MIGRATION FROM DISTRESSED AREAS: ITS MEANING FOR REGIONAL POLICY

PREPARED FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION,
THE FORD FOUNDATION, AND THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

PETER A. MORRISON

R-1103-EDA/FF/NIH

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PREFACE

As part of its mandate, the Economic Development Administration has sponsored an extensive program of research on migration and its relationships to the labor force and human resources in distressed areas. This report is one product of that program.

National economic growth and social change inevitably cause mismatches of labor supply and demand. Job opportunities multiply in one region and disappear in another; new industries thrive while old ones wither. Migration acts as a bridge over which workers pass from areas where jobs are scarce to areas where workers are scarce. This report examines how migration restores labor market balance, and how it affects those who leave distressed areas and those who remain. The findings and their policy implications are intended for government use in planning regional policy, and should be interesting to the academic community.

The research and writing of this report was suggested by Professor Benjamin Chinitz of Brown University and was partially funded under his grant from the Economic Development Administration. It was also supported in part by Ford Foundation Grant No. 710-0150 and by Grant No. 5 R01 HD05426-02 from the National Institutes of Health.

SUMMARY

This report explores the complex relationships among migration, the phenomenon of distressed areas, and the problems of disadvantaged residents in those areas. Its purpose is to review and synthesize U.S. research findings and identify any emerging general principles that may serve to guide future regional policy.

From the standpoint of the individual who migrates, the following key points can be noted:

- Migration tends to be both economically rewarding and personally satisfying. Judged by objective measures, migrants often improve their earnings and occupational status, particularly where the move is rural-to-urban. And their own self-evaluations of moving suggest that migrants are happier, and believe they are better off, for having moved. Disadvantaged persons—blacks especially—benefit remarkably when they migrate, inviting the conclusion that moving offers people a major escape route from disadvantaged circumstances.
- There is a sizable reservoir of would-be migrants—persons who say they want to move but fail to realize their preferences or intentions. For each person who migrates, nearly two persons expect to migrate, and four persons say they would like to do so. Many people seem unable to bridge the gap between inclination and action.
- People move, or fail to move, for multiple and complex reasons. Often their choices are marred by considerable ignorance of their alternatives. Decisions about moving tend to be briefly deliberated and constrained by limited information acquired largely through friends and relatives. Reliance on family and friends in deciding where to move restricts destination choices to the places where these persons have already settled. As a result, migrants often end their journeys by finding old friends, not new economic opportunities.
- Unemployed workers are somewhat more likely to migrate than employed workers. However, the vast majority of the unemployed do *not* move, even in the face of prolonged and severe hardship—partly because they believe economic conditions are no better anywhere else.

Those who migrate, then, seem to benefit by moving even though they often base their moves on poor information. Other would-be migrants, though, appear to forgo the same chance to achieve more affluent lives; many of them are not even aware that they have such a chance.

From the standpoint of the localities that migrants enter and leave, several other important points can be noted:

- Migration acts as an adjustive mechanism, transferring labor from areas where jobs are scarce or wages low to areas where workers are scarce or wages high. Evidence conflicts, however, on whether this adjustment works symmetrically: although migrants go to the economically "correct" destinations, they may not always leave from the "correct" origins.
- In adjusting the labor market toward efficiency, migration also enters into the basic anatomy of local growth or decline. In growing areas, additions of population through migration tend to stimulate still further employment growth, thereby drawing still more migrants to fill new jobs. In declining areas, a reverse multiplier may operate.
- The most productive members of the labor force are the ones who move away from areas with few worthwhile employment opportunities, leaving behind a labor pool of diminished productive potential. What begins as an economic adjustment can become over time a gradual leaching away of local human capital. Inmigration often accentuates this loss of human capital by replacing the more productive outmigrants with less productive inmigrants. These effects combine to make such localities increasingly unattractive for industrial investments.

These findings have broad implications for U.S. regional policy and urge amendment of certain concepts on which the Economic Development Administration's operational programs are based. The findings suggest that creating jobs in distressed areas is not the only way to aid their neediest inhabitants. An important complement to traditional area-oriented policies to stimulate development or deliver services would be policies designed to strengthen the effectiveness of migration itself. A national program of assisted migration for unemployed and low-income workers could open up broader avenues of economic and social betterment for persons willing, but as yet unable, to move.

Experience has shown that relocation assistance can help unemployed persons with widely varying backgrounds and skill levels to find jobs and increase their earnings. By underwriting the risks that prevent workers from moving, relocation assistance can help achieve a more efficient allocation of the labor force. At the same time, it can bring about a situation in which an individual's material well-being and social status rest on personal achievement and not on a legacy of disadvantage.

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MIGRATION FROM DISTRESSED AREAS: ITS MEANING FOR REGIONAL POLICY

INTRODUCTION

During the 1960s and early 1970s, the Economic Development Administration sponsored an extensive program of research on migration and its relationship to the labor force and human resources in distressed areas. It also funded the study described here, whose purpose is to review and synthesize the research conducted thus far, and identify any emerging general principles that may serve to guide future regional policy. Broadly speaking, the studies focus on three questions: (1) Why do people migrate? (2) How does migration affect them? (3) What happens to the places they leave and the places to which they go? The program has yielded substantial results. It has enlarged our understanding of the determinants and consequences of migration, and has produced a measure of operationally useful knowledge where virtually none existed before.

Some of the findings challenge basic principles that underlie regional policies in this country. They invite us to examine when and where a fluid movement of population promotes the interests of the economy and of the individual:

- In a highly developed economy, is attachment to a fixed place necessarily a desideratum? Is migration a "problem," or is immobility far worse—the immobility of people in rural and urban ghettos?
- How does migration correct or inflict social and economic injustices? Is migration too often forced by economic necessity that overrides people's wish to live where and as they choose? Or should we regard migration as a pathway to advancement, which multiplies the ways in which a person can realize his potentialities and attain a status founded on his achievements, not on a legacy of advantage or disadvantage?
- How does migration help or hurt a distressed area? Is the depopulation of *areas,* rural and urban, a trend to be corrected? Or is it a necessary retreat from economically or socially outmoded localities?
- Finally, to what extent do obsolete statistical categories—"rural" versus "urban," or "metropolitan" versus "nonmetropolitan"—color policymakers' judgments? Does the semantic power of labels shape our policies by confusing disadvantaged persons with the places where they live (or have left)?

Migration is an important mechanism of development for people and regions alike; for both, public policy can foster beneficial developments, but only if it is guided by a full and balanced recognition of migration's functions.

This study explores the complex relationships among migration, the phenomenon of distressed areas, and the problems of their disadvantaged residents. A review of the several dozen EDA-sponsored studies on migration quickly reveals that some contribute considerably more information, useful to policymakers than do others. Accordingly, I have followed the principle of "unequal time," devoting the most attention to the relatively few studies that have substantially advanced our knowledge. Moreover, since the larger significance of certain studies lies in their relationship to the broader demographic, economic, and sociological literature on migration, I have felt free to develop these connections. Artificially separating EDA's research from this larger body of knowledge would have contradicted the purpose of this study. Indeed, one measure of the value of EDA's research is that its findings can be so connected.

Under the next heading is a brief but necessary introduction to the problems of data and operational definition that hamper the study of migration. An inquiry then follows into the characteristics and motives of people who move, and how moving decisions are made. The major focuses of EDA's research are treated next: how migration affects people, and how their movements affect origin and destination labor markets. The final section summarizes the findings and important questions that remain unanswered, and states the central implications of these findings for future regional policy.

DEFINITIONS AND DATA

Studies of U.S. migration suffer from common weaknesses in operational definitions and data collection practices. Since these weaknesses often affect the conclusions, they warrant our first attention.

Analytical Definitions

A migrant is customarily defined as a person who moves during a fixed time interval, perhaps one year or five years; a nonmigrant is a person who does not. But this operational definition has an analytical weakness: it includes as nonmigrants both the genuinely immobile person who has, in effect, "pledged allegiance" to his present community, and the potentially mobile person who simply has not yet migrated. This is like defining the labor force to include only persons who are now employed. The standard definition is more discriminating: the labor force consists of all people who are employed *or seeking work* at a given time. Likewise, the migrant class should consist of all people who actually move *or seek to move;* and corresponding to the class of "unemployed" persons, we might speak of a class of "unmigrated" persons.

Classification of People

Migration studies are concerned chiefly with the factors that predispose or guide movement and the consequences that ensue. Ideally, the information pertaining to a move should be linked to the event itself, as is done for births and deaths. Population registers in some European countries (e.g., the Netherlands) use this type of reporting, but virtually all accounting of population movements in the United States is on a calendar basis. That is, a person's current place of residence is compared with his earlier places of residence at arbitrary points in time (e.g., a year ago, five years ago, at birth). We thereby know only where he resided on two or more particular dates, and we then make inferences about his actual moves. Because we infer moves, not count them directly, our measures cannot register every move that occurs.

For example, data from the five-year migration question asked on the censuses of 1960 and 1970 leave major uncertainties about actual patterns and frequencies of movement. Quite diverse patterns of migration are masked by inadequate statistics: people who moved once are lumped with those who moved repeatedly; and those who migrated and then returned are included with those who did not move at all. Thus, the conclusions drawn from these data are asymmetric and biased: where census data indicate a move, movement *has* occurred; where they fail to indicate a move, movement still *may* have occurred.

Furthermore, census data cannot indicate the *number* of moves, but only the fact that there was at least one. For example, the 1960 census question on interstate migration status, 1955-1960, differentiates only the following two types:

1. Migrated not at all; or at least twice, returning to origin (1955 and 1960 states of residence agree).
2. Migrated at least once (1955-1960 states of residence disagree).

When place of birth is added, the possibilities expand to three:

1. May have migrated, but lived at birthplace in 1955 and in 1960 (birthplace = 1955 residence = 1960 residence).
2. Migrated at least once (birthplace = 1955 $\neq$ 1960; or birthplace $\neq$ 1955 = 1960).
3. Migrated at least twice (three different states named).

Each type 1 mixes nonmigrants and return migrants; each type 2 mixes the one-time mover with the footloose chronic mover.

The analytical precision of migration research has increased.[1] With the recent availability of survey data and residence histories, such information has made it possible both to record moves directly and to probe decisionmaking processes. With new insight into the socioeconomic determinants of the *intent* to move, it became possible to trace how a potential migrant develops into an actual migrant and to identify factors that prompt and impede movement. Residence histories illuminated the sequences of moves more directly than before, so that single moves could be examined within the context of a series of related acts.

Spatial Classifications

Since migration must be defined with reference to some geographic boundary, its operational specification depends directly on the type of boundaries chosen. Demographers distinguish two types of mobility: (1) local (or residential) mobility, referring to moves within the same community, and (2) migration, referring to moves between communities. Clearly, the precision of this classification hinges on the operational definition of "community."

In current practice, the Bureau of the Census distinguishes the population classes shown in the table below according to mobility status and type of mobility. Classifying anyone who moves across a county line as a migrant has one unavoidable drawback: because metropolitan areas consist of clusters of integrated counties, many intercounty moves are simply changes in residence within the same larger "community."

Mobility Status	*Type of Mobility*
Living in same house	Nonmover
Living in different house in same county	Intracounty mover
Living in different county	Migrant
Same state	Intrastate migrant
Different state	Interstate migrant
Contiguous states	—
Noncontiguous states	—

To avoid this problem, some analysts prefer to define migration as moves across the boundaries of labor market areas (as delineated by the Department of Labor). Since these boundaries generally coincide with those of metropolitan areas, this definition has the advantage of excluding intrametropolitan moves across county boundaries from the definition of migration.

Finally, migration has been defined in certain studies as moves of 50 miles or more.

The Statistical Fiction of "Net Migration"

For a locality, the arithmetic difference between migratory arrivals and departures is an important change-in-stock factor and a crude proxy for the community's "attractiveness." For analytical purposes, though, net migration is a statistical fiction. No person is a "net migrant"; he can only arrive or depart.

Generally, net migratory gains or losses are only the surface ripples of powerful crosscurrents modifying a locality's labor force. Indeed, what we casually regard as a "community" is actually a procession of people coming and going. Between 1965 and 1970, for example, metropolitan San Jose, California, gained 75,000 new residents through migration, but 395,000 people moved either in or out. Metropolitan Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, had a net migration loss of 72,000 residents—still, 138,000 persons moved *to* Pittsburgh. Consequently, the one-way drift of net migration is no measure of the many migratory moves that people undertake, and it is erroneous to treat net migration—such as Pittsburgh's 72,000 net loss—as the phenomenon of people's behavior to be explained. Rather, we must explain the behavior of 138,000 people who moved to Pittsburgh and 210,000 other people who moved away.

DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION [2]

In examining the determinants of migration, it is useful to distinguish two phases of the decision process: first, deciding to move, and second, deciding on a destination.[3] This perspective distinguishes a question about people ("Why do they move?") from one about places ("Why are localities attractive to new residents?").

Separated for analytical purposes, the decisions on whether to move and where to move appear to be determined somewhat differently. Typically, a major change or event that alters the pattern of a person's life precipitates the decision to move—for example, entering or retiring from the labor force, changing jobs, family formation or dissolution. *Where* a person migrates is, in some respects, a separate decision —perhaps made long before, and merely waiting the "right time."

Who Moves?

Certain personal attributes differentiate migrants from nonmigrants and reflect underlying social and economic influences on decisionmaking. The principal factors are those connected with the life cycle, the person's occupation and employment status, his educational attainment, and past mobility experience.

Life-Cycle Patterns in Migration. Migration is induced—in certain situations virtually compelled—by transitions from one stage of the life cycle to another. Migration rates vary sharply and with nearly universal regularity according to age groups. U.S. rates are highest for people in their early twenties, reflecting the changes, adjustments, and initial commitments that accompany early adulthood. Large numbers of these people are completing their formal schooling, entering the labor market for the first time, serving in the armed forces, and marrying and forming families. These activities predispose people to move frequently until they are well into their thirties.

Supplementing this sociological interpretation is the human capital view of migration as a form of self-investment. According to this view, the older the prospective migrant, the less his long-term expected gains from mobility and the greater its costs. The economically rational migrant maximizes his expected future earnings by moving early in his productive life.[4]

Changes in marital status accentuate the effect of age. Migration is closely linked in time to marriage and family formation, and the first few years after marriage are a period of frequent movement. The dissolution of marriage through separation or divorce is also accompanied by frequent movement.

Occupation and Employment Status. Whereas unskilled jobs are usually filled by local residents, highly skilled or specialized jobs tend to be filled through regionwide or even nationwide competition and recruitment.[5] Occupational differentials in migration reflect the scope of this competition and recruitment. White-collar workers migrate more frequently than do manual and service workers. Within the white-collar category, professional workers (especially those who are salaried rather than self-employed) tend to be the most migratory. Professionals' migration stems from the more nearly nationwide labor markets in which such persons find jobs; it also reflects the variety of relatively short-term residences that accompany higher education and internship or other apprentice-like arrangements. The least migratory occupational groups tend to be service workers and farmers and farm managers.[6]

Apart from these occupational differences is a consistent tendency for wage and salaried workers to move more frequently than do the self-employed.[7] This differential arises from common constraints that discourage movement among the latter group. For example, salaried professionals are quite footloose for reasons just mentioned. But self-employed professionals typically are entrepreneurs tied down by capital investments and a clientele built up over many years.[8] Even such specific limitations as state-based licensure for certain professions retard interstate migration.[9]

Educational Attainment. Education is also related to the propensity to move. People with at least some college education, for example, are considerably more migratory overall than those with only an elementary education, and nearly four times as likely to migrate across a state line. In general, each successively higher increment of education between these extremes is associated with a higher rate of migration.[10]

Why Do People Move?

The above migration differentials show the broad sociological and economic influences on decisionmaking, but reveal nothing directly about mobility intentions and decisions per se (i.e., apart from their observed outcomes). To study directly the *intent* to move, we must examine would-be movers—persons who failed to realize their preferences or intentions during the period of observation—as well as those who actually move.

In their landmark national survey, *The Geographic Mobility of Labor,* [11] Lansing and Mueller advance our insights into these behavioral aspects of mobility. This study (sponsored in part by EDA's predecessor, the Area Redevelopment Administration) has two valuable features: first, it examines the intent to move; second, it identifies the specific factors that motivate migration by different classes of workers and in economically different areas of the United States.

On the first point, the survey indicates that there is a sizable reservoir of would-be migrants—persons who say they want to move but fail to realize their preferences or intentions. Lansing and Mueller estimate that for every actual migrant, nearly two persons *expect* to migrate and four persons say they would *like* to migrate. (Migration refers here to moves away from labor market areas.) In short, many people seem unable to bridge the gap between their inclination to move and action.

The survey also advances our understanding of people's reasons for moving. Unlike past studies, Lansing and Mueller's allowed for the possibility that people may move for more than one reason.[a] The findings indicate that people migrate fundamentally—but by no means exclusively—for economic and job-related reasons. "Three moves out of four were, according to people's explanations, at least partly economic in purpose, while one out of four was made for noneconomic reasons exclusively."[12]

Economic reasons for moving are especially characteristic of the young, the college-educated, and the professional. Indeed, most of the differentials in mobility

[a] Stated reasons for moving elicited ex post facto may contain an element of rationalization; still, they furnish direct information on why and how moving decisions are reached. This direct information is invaluable in sorting out the clues embedded in aggregate data on differential migration.

between major socioeconomic groups seem to be due to a greater or lesser propensity to move for economic reasons. All groups exhibit roughly the same propensity to move for purely noneconomic reasons.[13]

Among economically purposeful migrants, particular reasons vary by occupation, education, and age. When blue-collar workers move, they do so chiefly to avoid unemployment, to find work, or to obtain a steadier job; professional workers, however, move to increase their remuneration. Both professional and other white-collar workers are more likely than blue-collar workers to migrate as a result of transfer or reassignment.

Reasons for moving vary also with age, but in a complex way. Young adults often move to avoid unemployment or to find work—part of the initial process of searching and experimentation in early working years. Middle-aged persons generally move for income-related reasons. With advancing age, migrants show a reduced interest in improving earnings; and by age 65, economic or occupational motives for moving are infrequent.

In summarizing these points, Lansing and Mueller draw two general conclusions:

> First, judging by people's own explanations, the decision to move among members of the labor force is strongly dominated by job-related economic reasons. Secondly, economic incentives seem to play the greatest role among the groups in the labor force which have the strongest economic position—the well-educated, the middle-aged, and white-collar workers. The groups which are in a weaker position may move because of serious economic pressures (such as lack of work), or occasionally because the employer initiates a move. The more optional types of moves, directed primarily toward higher earnings or professional advancement, are relatively infrequent among blue-collar workers, older people, and the less educated.[14]

Unemployment as an Incentive to Move. An unemployed worker is more inclined to migrate than is an employed one; but overall, the unassisted migratory response to unemployment proves to be weak and uneven.[15] It is weak because most workers with unemployment experience, whatever their inclinations, nevertheless do not move. And it is uneven because workers more prone to unemployment—those in blue-collar occupations, with low skill and educational levels, and of advanced age—tend to be more immobile than others.

The crux of the problem is that most people are reluctant to move, even in the face of prolonged and severe unemployment hardship. This reluctance may reflect a carefully considered personal judgment that values familiar surroundings above the prospect of employment elsewhere. But the weight of evidence suggests that what really prevents the unemployed worker from migrating is the *unawareness* or *absence* of choice. Residents of federally defined depressed areas express surprisingly little interest in moving away, despite the economic "push" of low incomes and high unemployment. This lack of interest must stem at least partially from people's erroneous impressions about relative economic conditions elsewhere. Lansing and Mueller's survey indicates that over half the residents of depressed areas think that conditions where they now live are just as good as, or better than, anywhere else. Nearly one-third believe that in other places the pay is *lower*, and the jobs *more* scarce, in their line of work.[16]

With information and help, matters can work out differently. Several experimental relocation assistance programs have demonstrated that many unemployed

persons willing to relocate can be helped to find jobs and increase their earnings elsewhere.[17] The success of these programs suggests that the overall migratory response to unemployment could be strengthened, with advantages redounding to workers and distressed areas alike.

Family and Community Ties. The decision to move, both at the stage of planning and at the point of action, is closely tied to the presence or absence of relatives.[18] Of the one in four who mention family reasons for migrating, fully half move to be reunited with family members. Persons who have moved away may come back (return migration); or family members who have stayed behind may join migrants at their destinations (chain migration). There is a marked tendency for family members or friends at a distance to foster chain migration, since they are in a position to reduce psychological and financial barriers that discourage or block potential moves. Job information, help with moving and settling into a new community, and other intangible kinds of assistance reduce the inertia of persons who might otherwise hesitate to move.

Potential Barriers to Migration. Many factors may inhibit migration. Fixed equities such as home ownership, pension plan coverage, and employment insurance have been identified as several that are within reach of public policy. Lansing and Mueller examined the effects of these equities but concluded that their restrictive effect on migration is probably only marginal.[19]

How Moving Decisions are Made

Moving decisions are circumscribed by many personal considerations that make for inertia and, once a decision to move has been made, often evidence a certain lack of deliberation. As noted above, there is a sizable reservoir of would-be migrants who either may be reluctant to make concrete moving plans or may postpone carrying them out after they have been made. Other studies of the decision to move have confirmed this important point: recent movers are known to be oriented toward future mobility and better able to actualize a moving plan or choice compared with those who have not moved recently.[20]

How fully do migrants deliberate in reaching a moving decision? How do they inform themselves about employment prospects where they are going? Many moves, it seems, are preceded by surprisingly little deliberation, and most potential movers consider only a narrow range of destinations and jobs:

- One-third of migrants report that they began thinking seriously about moving only a month before they actually departed.
- Two-thirds considered no other destinations than the places to which they actually moved.
- Six out of ten migrants relied on only one source of information to explore job opportunities in the new place.
- Job information was most frequently obtained from friends and relatives (49 percent) or through special trips to look the situation over (33 percent). Migrants rarely consulted state employment agencies (6 percent).[21]

Thus, many migrants display a poor facsimile of rational choice behavior in reaching a decision to move. They deliberate hastily and give little or no thought to

alternatives. Moreover, because they rely so heavily on family and friends in deciding where to go, migrants often go only to the places where friends and relatives already have settled. The typical migrant's information sources, then, do not assure that he will move effectively.

Where Do They Move?

Migrants tend to move to large, nearby centers of population. The relatively stable determinants of population size and distance fix the approximate gross volumes of migratory flows that connect any two places. Beyond these gravity-like effects, though, local economic conditions systematically influence where migrants go. Mobile persons flow toward labor markets, especially nearby ones, that are attractive to job-seekers.[22] (This point is elaborated below under the heading, "The Effects of Migration on Localities.")

Flows of migration also exhibit well-defined directional patterns. Some are, as just noted, relatively permanent "beaten paths" that follow historical movements (e.g., blacks leaving the South) and are perpetuated through the location of friends and relatives. Others are linked to shifts in the regional and territorial balance of the economy (e.g., skilled workers moving to aerospace jobs in Southern California).

Summary and Conclusions

Patterns of differential migration indicate how diverse are the decisionmaking processes that eventuate in migration. They point up the need to distinguish among different types of migrants, such as the unemployed person seeking work, the retiree seeking amenities and a pleasing climate, and the career migrant for whom geographic and occupational mobility blend into an institutionalized life style. Policies aimed at strengthening migration's individual or collective effectiveness cannot overlook these diverse processes of adjustment.

Migration may improve the functioning of the labor market, but many personal obstacles impede its full and rational operation. People move or fail to move for multiple and complex reasons. Often, their "choices" are marred by considerable, albeit benign, ignorance of their alternatives.

Many pressing problems relate to *immobile* persons, in particular the educationally and occupationally disadvantaged, who remain in rural and city ghettos.[23] Such persons might be aided by "lubricative" policies aimed at reducing the misinformation and uncertainty that hamper mobility. This interpretation is supported by evidence from recent demonstration programs that have shown relocation assistance to be an effective means of dealing with these problems.

More generally, decisions about moving tend to be briefly deliberated and heavily influenced by information from friends or relatives. Hit-or-miss information guiding choices of destination does not enable people to migrate effectively in terms of economically purposeful objectives.

INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES OF MOVING

The main question posed in this section is whether the experience of migration affects people's material well-being and personal satisfaction. This question is somewhat ambiguous.[24] For one thing, migration is not equally advantageous for all types of people. The skilled or educated worker is better equipped to compete in new labor markets and stands to gain more from moving than do his less skilled or educated counterparts.

Moreover, whether the migration experience is "favorable" or not may depend on the norm of comparison selected. One possibility is to compare migrants and nonmigrants from the same place of origin. If the migrants are more successful, we may infer that their migration experience has been favorable. Several EDA-sponsored studies, for example, report that rural-urban migrants enjoy greater economic success relative to their counterparts who stay behind.[25] In making this comparison, however, we cannot rule out the possibility that the migrant's advantage arises primarily from his access to a broader set of opportunities. One way of separating these interpretations is to compare migrants with nonmigrants in the communities of destination, where opportunities are presumably the same for inmigrants and natives alike.

Whichever comparison is made, there is always a further and more serious source of ambiguity: whether migration in some sense "causes" observed improvements, or whether migration is merely selective of certain persons who would have improved their status irrespective of the decision to migrate. The initiative it takes to migrate tends to be more characteristic of people with superior social origin, education, and work experience—all factors that make for improved outcomes. So, to an unknown extent, migration may simply move people likely to succeed anywhere to places where the opportunities for success are more readily available for everyone.[26]

Objective Effects

In the studies reviewed here, the effects of migration have been gauged in three different ways: (1) by asking migrants for their own evaluation, (2) by comparing migrants with their counterparts who have not migrated, and (3) by estimating migration's "dividends" as an investment in human capital. Lansing and Mueller's study followed the first two approaches;[27] the third was followed in EDA-sponsored studies by Bowles and Apgar.[28]

It can be tricky to assess outcomes on the basis of how the individual migrant *perceives* the consequences of his action. Actual monetary improvements are meaningful only if they are perceived as gains; on the other hand, the individual's judgment may overstate his true gain if he fails to account for loss of purchasing power.

Migration's perceived effect on earnings is shown in Table 1. These data refer to heads of families in the labor force who, after migrating, were asked about their prior and subsequent earnings. Referring to their last move, 65 percent reported higher earnings after moving; 24 percent said they earned less. Of the 11 percent earning the same, some probably had made defensive moves to avoid circumstances in which earnings would otherwise have declined. The right-hand column shows that for persons who moved with the intention of obtaining a better job, earnings

Table 1

REPORTED EARNINGS AFTER MIGRATION FOR HEADS OF FAMILIES IN THE LABOR FORCE

Head's Earnings After Move	% of Moves in Last Five Years	
	All Moves	Moves to Get a Better Job
Higher	65	73
Same	11	10
Lower	24	17
Total	*100*	*100*
Number of moves	401	139

SOURCE: John B. Lansing and Eva Mueller, *The Geographic Mobility of Labor*, Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1967, p. 247.

NOTE: Migration is defined here as moving across the boundaries of labor market areas.

were even more likely to have increased. According to people's own reports, then, migration tends to be accompanied by higher earnings, although it must be noted that many moves are made by young adults, who typically enjoy a rising income anyway.[b]

Self-evaluation has the advantage of permitting the mover to judge the success or failure of his move in light of his own criteria, not those imposed by the researcher. Thus, it is informative to consider people's overall evaluations, "all things considered."

Reactions to moving, shown in Table 2, are highly favorable, although possibly influenced by ex post facto rationalization. The vast majority of moves (89 percent) are judged as a "good idea" or "very good idea," without qualification, by people's own criteria.

Comparing migrants with nonmigrants affords a second perspective on individual outcomes. Specifically, we can ask whether people who have moved enjoy higher incomes than those who have not moved, other things being equal. Lansing and Mueller's survey does not show migration to have any consistently favorable effect on subsequent income. Mean income for migrants, to be sure, is substantially higher than for nonmigrants, but the differential is attributable to occupational, educational, and racial differences between the two groups.[29]

These cross-sectional data, however, afford only crude comparisons and have intrinsic limitations. For example, they do not compare the rural-urban migrant's earnings with those of his counterpart who remained behind, or with earnings of urban nonmovers at the destination. On these points, the evidence shows that migrants from rural to urban areas subsequently better their economic positions and attain parity with the urbanites they join:

[b] Thus, when these data were distributed by age, they confirmed that a consistently higher fraction of persons under 35 than over 35 report increased earnings after moving. In both age groups, however, the majority of people who move find themselves earning more or about the same.

Table 2

OVERALL EVALUATION OF MOVES

Evaluation of the Move	% of Moves in Last Five Years
Very good idea	14
Good idea	75
Good in some ways, not others	5
Poor idea	4
Very poor idea	2
Total	*100*
Number of moves	690

SOURCE: John B. Lansing and Eva Mueller, *The Geographic Mobility of Labor,* Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1967, p. 250.

- Relative to earnings at origin: "People who have left rural areas for urban areas now earn more on the average than those who remained in rural areas, and people who have left the Deep South now earn more on the average than those who remained there."[30]
- Relative to earnings at destination: "Five years after moving, the migrants have earnings equal to those of . . . urban nonmovers of the same education, age, race, and sex."[31]

Thus, people do not consistently better their earnings when they migrate, given their initial personal attributes. However, our distinguishing among functionally different types of migration forces qualifications. Certain kinds of migration are associated—and strongly so—with improved incomes and better employment prospects. Migrants from rural to urban areas and migration by disadvantaged blacks are the clearest cases in point.[32]

Finally, migration can be viewed as an investment in human capital that incurs costs and yields returns. The costs include direct, opportunity, information, and psychological costs, and also losses in the value of capital that is costly to transfer to a new location. Among the returns are changes in earnings and nonpecuniary benefits over subsequent years (e.g., the individual's full lifetime or his remaining years in the labor force). Since it is embodied in the individual himself, migration is an investment in *human* capital.

Migration may change the value of a person's existing stock of human capital by affording him the opportunity to work in another labor market where his stock of human capital is more highly valued. Migration also may enable him to add to his human capital stock, for instance by enjoying on-the-job training at the destination.[33]

The human capital approach is represented in two EDA-sponsored studies. In a study of migration out of the South, Bowles reports that "the present value of the expected income gains from moving out of the South is positively related to the probability of moving,"[34] i.e., people who stand to gain the most from moving are the ones most prone to do so. He also notes that the effect of income gain on the

probability of moving appears to be increased by the level of schooling but reduced by the individual's age.

Although theoretically sound, Bowles's analysis suffers from several empirical faults, pointed out by Apgar.[35] One is its focus on net rather than gross migration flows, which complicates interpretations of actual behavior (see above, "The Statistical Fiction of Net Migration"). More important, though, the data supporting Bowles's analysis are contaminated by the influence of military-related migration, which accounts for a substantial share of long-distance moves by men.[36] Other kinds of migration (e.g., return migration) that are responsive to different factors also are lumped together in Bowles's study.

Upon altering the functional form of Bowles's model and adjusting for some of these problems, Apgar found little evidence to support the original hypotheses. Perhaps the larger point here is that human capital theory has advanced considerably beyond the quality and detail of available data. Migration's important investment features warrant more thorough examination with richer data sources.[c]

Subjective Effects

The subjective outcomes of migration are difficult to assess since they involve private considerations connected with both family ties and personal tastes. Noneconomic reasons for moving fall into one of two categories. The first has to do with *reuniting people:* more than one migrant in ten moves in part to be closer to other family members.[37] The second relates to *community features:* one migrant in five is motivated partially by community considerations.[38] Typically, these features are connected with the destination community—its general attractiveness (e.g., climate), or a specific personal attachment (usually to a place where one has lived before). Few migrants say they were repelled by some unappealing characteristic of their former community.

Family and community factors play a large part in certain types of moves. Localities from which many migrants have left over a long period of time have large numbers of distant "alumni." In some cases, these connections sustain sociological "communities without propinquity"; they also may generate a flow of return migrants motivated by both economic and noneconomic reasons.[39] A significant minority of moves, then, perform important family- and community-related adjustments that cannot be "valued" in any pecuniary sense.

Rural-urban migration involves a major transition. How well do rural migrants adapt to an urban environment? Generalizations about adjustment are difficult because: (1) the outward signs of adjustment vary from one subculture to another; (2) a migrant may be "adjusted" within the confines of his immediate group but not integrated into the broader community; (3) migrants' success in adjusting to a new environment is shaped in part by their motivations for moving.[40]

Most studies agree that friends and relatives are crucial in the adjustment process. Length of residence in the city is another important factor. And, as would be expected, the migrant tends to be satisfied when he experiences economic success. Overall, the evidence suggests that most migrants are happier, and believe they are better off, in urban than in rural areas.[41]

[c] The Parnes Survey of Work Experience and the Survey of Economic Opportunity are two recent examples of such data sources.

Summary and Conclusions

From the individual's standpoint, migration tends to be both economically rewarding and personally satisfying. Judged by objective measures, migrants often improve their earnings and occupational status, particularly where the move is rural-to-urban. And looking back on the move, migrants' self-evaluations of moving usually are favorable. Disadvantaged persons—blacks especially—benefit remarkably when they migrate, inviting the conclusion that moving offers people a major escape route from disadvantaged circumstances.

It is equally apparent, though, that these favorable outcomes are related not only to changes of locale but also to the *attributes* of persons who choose to move. Migration complements those characteristics—higher educational attainment and occupational status, orientation toward occupational advancement, etc.—that favor material improvement in general. Thus, a key question for policy remains: To what extent are all of these advantageous changes the *result of migration* rather than merely of the *characteristics of people* who tend to migrate? From the evidence so far, we can discern both factors operating.

EFFECTS OF MIGRATION ON LOCALITIES

Models of Area Distress

The "national problem" of area distress is actually a mosaic of unemployment and low-income problems, and the effect of migration may differ according to the situation. A perspective that conveys this diversity is furnished by Chinitz, who sketches seven models of area distress:[42]

1. *The "rich" and rapidly growing distressed area,* enjoying very high per capita income and rapid growth but, paradoxically, afflicted also with high unemployment. The inflow of migrants may be faster than the increase in jobs; or migration may respond sluggishly in the face of an economic downturn, as in Southern California.

2. *The well-to-do mature distressed area,* generally a highly urbanized setting with average or slightly above-average per capita income, growing very slowly or even declining absolutely. Overly specialized in declining industries, and with a limited capacity to adapt its resources to alternative uses, the mature area is overly sensitive to national downturns and, hence, vulnerable to spells of serious unemployment. Yet, its problems may to a considerable degree be corrected through outmigration. Pittsburgh and certain other metropolitan areas in Pennsylvania, along with parts of New England, exemplify this model.

3. *The not-so-poor depressed rural area,* with high unemployment and below-average income. Basically rural, with some small towns, this area typically is plagued by declining employment in extractive industries. It lacks the scale and experience necessary to sustain industrial growth on a broad front. There is heavy outmigration to urban areas. Examples of this model are the Pacific Northwest, northern New England, and the upper reaches of the Great Lakes region.

4. *The poor depressed rural area,* marked by exceptionally low income, although not typically afflicted with high unemployment. This model is one of classic underdevelopment and is found only in southern sections of the United States—for example, the Mississippi Delta. Agriculture is declining, although it still offers low returns to a large number of underskilled and undereducated workers, and outmigration is massive. Industrialization is very limited and community facilities tend to be primitive.

5. *The special case of Appalachia,* combining the liabilities of Model 2 high unemployment and Model 4 low income. It presents a heritage of liabilities: exploited resources, ravaged land, a labor force that is largely unemployed and poorly suited for alternative occupations, little indigenous entrepreneurship, and scant public capital.

6. *Poverty areas of large cities,* with high unemployment, poor access to suitable jobs that have shifted to the suburbs, and housing discrimination. Its increasingly black population shows the cumulative effects of previous black inmigration, compounded by subsequent natural increase of black urbanites and thinned out by the exodus of middle-class whites and blacks to fringe locations.

7. *The Indian reservation,* a unique special case of Model 4, marked by primitive living conditions and largely isolated from the outside world.

Issues of Efficiency and Equity

From this mosaic of income and employment problems emerges the basic issue facing regional policy: how to maximize economic growth while assuring an equitable distribution of what is gained and what must be sacrificed to achieve this growth. Migration may bring these goals into total or partial conflict. The following discussion centers on three aspects of migration that bear on achievement of efficiency and equity: (1) adjustments in the labor market, (2) migration's interactions with local growth, and (3) the consequences of selective migration.

Regarding the first, economic growth generates the geographic shifts in opportunities that induce internal migration—indeed require it for growth to be realized.[43] Migration acts as an adjustive mechanism, transferring labor from areas where wages are low or unemployment is high to areas where labor is more highly valued and in demand.

Second, migration may accelerate local growth or blunt the potentiality for growth. Migrants, drawn to a locality largely by its attractive employment opportunities, expand the local market for goods and services. This expansion, in turn, activates more employment opportunities, thereby drawing more migrants to fill new jobs.

Third, it is the younger, better-educated, and more skilled members of the labor force who move away from areas with few worthwhile employment opportunities. The reason is found in the conscious choices and decisions that act to filter and preselect persons who move. As a prism separates light, migration typically separates out able and enterprising persons whose departure leaves behind a labor pool of diminished productive potential.

The following sections review what EDA's research shows about these three features of the efficiency-equity tradeoff.

Adjustments in the Labor Market

There is virtually unanimous agreement that labor force migration is an effective mechanism of adjustment. Evidence conflicts, however, as to whether this adjustment works symmetrically—that is, whether the carrot and the stick are equally important as motivating forces. All studies seem to agree that migrants find their way to destination areas where labor is in demand. It is not clear, however, whether their departure is stimulated by depressed conditions at origin. Although migrants go to the economically "correct" destinations, they may not always leave from the "correct" origins.

Is migration's wisdom two-sided or only one-sided? The question is of more than academic interest. The one-sided interpretation, suggesting that there is little or no economic "push," contradicts the logic of existing national policy toward distressed areas:

> A cornerstone assumption . . . is that economic distress leads to heavy outmigration, and that this inflicts upon the area of origin grave social costs as well as on the area of destination. Policies of investment in depressed areas have been based in large measure on an attempt to expand local economic opportunities and prevent economically-forced outmigration. In effect, they claim to provide people the freedom to stay in their own region. . . . [But if asymmetry holds] programs of development would not have the effect of retaining the original inhabitants, but rather that of increasing the inflow of outsiders in to areas which typically already suffer from a labor surplus.[44]

The first indication that outflow rates may be unresponsive to "push" at origin was given in Lowry's well-known study of intermetropolitan migration.[45] Numerous other studies have reported similar findings that point to a conspicuously absent relationship: outmigration seems largely spontaneous and insensitive to local labor market conditions.[46]

This interpretation is supported also by Lansing and Mueller's survey, which illuminates the behavioral mechanism of this asymmetry. The survey probed people's perceptions of origin conditions and their motives for staying or leaving. Comparisons between depressed-area residents and persons in nondepressed areas revealed no obvious "push" for outmigration among the former group.[47] People in depressed areas were no more inclined to leave than were their counterparts in nondepressed areas.

But other studies report finding the expected relationship between outmigration and economic conditions at origin. Their claim is that origin "push" surely is operative, but its role is masked by improper specification of the unemployment variable. Average or end-period rates of unemployment at origin are poorly suited to explaining differential outmigration, for such rates have already been modified by the most recent corrective effects of outmigration. Synthetic measures like "prospective" or "potential" unemployment are needed to avoid this problem. They are designed to relate outmigration to the total pressure for outflow, rather than to the residual level of unemployment that remains after surplus workers depart.[48]

Evidence of economic "push" does appear in studies that rely on these synthetic measures. Olvey reports "a highly significant relation between outmigration rates and local labor market conditions, as characterized by 'prospective unemployment' . . . [that is,] the level of unemployment which would have accumulated by the end

of the period had no outmigration taken place."[49] And Mazek, in his EDA-sponsored study, reached a similar conclusion using a comparable synthetic measure ("potential unemployment").[d]

How can these conflicting findings about the authenticity of economic "push" be reconciled? Neither side of the argument is convincing, the one marred by an improperly specified unemployment variable, the other calling for a heroic reliance on a synthetic construct. Nevertheless, the issue has key policy implications; and until these processes can be fully sorted out, Alonso notes, "there is a good chance that our policies and programs may not only be wasteful or ineffective, but indeed counterproductive."[50]

Ironically, the evidence on both sides rests partly or wholly on five-year migration data from the 1960 census. The problem is that five-year migration flows, viewed in cross-section, capture long-term structural differences among areas but disguise short-term adaptive changes.

Examined cross-sectionally, outmigration rates are equally high in prosperous metropolitan areas as in depressed ones. But the high outflows from fast-growing San Jose, Houston, Atlanta, and the like, may result simply from the hypermobile population base that has been built up by wave after wave of inmigrants.[51] Conversely, the declining Johnstowns and Pittsburghs have already lost many of their mobile residents; therefore, their rates of outflow would be only nominal, even though by economic reasoning these rates should be higher than elsewhere. Consequently, if "push" does operate in the short term, any trace of its effect may be obscured by the opposing structural effect of hypermobility.

Better data are needed so that more pointed questions can be asked: Do *annual* outflows respond to *annual* fluctuations in economic conditions? Is migration reacting to this year's growth, accommodating to last year's growth, or anticipating next year's growth? Where approximations to such data have been used, the results have been revealing. Metropolitan outmigration, although economically insensitive over the long term (as Lowry found), seems responsive to short-run changes in local employment growth.[52]

Migration's Interactions with Local Growth

Although it promotes efficiency in the labor market, migration also affects the basic anatomy of local growth and decline. Additions of population through migration may stimulate growth; subtractions may attenuate it.

Two explanations of how inmigration and employment growth reinforce one another have been offered. One is that employment growth acts as a magnet to attract available migrants (jobs draw migrants). Alternatively, differential employ-

[d] Olvey and Mazek use different operational definitions. Olvey defines prospective unemployment as "the increase in the labor force (proxied by net population increase) minus total employment increase, assuming a zero rate of outmigration. It is a measure of the increase in unemployment which would occur if outmigration dropped to zero while all the other variables held constant" (p. 85). Mazek defines "potential unemployment" as "the unemployment rate which would exist in a region at the end of the period studied if no migration—in or out—took place during the period. It is estimated by first estimating the size of the labor force at the end of the period, assuming no migration, and subtracting from this the actual employment of the labor force at the end of the period. . . . This is the precise equivalent of adding the net outmigration of the labor force that took place over the period to the actual unemployment rate at the end of the period" (p. 21).

ment growth itself may result from differential inmigration and its invigoration of local demand for goods and services (additions of migrants stimulate new jobs).[53]

However useful this distinction may be in theory, it is difficult to make empirically. The weight of evidence points to the interpretation that migration and employment growth perpetuate one another.[54] That is, an influx of migrants tends to stimulate employment growth by increasing the demand for local goods and services, thereby drawing more migrants to fill new jobs. Three possible effects can be distinguished here: (1) the tendency for service jobs to increase in response to the demands of a population growing larger and more diverse, (2) the pull exerted by growing economies, which begin to evidence agglomeration opportunities, and (3) the tendency for migration to add more ambitious and enterprising workers whose qualifications attract additional entrepreneurs. Because of their interaction, exogenous increases in either migration or employment lead to multiple increases in both.[55]

The self-perpetuative link in a growing locality has its counterpart in a declining area. Part of the reason that outmigration and economic stagnation reinforce each other is that migration is adversely selective.

Consequences of Selective Migration [e]

Outmigration acts as an economic adjustment mechanism by reducing local labor surpluses and lessening competition for scarce employment. But what begins as an equilibrating force may lead to disequilibrium, as rich areas become richer and poor areas become poorer. At some point, outmigration accelerates local economic distress by reducing productivity and, hence, attractiveness to new industry.

Since outmigration usually draws away more highly qualified members of the labor force—the young, the educated, and the skilled—the labor force left behind tends to be overaged, undereducated, and underskilled. This effect often is further accentuated by inmigration of persons similar to those who have remained behind.[56] As a labor force declines in quality, distressed areas become less attractive to new industries that require a supply of skilled workers. Only marginal firms paying low wages want an undereducated, underskilled, and overaged labor force. Where downside rigidity has kept wages high relative to productivity, an area fails to attract new employers and hence continues to lose labor, though perhaps too slowly.[57] This self-perpetuating erosion of the area's competitive position corresponds to Chinitz's model of the "well-to-do mature distressed area" described above.

Furthermore, since the people who stay are generally the less migration-prone, the remaining population shows a gradually reduced potential for mobility. This means that stronger and stronger economic incentives would be necessary to induce additional people to move away in order to maintain any balance between population and shrinking employment.

Prolonged and heavy outmigration, then, leaves behind those persons who are least able to cope with the unfavorable conditions that led others to depart in the first place. The remaining residents tend to lack the attributes and skills that would

[e] This section draws heavily from material prepared by the author for the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future (Morrison, *Population Movements,* 1972).

attract new employers who could offer them jobs or that would predispose them to move away as others before them did.

The data from Lansing and Mueller's study show the effects of selective outmigration. Using a supplemental sample for redevelopment areas (classified by the Area Redevelopment Administration as "depressed"), the authors compared families in high-unemployment (5A) and low-income (5B) areas[f] with families outside these areas.[58] Their findings are revealed in the data of Table 3:

Table 3

CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULATION IN REDEVELOPMENT AND NONREDEVELOPMENT AREAS
(In percent)

Characteristic	Present Place of Residence		
	Redevelopment Area		Not a Redevelopment Area
	High Unemployment	Low Income	
Age			
Under 35 years old	19	15	26
35-54 years old	42	39	41
55 and over	39	46	33
	100	*100*	*100*
Education			
Grade school or none	39	54	27
High School	47	32	46
College	14	14	27
	100	*100*	*100*
Labor force status			
Wage and salary workers	60	43	65
Self-employed and farmers	11	24	11
Not in the labor force	29	33	24
	100	*100*	*100*
Occupation of wage and salary workers			
Professional, technical	11	16	19
Managerial, officials	6	7	10
Clerical and sales	13	9	17
Craftsmen and foremen	26	16	20
Operatives	25	25	20
Laborers and service	19	27	14
	100	*100*	*100*

SOURCE: John B. Lansing and Eva Mueller, *The Geographic Mobility of Labor,* Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1967, pp. 303, 305, 307.

- *Age.* Redevelopment areas contained proportionately fewer persons under 35 and more 55 and over. Low-income areas contained an exceptionally large fraction (46 percent) of persons 55 and older.

[f] Section 5A areas are characterized by high and persistent unemployment; Section 5B areas have a high percentage of low-income families and are predominantly rural counties or small labor market areas. At the time of the survey and in the preceding four years, both 5A and 5B areas suffered relatively severe economic distress.

- *Education.* The proportion of college-educated family heads was only half as large in the redevelopment areas. In low-income areas, 54 percent had only grade-school education, compared with 27 percent in nonredevelopment areas.
- *Labor force and occupation.* Compared with the nation as a whole, fewer family heads were in the labor force, and white-collar workers were underrepresented.

On the inflow side, persons migrating to redevelopment areas were not a typical cross-section of all migrants. Redevelopment areas tend to draw migrants who are older, undereducated, out of the labor force, blue-collar workers, self-employed, or farmers. Thus, as inmigration replaces the more productive outmigrants with people who may be less productive economically, the tendency for redevelopment areas to lose valuable human capital is accentuated.[59]

Apart from its effects on productivity, migration also tends to concentrate people at the origins of outmigration whose characteristics make them either relatively immobile or overly unemployment-prone, or both. The eventual result is accumulation of unemployment in certain regions. These effects are detailed in Mazek's study of age and occupational selectivity and how they modify the composition of unemployment in depressed areas.[g]

Because outmigration is age-selective, it renders local unemployment less apparent but more persistent. As younger workers depart, the remaining unemployed become concentrated in the older age brackets. Young workers are known to be more unemployment-prone than are older workers; however, older workers migrate less readily in response to being unemployed. So, as young workers depart, observed levels of overall unemployment may improve, but those workers who have remained tend to be older, hence immobile. According to Mazek's study, then, a favorable short-term effect conceals an adverse long-term shift in labor force structure toward immobility.

Occupational selectivity has a similar effect. Extensive outmigration tends to leave behind blue-collar workers (especially laborers and operatives). Blue-collar workers, however, migrate less readily than white-collar workers when faced with unemployment. Laborers and operatives (occupations that experience the severest unemployment rates) are least responsive in this respect. Thus, the occupational distribution of those who remain is increasingly unemployment-prone.

Where occupational shifts are extreme, they may hinder the prospects for subsequent growth. White-collar jobs are expected to increase faster than the national average in future years; for operatives, employment will grow slower than average; and for laborers, not at all. In other words, precisely those occupations facing the bleakest employment future nationally tend to accumulate at the origins of outmigration.

The onset of these structural weaknesses is gradual, of course. Indeed, Mazek concludes that observed unemployment in the depressed areas he examined could not (as of 1960) be attributed to an unfavorable age or occupational composition. Over the long term, though, outmigration can be expected to have the compositional effects described above.

[g] Depressed areas examined by Mazek do not correspond to those in Lansing and Mueller's study. Mazek selected ten metropolitan areas that had the highest rates of average unemployment between 1954 and 1960: Buffalo, Utica-Rome, Charleston (West Virginia), Huntington, Providence, Detroit, Erie, Johnstown, Pittsburgh, and Wilkes-Barre. For the six-year period, unemployment rates for these areas averaged 9.0 percent.

Brennan's EDA-sponsored study corroborates many of these points, but his distinctive emphasis on the relationship between flows of capital and of labor warrants our attention here. "If the residual labor force in a region is not of adequate quality to be combined with the type of capital that might migrate into the region," Brennan notes, "then the expected future earnings on investment will not be raised by relatively low wage rates."[60] Hence, capital cannot be attracted to expand labor demand, reduce unemployment, or raise per capita labor income.

Brennan's study also addresses the equity issue explicitly. He found that migration moves highly productive workers from low-income and high-unemployment areas, and adds them to prosperous and low-unemployment areas:

> Capital and labor both move in the same direction. This means that regions of high returns to labor are also, with some exceptions, regions of high returns to capital in the short run. The net outflow of (the most productive) labor from regions of low income and high unemployment is not counteracted by an inflow of capital. . . . Capital moves instead to the regions in which the productive quality of the labor force is increasing. Therefore, capital migration enforces the regional disparities in labor earnings per capita caused by labor migration.[61]

Thus, as market forces operate to increase national efficiency, they work against regional equity. However, Brennan properly cautions that the aggregate data he used could easily conceal particular industries able to provide relatively high rates of return to capital investments in distressed areas. His point underscores the importance of identifying such "deviant" cases—potential vehicles through which local development might be initiated.

Summary and Conclusions

To recapitulate the salient themes in this section:

1. Nationally, migration promotes economic efficiency by rearranging workers so as to increase national output. In economically expanding localities, migration responds vigorously to the demand for labor and has a multiplicative effect on this growth. In declining localities, it reduces imbalance between labor supply and demand in the near term, although its effectiveness diminishes with prolonged heavy outflow.

2. Apart from efficiency, however, migratory adjustments exhibit imperfections of a longer-term cumulative nature. The potential for development is diminished in areas of persistent outmigration through selective losses of high-quality elements in the labor force. Where there is a labor surplus, these losses may cause jobs to filter downward to remaining residents, thereby improving their welfare. But the cost of this adjustment is a gradual compositional shift that may aggravate incipient local obsolescence by: (a) reducing productivity and, hence, attractiveness to new industry; and (b) removing the more readily mobile workers, thereby reducing the remaining population's capacity for further adjustment through outmigration.

3. By helping to shape local growth and decline, migration tends inherently to produce divergence in localities' performance. For this reason, it brings the goals of regional equity and national efficiency into conflict.

PRESENT AND POTENTIAL VALUE OF EDA'S RESEARCH

Research supported by EDA has deepened our understanding of the complex relationships among migration, regional economic decline, and personal disadvantage in distressed areas. In fact, the new findings urge amendment of certain concepts on which EDA's operational programs are based. The findings suggest, for example, that creating jobs in distressed areas is not the only way to aid their neediest inhabitants. An additional strategy might be to assist outmigration from distressed areas, so people can take advantage of the opportunities for personal betterment that are inherent in a freely mobile labor market.

The EDA programs were developed on the assumption that public aid to a distressed area—primarily in the form of infrastructure investment, but also as direct capital subsidies to attract new firms—would aid unemployed and underemployed people. The general logic has run: since the majority of unemployed people do not migrate away from a distressed area, jobs must be brought to them.

It is not easy to import jobs, however; besides, studies indicate that people who do migrate away from distressed areas generally benefit. Thus, the problems of economically distressed areas may be solvable in part outside their borders. These findings invite consideration of measures to facilitate and rationalize migration as a complement to existing policies aimed exclusively at area development.

Outmigrants from distressed areas can be shown to benefit economically from moving, but there is no satisfactory way to measure how much their departure benefits or harms the remaining residents. Unemployment may drop if the jobs vacated by outmigrants pass on to local workers who might otherwise be unemployed or underemployed. Evidence indicates that this does not always occur, however.[62] In some areas, vacated jobs tend to be filled by return migrants. Furthermore, extensive outmigration may have a negative multiplier effect (although there is no direct measure of this effect); and owing to age selectivity, it may create special problems associated with an increased ratio of elderly dependents to workers. Finally, the steady departure of younger and more highly qualified workers represents a loss of human capital that has probably been formed largely at local expense (most notably, through education).

In short, while the benefits can be estimated, the costs of outmigration are less easily defined, and it is difficult to relate them to each other, based on what is now known. Part of the difficulty derives from the way the government compiles social and economic statistics. Since statistics are for the most part organized by areas rather than by groups of people, the experience of places can be observed, but not the experience of people. The two can be quite different. For instance, if those who leave are among the most employable and better educated (as they almost always are) and jobs pass to other less-qualified workers who earn less, then area indicators (such as per capita income) can drop, even though both those who left and those who remained are actually better off.

A special paradox arises in programs of human resource development, which are viewed as an investment in the local community by the local community. In fact, these education and training programs often transform unskilled natives into skilled migrants. To the graduate trainee, the community's investment in him is a form of portable capital that he may best exploit elsewhere. Thus, while human resource development is often advocated as an instrument for local area develop-

ment, in practice it may accelerate outmigration, raising a contradiction between programs of human resource development and programs of area development.

This overview provides a context for synthesizing the results of EDA research on migration, labor force, and human resources. The research's present and potential value may be judged by asking what useful knowledge has been added, what important areas of ignorance have been revealed, and whether these areas are such that further research holds promise of furnishing answers.

What Has Been Learned

About Migrants. From the individual's standpoint, the following key points can be noted:

1. Migration tends to be both economically rewarding and personally satisfying. Judged by objective measures, migrants often improve their earnings and occupational status, particularly where the move is rural-to-urban. And their own self-evaluations of moving suggest that migrants are happier, and believe they are better off, for having moved. Disadvantaged persons—blacks especially—benefit remarkably when they migrate, inviting the conclusion that moving offers people a major escape route from disadvantaged circumstances.

2. There is a sizable reservoir of would-be migrants—persons who say they want to move but fail to realize their preferences or intentions. For every person who actually migrates, nearly two persons expect to migrate, and four persons say they would like to migrate. Many people seem unable to bridge the gap between inclination and action.

3. People move, or fail to move, for multiple and complex reasons. Often their choices are marred by considerable ignorance of their alternatives. Decisions about moving tend to be briefly deliberated and constrained by limited information acquired largely through friends and relatives. Reliance on family and friends in deciding where to move restricts destination choices to the places where these persons have already moved. As a result, migrants often end their journeys by finding old friends, not new economic opportunities.

4. Unemployed workers are somewhat more likely to migrate than employed workers. However, the vast majority of the unemployed do *not* move, even in the face of prolonged and severe hardship—partly because they believe economic conditions are no better anywhere else.

Those who migrate, then, seem to benefit by moving even though they often base their moves on poor information. Other would-be migrants, though, appear to forgo the same chance to achieve more affluent lives; many of them are not even aware that they have such a chance. The results of experimental relocation assistance programs corroborate this view by demonstrating that unemployed persons with widely varying backgrounds and skill levels can be helped to find jobs and increase their earnings.

About Sending and Receiving Areas. From the perspective of the localities that migrants enter and leave, several other important points can be noted:

5. Migration acts as an adjustive mechanism, transferring labor from areas where jobs are scarce or wages low to areas where workers are scarce or wages high. Evidence conflicts, however, on whether this adjustment works symmetrically: al-

though migrants go to the economically "correct" destinations, they may not always leave from the "correct" origins.

6. In adjusting the labor market toward efficiency, migration also enters into the basic anatomy of local growth or decline. In growing areas, additions of population through migration tend to stimulate still further employment growth, thereby drawing still more migrants to fill new jobs. In declining areas, a reverse multiplier may operate.

7. The most productive members of the labor force are the ones who move away from areas with few worthwhile employment opportunities, leaving behind a labor pool of diminished productive potential. What begins as an economic adjustment can become over time a gradual leaching away of local human capital. Inmigration often accentuates this loss of human capital by replacing the more productive outmigrants with less productive inmigrants. These effects combine to make such localities increasingly unattractive for industrial investments.

Promising Directions for Further Research

These findings have broadened our understanding of migration processes and their consequences. They have raised questions as well:

1. At this point, there is no assurance that moves cultivated by public policy would yield outcomes as beneficial as those associated with existing "free market" moves. We have seen that migration complements those characteristics—e.g., higher educational attainment and occupational status—that favor material improvement in general. We do not know to what extent the benefits of migration arise from the act of moving rather than from the distinctive personal qualities of people who tend to migrate. These circumstances and conditions that enhance the dividends of migration as an investment in human capital would be a useful object of research.

2. Since many who *do* migrate benefit, others who *could* migrate might also benefit. What barriers prevent would-be migrants from transforming their inclination to move into action? It may be possible to develop policies that could eliminate these barriers.

3. As noted above, migrants go to the economically "correct" destinations, but they may not always leave from the "correct" origins. The nature of the link between migration and origin "push" is a question of central importance to policy design, but the evidence is conflicting. With adequate data, it is possible to determine exactly how outmigration is related to depressed conditions at origin.

4. It is not clear that the primary beneficiaries of local development are usually local residents. Prolonged outmigration from labor surplus areas is known to leave behind a labor pool of diminished productive potential. But little is known about its overall net effect, since it also reduces competition for scarce employment. Localities from which outmigration has been extensive are subject to significant flows of return migrants who may largely cancel the increased ratio of jobs to workers. Jobs vacated by outmigrants may pass on to local workers, improving their welfare, but it may be that their jobs are usually filled by ex-residents who, having gained industrial skills and experience elsewhere, return home and are hired in preference to the resident (and comparatively inferior) labor force. The evidence on job filtering versus return migration being only sketchy, research is needed to identify circumstances conducive to one or the other.

5. Among the most important issues calling for analysis are the likely effects on migration of such major social programs as income maintenance, manpower development, and public employment. Policies that incorporate estimates of these effects can help direct outcomes toward conscious social ends. As an example, two contrasting effects of an income maintenance program carry vastly different policy implications. On the one hand, such a program might enable many would-be migrants to leave depressed areas with minimal economic risk, for they would be assured an income wherever they moved. On the other hand, it might stall many persons who would otherwise leave, while subsidizing the return of former outmigrants, who could now combine important amenities (for example, friends and relatives) with satisfactory economic security. Clearly, these diverse effects would have drastically different consequences on the community in question, but there is currently little basis for guessing which personal choice would predominate.[63]

Conclusion

Policies are most effective where they exploit ongoing processes of change, channeling momentum rather than attempting to generate it. The evolution of the national economy carries with it a logic of job distribution that will differ at times from the actual distribution of workers. In areas where population loss is inevitable, the objectives of public policy should be twofold: (1) to strengthen the migratory response of those residents inclined to depart, (2) to address the needs of the residents who will remain.

But the directions suggested by research conflict with strong political pressures for reducing local outmigration. Understandably, legislators rarely welcome the depopulation of their constituencies; inevitably, they seek programs of assistance to deal with local problems. The question posed by the research is whether such resources could be used more effectively and constructively to ease the transitional costs incurred in localities from which migrants inexorably depart. To be sure, some areas can benefit most from measures that stimulate new jobs. All areas undergoing extensive population loss, however, can benefit from social policies to assist the remaining residents, many of whom are unemployable because of their advanced age or lack of education and skills. Policies that consolidate the delivery of health, education, and other social services and upgrade human resources can make decline more orderly and life in declining areas more pleasant in human terms.

In this way, political considerations need not conflict with the observed fact that persons who migrate away from distressed areas are generally better off for having done so, and that for a wider group of would-be movers, migration could open up paths of occupational mobility that do not exist in their declining home communities. Thus, an important complement to traditional area-oriented policies to stimulate development or deliver services would be policies designed to strengthen the effectiveness of migration itself. A national program of assisted migration for unemployed and low-income workers could open up broader avenues of economic and social betterment for persons willing, but as yet unable, to move.

Experience has shown that relocation assistance can help unemployed persons with widely varying backgrounds and skill levels to find jobs and increase their earnings. By underwriting the risks that prevent workers from moving, relocation

assistance can help achieve a more efficient allocation of the labor force. At the same time, it can bring about a situation in which an individual's material well-being and social status rest on personal achievement and not on a legacy of disadvantage.

NOTES

1. Representative examples are: Maurice D. Van Arsdol, Jr., et al., "Retrospective and Subsequent Metropolitan Residential Mobility," *Demography,* Vol. 5, 1968, pp. 249-267; John B. Lansing and Eva Mueller, *The Geographic Mobility of Labor,* Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1967; Karl Taeuber, et al., *Migration in the United States: An Analysis of Residence Histories,* Public Health Monograph No. 77, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., 1968; and numerous studies based on the Survey of Economic Opportunity (sponsored by Office of Economic Opportunity) and the Social Security Continuous Work History Sample (made available by the Social Security Administration).

2. This section draws heavily on material prepared by the author for the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future. See Peter A. Morrison, *Population Movements and the Shape of Urban Growth: Implications for Public Policy,* The Rand Corporation, R-1072-CPG, 1972.

3. Ira S. Lowry, *Migration and Metropolitan Growth: Two Analytical Models,* Chandler, San Francisco, 1966, p. 94.

4. Gary S. Becker, *Human Capital,* National Bureau of Economic Research, New York, 1964; Larry A. Sjaastad, "The Costs and Returns of Human Migration," *Journal of Political Economy,* Vol. 70, October 1962, pp. 80-93.

5. Donald J. Bogue, *Principles of Demography,* John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1969, p. 771; see also Fred E. Katz, "Occupational Contact Networks," *Social Forces,* Vol. 37, October 1958, pp. 52-58.

6. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports,* Series P-20, No. 210, January 15, 1971.

7. Jack Ladinsky, "Occupational Determinants of Geographic Mobility Among Professional Workers," *American Sociological Review,* Vol. 32, 1967, pp. 253-264; James Tarver, "Occupational Migration Differentials," *Social Forces,* Vol. 43, December 1964, pp. 231-241.

8. Ladinsky.

9. Arlene S. Holen, "Effects of Professional Licensing Arrangements on Interstate Labor Mobility and Resource Allocation," *Journal of Political Economy,* October 1965, pp. 492-498.

10. U.S. Bureau of the Census.

11. Lansing and Mueller.

12. Ibid., p. 39.

13. Ibid., p. 62.

14. Ibid., p. 66.

15. Ibid., pp. 68-72; Warren F. Mazek, "The Efficacy of Labor Migration with Special Emphasis on Depressed Areas," Working Paper CWR 2, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, June 1966, pp. 122-124.

16. Lansing and Mueller, Table 107.

17. These studies are reviewed in Charles K. Fairchild, *Worker Relocation: A Review of U.S. Department of Labor Mobility Demonstration Projects,* Final Report of a Study for the Manpower Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, by E. F. Shelley and Company, Inc., April 1970; and in Martin Schnitzer, *Regional Unemployment and the Relocation of Workers,* Praeger, New York, 1970.

18. Lansing and Mueller, pp. 135-144.

19. Ibid., pp. 151-174.

20. See Van Arsdol, Jr., et al.

21. Lansing and Mueller, p. 210.

22. See, for example, Michael J. Brennan, *Regional Labor and Capital Migration,* Final Report, Contract No. C-325-65, May 1967 (ARA funded), p. 73; Richard F. Muth, "Migration: Chicken or Egg?" *Southern Economic Journal,* Vol. 37, January 1971, pp. 295-306; and Lowry, pp. 30-31.

23. Everett S. Lee, "Migration in Relation to Education, Intellect, and Social Structure," *Population Index,* Vol. 36, October-December 1970, p. 107.

24. This discussion is drawn in part from Otis Dudley Duncan, et al., *Socioeconomic Background and Achievement,* Seminar Press, New York, 1972, pp. 224-225.

25. Recent findings about rural-urban migration are reviewed in Irving N. Fisher, "The Implications of Rural-Urban Migration for Regional Development and Growth Center Policies: Summary," The Rand Corporation, unpublished paper, 1971; Patricia Koshel, *Migration and the Poor,* Working Paper No. 7, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C., July 1972; Daniel O. Price, *Rural-Urban Migration and Poverty: A Synthesis of Research Findings with a Look at the Literature,* U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C., July 1971; Gladys K. Bowles, "A Profile of the Incidence of Poverty Among Rural-Urban Migrants and Comparative Populations," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, Washington, D.C., 1970; and Peter A. Morrison, *The Impact and Significance of Rural-Urban Migration in the United States,* The Rand Corporation, P-4752, March 1972.

26. Peter M. Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan, *The American Occupational Structure,* John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1967, p. 273.

27. Lansing and Mueller.

28. Samuel Bowles, *Migration as Investment: Empirical Tests of the Human Investment Approach to Geographical Mobility,* Discussion Paper No. 51, Harvard Program on Regional and Urban Economics, Harvard University, July 1969; William C. Apgar, Jr., *Migration as Investment: Some Further Considerations,* Discussion Paper No. 64, Harvard Program on Regional and Urban Economics, Harvard University, May 1970.

29. Lansing and Mueller, p. 83.

30. John B. Lansing and James N. Morgan, "The Effect of Geographical Mobility on Income," *Journal of Human Resources,* Vol. 2, Fall 1967, p. 460.

31. Richard F. Wertheimer II, *The Monetary Rewards of Migration Within the U.S.*, The Urban Institute, Washington, D.C., 1970.

32. See Fisher.

33. This description of the human capital approach is drawn from, and developed more fully in, Julie DaVanzo, *An Analytical Framework for Studying the Potential Effects of an Income Maintenance Program on U.S. Interregional Migration,* The Rand Corporation, R-1081-EDA, December 1972.

34. Samuel Bowles, pp. 1-2.

35. Apgar.

36. Ibid., pp. 17-29.

37. Lansing and Mueller, Table 37.

38. Ibid., Table 42.

39. Ibid., Table 110. See also Edward Miller, "Return and Nonreturn In-migration," *Growth and Change,* Vol. 4, No. 3, January 1973, pp. 3-9.

40. Price, pp. 2-3.

41. Daniel O. Price, *A Study of Economic Consequences of Rural to Urban Migration,* Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C., 1969.

42. Benjamin Chinitz, "The Regional Problem in the U.S.A.," paper prepared for the International Economic Association Conference on Backward Areas in Advanced Countries, August-September 1967, p. 4ff.

43. Simon Kuznets, "Introduction: Population Redistribution, Migration, and Economic Growth," in Hope T. Eldridge and Dorothy Swaine Thomas (eds.), *Population Redistribution and Economic Growth, United States, 1870-1950:* Vol. III, *Demographic Analyses and Interrelations,* American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1964, p. xxiii.

44. William Alonso, "The Policy Implications of Intermetropolitan Migration Flows," *Proceedings of the Regional Economic Development Research Conference,* U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA, April 19, 1972, pp. 6-7.

45. Lowry.

46. William Alonso, *The System of Intermetropolitan Population Flows,* Working Paper No. 155, Institute of Urban and Regional Development, University of California, Berkeley, Calif., August 1971.

47. Lansing and Mueller, Table 106.

48. See Mazek, Chap. III, and Lee Donne Olvey, "Regional Growth and Interregional Migration—Their Pattern of Interaction," Ph.D. thesis, Department of Economics, Harvard University, 1970, p. 85. Both use variants of "prospective unemployment" as originally formulated by Cicely Blanco, "Prospective Unemployment and Interstate Population Movements," *Review of Economics and Statistics,* Vol. 46, No. 2, May 1964, pp. 221-222.

49. Olvey, p. 107.

50. Alonso, "Policy Implications," pp. 10-11.

51. Peter A. Morrison, "Chronic Movers and the Future Redistribution of Population," *Demography,* Vol. 8, No. 2, May 1971, pp. 171-184.

52. See Vernon Renshaw, "The Role of Migration in Labor Market Adjustment," Ph.D. thesis, Department of Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1970.

53. Muth, p. 1.

54. See Muth; Olvey; and Michael J. Greenwood, "A Simultaneous Equations Model of Urban Growth and Migration," n.d. (mimeograph).

55. Muth, p. 2.

56. Lansing and Mueller, pp. 318-319.

57. Olvey, pp. 127-129.

58. Lansing and Mueller, p. 292.

59. Ibid., p. 319.

60. Brennan, p. 70.

61. Ibid., pp. 73-74.

62. See Irwin Gray, "Employment Effect of a New Industry in a Rural Area," *Monthly Labor Review,* Vol. 92, No. 6, June 1969, pp. 26-30, and Niles M. Hansen, *Rural Poverty and the Urban Crisis: A Strategy for Regional Development,* Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind., 1970, pp. 262-263.

63. A framework for analyzing the effect of an income maintenance program on migration has been developed in DaVanzo's EDA-sponsored study.

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