TOWARDS A NEW SOUTH-SOUTH MODEL: THE ROLE OF STATE POLICIES AND RELATIVE DEVELOPMENT LEVELS IN CHINESE MIGRATION TO ZAMBIA

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OVERVIEW

• Hypothesis: Chinese migration to Zambia typifies a different nature of population flow from that addressed in the majority of migration theory; popular models merit expansion to include not only the archetype

• Migration theory: largely South-North.
  • Relative development levels
  • State policies (entry, welfare)
  • Dual labor markets; migration systems

• Data and methodology

• Immigration to Zambia

• Chinese migration to Zambia

• Conclusions and theoretical implications
MIGRATION THEORY: OVERVIEW

- Evolution of migration theory: DEMIG

- Dual labor markets (Piore)
  - Employment factors drive migration; always demand for cheap immigrant labor at the “secondary” end of the labor market
  - Narrow yet can be expanded (Czaika – societal fractionalization)

- Migration systems
  - Origin and destination contexts and their relationships
  - Criticized as too broad
MIGRATION THEORY: GEOGRAPHY

• Despite theoretical advances, geographical focus has not changed
• Migration archetype: low-skilled migration to high-income countries
• Relative development levels
  • U.S. GNI 11x higher than average of top 10 migrant-sending countries
  • Often little state-provided welfare in origin; more in receiving
• State policies
  • Tending restrictionist (as regards low-skill migration)
  • At least rhetorical focus on border protection; stringent admission laws; combating “welfare migration”
SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION

- Difficult to define
- UN 2013: 36% of global migrants (82.5 million) born and still reside in the global South
- Greater than any other migration pattern
- Relative development levels
  - Less striking gap than in South-North
- State policies
  - Often more relaxed; if not in theory, in practice due to low enforcement capacity
  - 80% undocumented – contiguous borders and limited enforcement (Ratha and Shaw 2007)
DATA AND METHODOLOGY (1)
DATA AND METHODOLOGY (2)

- Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX)
  - Designed by Migration Policy Group, 31 European countries
  - 148 policy indicators in 7 policy areas
    - Labor market mobility
    - Family reunion for third-country nationals
    - Education
    - Political participation
    - Long-term residence
    - Access to nationality
    - Anti-discrimination
  - In-person interviews with relevant government ministries
  - Coding: 0 vs. n/a
DATA AND METHODOLOGY (3)

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DATA AND METHODOLOGY (4)

- Weaknesses
  - Family members enter on same permit as permit-holder
    - No family reunion designation
    - One permit ≠ one person
  - No way to determine length of stay
    - Extremely weak exit records
    - Permits vs. short-term visas indicate usually at least 6 month duration, but unable to determine exactly
  - Permit renewals counted as new permits
ZAMBIAN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM: OVERVIEW

• Very little specified policy

• Tenets:
  • An immigrant to Zambia must have a contribution to make in form of skills, profession, or capital
  • An immigrant should not deprive a Zambian of employment
  • An immigrant should not be a charge on the state
  • An immigrant intending to settle in Zambia must be in possession of a permit

• Investment/skill-seeking

• Does not intend to supply welfare
ZAMBIA IMMIGRATION SYSTEM: ACCESS

- Not a traditional migration destination; 141/167 HDI
- Only 5.8% of applicants denied admission over past 4 years
- Low total volume – approx. 17,000 work permit applications
- Diverse

![Graph: Approved Permits by Nationality](image)
# Zambian Immigration System: Relative Development Levels

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<th>Country</th>
<th>GNI per capita</th>
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<td>India</td>
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<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>Zambia</td>
<td>1,480</td>
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Source: World Development Indicators
Zambian Immigration System: Length of Stay

- Only qualitative due to weak exit records
- USA, UK: fixed-term work assignments, usually leave after 2 years
- South Africa, Zimbabwe, India: longer-term stays
- China: mixed
- Central, East Africa: mostly irregular, transit to South Africa
ZAMBIAN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM: WELFARE

- Explicit statement in immigration law
- Lack capacity to provide welfare to own citizens
- Relative development levels: most incoming migrants do not require government-provided social services
- MIPEX: designed for Europe
  - Low score would indicate more stringent integration policies
  - Zambia: 29.55 out of 100; 37th of 38 if included
  - Mainly attributable to education and political participation
  - Immigration-specific policies on par with mid-level European countries
  - Does not indicate anti-immigrant sentiment; rather, different policy priorities and lack of resources
CHINESE MIGRATION TO ZAMBIA (1)

- Zimbabwean, South African, British migrants virtually indistinguishable from local population – colonial ties, geography
- Long history of Indian migration
- Chinese – newer flow: more conspicuous, less assimilated
- China in Zambia
  - First aid project, Special Economic Zone
  - FDI estimated over $2 billion to date
    - Infrastructure – roads, power, water & sewerage
    - Mining
    - Construction
    - Manufacturing
  - Castles: “migrations are not an isolated phenomenon: movements of commodities and capital almost always give rise to movements of people.”
CHINESE MIGRATION TO ZAMBIA (2)

- Approximately one third of all approved employment permits; under 1% rejected in 2012
- Employment – main permit type
CHINESE MIGRATION TO ZAMBIA (3)

- **Employers**
  - All Chinese-owned companies
  - 55%: national or regional state-owned enterprises
  - 20%: Zambian government ministry

- **Occupations (2012 dataset)**
  - Managers: 25% of Chinese, 34% of total
  - Also vague, possibly unskilled positions: multiple chefs for same company, “constructor”, “skilled worker” (20% of total)
    - Contrary to Zambian immigration policy
    - Lends credence to the stereotype that Chinese migrants take jobs away from native Zambians

- **China sending policy: tracks with global trends**
  - Entry/exit reform, WTO accession, FOCAC 2008
CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

• Migration to Zambia does not fit archetypal model
  • Relative development levels: migrants offer managerial and sectoral expertise
  • Government policies: investment-seeking, not welfare state

• Applications of current theory:
  • Dual labor market theory in reverse
    • Immigrants fill “first tier,” natives fill “second tier”
    • Need for empirical evaluation of labor market structure
  • Migration systems theory
    • International labor markets (Massey et al)
    • Colonialism, political and economic ties
    • Broad can be good

• No need for “separate but equal”; rather, broaden to encompass all types of population flows
Thank you!