

Gender in Economic Research on International Migration and Its Impacts: A Critical Review

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The World Bank Group
Gender and Development
Washington DC, August 29, 2006



The Role of Women in International Migration is Big

- More than 175 million people live outside their country of birth
- Since the 1960s, the number of females has been nearly as great as the number of males
- Today close to one half of all international migrants are females



Women are Different (or Is it Men?)

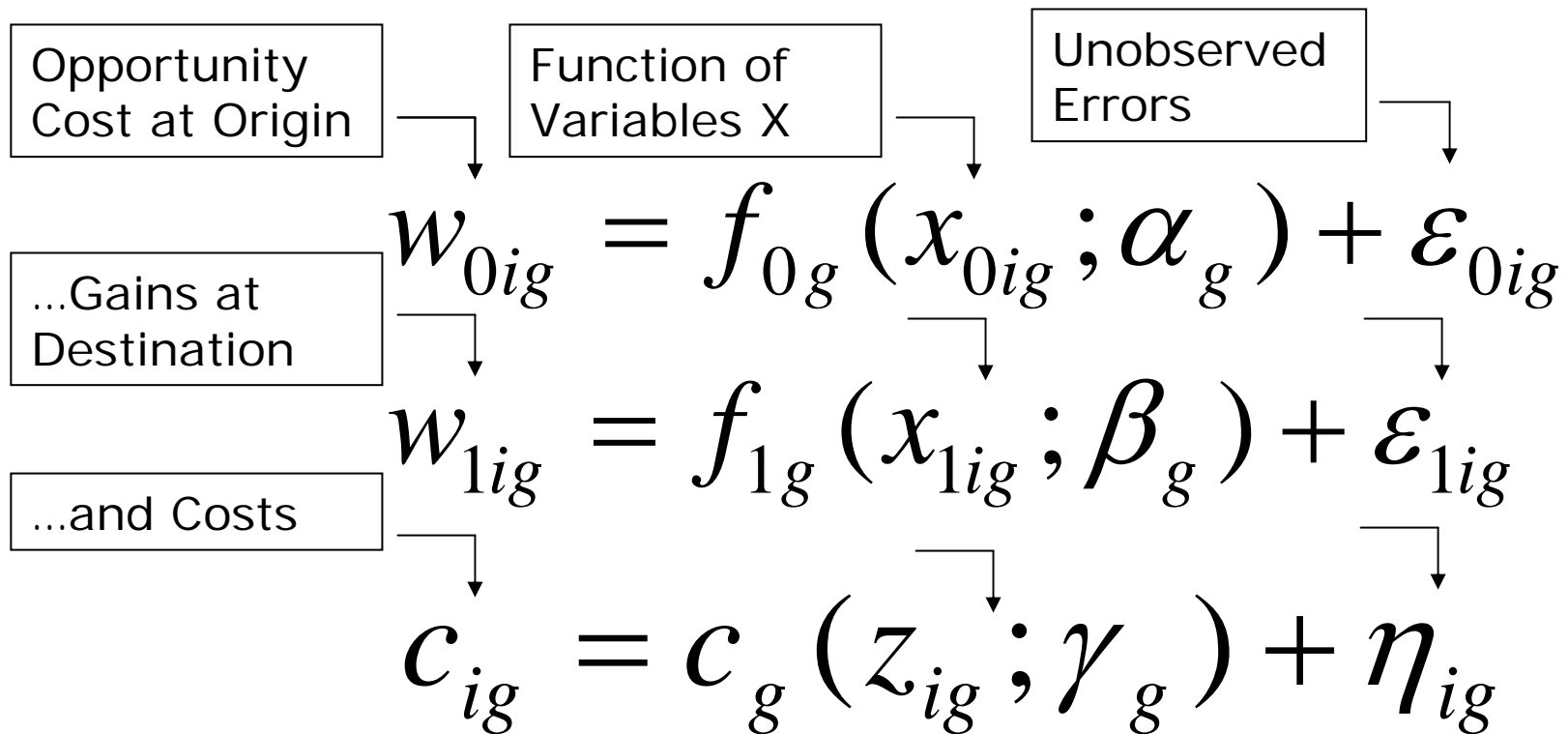
- 2000 U.S. Decennial Census found:
 - More male than female immigrants from El Salvador
 - More female than male immigrants from the Dominican Republic
 - India-to-U.S. migration is male dominated
 - Immigration from China and South Korea is dominated by females.



Why Are Women Different?

- “Pull”: Gender segmentation of the immigrant labor market in receiving countries
- “Push”: Opportunity costs at the origin
- Networks and Experience
- Policies
 - Gender composition of permanent and temporary immigrant visas
 - Impacts of Enforcement
- Differences in opportunities for women in the “North” and “South”

Costs and Benefits of International Migration May Be Shaped by Gender





The Migration “Opp Cost” Function

$$w_{0ig} = f_{0g}(x_{0ig}; \alpha_g) + \varepsilon_{0ig}$$

- Wages at origin (individual models)
- Marginal value products in home production and “reproduction” activities (household models)
- ...tempered by other variables (e.g., risk, cultural).
- Different for men and women (*x*'s *and* α 's differ)



The Migration “Benefit” Function

$$w_{1ig} = f_{1g}(x_{1ig}; \beta_g) + \varepsilon_{1ig}$$

- Wages (individual models)
- Remittances (household models)
- ...tempered by other effects (e.g., risk, loosening of constraints on sending households in NELM models)
- Variables shape differently for men and women (*x*'s *and* β 's differ)



Migration Costs

$$c_{ig} = c_g(z_{ig}; \gamma_g) + \eta_{ig}$$

- Financial, psychological, cultural costs
- Networks and other variables shape these differently for men than women (*z's and γ 's* differ)
- ...tempered by other variables (e.g., policies, liquidity constraints, risk).

For the Household, Opportunity Costs and Benefits Depend on Four Things

1. Lost-Labor Effects of Emigration



2. Remittances



3. Impacts of Remittances (and Migration) on Production, Income, and Demands

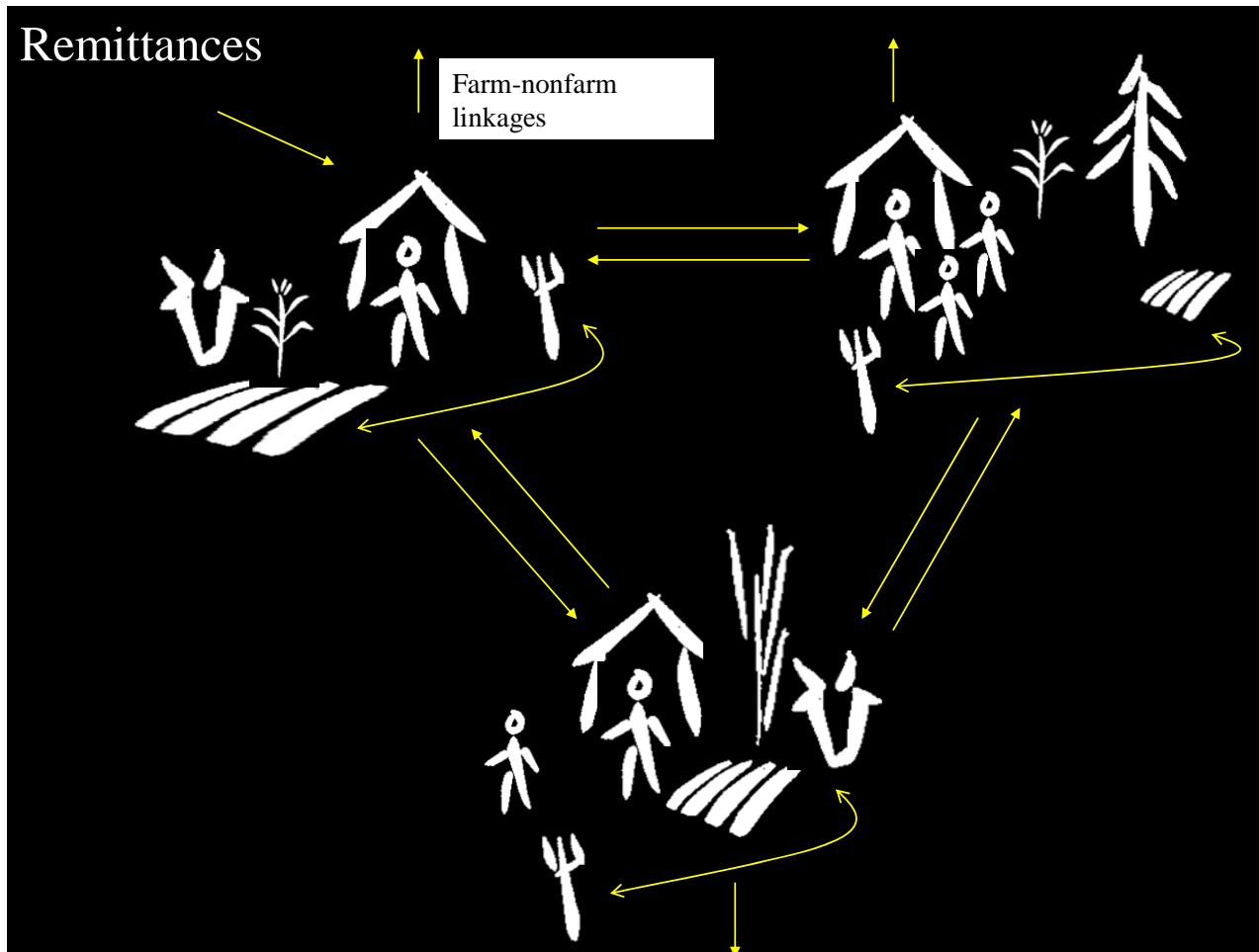


...Including Leisure

“Increased demand for leisure” effect



4. Linkages





All May Depend on Gender Differences

- Of individuals
- ...and their connections to larger social groups (esp. households, but also communities at origin and destination)



Gender Research Lacuna

- Nascent research on gender and remittances (and glimpses from past)
- Almost no economic research on
 - gender-selectivity of migration (this afternoon's talk)
 - gender-specific impacts on migrant-sending households
- Nothing on linkages



Gender and Remittances

- One study found structural differences in remittance behavior of men and women
- Female migrants sent home significantly more remittances than male migrants
- Remittances from female but not male migrants responded positively to the number of lost working days by parents
- Men remitted more to invest while women did so to insure their family and assist siblings



Other Research Reaffirms Gender Differences

- Women (not men) remit more when people are sick at home^{1,5}
- Daughters (not sons) remit more when there are grandchildren at home¹
- Conflicts over who remits more^{1,2,5}
- Sons remit more to households with more assets^{3,4,5}

¹ Pfeiffer and Taylor (2006); ² Ribas (2000), Semyonov and Gorodzeisky (2005); ³ Lucas and Stark (1985); ⁴ Hoddinott (1994); ⁵ De la Briere, et al.



Challenges to Studying Gender, Opportunity Costs, and Impacts

- Women often not in workforce prior to migration
 - => no observed wages, sample selection problems
- Many benefits produced by women in households have unobserved “shadow value”
 - => no market values
- Very little effort to address these problems to date
 - In development economics
 - Nothing in economics of migration literature



First Steps...

- We tried to estimate gender-specific effects of migration on sending-households' participation in crop and noncrop activities, remittances, and some expenditures
- Data from 2003 Mexico National Rural Household Survey (ENHRUM)
- Used historical migration rates (state and household) to instrument for current migration

Migrant Gender Affects Household Participation in Cash Crop Production

| <i>Gender of Migrants</i> | (1) <i>2 Stage Probit</i> | (2) <i>IV Probit</i> | (3) <i>IV Linear probability</i> | (4) <i>3SLS Linear Probability</i> |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Female migration | 0.466 (2.34)** | 0.005 (0.01) | -0.317 (2.03)** | -0.066 (0.24) |
| Male migration | -0.515 (1.98)** | -0.419 (2.10)** | -0.388 (2.71)*** | -0.437 (2.63)*** |

Controls for other variables not shown here (see paper)



...Non-Agricultural Production

| <i>Gender of Migrants</i> | <i>(1) 2 Stage Probit</i> | <i>(2) IV Probit</i> | <i>(3) IV Linear probability</i> | <i>(4) 3SLS Linear Probability</i> |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Female migration | -0.057 (0.25) | -0.417 (0.92) | -0.425 (1.44) | -0.293 (1.07) |
| Male migration | -0.398 (1.36) | -0.467 (1.98)** | -0.357 (2.16)** | -0.350 (2.12)** |

Controls for other variables not shown here (see paper)



...Wage Work

| <i>Gender of Migrants</i> | <i>(1) 2 Stage Probit</i> | <i>(2) IV Probit</i> | <i>(3) IV Linear probability</i> | <i>(4) 3SLS Linear Probability</i> |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Female migration | -0.087 (0.35) | -0.010 (0.03) | -0.167 (0.47) | -0.186 (0.67) |
| Male migration | -0.674 (2.41)** | -0.674 (3.36)*** | -0.730 (4.11)*** | -0.667 (3.79)*** |

Controls for other variables not shown here (see paper)

...and Spending on Education and Health

| <i>Gender of Migrants</i> | (1) <i>Education Spending</i> (2 Step Tobit) | (2) <i>Education Spending</i> (3SLS) | (3) <i>Health Spending</i> (2 Step Tobit) | (4) <i>Health Spending</i> (3SLS) |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Female migration | -8,428.056 (2.12)** | -3,181.552 (1.63) | 6,126.766 (1.97)** | 3,381.479 (1.73)* |
| Male migration | -1,252.618 (0.39) | 192.225 (0.22) | -1,755.249 (0.65) | -1,072.243 (1.25) |

Controls for total expenditures and other variables not shown here (see paper)



Gender and Migration Costs

- No econometric research on differences in migration costs between men and women
- Emerging indirect evidence that migration networks and policies have gender-specific effects (this afternoon)



Human Capital

- Potentially affects benefits, opportunity costs, and migration costs
- New evidence that these are different for men and women (this afternoon)

Some Economic Research Challenges

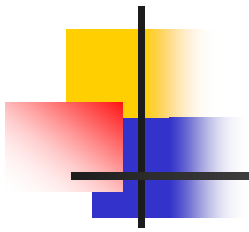


- Theory: Bring gender focus into household, migration, GE models (basis for everything)
- Data: Get gender-specific data on time use, migration, production, income, etc., from household surveys
- Econometrics: Highlight identification issues
 - Endogeneity of migration (“What’s the experiment?”)
 - Unobserved variables
 - => really need longitudinal data (or at least good *gender-specific* instruments for migration)
 - No gender impact studies with fixed effects

Where Economics Research Has Begun to Focus



- Differences in remittance behavior between men and women
- Differences in effects of human capital and household variables on migration probabilities
- A key variable: family migration networks (effects different for men and women)
- Different impacts of policy shocks (immigration, trade reforms) on male and female international migration
- Just starting to study gender impacts of migration in sending areas



“Migration Is a Profoundly Gendered Process and the conventional explanations of men’s migration in many cases do not apply to women.”

-Kanaiaupuni (2000)



A Gender Dummy Is Not Enough!

- Studies that do not distinguish between males and females yield findings that are biased for both genders
- ...They also may give a distorted picture of determinants and impacts and an unreliable basis for policy