

Governance Concerns and Migration Intentions: A Study of Potential Filipino Migrants

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I. Introduction

The past few decades have witnessed a dramatic increase in population movements and attendant resource flows across borders. The most recent estimate indicates that about 215.8 million people, 3.2% of the world's population, live outside their country of birth (World Bank 2011). Direct money transfers from migrants, known as remittances, reached \$440 billion worldwide in 2010, of which \$325 billion went to developing countries (World Bank 2011). In some high emigration countries, remittance inflows exceed foreign direct investment and foreign aid, and in more pronounced examples, they account for more than 10 % of the country's annual GDP (Dilip Ratha and Silwal 2009).

In considering the causes of international migration, the existing literature is predominantly focused on economic factors. Scholars studying international migration generally agree that the most significant predictors of bilateral migration flows are the income gap between destination and origin countries, migrant networks, and the

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immigration regime of the destination country (Hatton and Williamson 2005, Mayda 2010, Ortega and Peri 2009). On an individual level, these structural factors translate into how much income individuals expect to gain from migration after taking into account the cost of migration, which can be substantially lowered by the assistance of previous migrants and more open immigration policies at the destination.

However, largely ignored in extant research on labor migration are noneconomic factors behind migration intentions. To be sure, noneconomic causes of migration have been extensively discussed with respect to population movements driven by political or religious persecutions (Davenport, Moore and Poe 2003, Moore and Shellman 2004). Yet even for economic migrants who constitute the vast majority of international migrants, grievances or dissatisfaction with how effectively a government serves its citizens may be a contributing factor in their migration decisions.¹⁾ In this study, I argue that citizens' dissatisfaction with the government, especially governance concerns, may be a driver, if residual but still important, of migration independent of economic factors. This hypothesis is based on an empirical observation that countries that send large numbers of their citizens abroad for employment frequently suffer incompetent and corrupt governments. Poor governance may be related to economic underdevelopment, but its relationship with migration needs to be investigated, not assumed away. Clearly, the lament of poor governance is widespread in local migration discourses in many large-scale sending countries (Dewan 2010, Inquirer 2010).

In this article, I investigate whether concerns about the quality of

1) Refugees constitute about 7% of global migrant population (United Nations 2006).

government institutions may lead citizens to consider the exit option using survey data from the Philippines. In doing so, I specifically inquire into (1) whether concerns over poor governance are higher among citizens with migration intentions, and (2) whether such concerns, if any, undermine support for democracy. It should be also clear that the scope condition for this study is confined to democratic origin countries and my analysis is limited to government-related grievances that may explain variation in migration intentions. As such, concerns of low-performing democracies are intrinsically interwoven with the challenge to the legitimacy of democracies in these countries.

The Philippines is a good research country for examining the effects of governance concerns on migration intentions because, despite many shortfalls, it is a *democratic* migrant-sending country. Considering the frequent theoretical and empirical conflation of freedom and governance in the literature, the challenge is to find a case that offers analytic leverage on this distinction. If an origin country is a poorly-governed dictatorship, for instance, like Yemen, it is analytically difficult to tease apart popular frustration with the lack of fundamental freedoms from frustration with government incompetence and corruption. The fact that while democratic institutions in the Philippines permit regular elections and the exercise of political freedom, they have failed to create a competent government allows us to test the hypothesis of governance-migration linkage with confidence (Hutchcroft and Rocamora 2003).²⁾

This article makes two contributions to the literature on international

2) It should be noted that political freedom in the Philippines is frequently threatened in a form of violence against journalists (Conde 2009, Park 2009).

migration. First, I place greater emphasis than previous works on the importance of individual-level characteristics in international labor migration. This change of perspective is important because it has significant implications for migration *outcomes*. Understanding personal characteristics of migrants is critical to predicting migration's political and social consequences. How migration affects the origin society, through the absence of migrants or the resulting remittance inflows, hinge on the initial characteristics of migrants. For instance, if those who want to migrate are principled supporters of democracy to a greater extent than the rest of the public, their departure would reduce the size of committed democrats among the remaining population. In such a case, national support for democracy may fall with serious political consequences. In contrast, if potential migrants are citizens more concerned about effective government, their absence would mean the loss of constituency for governance reform. Therefore, answering the questions about who migrants are and why they leave provides valuable insights into our efforts to understand the political side of migration outcomes.

Second, by bringing new evidence from Southeast Asia to a field largely informed by Latin American migration, I expand the scope of contemporary scholarship on international migration. Existing migration studies are heavily focused on population movements into the U.S. and Europe where migration tends to lead to permanent settlement. On the contrary, due to geographic locations, Southeast Asia is more likely to have temporary, contract-based migration (Choi 2010). For instance, a clear conceptual distinction exists in the Philippines, the research country of this study, between temporary overseas employment

and permanent migration, which reflects the cross-region variation in migration patterns. This creates different dynamics to the politics of migration, which has been less appreciated in the literature. As such, Southeast has great potential to reshape theoretical debates and empirical investigation on international migration.

To preview the results, I find that citizens concerned about the quality of institutions are more likely to consider overseas employment. However, concerns about governance does not undercut the legitimacy of democracy among potential migrants in the Philippines, suggesting that the relationship between governance grievances and migration intentions appears to be more subtle and nuanced than commonly thought. This quantitative evidence is corroborated with and complemented by interviews with Filipino migration experts along with locally collected secondary resources during fieldwork in the Philippines in 2008 and 2009.

This paper proceeds as follows. I begin by briefly reviewing the existing literature on the determinants of international migration and present my own theoretical argument. In the third section of the paper, I discuss labor migration and governance challenges in the Philippines. I then pose a hypothesis and discuss an empirical strategy appropriate for the Philippine setting. Finally, I present the results and discuss the implications.

II. Previous Research: What Drives Migration?

By definition, labor migration, a population movement in search of a better material life, is driven by expected economic gains adjusted for the cost of migration. Migration research identifies the income gap, the presence of migrant networks, and immigration policies of the destination country as the most significant factors that determine the costs and benefits of contemporary international migration (Borjas 2001, Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino and Taylor 1998, Mayda 2010, Ortega and Peri 2009).

Gaps in income per capita across countries constitute the first structural factor that contributes to the rise in international migration. In their recent attempt to explain bilateral flows, Ortega and Peri find that a rise in the income gap by \$1000 per person increases bilateral flows by about 10% (2009: 4). Other individual-level studies examine earning gaps while considering skill levels of migrants. This is because although wage gaps across countries are a good starting point, what is theoretically relevant is gaps in wages for the same worker across countries, adjusted for education and skills (Pritchett 2006). Micro-level studies find that wages increase for the workers with similar skill levels before and after they move to the US (Jasso, Rosensweig and Smith 2003). This leads to another literature that examines the extent to which migrants are positively “selected” on education. The education level of migrants is important because one’s schooling directly affects earnings differential between source and destination countries (Beine, Docquier and Rapoport 2008, Grogger and Hanson 2011).

Second, migrant networks significantly lower the cost of migration.

The presence of families or friends in the potential destination country reduces information and transaction costs associated with international relocation (Epstein and Gang 2006). Previous migrants provide valuable information about employment opportunities as well as the passage to the destination. They can also provide new arrivals with food, shelter and credit while serving as a cultural intermediary between new migrants and the host environment (Carrington, Detragiache and Vishwanath 1996). The importance of transnational migrant networks has been extensively studied in sociological and anthropological examinations, including in contexts of local-to-local and local-to-global connections (Levitt 2001, Orozco 2003). One particular outcome of the network effect in migration is ethnic and regional clustering where clustering takes place on a considerably narrow scale. An extensive literature on transnational migrant networks provides rich insights about how contemporary migration operates and why persists despite apparent political and economic obstacles.

Finally, the immigration regime in the destination country is an important constraint on migration flows. Ortega and Peri also report that a more restrict immigration policy (measured by policy reform) is associated with lower immigration flows by 6% to 10% (2009: 4). Although globalization appears to erode the autonomous policy-making capacity of the state, it still retains extensive power to regulate and control population inflows. In recent years, international migrants have built a transnational political and social space, but their social action often transpires within the terms defined by the state and domestic politics of the destination country (Waldinger & Fitzgerald 2004).

From the perspective of a potential migrant, these structural factors

translate into the following questions: (1) what would be my earnings at the destination; (2) will I get help from families or friends throughout the migration process; and (3) how easy is it to enter the country and deal with authorities upon arrival. These are external factors that determine the costs and benefits of migration. However, migration propensity is not completely explained by income maximization. In the next section, I discuss governance as a case of noneconomic motivations of migration.

III. Governance Concerns and Migration Intentions

Who are migrants? How different are they from the rest of the public in their attitudes toward the government? The key consideration of this study is that citizens preferring migration have certain attitudes toward the government that are systematically different. I argue that concerns about the quality of government institutions may play an important, albeit complementary to economic reasons, role in the decision to move abroad for better material well-being.

It should be emphasized that governance, used interchangeably with the quality of government institutions in this study, does not include economic development, job creation or public goods provision by the government. Modern governments play a central role in the material well-being of citizens and it is possible that poor governance may be part of the lack of economic opportunities as a driving force of migration. Nevertheless, governance is conceptually and empirically distinct from economic conditions of the country.

As for governance, I focus on how a government operates itself in an

effective and disciplined manner, away from its economic performance or public services. In that sense, this approach closely follows certain dimensions of Worldwide Governance Indicators published by the World Bank, especially government effectiveness, rule of law and control of corruption (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2009). My argument is thus that citizens predisposed against incompetent government and corruption in greater degrees may want to pursue their career overseas even after controlling for economic factors.

When addressing governance, it is necessary to discuss its relationship with democracy. Theoretically speaking, dissatisfaction with the current political system can be divided into two categories: how well the government honors political freedom and how well the government runs state institutions to serve the public interest. In the first case, citizens may find the lack of freedom and widespread state violence under authoritarian rule unacceptable in addition to poor economic opportunities and want to leave. In the second, government incompetence and corruption may lead citizens to think of leaving regardless of the regime type of the home government.

For analytical purposes, a democratic sending country provides a better research opportunity to separate the two dimensions of democracy and governance. This is because, for a democratic sending country, the failure of political institutions is likely to concern governance-related grievances. It should be reasonable to assume that democracy does not repel citizens in principle. It is difficult to imagine large numbers of people flee democratic rule out of a principled aversion to freedom. Although such a scenario is possible, a more reasonable way to proceed is to examine whether individuals leave a democracy due to poor

governance.³⁾ This is also consistent with the academic and policy concerns about new and less-established democracies in the developing world. Despite democratization of political space, many new democracies struggle to protect the lives and properties of citizens and to supply public goods the population desperately need. The poor performance of many democratic governments has raised concerns as to whether this discontent could undermine popular support for democracy (Diamond 1999). Therefore, I examine in the second part of the analysis whether governance concerns, to the extent they contribute to migration intentions, are associated with principled dissatisfaction with democracy.

Within the migration literature, this insight was hinted at in a recent work by Hiskey and Montalvo (2008). Using individual-level survey data from Latin American and Caribbean countries, the authors show that those considering migration have experienced instances of poor governance, more specifically, corruption and discrimination in government offices and crime victimization. As such, their empirical findings directly speak to the key claim of this study. Their work, however, leaves much to be desired in differentiating grievances regarding democracy, governance and to an extent economic development in their theoretical framework. Effective government is intimately related to citizen attitudes to democracy, but it is a conceptually different entity with different empirical implications.

To recap, in this article, I examine variation in migration intentions in

3) To be sure, grievances with certain policy outcomes of a democracy, for instance distributive and redistributive outcomes, may lead to migration decisions. Yet I only address the principle of democracy in this study.

the Philippines with special attention to citizen grievances about poor governance. My research asks whether governance concerns affect the likelihood of considering migration and whether such considerations come at the expense of commitment to democracy.

IV. Labor Migration and Governance Challenges in the Philippines

The Philippines provides an appropriate setting for studying the interplay between migration intentions and governance-related grievances because it is a large-scale sending democracy with significant governance challenges. In 2008, the number of Filipino migrant workers scattered all over the world reached 2 million, roughly 2% of total population (National Statistics Office 2010), while 346,000 workers were newly hired in 2009 (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration 2009).⁴⁾ The country's economy is dependent heavily on migrant remittances, which reached \$17.3 billion and constituted over 10.8% of its annual GDP in 2009 (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas 2010). A household-level study also estimates that 23.3% of Filipino Households received cash remittances in 2006 (Ang, Sugiyarto & Jha 2009).

Labor migration has long history in the Philippines. Migration scholars divide the country's century-long population out-movement into three periods (Rother 2009). The first period saw the beginning of

4) The World Bank estimates the entire overseas Filipino migrants to be about 4.3 million (2011), including both permanent emigrants and temporary workers.

labor migration of Filipinos as plantation workers to Hawaii in the early twentieth century, which was right after the establishment of the US colonial rule in the archipelago.⁵⁾ The next significant phase came during the 1960s, when nearly a million, mostly middle class, Filipinos moved permanently to the United States under a new US immigration regime established by the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act (Anderson 1998). Since many of Filipino emigrants during this period were highly educated with professional backgrounds, this raised the concern of “brain drain.” Finally, labor migration in a current form started in the 1970s when large numbers of Filipino workers on a contract basis were employed in oil-rich Gulf countries to work on massive infrastructure projects. Labor migration increased steadily throughout the 1980s when labor demand shifted toward professional and service workers. Gulf countries continued to need migrant workers to run its economy and households while non-traditional destinations in Europe and Asia also attracted a large number of service workers, including “caregivers.” Rising demands for service workers abroad also increased female labor migration substantially in the Philippines (Asis 2008).

Overseas employment is now a deeply entrenched social institution in the Philippines. The Philippine state has reorganized itself in such a way that it now regulates and operates programs regarding almost all aspects of labor migration, from pre-migration preparations to post-migration reintegration. Over the years, the government institutionalized a variety of legal codes, including the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipino Act of 1995, and government agencies to promote and regulate labor

5) Between 1906 and 1934, some 120,000 Filipinos arrived in the US (Asis 2008).

migration. In addition to the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), two agencies specific to labor migration have been established. The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) regulates licensing of the migration industry and placement of labor migrants while the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) maintains welfare funds and programs for migrant workers. This “labor export” apparatus is unique in that a government is deeply involved in migration management and has led to much international attention (Agunias & Ruiz 2007). On the part of Philippine society, there exists an extensive migration industry, including over 1,000 licensed recruitment agencies for overseas workers (Asis 2008) and part of the education system has been transformed into vocational training for overseas employment. “Culture of migration” is also widespread (Scalabrini Migration Center 2005), as labor migration is now perceived as an attractive career option among ordinary Filipinos, not as a temporary measure responding to an economic crisis.

The entrenchment of labor migration has coincided with the chronic underperformance of the Philippine democracy. Despite regular elections, relatively high levels of political freedom and a vibrant civil society (Park 2009), effective government remains elusive in the Philippines. Widespread corruption from top politicians to lower government workers have compromised the quality of public administration, whose prominent examples include the political crisis that led to the demise of the Estrada administration by popular protests in 2001. Government programs and services tend to operate on clientelistic terms, fostering rampant rent-seeking on public resources

while failing to provide any systematic policy solutions for impoverished Filipino citizens (Hutchcroft and Rocamora 2003). Although the Philippine state is relatively constrained in using force on its citizens, extrajudicial killings and the failure of the state to monopolize violence and protect the lives of its citizens, as exemplified by a recent massacre of 34 journalists during the 2010 election campaign (Conde 2009), critically undermine any claim of effective government in the Philippines.

These challenges are also reflected in cross-national governance measures. According to the 2002 World Bank Governance Indicators, the Philippines ranked at the 53rd percentile of 213 countries for government effectiveness, 37th percentile for rule of law, and 41st percentile for control of corruption. This performance is disappointing in absolute terms, but even so within the region. It lags behind Thailand, a frequent reference point for the Philippines, which ranked 63rd, 62nd, and 47th percentiles for the same categories (Kaufmann, Kraay & Mastruzzi 2009).⁶⁾ The failure of the Philippine democracy to maintain effective government has been a source of concern among the intellectual community about the appeal of an authoritarian model of government to better provide for citizens.⁷⁾

The domestic context that labor migration and governance challenges coexist raises a possibility that Filipino citizens may consider migration as a response to continuing poor governance. Public opinion polls in the Philippines over the years support this insight. A 2006 poll conducted

6) The reference year 2002 was chosen to be informative for the empirical analysis of this study, which uses data from 2002 and 2003.

7) Interview with a journalist, Manila, 2008.

during the Arroyo administration found that 29% of Filipinos wanted to permanently emigrate (Dizon 2010), reflecting public frustration with the ongoing 2004 election fraud scandal, high inflation and accusations of government corruption of the time. On the other hand, the number dropped to 9% in 2010 when a survey was conducted in the second month of a new administration of President Benigno Aquino III, indicating “renewed hope” about the government among Filipino citizens (Dizon 2010). Although temporary labor migration and permanent resettlement are conceptually different, considering they are closely related, this still provides valuable information about public attitudes toward the government and migration.

V. Empirical Strategy

The empirical task of this study is to examine (1) whether potential migrants are different from the rest of the public in their extent of concerns about the government; and (2) whether such concerns, if any, stems from attitudes toward democracy or frustration with governance issues. To investigate these hypotheses, I draw upon survey data from the Philippines. My dataset combines 2002 and 2003 rounds of the Social Weather Survey (SWS), which is a quarterly survey designed and administered by the Social Weather Stations based in Manila. The nationally-representative data set contains responses from voting-age Filipinos and has questions about migration intentions and the migrant status of household members. My dataset has 2,400 respondents. To corroborate with and draw out the meanings of quantitative findings, I

also use qualitative data I collected in fieldwork in the Philippines in 2008 and 2009, which consists of interviews with migration experts and secondary materials including newspaper reports and scholarly articles.

I begin by discussing the measurement of my dependent variable of migration intentions. I construct a binary indicator variable based on the responses to the question “Do you want to work abroad?” where “1” indicates migration intentions and “0” otherwise. The SWS contains two other measures with respect to migration intentions: “currently looking for overseas employment” and “want to emigrate permanently.” I use “want to work overseas” for my analysis because focusing on current job search and permanent migration too restrictive. In addition, contract-based temporary labor migration is the predominant mode of labor migration in the Philippines.⁸⁾

To be sure, there is a difference between migration intentions and actual movement across the border. Since what ultimately matters for political effects of migration is who actually gets to migrate, it would be necessary to uncover the political attitudes of actual migrants. Empirically, a study of such a topic would be based on a sample of those about to leave for overseas employment. A recent study employed such a strategy, using workers who have secured overseas jobs and are waiting to be deployed in the Philippines (Rother 2009). Nonetheless, understanding motivations of those considering leaving the country still provides valuable information about what migration consequences imply for the political future of the sending country.

8) For robustness checks, I reestimate models using these alternative measures of migration. The results do not change. The estimation results using alternative measures are available upon request.

My independent variables to capture individual attitudes toward the political system can be divided into four categories. The first captures the respondent's evaluations of the overall performance of the Philippine democracy without necessarily probing what aspects the respondent is referring to. I use responses to the question, "On the whole, are you satisfied with the way democracy works in the Philippines?" which range from "Not at all satisfied" "Not very satisfied" "Satisfied" "Very satisfied." The responses are then collapsed into two categories, creating a binary variable of 1 for "Satisfied" and 0 for otherwise.

I then move to the potential causes of such (dis)satisfaction. For the democracy aspect, I utilize two measures to examine whether democratic attitudes are correlated with migration intentions. As discussed in the theory section, I do not expect issues with democracy in principle to have an impact on migration intentions. Rather, I include democracy in my model to isolate the effects of governance concerns. The first democracy variable is to measure the respondent's expressed support for democracy as their most preferred form of government. In SWS, citizens' support for democracy is assessed by responses to the following question: "Thinking of these three statements, which is closest to your way of thinking?" Respondents choose a statement out of the following three: 1) Democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government; 2) Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one; and 3) For people like me, it does not matter whether we have a democratic or a non-democratic regime. For my analysis, I create a dichotomous variable where "1" is coded as having stated "Democracy is always preferable" and "0" otherwise.

The second democracy measure I use is responses to the question on the “most important issue” of the country. SWS has an item that asks respondents to state what they think might be the most important problem facing the country of the day. It is an open-ended question and the answers are coded into broad categories under economy, democracy, governance, security, crime, social services, infrastructure, and environment.⁹⁾ Using this instrument, I create a binary indicator variable and code answers “1” for citing democracy issues concerning elections, local and national politics and human rights. The theoretical insight behind this measure is that the cited problem is likely to be what the respondent find most pressing about the status quo. The distribution of responses is provided in Table 1. 5% cited democracy as the most pressing problem of the country while 11% chose governance for the same question. 53.3% cited economy as the most important problem.

Finally, I turn to the governance dimension of political assessment. Utilizing the question on the “most important issue” of the country again, I now create a binary indicator variable and code answers “1” for citing governance concerns when they are under the “governance problem” category that consists of corruption, bureaucracy problems, or fiscal deficits and “0” otherwise. This is a conservative measure that captures how the government does work and excludes the outcomes of its activities such as infrastructure and social services.

9) The full coding scheme is available upon request.

Table 1. "Most Important Problem of the Country"

	Frequency	(%)
Economy	1279	53.29
Governance	269	11.21
Democracy	117	4.88
Others	735	30.63

Note: "Others" include crime, security, social services, infrastructure, environmental issues and non answers.

To these central variables, I add a battery of individual- and household-level controls. I account for two specific additional variables known directly associated with migration propensity. It is well established in the literature that migration decisions are strongly influenced by those in the person's social network (Epstein and Gang 2006). Therefore, I include membership in a migrant network measured by whether the respondent has a family member currently working abroad. Retrospective evaluations about how the quality of life fares compared to a one year ago also capture the dynamic economic conditions faced by individuals. A four-level class variable, measuring the condition of residential dwelling, is a proxy for household income. It has four categories and assessed by a field interviewer according to clearly laid-out criteria prior to the field interview. Personal characteristics of respondents consist of education, age, gender, and employment. Education has an eight-point scale ranging from no formal education to postgraduate degrees. As a proxy for human capital, education should be an important predictor for earning potential of a migrant. Age and gender are standard controls and employment is a binary indicator variable whether the respondent is currently employed. Table 2 provides basic descriptive statistics regarding my dependent

variable and political variables.¹⁰⁾ On average, respondents were not very satisfied with the way Philippine democracy works (“2” corresponds to “Not very satisfied”). 60% expressed unconditional support for democracy.

Table 2: Political Attitudes and Migration Intentions

	Mean	Min	Max	N
Satisfaction with Philippine Democracy	2.21	1	4	2400
Democracy is always preferable	0.6	0	1	1194
Democracy Most Important Problem	0.05	0	1	2400
Governance Most Important Problem	0.11	0	1	2400
Want to Work Abroad	0.25	0	1	2400

VI. Models and Results

I use a binary probit specification for analyzing variance in migration intentions. Given the dichotomous nature of the dependent variables, I first present crosstabulation results to introduce the relationship between political attitudes and migration intentions before moving to multivariate regression analysis. Considering the difficulties associated with interpreting probit estimation results, I then present predicted probabilities for a typical respondent.¹¹⁾

I therefore begin with a correlation matrix in Table 3 to illustrate that

10) The full descriptive statistics regarding all variables are available upon request. Number of observations “Democracy is always preferable” are 1194 due to the fact that only the 2002 SWS carries the item.

11) A typical respondent is defined as a 42-year-old female, who is employed, residing in an urban area and coming from the upper middle class.

individuals who consider migration may not give equal weight to different dimensions of political problems. To begin, overall satisfaction with the political status quo appears to significantly differ by migration intentions. As expected, responses to questions related to democracy in principle do not vary systematically across the two groups. In contrast, governance concerns appear different depending on whether the respondent contemplates overseas employment.

Table 4 displays the multivariate statistical results. Model 1 only includes the satisfaction with the state of Philippine democracy. Model 2 examines the relationship between democracy concerns and migration intentions. Model 3 includes dummy variables about “the most important problem facing the country,” including governance, democracy and other concerns, where the reference category is economy.

Table 3: Political Concerns, by Migration Intentions

	Migration Intentions		N
	No	Yes	
Satisfaction with Philippine Democracy	<i>36.96%</i>	<i>31.27%</i>	<i>2400</i>
Democracy is always preferable	<i>59.58%</i>	<i>60.95%</i>	<i>1194</i>
Democracy Most Important Problem	4.5%	6.02%	2400
Governance Most Important Problem	<i>8.99%</i>	<i>17.78%</i>	<i>2400</i>

Note: Italics represent pair wise correlation significant at $p < 0.05$ or better. The “satisfaction with Philippine democracy” variable was collapsed into a binary variable for presentation. Source: Author’s calculations using data from the Social Weather Survey 2002 and 2003.

Note that satisfaction with Philippine democracy is not statistically significant in Model 1 despite the earlier results in the bivariate analysis.

This may suggest that political grievances may contain two distinct dimensions and they may work in different directions in terms of their effects. Remember that this is precisely the insight behind examining democracy and governance dimensions separately.

Models 2 and 3 show that neither support for democratic principles nor concerns about Philippine democracy explains variance in migration intentions. Put differently, issues about democracy in general or the Philippine case in particular do not affect individuals' consideration to move overseas for better employment. In contrast, as shown in Model 3, those who cite governance concerns, compared to those who cite economy as the most important problem, are significantly more likely to consider the migration option. These overall patterns suggest that dissatisfaction with poor governance may drive dissatisfaction with the political system in the Philippines while making citizens look overseas for better life chances.

Table 4: Political Attitudes of Potential Migrants

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Satisfied with the Philippine Democracy	-0.075 (0.054)		
Democracy is always preferable		0.100 (0.095)	
"The Most Important Problem of Governance"	Problem of	the Country"	
Governance			0.183*** (0.025)
Democracy			0.139 (0.129)
Others			-0.180*** (0.042)
Education	0.204*** (0.034)	0.235*** (0.038)	0.198*** (0.036)

Class	-0.032** (0.015)	-0.049 (0.061)	0.038 (0.022)
Personal finance improved	-0.036 (0.042)	-0.094** (0.042)	-0.045 (0.04)
Migrant network	0.304*** (0.105)	0.259* (0.136)	0.300** (0.118)
Age	-0.030*** (0.001)	-0.031*** (0.002)	-0.030*** (0.001)
Female	-0.187*** (0.056)	-0.181* (0.106)	-0.175*** (0.064)
Employed	-0.106*** (0.039)	-0.106 (0.119)	-0.116*** (0.033)
Urban	0.127 (0.08)	0.202** (0.098)	0.119 (0.079)
Year 2002	-0.187 (0.168)		-0.198 (0.169)
N	2398	1192	2398
Log pseudo-likelihood	-1130.63	-588.272	-1124.809
Pseudo R2	0.160	0.172	0.165

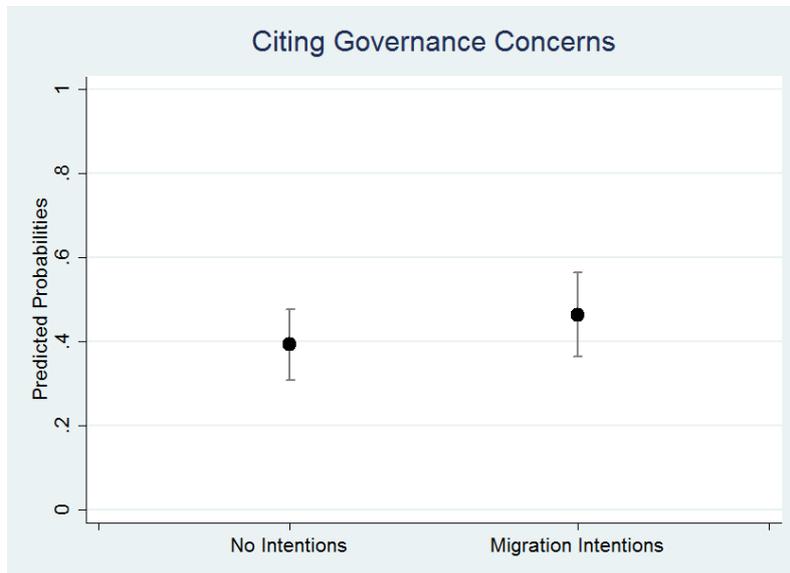
Note: Models 1 through 3 present the results of binary probit estimation. "Economy" is the baseline category for "Most Important Problem." Robust standard errors are in parentheses, with clustering by region. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. Number of observations differ for "Democracy is always preferable." because the 2002 SWS does not contain the item.

Most control variables are in the directions consistent with the previous findings in the literature. Membership in a migrant network is a powerful predictor of migration intentions in most specifications. Education, a proxy for human capital and potentially higher income gain from migration has a positive effect. So does the urban residence, which captures access to information and opportunities available in cities. Age, female, improving personal finance, and having a job are negatively associated with migration intentions. Some of the controls are not robustly significant across specifications.

Because of the non-linear nature of probit coefficients, the substantive

magnitude and significance of these effects are better assessed with predicted probabilities. Figure 1 provides a visual illustration of predicted probabilities of citing governance concerns across migration intentions.

Figure 1: Predicted Probabilities of Citing Governance



Note: Plots display predicted probabilities with 95% confidence intervals. The probabilities were calculated by the Clarify package (King, Tomz & Wittenberg 2000).

The finding that governance concerns may be a driving force of migration is also consistent with qualitative evidence I collected in the Philippines. An expert on migration issues in the Philippines pointed out that when considering “political” causes of large-scale labor migration, it is the failure of governance, not democracy, that forces Filipino citizens to move overseas in large numbers.¹²⁾ The incompetency and

corruption of the Philippine state has been also part of the macro-level public narrative of the importance of labor migration to the Philippine society (Inquirer 2010; Pernia 2006). The entrenchment of labor migration is related to people's frustration with a government, albeit democratic, that cannot deliver.

VII. Concluding Thoughts

In this study, I have argued that political concerns, particularly, frustration with ineffective government may lead citizens to consider the migration option. The insight behind such a hypothesis was that, since the modern government plays a critical role in citizens' day-to-day life as well as their long-term well-being, even what appears to be an attempt to seek a better material life abroad may be driven in part by concerns about government incompetence and corruption. The evidence from my analysis of the SWS data shows that governance concerns are more pronounced among Filipino citizens who want to leave. I further investigated whether such political grievances may contain issues with the principle of democracy. The findings suggest that the governance-migration linkage does not come at the expense of principled support for democracy: those who consider migration do not differ in their commitment to democracy. Even though ineffective government is the failure of Philippine democracy, Filipino citizens seems to have a good grasp of the distinction between democracy as a principle and the performance of a democratic government.

12) Interview, Manila. 2009.

In showing that political grievances play a role in the consideration of overseas employment, this study contributes to our understanding of what drives migration. Prior researchers had not adequately accounted for citizen frustration with governance in models of migration decision. The immediate implication of this finding is that global labor mobility can be accounted for by the effectiveness of origin-country governments. It is important to note that I do not question the importance of economic consideration in migration. Rather, I find that there is a significant, residual relationship between political grievances and migration intentions after controlling for relevant economic factors.

More importantly, this study provides a more nuanced view on the ongoing debate on political “brain drain” in the Philippines. The concerns about losing more educated and engaged citizens to migration stem from the assumption that they are critical to political reform. The question then becomes what type of political reform is to be affected. The implications of my findings are mixed. For principled support for democracy, those who want to leave are not necessarily stronger nor weaker supporters. Thus, their exit will not change the balance already in place among the population. On the other hand, the results suggest that potential migrants are more interested in governance issues and thus more likely to push for governance reform should they stay behind. As such, political brain drain, if any, will probably negatively affect the political support for reforming the Philippine state to be more effective.

Anderson (1998) once pointed out a connection between migration and governance-oriented constituency in the Philippines. In his view, the mass exodus of Filipino middle class during the 1970s was one of the reasons why government reform initiatives following democratization in

1986 had suffered such a lack of societal support.

“a wider urban bourgeois and petty-bourgeois constituency: middle-level civil servants, doctors, nurses, teachers, businessmen, shopkeepers, and so on... In the 1960s it made its political debut in campaigns for honesty in government, urban renewal, crackdowns on machine and warlord politics, and the legal emancipation of municipalities and the new suburbs. ... in the 1970s and 1980s, well over a million Filipinos (mainly from this stratum) had emigrated across the Pacific, most of them for good. This bourgeois haemorrhage ... cost it an important politically ally —one reason why the Aquino government has so little room for manoeuvre” (Anderson 1998, p.212).

Certainly, migration may create countervailing forces, including remittance inflows, knowledge transfers and transnational civil society that can push political reforms. How these conflicting forces unleashed by migration shape ultimate political outcomes is the subject of future research. It should be also noted that although the poor performance of a democratic government does not undermine Filipino citizens’ commitment to democracy to a point that they want to leave the country, it is still an indication of a deep crisis facing Philippine democracy.

Keywords: International migration, governance, principled support for democracy, the Philippines

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<국문초록>

거버넌스와 이주: 필리핀 잠재적 이주노동자에 대한 연구

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이 글은 잠재적 이주노동자들이 거버넌스에 중요성을 부여하는 정도가 이주의도가 없는 경우와 비교하여 어떻게 다른지를 필리핀의 자료를 이용하여 분석한 연구이다. 2011년 기준으로 전 세계 인구의 3.2 퍼센트가 국제이주자이며 이들이 본국에 보내는 노동송금은 4천 4백 억 달러에 달한다. 기존연구에서 파악하듯 세계인구이동의 대부분을 차지하는 노동이주의 주요 결정요인은 출신국과 이주대상국의 소득 격차, 기존 이주 네트워크, 이주대상국의 이주정책 등을 포함한 경제적 요인들이다. 그러나 대규모 송출국들이 대부분 경제적 저발전과 취약한 정부(ineffective government)의 구조적인 문제를 함께 가지고 있다는 점에 착안한다면 비록 경제적 고려가 우선시 되는 노동이주에 있어서도 잠재적 이주자들이 “정치적”으로 여타의 사회와 구분되는 특수한 정치적 태도를 가질 수 있다고 생각할 수 있다. 이주자들의 정치적 태도를 올바르게 이해하는 것은 노동이주가 송출국에 미치는 정치적 영향을 분석하는 데 있어 매우 중요하다. 해당 이주자들의 부재와 이들이 본국으로 보내는 노동송금이 송출국 정치에 영향을 미칠 수 있는데 그 영향의 방향은 이주자의 기본적인 정치적 관심과 의제에

따라 달라질 것이기 때문이다. 이러한 배경에서 이 글은 다음과 같은 연구 질문에 답하고자 한다. 첫째, 이주노동의사가 있는 시민들이 취약한 정부능력에 대한 염려가 그렇지 않은 경우보다 높은가? 둘째, 이러한 관계가 성립된다면 그 관계는 민주주의에 대한 지지를 저해하는가? 이 연구는 2002년과 2003년 필리핀에서 실시된 전국적 설문조사인 Social Weather Survey 자료와 2008년 및 2009년 필리핀 현지조사에서 수집한 인터뷰와 2차 자료를 근거로, 정부능력에 대한 평가와 이주노동의사의 관계를 분석하였다. 연구결과, 기존 연구가 제시하는 통제변인들을 감안하더라도 효과적인 정부운영이 필리핀이 당면한 가장 중요한 과제라고 생각할수록 해외로 취업할 것을 고려할 가능성이 높은 것으로 나타났다. 또한 다행히도 이러한 태도가 민주주의에 대한 원칙적인 지지에는 영향을 미치지 않는 것으로 드러났다. 그러나 효과적인 정부에 대한 관심이 이주노동을 고려하는 시민들에게 높다는 사실은 장기적으로 이들이 해외로 이주할 경우 정부개혁을 요구하고 추진할 국내적 정치적 기반이 줄어들 수 있다는 부정적 함의를 가지기도 한다.

주제어: 국제이주, 거버넌스, 민주주의 대한 원칙적인 지지, 필리핀