INTERNAL MIGRATION: Migration and Urban Transformation in Colombia, 1988-2005. Sociodemographic Characteristics and Location in Urban Space[1].

Nubia Yaneth Ruiz[2]

Presentation

This research work is intended to recognize the role played by internal migration in Colombia, within the process of urbanization and transformation of urban space in large and medium cities. This project approaches the topic of the transformation of a rural country to an urban country, and the spatial transformation of cities due to internal migration, from a historical, sociodemographic and territorial perspective. At the same time, this project provides the analysis tools necessary to determine the directionality of the immediate and future population flow, and thus, the urban growth perspective in the group of cities.

This work approaches the relationship between migration and urbanization in Colombia, determining the process that the country has undergone during the last twenty years, and establishing from a historical perspective, the most relevant economic and sociodemographic variables and indicators that show the short and medium term projection of migration process in territorial terms (origins and destinations) and the populations that are the most prone to migrate to urban zones.

Research Problem

The continuous migratory flow has been one of the main variables for urban growth. The increase of poverty and the permanent rise of new outlying urban areas, is the evidence of the incompetence of cities for receiving immigrant population, offering them goods and services necessary for an appropriate quality of life. This research contributes to the study of internal migration in Colombia in the last twenty years; determining the contribution that urban growth has been given by migratory process in physical and population terms, establishing the relationship between the location sites of migrants in the city and their sociodemographic characteristics.

General Objective

To determine the dynamics of internal migration during the last twenty years, and its relationship with the growth of urban centers; establishing the different stages of the expansion of urban areas and the settlement zones for migrant population. To recognize the relationship between the location of migrants in the city, and the economic, social, and demographic characteristics of this population.

Methodology

This research has an analysis methodology that shows evidence of internal migration evolution and the country's urbanization, and establishes the relationship between spatial location in the city and the social, economic and demographic conditions of the new settlers.

A sample of 19 cities, distributed around the country was designed, obtaining results that are extendable for the whole country. The selected cities have the following criteria:

> 1- They include three tipologies of cities according to population size.

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2 Psychologist. PhD on Demography. Research Professor. Instituto de Estudios Urbanos de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia. nyruizr@unal.edu.co.
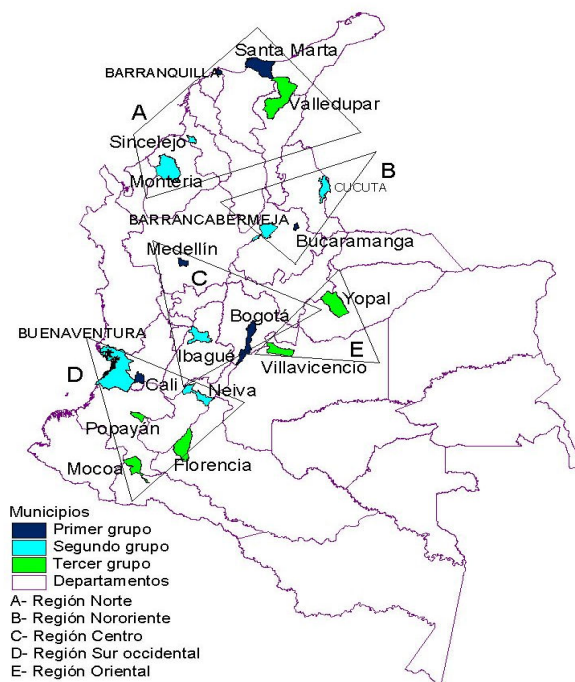
2- They are located in different regions of the country, so that all national territory is covered.

3- These cities are highly important for the economic development of the regions.

Thus, the country's territory has been organized in three groups of cities (big, medium, and small) and five regions in which these cities are located, to establish municipal, regional and national levels of analysis. These city groups are the following:

- First group of cities: Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, Barranquilla, Bucaramanga, Santa Marta.
- Second group of cities: Buenaventura, Cúcuta, Neiva, Ibagué. Barrancabermeja, Sincelejo, Montería.
- Third group of cities: Villavicencio, Florencia, Popayán, Yopal, Floridablanca, Mocoa.

The regions where these cities are located are territories in which the selected cities contribute to their region's development and attract population. Regional distribution is described as it appears in the map, and it is made with the aim to cover all national territory and to validate the existence of urban areas that have an important participation in development.

This map was distributed taking into account the existence of natural regions, that historically share family and cultural links that are present in the base of migratory behaviors, establishing a high endogenous behavior of population flow.

The methodology of this work has four stages: The first one is related to the knowledge of the demographic characteristics and the flow of the population that moved to urban areas, determining the different moments of migration; secondly, the settlement zones and the urban growth process – attributed to migration- are identified in the cities. In the third stage, the urban expansion maps for both nationwide and each one of the cities involved in the research, determining the historical facts that have generated the migration and the migrants' sociodemographical characteristics; and the fourth stage the correlation between migrants' location in the city and their economic, social, demographical and origin-related characteristics.

The main source was the census data, (1993 and 2005). This information determined:
1. Territorial dimension of migration:
   a. Migration-related growth pace in each one of the cities.
   b. Spatial location of migrants in the city, identifying settlement zones and the urban growth process, due to migration.
   c. The dimension and origin of population flow, having the municipality and origin area (rural-urban) as the basic unit.
2. The poblational dimension of migration:
   a. Sociodemographic characteristics of migratory flow.
   b. Homes' dimension and composition.
   c. Age and sex.

        d.   Educational level and employment condition.

The research is carried out upon the population and cartographic databases of the 1993 and 2005 census. Thus, migrant population can be located accurately in the urban space, which makes possible to intersect the sociodemographical variables with the urban spatial location variables and the municipality and origin territory variable.

The basic research variables are:

Territorial:
- Place of origin.
- Destination place.
- Urban area.
- Rural area.
- Urban spaces in which migrant population is located.
- Urban growth due to migration.

Sociodemographic:
- Demographic characteristics of the population.
- Economic characteristics.
- Homes' structures.

Temporality of migrations
- Population flows stages.
- Places of origin.
- Contextual facts attached to migrant flows.

Expected results

This research shows the condition of internal migration in Colombia during the last twenty years, taking as analysis unit the municipality and the origin area (rural-urban). This is a ground-breaking study that determines accurately how migration process has contributed to urbanization process, establishing the location of migrants in the urban space of 19 cities in the country. Thus, it is possible to determine the relationship between population flow, its origin, its sociodemographic characteristics, its location in urban space, and the relation of this flow with the political and economic facts that precipitate the migratory movement.

Internal migration can be approached from the sample of cities, as well as its contribution for the growth of the diverse types of municipalities, taking into account their population size and its location in the national territory.

Using the Geographical Information System (GIS), it is possible to demonstrate the widening process of the cities as an answer to the migrant population arrival, and to compare the evolution during the period of the research. In the same way, the map of migration for each analyzed period has been elaborated for each one of of the regions.