

The causes and selectivity of internal migration in Korea

1. Introduction

. The main purpose of this paper is first, to examine reasons for move among various groups of mover in Korea. There have been a number of migration studies in Korea. Most of these migration studies were based on the census data. Using questions of place of residence at one year or five years before the census, volume of inter-regional migration for different migration streams and characteristics of migrants at the time of the census were analyzed (Kim and Lee, 1979; Kim and Sloboda, 1981; Lee and Lee, 1983; Choi, 1982, 1986, 1994, 1996, 2002, 2007; Noh, 1991).

In comparison with the studies on volumes and directions for inter-regional migration, only a few studies have been conducted on reasons for migration because of the lack of data for the analysis. In Korea two sources of data are available for the analysis of migration. One comes from the population census and the other from the civil registration for the population movement. But unfortunately these two sources of data do not provide information on reasons for move as well as various social and economic characteristics of the migrants at the time of move. Consequently, causes and selectivity of migration cannot be properly examined using these data.

Information on reasons for move and various characteristics of the migrants at time of move can only be secured by the large scale national sample survey. In Korea the kind of sample survey on migration was first conducted in 1983 and again in 1997. Now it is possible to analyze reasons for move and selectivity of migration utilizing the 1997 survey data.

The second purpose of this paper is to investigate particularly for reasons of move of the migrants who moved into or out from the Capital Region of Korea as well as selectivity of them. Concentration of population in the Capital Region (Capital city of Seoul, Incheon city and surrounding Gyeonggi Province) has long been a key issue in national development in Korea.

A recent study documented that the degree of population concentration in the Capital Region has been alleviated during the 1995-2000 period mainly due to the economic recession, but it has again increased for the recent 2000-2005 period (Choi, 2007). For instance, during the 1995-2000 period the Capital Region absorbed 76.3% of the total national population increment. But for 2000-2005 period population increase of the Capital

Region accounted for 123.5% of the total national population increase. As a result almost about a half of the total Korean population lives in the Capital Region in 2005.

Since the late 1960s, the Korean government has recognized the problems of heavy concentration of population in the Capital Region, and put many efforts to alleviate population concentration. However, unfortunately the various measures of government's policies have not been so effective to control population movement into the Capital Region. Recently, the Korean government decided to build an administrative new town far from Seoul, and made a plan to relocate many central governments' ministries from Seoul. In relation to these policies, hot debates have been arisen for the effect of constructing new administrative town on relieving population pressure in the Capital Region.

Therefore, in-depth analysis on the causes of internal-regional migration between the Capital Region and Non-capital Region is urgently needed. Analysis on selectivity and reasons for move among migrants in the Capital Region may shed some light on changes of human capital among regions, and give some implications on balanced regional development.

2. Data

The main source of data for this analysis comes from raw data of the 1997 Special Migration Survey conducted by the National Statistical Office of Korea. The survey was conducted for the sample of 40,700 households, and the total number of respondents was 126,000. The survey included questions on migration history since birth, place of residences at one year and five years ago, reasons for move, marital status, housing type and tenure status, and economic activity at the time of move.

For the analysis, those who have lived in the current house less than one year were selected. A total of 16,792 respondents were identified. Among them only household head, which is 7,229 are included in the analysis, because migration decision is normally made by the household as a whole.

3. Causes of Migration: Reasons for Move

The 1997 Special Migration Survey included question of reasons for move for every movement made by the respondents, and identified altogether 40 reasons. These 40 reasons were reclassified broadly into five reasons in this analysis; job, housing, family, education and all others which include community and natural environment, etc.

<Table-1> summarizes reasons for move for those household head that have changed their residence within one year period at the time of the survey. Here the movers are classified into four groups: those who moved within the same district (Dong, Eup, and Myeon in Korean which are the smallest administrative unit in the country); those who moved within the same city and county; those who moved in different cities and counties but within the same province; and those who moved in different provinces.

<Table-1> Reasons for Move by Type of Movement

	Job	Housing	Family	Education	Other	Total(N)
Within same district	10.2	62.8	12.0	3.6	12.2	100.0 (1,886)
Within same city/county	16.3	49.7	17.7	4.4	11.9	100.0 (2,409)
Different city/county	31.5	25.6	20.7	11.4	10.9	100.0 (1,428)
Different province	49.1	8.0	20.3	16.1	6.5	100.0 (1,506)
All Mover	24.6	39.5	17.3	8.0	10.7	100.0 (7,229)
Mover	13.6	55.1	15.2	4.0	12.0	100.0 (4,295)
Migrant	40.6	16.6	20.4	13.8	8.6	100.0 (2,934)

Overall, for those who have changed their residence, the most important reason for move appears to be housing. Altogether 39.5% of all movers moved for housing related reasons. Among housing related reasons, expiring contract for lease and need a large dwelling unit share a large proportion.

. Another 24.6% of movers moved for job related reasons, and 17.3% for family reasons.

Among job related reasons seeking or taking a new job and transfer of work place are prominent. Move due to marriage and separation of household comprise the major component of family reasons.

It is easily anticipated that reasons for move among movers by types of movement are quite different. As can be seen in the table for those who moved in short distance, housing reason is predominant. Among movers who moved within the same district or the same city and county, 62.0% and 49.7% moved for housing reasons, respectively.

In contrast, among migrants who at least moved across the city and county boundary, job related reasons are most important. It is consistent that the longer distance they moved, the larger proportion of them moved for job related. For instance 49.1% of the migrants who moved into the different provinces moved for job related reasons whereas it is only 10.2% for those who moved within the same smaller district.

When we examine reasons for move in more detail at the sub category level, we can find interesting differences among groups of mover. For instance, for mover who moved in short distance, among job related reasons, 'for the businesses' shares a large proportion. In contrast, for the migrants who moved in relatively long distance, 'transfer of work place' and 'seeking or taking a new job' are prominent.

Likewise among housing related reasons, movers are more likely to move for 'larger dwelling unit' or 'expiring contract for lease'. But long distance migrants tend to move more frequently because of 'buy their own houses for the first time'. This can be explained by the fact that when people have to move their residence due to termination of housing contract, they tend to look for another one in the neighboring areas. Migrants who moved in different cities and counties for buying their own houses can be observed frequently in the large metropolitan areas. For example in Seoul metropolitan area since the housing price in Seoul is very high people is willing to buy their own houses in the neighboring cities and counties.

In sum, when we divide all movers who have changed their residence into movers and migrants, we can conclude that movers tend to move predominantly for housing, and to some extent for family and job related reasons. Instead for migrants job related is the most important reasons for move and then family and housing reasons.

Then are the reasons for move different by various characteristics of migrants? To answer the question, <Table-2> shows how the reasons for move are varied with different groups of migrants. In the table only those migrants who moved across the city and county boundary are included.

Comparison of reasons for move by sex reveals that males are more likely to move for job related reasons than females. For males 43.4% moved for job, while 30.9% of females

moved for job. Instead females tend to move more frequently by family reasons especially for marriage.

Reasons for move are also varied with age groups. The most of youngsters move for their education. More than three quarters of migrants who are below age 20, and 36.6% of those migrants for aged 20-24 moved for education. But in their early 20s, job reasons are equally important for move in addition to education reasons. After the age at late 20s, job related reasons become the prime causes of migration. The proportion of job related reasons for move reaches its peak at age group of 35-39. More than 51% of those migrants aged at 35-39 moved for job related reasons.

Proportions of housing related reasons for move by age group reveals interesting pattern. The proportion increases consistently with ages. During early 20s only 9.0% of

<Table-2> Reasons for Move by Characteristics of Migrants

	Job	Housing	Family	Education	Other	N
Sex						
Male	43.4	16.6	19.7	12.0	8.3	(2,258)
Female	30.9	16.4	23.1	19.8	9.8	(676)
Age						
- 20	12.4	0.6	5.9	78.1	3.0	(169)
20 - 24	31.2	9.0	15.6	36.6	7.6	(423)
25 - 29	44.3	13.9	28.8	6.0	7.0	(632)
30 – 34	48.1	18.9	23.5	1.5	8.0	(609)
35 – 39	51.2	19.3	16.7	5.2	7.6	(420)
40 – 44	48.7	20.2	13.9	8.0	9.2	(238)
45 – 49	42.1	25.6	12.8	8.3	11.3	(133)
50 – 59	35.0	25.7	17.5	6.0	15.8	(183)
60 +	10.2	26.8	37.0	6.3	19.7	(127)
Education						
Primary	34.8	22.0	26.2	3.7	13.4	(164)
Middle	36.5	23.4	20.1	8.0	12.0	(274)
High	46.4	19.1	21.6	4.2	8.8	(1,228)
Junior College	34.5	11.5	19.7	24.3	9.9	(304)
University+	38.5	11.8	16.9	27.0	5.9	(905)
Housing Tenure						

Own	36.7	6.9	21.8	26.8	7.9	(1,140)
Free	50.4	7.4	27.0	8.7	6.5	(230)
Key money	40.3	25.9	19.0	5.1	9.6	(1,099)
Rent	45.8	22.6	17.4	5.2	9.0	(465)
Marital Status						
Single	35.0	8.5	23.0	26.9	6.6	(1,178)
Married	47.0	21.6	17.1	4.6	9.7	(1,583)
Divorced/widowed	20.1	26.0	34.3	6.5	13.0	(169)
Economic Activity						
Employed	46.1	19.3	21.5	3.7	9.3	(2,151)
Unemployed	70.0	4.3	17.1	2.9	5.7	(70)
Housewife	28.8	19.5	33.0	8.8	9.8	(215)
Student	18.1	3.9	6.9	67.3	3.9	(437)
Other	15.8	14.0	42.1	10.5	17.5	(57)

migrants moved for housing. But it is 20.2% for migrants for 40-44 age groups, and again increases to 25.6% for 45-49 age groups. This can be explained by the fact that a large proportion of household, particularly urban household does not own their houses and thus housing stability is relatively low. The 2005 census reported that among urban households about a half (51.6%) owned their houses, and 25.7% were living in houses with key money deposit and 20.6% paid monthly rent. But the housing price in the urban areas, particularly in the Capital Region has been increasing continuously, the tenant has to pay more key money or rent when they renew the housing contract for every two years. Therefore, the low housing ownership rate and hike of housing price may cause frequent move for housing reason.

The family reason shares a large proportion for migrants aged 25-29 and 30-34. It is 28.8% for age group 25-29 and 23.5% for 30-34. This relatively high proportion of family reason for move in these age groups is attributable to marriage. The proportion of family reasons for move is the highest for the migrants aged 60 and over. Among others return migration to hometown after retirement, widowhood, living together with children may be the prime causes.

Level of education appears not to affect much for the reasons for move. For only those migrants who have a junior college and a university level of education show high proportion of education reasons for move. But in this case education level is not a cause but an end

result of the migration. Unlike the education level housing tenure status affect significantly to reasons for move. Those migrants who owned their houses are more likely to move for job (36.7%) and for education (26.8%). But for those who do not own houses, more migrants moved for job and also for housing reasons as compared with migrants of home owners. This implies that relatively weak stability of both job and housing among lower socio-economic status group may push them to move more frequently for job and housing reasons.

As expected, reasons for move are varied with marital status. Singles are more likely to move for family and education reason, but for married couple job and housing are more important. Economic activity at the time of migration also influences distribution of reasons for move. Migrants who were working at time of migration tend to move frequently for job related reasons (46.1%) and for family reasons (21.5%). For housewives family reasons are most important, and most (67.3%) of the students migrated for education reasons.

4. Causes of Migration for the Capital Region.

This chapter deals particularly with the causes of migration in the Capital Region. The Capital Region in Korea denotes areas including the capital city of Seoul, Incheon special city, and surrounding Gyeonggi province. Excessive concentration of population as well as key central functions in the Capital Region has always been an important policy issue in Korea. In this respect, we need further empirical evidences on the causes of population concentration in the Capital Region.

<Table-3> Reasons for Move of Migrants for the Capital Region

	Job	Housing	Family	Education	Other	N
In-migrants to the Capital Region	51.2	3.4	18.9	21.9	4.7	(768)
Out-migrants from the Capital Region	47.0	12.9	21.7	10.0	8.4	(738)

<Table-3> summarizes reasons for migration for those in and out migrants to and from the Capital Region. In the table we can find some differences in reasons for move between in and out migrants. First of all, in-migrants to the Capital Region were induced by the good

opportunities in job. More than a half (51.2%) of the in-migrants moved into the Capital Region for job. Among them 20.4% migrated to seek and take a new job, and 17.8% moved for transfer of work place. This implies that the Capital Region provides many job opportunities for the young migrants.

The second important reason for move to the Capital Region is for education. Altogether 21.9% of the in-migrants to the Capital Region moved for education reasons. When we look at the education reason more detail, we can find that in-migrants to the Capital Region moved for their own education. More than 18% of the in-migrants came into the Capital Region for their own education, while only 3.0% moved for education of children. About 19% of in-migrants moved for family reasons. Of these 'to live close to the family', 'due to marriage' and 'because of hometown' share almost the same proportion.

When comparing reasons for move of out-migrants with those of in-migrants, we can find that the proportion of job related reasons is somewhat less for the out-migrants from the Capital Region. Many out-migrants from the Capital Region moved out for transfer of work place (17.1%), as well as for seeking and taking a new job (12.2%).

In contrast to the in-migrants, the second major reason for move for the out-migrants is family reasons. Of them 6.0% moved out 'due to marriage' and 4.7% moved out from the Capital Region 'to live close to the family'. Unlike the in-migrants to the Capital Region, housing reasons stand for third place for the out-migrants. About 13% of the total out-migrants moved out for housing reasons. Among them 4.3% moved because of 'to buy their own houses for the first time' and 2.0% moved out due to 'housing rent is too high'.

Overall, we found some differences in the reasons for move between in-migrants to and out-migrants from the Capital Region. In-migrants to the Capital Region are more likely to be induced by the job opportunities as well as the quality education provided by the Capital Region. Instead out-migrants moved out from the Capital Region for transfer of work place and for family reasons.

5. Selectivity of Migration for the Capital Region

<Table-4> shows various socio-economic characteristics of the different migration groups in the Capital Region. The first two groups are in and out migrants of the Capital Region. To examine selectivity of those in and out migrants of the Capital Region, we have to compare with non-migrants of both in the Capital Region and in the Non-capital Region. However, unfortunately we cannot secure information on the non-migrants of both regions.

Consequently, the table includes those who moved within the same district both in the Capital and Non-capital Region as a proxy for non-migrants.

Sex distribution of the different migration groups reveals that males are predominant than females in the sample, because most of the household head in the ordinary household are males. When we compare sex distribution between in and out migrants, we can find that males are more likely to move out from the Capital Region than females.

As for selectivity of sex, there have been slight differences only in the Capital Region. The propensity for move is slightly higher for females than males in the Capital Region.

The table also indicates sharp differences in the age distribution between migrants and non-migrants. Both in and out migrants are much younger than non-migrants. Among in-migrants to the Capital Region, 21.6% are aged 25-29, and early 20s and early 30s also represented for about 18% of the total in-migrants to the Capital Region. But it is interesting to note that out-migrants from the Capital Region are slightly older than in-migrants. Out-migrants from the Capital Region are mostly in their ages at late 20s and 30s. More than 60% of them moved out from the Capital Region in these age groups.

As for the education level big differences can be observed between migrants and non-migrants. When we compare the proportion of those who at least have university level of education, we found that about 35% of the migrants have a higher level of education while only about 20% of the non-migrants have. It is quite natural that because education, particularly for the higher education, is one of the major reasons for migration, the level of education of migrants should be higher than that of non-migrants.

It is also interesting to see that there are basically no differences in education level between in and out migrants for the Capital Region. This implies that concentration of population in the Capital Region does not affect much for the accumulation of human capital in the Non-capital Region.

The housing tenure status among different migration groups is not comparable, because the housing ownership rate is much higher in the Non-capital Region than in the Capital Region. But we can compare it between migrants and non-migrants within the same region. The result shows that the housing ownership rate is much higher for the migrants than the non-migrants both in the Capital and Non-capital Regions. If we

<Table-4> Selectivity of Migrants for the Capital Region

In-migrants to the Capital Region	Out-migrants from the Capital Region	Within the Capital Region	Within the Non- capital Region
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Sex				
Male	75.1	80.4	82.1	75.9
Female	24.9	19.6	17.9	24.1
Age				
- 20	9.0	3.7	0.3	3.9
20 - 24	17.8	12.3	6.7	15.4
25 - 29	21.6	20.2	14.9	13.4
30 - 34	17.7	24.0	18.9	15.0
35 - 39	13.2	16.4	22.5	15.3
40 - 44	7.2	8.1	12.8	11.2
45 - 49	3.4	3.8	8.4	7.8
50 - 59	6.8	5.8	10.5	9.5
60	3.3	5.7	5.1	8.5
Education				
Primary	6.1	5.4	10.3	12.9
Middle	7.6	9.0	15.3	15.6
High	40.7	41.2	49.0	42.6
Junior college	10.5	9.8	5.2	7.0
University+	35.1	34.6	20.2	21.9
Housing Tenure				
Own	48.4	34.7	22.3	18.9
Free	9.9	7.3	5.6	4.7
Key money	26.3	44.4	49.3	37.9
Rent	15.3	13.5	22.8	38.4
Size of Housing(Pyeong)				
- 10	23.2	22.6	38.2	50.2
10 - 19	29.4	35.4	36.7	30.1
20 - 29	34.1	29.4	18.0	15.0
30 -39	9.1	9.3	4.9	3.4
40 - 49	2.5	1.6	1.3	0.9
50	1.7	1.6	0.8	0.4
Marital Status				
Single	45.8	36.4	23.4	31.3
Married	50.2	57.2	68.4	57.8
Divorce/widowed	4.0	6.4	8.2	10.8

Economic Activity				
Employed	61.8	75.9	92.3	77.8
Unemployed	2.9	2.0	1.0	1.3
Housewife	9.3	7.7	2.8	4.7
Student	23.7	11.9	2.0	13.9
Other	2.3	2.4	2.0	2.4

assume that the housing ownership rate is a proxy for the socio-economic status, then there might be a positive selectivity of socio-economic status in migration

This positive selectivity of socio-economic status in migration is also found in the distribution of size of housing among migrants groups. Here one Pyeong is equivalent to 3.3 square meters. The figures in the table clearly indicate that size of the housing at the time of move for the migrants group is much bigger than the non-migrants group.

Reflecting the age differences between migrants and non-migrants, migrants are more likely to be a single when compared with non-migrants. Also since in-migrants are younger than out-migrants, the proportion of single is higher for in-migrants than out-migrants.

Economic activity by migration status also shows different distribution. The proportion of employed of the migrants is lower than that of the non-migrants. This is because migrants group includes a number of student and also housewife. Therefore, it can be noted that student and unemployed are more likely to migrate than other categories of the economic activity.

6. Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to examine causes and selectivity of internal migration in Korea. Using the 1997 Special Migration Survey data, the paper first analyzed reasons for move for four groups of movers; movers within same district, movers within same city and county, migrants moved to different cities and counties, and migrants moved to different provinces.

Results of the analysis revealed that reasons for move varied with the distance they moved. Short distance movers tend to move predominantly for housing reasons, and to some extent for family and job related reasons. Instead for migrants who moved in relatively long distance, job related reasons are the most important, and then family and housing reasons.

The paper also compared reasons for move of the migrants with their various socio-economic characteristics. We found that males are more likely to move for job related reasons while females tend to move more frequently by family reasons especially for marriage. Reasons for move are also varied with age groups. The most of youngsters move for their education. But after the age at late 20s, job related reasons became the prime causes of migration.

Housing tenure status also affect significantly to reasons for move. Migrants who owned their houses are more likely to move for job and for education. But among those who do not own houses, more migrants moved for job and also for housing reasons. It is quite evident that relatively weak stability of both job and housing among lower socio-economic status group may push them to move more frequently for job and housing reasons. Marital status also affects reasons for move. Singles are more likely to move for family and education reason, but for married couple job and housing reasons are more important.

The analysis found some differences in the reasons for move between in-migrants to and out-migrants from the Capital Region. In-migrants to the Capital Region are more likely to be induced by the job opportunities as well as the quality education provided by the Capital Region. Instead out-migrants moved out from the Capital Region moved for transfer of work place and for family reasons.

The last part of the paper dealt with selectivity of migration for the Capital Region. Of various socio-economic characteristics age, education, housing tenure status, size of housing revealed sharp differences in propensity to move. Migrants are much younger than non-migrants, and people with higher level of education are more likely to move. The result also shows that the housing ownership rate is much higher for the migrants than the non-migrants both in the Capital and Non-capital Region. The positive selectivity of socio-economic status in migration is also confirmed by the size of housing.

These findings of the analysis may have some policy implications. First of all, it was ascertained that population concentration in the Capital Region has been induced largely by job opportunities. Consequently, providing enough jobs in the Non-capital Region is the most important for the balanced regional development. In this respect, the government should shift the policy directions from control for the concentration of functions in the Capital Region and relocation of them to the Non-capital Region, to create massive job opportunities in the Non-capital Region.

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