

Fragmentation: The cost of remittances of Paraguayans living in Argentina

María Alejandra Fantin¹

Eduardo Bologna²

Norma Cristina Meichtry¹

Since the last decades of the twentieth century, international migration has assumed demographic, social and cultural patterns different from those historically recognized.

Numerous authors have raised the concept of "transmigration" and "transmigrants" to describe these new ways and forms that mobility of population assumes worldwide (Tilly, 1990; Smart, 1999; Portes, 1997 and Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992). "Transmigration differs from the traditional forms of migration, because it involves the consolidation of new social spaces that go beyond the communities of origin and destination. It means the transnational expansion of the area of communities through social practices, artifacts, and transnational systems of symbols. Unlike temporary migration, transmigration does not define a temporal situation, but reflects the materialization of multi-local spaces and transnational communities, where in addition, migrant status changes completely." (Canales and Zolniski, 2000).³

The emergence of transnational communities involves, first of all, that migrants develop an important social network that includes familiar, economic, social, organizational, religious and political relationships, that are beyond the national borders.

As noted by Portes (1997) transnational communities form a solid system of social networks that goes beyond political boundaries, and they are developed by migrants as a way of survival and a search for social recognition and economic progress. These networks rely on bonds and kinship ties, friendship, and above all, on community identity.

In addition to persons and community, the family appears as one of the main units of analysis for this new modality of migration. Transnational families are defined as a household unit in which some members are living at the country of origin and others are in the country of destination, but all of them keep connections and relationships between them, particularly survival and economic ties.

¹ Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET). Argentina.

² Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Argentina.

³ Our translation

The transnational family, unlike other new forms of family, does not arise as election of its members, but as a consequence of macrostructural conditions (migration policies, for instance.), as an adaptation of the family to a new context. At family level, this situation implies a major restructuring of relationships between its members. The transnational family lives in a constant renegotiation of its internal dynamics, struggling for its reunification. (Pascale, 2006) relationships

This new family situation raises questions about the growing numerical and social presence of the transnational families and their possible implications on the idea of traditional family model in Paraguay. Do transnational families emerge as a new way of adaptation of the family to migration processes? Are the economic contributions in terms of remittances, justify the cost of family fragmentation?

"From an optimistic perspective, although it remains yet as an unresolved issue, emigration abroad has, as one of its consequences, the inflow of remittances to support origin country economic development, as well as they are an important mechanism of subsistence and poverty alleviation for the recipient families. However, this phenomenon underlies the national work hand drain, reduces labor supply, incentives the voluntary inactivity, as well as produce moral and emotional damages related to family breakdown that negatively affects migrant and no-migrants children and adolescents." (Borda and Gonzalez, 2009).⁴

A study by González and Denis (2007) shows that international migration leads to changes in family structure at Paraguay, pushing the entry of relatives as grandchildren, nieces, the daughter or son-in-law with children or without children, among others, into the family resulting in the formation of extended family units⁵.

To answer the questions listed above, it is necessary to explore in greater depth and breadth, the impact that migration is having not only on the economic future of families in Paraguay, but also in social and cultural construction of such families. However, it is also needed a greater contribution to the knowledge of the basic characteristics of migrant (e-migrant) population, especially using information collected at the households of urban communities and rural locations of the principal of origin of the migrant population of Paraguay.

⁴ Our translation

⁵ Cited by Borda and Gonzalez (2009)

In this regard, this paper presents initial information on general demographic characteristics of population that has e-migrated from four administrative jurisdictions (departments) of Paraguay, recognized as the most highly related to the ongoing processes of migration in the country.

This paper set out the main countries of destination, age and sex composition of migrants and their relationships to education, urban / rural origin and destination countries.

Sources of Information

Besides of secondary information that is properly mentioned in the text, the main information source used for this study is the Paraguayans Emigration Survey (*Encuesta de Emigración de Paraguayos - EEP2008*) conducted in September and October in 546 households located in 31 urban and rural locations at the following administrative departments: Central, Caaguazú, Itapúa and Alto Paraná. The departments were selected, based on data from the Household Survey (EPH), (DGEEC, 2007), according to their greatest potential both as expelling population (measured as a percentage of households with migrants) and as receiving remittances.

The survey enquires about characteristics of each urban or rural location (services, community activities, major economic activities), households (composition, housing, education, and members occupations), remittances (receiving yes/not, amount, frequency, usage, way of reception), migrant networks (people known in other countries, type of support that is received or offered), family members abroad and previous international migration experience.

Interviewed households belong to different categories: with and without e-migrants at the survey moment, with and without migration experience of some members, recipients and non recipients of remittances, and households in different stages of the life cycle. All of these conditions made possible to establish comparisons at different levels.

This survey was conducted in a cooperative way between the Center for Advanced Studies⁶ and the Geo-History Research Institute⁷, both from Argentina, the UNFPa

⁶ Centro de Estudios Avanzados, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba

⁷ Instituto de Investigaciones Geohistóricas, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas

Paraguay and it also has the support of the Association for the Study of Population and the General Statistics, Surveys and Censuses Direction, both from Paraguay.

Sample design

To establish the sample design it was used the database of the Household Survey (EPH 2007) to better understand the distribution and concentration of households by department, taking into account migration experience (at least one household member abroad) and also the receipt of remittances .

Taking into consideration that according to EPH 2007 the number of households receiving remittances is slightly higher than those with at least one member outside the country, we decided to take the pattern of remittances reception as a criterion for selecting the departments in which it would be applied the survey questionnaire for research.

At the beginning, it were selected the departments Central, Itapúa and Caaguazú, concentrating 53% of households receiving remittances in the country. On this basis we proceeded to distribute a total of 400 cases, ensuring the inclusion according to their proportions of urban and rural areas. Looking at the budgetary performance and with the desire to cover as many departments as possible to better reflect the experience of emigration, it was included Alto Paraná, which is the fourth department in order of receiving remittances jurisdictions, completing a total of 100 cases.

Finally, the survey collected information from 546 households (divided into 31 primary units of sampling - UPM⁸) distributed as following:

Table 1

Total surveyed households according to department and urban-rural areas.

Department	Urban	Rural	Total
Caaguazú	52	56	108
Itapúa	60	60	120
Central	152	58	210
Alto Paraná	63	45	108
Total	327	219	546

Source: Elaborated from. EEP2008

⁸ UPM: Unidades Primarias de Muestreo in Spanish

Questionnaire design

The questionnaire consists of the following sections searching: migration history, family and social networks, internal and international migration experience, in addition to the reception of remittances.

Section 1: Characteristics of the population

Section 2: Characteristics of Housing

Section C1: Known people living in other countries

Section C2: Other children not currently living at home

Section C2 b: Abroad migration experience of all members of the household

Section C2 c: Abroad migration experience of parents and siblings of the head of the household

Section C2 d: Migration experience of the head of the household

Section 3: Receiving Remittances

Methodology for collecting information

The survey was applied every 2 households in urban areas and in every household in rural areas, all along.

- The survey was implemented in urban and rural Paraguayans households which currently have or have had a relative or any known people living abroad or which receive or have received remittances from abroad sometimes.

- Interviews were applied to the household head or his/her spouse.

- The fieldwork was conducted in two campaigns. The first one counted with three teams, each one of them integrated by a supervisor, three interviewers and a driver for the case of Caaguazú, Itapúa and Central. The second campaign was conducted with only a in the Alto Paraná department.

- The interviewers were monitored by their Supervisors and a Field Coordinator, depending all of them of the Project General Coordination.

- The daily production of each interviewer was 5 interviews per day.

- The questionnaires were revised and ordered according to UPMs, controlled and delivered to a database construction and statistical processing.

Survey results

Of total number of surveyed households, 148 reported having a member living abroad at the time of the survey.

Of the total number of households receiving remittances (157), 65% (102 households) reported having a household member living abroad and 35% reported having known peoples in a foreign country.

113 households have revealed one or more children living in Argentina⁹ and 32 households with children in Spain¹⁰.

Because of the number of households with children in Spain, we decided to make comparisons between households with migrants in both countries.

Demographic characteristics of migrants

Sex composition

The demographic characteristics of migrants show a clear difference regarding the sex composition of migrants to Spain or Argentina.

Survey data confirm that the presence of women in Paraguay mobility to Spain far exceeds that of men. Women are more than 75% of children from households that have declared to have one or more children in Spain¹¹.

In relation to sex composition of children emigrated to Argentina, we found a more equitable distribution. According to the EEP2008, 51% were male and 49% were women. Consistent with previous data from the Household Survey for 2007¹² shows a mostly male (53% vs 47%). However, population census data from Argentina in 2001 indicated that 58% of Paraguayan migrants were women and 42% were men (Borda and Gonzalez, 2009). The difference is not significant and all types of information show a better balance between Paraguayan migrants of both sexes in Argentina.

Table 2

Sex composition of Paraguayans migrants to Argentina

Source	Male	Female
Paraguayan Emigration Survey (EEP2008)	51	49

⁹ At the total of 113 households listed, there are 239 children living in Argentina.

¹⁰ The 32 households registered 45 children living in Spain.

¹¹ Taking the national population census of Spain, and considering that there could be underreporting of immigrants in this source of information, data, similar to the EEP2008, realize that 66% of Paraguayan immigrants are women and 34% are men. (Borda and Gonzalez, 2009)

¹² EPH 2007 (Encuesta Permanente de Hogares) at Paraguay

Household Survey 2007 (EPH DGEEC, Paraguay)	53	47
National Census of Population and Housing 2001 (INDEC, Argentina)	42	58

Sources: Prepared from EEP2008, DGEEC 2007 e INDEC 2001

At present, the global migration flows show a significant trend towards the feminization due mainly to the massive incorporation of women to labor market which has led, as a consequence, to the feminization of labor force in a growing trend since the middle of the seventies.

"Traditionally women's presence in this process (migration) was related to family reunification, but at this time, many women migrants have left the role of mere companions; they are now the main providers of income or they are the heads of households. According to studies by the United Nations, women represent 48.6% of international migration"¹³(Moreno Egas, 2006:124).¹⁴

Table 3

Sex and age composition at destination of Paraguayan migrants

	Argentina	Spain
Percentage of males	51,9 %	22,2 %
Total average age	22.9	22.9
Average age of women	21.8	23.4
Average age of men	24.0	21.1

Source: Prepared from. EEP2008

Age composition

With regard to the age composition, the data show an essentially young people emigration. The survey showed that the average age of Paraguayans at the moment of leaving towards other country was, on average 22.9 years, with no observed differences between the two most common destinations: Argentina and Spain.

¹³ Between 1960 and 2005, percentage women among international migrants increased by nearly 3 percentage points from 46.7% to 49.6%, reaching a total of about 95 million, according to the World Bank publication "The International Migration of Women" (2007), by Andrew R. Morrison, Maurice Schiff and Mirja Sjöblom

¹⁴ Our translation

We are talking about young people in economically active and productive age¹⁵. Such migration would indicate that it is not family reunification, because there is not a high proportion of children. Mostly it seems to be displacements in search of job.

The negative economic and family impact of young people expulsion is usually greater in rural areas. "Around 83% of rural emigrants are young. Moreover, adults 30 years and older, constitute 25% of emigrants. This number together with the number of young emigrants represents up to 7% of the workforce out of the country. " (Borda and Gonzalez, 2009)¹⁶

While there are no evidences of important differences in the mean average age of migrants by place of destination, the survey shows a discrepancy between average age of men and women.

Women have a lower average age than men when the destination is Argentina, which is reversed for overseas migrants.

Level of Instruction

According to data from the Household Survey (EPH) of 2007, every 100 Paraguayans going abroad, 33% have between 1 to 6 years of schooling; 17.1% have from 7 to 9 years; 40% between 10 to 12 years of regular studies and 9% with a higher level of education (13 to 18 years of study). According to the geographical areas of origin, migrants from rural areas are characterized for having only elementary level of schooling, 1 to 6 years of formal education (44.3%). Those from cities or urban areas, usually have high school level of formal education, 10 to 12 years of study (48.7%). (Borda and Gonzalez, 2009).

There is a significant difference among migrants according to destination. Emigrants to Argentina have predominantly elemental level education (63%) and those who go to Spain have a higher degree of education with a predominance of high school level (60%). It is also important to say that there are at least three points of difference in number of migrants over 12 years of formal education; that is tertiary level and / or college education in favor of Spain destination.

Table 4

¹⁵ Over the past five years, 74.2% of migrants were young people between 15 and 29 years of age. They represent 5% of the workforce of 2007 in Paraguay (Borda and Gonzalez, 2009)

¹⁶ Our translation

Years of formal education as the destination of migrants Paraguayos.

Years of schooling	Destinations		Total emigrants
	Argentina	Spain	
1 to 6 years	63,4	24,4	57,2
7 to 9 years	8,8	8,9	8,8
10 to 12 years	24,8	60,0	30,4
more than 12 years	2,9	6,7	3,5

Source: Prepared by. EEP2008

This seems related to area of origin, given that usually in urban areas levels of schooling are higher than in rural areas¹⁷. Moreover, this difference is directly related to the characteristics of each of the labor markets for different types and levels with different requirements and niche of migrant labor.

Comparing the level of formal education in number of years of education of migrants to Spain and Argentina with the population from 20 to 29 years of age residing in Paraguay in the 2002 census (Table 5) shows that:

Emigration to Argentina, with a primary education complete / incomplete (1 to 6 years) is at the same level as the rural population of Paraguay, while that of Spain was assimilated to the urban population.

Another fact of interest is the high 60% of migrants with secondary education complete / incomplete emigrants to Spain and, finally, the percentage of population with tertiary education to 12 years is higher among immigrants, particularly Spain, which among the resident population in Paraguay, which gives evidence of the skill level of those leaving the country.

Table 5

Educational attainment of population 20 to 29 years of age by place of residence, urban-rural

Years of schooling	Total	Urban	Rural
uneducated	2,6	1,6	4,2
1 to 6 years	41,6	28,1	63,7

¹⁷ "Most of the rural migrant remains in the traditional line to Argentina (81.8%), although a smaller percentage but not less significant (14.8%) had inserted into the flow of migrants to Spain. Meanwhile, more than half of urban migrants targets Argentina and 38% to Spain. " (Borda and Gonzalez, 2009)

7 to 9 years	15,4	16,8	13,1
10 to 12 years	22,9	29,8	11,7
more than 12 years	16,0	21,8	6,5
1 to 6 years	1,2	1,5	0,6

Source: Prepared by. National Census of Population and Housing 2002

About remittances

A very important feature of transnational families are the links between its members by sending and / or receipt of remittances and / or exchange of goods for household consumption and / or marketing in the other country. Remittances sent by migrants constitute the largest direct positive impact of migration on areas of origin of migrants. "If the work is considered as export, these remittances represent the payment for the export of labor services that returns to the country of origin." (Taylor, 2002:

According to the study of IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2007) the total global remittances in 2006 exceeded 300 billion dollars (300 billion dollars). Asia was the continent's number one with \$ 114 billion, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean with \$ 68 billion, then Eastern Europe with \$ 51 billion, Africa with \$ 39 billion and the Middle East with U.S. \$ 29 billion.

The study estimated that during 2006, Paraguay received \$ 650 million in remittances¹⁸.

A public opinion survey on remittances in Paraguay, carried out by the Inter-American Development Bank in 2006 (IDB, 2006) revealed that more than half the money is sent to Paraguay in Europe, while 22% comes from other Latin America (mainly Brazil and Argentina) and 19% for the United States. The average amount received from the United States is U.S. \$ 340, compared with \$ 320 from \$ 185 Europe and Latin America.

According to data from the Household Survey of 2007 about 11% of households in Paraguay (158 thousand households) receive financial support from a relative who lives abroad.

The consequences of migration for the communities of origin are quite important, although there is debate about whether the effects are positive or negative. Until the 1980s emphasized the negative, arguing that migration cut the workforce, exacerbated

¹⁸ It is further estimated that in 2005 the entry money remittances in Paraguay totaled \$ 550 million, eight times the total foreign direct investment (FDI) and tourism revenues.

social inequality and dependence, which restricts the possibilities of a local endogenous development. Since then it has tended to emphasize the positive impacts, particularly the potential of remittances sent by migrants when they are used for productive investment (Canales, 2006).

According to data obtained in the EEP2008 of total households reported receiving remittances, 81% said to use the money primarily to cover food and clothing and only 8.3% for savings or investment.

Table 6

Principal value of money from remittances. Cuadro 6

	%
Cover food and clothing	81,5
Paying for education of children or grandchildren	3,8
Pay health expenses (operation or medical treatment)	6,4
Buying land to build a first home itself	1,3
Purchase goods for the job (tools, vehicle work, etc..)	2,5
Buy another field, a business or rental property for	0,6
Savings in the bank	3,8

Source: Prepared by. EEP2008

Even when the expectations that are generated around the remittances are quite overvalued, it is important to note that remittances indeed play an important role in shaping the income of households, mainly in the goal of overcoming poverty and social and economic positions scalar high. (Borda and Gonzalez, 2009)

Conclusions

The Emigration Paraguayos Survey was conducted in 546 households located in urban and rural jurisdictions Paraguay presents the greatest potential for migration in the present and the highest remittance receiving.

Initial results showed that Argentina continues as the first destination for emigration from Umbrella and Spain is in second place.

The age of migrants is that of young adults around 23 years of age and half is dominated by men in the movement for women in Argentina and destined for Spain. There is a

significant number of children that suggests that labor migration is basically no movement and family reunification.

The number of years of formal education is lower when the migrants are from rural areas and are destined for Argentina, with a majority in primary schooling. By contrast, migration to Spain is the largest source of urban population with more years of education, mainly at secondary level. This shows a distinct insertion in the labor markets of both countries. Also noted is the highest percentage of population with higher education, for residents in Paraguay as compared to the 2002 census.

Like a vast majority of situations of migration and sending money to relatives in the world, including in the case of immigrants from Paraguay, the use of the funds arrive as remittances are overwhelmingly (80%) for the maintenance by buying food and clothing. The use of money for health, education and savings is in the order of 3% of respondents. Investments in land, housing and means of production are very limited, which also weakens the importance of remittances their ability to boost the economy of the communities of origin.

Bibliography

- BID (Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo). (2006). *Estudio de Opinión Pública sobre las remesas en el Paraguay*.
<http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=817260>
- BID (Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo). 2006. *The Politics of Policies. Economic and Social Progress in Latin American 2006 Report*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. [[Links](#)]
- Borda, Dionisio y Cynthia González (2009) “La emigración internacional de paraguayos y sus efectos actuales en el origen” Trabajo presentado a la Fundación Konrad Adenauer (Rio de Janeiro) en el marco del Programa Regional Políticas Sociales en América Latina- SOPLA.
- Canales, Alejandro y Christian Zolniski (2000) “Comunidades transnacionales y migración en la era de la globalización” *Simposio sobre migración internacional en las Américas*. San José, Costa Rica
- Canales, Alejandro. (2008) “Globalización, Transnacionalismo y Multiculturalismo. Claves para el entendimiento de la migración internacional en la sociedad contemporánea” En: . Celton, Dora, Mónica Ghirardi y Enrique Peláez (Eds). *El Nexo entre Ciencias Sociales y Políticas: Migración, Familia y Envejecimiento*. UNESCO y Centro de Estudios Avanzados de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Córdoba, Argentina. Vol 1, pp. 247-270
- Glick Schiller, Nina, Linda Basch y Christina Blanc-Szanton (eds.) (1992). *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration*. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, vol. 645.
- Glick Schiller, Nina; Linda Basch y Cristina Szanton-Blanc, (1992). “Transnationalism: a New Analytical Framework for Understanding Migration”. En. N. Glick

- Schiller; L. Basch y C. Szanton-Blanc, eds. *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration*. p.1-24. New York Academy of Sciences. N.Y.
- González, C y Denis, M. 2008. *La emigración internacional: beneficios o costos para las familias? Un análisis cuantitativo y cualitativo del caso paraguayo*. UNFPA (En prensa).
- IFAD (2007) *Sending money home: Worldwide remittances to developing countries*. Roma, Italia.
- Moreno Egas, Jorge (2006) "Feminización del fenómeno migratorio Ecuatoriano" *HAOL*, Núm. 11 (pág. 121-132)
- Morrison Andrew R., Maurice Schiff y Mirja Sjöblom (2007) *The International Migration of Women* Palgrave Macmillan , World Bank.
- Ojeda, Norma "Familias transfronterizas y familias transnacionales: algunas reflexiones" *Migraciones Internacionales*.
- Pascale, Pablo (2006) "Familia transnacional" *Relaciones* Edición en Internet N° 109. Montevideo.
- Portes, Alejandro. (1996): "Globalization from below." *Latin America in the World Economy*, Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, pp. 151-168. 2
- Portes, Alejandro. (1997). "Immigration theory for a new century: some problems and opportunities". *International Migration Review*. Winter 1997, v31, n4, p799.
- Taylor J. E. (2002). "Migración: nuevas dimensiones y características, causas , consecuencias e implicancias para la pobreza rural". FAO. *Temás actuales y emergentes para el análisis económico y la investigación política (CUREMIS I)*. Roma Italy <http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/x9808s/x9808s07.htm#TopOfPage>
- Tilly, Charles (1990): "Transplanted Networks". In Virginia Yans-McLaughlin (Eds.) *Immigration Reconsidered. History, Sociology and Politics*. New York. Oxford University Press.