Migration attempts:
Who tries, who succeeds, who fails?
Evidence from Senegal

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European public and policy debate emphasise fear of the “African invasion”

BUT Sub-Saharan African migrants in Europe (still) a minority (e.g. <1% of immigrant population in France in 1962, 12% in 2006; 4% in Spain; 8% in Italy)

WHY?
- Do people not attempt to migrate?
- Do people start an attempt but fail or abandon the attempt?
- ...data collected only on migrants at destination or only on non-migrants at origin may not tell the full story
Research objective

- Analyse attempts & migration of Senegalese to Europe jointly
  - Which factors determine migration attempts?
  - Which factors affect the realisation of attempts?

Are they the same?
Do failed and successful attempters differ?
What matters when in the migration process?

- Definition of “attempt”
  - Stated migration intention + concrete steps towards migrating
Migration decision-making: theoretical background

- Microeconomic migration theories:
  - Re-evaluations of expected returns and costs are implicit in the process of information gathering: focus on observed behaviour

- Social psychology:
  - Typologies of decision-making “stages” from vague wish to attempt with observed actions:
    - Decision and realisation are separated in time
  - Theory of reasoned action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980):
    - Stated intentions are main predictor of behaviour; plus facilitators and constraints
Previous studies often “lack” one group

- Observed migration behaviour only: failed attempts are grouped with individuals who never considered migration.
- Intentions only: neglects disparities between stated and observed behaviour.

Decision rule:

- **Intention/attempt**
  - **t₁**
  - **t₂**

- **Not migrate**

- **Migrate**
  - **No intention/attempt**
“Migration between Africa and Europe” Survey (2008)

- Non-migrants + Returnees
  - Senegal
  - Spain
  - Italy
  - France

- Current Migrants

- In Senegal, sample which is representative of Dakar region (n=1067)
- In Europe, mix of probabilistic and non-probabilistic (quota) sampling methods (n≈200 in each country)
- Household and biographic surveys with annual retrospective data on a wide range of topics (family, activity, housing, migration etc...)
- Identical questionnaires at origin and destination
How are attempts and migration measured?

- Biographic survey contains:
  - Module on unsuccessful migration attempts:
    - “Have you already taken concrete measures to leave and settle in a different country, without, however, having so far been successful in getting there?”
  - If yes:
    - year of start, if project abandoned and when, envisaged destination, concrete steps taken, open questions on motives of departure, destination choice, as well as abandonment
  - Migration module: start of migration attempt and which steps were taken
### Analysis sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome: attempt</th>
<th>Event: migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-attempters (n=868)</td>
<td>No attempt /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfruitful attempters (n=102)</td>
<td>Attempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful attempters (n=641)</td>
<td>Attempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of individuals</td>
<td>1611</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Limited to attempts and migrations to France, Spain or Italy

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MAFE - Migrations between Africa and Europe
Methods

- Decision rule suggests bivariate probit with sample selection (event migration not observed for non-attempters)

\[
y_{1it}^* = x_{1it}'\beta + Pol_{1it}'\delta + Econ_{1it}'\gamma + \epsilon_{1i}, \quad y_{1it} = 1 \text{ if } y_{1it}^* > 0, 0 \text{ otherwise} \\
y_{2i}^* = x_{2i}'\gamma + Pol_{2i}'\delta + Econ_{2i}'\gamma + \epsilon_{2i}, \quad y_{2i} = 1 \text{ if } y_{2i}^* > 0, 0 \text{ otherwise, and if } y_{1it} = 1, \\
y_{2i} \text{ unobserved when } y_{1it} = 0 \\
(\epsilon_{1it}, \epsilon_{2i}) \sim N_2[(0,0), (1,1), \rho] 
\]

- How to integrate time?
  - Attempts equation: discrete-time duration framework (t subscripts)
    - collapses to binary probability model
    - From age 10/from beginning of 1970s till 2008 for non-attempters (censored)/the year in which attempt started for attempters
    - n=37,164 person years;
  
- Migration equation:
  - Years too coarse a measure, would need monthly information
  - Characteristics in last year of attempt/before departure

- Exclusion restrictions
Explanatory variables (I)

- Individual and family-level (mostly time-varying):
  - Human capital: formal education, previous migration in Africa
  - Financial resources: subjective household resources; occupation
  - (Migrant) Social capital: migrant networks; affiliation to Mouride brotherhood
  - Family situation/life-cycle: age; marital status; dependent children; at least one brother (breadwinner) in the household
  - Separate models for men, women not possible; sex only control variable
Explanatory variables (II)

- Contextual variables (mostly time-varying):
  - Destination variables: average value in attempts equation, destination-specific in migration equation
  - Change in destination/origin GDP per capita ratio
  - Change in unemployment rate at destination
  - Policy variables (...see next slides)
  - Inflation rate in Senegal

- Exclusion restrictions (only in attempts equation):
  - Inflation rate, at least one brother in HH, n° of children
  - Not great but so far nothing better available

- Attempt characteristics (only in migration equation):
  - motive; steps to obtain documents
Explanatory variables (III): Immigration policies

- **Aim:** immigration policy indicators comparable across time (1970-2008) and countries (France, Spain, Italy)

- **Method:**
  - Policy texts versus policy outcomes → choice: policy texts
    - Establish list of indicators related to ENTRY (approx. 40 variables);
    - define indicator categories (-1, 0, 1);
    - score exhaustively policy changes
  - Aggregation by thematic block of indicators
Immigration policies

- Texts from 1970s and 1980s extremely hard to get (never published in Italy)
- First version today: limited number of indicators (18), 4 aggregated variables
  - **Illegal immigration**: readmission agreements, retention centres, extraordinary & permanent regularisations
  - **Entry short stays**: tourist visa, motivation of refusal; requirements (economic, housing, health)
  - **Family reunification**: legal possibility, requirements (sponsor’s residence, economic, housing), eligibility (parents, polygamous relationships, sequential)
  - **Work immigration restrictions**

- Weighting? Time (lags, anticipation)? Stay indicators? Validity over time?
- Do we expect policies to matter?
## Findings – Human, financial, social capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attempt</th>
<th>Migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary edu (ref. no schooling)</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary edu (ref. no schooling)</td>
<td>0.37***</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous mig experience in Africa</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td>-0.44**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient HH resources (ref. more than sufficient)</td>
<td>0.12**</td>
<td>0.51**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just sufficient HH resources (ref. more than sufficient)</td>
<td>0.20***</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient HH resources (ref. more than sufficient)</td>
<td>0.213***</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers/Self-employed (ref. wage-employed)</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No income earner (ref. wage-employed)</td>
<td>-0.12***</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of network in F, I, ES</td>
<td>0.19***</td>
<td>§</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network, not at destination (ref. no network)</td>
<td>§</td>
<td>-0.40***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network in destination country (ref. no network)</td>
<td>§</td>
<td>0.53***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouride religion (ref. Other)</td>
<td>0.09***</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cont’d…
## Findings – Family/life cycle & attempts characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attempt</th>
<th>Migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time 16-25 years since age 10 (ref. &lt;=15 years)</td>
<td>0.25***</td>
<td>§</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time &gt;25 years since age 10 (ref. &lt;=15 years)</td>
<td>-0.16***</td>
<td>§</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>§</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (ref. male)</td>
<td>-0.10**</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married/in union</td>
<td>0.18***</td>
<td>0.33*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married/in union*Female</td>
<td>-0.13*</td>
<td>-0.55*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children 0-12</td>
<td>-0.07***</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother lives in household</td>
<td>0.09***</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt motive is “Find a job” (ref. Other)</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>-0.56***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied for/obtained papers (ref. other action)</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>0.65***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cont’d…
## Findings - Context variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attempt</th>
<th>Migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inflation rate SN</td>
<td>-0.012***</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year average change in ratio GDP pc (F+I+ES)/SN</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>§</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change ratio GDP pc destination/SN</td>
<td>§</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change unemployment rate (mean F-I-ES)</td>
<td>-0.12***</td>
<td>§</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change unemployment rate (destination country)</td>
<td>§</td>
<td>-0.18***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less restrictive policies towards illegal immigration</td>
<td>-0.30**</td>
<td>0.74**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less restrictive entry policies</td>
<td>-0.15**</td>
<td>0.58***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less restrictive family reunification policies</td>
<td>-0.39***</td>
<td>0.93***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less restrictive work immigration policy</td>
<td>-0.42***</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.62***</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With and without policy variables: what changes?

❖ Correlation between two processes
  • 0.54** without policies
  • 0.16 with policies

❖ Most estimates & sign. levels of other covariates differ little, but:
  • Change in GDP ratio (negative for attempt, positive for migration) not anymore stat. significant when including policies
Conclusion, limitations and further research

- Distinction between attempts and subsequent departure provides insights into “how migration determinants work”: stimulating an attempt or contributing to its realisation

  - More educated males who perceive that their household is in financial difficulties, with previous migration experience and network connections are more likely to attempt to move to Europe
  - BUT: sex and education do not explain actual migration; the poorest are not those who move, and only country-specific migrant social capital and migration-specific human capital turns out to be helpful
  - Immigration policies seem to have indeed an effect on the realisation of the migration plan, but do not discourage attempts
Limitations and further research

- Data and methodological limitations:
  - Underreporting of attempts possible (retrospective data)
  - Modelling of attempt duration not possible
  - Small samples, separate models for men/women not possible – also try to make model more parsimonious
  - Focus on individual as decision-maker

- Next steps:
  - Improve policy indicators
  - Continue search for better exclusion restrictions
  - Review macroeconomic indicators & possibly origin-country factors
Comments, questions...

CONTACTS

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Considerable amount of research on the determinants of migration intentions as proxy for actual migration (on Senegal: Van Dalen et al., 2003); “intention” → varying degree of firmness

Very few papers linking intentions or attempts and international migration behaviour (Gardner et al., 1985; Van Dalen and Henkens, 2008; McKenzie et al., 2007)
At what stage do “determinants of migration” come into play?

- Focus on start of attempt and migration
- Which “determinants” at what stage?
  - Resources: Human, financial, social capital
  - Family/life-cycle factors
  - Context at origin and destination (economic, political)
  - Attempt characteristics – effort/seriousness
- Determining factors vary over time/may be re-evaluated by the decision-maker
At what stage do “determinants of migration” come into play?

- **Intention** = stated, at origin
  - Values and norms, push-factors, socio-demographic characteristics

- **Attempts** = observed behaviour, at origin
  - Cost-benefit evaluation: resources (financial, human, social capital); family situation; origin & to less extent destination context

- **Migration** = observed behaviour, at destination
  - Re-evaluation of costs, benefits, constraints and facilitators; changing conditions; “effort” put into the realisation of the attempt

Focus is on these stages
Case: Senegalese migration

❖ Volume of migration
  • Approx. 480 000 = <5% of Senegalese abroad (Global Migrant Origin database, 2000 census round)
  • One out of two households in Dakar with migration experience (current migrants or return migrants in the household; MAFE survey)

❖ Diversification of destinations
  • Until 1980s mainly to West and Central African countries and to France
  • Then: increasingly to countries without historical or linguistic links (Italy, Spain, US)
Senegalese migrant stocks in France, Italy and Spain