

Preface

Aims

This book seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- provide clear definitions of migration concepts and present a literature-based foundation for the study of internal migration in South Africa;
- provide a comprehensive overview of internal migration (based on recent census and other secondary data, mostly those provided by Statistics South Africa);
- introduce techniques and approaches that can be used to analyse data on internal migration;
- provide guidelines for questions on internal migration in future censuses and other surveys; and
- help to pave the way for the questionnaire survey to be undertaken as part of the larger project on the causes of migration.

As a work it is rather technical so it is aimed at analysts (e.g. academics, students and researchers) and decision makers dealing with migration issues rather than at the general public. It should appeal to those with a 'feel' for figures and, preferably, some basic knowledge of statistics.

Overview

What is immediately clear from the research undertaken for this book is that despite political and economic changes, migration patterns are essentially a continuation of patterns that pre-date the abolition of apartheid in South Africa. A more substantive finding derived from the analyses is that relationships and patterns of migration are complex.

At times the relationships demonstrate great continuity, for example the apparent continuation of migration rates set 20 years ago by segregationist policies. At others, established trends are discontinued, for example in the unexpected prominence of migration from metropolises to non-urban areas. There is discontinuity also in the role played by distance, with one pattern evident in the population of the former homelands and another in the non-homeland population. One source of misunderstanding is the divergence in absolute numbers and rates. Rates of migration appear to be contradictory. How the population is distributed by location, area type and political heritage (setting the social dimension aside) has to be borne in mind when examining the data.

In the past, South Africa lacked suitable data on internal migration. This meant that historical trends could not be analysed to the extent required in a country that underwent such notable political, social and economic changes during the final decade of the 20th

century. The only available historical data on internal migration were those for the period 1975–80, but these were flawed by the exclusion of data in respect of the former homelands of Transkei, Bophuthatswana and Venda.

Census '96 provided a welcome change by making available, for the first time, data on internal migration for the entire country and population. This new source of data has invited the undertaking of appropriate analyses. However, the prior absence of suitable data has obstructed the development of experience in the analysis of migration data over time. This calls for some guidance on techniques for using national data on internal migration and for examples of the kinds of analyses that can be undertaken. This book aims to address these needs.

Chapter 2 deals with the theories and models of migration. Although the underlying (root) causes of migration are predominantly economic in nature, there are some very important non-economic (mainly social) reasons why migration is often perpetuated and sometimes becomes systemic. Non-migration is seen as the result of constraints to migration caused, among other things, by the costs associated with moving (especially over longer distances) and by personality characteristics (such as aversion to risk-taking). Very often, non-migration is caused by – and almost inevitably leads to – an *in situ* adjustment to the current situation, irrespective of how unattractive that may be.

In Chapter 3 the patterns of internal migration are analysed in relation to urbanisation and metropolisation trends in their historical context and with reference to the role of apartheid. The concentration of people and poverty in the former homeland areas and the resultant high population densities in these 'rural' areas were discussed. The economic anomaly of high unemployment and low out-migration rates was highlighted. The importance of regional (spatial) planning and development for the provision of economic opportunities and services in these hitherto deprived areas should again be emphasised.

The two main types of migration that have been identified are 'migration' and 'labour migration'. The reason for separating these two lies more in the data constraints than in any inherent conceptual or definitional differences. In fact, the general migration typology discussed in Chapter 2 treats these two migration types as very much the same thing. The data are not that tolerant though. In the analyses in Chapter 4 that deals with 'migration', the main question addressed is why some people migrate and others not. The analyses on 'labour migration' in this chapter deal mainly with a similar question, namely why some people become labour migrants and others not. Various explanations for migration and non-migration are offered, but in the end the questions remain largely unanswered, mainly owing to the absence of suitable data.

Despite the data problem, an attempt is made in Chapter 4 to compare the basic migration patterns for the two five-year periods (1975–1980 and 1992–1996) for which relatively comparable information is available. The only analyses that are viable in view of the data constraints are those dealing with the different levels of migration among the various age and population groups. The findings indicate that despite dramatic political, social and economic changes in South Africa (including the abolition of apartheid's migration-related measures such as influx control and group area demarcations), there was an insignificant change in the overall level of migration between the late 1970s and the early 1990s.

A 'modified' gravity model is applied in Appendix D, and it is shown that unemployment, income and racial differentials seem to play a lesser role in inter-provincial migration than crime levels. An analysis of the 1997 October Household Survey data (see Appendix D) shows that a slight majority of moves were caused by economic factors (especially work-related reasons), but that the remaining moves had been caused by non-economic factors. The results of the modelling attempts reported in Appendix D are inconclusive and even confusing. This highlights, once again, the need for 'purpose-made' data for the analysis of migration causes and patterns. This need should be addressed to a large extent by the HSRC-funded questionnaire survey that will be undertaken as part of the larger project.