Dynamics of internal and international migration drivers: a study of Colombian labor migration

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Bachelor Thesis

BSc Political Science

Faculty of Social and Behavioural Science

Thesis Seminar: Global Migration
Supervisor: Dr. Katharina Natter

Date: 24/12/2021
Word Count: 7979

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Introduction

In the last decades, migration research seems to be too narrowly focused on either internal migration or international migration. Examining one form of migration without the other, is looking at only one part of the story and results in misinterpretation (King et al., 2008). These migration forms both have their own and similar dynamics and are able to influence each other (King et. al., 2008). King & Skeldon (2010) add to this, that migrants' travels are becoming increasingly diverse, complex, and fragmented, and that therefore, the line between domestic and international movements is getting increasingly blurred. Differences and dynamics of driving factors behind internal and international migration are rarely researched in combination. Therefore, this thesis aims to complement and contribute to the literature on both drivers for internal and international migration combined. The focus of this thesis will be on drivers behind internal and international labor migration, specifically in Colombia.

When thinking about Colombia, most people think about cocaine trade, Pablo Escobar and political instability. Migration is not the first theme when thinking about this South-American state. Both internal and international migration are, however, prominent parts of Colombia's culture and economy. Historically Colombia has been tortured by decades of internal conflicts, which caused large internal and international migration streams of Colombians. However, according to Ibáñez & Vélez (2008), Colombian migration cannot always be explained simply by internal conflict and violence. Even when experiencing violence, people are still considering other aspects of life in their decision to migrate or not, such as economic and labor opportunities. Labor migration has been an important part of Colombian migration in the last 70 years. Nowadays, labor is still one of the main reasons for Colombians to migrate abroad (Cancillería de Colombia, 2020). In 2020, 5.6% of the total Colombian people lived abroad (Migration Data Portal, 2020). The United States and Spain are the most popular destination countries. Internal labor migration is a common phenomenon in Colombia as well. Besides violence, domestic movement was largely caused by labor opportunities in different urban parts of the country. In 2020, 80.8% of the total population of Colombia resided in urban areas (Migration Data Portal, 2020).

I will explore the role of two prominent theories in migration studies – social capital theory and the New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM) theory – in understanding similarities and differences between international and international labor migration in Colombia. My research question will be as follows:

'To what extent can the social capital theory and the NELM theory explain internal and international labor migration in Colombia?'

Two hypotheses have been formulated for each theory. These hypotheses are descriptively examined, and conclusions are drawn based on the findings. The role of prior migratory experience as a driver of new migration and the importance of the strength of social migrant networks will be investigated for the social capital theory. The NELM theory will be investigated by looking into relative deprivation as a migration driver and the effect of family structures on migration.

Prior migratory experience, I find, mostly explains new internal migration but not necessarily migration abroad. The strength of social migrant networks has a significant impact on understanding international migration. For both domestic and international migration, relative deprivation is not a substantial explanatory factor. Migration decisions are, however, influenced by family structures.

The outline of this thesis will be as follows. First, I'll go over the literature on the debate over 'internal versus international' migration drivers. Secondly, I'll give a general overview of migration theories. Following that, I'll lay out a theoretical foundation for two of the most promising migration theories for studying labor migration drivers: social capital theory and the New Economics of Labor Migration. I'll next go into the dataset and variables I employed, as well as my method of analysis. Following that, I'll present the outcomes of my analysis and review my hypotheses. Finally, I will discuss the implications of my thesis and provide recommendations for further research.

Literature Review

Internal versus international migration debate

In order to understand the drivers behind internal and international migration it is important to understand the dynamic between these two types of migration in the existing literature. I will start by explaining the internal versus international migration debate. Secondly, I will set out the linkages between the two types of migration.

Debate

As is briefly mentioned in the introduction, existing migration research is often internally split; international migration is studied apart from internal migration and vice versa (King et al., 2008; King & Skeldon, 2010). Skeldon (2017) argues that the magnitude of internal migration is heavily underestimated and in existing literature is rarely linked to international migration. There has been literature on the drivers of people to either migrate internally or abroad, but scholarship rarely focuses on why migrants choose one of the two options.

Linkages

King & Skeldon (2010) argue that the distinction between international and internal migration becomes increasingly blurred. It is therefore important to explore the linkages. Korgelli (1994) states that both internal and international migration are positively associated with economic growth. Therefore, he concludes that migration decisions are mostly based on socio-economic factors rather than purely a survival strategy (Korgelli, 1994). Bohra & Massey (2009) share this idea. They argue that internal and international migration motivation are both explained by differences in regional labor demand and supply. Migrants maximize their utility by relocating to areas where the expected gains from their labor are highest. Skeldon (2017) claims that internal and international migration are often linked. For the Americas, Skeldon (2017) states that international migration generated internal migration, impacted by colonialism. He also states that rural-urban migration is often motivated by the idea of eventual migration from the cities abroad. He argues that internal migration processes are linked as well. Rural-urban migration results in prior migrants or native citizens pushed away, out towards the periphery, known as suburbanization, or more rural parts of the country (Skeldon, 2017, p. 5). He concludes stating that internal and international migration interact in a complex and ever-changing way.

There seems to be a gap in the literature examining internal and international migration jointly. In the light of the dynamics and linkages between these two forms of migration, this form of research requires more attention. It is to this debate that my thesis seeks to contribute to.

Migration Drivers

In order to understand existing literature on migration drivers it is important to set out the main theories of migration. Historically, two of the most important migration theories were the neoclassical migration theory and the historical structural approach. In neoclassical theory, on the macro-level, migration is a result of regional disparities in labor supply and demand. At the micro level, the theory views migration as a rational individual choice based on a cost-benefit analysis in order to maximize income (Castles et al., 2014). According to the historical-structural approach, a reaction to neoclassical theory, migration is a means of mobilizing cheap labor for capital, which serves primarily to raise profits while depriving origin places of essential labor and skills (Castles et al., 2014). The New Economics of Labor Migration and Social Capital Theory are both reactions to the theories mentioned above. For my thesis I am mostly interested in the influence of family structures and individual characteristics on migration. NELM and the social capital theory are the most promising theories to describe these micro- and meso-level migration drivers. These theories will be examined and applied to my research question in this thesis. In the theoretical framework section, I'll go through them in further detail.

Van Hear et al. (2018) emphasize that in order to understand migration processes and to make migration policy it is necessary to understand migration drivers. The concept of migration drivers is fairly new and is becoming more and more dominant since the 2000s, progressively replacing the term 'migration causes' because causality in migration is difficult to determine (Carling & Collins, 2018). The change from 'causes' to 'drivers' enables for more in-depth examinations of the complex processes that affect migration (Carling & Collins, 2018). According to Czaika and Reinprecht (2020) migration drivers are structural elements that can facilitate, enable, limit, and initiate migration processes. Migration drivers are decisive in the choice of migration, choice of migration route and migration destinations. Migration drivers influence migration directly, but also, indirectly (Czaika & Reinprecht, 2020). Drivers are not static but influence each-other and ultimately determine migration decision-making.

Existing literature distinguishes between migration drivers in different ways and sets out the content differently. Black et al. (2011) view migration drivers to consist of five driver families. They argue that economic, social, political, demographic and environmental drivers eventually decide migration. These drivers interact. Castelli (2018) divides migration drivers into 3 different levels, namely micro-, meso- and macro-level. Micro-level drivers include individual characteristics such as education, marital status and religion. Meso-level drivers include technology to communicate and diasporic links. Kuhnt (2019) adds migration culture, migration networks and access to information to the meso-level. Macro-level drivers include political, demographic, socio-economic and environmental factors, similarly to the 'driver families' of Black et al. (2011). Carling and Talleraas (2016) see migration drivers as a concept that includes the mechanisms that eventually result in migration outcomes. This thesis will specifically look at micro- and meso-level migration drivers.

Theoretical Framework

In this section I will describe the two theories used for my thesis. For each theory, I will specifically focus on two components and will accompany them with a hypothesis.

Social Capital

Migrant network theory is one of the most promising theoretical frameworks to understand differences and dynamics of internal and international migration. Massey et al. (1993) define migrant networks as sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and potential migrants. They are mostly connected through family ties and friendship or a shared community origin (Massey et al., 1993, p. 448). These networks cause a form of social capital that lowers the costs, risks and reluctance of people who desire to migrate and influences their migration decision-making (Castles et al., 2014, pp. 39-41). I will divide the social capital framework in a 'presence versus absence' of migration networks part and a 'strong versus weak' network part.

Presence versus absence of social networks

Existing literature argues that the presence of a social network is an important driver for both internal and international migration. Reher and Silvestre (2009) and Garip (2008) conclude that the likelihood of domestic migration increases with the availability of social migrant networks. Kandel and Massey (2002) and Van Dalen and Henkens (2008) argue that both family history of international migration and presence of social networks influence the desire of young people to migrate internationally. Massey and Riosmena (2010) add to this that migrant networks play an important role in the occurrence of undocumented migration abroad (Massey & Riosmena, 2010, p. 316).

    According to Creighton (2013) and Fussell (2004), having a social migrant network can both explain the desire for domestic and international migration. Social networks can influence domestic moves towards more urban parts of the country (Creighton, 2013, p. 87). When looking at migration history of the household, Creighton (2013) interestingly found that there is not necessarily a positive relation between a history of members of the household migrating abroad and the desire of emigration of other household members. However, domestic migration was stimulated by international migratory experience of the household. Fussell (2004) also argues that the presence of social migrant networks abroad stimulates internal migration, especially to urban areas (Fussell, 2004, p. 964). Based on the literature, I

would assume that having a social network both influences Colombian internal and international migration. I expect the following to be true:

H1: 'The presence of social capital in the form of social migrant networks explains both domestic and international migration in Colombia.'

Strong versus weak social migrant networks

One of the first researchers to look into strong and weak social ties was Granovetter (1973). In his paper, he claims that the most fruitful micro-macro bridge is the investigation of processes in interpersonal networks. Especially in the context of labor migration, the strength of network ties becomes increasingly important (Giulietti et al., 2018). Strong ties, according to Giulietti et al. (2018), are characterized as strong bonds between people; for example, family and friends. People with a similar cultural background or acquaintances could be characterized as weak ties.

The statement that the strength of migrant ties is significant for migration decisions is supported by Massey and Riosmena (2010), Reher and Silvestre (2009), and Garip (2008). Some researchers (Massey & Riosmena, 2010; Reher & Silvestre, 2009) argue that 'strong' migrant relationships have a greater influence on potential internal migrants' decision-making than 'weak' ones. Zhao and Qu (2021) argue that having strong network linkages have a significant favorable impact for first-time internal migration. When people already have migration experience, however, weak networks have a greater encouraging effect on migrating a second time than strong networks.

In his study, Creighton (2013) claims that having tight relationships with family, or strong ties, predicts both a desire to migrate domestically and internationally. Furthermore, even the most basic migrant network explains international migration. In conclusion, I anticipate the following for Colombian migrants:

H2: 'Both 'strong' and 'weak' social ties are important for migration in the context of migrant networks, for both domestic and international migration. However, 'strong' ties are more influential.'

NELM Theory

The NELM, short for New Economics of Labor Migration, was introduced in response to the flaws of the neoclassical migration theory. In essence, according to the NELM, migratory motivations are not solely driven by individual economic considerations. According to the theory, an individual's decision to migrate is influenced by the family or home in which he or she lives. Households view migration as a risk-spreading strategy because it allows them to diversify their income sources (Castles et al., 2014, p. 38; Massey et al., 1993). NELM also claims that migration is a response to relative deprivation rather than absolute poverty. Having a lower socioeconomic standing than members of one's own community can be a powerful motivator for people to migrate in order to climb the social ladder (Castles et al., 2014, p. 38).

Relative deprivation

As previously stated, one of the NELM theory's components is the assumption that migration is a reaction to relative deprivation rather than absolute poverty. Czaika and de Haas (2012) and Skeldon (2002) argue that according to NELM, people and households migrate not only to enhance their income in absolute terms, but also to improve their income relative to other households. Migration propensities will be favorably connected with inequality in origin societies and negatively correlated with inequality in destination societies (Czaika & de Haas, 2012, p. 425). That also explains why migrants will be prepared to take-up low-paying employment that is degrading in the view of natives as long as the origin community or society remains the main reference group (Czaika & de Haas, 2012, p. 425). They conclude that absolute poverty constrains emigration.

Skeldon (2002) and Stark (1984) state that for the poorest people internal migration is a more common strategy than international migration. The poorest cannot afford to risk losing everything because of migration, which always entails some transportation fees and the abandoning of the few assets the poorest may have (Skeldon, 2002, p. 71).

Stark and Taylor (1991), however, find evidence in researching Mexican-US migration patterns that relative deprivation is positively related to international migration. They find no clear positive relation for relative deprivation and internal migration (Stark & Taylor, 1991). Hyll and Schneider (2014) and Stark and Yitzhaki (1988) find a positive relation between relative deprivation and labor migration motivation in general.

Despite some conflicting conclusions in existing literature, I expect the following:

H3: 'Colombians who feel relatively deprived have a higher chance to migrate both internally and internationally.'

Migration as a family decision

Another component of the NELM theory is that it states that migration is not an individual choice but that it is influenced by the household or family in which an individual lives (Castles et al., 2014; Massey et al., 1993). Within these family structures gender and marital status are important drivers for migration.

Gubhaju and de Jong (2009) analyze the role of gender and marital status on migration decision-making in the context of family structures in South Africa. They conclude that unmarried men and women are more likely to migrate for their own future, while married males are more inclined to relocate in the short term to optimize household income. Married men and women are both more inclined to migrate in the long term in the hopes of reducing household risk (Gubhaju & de Jong, 2009). These findings add to the understanding of how family practices and individual aspirations interact. Mendola (2012), while investigating internal and international migration from rural areas, states that female migration becomes more and more accepted and the probability of females migrating for household benefits increases. Coe (2011) and Hoang (2011) find that in societies with more traditional and unemancipated family roles, married fathers are more likely to migrate both internally and internationally than their women. In patriarchal societies it is easier for men to migrate because they have the authority and the social network resources to do so (Hoang, 2011). Coe (2011) adds that women are often left behind to take care of the children while the men are working abroad or in urban areas. Hoang (2011) states that married women base their migration decision mostly by the decisions of their husbands or (male) siblings. Bylander (2015) focuses on migration as a household decision and specifically on migration pressure for youth and the role of gender. Men and women who refuse to migrate despite family pressure experience varied social responses. People seem to be more understanding of women staying because of traditional family structures, whereas men often face negative social reactions (Bylander, 2015, p. 1133). This indicates that married men face greater (social) pressure to migrate than women. Conclusively, the existing literature on the role of family structures in migration decision-making suggests the following:

H4: 'Married people are more likely to migrate both internally and internationally than unmarried people, additionally married men are more likely to migrate than married women.'

Methodology

Case selection

As stated in the introduction, this thesis will address the shortcomings of the current literature on internal versus international migration drivers. In my research, a country of study was chosen that has both high numbers of internal and international migration. Because of this, the results will be largely generalizable. The choice fell on Colombia, partly because of the availability of 1 dataset that deals with both internal and international migration simultaneously.

Historically, the high migration rates in Colombia can be explained by internal conflicts and violence. It is important to note, however, that for the past 20 years, economic opportunities and employment chances have been the main reasons for migrating within Colombia or abroad. According to Silva et al. (2007) 40% of the total population has migrated towards urban centers in the last decades. Besides violence, domestic movement was largely caused by labor opportunities in different urban parts of the country. Domestic migration in Colombia resulted in a demographic transformation totally different from other Latin-American countries. The internal migration flows were concentrated to multiple urban centers and not just one main city (Silva et al., 2007, p. 69).

International labor migration has also been an important part of Colombian migration in the past 70 years. The international labor migration was roughly divided in three waves. First, highly educated Colombians migrated to the US, this was followed by Colombians migrating to Venezuela and most recently, lower- and middle-class labor migration to Spain. Nowadays, labor migration is still one of the main reasons for Colombians to migrate abroad (Cancillería de Colombia, 2020). In 2011, it was estimated that 85.7 per cent of Colombian emigrants, migrated in search of employment and better economic opportunities (IOM, 2011). In 2020, as many as 3 million Colombians are living outside of Colombia (Migration Data Portal, 2020).

Overall, Colombia is an interesting country to study due to its high labor migration rates. The country also has a unique historical context of internal violence, but as Ibáñez & Vélez (2008) argue Colombian migrating decisions are not solely based on conflicts and violence. In addition, the dataset of the Latin American Migration Project (LAMP, 2016) offers me the opportunity to study internal and international migration simultaneously, the main aim of this thesis.

Data

I will make use of the Colombia dataset of the Latin American Migration Project (LAMP). They conducted survey research from 2008 until 2016 of Colombian migration. The dataset used, contains survey data of 14 communities surveyed in Colombia, with a total of 2,801 households. In addition, they surveyed 33 Colombian households in the United States, and 189 Colombian households in Spain. In total between 2008 and 2016, 14,958 people were interviewed, 47.3 % were male and 52.7 % were female. The accompanying documentation of the survey suggests that the survey data is solely focused on labor migrants: *'Migration trips are defined as those that involve work and the active search of work'* (LAMP, 2016).

Social Capital

To explore H1 (*'The presence of social capital in the form of social migrant networks explains both domestic and international migration in Colombia.'*), I will use information on personal prior migration experience from the [PERS FILE], particularly the variables *Total number of international migrations (ABTRIPS)* and *Total number of Colombian migrations (DOTRIPS)* (LAMP, 2016). I consider that when the total number of domestic or international trips of individuals is 1 or higher, an individual has prior migration experience and therefore the access to a social migrant network (for example help and information given by another member of the household). It must be noted that the dataset has its limitations. Unfortunately, no file with variables on relations of the individual who migrated both internally and internationally was found. Therefore, prior domestic and international migratory experience of the individual is used. Given the limitation of concluding on the presence and absence of social migrant networks based on individual migratory experience, I will stick to descriptive analyses and not draw general conclusions.

H2 (*'Both 'Strong' and 'weak' social ties are important for migration in the context of migrant networks, for both domestic and international migration. However, 'strong' ties are more influential.'*) will be answered by using information on the role of 'strong' and 'weak' social ties in individual's migration journey contained in the [MIG] file. MIG is a cross-sectional file for each head of household that migrated internationally. Unfortunately, in the dataset there is no comparable data available for domestic migration. Given this limitation, I will solely draw conclusions for international migration in this section. Of this file, 4 variables will be used: *Relations: Lodging from whom upon arrival on first trip, Employment:*

How job was obtained, Finances: Who provided financial help on first trip, Finances: Who provided financial help on last trips. The lodging variable describes whose accommodation the migrants could use during their first international trip. I recode the variables' options to be able to clearly distinguish help through weak and strong ties (see table 1.1).

NELM Theory

To test the two hypotheses of the NELM Theory, namely relative deprivation and family structures, I will use variables from the [PERS] File. [PERS] is a person-level file that provides general demographic characteristics and information on domestic and international migration (LAMP, 2016). For H3 (*'Colombians who feel relatively deprived have a higher chance to migrate both internally and internationally'),* the variable *Wage (for last formal job in Colombia)* will be used. The average wage of the respondents will be calculated and everybody who has a wage below this average will be considered relatively deprived. Additionally, the variables of *Total number of international migrations (ABTRIPS)* and *Total number of Colombian migrations (DOTRIPS)* will be used to determine whether relative deprivation leads to more migration.

For H4 (*'Married men are more likely to migrate both internationally and internally than married women'*), the variables of *marital status* and *sex* will be used.
It is important to note that, when using the PERS file, a lot of information was missing for respondents aged 17 or below and 61 or higher. Therefore, when using the PERS file, people that will be reviewed will be aged 18 – 60. People whose age is unknown and deceased people will also be excluded from the sample. This results in a total of 10,104 respondents. This range will also best cover individuals who are individually able to make migration decisions.

Table 1.1 summarizes the variables used for each of the hypotheses, as well as their main characteristics.

Table 1.1: *Variables used in analyses (including recoding)*

Hypothesis	Survey file used	Variables used	Options (if recoded, see footnote)	Sample size
H1	PERS	total number of Colombian migrations		4,951
	PERS	total number of international migrations		4,951
H2	MIG	Relations: Lodging from whom upon arrival on first trip	Strong ties, weak ties, did not need help, other, the bank[1]	420
	MIG	Employment: How job was obtained	Strong ties, weak ties, searched by oneself, contracted, paid a friend/fellow home-community member, through an employment agency, 'pick-	420

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[1] The original options were recoded as follows: Friends and relatives will be regarded as 'strong' ties and will be option 1. Fellow home-community members, and the employer will be regarded as 'weak' ties and will be option 2. Option 6 and 7 will remain as they are, but will be option 3 and 4 now. The bank will remain option 5, as they will most likely provide financial help.

			up' on street corner[2]	
	MIG	Finances: Who provided financial help on first trip	Strong ties, weak ties, did not need help, other, the bank[1]	420
	MIG	Finances: Who provided financial help on last trip	Strong ties, weak ties, did not need help, other, the bank[1]	420
H3	PERS	Wage (for last formal job in Colombia)		1852
	PERS	total number of Colombian migrations		1852
	PERS	total number of international migrations		1852
H4	PERS	Marital status	Unmarried, married[3]	10,104
	PERS	Sex	Male, female	10,104

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[2] Again, friends and relatives will be recoded into 'strong' ties. A fellow home-community member and a coyote (a migrant smuggler) will be recoded into 'weak' ties. Searched by oneself will be option 3. Option 6,7,8 and 9 will remain the same, they only will be option 4,5,6 and 7. The original option 7 will not be included in either strong or weak ties as is it a payment. The role of strength of social ties and the help migrants receive from them, in my opinion, should be measured as a form of un-conditionality.

[3] The original options were recoded as follows: Never married, Widowed, Divorced and Separated will be merged and recoded as unmarried; Married (Civil or Religious) and Consensual union will be merged and recoded as married. Deceased and Unknown will be excluded from the analysis.

Method of analysis

I will analyze Colombian domestic and international migration drivers found in the survey data to answer my hypotheses and research question. The analysis form will be mainly descriptive. The findings in my survey data will be supported, questioned or nuanced by available literature and existing theories on the subject of international and internal labor migration.

Analysis

The analysis of this thesis will be divided into two parts. The first part will focus on the social capital theory and the role of migrant networks to explain internal and international migration. The second part will focus on the NELM theory and to what extend relative deprivation and family structures are able to explain internal and international migration in Colombia.

Social Capital Theory

Prior migratory experience

Summary of findings

This analysis shows that prior migratory experience domestically is more influential for migrating internationally than prior international migration experience is for migrating domestically. It also suggests that prior domestic migration experience more often leads to new domestic migration than international prior migration experience leads to new international migration experience.

Prior migratory experience (domestic and international migration)

For the first test (table 2.1), I use the data of respondents who have migratory experience, either domestically or internationally (N=4951). The results show that of the people who migrated domestically or internationally at least once, 71.9% (N = 3559) never migrated internationally. This means that only 19.1% (N = 946) never migrated domestically. This suggests that prior migratory experience domestically is more influential for migrating internationally than the other way around. These results also show that 9% (N=446) migrated at least once domestically and at least once internationally.

Table 2.1: *Domestic and international migration combined (at least one domestic or international migratory experience)*

	Total number of Domestic Migrations (N=4951)		Total number of International Migrations (N=4951)	
Migrations	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0	946	19.1	3559	71.9
1+	4005	81.9	1392	28.1
Mean number of migrations	1.19		0.31	

Domestic prior migratory experience

For the second test (table 2.2), I only look at prior domestic migratory experience. Of the 4,005 respondents who domestically migrated at least once, 71.9% (N = 2879) never migrated domestically again. This means that for 28.1% prior domestic migration experience resulted in new domestic migration experience. The results of the influence of prior domestic migratory experience on international migration also gives interesting results. The results show that of the people who migrated domestically at least once, 88.9% (N = 3559) never migrated internationally. This means that only 11.1% of the Colombians who migrated domestically at least once, also migrated internationally at least once.

Table 2.2: *Domestic and international migration (at least one domestic migratory experience)*

Migrations	Total number of Domestic Migrations (N=4005)		Total number of International Migrations (N=4005)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
0	-	-	3559	88.9
1	2879	71.9	408	10.2
2	708	17.7	32	0.8
3	238	5.9	2	0.0
4	96	2.4	2	0.0
5+	84	2.1	2	0.0

International Migratory Experience

For the third test (table 2.3), I only look at prior international migratory experience. Of the 1,392 respondents who internationally migrated at least once, 92.1% (N = 1282) never migrated internationally again. Only 7.9% migrated again after their first international migratory experience. The results also show that 68.0% (N = 946) never migrated domestically. This means that 32.0 % of the respondents who migrated at least once internationally, migrated at least once domestically. Compared to only 11.1% of the Colombians who migrated domestically at least once and also migrated internationally at least once, this suggests that domestic migration is likely to be a step forward towards international migration but not the other way around.

Table 2.3: *Domestic and international migration (at least one international migratory experience)*

Migrations	Total number of International Migrations (N=1392)		Total number of Domestic Migrations (N=1392)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
0	-	-	946	68.0
1	1282	92.1	305	21.9
2	89	6.4	92	6.6
3	11	0.8	26	1.9
4	5	0.4	8	0.6
5+	5	0.4	15	1.0

Weak versus strong social networks

For the second part of the social capital theory, I'll look at three separate aspects of the role of social ties in migrant social networks in international migration. I'll investigate who helped migrants with lodging, employment, and financially on their first and last trips.

Summary of findings

The results show that for all the variables used to test the hypothesis (*both 'strong' and 'weak' social ties are important for migration in the context of migrant networks, for both domestic and international migration. However, 'strong' ties are more influential.'*) the likelihood of receiving help from 'strong' ties is significantly higher than that of receiving assistance from 'weak' ties for international Colombian Migrants.

Relations: Lodging from whom upon arrival on first trip

The results of who assisted migrants with lodging (see table 3.1) support my hypothesis. We see that of a total of 420 household heads, 62.4% (N = 262) indicated that strong ties, for example a friend or relative, helped them with lodging. This is a lot compared to only 11.0% (N = 46) who indicated that they received help from a weak tie, for example a home-community member. Interestingly, 18.8% (N = 79) indicated that they did not need help, whether they received help is unclear from the dataset, I would assume not, otherwise they would have filled in something else.

Table 3.1: *Lodging from whom upon arrival on first trip*

Type of relation	Frequency	Percentage
'Strong' tie	262	62.4
'Weak' tie	46	11.0
Did not need help	79	18.8
Other	19	4.5
Bank	1	0.2

Note: N=13 were system missing (3.1%)

Finances: Who provided financial help on first trip and last trip

Next, I explore who in the social network of a migrant offered financial help on their first trip. Again, we see that 'strong' network ties were much more important than 'weak' network ties. Up to 40.2% (N=169) of the respondents indicated that they received financial help from 'strong' ties on their first trip. Only 4.8% (N=20) indicated that they received financial help from 'weak' ties. Interestingly, 44.8% (N=188) answered that they did not need financial help on their first trip. The results are similar for the last trip: 37.4% (N=157) of the respondents indicated that they received financial help from 'strong' ties on their last trip. Only 4.3% (N=18) indicated that they received financial help from 'weak' ties. For many international migrants their first trip abroad was also probably the last and therefore the numbers are similar.

Table 3.2: *Finances: who provided financial help on first and last trip*

Type of relation	First trip		Last trip	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
'Strong' tie	169	40.2	157	37.4
'Weak' tie	20	4.8	18	4.3
Did not need help	188	44.8	189	45.0
Other	7	1.7	7	1.7
Bank	19	4.5	19	4.5

Note: N=17 were system missing (4.0%) for the first trip, N=30 (7.1%) for the last trip

Employment: How job was obtained

Lastly, I look at the role of the strength of ties on how a job was obtained (see table 3.3). Also, here, we see that the influence of 'strong' network ties is far more influential than 'weak' network ties. A total of 46.9% (N=197) indicates that 'strong' ties helped them finding a job. Only 1.9% (N=8) answers that 'weak' ties helped them find a job. Interestingly here as well, 33.6% (N=141) indicates that no help was needed and that they searched for a job themselves.

Table 3.3: *Employment: How job was obtained*

How?	Frequency	Percentage
'Strong' tie	197	46.9
'Weak' tie	8	1.9
Oneself	141	33.6
Contracted	29	6.9
friend/community member (paid)	-	-
Employment agency	6	1.4
'Pick-up' on street corner	-	-

Note: N=39 were system missing (9.3%)

Social Capital conclusions

Prior domestic migration experience leads to new domestic migration experience more frequently than prior international migration experience leads to new international migration experience, according to the study. Additionally, prior domestic migratory experience is more influential for migrating internationally than prior international migration experience is for migrating domestically, according to the analysis of the significance of prior migratory experience. As is addressed in the data section I will not draw generalized conclusions on the role of the presence of social networks (H1) based on the limitations of my dataset.

The results of the analyses on networks strength are clear and suggest that the availability of a strong social network is more influential for migrants than the availability of a weak social network. This corresponds with my hypothesis (*'Both 'Strong' and 'weak' social ties are important for migration in the context of migrant networks, for both domestic and international migration. However, 'strong' ties are more influential.'*) and with the findings in existing literature (Massey & Riosmena, 2010; Reher & Silvestre, 2009).

Relative deprivation

Summary of findings

The analysis of the influence of relative deprivation on migration shows that for domestic migration, relatively deprived people are more likely to migrate than not relatively deprived people. However, this difference is not significant. For international migration, the results show that relatively deprived people are less likely to migrate than not relatively deprived people. This difference is significant.

Analysis

For this analysis, I excluded respondents whose last wage is unknown. Unfortunately, in the dataset the wage unit is not the same for every respondent. The most frequent wage unit is monthly. Therefore, I will only select respondents who earn their wage per month and people who do not earn wage at all. 1,852 respondents fit this description. The average wage of them is 673,548 (N=1852) Colombian pesos per month. This average will be used as a reference amount of wage. Any respondent with lower wage earnings than this average will be considered feeling relatively deprived.

Based on this average wage, the total number of relatively deprived respondents is 1,203. 27.6% (N=512) of the respondents is unemployed. This means that 65.0% of the total 1,852 respondents with known wage per month for their last formal job in Colombia can be considered relatively deprived compared to other Colombians, unemployed included.

Relative deprivation and domestic migration

When looking at the total number of domestic migrations of household heads considered relatively deprived, we see (table 4.1) that 47.5% (N=571) never migrated internally and that 52.5% (N=631) migrated domestically at least once.

It is important to compare this result to the statistics of people who do not feel relatively deprived. In total there are 649 respondents who earn 673,548 Colombian Pesos or more, and can thus be considered to not be relatively deprived. When looking at the total numbers of domestic migration we see that 48.4% (N=314) never migrated internally (table 4.1). We also see that 51.6% (N=335) of the respondents, domestically migrated at least once.

These findings both support and contradict to my hypothesis, as we see that the percentage of people who migrated domestically at least once is higher for relatively deprived people 52.5% (N=631) compared to people who do not feel relatively deprived, namely 51.6% (N=335). However, table 4.1 shows that the average number of domestic migrations is lower for relatively deprived Colombians (0.81 (N=1203)) than for not relatively deprived Colombians (0.87 (N=649)). It must be noted that the difference between the means, however, is not significant.

Table 4.1: *Domestic Migration*

Migrations	Relatively Deprived (N=1203)		Not Relatively Deprived (N=649)	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0	571	47.5	314	48.4
1	445	37.0	220	33.9
2	111	9.2	68	10.5
3	41	3.4	23	3.5
4	15	1.2	9	1.4
5+	19	1.7	15	2.3
Mean number of migrations	0.81*		0.87*	

The difference between the means is not significant (>0.05)

Relative deprivation and international migration

I perform the same analysis for international migrants. Of the Colombian household heads that can be considered relatively deprived, we see that 85.5% (N=1028) never migrated internationally (table 4.2). We also see that 14.5% (N=175) internationally migrated at least once.

It is important to compare this to the statistics of people who do not feel relatively deprived. When looking at the total numbers of international migration we see that 80.7% (N=524) of the respondents, never migrated internationally (table 4.2). We also see that 19.3% (N=649) respondents, internationally migrated at least once. Table 4.2 shows that the average number of international migrations is lower for relatively deprived Colombians (0.17 (N=1203)) than for not relatively deprived Colombians (0.21 (N=649)). This difference is significant.

Table 4.2: *International Migration*

Migrations	Relatively Deprived (N=1203)		Not Relatively Deprived (N=649)	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0	1028	85.5	524	80.7
1	153	12.7	116	17.9
2	20	1.7	7	1.1
3	-	-	1	0.2
4	1	0.1	1	0.2
5	1	0.1	-	-
Mean number of migrations	0.17*		0.21*	

The difference between the means is significant (<0.001)

Family structures

Lastly, to answer the hypothesis about the influence of marital status and gender on internal and international migration I ran several tests. The analysis shows that married people are more likely to migrate both internally and internationally. Additionally, married men are more likely to migrate than married women. My hypothesis was confirmed.

Domestic migration

Firstly, I ran a test on the influence of being married on domestic migration, see table 5.1. The results show that of the 5,962 married respondents, 56.7% (N=3380) never migrated domestically, 43.3% of the respondents migrated at least once or more. There is a significant difference between the migration numbers of married people and unmarried people. I found that of the 4081 unmarried respondents 65.3% (N=2665) never migrated internally, 35.7% of the respondents migrated internally once or more.

Table 5.1: *Domestic Migration and marital status*

	Married (N=5962)		Unmarried (N=4081)	
Migrations	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0	3380	56.7	2665	65.3
1	1853	31.1	1020	25.0
2	460	7.7	248	6.1
3	151	2.5	86	2.1
4	64	1.1	32	0.8
5+	54	0.9	30	0.6
Mean number of migrations	0.64*		0.51*	

The difference between the means is significant (<0.001)

International migration

Secondly, I looked at the influence of being married on international migration. I found that of the 5,965 married respondents, 85.2% (N=5080) never migrated internationally. Only 14.8% of the respondents migrated at least once or more. Compared to unmarried respondents we see a small, but significant difference. I found that of the 4084 unmarried respondents 87.7% (N=3581) never migrated internationally. Only 12.3% of the respondents migrated internationally once or more.

Table 5.2: *International Migration and marital status*

Migrations	Married (N=5965)		Unmarried (N=4084)	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0	5080	85.2	3581	87.7
1	819	13.7	460	11.3
2	55	0.9	33	0.8
3	7	0.1	4	0.1
4	2	0.0	3	0.1
5+	2	0.0	3	0.1
Mean number of migrations	0.16*		0.14*	

The difference between the means is significant (<0.001)

Migration chance by gender

Finally, I looked into the number of domestic and international migration numbers by gender. Tables 5.3 and 5.4 reveal that married men are more likely than married women to migrate both domestically and internationally. Even though the difference is minor, it is significant.

Table 5.3: *Domestic migration of married men and women*

Migrations	Men (N=2835)		Women (N=3130)	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0	1575	55.6	1805	57.7
1+	1260	44.4	1325	42.3
Mean number of migrations	0.70*		0.59*	

The difference between the means is significant (<0.001)

Table 5.4: *International migration of married men and women*

Migrations	Men (N=2835)		Women (N=3130)	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0	2388	84.2	2692	86.0
1+	447	15.8	438	14.0
Mean number of migrations	0.18*		0.15*	

The difference between the means is significant (<0.001)

NELM theory conclusions

The hypothesis (*'Colombians who feel relatively deprived have a higher chance to migrate both internally and internationally.'*) was substantially disproved. Relatively deprived people were slightly more likely to migrate domestically than not relatively deprived. Despite the fact that the difference was not significant, the average number of domestic migrations was higher for non-relatively deprived respondents. In terms of international migration, individuals who were relatively deprived were less likely to migrate than those who were not relatively deprived. This was a significant difference. One explanation for this could be that international migration is generally more expensive than internal migration, necessitating a minimum income. This conclusion is supported in literature by Skeldon (2002) and Stark (1984).

The hypothesis (*'Married people are more likely to migrate both internationally and internally than unmarried people, additionally married men are more likely to migrate than married women.'*) was confirmed. For both domestic and international migration married people were more likely to migrate. Moreover, married men were more likely to migrate both domestically and internationally than married women.

Conclusion

This thesis aimed to research the drivers of both internal and international migration in Colombia. The thesis tried to contribute to the research that combines both internal and international drivers, instead of conducting research separately. To answer the question *'to what extent can the social capital theory and the NELM theory explain the drivers of internal and international labor migration in Colombia?'* four different hypotheses were set up. Two hypotheses on the social capital theory and two hypotheses on the NELM theory. These hypotheses were tested both in context of internal and international migration, except for hypothesis 2 where this was not possible.

The analysis offers several conclusions. Firstly, the social capital theory and role played by migrant networks was tested by looking at prior migratory experience, both internally and internationally. It can be concluded that repeated migration was not an often-occurring phenomenon. Prior internal migratory experience was often more influential on international migration than the other way around. Thus, prior migratory experience only mildly explained repeated migration and did not have the explainable capability I had expected. Therefore, I will not be drawing generalizing conclusions based on this part of my research. However, the hypothesis of the role of the strength of social ties could definitely be explained by the analysis I conducted. It can be concluded that the role of 'strong' ties in regard with help with accommodation, finances and employment was much more important than the role of 'weak' ties in international migration. This suggests that the overall role of 'strong' social network ties is of great importance in international migration and might also be of great importance for internal migration. Based on the analysis and limitations of my dataset, I cannot, however, draw conclusions for internal migration.

Secondly, I tested two hypotheses in line with the NELM theory. My hypothesis on the role of relative deprivation in migration decisions was only partially supported by the analysis. People who felt relatively deprived more often migrated internally, as expected, compared to people who did not feel relatively deprived, albeit the difference being relatively small in percentage. However, relatively deprived people were less likely to migrate internationally. This difference was, again, really small in percentage and can be explained by the fact that international migration is often more expensive than internal migration and therefore people need a certain amount of income to be able to migrate internationally. The role of family structures was also tested. My hypothesis was confirmed here. Both

domestically and internationally, married respondents had a higher chance to migrate. Additionally, married men were more likely to migrate than married women. This confirms the idea that family structures influence migration decision-making.

It is noteworthy to recognize that this research has its limitations. Most importantly, as stated before, the dataset did not allow me to thoroughly analyze the role of absence or presence of social migrant networks in both internal and international migration. Unfortunately, by using prior migratory experience as the variable here, I was not able to draw a scientifically well-based conclusion on this subject. For further research, more information on the role of social networks in migration decision-making should be made available, so this phenomenon can be more thoroughly researched. A second limitation of my thesis has been that I could not take into account to what extent Colombia's long history of internal violence affected these survey results on labor migration. Thus, for future research it would be interesting to see what drives people specifically to migrate for economic motivations but within the context of internal violence. More countries with years of internal conflict and violence should be researched to find universal drivers for labor and economic migration in conflict-driven nations. Lastly, this thesis focused on micro and meso-level migration drivers. It might be interesting for coming studies that combine internal and international migration to also research the role of macro-level migration drivers.

Ultimately, my thesis contributed to migration drivers research. In particular, it has contributed to literature on the combination of internal and international migration drivers. Evidence from my research suggests that internal and international migration drivers are more similar than often portrayed in the literature which remains split. Apart from a few exceptions (Korgelli, 1994; Bohra & Massey, 2008; Skeldon, 2017), previous literature ignores this combination and my thesis therefore contributes to an innovative way of doing migration research. In addition, this thesis contributes to research into drivers of labor migration in the context of internal conflict. Without trivializing the conflict, economic migration drivers can be looked at objectively.

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