Migration and urbanization research in Asia: some practical and theoretical issues

GAVIN JONES

FOR PRESENTATION AT SHANGHAI POPULATION FORUM, 10-12 OCTOBER 2016

Kinds of migration flows

- By geographic division (e.g. inter-
- provincial, inter-district)
- Temporal
  - Lifetime
  - Recent
  - Seasonal or circular
- Nature of origin-destination
  - Rural-rural
  - Rural-urban
  - Urban-urban
  - Urban-rural
- Distance travelled

Migration intensities

▶ The IMAGE project

▶ Often unclear whether apparent differentials in spatial intensity between countries reflect real, underlying differences in the propensity to move between regions, or are the product instead of variations in the spatial units between which migration takes place.

▶ Low intensities in South and Southeast Asia – 5-year intensities ranging from 5% (India), 12% (Indonesia-Vietnam) to 17-18% (Cambodia-Malaysia). Japan much higher, South Korea higher still. But USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia the highest

▶ To what extent can migration intensities be explained by level of development?

Census data on migration

- Typically, a birthplace question and one to elicit recent migration patterns

- Can cross-tabulate with characteristics of migrants and non-migrants

- Likely shortcomings in the data

  - Census procedures in determining migration status – e.g. 6 month residence requirement - will undercount circular and seasonal migration

  - What boundaries have to be crossed to be considered a migrant? Likely undercount of short-distance movement

  - Will totally miss commuters

  - Undercount of mobile and homeless people, and those living on work sites

Data shortcomings in South Asia

- Pakistan – no census since 1998

- Afghanistan – no census

- Bangladesh – migration data 2011 from census **survey**, not full census – very small sample. Strange re-classification: some urban areas revert to rural - complicates comparison with earlier years

- Are migration intensities elsewhere in South Asia like those of India – very low? Probably. But it would be good to have better data.

Migration patterns

Vietnam

- Rural-urban (large)
- Urban-urban (large)
- Rural-rural (next)
- Urban-rural (least)

- Over 50% of migrants under age 25
- Female predominance, especially in rural-urban migration

Malaysia

- Urban-urban 69%
- Rural-urban 13%
- Urban-rural 13%
- Rural-rural 5%

- Young migrants predominate
- Female predominance in rural-urban migration (this also especially marked in Thailand and Philippines)

Bangladesh - Rate of lifetime internal migration per 1000 population in destination areas, for different categories of migrants, 1991-2011

Destination	1991	2004	2011
RURAL DESTINATIONS	45.2	33.7	57.2
Rural to rural	34.2	29.9	52.6
Urban to rural	11.0	3.8	4.6
URBAN DESTINATIONS	561.5	312.0	267.3
Urban to urban	43.6	47.9	44.4
Rural to urban	517.9	264.1	222.9

Malaysia: migration rates by age group
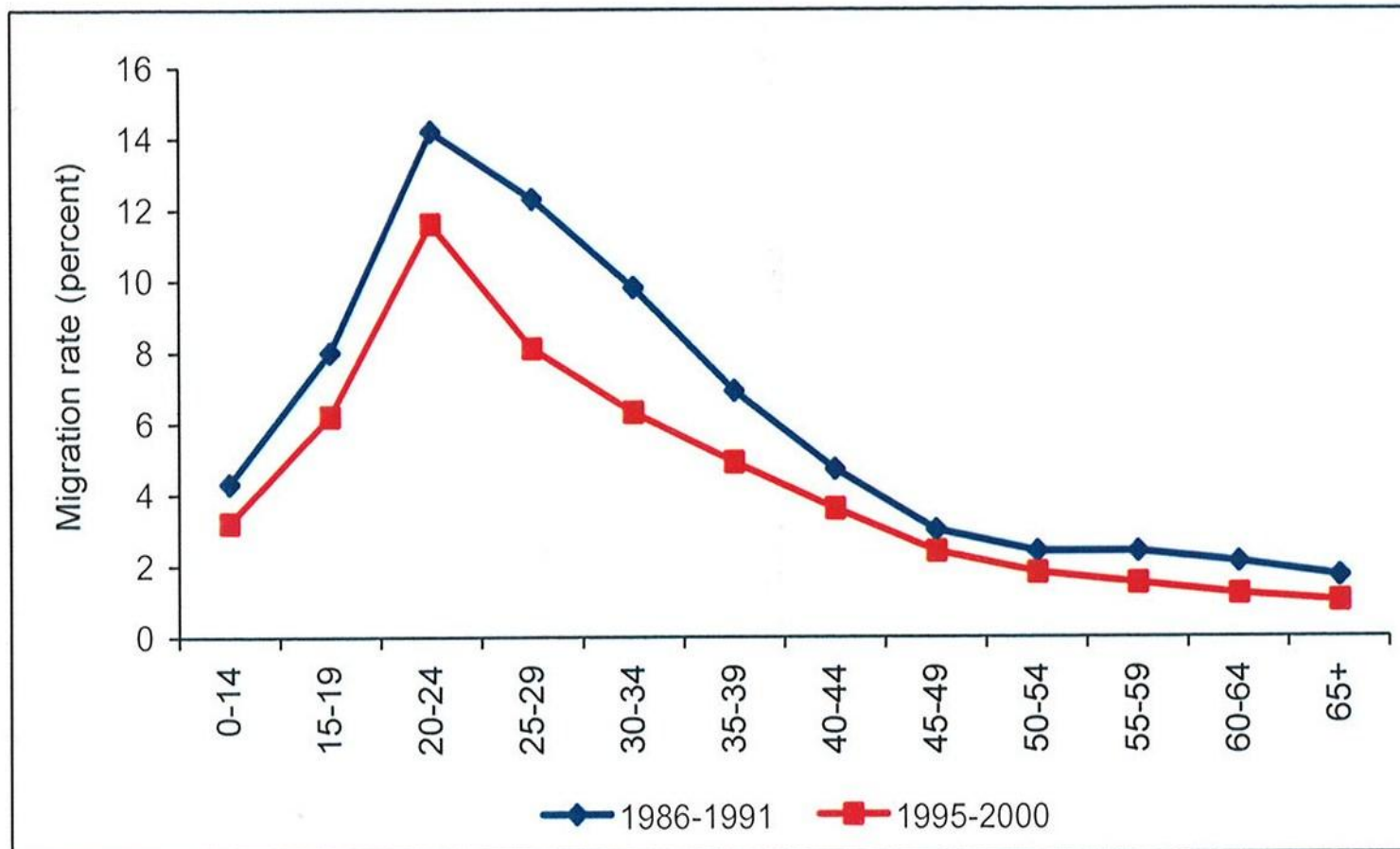
Source: Department of Statistics Malaysia (2005a).

Indonesia 2010 – recent migrants as share of total population, by age group and kind of migration

	Age group						
	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44
Inter-island	0.5	1.5	2.0	1.8	1.5	1.0	0.7
Inter-province	1.5	2.5	5.5	4.0	3.7	2.5	1.5
Inter-district	4.0	6.0	13.0	8.5	7.0	5.5	4.0

Internal migration crucial in changing the internal "balance" within countries

- **Depopulation of rural areas**
  - Northern Thailand
  - Central Java
  - Chinese examples
- **Shifts in regional population balance**
  - **Indonesia –**
    - Central and East Java 42% in 1971; 29% in 2010
  - **Malaysia**
    - Perak 13% in 1980; 9% in 2000
    - KL-Selangor 18% in 1980; 24% in 2000
    - Sabah 7% in 1980; 11% in 2000

Role of migration in urbanization

▶ 3 possible factors raising the urban share of the population

- ▶ Differential natural increase

- ▶ Net in-migration

- ▶ Re-classification from rural to urban area

The first and third of these are often neglected

Examples of role of the three (Indonesia)

Migration to cities
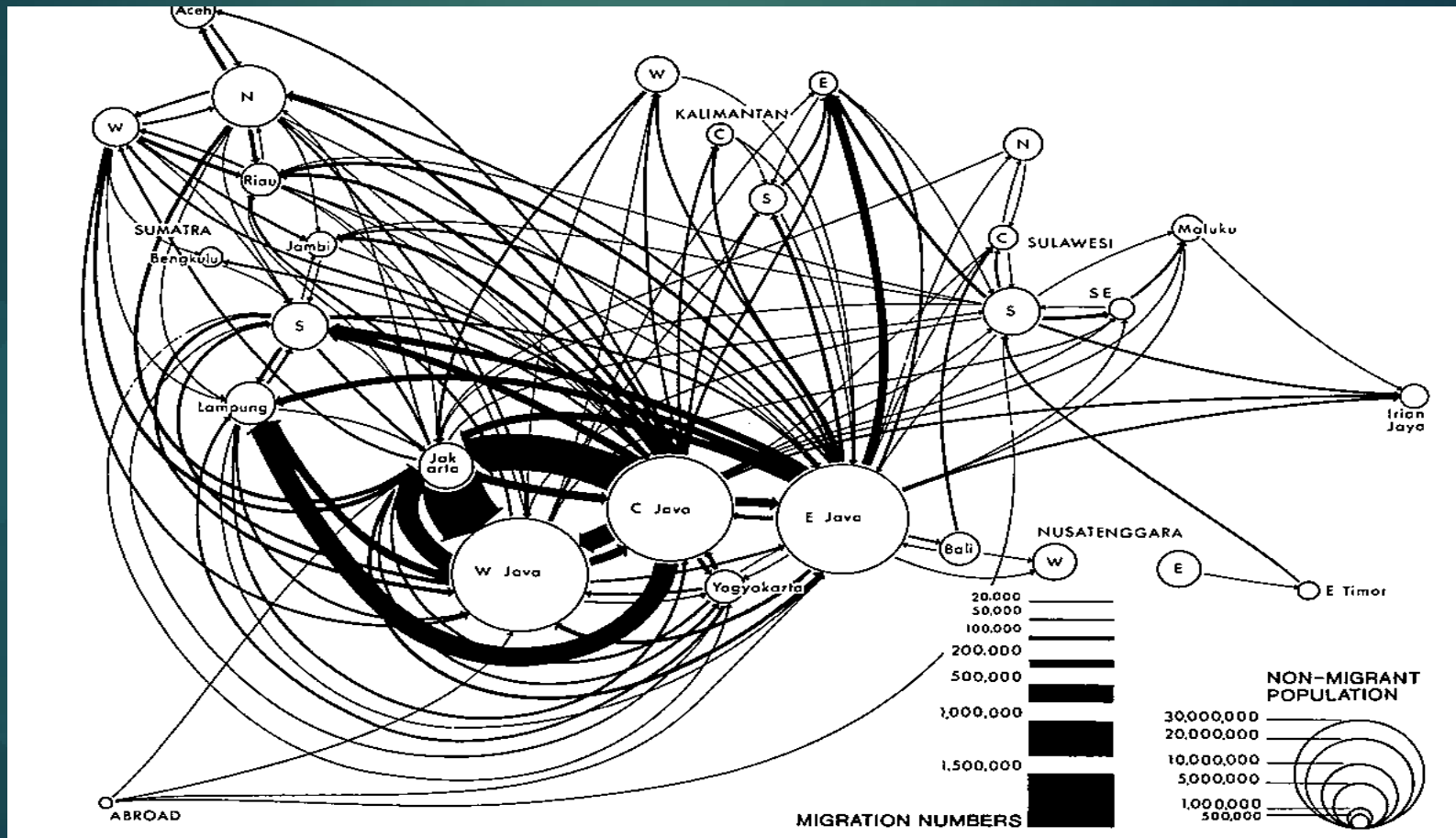
- Rural populations declining since:
  - Japan (1964)
  - Korea (1966)
  - China (1992)
  - Indonesia (1993)
  - Thailand (2002)
- Migration is propping up population in lowest-fertility cities
  - Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, Taipei
  - Bangkok
  - Ho Chi Minh City

Indonesia: Inter-provincial migration streams 1985-1990
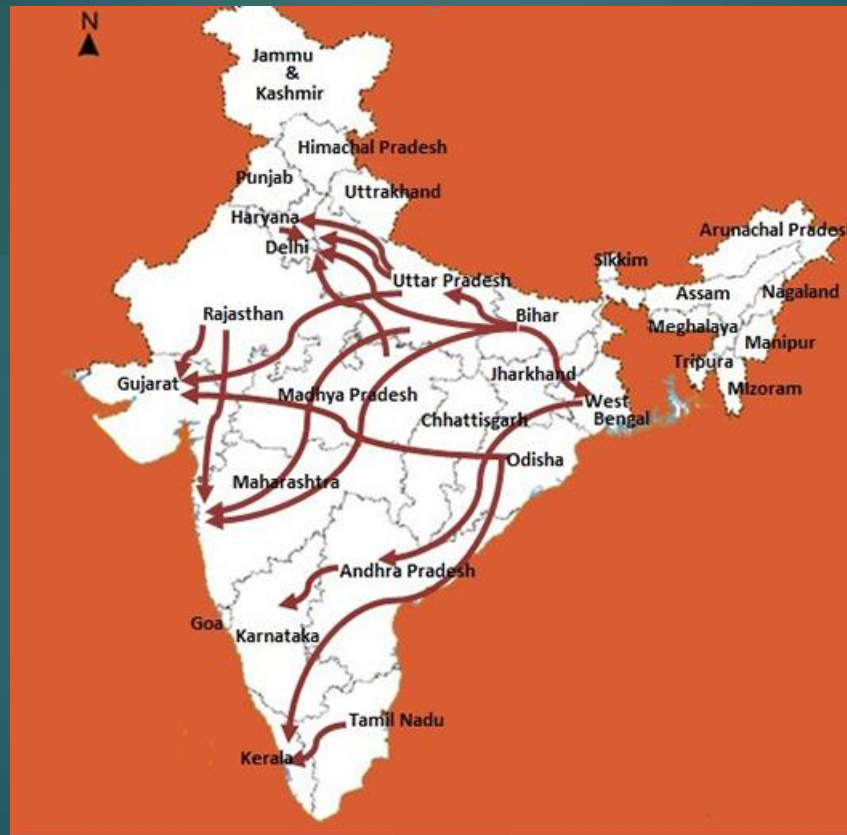(province of previous residence)

China – patterns of internal migration

NB: The thickness of the arrows indicates the strength of the flows. Source: NBSC, 1997.

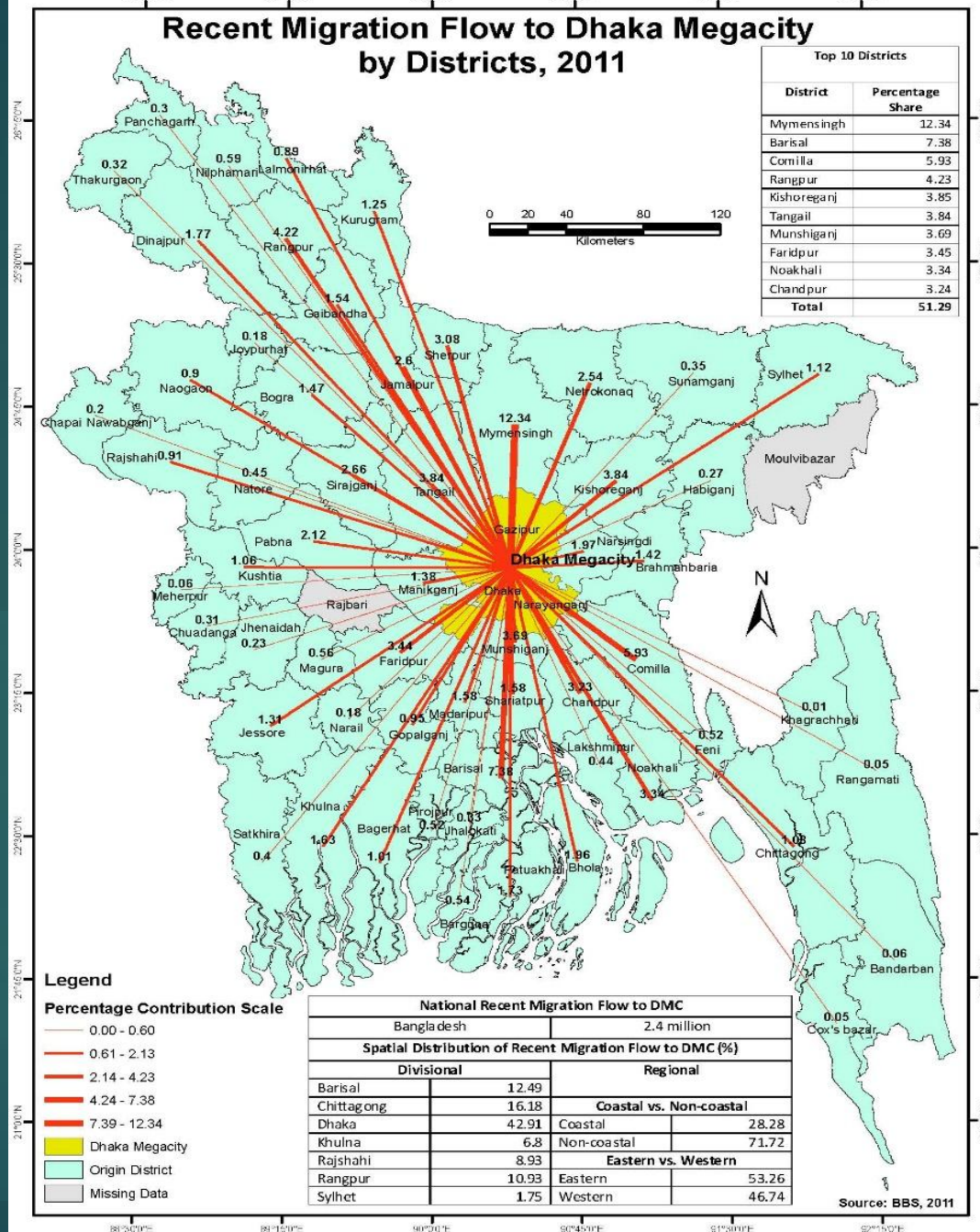# India – patterns of internal migration

Internal Migration Flows, 2001 (Source:IIPS, Mumbai)

Barriers to migration

- Ravenstein-Lee theories – volume of migration decreases with distance; influenced by intervening obstacles

- But political and ethnic issues limit the freedom of movement in many countries

- Examples:
  - China
  - India
  - Indonesia
  - Malaysia

► These days, the main migration flows are those to, and within, mega-urban regions

Recent Migration Flow to Dhaka Megacity by Districts, 2011

Top 10 Districts

District	Percentage Share
Mymensingh	12.34
Barisal	7.38
Comilla	5.93
Rangpur	4.23
Kishoreganj	3.85
Tangail	3.84
Munshiganj	3.69
Faridpur	3.45
Noakhali	3.34
Chandpur	3.24
Total	**51.29**

Legend

Percentage Contribution Scale

- 0.00 – 0.60
- 0.61 – 2.13
- 2.14 – 4.23
- 4.24 – 7.38
- 7.39 – 12.34
- Dhaka Megacity
- Origin District
- Missing Data

National Recent Migration Flow to DMC			
Bangladesh		2.4 million	
Spatial Distribution of Recent Migration Flow to DMC (%)			
Divisional		Regional	
Barisal	12.49		
Chittagong	16.18	Coastal vs. Non-coastal	
Dhaka	42.91	Coastal	28.28
Khulna	6.8	Non-coastal	71.72
Rajshahi	8.93	Eastern vs. Western	
Rangpur	10.93	Eastern	53.26
Sylhet	1.75	Western	46.74

Source: BBS, 2011

Migration to mega-urban regions of Asia

- Census-based studies of Jakarta, Bangkok, Manila, HCMC, Taipei and Shanghai
- Core (metropolitan area), inner zone and outer zone identified
- The cores of Jakarta and Taipei lost population through net migration, and Bangkok gained nothing
- Inner zones gained population through net migration in all MURs
- Age structure of migration to inner zone older than migration to the core, mainly because of family migration into inner zone from the core
- Shanghai – ultra-low fertility – all the increase of core and inner zone populations resulted from migration
- Taipei and Bangkok will soon follow Shanghai in being unable to sustain their populations through natural increase

Characteristics of internal migrants

- **Age patterns**
- **Gender differences: sex ratio of migrants differs enormously by region:**
- **SE Asia**
  - Young females dominate movement to Manila, Bangkok, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur
- **South Asia (traditionally)**
  - Female short-distance marriage migration
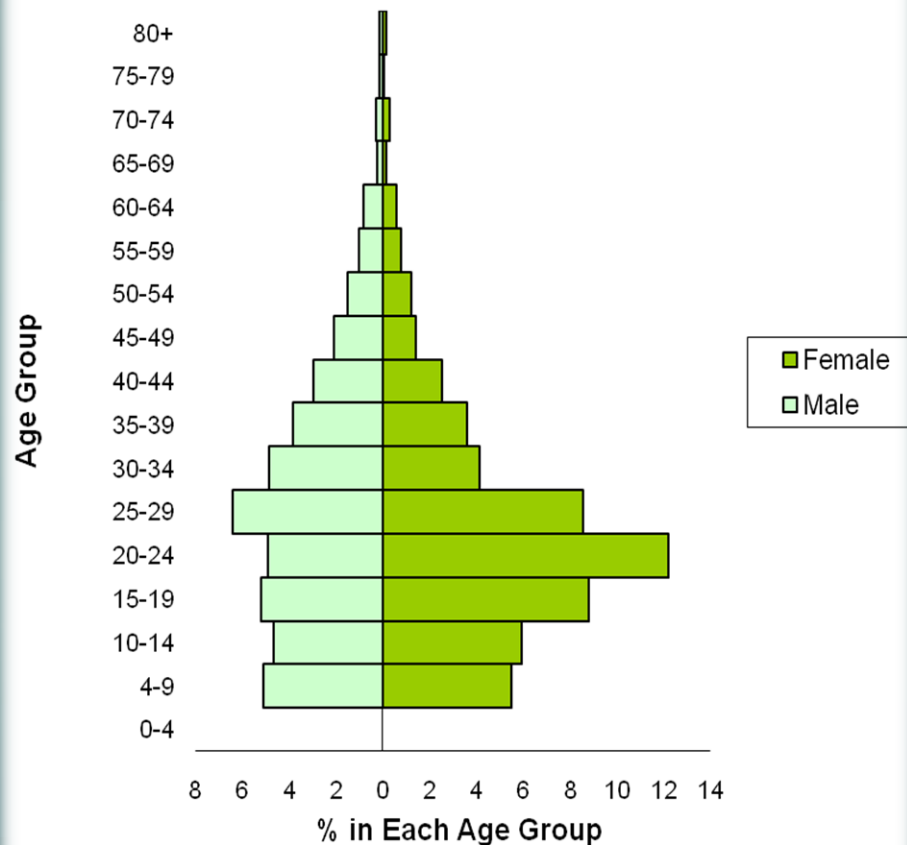 - Male dominated long distance migration
  - Examples from India, Bangladesh

Sex ratios among migrants to large Southeast Asian cities: 2000
(sex ratio: males per 100 females)

Age group	Jakarta	Manila	Bangkok
15-24	62	60	84
25-34	123	91	95
35-44	133	98	104

Sex ratios of migrants to large South Asian cities

Age-Sex Structure of Recent Urban Migrants in Bangladesh, 2011

Non-permanent mobility

- Seasonal migration
  - Thailand patterns
  - Indonesian patterns
- Commuting
  - Factors affecting
  - Volume
  - Costs and benefits

Internal and international migration are linked

- Economic motivation to migrate – similar in both cases. Examples:

  - Indonesian and Filipino domestic workers

  - Laos – in north, mainly to Vientiane; in south, mainly to Thailand

- Refugee migration – can lead to both international and internal movement

- Differences relate mainly to ease or difficulty of movement, legal aspects.