

Book review

Crawley, Heaven and Teye, Joseph Kofi (editors), 2024

The Palgrave Handbook of South–South Migration and Inequality

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INTRODUCTION

The Palgrave Handbook of South–South Migration and Inequality unpacks the multidimensional nexus between migration and socio-spatial inequality in the Global South. It draws on Global South perspectives and migration scholarship to correct what the editors, Heaven Crawley and Joseph Teye, refer to as misunderstandings and misinterpretations of South–South mobility patterns that have been incorrectly based on North–South migration experiences. The authors argue that contrary to narratives suggesting an exodus of migrants to the Global North, South–South migration is the most prevalent type of human mobility in the Global South. The authors unpack the “Global South” as a geographical region and a “relational, structural and political construct within global networks of power.” The authors also remind us that the capacity to migrate and the conditions under which migration occurs reflect and reinforce prevailing spatial, structural, and social inequalities related to gender, nationality, race, and age. These conditions determine who migrates, where they move to, and the range of resources they can access. Significantly, migration can increase and reduce inequality depending on the circumstances. For example, income inequalities in countries of origin often increase with international migration, particularly for the marginalized groups in society.

The book is divided into four parts that highlight often-overlooked mobility patterns within and between regions of the Global South and the intersectional inequalities that migrants face. The introduction by the editors highlights the critical issues discussed in the collection of 33 well-structured but uneven chapters that provide fresh insights into South-South migration triggers and patterns. The chapters grapple conceptually with the relationship between migration and inequality in diverse Global South locations. They also question the relevance of econometric migration theories that downplay context-specific economic and socio-political processes.

PART 1: CONCEPTUALISING SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION

Part 1, consisting of Chapters 1–7, provides a historical perspective on South–South migration and a conceptual framing of the Global South based on decolonial theory that critiques Eurocentrism in migration research. In Chapter 2, Veronica Fynn Bruey and Heaven Crawley provide a historical perspective on South–South migration that aims to address several Global South knowledge “blind spots.” Chapter 3, by Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, argues that there is a need for nuanced studies of migration that focus on re-centering the South by conducting more research in and about particular geographies associated with the Global South. In Chapter 4, Yousif M. Qasmiyeh and Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh engage critically with the geopolitics of knowledge production by discussing how migration knowledge production and dissemination are connected to structural inequalities in the Global South. In Chapter 5, Karl Landström and Heaven Crawley draw on feminist social epistemology to challenge migration scholars researching South–South migration to foreground structural inequalities in knowledge production. In Chapter 6, Kudakwashe Vanyoro challenges Global South migration researchers to frame their studies in ways that value and appropriately recognize their lived experiences. In Chapter 7, Hyab Teklehaimanot Yohannes and Alison Phipps discuss how climate-induced internal displacement has created new patterns of semi-nomadic life within the borders of the Horn of Africa region and how the Global North has created epistemic barriers whose overarching intention has been to immobilize, contain, and detain displaced people.

PART 2: UNPACKING “THE SOUTH” IN SOUTH-SOUTH MIGRATION

Part 2 unpacks South–South migration patterns and explores the interplay between social conditions and policy instruments. In Chapter 8, Kerilyn Schewel and Alix Debray argue that strengthening regional cooperation on migration governance is vital to managing the negative effect of international migration on inequality and poverty. Joseph Awetori Yaro and Mary Boatemaa Setrana (Chapter 9) highlight the adverse effects of South–South migration in Africa. In Chapter 10, Dereje Feyissa, Meron Zeleke, and Fana Gebresenbet focus on the Ethiopia–South Africa spatial corridor in their discussion of the changing contours of “Hadiya migration” to South Africa. In Chapter 11, Bonayi Hubert Dabiré and Kando Amédée Soumahoro examine the contradictory impacts of migration on inequalities in the Burkina Faso–Côte d’Ivoire corridor. They argue that while migration helps poor households in Burkina Faso by transferring resources, it creates multiple inequalities between children whose parents have migrated and those whose parents have not and between remittances-receiving households and households that do not receive any. Chapter 12, by Victoria Prieto Rosas and Gisela P. Zapata, outlines trends and characteristics of migrant social and economic inclusion in several immigration and transit countries, especially Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay, which have experienced rising levels of intra-regional migration.

In Chapter 13, Louis Herns Marcelin and Toni Cela argue that while migration has the potential to contribute to human development and reduce social inequality, migrants are often subjected to entrenched vulnerabilities emerging from social exclusion, marginalization, climate change-related disasters, armed conflicts, and human rights abuses. Chapter 14, by Seng-Guan Yeoh and Anita Ghimire, examines migrant labor and inequalities in the Nepal–Malaysia corridor. Malaysia relies heavily on foreign migrant labor in the manufacturing, construction, plantation, and service sectors. However, in the host countries, foreign migrant workers (together with refugees) are categorized and surveilled. Nepal and Malaysia's closely intertwined migration infrastructures have efficiently facilitated the transnational flow of labor and remittances. In Chapter 15, Joseph Teye, Jixia Lu, and Gordon Crawford discuss the drivers and impact of recent Chinese migration to Ghana on equality. They argue that despite the income benefits received by the local population, there have been increased income inequalities along gender and social-class lines. This chapter focuses mainly on the trading and small-scale mining sectors. Chapter 16, by Luisa Feline Freier, Leon Lucar Oba, and María A.F. Bautista, is based on an interesting methodological approach that uses data on asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants detained in Mexico to map trends in African migration to Latin America.

PART 3: INEQUALITIES AND SOUTH–SOUTH MIGRATION

Part 3 focuses on the inequalities-migration nexus in the Global South. Several chapters examine the role played by porous borders in the South, the dynamics of weak border control, and state capacity in monitoring and registering movements. In Chapter 17, Giulia Casentini, Laura Hammond, and Oliver Bakewell unpack the relationship between migration, poverty, and income inequality by focusing on migration dynamics in the Burkina Faso–Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia–South Africa, and Ghana–China migration corridors. In Chapter 18, Tanja Bastia and Nicola Piper focus on the feminization of migration, temporary migration, and transnationally split families to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of gendered patterns of migrant employment in the domestic work and agricultural sectors in several Global South countries. They argue that the rate of return migration is considerably high because of a combination of factors, such as the temporary nature of migration, the employer-tied contracts, and the high occurrences of undocumented migration resulting from absconding or overstaying. Chapter 19, by Jailson de Souza e Silva, Fernando Lannes Fernandes, and Jorge Luiz Barbosa, on Haitian migration and structural racism in Brazil explores the inequalities that influence migration decisions and the role of migration drivers, such as climate change, household food insecurity, and migration intermediaries.

In Chapter 20, Ingrid Boas, Animesh Gautam, and Ademola Olayiwola interrogate the nexus between mobility and climate change. They argue that climate change-mobility patterns are embedded within uneven socio-political dynamics, social networks and kinship ties, mobility experiences, the availability of support

systems, as well as the type and intensity of environmental triggers. Together, these factors determine whether an extreme weather event, such as floods, will create environmental refugees. In Chapter 21, Caterina Mazzilli, Jessica Hagen-Zanker, and Carmen Leon-Himmelstine explore how migration decision-making intersects with perceptions of inequality that are multidimensional, intersectional, and overlapping and that studies that focus on these perceptions increase our understanding of migration decision-making processes. In Chapter 22, Katharine Jones, Haila Sha, and Mohammad R.A. Bhuiyan discuss the critical role intermediaries play in shaping processes and outcomes in South–South migration. In Chapter 23, G. Harindranath, Tim Unwin, and Maria Rosa Lorini show how the use and design of digital technologies play a vital role in South–South migration, from migrant decision-making to increasing migrants’ access to opportunities and rights in the host countries.

In Chapter 24, Edward Asiedu, Tebkiet Alexandra Tapsoba, and Stephen Gelb examine the impact of remittances in the countries of origin, including financial flows and diaspora investment, trade flows of goods and services, and knowledge flows, in reconstructing local economies. Chapter 25, by Henrietta Nyamnjoh, Mackenzie Seaman, and Meron Zeleke, drawing on research conducted in Ethiopia and South Africa, argue that migration produces, mitigates, and transforms educational inequalities across generations and geographies thereby making it vital to conduct studies that focus on the links between children, migration, and inequalities. Chapter 26, by Jonathan Crush and Sujata Ramachandran, draws attention to the linkages between food security, inequality, migration, and development concerning South–South migration. The authors critique the positive framing of the migration–development nexus that has largely overlooked the critical theme of food security in contemporary migration studies. The chapter concludes that migration research should pay increased attention to the intersections between migration, inequality, and food security.

PART 4: RESPONSES TO SOUTH–SOUTH MIGRATION

Chapters 27–33 in Part 4 focus on various migrant attempts to access justice and rights in their efforts to construct new forms of transnational solidarity that bridge both geographical and sectoral boundaries at various levels. In Chapter 27, Francesco Carella argues that it is essential for both researchers and policymakers to frame migration as a human rights issue rather than a security problem, to encourage host communities to be more welcoming and tolerant of migrants. Chapter 28, by Joseph Teye and Linda Oucho, argues that despite the measures taken by the African Union Commission and Member States to promote the free movement of persons, there has been a slow and uneven implementation process, due to a variety of factors that include the lack of political will and resource constraints. The chapter also shows that while many African governments have signed regional and sub-regional free movement protocols, their migration policies focus primarily on restricting an influx

of low-skilled immigrants. In Chapter 29, Marcia Vera Espinoza argues that because migration governance in South America has been framed and justified through the “lens of crisis,” the challenge is how move from a conceptual lens of crisis, as has been the main feature of governance, to one that encourages human security and social cohesion. In Chapter 30, Jacqueline Mazza and Nicolás Forero Villarreal argue that Peru’s restrictive policies have been both ineffective in reducing forced migration flows and counterproductive by further marginalizing Venezuelan migrants fleeing the economic-political-social “implosion” of Venezuela that has created a migration crisis in the region.

In Chapter 31, Rey P. Asis and Carlos L. Maningat explore how the migrant labor brokerage model, involving national governments, civil society organizations, migrant workers, and private recruitment agencies in the archipelagic Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Mekong sub-regional corridors, has resulted in the treatment of migrants as a “commodity” for export-import. In Chapter 32, Pia Oberoi and Kate Sheill argue that while temporary labor migration programs are a comprehensive option for regular migration available to low-wage migrant workers from Asia and the Pacific, these programs bring risks to the migrants and their families. In Chapter 33, Mariama Awumbila, Faisal Garba, Akosua K. Darkwah, and Mariama Zaami discuss how migrants in the Global South organize to defend and access their rights and the solidarity that they build with other civil society actors.

FINAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATION

The Palgrave Handbook of South–South Migration and Inequality represents an essential contribution to South–South migration and its relationship to inequalities. The book underscores the need for a critical and socially embedded understanding of South–South migration, including the climate change-mobility nexus. The corridor and regional approach used to empirically examine the migration patterns and trends within or between multiple regions in the Global South facilitates the comparison of findings from multiple and contiguous geographical regions. What emerges from this handbook is an understanding that whether migration increases or decreases, inequality is shaped by a pool of contextual and political factors and historical contexts.

This open-access handbook is a good source for academics, researchers, and students seeking to deepen theoretical and policy insights into South-South migration and inequality. Development practitioners engaged in migration policies and programs in the Global South will find it a helpful source when developing international migration policy responses.

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