Migration and sustainable development in Thailand

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Abstract

Purpose – Previous studies have focused on migration and development from an economic perspective. The purpose of this paper is to evaluate sustainable migration and development in an integrative manner, including economic, social and environmental perspectives linking theoretical frameworks with empirical evidence in Thailand.

Design/methodology/approach – A framework of migration and sustainable development was developed in a structured and integrative manner, and the shift in migration and development patterns in Thailand was examined from an empirical and theoretical standpoint.

Findings – Migration contributes to Thailand’s economy in many ways. Migrant workers help to grow the economy, especially in labor-intensive sectors. This helps reduced income inequalities at the household level through remittances. Climate change will enhance migration, especially from neighboring countries and within Thailand itself, thus helping to reduce poverty and income inequality. Possible economic gains from migration, as well as circulating workers and international retirement migrants are highlighted.

Research limitations/implications – Only studies published in English or Thai were included, which may have resulted in the omission of some research. A need for rethinking policy design and implementation as a source of sustainable development is required.

Originality/value – Despite the recent influences of political and environmental changes, there has previously been no analysis of migration and sustainable development in Thailand in a structured and integrative manner as in this study. The impact of migration on the diffusion of new technology and brain drain issues was also addressed.

Keywords Thailand, Sustainable development, Migration policy, Migration and development

Paper type Literature review

1. Introduction

The role of migration in a country’s development is often viewed as a policy dilemma. While migration within Thailand is seen as one of the key sources of economic growth (Sussangkarn, 1996; Martin, 2007; Pholphirul and Ruknumuaykit, 2010; Pholphirul and Kamlai, 2014; Sparreboom et al., 2017), workers entering from neighboring countries are perceived as a challenge to security, stability and standards of living, as well as a source of undesirable cultural change. Thailand’s immigration policies have largely been based upon the fear of undermining social stability, and increasing crime, drug trafficking and the entry of communicable diseases (Jirattikorn, 2015; Tunon and Baruah, 2012).

There is, however, a gap in the research on the influence of migration on sustainable development in Thailand in three areas: economic, social and environmental. This study developed a framework for evaluating the role of migration on sustainable development based on theoretical issues and synthesized new aspects of the burgeoning literature on migration in Thailand in a structured and integrative manner. The focus here was on voluntary migration and did not include refugees, forced labor, child labor and human trafficking, and the role of aid in migrant areas. The study considered empirical and theoretical issues arising from the literature, linked the theoretical framework in migration with the empirical evidence and highlighted the gaps in this area within a Thai context.

2. Snapshot of migration in Thailand

Like other countries, Thailand has a long history of migration. Thailand, however, is fortunate in being relatively rich in natural resources and in having a stable political situation, resulting in little pressure on people to emigrate abroad. As a result, a relatively
large number of immigrants have arrived in Thailand for various reasons (Stern, 1997). After the Second World War, the Thai government enacted a set of migration laws. In the 1950s, the Alien Registration Act and the Immigration Act were promulgated to regulate foreigners for registration and to limit the number of immigrants. In 1979, the Immigration Act was revised in order to prohibit low-skilled immigrants from entering Thailand. In line with the immigration laws, the Alien Working Act specified the types of migrant workers allowed and prohibited migrants from 39 different occupations to ensure job security for the local workforce and to preserve the Thai heritage. The laws were revised several times. Despite the Acts, a large number of low-skilled workers from Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia have still arrived and worked in Thailand.

In response to the high demand for low-skilled workers during the economic boom of the late 1980s and 1990s, the Thai Government established Cabinet resolutions to allow itinerant workers to register and legally work temporarily as laborers or domestic servants. In 1992, the first permission for low-skilled migrant workers to work in Thailand was given to four border provinces, and later expanded to nationwide (Chantavanich and Vungsiriphisal, 2012). However, this employment policy did not align with the continuously high demand for low-skilled workers. Complicated procedures and weak law enforcement resulted in a number of migrants avoiding regulatory procedures to work wherever there was a demand. In the late 1990s, the Thai government developed measures to tackle this problem. These included an initiative on a Bilateral-Memorandum of Understanding for employment with neighboring countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam: CLMV).

In line with the socio-economic situation, the number of immigrants entering Thailand has been growing faster than the number of individuals emigrating abroad. This trend is still occurring today (Table I) and personal remittances to Thai households have continued to climb. The rapid increase in remittances as a percentage of GDP in Thailand over the last 20 years suggests that, compared to the global average, they play a greater role in the economy than in other countries.

3. Views on migration and sustainable development

This study aimed to investigate the impacts of migration on sustainable development and long-term impacts in Thailand through economic, social and environmental dimensions (Khalili, 2011). Economic development was explored in terms of how migration contributed to economic growth and income inequality. The social perspective focused on migration in terms of political and national security and sociocultural impacts. The environmental sustainability aspect showed how migration influenced environmental policy making and development plans. The enhancement of knowledge and technological advancement because of migration are issues that cut across a number of theories. Technological change can affect all three aspects, as such changes might transform production, alter consumer behavior and improve environmental safeguard systems. The three dimensions – social, economic and environmental – serve as the framework within which the overlapping issues relating to socio-economic, economic, economic-environmental and socio-environmental perspectives are discussed (Figure 1).

4. Debates on migration and economic development in Thailand

4.1 Economic growth

Previous studies confirmed that international immigration contributes to Thai economic growth. A pioneering work conducted by Sussangkarn in 1996 estimated the contribution of international immigration to the Thai economy using the computable general equilibrium model. He found that the international migrant workers’ contribution to the Thai GDP
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>309,088</td>
<td>414,506</td>
<td>530,881</td>
<td>631,993</td>
<td>766,543</td>
<td>861,576</td>
<td>902,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>122,347</td>
<td>157,626</td>
<td>197,713</td>
<td>231,040</td>
<td>276,391</td>
<td>307,371</td>
<td>319,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>186,741</td>
<td>256,880</td>
<td>333,178</td>
<td>400,953</td>
<td>489,952</td>
<td>554,205</td>
<td>582,950</td>
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(b) International migrants in Thailand

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>528,693</td>
<td>809,720</td>
<td>1,257,821</td>
<td>2,163,447</td>
<td>3,224,131</td>
<td>3,486,526</td>
<td>3,588,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>283,486</td>
<td>426,290</td>
<td>647,728</td>
<td>1,086,166</td>
<td>1,624,755</td>
<td>1,751,187</td>
<td>1,802,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>245,207</td>
<td>383,430</td>
<td>610,093</td>
<td>1,077,281</td>
<td>1,599,376</td>
<td>1,735,339</td>
<td>1,786,550</td>
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(c) Net migrant stock [(b)–(a)]

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>219,605</td>
<td>395,214</td>
<td>726,930</td>
<td>1,531,454</td>
<td>2,457,588</td>
<td>2,624,950</td>
<td>2,685,945</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>161,139</td>
<td>268,664</td>
<td>450,015</td>
<td>855,126</td>
<td>1,348,164</td>
<td>1,443,816</td>
<td>1,482,345</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>58,466</td>
<td>126,550</td>
<td>276,915</td>
<td>676,328</td>
<td>1,109,424</td>
<td>1,181,134</td>
<td>1,203,600</td>
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(d) International migrant workers in Thailand

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<th>Year</th>
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<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>625,084</td>
<td>846,660</td>
<td>1,335,155</td>
<td>1,445,575</td>
<td>1,938,101</td>
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</tbody>
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(e) International migrants in Thailand: % of the total population

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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
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(f) Personal remittances received: % of the GDP

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:**

- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2017), Population Division;
- Foreign Workers Administration Office, Ministry of Labor;
- World Bank (2018) Migration and Remittances
amounted to 0.48 percent. Using the same model ten years later, Martin (2007) found that international migrants work increased the GDP by about 1.25 percent. Recent literature estimated that the economic contribution ranged from 4.3 to 6.6 percent of the GDP in 2010 (Sparreboom et al., 2017). With different models, the net contribution of international migrant workers to the Thai economy was between 0.023 and 1.0 percent of the real national income per year (Pholphirul and Rukumnuaykit, 2010; Pholphirul and Kamlai, 2014). The economic advances were mainly generated in labor-intensive sectors such as the shrimp industry to preserve cost competitiveness (Kura et al., 2004). The results of those empirical studies are consistent with the neo-classical theory that migration benefits both the sending and receiving communities in balancing growth and enhancing economic welfare through the higher incomes of relocated workers and increased overall profits of the industry (Sriskandarajah, 2005; De Haas, 2010). In contrast to the neo-classical theory, the neo-Marxist theory proposed that migration was mainly a way to mobilize cheap labor for the benefit of richer countries (De Haas, 2010; Kunwar, 2013). Multinational companies are often used as a proxy for rich countries exploiting poorer countries, resulting in accelerated urbanization, more poor people, job displacement and the growth of informal economies. Such manipulation of migration by rich countries increases the dependency of poor countries, resulting in market failures and lower incomes. The arrival of multinational companies is generally associated with foreign direct investment (FDI), where FDI is related to migration through urbanization of internal migration (Poelhekke and Ploeg, 2008; Kolomiets, 2013). Thus, by promoting the expansion of modern industries, FDI could increase demand for workers and migration from rural to urban areas. A study by Farhan et al. (2014) revealed that FDI reduced inequality in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand as it benefited low-skilled workers. However, the FDI increased the wage inequality because of an insufficient number of highly skilled workers (Velde and Morrissey, 2002). The presence of an FDI-concentrated area constitutes a driving force for both internal and international migration. FDI may increase economic growth, but a well-planned policy should also consider its impact on wages.

**Figure 1.**
The three dimensions for the discussion of the relationship between migration and sustainable development

**Source:** Author
4.2 Employment and wages

In a competitive market, the relationship between production factors determines employment and wages. With a clear segregation of the job market, migrant and local workers perform in different labor market positions and so have no effect on employment levels. In fact, the presence of migrant workers can raise the proportion of local employment in higher-skilled jobs (Mertens and Tangtipongkul, 2017). Similarly, the productivity of highly skilled and highly educated Thai workers tends to increase with an increase in low-skilled immigrant workers (Lathapipat, 2010). As the majority of immigrant workers in Thailand are working for small firms in low-paid sectors (Kunwar, 2013, p. 71), they are likely to contribute to Thailand as a complementary factor of production to Thais.

Unlike a labor market with a clear division of labor between migrants and locals, migrants are often perceived as job stealers. This perception suggests that migrant workers behave as a substitute factor of production. The shift of migrant flows will lift the supply curve and depress wages in the receiving countries (Borjas, 2013). Several empirical studies have suggested a wage convergence between local Thai workers and migrant workers. Bryant and Rukumnuaykit (2007) reported that increased immigration caused a small wage reduction in Thailand, where a 10 percent increase in the migrant share reduced the average local wages by 0.23 percent. In contrast, Kulkolkarn and Potipiti (2007) found an insignificant impact of immigration on native wages. Instead, they noted that immigration had an unfavorable effect on the locals’ employment rate, with a 1 percent increase in the migrant-to-native ratio in 2001 decreasing the natives’ employment rate by about 0.5 percent in 2005. The people most affected were the low skilled, the young and agricultural workers.

While migrant workers can contribute to economic growth and competitiveness, the use of low-skilled workers restricts the migrant workers’ employers to a labor-intensive technology and untrained workers. Pholphirul and Kamlai (2014) found a 0.75–1.0 percent contribution of immigrant employment to real GDP growth in Thailand, but, the 1 percent increase resulted in a reduction in the overall labor productivity in the manufacturing sector of 0.88–1.0 percent and in the service sector by 1.3 percent. The employment of immigrants in the agricultural sector tended to reduce the total employment by 0.67 percent and wages by 4.3 percent. Without an improvement in productivity, it becomes more likely that Thailand will continue as a middle-income country.

4.3 Remittances and income equality in Thai households

Labor migration usually brings about a higher income for the migrants who then take the money back to their home country, resulting in an increased GDP and economic improvement of the migrant-sending regions. Remittances could be used to provide education or healthcare to family members or insurance against risk for the family as a whole. In Thailand, the Thai migrant workers’ remittances were in line with the new economics of labor migration (NELM) theory. The NELM theory considers that the decision to migrate is a collective decision of the migrants’ household members in the origin communities (Stark, 1978, 1991; De Haas, 2010). Yang (2004) found that internal migration generated a net income gain for migrants and their families, and remittances helped to redistribute the income toward poor areas and reduce inequalities in household incomes. Increasing the fraction of migrants to Bangkok by 1.0 percent led to a 0.058 percent reduction in the average ratio of Bangkok’s income to other provinces. Osaki (2003) also concluded that, in general, the proportion of households receiving remittances dropped as the household’s income increased.

Studies of Thai emigrant workers indicate that remittances are mostly used for purchasing necessary household goods and a few luxury items rather than for investment or the education of family members. Osaki (2003), utilizing the Migration Survey of Thailand conducted in 1992 by the Thai National Statistical Office, revealed that 84 percent of households receiving remittances mainly spent the money on daily living costs.
Only 4 percent of the households invested the money and 3.7 percent used it to educate their children. In addition, continuing remittances may act as an economic disincentive for family members in the sending countries (Sriskandarajah, 2005). Enhancing the financial literacy of returning migrants and their families is essential to maximize the benefits of migration.

5. Debates on migration and social development in Thailand

5.1 National security
A shared environment, a common set of norms and common interests are essential for promoting socio-economic development, while a lack of trust in society deters development opportunities (Campfens, 1999). In Thailand, national security has long been a concern in establishing reasonable policies regarding immigration. Transient migrant workers were blamed for reintroducing communicable diseases that had been eradicated in Thailand and migration policies have been shaped by fears about job loss, social instability and introduction of narcotics and crime caused by migrants (Martin, 2004; Jirattikorn, 2015). Tunon and Baruah (2012) reported that 80 percent of respondents in Thailand felt that migrants were more likely to commit crimes than residents. Empirical studies are needed in this area to obtain actual evidence about whether international immigrants are seen as a threat to border control and national security.

5.2 Sociocultural exclusion
From the late 1980s into the 1990s, most studies increasingly acknowledged a heterogeneous impact of migration on sociocultural development. However, the prevailing attitudes of local Thais reflect the existing social exclusion and discrimination they feel toward migrant workers. Chalamwong et al. (2010), employing a knowledge, attitude and practice baseline survey in five migrant-intensive provinces, discovered that local communities, authorities and employers often perceived migrant workers as unskilled or low-skilled second-class citizens. Some local communities and workers invariably viewed migrant workers as having stolen local jobs and usurped legitimate business activities. Tunon and Baruah (2012) showed that there were more negative attitudes toward migrants among Thais, than in Korea and Singapore. According to their study, 64 percent of all 1,000 respondents in Thailand agreed that authorized migrant workers should not expect the same pay and working conditions as resident Thais, and 80 percent felt that transient migrants were not entitled to any rights at work. Nearly half of the respondents said that the presence of migrants threatened the culture and heritage of the country. These prevailing attitudes of discrimination and exclusion are in line with several quantitative studies, such as those of Chaisuparakul (2015) with regard to Cambodian workers and Napier-Moore and Sheill (2016) in the construction sector.

Both the 2016 Constitution and Thailand’s Gender Discrimination Act 2015 prohibit discrimination by place of origin and gender. According to those laws, Thailand’s MOUs with neighboring countries call for non-discrimination in pay and benefits for migrant workers, but difficulties in implementing the laws have allowed gender inequalities to continue. Most studies have addressed these challenges using a qualitative approach (Napier-Moore and Sheill, 2016; Kusakabe and Pearson, 2013; Lee and Piper, 2013).

5.3 Public service use
The presence of a large number of immigrants may have the effect of reducing local Thais’ access to public services, especially healthcare and education. In Thailand, there have been heated policy debates about the possibility that migrant workers are responsible for an increase in communicable diseases and overcrowding in public hospitals along the border because of Thailand’s better healthcare system. In contrast to this idea, Sonkong et al. (2015) found that migrant workers usually preferred to self-medicate, even when they had health
insurance coverage. While many hospitals were facing deficits because of providing healthcare services to migrants in Thailand, some hospitals with large numbers of registered migrants benefitted financially from the migrant health plan (International Organization for Migration and World Health Organization, 2009). This empirically suggested an area-based problem rather than a nation-wide challenge. On the other hand, high-income immigrants and the international retirement migration (IRM) from developed countries are seen as opportunities for development. Targeted services were developed in the receiving countries for this group of migrants. The number of high-income immigrants and the IRM from developed countries is likely to increase, necessitating an expansion in health facilities, mainly among the private service providers (Miyashita et al., 2017; Toyota and Thang, 2017). The demand for medical doctors in private hospitals is also expected to rise along with the average income of physicians that may create a labor shortage in the health services including short-term, long-term and hospice care. Many western migrants prefer the Thai lifestyle and culture, low living costs, warm climate and attractive sexual partners, if standard health facilities are available (Howard, 2009). Thus, Thai service facilities can also improve their standards to meet the needs of high-income immigrants. In terms of education, the Thai National Education Act of 1999 stated clearly that every person should have an equal right and opportunity to a good, basic education. Both Thai and non-Thai children will be able receive an education up to the secondary level. Previous studies have focused on the quality and accessibility of education (Petchot, 2014; Tuangratananon et al., 2019), but a possible overcrowding from larger numbers of non-Thai children needs to be considered.

6. Debates on migration and environmental change in Thailand
Global environmental change may exert a greater pressure on the current pattern of human migration than any other factor. It is expected that by 2050 climate change will displace up to 250 million people (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 1990). An increasing incidence of natural disasters and the vulnerability of those in poverty may accelerate emigration, especially from developing countries. Climate change is expected to reduce agricultural productivity and increase food insecurity for large numbers of people, thus swelling the numbers of internal and international migrants whose families depend on remittances as an important source of income (Brown, 2008; Newland, 2011). It was confirmed by Kerdsuk (2008) that climate change had reduced the average rice yield by 45.5 percent in the northeastern region of Thailand. Rice farmers and workers had to diversify their sources of income through off-farm sources or migration for work and income in urban areas in order to feed family members. However, the response to climate change will differ according to people’s expectations of the duration of the impacts, their characteristics and their assets. Another study of migration in northeast Thailand in response to climate shocks found that migration was only weakly affected (Entwisle et al., 2016). In addition, Thai women, especially landowners, were less likely to emigrate (Curran and Meijer-Irons, 2014).

Climate change also influences the demand for Thai workers aboard, as the majority of Thais in developed countries work in low-skilled jobs including construction, service and agriculture (Marks, 2011). Many countries are suffering from an increase in natural disasters because of climate change, causing a spike in the influx of immigrants into neighboring countries. The long-term climate risk index (1996–2015) ranked Myanmar as the second most affected country, while Thailand was ranked as tenth (Kreft et al., 2016). Therefore, the number of environmental migrants from countries bordering Thailand might increase in the near future. Policies on humanitarian interventions and assistance have to be reviewed and aligned with development policies (Nyberg-Sorensen et al., 2002).
7. From the perspective of knowledge and technology

7.1 Diffusion and adoption of new technology
New knowledge, entrepreneurial attitudes and innovations in technology brought back by returning migrants are all expected to contribute to economic development in their home country. Several studies have indicated that the presence of highly skilled workers leads to technological diffusion and productivity improvement (Le and Bodman, 2011; Hornung, 2014; Hübler, 2015). Tech-savvy workers transfer the knowledge they obtained from working overseas to their sending countries, which have mutual skills recognition schemes to promote technical development at the regional level. Rural-urban migration can also create technology diffusion at the household level. Using rural households’ mobile phone usage as a proxy, Hübler (2016) reported a positive and significant correlation of mobile phone ownership within districts, suggesting rural technology diffusion across villages and households. He further concluded that education and remittances were associated with rural technology diffusion.

7.2 Brain drain or brain gain
The emigration of highly educated people is thought to weaken the economies of their home countries due to human capital losses. Highly skilled workers employed in developed countries are likely to become permanent residents in the receiving countries (Kuehn, 2007; Marchal and Kegels, 2003; Al Ariss and Özbilgin, 2010). The number of highly educated emigrants leaving developing countries is likely to grow rapidly in response to immigration policies in developed countries that give preference to skilled workers. However, the brain drain may bring positive effects through remittances, increasing numbers of skilled returnees, diaspora externalities, better governance and increasing numbers of migrant workers opting to return to school to better their education. Thailand may continue to receive a number of talented immigrants from CLMV, particularly those who graduated in Thailand, as the accessibility to higher education in Thailand’s neighboring countries remains limited (Kruanak and Ruangkanjanases, 2014). The number of circulating workers in Thailand as well as all over the world, has been increasing (Bhumiratana et al., 2009) and many countries seem to be gaining an internationally skilled workforce in spite of losing some of their workers. Using a comprehensive data set on international skill emigration to the OECD in 1990 and 2000, Docquier (2006) found that 5–10 percent of the net skilled emigration rate stimulated development. Quantitative studies in Thailand to investigate this effect on the country’s economic and social development have not yet been explored.

8. Discussion and conclusions
While most current reports have focused on the effect of migration on economic development, this study discussed migration and sustainable development in an integrative manner from economic, social and environmental perspectives. A large number of studies about Thailand have investigated the impacts of international immigrant workers on development, as it has long been a net immigration country.

Several reports have confirmed that international immigration improved the national GDP. However, its impact on income distribution might increase wage inequality due to insufficient numbers of skilled workers and capitals. Hiring international migrant workers in the labor-intensive and low-profit margin sectors, without technological improvement, could be a large risk to development in the long term. The impact of international migrant workers on employment for locals depends on the production relationship between locals and migrant workers. Additional studies to assess the effect of substitution and complementation between immigrant and local workers on a sector-by-sector basis are required.
Thai emigrants could reduce income inequalities at home due to sending their remittances back home. However, many Thai emigrant workers used their remittances for routine purchase and luxury goods rather than investment or education of their family members. In addition, a steady remittance income may act as an economic disincentive for family members in the sending countries. Studies about remittances and its impacts on development in Thailand so deserve further examination in the current context.

From a social development perspective in Thailand, the national security and crowding-out effects of migrants in public services have long been a concern of policy makers. At the same time, the role of high-income immigrants and IRM as potential benefits and opportunities needs to be further explored.

Environmental changes create a greater pressure for human migration than other current patterns. Climate change directly affects the livelihoods of some workers, especially those in agriculture and fishing, and changes the demand for workers in the receiving countries. Migration should help reduce poverty and income inequalities caused by environmental challenges. As countries bordering Thailand are more prone to natural disasters, their vulnerable populations are more likely to immigrate to Thailand. Thus, new policies need to be developed to ensure that environmental migrants will continue to support a smooth transition, humanitarian relief, refugee protection and migrants’ rights.

Empirical results from Thailand confirmed that returning migrant workers brought new knowledge and skills from working overseas to their sending countries and application of their new talents should promote economic development at the regional level. In addition, although countries lose some of their skilled workers, they seem to receive a net gain from a skilled, globally experienced workforce and a rapid advance in information and communication technology. With regard to gender inequality in migration, however, there have been only a limited number of investigations in Thailand and further research to promote the fair and inclusive employment for sustainable development is required.

As migration will likely continue to grow, rethinking of policy design and implementation of migration policies as a source of development is crucial. Migration can be a source of development by bringing back environmentally friendly technologies and helping to reduce income inequalities through better financial literacy of migrants of both genders. This study highlighted key areas for further studies, such as the role of remittances for Thais abroad and its effect on income distribution, empirical studies on national security and sociocultural exclusion, opportunities for Thais in public services management, new strategies for sustainable environmental development, as well as in-depth examinations of the roles of circulating workers and gender in Thailand. Creating a safe workplace and providing good working conditions for all people is of great importance in promoting sustainable development goals.

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Further reading

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