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Introduction: mobility, migration and development

The movement of people and the associated flows of tangible and intangible resources have attracted increasing attention from policy-makers and practitioners, as well as researchers, seeking to understand the processes involved and the potential of such movements for enhancing debates around mobility which includes not just migration, but other forms of movement such as commuting and journeys to school. This paper considers key dimensions of the perceived relationships between mobility and development, highlighting how mobility can be both a route to challenge social exclusion and poverty as well as a mechanism for reinforcing such disadvantage. The paper also provides an overview of the key themes addressed in the eight papers making up this special issue on mobility and migration.

As the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) states in the *Human Development Report 2009*, ‘mobility matters’ (2009, 9) and the report’s focus on ‘Human mobility and development’ is a high-profile example of how mobility has come to the fore in development policy-making in the early twenty-first century. However, the definition of ‘mobility’ used by the UNDP is a very limited one, focusing purely on movement from one place of residence to another (2009, 15), a process which is usually identified as ‘migration’. Other forms of mobility, such as commuting and journeys to school, itinerant trading, mobility to access goods and services for unpaid domestic tasks, as well as mobility for leisure were not considered.

The focus on migration is understandable given both the size of migrant flows and the perceived development benefits and challenges which they create (Castles and Miller, 2009; Samers, 2009). However, in this special issue, we have drawn together papers which cover mobility themes more broadly. While recognising key distinctions between different kinds of migration and other forms of mobility, the papers also highlight limitations of compartmentalising forms of human movement, something which the UNDP recognises in relation to changes in residence (2009, 12).

Mobility (including migration) can represent a response to insecurity (war, food shortages, economic crisis) and create insecurity (as with large-scale displacement associated with infrastructure projects or urban regeneration), while also reflecting the security of some groups to move because they have the economic, political and social power to do so. Similarly, fixity or immobility may result in forms of social exclusion as individuals cannot move to take advantage of opportunities which may lie elsewhere (Ureta, 2008), while, in turn, social exclusion may also be reflected in

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continual mobility and the inability to find a place to settle (Cresswell, 2006).

These contrasting experiences and interpretations of mobility operate at a range of temporal and spatial scales, resulting in diverse challenges for development policy-makers and practitioners, as well as for the mobile/immobile individuals themselves and researchers seeking to understand the processes involved. The papers in this special issue of *International Development Planning Review* seek to highlight a range of contexts within which mobility and immobility are considered to be obstacles or opportunities for development. Examples are drawn from throughout the world and range from large-scale international migrations, such as from Mexico to the USA (Beard and Sarmiento, 2010) and African nations to Western Europe (Nijenhuis and Broekhuis, 2010), to small-scale daily trips to school in Nepal (Lind and Agergaard, 2010).

Each of the papers provides suggestions as to the role of policy-makers in supporting mobile/immobile individuals and/or ensuring that mobility results in broader benefits if appropriate. These policy recommendations are targeted not just at national and local governments, but also community and non-governmental organisations. As such, the collection seeks to contribute to the development of policy which engages with the complexities of mobility and the diversity of mobile populations.

The rest of this paper provides an introduction to a number of the key themes addressed in more detail in specific papers in the collection. It starts with an overview of how migration and mobility have been considered within development policy and how this has changed over time, particularly with shifts in communication and transport technologies. It then focuses on different elements of mobility and possibilities for transformation, considering economic dimensions, mobility and empowerment, education and finally the broader concept of wellbeing. While the bulk of the papers focus on human mobility, it is also important to recognise the mobility of both objects and ideas which will be discussed in this introduction and with reference to a specific example of food provisioning in Bruce Frayne's paper in this issue (Frayne, 2010). Finally this introduction outlines key dimensions of policy recommendations which are developed further in the later papers.

Mobility and migration in development policy

In the development of theory and policy, migration has usually been considered separately from other forms of mobility, a focus which has continued to the present (see the discussion above about the 2009 *Human Development Report*). While the emergence of a 'new mobilities paradigm' (Sheller and Urry, 2006) has resulted in some attempts to address these breaks, the distinction largely remains. In relation to policy development, this separation can be viewed as a response to the differences in spatial and temporal scales which are involved; migration over longer distances and less frequent, while commuting, journeys for leisure or schooling take place more frequently and

over shorter distances. Policy responses to the challenges presented by different forms of mobility have also varied, from technocentric, infrastructure projects for transport provision, to social and legal solutions in the form of border and internal mobility controls, colonisation projects to ‘frontier territories’ and economic incentives to emigrate. Such policies have also attempted to either facilitate mobility or restrict it, depending on wider planning and political priorities and capacity.

Engagement with migration in development policy in the 1950s–1970s often focused on debates around modernisation, rural–urban migration and spatial patterns of economic development within countries. For example, W. Arthur Lewis’s analysis of moves from ‘traditional’ to ‘modern’ sectors involved the movement of surplus labour from rural to urban areas as agriculture became mechanised and rural production was for the market rather than subsistence (Lewis, 1964). In theory, labour mobility would lead to wage equalisation. However, as Michael Lipton (1977) argued, continued urban bias meant that a point of equilibrium would not be met. Government attempts to improve poor urban conditions for recent migrants from rural areas would continue to attract new arrivals. Thus, for Lipton, appropriate policy responses included turning investment attention to rural areas to encourage rural populations to stay *in situ*.

Large-scale state-led attempts at managing internal migration included the use of permits and local registration systems, such as the *hukou* in China (Zhao and Howden-Chapman, 2010). Massive relocation projects, such as the transmigration policy in Indonesia (Leinbach, 1989) or attempts by the Brazilian government to expand population centres in the country’s interior were also attempted, as were growth pole policies (Hirschman, 1958), including the founding of new capital cities.

In more recent decades, such large-scale schemes have been largely abandoned, however, migration still remains an important focus of development policy, albeit understood in different ways. In addition, rapid changes in transport and communication technology have created new opportunities for some groups of people to move more easily, to move further and to facilitate continued links with ‘home’. In relation to international migration, governments are increasingly seeking routes to maximise the contributions of ‘diaspora populations’ (see below).

With a focus on economic development, the World Bank (2009) argues that the earlier policy formulations which focused on preventing or limiting migration resulted in restricted economic growth. Instead, the greater freedom of labour mobility (and capital mobility) should be encouraged as labour migrants will move to places where there are higher wages and agglomerations of economic activity resulting in higher levels of economic growth. Rural development should be encouraged to prevent migration for reasons other than wage differentials (World Bank, 2009).

A broader interpretation of development and how migration should be considered within development policy focuses on human development and how migration

can facilitate or hinder migrant wellbeing, as well as the achievement of broader development goals (UNDP, 2009). The papers in this issue largely fit within this more expansive view of development, considering the relationships among mobility and economic growth, empowerment, human capital and wellbeing.

Development implications of mobility

Economic contributions

One of the reasons for the continued focus on mobility is the assumption that mobility provides access to more lucrative or secure income-generating or livelihood activities (Steel and Zoomers, 2009; Thieme, 2008). Thus there is a strong economic rationale for moving and also for encouraging or supporting mobility. This has been particularly apparent in the rapid increase in governmental and multilateral attention paid to migration and particularly remittances, especially since the 1990s.

A number of papers in this special issue deal with the potential role of remittances in development and the attempts by governmental and non-governmental bodies to channel monetary flows to 'productive ends'. As many studies have argued (see, for example, de Haas, 2005; 2006; Mercer, Page and Evans, 2008) the definition of what is 'productive' should be expanded from a narrow definition of investment in small businesses and infrastructure, to a more expansive definition that recognises the possible multiplier effects from investment in house-building or the human capital outcomes of expenditure on better food, shelter and healthcare at the household level.

Individual remittances are examined by Makiko Nakamuro in her paper on the role of internal and international remittances in children's education in Albania and Tajikistan (Nakamuro, 2010). While many studies suggest that remittances could be used for education, either through paying for school fees and other educational expenses, or freeing children from the need to enter the labour market rather than going to school, few have examined the evidence from specific cases. Nakamuro's work provides support for the positive influence of remittances on children's school attendance.

The ability to send remittances is, however, strongly influenced by the opportunities in the place of residence. Pengjun Zhao and Philipa Howden-Chapman clearly demonstrate how different forms and scales of mobility can intersect to reinforce social exclusion (Zhao and Howden-Chapman, 2010). Using the example of Beijing, they demonstrate that the job-related mobility of migrants, either from rural areas or from other urban areas, is different from their Beijing-born counterparts. This is a reflection of the *hukou* system (see above), which limits state-supported housing and a number of key employment sectors to individuals born in the city. This means that for migrant workers, their commuting times are longer on average, as well as more costly in economic terms.

Above the scale of the individual household, the role of hometown associations (HTAs) – or, as Claire Mercer, Ben Page and Martin Evans (2008) term them, ‘home associations’ – has been of particular interest to governments as a route through which funds can be channelled from migrant groups (domestically or internationally) to their regions of origin, either to be invested in income-generating activities or in community development facilities. From a grassroots development perspective, the choice of development projects which are funded this way may more effectively match the priorities of the community residents than projects funded by more conventional means. For example, home association funds were used to support training and awareness-raising regarding the vulnerabilities of elderly rural populations in Tanzania, a topic which is unlikely to receive funding through other more mainstream routes (Mercer, Page and Evans, 2008, 21).

Victoria A. Beard and Caroline S. Sarmiento detail the activities of such HTAs using the case of migrants from the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca to Los Angeles (Beard and Sarmiento, 2010). They demonstrate how contributions are gathered through collective pressures in the USA and Mexico, as well as the uses these funds are put to in villages in Oaxaca. However, they also refer to the potential misuse of such funds and the co-optation of HTA activities by political elites in Mexico.

The limits to successful use of transnational links between migrant communities and their ‘home communities’ are also discussed by Gery Nijenhuis and Annelet Broekhuis through an examination of ‘co-development’ programmes in the Netherlands, Spain and France (Nijenhuis and Broekhuis, 2010). Under such schemes, migrants are viewed as ‘agents of change’ with regard to the development of their ‘home countries’. Possible routes for this agency include funding, investment, knowledge-sharing and expertise. While such activities have had positive outcomes, Nijenhuis and Broekhuis conclude that the claims about co-development are often overstated and do not recognise wider structural barriers to successful transnational development activity of this sort.

The role of international migrants as sources of financial and human capital has also attracted the attention of national governments in regions with high levels of outmigration. Attempts to link with members of the diaspora have risen in importance, with governments adopting policies such as an acceptance of dual citizenship and schemes to encourage migrants to invest ‘back home’. Frederico Brandão and Annelies Zoomers examine these debates, focusing on returning migrants to Cape Verde (Brandão and Zoomers, 2010). Despite the growing number of return migrants and government schemes to maximise their economic development impact on the country, there has been limited success. This reflects both the demographic characteristics of the return migrants and the bureaucratic structures which migrants feel constrain their capacity to invest productively.

For some migrants, return is not an option as links back to ‘home’ have weakened or

been broken completely, thus again making remittances unlikely. In Suzanne Speak's paper on homelessness in urban areas in the Global South, she outlines the barriers to return in which urban residents with precarious housing situations find themselves (Speak, 2010). For a large group, the inability to return is economic; marginalisation within the urban labour force has resulted in insufficient amassing of funds to return home as a 'successful' migrant, thus enforcing a future in the city.

Therefore, while mobility has been interpreted as a key way in which income and livelihoods can be enhanced for individuals and households and boost economic development at a larger scale, the papers in this special issue stress that these outcomes are not inherent to mobility. Instead, the diversity of individuals and households as well as the wider social, economic and political structures which constrain their actions need to be recognised.

Mobility, empowerment and transformation

The ability to move can be an indicator of existing empowerment and also an opportunity for transformation. As outlined above, mobility often requires some form of existing economic resources, but other factors may also affect individuals' mobility patterns, not least social norms regarding appropriate behaviour. For example, there is vast literature on how gender affects mobility, in terms of everyday practices and also longer-term migration patterns (see, for example, Chant, 1992; Silvey, 2006; Uteng and Cresswell, 2008; Willis and Yeoh, 2000). Moving to or through different places may also expose individuals and groups to different social norms and resources, leading to longer-term change and potentially greater equality. In the case of migrants, these ideas and 'ways of doing things' may be transferred back to family and friends 'at home' through what Peggy Levitt has termed 'social remittances', 'the ideas, behaviors, identities, and social capital that flow from receiving- to sending-country communities' (1998, 927).

Birgitte Lind and Jytte Agergaard draw on these ideas in their paper on children's everyday mobilities in relation to schooling in Nepal (Lind and Agergaard, 2010). For students living in isolated locations who have to travel significant distances to school, moving into the space of the school and the village provides them with new information and skills (see below). However, this mobility may not be empowering because of the processes of exclusion which many of the students experience. Despite these limitations, Lind and Agergaard stress the potential liberation that the journey to school brings, not least for female students who see it as a period of freedom from the domestic chores or limits on socialisation which they often encounter at home or school (see also Porter et al., 2010).

Beard and Sarmiento (2010) also investigate the possibilities of Mexican hometown associations providing some form of empowerment for their members, not least in

challenging prevailing forms of exclusion and discrimination. While annual events contribute to maintaining feelings of cultural pride among migrants and later generations in the USA, Beard and Sarmiento conclude that the Oaxacan HTAs they researched currently lack the capacity and inclination to work towards greater social justice for migrants and marginalised groups in the USA or broader political change in Mexico. Instead, their focus is on development interventions in their 'home villages'.

Mobility and education

Two of the papers in this special issue focus on education; firstly, the direct implications of the school journey (Lind and Agergaard, 2010), and secondly, the relationship between remittances and children's schooling (Nakamuro, 2010). In addition, several other papers consider the role of human capital (particularly higher education) in return migration (Brandão and Zoomers, 2010) and co-development schemes (Nijenhuis and Broekhuis, 2010). This focus on education reflects the importance of human capital in livelihood options for individuals and households, and wider contributions to economic development.

Educational opportunities can be accessed without mobility on the part of the student, particularly with the rise in information communication technologies, such as radio, TV and increasingly the Internet (Rye, 2007; Unwin, 2009). However, access to such technologies is still highly uneven, and physical presence in a school or college can provide benefits which distance learning may not be able to.

Lind and Agergaard (2010) stress the importance of distance from school in framing the mobility experiences of children in Nepal, but their paper goes beyond seeing distance purely in quantitative physical terms. As all the papers in this special issue stress, mobility is mediated through the operation of power relations at a number of scales, i.e. distance should be considered not purely in physical terms, but also with regard to the form of mobility that is available, especially transport methods. This will be affected by income as well as social norms, for example women driving themselves or accompanying a man who is not a family member. In addition, distance can be understood in social terms with certain places being constructed as suitable for certain kinds of behaviour and people. Thus, even if a location is physically close, individuals may not feel able to or be able to access it because they would be seen as being out of place. The 'othering' processes described by Lind and Agergaard in Nepal, whereby the *taadhaa* students (those from distant villages) are constructed as being inferior to those of the core villages, are good examples of this. Zhao and Howden-Chapman's (2010) paper on migrants in Beijing also hints at these processes of exclusion alongside more explicit exclusionary processes which have been institutionalised through the *hukou* system.

Mobility and wellbeing

Drawing on Amartya Sen's capabilities approach (Sen, 1999), the UNDP uses the concept of wellbeing as a key aim of development (UNDP, 2009). At the heart of the idea is that rather than imposing a rigid idea of 'development' on all individuals, groups and contexts, the capabilities approach focuses on how far people are able to live the lives that they value (see also Gough and McGregor, 2007).

In relation to migration and mobility, the UNDP (2009) suggests that mobility can expand human freedoms and therefore provide greater opportunities for individuals to achieve their goals and therefore greater wellbeing. However, as suggested above in relation to economic resources, education and empowerment, such outcomes are not inherent within mobility; rather, they are contingent on the characteristics of the individuals involved and the wider context. Katie Wright (2010) considers the role of migration in the wellbeing of Peruvian migrants in London and Madrid. She demonstrates the importance of considering migrants' perceptions of a 'good life' in relation to material goods, social relationships and psychological aspects. Whereas migration for many Peruvians has opened up new income streams, educational opportunities and exposure to new ideas, feelings of loneliness, experiences of discrimination and poor living conditions all combine to challenge overly optimistic views of mobility (see also Zhao and Howden-Chapman, 2010, in relation to internal migration).

Forced mobility is clearly associated with dramatic impacts on wellbeing as not only may those involved in be fleeing for their lives (in war or disaster situations), but the migrants' future plans and their ability to achieve them will often be destroyed. Large-scale 'development' plans, such as dam projects, or urban regeneration schemes often involve large-scale forced displacement, usually of lower-income populations with little political power. While they are usually less unexpected than floods or earthquakes, for example, such displacements will also affect wellbeing as communities are uprooted and often broken up as households are forced to find new homes wherever they can.

The papers in this special issue, while not drawing directly on the concept of wellbeing, do engage with the debates around mobility and the meeting of needs (both material and non-material). Some also focus on the perspectives of individuals regarding their life choices, rather than starting from an externally driven list of priorities. In her discussion of homelessness and migrants who are 'trapped' in the city, Speak (2010) stresses the need to recognise that homelessness may be a conscious choice by individuals with limited options.

As well as looking at economic and human capital goals, a number of papers consider the relationships between mobility and social relationships. In many cases mobility may be driven by the desire to provide for other people, most notably children, as in the case of migration and remittances to Tajikistan and Albania (Nakamuro,

2010). Thus, migration decisions cannot be divorced from the wider social context in which they are made. However, mobility may also rupture or strain social relationships, leading to a decline in wellbeing if these social relationships continue to be viewed as important by the individuals concerned.

The mobility of some individuals may also have impacts on relatives and friends who are less mobile. This may be through the above-discussed contributions that remittances (both financial and social) make (see also Moser, 2009; Pribilsky, 2007), but there may be more negative aspects of immobility such as loneliness, depression and family breakup (Parreñas, 2005). However, in some cases the mobility of individuals is facilitated by their connections to more mobile people, particularly in relation to migration (see, for example, Muanamoha, Maharaj and Preston-Whyte, 2010).

Non-human mobility

Implicit in the sections above on different development implications of mobility is the movement of financial resources and ideas as part of human mobility. As outlined earlier in this paper, for the World Bank (2009), factor mobility is a key contributor to economic development and obstacles to this mobility are interpreted as barriers to economic growth. However, as well as labour mobility and capital mobility – which the World Bank identifies – the mobility of subsistence goods should also be considered. In his contribution to this issue, Bruce Frayne provides insights into the circulation of food between selected urban centres in Southern Africa (Frayne, 2010). For poor urban households, the receipt of food through social networks from rural areas where it has been produced, or from other urban areas where it has been purchased, provides an important safety net for basic survival.

Mobility and policy

Maximising the potential of mobility to contribute to positive development outcomes requires policy interventions at a number of levels involving a range of institutions. The papers in this issue provide recommendations as to appropriate support which governments (national and local), NGOs and other civil society organisations can provide. What is clear from most of the papers is that current policy is often based on rather optimistic interpretations of mobility's benefits, or failures to recognise barriers to mobility which need to be addressed.

While national governments have often enthusiastically embraced the concept of assisting members of the diaspora to contribute to development 'back home', for example, through removing import duty on cars for returning migrants to Cape Verde (Brandão and Zoomers, 2010), overly bureaucratic procedures and a lack of transparency may limit the positive outcomes. However, the importance of remittances

for community projects (Beard and Sarmiento, 2010) and household investments (Nakamuro, 2010) means that the creation and maintenance of secure and affordable routes for transferring money are vital.

The role of Northern governments is also discussed in some of the papers, in particular Gery Nijenhuis and Annelet Broekhuis's paper on co-development programmes in Europe. Despite national and regional government support structures to facilitate the development efforts of migrant organisations, hometown associations and individual migrants in their home countries, attempts to create more inclusive and transnational forms of development assistance have been rather unsuccessful. Other roles of Northern governments include bilateral agreements on pension rights for return migrants (Brandão and Zoomers, 2010).

Clearly, governments need to evaluate the nature of national border controls using a range of criteria, however, as the UNDP highlights in the 2009 *Human Development Report*, improvements can be made to ensure that the rights of migrants are upheld (UNDP, 2009). These include changing regulations that link work visas with named employers and requiring migrants to leave the country if they leave that employment. This has been associated with reported cases of abuse, particularly of individuals working as live-in domestic staff (Anderson, 2000). Internal migration controls, such as the *hukou* in China, while having been slackened in recent years can still exacerbate inequalities (Zhao and Howden-Chapman, 2010).

Ways of addressing forms of social exclusion in relation to mobility also need to be addressed in the planning of service provision. This includes not only the spatial location of schools, housing and workplaces, but also what services will be provided and to whom. In the case of Beijing, the restrictions placed on non-Beijing *hukou*-holders clearly excluded these migrants from a range of services and created added time, money and energy expenses in relation to commuting (Zhao and Howden-Chapman, 2010). For the schoolchildren of rural Nepal, while physical distance was a challenge, exclusionary processes could be reduced by a more strategic organisation of the school day and the possible availability of residential accommodation (Lind and Agergaard, 2010).

Concluding comments

This paper has provided an introduction to key debates within mobility and development theory and practice. While the focus of this paper and the special issue as a whole is migration of different sorts, a major aim of this article has been to demonstrate key ways in which the challenges and benefits of migration hold for other forms of mobility. It has also sought to highlight how mobility/immobility vary spatially and socially, with particular reference to gender and migrant status.

The global economic crisis of recent years has had profound effects on mobility

and its possible contributions to development (Skeldon, 2010). These have included migrant job losses and the concomitant impacts on remittances and displacement due to housing foreclosure or inability to meet rental payments. While the global economy is recovering, the implications of the crisis on mobility are likely to continue for some years.

Future challenges include those of possible climate change-induced migration, as well as the implications of demographic transition. Ageing populations will require greater levels of care which may require the mobility of paid care-providers, increasingly represented by migrant workers (Wills et al., 2010). Alternately, it may be that relocation to seek appropriate care becomes more common, as with Japanese retirees moving to Thailand (Toyota, 2006).

Everyday mobility for older people will also require planners and policy-makers to consider access to transport and vital services. Such considerations may also make urban areas more accessible for a wide range of currently excluded groups, as well as potentially addressing the challenges of minimising cities' ecological footprint. This could include a focus on liveable cities and a bringing together of work, home and leisure opportunities at a more human level. Reducing travel in such circumstances would not be an indicator of fixity and exclusion, so demonstrating some of the complexities of the debates around mobility and development. These are now expanded upon in the following eight papers in this special issue.

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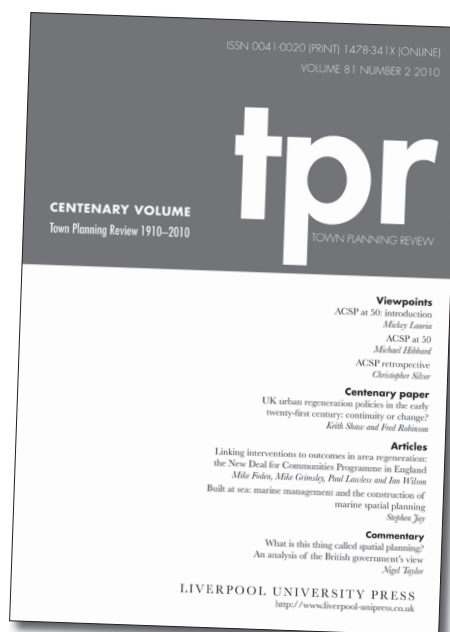
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