

Given the broad context of fertility decay in Brazil, the impact of migration on the spatial redistribution of the Brazilian population tends to acquire more and more relevance. Thus, the general aim of this paper is evaluate the changes in the structure of the migration system in Brazil, between 1986-1991 and 1995-2000. The geographic units of analysis are 137 “mesorregiões” (MRs) created by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistic (IBGE). The migrants were disaggregated in “total population” (all migrants considered) and “population 15 years of schooling and over”, and to assess the interrelationship among areas, the Factor Analysis technique was applied.

The factor analysis applied in the Brazilian data array made possible a nationwide visualization of the spatial structure of migration. Despite not being a new form of handling a huge matrix, in Brazil has not been done this kind of study, and a general view of the process is obscured by much good research about particular clipped spaces.

The empirical conceptualized fields of migration such as those uncovered in the previous sections are interrelated in a more global migration space, and could be represented in the second and sometimes third order factors. Consequently, it is possible and desirable to continue factoring the first order pattern matrix in order to get a more general and meaningful visualization of the migration pattern.

Besides other possible methodological extensions, a basic remark on these results is that core regions are always essential to understanding the spatial redistribution of Brazilian population, although the proportion of the capitals in the whole population has been practically constant during the periods studied.

Given the impact on the spatial population distribution of the biggest Brazilian metropolitan region, São Paulo presents different patterns of migration in a unique area. It is an attraction region for more educated people coming from the richest areas of the country – the interior of its own state. But it is also the destination for less qualified migrants arriving from the poorest and distant areas – the Northeast. In this case, distance does not matter when the focus is the more immediate flows delineated by the first order factors of total population. Therefore, a metropolitan region can carry out very different functions on the migration space.

Also, Rio de Janeiro plays an important role as a national destination for more educated individuals, a fact that is not paramount in considering the flows as a whole, since São Paulo fulfills this function. If São Paulo has not been a relevant destination for skilled people from the Northeast, does it means that the job market competition in Sao Paulo is higher and fulfilled by its own state, given that those closest areas are highly educated? Is distance deterrence decisive in São Paulo-Northeast when the migrant is highly qualified? The results point out the necessity of deeper and more specific studies.

On the other hand, Campinas region has lost its role as a destination for total migrants, but has continued drawing qualified people from the metropolitan region of São Paulo in a more selective process. Being one of the more important high-tech urban centers in Brazil, Campinas seems to exemplify the attraction power of some recently created metropolitan regions, especially for skilled people, but also for the population as a whole. As the municipalities ranging from 100,000 to 500,000 inhabitants has increased faster, it is possible to infer that relatively few regional cores are the more dynamic places mainly

responsible for great part of the Brazilian population redistribution. Hence, there is a demographic spread out, but limited in scope and point-pattern in space.

Finally, the use of information about people 15 years of schooling and over is a preliminary attempt to delineate the spaces of more and less dynamic regions, demographically, but also economically. The latter can be viewed as a proxy if it is considered that sophisticated economic activities need highly skilled people, and those people will look for jobs in places where a supply of modern occupations exists.

The results presented here encourage the utilization of other categories of migration, for instance, by disaggregating groups of migrants according to occupation and income. Moreover, flows of origin and destination between a pair of areas can also be summed, resulting in a symmetrical interaction matrix, allowing the elaboration of a up-to-date regionalization of Brazilian migration flows.