

Migration of young Tunisians: gender relations determine who migrate and why?

Ibtihel BOUCHOUCHA (INED/CERPOS)

ibtihel.bouchoucha@ined.fr

The predominant explanatory models of migration are inspired from the economic neo-classical theory. The assumption which has been often defended is that the main causes of migration are economic. Thus, because women's participation in economic activity has been very low, migration was considered as male phenomenon. Only from the 1980s that female migration is starting to interest researchers (Zlotnik, 2003). They highlight the increase tendency of female migration and they explained it by the gradual improvement of the social status of women and their progressive integration into the labor market. But they have also shown that these migrations, especially in developing countries are still influenced by the traditional social model. Thus women migrate principally in a family context (follow or join a spouse or family members) (Come, 2006).

The recognition of women's migration has highlighted the effect of non-economic factors on the decision to migrate and on the migration reasons. Migration is analyzed in a context of gender relations taking into account the socio-economic characteristics of the migrants and of their family (Cooke, 2003 ; Come, 2006). According to some authors, beyond the social, economical and institutional situation in the origin place (including the situation on the labor market such as the availability of jobs, job opportunities, inequality in the labor market ...), gender relations are an important factor explaining the decision to migrate as well as the main migration reasons. Gender relations are defined as a set of social representations, roles, perceptions, ideologies and behaviors of women and men (Veron, 1997). They determine the roles of women and men as well as the opportunities and the constraints specific to each sex which can influence their migration's behaviors (Bidet and Bidet, 2001). So, gender relations determine who migrates and for which reason he/she migrate.

Tunisian society has changed. Currently, women invest, more than in previous generations, active life. They work and contribute to the budget of the family. However, at migration level, the traditional family model is still highly representative. The desire of emigration of young Tunisians is increasingly important that explains the growing trend for emigration. The results of the youth survey in Tunisia (1996, 2000 and 2005) show both of sexes intend to leave the country and live outside (Fourati, 2008). In addition, the results of 2005 also show that no significant differences between the two sexes in terms of desire for international migration. However the statistics on international migration show that the level of migration of young women is very low not only compared to male migration but also to the level of their desire to migrate.

The objective of this research is to show the role of gender relations in the young Tunisians migrations. We try to study in particular the influence of gender relations on the decision to leave as well as on the main migration reasons. Our main hypothesis is that gender relations determine the decision to migrate and the migration's reasons of the two sexes. Women and men may have the same desire to migrate but this does not mean that they have the same probability to migrate. Indeed, migration of both sexes is still influenced by the traditional social model. According to

this model, men are more likely to migrate and they migrate principally for economic reasons. However, female migrations are valued only within a context socially accepted.

We use data from the labor force survey. It is a national survey of 65000 households; its main objective is to produce statistical information on socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the population in Tunisia. But, in order to provide some information about migration, a sub-sample was selected to be interviewed twice for two successive years (2005 and 2006). The sub-sample contains 27 904 households (43% of the total sample which allows to interview more than 126,000 people). This sample allows us to estimate the number of migrants (between 2005 and 2006) as well as their socio-economical characteristics before migration. Our analysis will be in two parts. The first part is descriptive analyses based on graphs and crosstabs between dependent variables and explanatory variables. And the second part is explanatory analyses. We develop logistic regressions to measure the probability to migrate and the main migration's reasons.

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