

Review of: "Choosing to Stay: Unpacking Immobility Amidst Adversity in Migration Studies"

Jagannath Adhikari

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

I read the article with great interest as it also resonated with what I have been undertaking. I have done a good deal of study on migration but not on immobility. Therefore, it was a learning experience for me as well. However, I studied people and communities during the time of political conflict (Maoist revolution in Nepal from 1996-2006) during which people stayed in their places - some by choice and using their own strength to cope and deal with rebels, and others stayed put by paying taxes or helping the rebels like providing food and the like, bearing a lot of risks at the same time, and many stayed in IDP camps. Based on my experience of working in a conflict period, I felt that what has been described in the article about the resilience-capability framework resonates well with my experience. The concept of stable-acquiescent immobility, involuntary mobility, vulnerable-acquiescent immobility, and activity immobility describes well the various categories of immobile people or forced mobile people.

The article provides us with cutting-edge knowledge on migration theories dealing with why people migrate and why people do not migrate. It improvises on the existing theories in the light of conflict conditions, when it is supposed that people tend to migrate. The article shows that people have agencies - they do migrate to a place of their choice (determined not only by monetary benefits, but also considering other utilities like freedom, social connection, etc.) or not migrate at all. Why people behave in those ways is well described.

I feel that this is a good contribution, especially considering a conflict-affected society. Therefore, I fully support its publication.

If authors would like, there are a few publications that I made after studying the conflict situation in Nepal. There are plenty of examples where people pay money or taxes to rebels so that they permit them to stay in their place. But there were people who also moved to the city (with resources and connections), to IDP camps, to their relatives in relatively safe places, and some stayed put, adapting to the situation and fighting with rebels if needed. These are:

1. <https://martinchautari.org.np/mc-publications/under-the-shadow-of-the-red-flag>
2. LIVING ON A TIGHTROPE: ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES OF GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT WORKERS IN A MAOIST-CONFLICT AREA. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 8(2): 369-383, December 2003.
<https://www.martinchautari.org.np/storage/files/sinhas-vol8-no2-jagannath-adhikari-commentary.pdf>