

**A Demographic Analysis Of The Labor Market Integration Of Haitian Migrants
In a Brazilian Metropolitan Area**

Introduction

Historically, migration flows between Haiti and Brazil have been miniscule, with the 2010 Brazilian Census enumerating just 36 Haitians. However, following the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti, small groups of Haitian migrants began arriving at the Brazilian border in Acre and Amazonas. Within the span of a year, this migration flow increased substantially, with 4,000 Haitian migrants estimated to have arrived in Brazil by the end of 2011 (CASTRO, FERNANDES, AND RIBEIRO, 2014, p. 2). New Haitian migrants' pace of arrival accelerated so quickly that, by the end of 2016, more than 80,000 Haitian migrants were living in Brazil (GOVERNO DO BRASIL). While Haitian migration to Brazil has slowed over the course of 2017 and 2018, due to the economic crisis, Haiti quickly became the most significant source of migration to Brazil, surpassing more traditional migration flows from both neighboring and developed countries, such as Bolivia and Portugal, respectively.

The reasons behind the sudden increase in Haitian migration to Brazil are uncertain and complex. Explanations encompass Brazil's leadership role in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) from 2004 onward, a booming Brazilian economy in need of cheap labor, and a simultaneous increase in migration restrictions in the neighboring Dominican Republic, and in other traditional destinations for Haitian emigration, such as the U.S., Canada, and France, which were also mired in economic crisis at that time. Furthermore, Brazil's administrative response to this migration flow greatly facilitated Haitian migrants' arrival in Brazil through the authorization of humanitarian visas granting permanent residency.¹²

In this context, the researcher seeks to accomplish three main objectives: 1) to create a general demographic profile of Haitian migrants residing in the RMBH; 2) to evaluate the degree of labor market integration of Haitian migrants living in the RMBH; and 3) to investigate how migration flows from Haiti to the RMBH fit within the existing literature with a particular focus on the reported motives for migration, ties with migrants' places of origin, migration routes, and other forms of social and/or employment-related connections and support.

Reflecting upon these objectives raises a number of questions in regard to the characteristics of Haitian migrants residing in the RMBH. The author proposes to

¹ CNIg Resolution 97, passed in January 2012, authorized the Brazilian consulate in Port-au-Prince to grant 100 five-year permanent humanitarian visas per month to Haitian migrants.

² CNIg Resolution 102, passed in April 2013, removed these numerical restrictions, while enabling Brazilian consulates in neighboring and transit countries to issue permanent humanitarian visas.

investigate the following hypotheses: 1) a greater length of residence in Brazil should be correlated with higher salaries, a more elevated chance of being employed in an area corresponding to migrants' educational attainment, and a superior probability of possessing both employment and formal employment; 2) higher levels of educational attainment should be associated with increased salaries, an improved likelihood of being employed, an elevated probability of possessing formal employment, a greater chance of being employed in an area corresponding to migrants' educational attainment and; thus, a greater degree of labor market integration; 3) differences between the employment outcomes of male and female Haitian migrants will be observed, with female Haitian migrants being less likely to be employed and/or to be employed formally, than male Haitian migrants; and 4) more recent migration flows should show a greater percentage of women due to the increased importance of family reunification as a motive for migrating.

Methodology

The analysis was conducted by triangulating data from three different sources. The first database was obtained from the Centro Zanmi, the predominant NGO that provides assistance to migrants in the RMBH. This dataset spans from 2013, when the Centro Zanmi opened, to April 2017. A major advantage of the Centro Zanmi data is its ability to capture a wide-range of variables not included in formal government-collected databases, such as migrants' self-reported employment status and their motives for migration, among other variables.

The second data source was derived from the Sistema Nacional de Cadastro e Registro de Estrangeiros (SINCRE). The data consists of an accumulated stock of all migrants who have registered with the Brazilian Federal Police in Belo Horizonte between January 2000 and November 2015. As all documented migrants are required to register with the Federal Police within 30 days of their arrival in Brazil, this database should provide a representative sample of Haitian migrants in the RMBH, given that almost all Haitian migrants in Brazil are documented.

The final data source is the *Relação Anual de Informações Sociais* (RAIS), spanning the years from 2002 to 2015. RAIS is a database maintained by the Labor Ministry (Ministério de Trabalho), which contains information that must be furnished annually by all persons holding a CNPJ (Brazilian corporate taxpayer identification number), and all establishments which possess a Cadastro de Empresa Individual (CEI). RAIS gathers information on workers' nationalities, allowing the researcher to

focus specifically on the formally employed Haitian migrant population in the RMBH. RAIS includes extensive information on all formally employed workers, such as salary, workers' length of employment in their current position, hiring and firing dates, occupational classifications, and other types of labor market data, as well as demographic information such as age, gender, and educational attainment.

Results and Discussion

The research provides several insights into the demographic profile of the Haitian migration flow to the RMBH. Concerning the gender of the Haitian migrants, we can conclude that this is a highly male migration flow. However, after 2015, women have composed an increasing portion of new arrivals, partially due to family reunification purposes, but overwhelmingly due to economic motives. Given that a majority of Haitian migrants cite economic reasons as their primary motivation for coming to Brazil, it is unsurprising that nearly all migrants are of working age and are heavily concentrated in the age groups 25-29 and 30-34.

A brief analysis of the main findings of this study indicates that no clear relationship exists between Haitian migrants' length of residence in Brazil and their average monthly salaries. Similarly, the association between educational attainment and monthly salaries is mixed, with the 2013 RAIS data showing a generally positive relationship between salaries and educational attainment. However, the 2015 RAIS data indicates that, among males, better-educated males can expect to earn more than their less educated peers, but that, among females, migrants with lower educational attainment levels could expect to earn the most. An analysis of the Centro Zanmi data concerning educational attainment and employment status shows little differences among educational attainment groups regarding the probability of holding employment or formal employment. Furthermore, the data provides scant indication that better educated Haitian migrants are more likely to encounter employment corresponding to their education. The principal findings of this study indicate that female Haitian migrants are less likely to be employed than their male counterparts; however, both male and female Haitian migrants report very low levels of informal employment, indicating the lack of a relationship between gender and labor market informality. Finally, the most recent Centro Zanmi data, concerning 2016 and 2017, indicate that female Haitian migrants compose a growing proportion of Haitian migrant flows to the RMBH. While more recent female migrants were more likely to report family reunification as their motivation for migration than were earlier

arrivals, the percentage of females migrating to Brazil primarily for family reunification reasons continues to be dwarfed by those citing economic motives.

The impact of Haitian migrants' educational attainment on various aspects of labor market integration, such as current occupation, labor market status, and salary level appears to be small, with few conclusive results regarding the relationship between educational attainment and labor market integration being observed. When Haitian migrants' labor market status is analyzed by their length of residence in Brazil, the researcher found that migrants who arrived earlier were more likely to hold formal employment and less likely be unemployed than more recent arrivals. However, no relationship between informal employment and Haitian migrants' year of arrival in Brazil was observed. Male Haitian migrants residing in Brazil for longer periods of time generally earned more than newer arrivals; however, female migrants' earnings differ little based upon their length of residence. Haitian migrants' length of employment in their current position also had small impacts on their average monthly salaries, with migrants employed for more than a year reporting higher average earnings than more recent hires.

Finally, this study furnishes novel results regarding Haitian migrants' reported motives for migration, migration routes, ties to Haiti, and other forms of social and/or employment-related connections and support. The majority of Haitians in the RMBH came for primarily economic reasons; however, females were slightly more likely than males to cite family reunification. The data concerning migrants' previous destination before arriving in the RMBH, their UF of entry into Brazil, and their place of birth in Haiti illustrate the shift in the paths of Haitian migration routes to Brazil over time, coinciding with policy shifts regulating this migration flow. Finally, family links were analyzed using the data concerning the number of reported children in Brazil and in Haiti, reflecting upon what these transnational ties could imply for remittance flows or for the future migration of younger migrants for family reunification purposes.

References

CASTRO, Maria da Consolação; FERNANDES, Duval; RIBERIO, Carolina. Migração Haitiana para o Brasil: Minas Gerais como destino, a fala dos haitianos. In: SEMINÁRIO SOBRE ECONOMIA MINEIRA, XVI, 2014, Diamantina, MG. *Anais...* Belo Horizonte: CEDEPLAR/UFMG, 2014. v.1, p. 1-19.

GOVERNO DO BRASIL. Governo prorroga visto humanitário para haitianos. Portal Brasil, Brasília, 14 Sept. 2016. Section: Cidadania e Justiça.