

SOCIAL SCIENCES

USING THE CAPABILITIES APPROACH TO ANALYZE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICTS) BY THE POOR¹

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This paper applies Amartya Sen's "capabilities approach" to the access and use of ICTs. An important issue raised by the Capabilities Approach is that while access to a basic good, in this case information and communication technologies (ICTs), is a prerequisite to its usage, individual differences, capabilities and choice also play a role on the use, value and application of these goods. As such, the paper investigates the extent to which people have access to ICTs, the characteristics of people who make use of it, and how and for what ends they are utilized. Based on household surveys conducted in urban and rural barangays in Puerto Princesa City, it attempts to analyze access beyond the traditional method of considering teledensities and number of Internet service providers (ISPs), but instead focuses on key demographic traits in a community and how these influence their capabilities, functioning and freedoms with respect to ICT use.

Keywords: ICT, information, communication technologies, teledensities, capabilities approach

**PROBING THE DECISIONS BEHIND INDUCED
ABORTION IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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Often a subject of emotional debates that unleash strong and opposing views, abortion, in particular, induced abortions, remain a health concern deserving public health policy action. While there have been several studies on the causes and consequences of abortion, data on a scale that would generate reliable estimates of the prevalence of abortion for the whole country remains scarce. This paper uses a mix of available data on abortion in the Philippines and compliments the profiles of women who have had abortions with life stories to give the abortion statistics the needed human face. The compelling circumstances surrounding the hard decisions to terminate unwanted pregnancies show that Family Planning Program interventions on preventing unwanted pregnancies have a potential of reducing induced abortions. Given the combination of the secrecy of abortion decisions and procedures and the limited capacity of our health system to provide post-abortion care and treatment due to limited resources to meet competing health needs, it is crucial that imperfections in the use of the more effective methods of family planning are addressed to prevent unwanted pregnancies, an event in women's lives that push them into preventable complications and ill health effects of induced abortions and at worst, maternal deaths.

Keywords: induced abortion, health policy, unwanted pregnancies, post-abortion care

**DEMAND FOR HOUSING IN METROPOLITAN CITIES
OF THE PHILIPPINES**

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This paper adds to the existing literature on the housing demand behavior of households in the Philippines. Unlike previous studies on housing demand, the paper compares major metropolitan cities – Metro Manila, Metro Cebu and Metro Davao and uses a panel set of households instead of single year household data in the analysis. The results show that housing demand for owners or amortizing owners is income elastic for both poor and non-poor households in the key metropolises of the country. Even chronically poor households are willing to spend more of income on improvements in tenure and dwelling conditions. The rate of improvements, however, is also affected by location. Tenure change and improvements in dwelling in Metro Cebu and Davao City are modest compared to Metro Manila. In the case of renter households, demand for housing is income inelastic. Renter-households have less incentive to spend a higher proportion of additional income on housing. These findings suggest that shelter design projects of government should adopt a more realistic and variable basis of households housing expenditure. It also suggests the need to develop the low cost rental housing market where the bulk of subsidies should be channeled instead of programs on homeownership. This will not only provide efficient targeting but lessen housing in illegal settlements.

Keywords: housing demand, housing consumption, urban housing

WOMEN, MIGRATION AND REINTEGRATION

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The paper is about the action research on the Social Cost of Migration and Possibilities for Reintegration done by Atikha-Balikabayani. The research was conducted among migrant women in Hong Kong and Italy and their families in San Pablo City, Laguna and Mabini, Batangas.

The objectives of the action research were: 1) assess the impact of migration on migrants, their families and communities and 2) mobilize the various stakeholders to work together and craft a comprehensive OFW Reintegration Program.

The research showed that despite years of hard work, majority of the migrant women do not have substantial savings and have no immediate plans of returning home for good. It was also noted that husbands of migrant women are unable to take on the “feminine responsibility” of managing the household. Migrant returnees had difficulty in adjusting to the estranged relations with their children and husbands and the lack of economic opportunities in the Philippines.

To enable the OFW to rejoin their families and maximize the gains from migration, the various stakeholders must provide community based assistance. The psychosocial and economic preparation of the OFWs for their eventual return must be addressed.

keywords: migration, reintegration, social cost, feminine responsibility, migrant women