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**INTERNAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT AS SEEN IN A LOCAL
GOVERNMENT UNIT: THE CASE OF DASMARIÑAS, CAVITE**

By Romulo C. Brillantes

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Abstract:

The unmitigated exodus of migrants from other regions to Metro Manila has spawned various social, economic and environmental problems in the metropolis. Recognizing this, the need to achieve a more balanced growth throughout the country has led to the promotion of regional development, the lynchpin of which is the industry dispersal policy.

Dasmariñas, one of the lowland municipalities of Cavite which is located within the metropolitan fringe, benefited immensely from this policy. Two waves of migration contributed to the phenomenal population expansion of Dasmariñas. The first was the resettlement of squatters from Metro Manila to Dasmariñas Bagong Bayan resettlement site. The second was brought about by industrialization and suburbanization. Thus, Dasmariñas hosts two distinct groups of migrants – the voluntary and forced migrants.

This study therefore aims to determine the migrants' impact on the town's socio-economic and spatial development. Specifically, their socio-economic and demographic profiles were drawn up to differentiate the two groups. Likewise, the factors which influenced their movement to Dasmariñas were probed. Their interaction in and integration to the host community was also inquired into.

This study covered 384 respondents, equally divided into voluntary and forced migrants. The systematic stratified sampling method was employed to select the migrant respondents. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of key informants. Personal interviews were administered to the respondents and key informants. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied in analyzing the gathered data.

Among the study's significant findings is the vast difference between the voluntary and forced migrants in terms of their socio-economic and demographic characteristics. This is attested to by the z-test on the quantitative variables and chi-square test on the qualitative variables, thereby showing, based on available data, that the voluntary migrants are "superior" to their counterparts.

The assessment of the factors that influenced migration to Dasmariñas reveals that there is no clear and definitive finding as to which between the economic and non-economic variables have a stronger influence on the voluntary migrants' decision to migrate to Dasmariñas. On the other hand, both the economic and socio-psychological factors have moderate impact on their decision to leave their last place of residence.

The migrants have a strong positive impact on the socio-economic development of the receiving area. On the other hand, migrants have a strong impact on Dasmariñas' spatial development in terms of urbanization and land use. They exert a moderate impact on traffic congestion, urban sprawl, and squatting.

In view of these significant findings, these recommendations are presented to the Municipal Government of Dasmariñas and concerned national government agencies: (1) the provision of more social services and employment and livelihood assistance to forced migrants; (2) tapping the voluntary migrants to put up their own business and enterprises in the town to provide jobs to the unemployed residents; (3) densification of the urban core to accommodate the housing needs of an expanding population; (4) preservation of the existing agricultural areas and open grasslands to maintain ecological balance; (5) moratorium on the establishment of shopping complexes along the national highway and on the development of subdivisions that requires the conversion of agricultural lands; (6) implementation of traffic congestion mitigating schemes and construction of more roads to minimize traffic congestion; and (7) strict implementation of the land use plan and zoning ordinance to prevent urban sprawl.