

Out-Migration and Destination Places: Race, National Origin, and Generation

Differences

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ABSTRACT

Research on immigrant dispersion has not addressed the question of how race cleavages within the foreign-born population conditions who migrates internally and where they settle. We look at those questions for white and non-white immigrants from Mexico and five world regions and compare them to patterns for the native-born population. Using ACS 2007-2011 confidential files, we estimate logistic regression models of out-migration from 741 geographic contexts and multinomial regression models of migrant settlement in traditional suburbs, new destination suburbs, and non-metropolitan areas. The analysis shows that migration and settlement patterns vary by race and nativity and are sharper for natives than they are for immigrants. Native-born blacks, Asians, and Hispanic whites and non-whites were significantly less likely to settle in dispersed suburbs or non-metro areas than non-Hispanic whites. Human capital relationships to migration and settlement are similar for native- and foreign-born groups and consistent with spatial assimilation theory.

Note: WE ARE CURRENTLY REWORKING SEVERAL PARTS OF THE DATA ANALYSIS AND WILL HAVE THE OUTPUT COMPLETED AND DISCLOSED BY THE CENSUS BUREAU BY THE PAA MEETINGS.

Introduction

Foreign-born settlement in new U.S. destinations has raised questions regarding the role of immigrants' race and nativity in that process and, in particular, whether the spread of immigrants to areas beyond traditional states and metropolitan areas is proceeding in a manner that is consistent with assimilation theory or responsive to other forces that are leading to increased racial and residential segregation (Hall, 2013; Iceland, 2009; Lichter, 2013). This is an important issue to address given that race has historically shaped where people live in the USA; and residential location, in turn, is associated with housing quality, employment, poverty and other socio-economic conditions. It is well known that most contemporary U.S. immigrants come from countries in the Americas, Asia, the Caribbean and, more recently, Africa that have racial phenotypes that differ from European Caucasians who arrived during earlier immigration waves and now constitute the majority of the native-born population. It is also the case that most contemporary immigrants remain highly concentrated in a handful of states and metropolitan areas (Hempstead, 2007). Since change in foreign-born settlements can only occur through internal migration or shifts in where recent immigrants from abroad settle, it is important to monitor immigrant's migration and settlement choices closely and to examine the role of race and nativity in shaping those changes. It is also important to look at whether race has a differential impact on the internal migration and settlement patterns of the foreign- and native-born. These issues are addressed in this paper by drawing on 2007-2011 ACS confidential research files to look at how race shaped out-migration from 741 labor markets. We also look at whether native- and foreign-born migrants settled in central cities, suburbs, or non-metropolitan areas and at the role of race in shaping settlement choices.

This paper looks at how race and national origin shape the migration and settlement choices of the foreign- and native-born. We focus on these choices because race/ethnic residential segregation will only diminish if the foreign- and native-born continue to migrate internally and make settlement choices based on considerations other than race. While we expect to find comparability in the effects of human capital and demographic characteristics on the migration and settlement choices that the native- and foreign-born make, it is less clear whether race will have differential effects for immigrants from different origins. We also expect to find that black, Hispanic and Asian immigrants are less likely than white immigrants to move to areas with relatively small foreign-born percentages but that finding may not be as important as whether some of them migrate to those places at all. Viewed dynamically, settlement shifts are started by pioneers and the expectation would be that if some immigrants from race groups that traditionally have located in large metropolitan areas are now settling in non-metropolitan or small metropolitan areas, it is likely that they will be joined in those places by increasing numbers of their co-ethnics in the years ahead. While we do not look at settlement change in this paper, that argument is consistent with social network theory and previous patterns of immigrant dispersion (Funkhouser, 2000; Morrison, 1971).

Findings would be consistent with spatial assimilation theory if we find that internal migration and dispersion processes are driven by people with higher human capital and acculturation levels. That finding alone would call into question a growing body of new destination research which holds that it is mainly low skilled immigrants who are moving to new destinations (Donato, Tolbert, Nucci, & Kawano, 2007; Hall, 2013; Hirschman & Massey, 2008; Lichter & Johnson, 2009; Lichter, Parisi, Taquino, & Grice, 2010). We also expect to find that recent immigrants will be less likely than internal migrants to disperse because they will have more social ties to compatriots in concentrated places and few or no ties to people in dispersed areas. Internal

migrants, on the other hand, are more likely to obtain information about alternative housing and employment opportunities in dispersed areas from co-ethnics who have already moved to dispersed places. Such a finding would contradict a claim in the new destination literature, namely that recent immigrants are leading that dispersion (Lichter & Johnson, 2009; Marrow, 2011; Torres, Popke, & Hapke, 2006). Our findings might well differ from those analyses because we focus on immigrants from all destinations rather than on Mexicans or Hispanics as studies have done that reported that finding. We explore migrants' social ties by including an indicator variable in the settlement models that specifies whether the respondent lived in a mixed nativity household and we expect that measure to be positively related to foreign-born dispersion but negative or insignificant for the native born. Those expectations are based on speculation that many foreign-born respondents in mixed nativity households will be married to natives living in tight marriage markets while native-born respondents in mixed nativity households are likely to be children of immigrants who grew up in metropolitan areas and married an immigrant of their own heritage.

Data and Measurement

We draw on Confidential Use Microdata Samples (CUMS) from the 2007-2011 American Community Surveys (ACS) and selected data from the 2000 decennial census that are available for analysis at U.S. Census Bureau Research Data Centers. Because CUMS files have more geographic information and sample cases than Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS) do, they are a rich data source for analyzing migration and settlement patterns of small population subgroups such as the U.S. foreign-born that are characterized by between-group heterogeneity. In fact, given national origin selectivity in settlement and dispersion patterns and the rise of new immigrant destinations in nonmetropolitan and small metropolitan areas, there is no alternative database that has comparable detail on foreign-born resettlement dynamics. The lack of such detail in PUMS data typically limits

analyses of immigrants' settlement changes to states or the largest metropolitan areas and to the total foreign born or Hispanics.

We first look at how race and nativity shape out-migration from 741 geographic areas. These geographic units correspond to local labor market units and have standardized boundaries in the ACS and 2000 analysis samples. The units were originally constructed by Tolbert and colleagues (2009; 1996) by using cluster analysis to identify contiguous counties with close economic and social linkages and commuting patterns in 1990 long-form census data.¹ In order to form a matching set of geographic units for 2000 CUMS data and the 2007-2011 ACS restricted access file, it was necessary to make some modifications due to a small number of county merges and new county creations. The units that include large metropolitan areas approximate metropolitan statistical areas if they have large populations while other units span large territories in non-metropolitan areas and have relatively small populations. Because the number of geographic units used in this analysis is large compared to studies that draw on PUMS data, it is possible to look in greater detail at relationships between people's race, nativity and migration than previous studies have done. The 741 geographic units are referred to as labor markets. The five-year ACS file has data that were collected continuously over 60 months, between January 2007 and December 2011, and only produces broad period estimates, which makes their interpretation less precise than point-in-time decennial census estimates (Grieco & Rytina, 2011).

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END NOTES

¹ They identified 741 commuting zones but in order to comply with Title 13 data protection and privacy rules, before making the data available for public use, the Census Bureau collapsed the 741 zones into 390 labor market areas and made them available in the 1990 PUMS-L. Because our research was carried out at a Census Bureau Research Data Center, we were able to reconstruct all 741 areas.