Internal Migration of Mexicans in the United States, 1990 and 2000

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between internal migration of Mexicans and their assimilation progress. Using micro data from Census 1990 and 2000, I examine three main questions. First, what kinds of people are more likely to be migrants? Second, what are the mobility consequences of internal migration? Third, how do individual attributes affect contextual mobility through migration? The general hypothesis is that immigrant group members with more favourable individual characteristics are more capable to take advantage of migration to achieve further spatial and economic mobility. This hypothesis is by and large confirmed by the findings from comparative studies of data from two Census periods. They point to similar patterns that the immigrants with greater individual attributes have higher migration propensity. In addition, they are more likely to achieve upward mobility in terms of changes of contextual conditions. Therefore, internal migration is most likely another important venue that facilitates assimilation among immigrants.

Despite a large body of literature on immigration, we know little about internal population movement patterns of the members of immigrant groups in this country. As an integral part of immigrant life, secondary migration is closely related to other aspects of immigration experience, such as residential integration and occupational mobility. Thus, a lack of knowledge in this area poses a serious impediment to the thorough understanding of the assimilation process. For instance, though it has been clearly demonstrated in previous literature that there is a noticeable discrepancy between immigrant neighborhoods and the rest of society in terms of social and economic conditions (Alba et al. 1999; Logan, Alba, and Zhang, 2002), it remains unclear what kinds of immigrants live outside their co-ethnic neighborhoods, how they manage to leave their co-ethnic neighborhood behind, and what impacts such movements have upon the overall socioeconomic achievement of group members.

The level of immigrant assimilation and its influencing factors are of interest to all students of immigration. In previous research, attention has been focused on a few large cities in the United States, such as New York and Los Angeles (Alba et al. 1999; Logan, Alba, and Zhang, 2002; Waldinger and Bozorgmehr, 1996). And the studies of immigrant movement have been primarily focused on the "suburbanization" process (Alba and Logan, 1993; Frey, 1985), which refers to the settlement patterns of the immigrant group members across central city and suburbs within metropolitan areas. The guiding theory of such studies is the "Spatial Assimilation" model, which suggests that immigrants with greater socioeconomic progress will, over time, convert such advantage into improvement of residential quality. Such residential improvement is achieved through the movement of immigrant populations from ethnic neighborhoods, which are

normally located in the poor central city areas, to less ethnic neighborhoods, which are normally located in suburban areas, that of better living conditions (Massey, 1985).

"Spatial Assimilation" studies bridge residential attainment and socioeconomic accomplishment. Since immigrants living in suburbs often demonstrate superior socioeconomic characteristics over their central-city counterparts, it is reasonable to expect that spatial assimilation is achieved through migration, and moving out of ethnic neighborhood is a forward step of assimilation that resulted from status improvement. Thus, migration is the result of advancement in the socioeconomic status of immigrant members, and the means for improvement of residential quality. Although the activity of migration is necessarily implied in the spatial assimilation process, it is rarely under direct investigation in previous literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

LOCATION AND ASSIMILATION

Through economic and non-economic forces, the location of immigrant residence exerts significant influences on the assimilation process through which the immigrants become a part of the host society.

Place of residence has crucial impacts on the social and economic progress of immigrants. It operates through both economic and non-economic channels. The relationship between the geographic distribution of an immigrant group and the route and pace of the group's integration has been stressed in many classic theories of immigrant adaptation (Eisenstadt, 1954; Gordon, 1964). In Robert Park's famous race relation cycle: "contact, competition, accommodation, and eventual assimilation (Park, 1950)," the

importance of location is certainly implied. As social interaction depends heavily on physical proximity, residence in an immigrant neighborhood will naturally affect the immigrant's chances of interacting with immigrant members or majority group members.

The close relationship between place of residence and the different aspects of assimilation can be seen from various theoretical perspectives. First, the level of exposure to the majority group has an important effect upon the pace of the cultural assimilation (Gordon, 1964). Language adaptation is a typical example of this. New immigrants confined in ethnic enclaves would be slow learning English, which in turn impedes their understanding of the host society. The lack of understanding of the host society would further limit their achievements in other fields and thereby prolong the time needed for immigrants to progress.

Residence and neighborhood play important roles in affecting the chances of intermarriage. Immigrants residing in ethnically concentrated neighborhoods should have a lower chance of marrying majority members. The exposure of immigrant group members to the majority group members can also affect the chance of intermarriage (Blau, 1977). The level of intermarriage between immigrants and the majority members is always considered as an important measure of the assimilation process (Alba, 1985 and 1990; Alba and Nee, 2003). For most immigrants, intermarriage is the result of their integration efforts, and it often leads to further socioeconomic advancement (Waldinger and Lichter, 1996).

Second, the level of economic assimilation can be directly influenced by the presence of ethnic niches at the location of residence. Among others, the "Enclave Economy Theory" points out the strong link between economic progress of immigrants

and their neighborhood of residence. Focused on self-employment of immigrant members, enclave economies are often based on ethnic communities (Light and Karageorgis, 1994; Portes and Bach, 1985). The small immigrant businesses are often in secondary industrial sectors that are dependent on the low cost of co-ethnic labor and community network support (Portes and Bach, 1985). Because of their limited capital and bounded markets, some scholars have argued that they do not provide the main route for economic advancement of immigrants (Sanders and Nee, 1996). Nonetheless, the enclave economy represents an important component of the immigrant labor market, and it is particularly important to immigrant newcomers. The existence of ethnic enclave-based economic arrangements is the reason that some immigrants can work and support themselves and their families in the United States without speaking English.

In sum, residential location has direct bearing on the assimilation experiences of immigrants. Therefore, the change of residence is of great importance to the student of immigration and adaptation.

INTERNAL MIGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS

There has not been much work done in this field. The early literature on this topic focused mostly on initial settlement and the subsequent redistributions of the immigrants. A substantial part of the work on this subject is inspired by and focused on the refugee replacement process dating back to the 1950's.

There are two major waves of refugee immigrations in the recent history of the United States: the Cuban refugees in the 1950's and the Indochinese refugees in the 1970s. These refugee relocations are heavily subject to political influence and

government policy. The factors of individual characteristics did not have great impacts (Boswell, 1993; Desparats, 1985; Kelly, 1986; McHugh, 1989.)

One of the key interests of existing secondary migration studies is about the geographic impacts of migration on immigrant distribution. The question is whether secondary migration leads to concentration or dispersion of the immigrant groups.

Studies at different levels seemed to draw different conclusions. In the studies of internal migration of the foreign-born population during the three census decades: 1970-1990, Rogers and others observe important differences in spatial structure and mobility patterns hidden in the aggregate data at regional level. They conclude that immigrants tend to move to areas with a higher concentration of their compatriots. And the internal migration patterns of the foreign-born are more spatially focused than those of the native-born. They also noticed that there are significant variations of concentration and the regional migration patterns between different subpopulations. For example, while the Concentration Index for Mexicans and South and Central Americans increased over time, the measure of Asians decreased (Belanger and Rogers, 1992; Rogers and Henning, 1999).

Bartel and Koch studied the metropolitan level migration patterns of the major recent immigrant groups from Asia and Central and South America (Bartel and Koch, 1991), using individual level data from the 1980 Census at the metropolitan area level. Their findings show moderate inter-group as well as inter-cohort differences in terms of spatial concentration.

In separate studies based on the 1990 Census, Newbold demonstrated despite the high rates of internal migration and a large volume of net migration, there was little

change in the overall distribution and concentration of the foreign-born population during the 1980's. Meanwhile, significant differences are observed among different immigrant groups. Specifically, due to the length of time within the U.S., human capital or ease of adjustment, the "older" immigrants are more dispersed. Among recent immigrants, only Koreans and Indians show the trend of dispersion (Newbold, 1999).

Another focus in the existing literature of secondary migration is about the forces behind secondary migration movements. The internal migration behaviors of immigrants can be affected by various kinds of factors, some of which are common to human migration in general, and others are specific for immigrants.

At the individual level, the human capital perspective is of the utmost importance and mostly examined. The main indicators of this perspective include nativity, immigration cohort, language fluency, education, economic status, employment, occupation, and various life cycle features. The human capital factors affect migration decision through the cost-benefit evaluation of economic gains based on individual characteristics (Gurak and Kritz, 2000).

The limited research on the effect of poverty status yields an interesting finding. Immigrants in poverty seem to enjoy a higher rate of migration. This effect is interpreted as "poverty flight" (Newbold, 1999).

The employment aspect is presented as the effect of self-employment. There seems to be a consistent finding that self-employment is negatively related to secondary migration (Gurak and Kritz, 2000; Kobrin and Speare, 1983; Kritz and Nogle, 1994; Sandefur and Scott, 1981).

Besides human capital, social capital is another important aspect influencing secondary migration. Measures like nativity concentration, co-national share, and immigration rate are a constant deterrence to migration mobility at different geographic levels (Kritz and Nogle, 1994; Newbold, 1999). And the time spent in the United States is found to have positive effects on migration, although citizenship is only moderately related to migration (Foulkes and Newbold, 2000; Kritz and Nogle, 1994).

IMMIGRANT SUBGROUP

A major limitation in the existing literature has to do with group specification. Although the existence of significant inter-group variations in terms of migration behaviors is hinted at in many studies (Bartel and Koch, 1991; Belanger and Rogers, 1993; Ellis and Wright, 1998; Newbold, 1999), "the literature that frequently distinguishes immigrants only by broadly defined ethnic groups (if at all)..." (Newbold, 1999). It is well known that there exists a significant variation among subgroups under the broad "umbrella" terms, such as "Asian" and "Hispanic" in terms of immigration history, assimilation progress, and integration pathways. Therefore, it is important to examine immigrant subgroups separately.

This research will focus on the largest recent immigrant group- Mexicans. They are the representatives of the major components of recent immigrants, and they reflect the distinctive social and economic characteristics of Hispanics. This comparative study of the Mexicans at two Census periods is expected to provide a good opportunity to understand the different dynamics of secondary migration of the immigrant groups with scrupulous differences in their conditions.

FIRST AND LATER GENERATION IMMIGRANTS

Another limitation of existing research on internal migration of recent immigrant groups is that they usually don't exclude native-born group members. The rationale is that the natives are US citizens that should face different kinds of tasks of assimilation from their foreign-born counterparts. However, such exclusion could conceal an important part of secondary migration. It is true that we shouldn't expect the first and later generations of immigrants be subject to the same kind of assimilation barriers, however, in many ways, the natives could be more similar to their co-ethnic peers than to the majority of the host society. Since they are usually still perceived as members of an immigrant group, they are expected to face some of the difficulties associated with their ethnic cultural heritage. This is particularly true for the immigrant groups of less assimilation success. Therefore, I decided to include both the native-born and foreign-born Mexicans in this study. The analyses will be conducted comparatively to highlight the similarities and differences between group members along the nativity divide.

HYPOTHESIS

In this study, I examine the internal migration of one recent immigrant group-Mexicans. I intend to explore the relationship between their migration activities and their assimilation progress. I am interested in the geographic scale and migration volume of the Mexican movement. In addition, it is important to understand the underlying dynamics and forces behind internal migration participation. Furthermore, it is beneficial to

investigate the impacts of internal migration on migrants as well as the immigrant group as a whole.

The general hypothesis is that the migration is a selective and privileged action that favours the group members with more advanced assimilation status and greater resources. The immigrant group members with more favourable individual characteristics are more capable to take advantage of migration to achieve further spatial and economic mobility.

There are three specific questions to be addressed. First, what kinds of people are more likely to be migrants? Second, what are the mobility consequences of internal migration? Third, how do individual attributes affect contextual mobility through migration? Microdata from Census 1990 and 2000 are used to carry out the analyses. Binomial logistic models are used to examine the migration propensity of Mexicans during the two periods. Mobility consequences are measured as two aspects of contextual characteristics: the change to co-ethnic presence and the change to poverty exposure of migrants between origins and destinations. Ordinary Least Squares regression models are employed to test the relationship between contextual improvements and individual attributes of migrants.

To test the significance of the difference of effect magnitude of indicator variables between immigrant and native models, I create interaction terms between independent variables and nativity status in a pooled model of both immigrant and native Mexicans within each Census period. The significance measures are presented to indicate the magnitude difference of the effects between immigrant and native models.

DATA AND METHOD

CENSUS MICRO DATA

This study uses 5% PUMS- Public Used Microdata Samples from 1990 and 2000. The Census long form data record one-sixth of the nation's population. The large sample size of Census makes it possible to study secondary migration of immigrant subgroups, which remain still small in number despite significant increase in recent decades.

The comparability and availability of 1990 and 2000 Censuses provide a good opportunity for a longitudinal examination of the internal migration. The data from two different periods could compliment each other in testing hypotheses. And the findings will strengthen our theories and improve the power of our interpretations.

The samples of analyses exclude those immigrated to US within five years of Census tabulation (after 1985 for 1990 Census and after 1995 for 2000 Census), had concurrent or past military service record, were concurrently enrolled in school, and were 18 years of age or above. Household is the unit of analysis. To limit the effect of replicate representation of households with two eligible samples, the group member householder or spouse is randomly selected to represent the household. For intermarriage households, the householder or spouse who is the group member is elected.

DEFINING MIGRATION

For any migration study, a crucial distinction has to be made before the research can proceed: "migration" should be clearly distinguished from "pure local move". It is because a significant difference exists between the two kinds of movements (Long, 1988). They represent different level of disruptiveness resulted from the moving, and they require different kinds of adjustment in the destination. For example, a movement to a

different town will require the change of friend network, or even job relocation; and a residential move within a city can mean only the change of the route of commute.

With the special characteristics of immigrants in mind, I propose to conduct analyses at metropolitan area level. Cross-metropolitan area migration refers to population movement across Census Metropolitan Statistical Areas /Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA/PMSA). Most metropolitan areas have central city centers with surrounding suburbs.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Dependent variables

Binomial logistic regression models are used to test the hypothesis regarding migration propensity that the secondary migration is a privileged move that migrants generally have more favorable individual attributes than non-migrants. The outcome variable is "being a migrant or not."

The mobility consequence of internal migration is measured as the change to poverty exposure at the metro area level. The difference between destination and origin is the dependent variable. Ordinary Least Squares regression models are used to test the relationship between contextual consequences of migration and individual characteristics.

Independent variables

There are three types of indicator variables. English ability and educational attainment are used to represent human capital. The dummy coded categories are speaking English only, speaking English well, speaking English poorly; below high school, high school, and college or above educated.

The second set of indicators represents deterring factors to internal migration. They include ethnic niche employment and homeownership. Both suggest closer ties with a location, and therefore, serve as impediment to migration and mobility.

The third set of indicator variables are demographic variables. They include age, gender, marital status, and presence of children. According to existing literature, age, female, marriage, and presence of children are expected to have negative impacts on migration participation and mobility.

Control variables

Student indicator is devised to control the possible effect of changing residence due to college enrollment. When a student enrolls in a non-local college, or graduates from college, he or she will appear to be a "mover." But clearly, this type of movement is different from the secondary migration of this study. In this study, I include the college-education-related movers into the analysis, for lack of a better way to single them out. But I create a variable representing the population who are most at risk for that, and to control the effect of this variable in migration analysis. The variable is constructed with combined use of age and educational attainment. In dummy coding, 1 represents people between ages 23 and 27 with college and above education, 0 represents the rest of population. This follows the assumption that the normal age range of college education is between 18 and 22.

Indicator of within CMSA migration is created to distinguish the movement between PMSAs within a CMSA. This type of move is usually short move. Since the analyses are based on "MSA/PMSA" geography, there is a concern about possible differences between movements involving MSA-MSA/MSA-PMSA/CMSA-CMSA and

movements involving PMSA-PMSA within a CMSA. Since the PMSAs within a CMSA can be adjacent to each other, the elements affecting migration can be less severe than other types of movements. In addition, the migrations between them might be subject to the common influence from belonging to the same CMSA.

To deal with this issue, I introduce a dummy variable to distinguish within-CMSA movement from other types of movements. It serves as a control variable to limit the within-CMSA effects. This will indicate whether CMSA as a geographic unit has significant bearings on cross-metropolitan migration study.

FINDINGS

MIGRATION RATES AND REGIONAL DISTRIBUTON

Table 1 gives the general overview of the internal migration of the Mexicans at metropolitan level for 1990 and 2000. The first section of the table deals with the volume and regional distribution of the migration. In 1990, there were about 4.5 million Mexicans meeting our criteria of eligible potential migrant in 1985. Among them, over 430,000 moved to a different metropolitan area during the 85-90 period. The migration rate is 9.38%. The regional distribution shows a clear pattern. The West hosts the majority of the group population- 60.6%, and its share of migrants is slightly higher. About 2/3 of the inter-metro migrants chose a metropolitan area in the West as their migration destination. The region of the second highest share is the South, which accounts for about 30% of group population and migrants.

The other two regions pale in comparison with the West and the South, their combined share of group total and migrant total were less than 10%. It appears that the

distribution of internal migrants in 1990 is a story of regional concentration that is comparable to distributional pattern of the Mexican population.

There is a significant population increase during the 90s for the Mexicans. Compared with 1990 Census, the number potential migrants in Census 2000 increased by more than 3 million, or 66.2%. And an even greater boost is observed for the volume of internal migration. In 2000, over 750,000 Mexicans recorded a change of residence to a different metropolitan area compared with 1995. It represents an increase of 74%. Despite the significant change in population total and volume of migration, the regional distributional pattern remains. In 2000, both Mexican population and Mexican migrants show similar pattern of concentration as 1990. The West still hosts the majority of the Mexicans and migrants, the South is a distant second, and the Midwest and the Northeast have much smaller share.

Despite of consistent ranking of regions in terms of group and migrant distributions in 1990 and 2000, their actual shares reported changes. First, the West reduced its share of the Mexican population by about 2%, while saw its share of migrants decreased by 7%. This difference goes to the South- by 2.7%, the Midwest- by 3.1%, and the Northeast- by 1.2%. This seems to indicate a tendency of regional shift in terms of migration destinations as more Mexicans manage to move away from the West, and move into the traditionally less Mexican populated regions.

Such expansion pattern is echoed by the summary of migration origins and destination. Here, we can see the expansion takes two forms. First, within each Census, the number of migration destinations is greater than that of migration origins, suggesting a territorial spread of the group. Second, in 2000, we see growth of both origins and

destinations, which seems to indicate that over time the Mexicans become more geographically spread out through internal migration.

But this geographic expansion doesn't appear to affect the rate of outmigration and immigration. The average metropolitan outmigration rate weighted by outmigration volume is around 11% in both 1990 and 2000. And the immigration rate is also steady at around 15%.

The uneven distributional pattern along with the geographic expansion of internal migration foretells the variation of migration activities at metropolitan level. In 1990, the largest number of outmigration is recorded in Los Angeles PMSA that a little less than 100,000 Mexicans left L.A. And the smallest measure of outmigration is 9. In relative terms, even when limited to metro areas with at least 100 outmigrants, there are still some areas reporting 100% outmigration, while the lowest measure is 5.3%. The pattern is similar for inmigration. In 2000, the absolute range of migration volume among metropolitan areas becomes even greater, particularly for the outmigration, where the maximum outmigration is over 157,000, again from Los Angeles PMSA. However, the margin of relative measures becomes smaller, and no metropolitan area reports 100% fro either inmigration or outmigration.

In sum, the macro picture of Mexican internal migration is characterized by regional concentration, wide range of variations between different places, and a geographic tendency of expansion. Overtime, these general patterns remain while some significant changes in magnitude are recorded.

INDIVIDUAL PROFILES

Table 2 provides profiles of individual attributes of migrants and nonmigrants for the two migration periods. Among the three sets of measures of individual characteristics, migrants consistently demonstrate advantages over their nonmigrant counterparts. Among the human capital measures, migrants have higher native presence. This is important because the later-generation Mexicans are expected to have fewer obstacles and more opportunities in their assimilation efforts than the first generation immigrants. Related to nativity status, migrants and nonmigrants show significant difference in terms of English ability. Migrants have much higher percentage of English speaking only and much smaller share of people with poor English ability.

The human capital difference between migrants and nonmigrants is also reflected in the stark contrast in educational attainment. The migrants are much better educated with much lower share of below high school educated group members, and they are about twice as likely to hold college or above degree than their nonmigrant peers.

The migrants also show advantage in socioeconomic measures. While the economic statuses of migrants and nonmigrants are similar, the migrants appear to show a better employment pattern. Compared with the nonmigrants, the migrants are much less likely to engage in enclave niche employment, which are usually considered inferior to the mainstream economic sectors in terms of working conditions and labour compensation. The migrants also have less public employment. This suggests that the nonmigrants are more likely to hold government positions that by nature are more locale-bound.

The measures of association with non-enclave ethnic niche sectors show little differences between migrants and nonmigrants in both 1985-90 and 1995-2000 periods.

Meanwhile, the migrants hold a steady edge of about 10% over the nonmigrants in employment outside of the ethnically concentrated industrial sectors. That suggests that migrants have higher rate of participation in mainstream economy.

As expected, the lifecycle variables indicate that the migrants are more likely to be single young males. But interestingly, the migrants are also more likely to have non-group spouse than nonmigrants. If intermarriage can be considered as a sign of integration, higher share of intermarriage gives advantage to the migrant population. The two periods show the same patterns that migrants have much higher rate of intermarriage.

In sum, in both 1990 and 2000, migrants seem to possess greater human capital, better employment positions, and demographic advantage. And the patterns are very much consistent during the 80s and 90s.

However, there has been a key change between the two periods worth noticing. There was a major shift to the Mexican population in terms of nativity status during the 90s. The US-born Mexicans changes from majority in 1990 to minority in 2000. This is reflected in both migrant and nonmigrant populations. This change is important because it could entail more significant changes to the underlying dynamics concerning group status, group perception, relative power and influence of the natives and the foreign-born, and the general assimilation path and process of the group on the whole. With the increased immigrant share, Mexicans would be perceived more as an immigrant group that its general assimilation progress would be more heavily influenced by the first-generation immigrants and measured against other foreign-born group members dominated recent immigrant groups.

There is no doubt that the participation of internal migration is selection process, and overall, the migrants are distinct in their social and economic status. In addition, the results from the two periods point to similar patterns with few variations, such as the nativity and employment change, that could have long term impact on internal migration activities.

We have seen proof of significant advantage of migrants over nonmigrants, as well as significant advantage of native group members over immigrant group members in terms of individual characteristics. Now the question is: How do these individual differences affect internal migration? The literature informs us that internal migration is a privileged move of group members with greater social and economic achievements. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding migration participation is that migrants should demonstrate more favourable individual attributes compared with the nonmigrants. In addition, this pattern should be consistent over time.

PREDICTING MIGRATION

Table 3 presents results from four logistic models separately examining migration participation for foreign-born and native Mexicans in 1990 and 2000. The dependent variable is migration participation. The explanatory variables are grouped into three kinds of factors: human capital factors, migration deterring factors, and lifecycle factors. The regional location and college student are used as control variables.

The results yield three main findings. First, most indicators behave similarly in all four models. The language measure of human capital seems to make no significant difference among natives or immigrants, although the preliminary results from migration

predicting models for the whole group indicate significant advantage of English speaking only and disadvantage of English speaking poorly. It suggests that the language ability will affect the chance of internal migration but only when a native and an immigrant are compared.

The predictors of education report cross the board significant and strong effects, which show the prominent role of higher education in internal migration selection for Mexicans. Compared with those with below high school education, the high school and college educated Mexicans are much more likely to be migrants. In fact, the college or above education indicator reports the strongest co-efficient in each model. It suggests that college education is the most effective predictor of migration propensity.

As expected, the public and ethnic-related employments have negative effects on migration participation. Possibly due to the ties to a location, the chance of getting government jobs is significantly reduced for the migrants. Public jobs are not necessarily bad jobs, but they tend to be locale specific and much less mobile.

Enclave niche association is another strong factor. Like the scenario of public employment, the migrants are much less likely to work in enclave niche sectors where both ethnic labour and ethnic capital are overrepresented. This may be related to the fact that ethnic enclave economy is most likely located in ethnic neighbourhoods, where the supplies of ethnic work force and ethnic capital are ample. Therefore, enclave association probably means stronger ties to local ethnic communities, which make it harder to move away.

The association with non-enclave niche sectors has similar effects on migration as the enclave niche in both 1990 and 2000 models. Even working in industrial sectors with

only ethnic worker or ethnic owner concentration has negative effect on one's probability of participating in migration, although expectedly, the coefficients are not as strong as those of the enclave indicator. This difference in magnitude reflects the fact that non-enclave niche jobs offer more flexibility than enclave economy, however, they still represent a significant restraint to Mexican migration mobility.

The other indicator of migration deterring factors is homeownership. As expected, migrants are much less likely to homeowners than nonmigrants.

Among the lifecycle predictors, conforming to the existing literature, migrants tend to be young male and less likely to have children in household. The effects of indicators of marital status come as a surprise that married group members are not significantly more mobile than the unmarried. However, as expected, intermarriage has strong positive effects on migration participation.

In summary, the main finding of the migration prediction models is that the individual level predictors have similar performance. It appears that our hypothesis is confirmed in all models that regardless of nativity status or time periods. Consistently migration participation is related to greater human capital, better employment position, and more favourable demographic features.

The second finding has to do with the different performances between native and immigrant models. There are qualitative and quantitative differences. By qualitative, I mean the presence of an effect is dependent on nativity status. For example, the effect of gender is of this case. Being female significantly impedes a Mexican immigrant's chance of migration, but it doesn't hold the same effect for the natives.

There are many quantitative differences between native and foreign models that the predictors show effects of same significance and direction but of significantly different magnitude. For example, the college education has positive effect for both immigrant and native Mexicans; however, the effect on natives is significantly stronger than that for the immigrants. In most cases where this type of difference is present, the effects are stronger for the natives. This seems to suggest that the native Mexicans are able to more fully utilize their individual attributes to realize their goal of migration than the immigrants. On the other hand, the immigrants seem to have additional barriers in translating their resources into migration mobility.

The third finding is about the comparison between 1990 and 2000. There are two kinds of change overtime. First, some factors changed their effects in 2000. For example, the regional indicator of the NE and the South, and the indicator of other ethnic niche report changes of significance or direction of effects. Second, there are more indicators reporting significant qualitative or quantitative differences between native and immigrant models during the 1995-2000 period than the 1985-1990 period.

CONTEXTUAL MOBILITY

Table 4 presents the summary descriptives of macro level mobility consequences for Mexican migrants. Mobility results are represented by two contextual characteristics: the presence of co-ethnic group members and exposure to poverty. The change of the percentages of Mexicans between origins and destinations directly test the impact of individual characteristics on ethnic concentration or dispersion movement. The changes in poverty rates address the changing economic environment of the migrants.

The change of group presence show clear sign of the impacts of the changes in the nativity composition of Mexicans. In both Census periods, the majority of Mexican migrants experience decrease of co-ethnic presence. In the 1990 model, the average Mexican migrant move a place with 3.7% fewer Mexicans; and the measure shot up to 5% in the 2000 model. An examination of the measures for immigrants and natives reveals that there was a switch of relative position between the two Census periods. In the 1990 Census, more native migrants experience decrease of Mexican presence at destinations, and the average percentage drop of co-ethnic presence is greater than that of the foreign-born migrants. Both of these relationships were reversed in Census 2000.

The sharp increase of new immigrants in the 90s could have contributed to this reversal as new immigrants tend to initially settle in ethnic neighbourhoods with high co-ethnic presence. Their departure from those neighbourhoods will most likely lead to decrease of group presence. On the other hand, this reversal could reflect the fact that the native Mexicans have already gained significant advantage over the first generation immigrants by living in less ethnic areas. Therefore, it is harder for them to experience further decrease.

As of poverty exposure, the poverty rate between origin and destination metro area for an average Mexican migrant decreased by 1.3% in the 1990 model. In the 2000 model, the improvement is slightly greater at 1.6%. The changes of poverty exposure cover a wide range. The largest deterioration of poverty increase is 35.4% and 29.2% for the 1990 and 2000 models respectively; while the biggest improvement of poverty exposure is 36.7% and 29.5 for 1990 and 2000 models. In both models, the majority of migrants experienced decrease of poverty exposure as a result of migration.

The findings show similar patterns for foreign-born and native migrants. In general, migration means exposure to lower poverty rate. However, there is a significant change to the relative positions of native and immigrant migrants. In the 1990 model, the native migrants seem to have a slight edge over their immigrant counterparts that higher percent of native migrants experience improvement of poverty exposure. This trend was decidedly reversed in the 2000 model. The immigrant migrants are more likely to experience lower poverty exposure. This could be the effect of the nativity shift of the group composition. The new immigrants, who the most likely settled in the co-ethnic concentrated areas initially, are also more likely to report greater poverty decrease when they move since they start with high poverty exposure.

An alternative explanation is related to a more dramatic change to migration motivation and destination choice. The concentrated presence of co-ethnics could create good opportunities for qualified individuals. The ethnically oriented professional jobs, such as Hispanic TV stations, financial agencies serving co-ethnic customers, and so on, could attract some well off Mexicans, more likely the natives, to come back to the metro areas with large Mexican presence. As a result, they obtain good jobs at the cost of the increase of poverty exposure.

MOBILITY PREDICTION

Concentration vs. Dispersion

Table 5 reports the OLS regression results predicting change to co-ethnic presence through migration. There are several kinds of findings. First, the four models yield mostly consistent results. In general, favourable individual measures are associated

with dispersion type of migration. As a surprise, educational attainment is not significantly related with concentration or dispersion results of migration. The positive co-efficients for college and above educated migrants seem to suggest that moving away from co-ethnic presence is not the primary goal for the Mexicans at higher stage of assimilation. Instead, they may prefer to take advantage of the good but demanding opportunities that are present with ethnic presence.

The ethnic employment indicators show expected results. In contrast to non-niche mainstream employment, ethnic niche employment of migrants predicts significant increase of co-ethnic presence. In particular, association with enclave niche sectors presents the strongest impact in all models. Public employment also leads to increase of group presence. This may be related to the fact that the government positions are more likely to locate in big cities.

The results of demographic predictors also conform to expectations. The older, female, within-group married, and with children migrants are more likely to experience increase of co-ethnic presence through migration. Though, intermarriage shows string influence on dispersion movement.

Despite the overall consistency of predictor performances, within each Census period, the first and later generations of immigrants demonstrate minor differences. Some predictors, such as the effects of language, non-enclave niche employment, gender, and single status, are significant for one nativity group but no for the other. In addition, some predictors show significantly stronger effects in one model than the other. In most of these cases, the native models seem to have the advantage. In comparison with the effects

in immigrant models, some indicators in the two native models show stronger positive impacts or weaker negative effects.

Another variation from the overall consistency of the models is between the two Census periods. A few changes are noticeable. The directions of the effect of English speaking well were opposite in the two periods. In Census 2000, being female or having children in a household were no longer predicting concentration movement. In addition, the 2000 Census models highlight more differences between the first and later generations of immigrants. This may suggest that the change of the nativity distribution might have brought about more substantive changes to the dynamics of internal migration for Mexicans.

Exposure to poverty

Table 6 presents the OLS regression results predicting change to poverty exposure through migration. Like the previous model, the poverty models present similar patterns. First, conforming to the hypothesis, the improvement of poverty exposure is generally associated with better individual attributes. In three of the four models, higher education is observed having a significantly positive impact on poverty improvement. The better-educated migrants are more likely to move to places with lower poverty level. The effects of migration deterring factors are also expected. In all models, the association with ethnic niche employment predicts increased poverty exposure than those engaged in non-ethnic industrial sectors. It means that the migrants experiencing higher poverty exposure are more likely to work in ethnic economic sectors, and/or the migrants who engage in ethnic niche employment are more likely to move to poorer places. This is true for both enclave

and non-enclave employments, although the negative impacts of enclave niche employment are more pronounced.

Migrants moving to less poor places are also less likely to be homeowners. Several factors might contribute to this observation. First, it could be related with time. These migrants might not have had enough time in their destination to go through the process of property purchase. They could still be in a transition period when they rent temporarily. Another possibility is that the places with less poor are more likely to have higher property price. Therefore, it makes it more difficult for the migrants to own home. On the other hand, the housing in poor places is understandably cheaper.

The lifecycle factors show expected patterns. The mobility advantage goes to those young, male, single, and with no children migrants. Again, intermarriage is a consistent positive influence to mobility change.

The second kind of finding is that native migrants have a mobility advantage. Compared with the immigrant models, we find more positive impacts and fewer negative impacts in the native models. This advantage is reflected in several scenarios. First, the positive influences of some predictors are only present in the native models. In both native models, college education and being single are positively related to the decrease of poverty exposure, while they are insignificant for the foreign-born migrants. Second, the positive influence becomes stronger for natives. Although the effects of inter-marriage status show up positive in all four models, they have significantly greater positive impact for native migrants than immigrant migrants. Third, the negative influences of some factors disappear in the native models. A female foreign-born migrant is significantly more likely to move to a poorer place, but it is not the case for the native female migrants.

Fourth, some negative impacts become weaker. The negative effect of age is present in all models; however, the magnitude of the impact is significantly smaller in the native models.

There is a single exception to the second kind of finding – ethnic niche employment. If the native migrants are engaged in ethnic sectors, they are more likely to experience increase of poverty exposure. In other words, there seems to be a stiffer penalty for natives for not participating in mainstream economy.

The comparison between the two periods yields the third kind of finding. The 1990 and 2000 models are mostly consistent. In both periods, the migrants with better social and economic characteristics are more likely to reduce their poverty exposure. Meanwhile, the native models in both periods show general advantage over the immigrant models. There are just a few exceptions to the overall similarity. These exceptions point to changing dynamics and group compositions of Mexicans in the 90s.

Between the immigrant models, the effects of high school education and public employment became significant in 2000. They are probably related to the increasing diversity of foreign-born Mexicans with significant addition of new immigrants in the 90s. There is higher variance of levels of education and foreign-born Mexicans start to enter the governments at different levels.

There are also a few changes in the native models representing changing conditions and status among the later generation Mexican immigrants. The negative effect of speaking English well in the 1990 model was reversed in 2000. It seems to suggest that overtime bilingualism become a liability in terms of migration mobility. An alternative explanation is that the changing group composition created new opportunities

in the less affluent and more ethnic places for those native-born Mexicans who have the ability of speaking both English and Spanish.

In the 1990 native model, both high school and presence of children report significant effects, which became insignificant in 2000. This seems to indicate that the improvement of educational level and economic status among natives made high school education less effective a predictor for poverty improvement, and presence of children is no longer an impediment to upward migration mobility.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This study addresses three critical questions regarding internal migration of the largest recent immigrant group - Mexicans. The results of models based on both Censuses display similar patterns for Mexican migration. In both 1990 and 2000, the Mexican internal migrations were highly selective and overall privileged move that group members with greater resources are significantly more likely to participate in internal migration.

Moreover, internal migration generally leads to improvement of contextual conditions. Migrants usually experience upward macro mobility by moving to destinations of better environment. In addition, the extent of upward mobility is closely related to individual characteristics. The better-off group members are not only more likely to move, they are also more likely to move to better places- experience greater improvement of contextual characteristics.

As of the foreign-native comparison, the results are more complicated. One the one hand, the same set of factors affects migration. On the other hand, the effects of these factors show different strength for foreign and native members. The individual attribute

factors are less powerful in predicting the migration behaviours of the foreign-born. This suggests that the foreign born members have more barriers than the natives. The negative forces are weaker on the natives, while the positive forces are stronger. They seem to be in a better position to take advantage of internal migration to move up than the first generation immigrants. This is important because it could be an effective way for the natives to distinguish themselves from the first generation immigrants. It could mean that native and foreign-born members will have different assimilation pathways.

The findings indicate that the Mexican migrations at the two Census periods are remarkably similar despite the significant changes happened to the group composition over the decade. However, the minor differences in magnitude of predicting factors may be prelude of greater and more fundamental shift in the future. The changing impacts of human capital and ethnic employment patterns are possible signs of such shift.

IMPACTS ON ASSIMILATION

The findings on internal migration shed light on understanding of assimilation experiences for Mexicans, and probably recent immigrants in general. As an important component of immigrant experiences, internal migration is most likely an additional venue that facilitates assimilation among immigrants. It could lead to consequences at both macro and micro levels.

The macro level descriptives provide an overview of Mexican migration. The central theme is the pattern of migration expansion. The fact that the migration destinations increasingly outnumber origins suggests ongoing territorial expansion of the group. There are two possible outcomes from this expansion. First, it could lead to

geographic expansion or dispersion of a specific immigrant group. Internal migration into new destinations could mean the beginning of future ethnic enclaves. The explorers into places without traditional co-ethnic presence will be followed by their lower status co-ethnic counterparts. The initial exploration would make the following migrations less demanding. The foreseeable chain migration could provide the needed critical mass-ethnic demand an ethnic supply to sustain and develop ethnic communities. As a result, new ethnic communities will develop, and they will attract more immigrant group members with less favourable social and economic resources, and make it possible for them to survive and develop in the new places. Eventually, the new destinations would become new concentrations or magnets for co-ethnic group members, even new immigrants. And enclave-based economy will establish in these new destinations. This path will lead to immigrant dispersion in the long run through successive waves of migration following the initial migration pioneers.

Another possibility is that internal migration may be the mark of true integration into the host society. Foremost, those marching into the new destinations are selected group members, who intend to leave their ethnic neighbourhoods behind and keep away from the ethnic way of life/culture. The key feature for these migrants is that they are very socially and economically advanced, and already well equipped to enjoy the better opportunities that the mainstream society has to offer. They will not desire or invest in the development of co-ethnic environment and network. As a result, it will remain difficult for the ethnic members with less resource to follow their foot steps. And the new destinations will remain close to the immigrant members with less resource. Along this

path, internal migration will not lead to substantial immigrant dispersion; instead, it will serve as the definitive mark of achieved assimilation for some immigrant group members.

At the micro level, internal migration could reinforce the existing differences between those have and have not immigrant group members. The participation of internal migration favours those with more favourable characteristics. This positive selection works in combination with the general upward contextual mobility to create further opportunities of social and economic advancements. As a result, the within immigrant group discrepancies will increase. The findings of the shrinking share of later generation Mexican immigrants and the increasing contrast between the foreign-born and the natives suggest that such divide could further develop along nativity line.

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Table 1. Metro level overview of Mexican migration in 1990 and 2000

	1990	2000
Regional distribution		
Total group population [a]	4,596,481	7,640,310
Northeast	1.1%	2.3%
Midwest	8.2%	9.9%
South	30.2%	29.2%
West	60.6%	58.7%
Total of actual migrants	431,336	750,592
Northeast	2.0%	3.2%
Midwest	6.6%	9.7%
South	26.9%	29.6%
West	64.5%	57.4%
Migration expansion [b]		
Number of metro origins	172	232
Number of metro destinations	244	257
Mean of outmigration rate	11.1%	11.7%
Mean of inmigration rate	15.2%	15.4%
Variation of migration action [b]		
Range of outmigrants		
-- count	100 - 97,693	100 - 157,891
-- percentage	5.3%- 100%	3.2%- 79.9%
Range of inmigrants		
-- count	100 - 66,589	100 - 67,859
-- percentage	3.6%-100%	3.5%-84.4%

Note: a. Mexicans who were possible to migrate in 1985/1995.
b. include metropolitan areas with at least 100 weighted number of migrants.

Table 2. Individual profiles for migrant and nonmigrant Mexicans in 1990 and 2000

	1990		2000	
	Migrant	Non-migrant	Migrant	Non-migrant
Human capital variables				
Nativity				
US born	57.9	53.5	45.5	42.2
Foreign-born	42.1	46.5	54.5	57.8
English ability				
Speak English only	27.5	19.2	23.1	17.8
Speak English well	52.2	56.0	49.9	52.4
Speak English poorly	20.2	24.8	27.0	29.8
Education				
Below high school	47.5	59.0	48.6	55.9
High school	42.6	36.9	40.8	38.5
College and above	9.9	4.2	10.6	5.6
Socioeconomic variables				
Economic status				
Income ratio	95.5	94.3	98.8	97.2
Individual below poverty	19.6	19.6	18.7	18.6
Employment				
Public employment	9.3	10.9	7.4	9.6
Enclave niche	24.5	32.9	15.9	23.8
Other ethnic niche	21.4	21.9	20.9	21.2
None niche employment	44.7	34.3	55.7	45.4
Housing tenure				
Home owner	38.5	55.0	38.6	57.2
Renter	61.5	45.0	61.4	42.8
Lifecycle variables				
Age	33.8	38.8	34.3	39.3
Gender				
Male	50.3	46.3	53.5	49.1
Female	49.7	53.7	46.5	50.9
Marital status				
Unmarried	41.4	39.2	42.2	38.3
Inter-married	19.8	12.4	18.7	13.5
Group-married	38.8	48.4	39.1	48.2
Presence of children	56.9	57.6	58.6	59.6

Table 3. Logistic Regression Results Predicting Migration for native and foreign-born group members

	1990			2000		
	Immigrant	s.d.	Native	Immigrant	s.d.	Native
Regional location						
West	-		-	-		-
Northeast	0.095		0.331 **	-0.257 ***	***	0.810 ***
Midwest	-0.567 ***	*	-0.359 ***	0.142 ***	***	-0.353 ***
South	0.016		-0.098 **	0.292 ***	***	0.107 ***
Human capital						
English ability						
English only	-		-	-		-
English well	0.044		< 0.001	0.030		< 0.001
English poor	0.146		0.099	-0.040		0.128
Education						
Below high school	-		-	-		-
High school	0.332 ***		0.339 ***	0.147 ***	*	0.257 ***
College	0.881 ***	*	1.072 ***	0.742 ***	**	0.920 ***
Migration detering factors						
Ethnic employment						
None niche employment	-		-	-		-
Public employment	-0.323 ***		-0.395 ***	-0.194 ***	***	-0.470 ***
Enclave niche	-0.354 ***		-0.311 ***	-0.559 ***	*	-0.439 ***
Other ethnic niche	-0.152 **		-0.099 *	-0.095 **		-0.111 **
Housing tenure						
Renter	-		-	-		-
Homeowner	-0.333 ***	***	-0.654 ***	-0.605 ***	***	-0.802 ***
Lifecycle factors						
Age	-0.031 ***	**	-0.038 ***	-0.037 ***	*	-0.041 ***
Gender						
Male	-		-	-		-
Female	-0.186 ***		-0.046	-0.183 ***		-0.009
Marital status						
Group-married	-		-	-		-
Unmarried	-0.078		-0.056	-0.014		< 0.001
Inter-married	0.447 ***		0.480 ***	0.249 ***	***	0.475 ***
Presence of children	-0.093 *	**	-0.224 ***	-0.166 ***	***	-0.323 ***
College student(85-90/95-2000)	-0.117		0.285 **	0.220		0.398 ***
Intercept	-1.007 ***		-0.623 ***	-0.466 ***		-0.399 ***
Likelihood Ratio	1215		3568	3076		4521

Note:

1. s.d. indicates the significance of the difference between the corresponding coefficients when they are significant in both models. They are drawn from the model of interactions.
2. The shaded cells represent significant differences between immigrant and native models.

Table 4. Macro mobility consequences for Mexican migrants in 1990 and 2000

	%group			%poverty		
	Total	Native	Immgirant	Total	Native	Immgirant
Mean						
1990	-3.65	-4.24	-2.66	-1.28	-1.51	-0.89
2000	-5.03	-3.91	-6.21	-1.60	-1.32	-1.90
Median						
1990	-3.13	-3.13	-3.13	-1.54	-1.61	-1.49
2000	-1.84	-1.37	-3.77	-1.37	-0.94	-1.92
Upper quartile						
1990	5.73	5.50	6.06	3.45	3.19	3.63
2000	5.55	6.40	3.75	2.82	2.87	2.62
Lower quartile						
1990	-10.50	-11.06	-9.66	-4.59	-4.76	-4.38
2000	-14.28	-12.17	-17.11	-5.62	-4.78	-5.95
% Improved						
1990	58.31	58.70	57.68	57.83	58.75	56.32
2000	60.65	56.94	64.44	58.69	56.23	61.20

Table 5. OLS regression results predicting ethnic presence change among migrants in 1990 and 2000

	1990				2000			
	Immigrant		%group s.d.	Native	Immigrant		%group s.d.	Native
Regional location								
West	-			-	-			-
Northeast	-17.467	***		-15.282 ***	-17.998	***		-17.679 ***
Midwest	-13.359	***		-12.865 ***	-13.326	***	*	-14.890 ***
South	5.700	***	***	2.504 ***	-3.353	***	***	-1.343 ***
Human capital								
English ability								
English only	-			-	-			-
English well	-1.897	***		-1.670	0.725	*	*	3.046 **
English poor	-0.431			-3.163 **	0.901			0.705
Education								
Below high school	-			-	-			-
High school	-0.667			0.527	-0.274			0.686
College	-1.211			0.772	0.028			0.404
Migration detering factors								
Ethnic employment								
None niche employment	-			-	-			-
Public employment	1.587			4.052 ***	3.837	***		2.265 ***
Enclave niche	5.122	***	***	10.626 ***	8.234	***	**	10.105 ***
Other ethnic niche	1.007			4.404 ***	2.392	***		2.885 ***
Housing tenure								
Renter	-			-	-			-
Homeowner	2.987	***		2.148 ***	1.359	***		1.053 **
Lifecycle factors								
Age	0.155	***		0.105 ***	0.183	***	***	0.108 ***
Gender								
Male	-			-	-			-
Female	2.005	***		1.048 **	2.651	***	***	-0.090
Marital status								
Group-married	-			-	-			-
Unmarried	-0.658			-1.913 ***	-0.423			-1.476 **
Inter-married	-4.246	***	*	-5.594 ***	-1.678	***	*	-3.165 ***
Presence of children	1.767	**		1.488 ***	1.084	**		0.348
College student(85-90/95-2000)	-2.234			0.717	-1.002			2.846 ***
Within CMSA	-0.409			1.130 *	4.693	***		3.557 ***
Origin measure	-0.998	***		-0.947 ***	-0.900	***		-0.901 ***
Intercept	12.645	***		13.726 ***	7.644	***		12.368 ***
R-square	0.57			0.63	0.58			0.61

Note:

1. s.d. indicates the significance of the difference between the corresponding coefficients when they are significant in both models. They are drawn from the model of interactions.
2. The shaded cells represent significant differences between immigrant and native models.

Table 6. OLS regression results predicting poverty exposure change among migrants in 1990 and 2000

	1990 %poverty				2000 %poverty			
	Immigrant		s.d.	Native	Immigrant		s.d.	Native
Regional location								
West	-			-	-			-
Northeast	-2.097	***		-1.459 **	-1.339	***		-1.097 ***
Midwest	-2.361	***		-1.495 ***	-3.331	***		-3.260 ***
South	4.811	***	***	3.294 ***	0.482	***		0.467 ***
Human capital								
English ability								
English only	-			-	-			-
English well	-0.851	***		-1.028 **	0.096			0.812 *
English poor	-0.539			-1.577 ***	0.419			0.171
Education								
Below high school	-			-	-			-
High school	-0.319			-0.337 *	-0.363	**		-0.094
College	-0.732			-0.448 *	-0.344			-0.606 **
Migration detering factors								
Ethnic employment								
None niche employment	-			-	-			-
Public employment	0.359			1.044 ***	1.052	***		0.826 ***
Enclave niche	1.138	***	***	2.870 ***	1.845	***	**	2.679 ***
Other ethnic niche	0.267		*	0.978 ***	0.424	**		0.815 ***
Housing tenure								
Renter	-			-	-			-
Homeowner	1.156	***	*	0.618 ***	0.496	***		0.321 *
Lifecycle factors								
Age	0.053	***	*	0.030 ***	0.052	***	*	0.034 ***
Gender								
Male	-			-	-			-
Female	0.438	*		0.177	0.611	***	***	-0.104
Marital status								
Group-married	-			-	-			-
Unmarried	-0.123			-0.571 **	0.046		**	-0.638 **
Inter-married	-1.109	***	*	-1.667 ***	-0.418	**	**	-1.192 ***
Presence of children	0.652	**		0.554 ***	0.391	**		0.141
College student(85-90/95-2000)	-0.267			-0.100	-0.360			0.833 **
Within CMSA	-2.812	***	*	-2.210 ***	-0.032		*	-0.578 ***
Origin measure	-1.033	***		-1.004 ***	-0.970	***		-0.983 ***
Intercept	11.855	***		13.324 ***	10.077	***		11.957 ***
R-square	0.59			0.66	0.59			0.62

Note:

1. s.d. indicates the significance of the difference between the corresponding coefficients when they are significant in both models. They are drawn from the model of interactions.
2. The shaded cells represent significant differences between immigrant and native models.