Socioeconomic Differentials among Single-Racial and Multi-Racial Japanese Americans

The increasing intermarriage between non-Hispanic whites and minority groups, particularly Asians and Latinos, has raised an argument of America's changing color lines and the multi-racial identification. Due to their high assimilation and acculturation into the mainstream U.S. society, the Japanese American population includes an increasing share of multi-racial persons, mainly those with an Anglo identification. However, there is no available research conducting the labor market experiences of persons with multi-racial identities, as U.S. statistical agencies did not recognize multiracial respondents prior to 2000. In this study, we examine hourly wage differentials across different groups of Japanese-origin persons (Nikkei) to entertain the diversity of this population. Specifically, we assess wage differentials across single-racial (foreign-born and native-born) and multi-racial (Japanese ancestry with non-Hispanic white, Chinese, black, and white with Japanese ancestry) Japanese Americans by gender, with a native-born non-Hispanic white as the reference category.

Data from the 2000 5% Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), which enable us to identify multi-racial and multi-ethnic persons, are used to conduct the analysis. The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the hourly wage, and controlled variables include age, native-born status, disability status, military experience, educational attainment, metropolitan/nonmetropolitan residence, and standard Census regions. We first estimate differentials in years of schooling among the six racial and ethnic categories. Second, we examine two types of multiple linear regression models for each gender: a short model restricted to the six racial and ethnic categories and a long model with all controlled variables.

The results mainly support our hypothesis that the segmented assimilation perspective explains the wage differentials better than the classical assimilation perspective. Namely, the single-racial Japanese (both foreign-born and native-born) attain higher wages than those with multi-racial identification across gender, partly because their higher levels of schooling is the mechanism by which the Japanese groups have higher wages. Especially, for men, there is no net direct effect of racial and ethnic groups on wages after controlling for the years of education, suggesting that their educational attainment works the same as non-Hispanic whites. Furthermore, the fact that native-born single-racial Japanese Americans attain higher wages than foreign-born single-racial Japanese Americans may be because immigrant parents push their U.S.-born children more.

The main finding of the female models is that unlike males, single-racial foreign-born Japanese maintain some positive effect of ethnic group even after controlling for education, which drives higher wages than their non-Hispanic white counterparts. Their higher wages might be explained as some sort of immigrant selection effects. However, there is no substantial or contingent advantage across the groups.

Table 1. Description of Group Category

Group Classification	Description
Group 1	White
Group 2	Single race, foreign born Japanese
Group 3	Single race, native born Japanese
Group 4	Japanese and White
Group 5	Japanese and Black
Group 6	Japanese and Chinese
Group 7	White with Japanese ancestry

Table 2. Sample Characteristics for Men by Group

	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3		Group 4		Group 5		Group 6		Group 7	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Age	42.74	10.19	43.90	9.76	41.89	9.51	37.98	8.50	37.73	6.67	36.88	8.40	38.37	7.72
age * age	1930.24	892.78	2021.97	867.48	1845.00	831.10	1514.55	701.71	1467.99	509.37	1430.44	674.60	1531.79	618.59
Native born	0.91	0.28	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.79	0.41	0.67	0.47	0.89	0.31	0.75	0.43
Disability status	0.15	0.36	0.10	0.30	0.13	0.34	0.14	0.35	0.12	0.33	0.08	0.28	0.12	0.32
Military experience	0.22	0.41	0.20	0.40	0.05	0.21	0.18	0.38	0.15	0.36	0.15	0.36	0.18	0.38
Educational attainment														
less than high school	0.12	0.32	0.02	0.13	0.03	0.18	0.06	0.23	0.04	0.20	0.01	0.08	0.04	0.21
high school	0.28	0.45	0.13	0.34	0.12	0.33	0.29	0.46	0.23	0.42	0.08	0.27	0.22	0.41
some college	0.22	0.41	0.22	0.42	0.11	0.32	0.24	0.43	0.29	0.45	0.19	0.39	0.27	0.44
associate degree	0.07	0.25	0.10	0.30	0.05	0.22	0.08	0.26	0.06	0.24	0.11	0.31	0.09	0.29
college degree	0.20	0.40	0.35	0.48	0.44	0.50	0.21	0.41	0.22	0.41	0.45	0.50	0.25	0.43
more than college	0.12	0.32	0.18	0.38	0.24	0.43	0.12	0.32	0.16	0.37	0.17	0.38	0.13	0.33
Metropolitan area	0.75	0.44	0.89	0.31	0.95	0.22	0.82	0.39	0.86	0.35	0.88	0.33	0.88	0.33
Region														
Northeast	0.20	0.40	0.03	0.17	0.21	0.41	0.07	0.26	0.19	0.39	0.03	0.17	0.07	0.26
Midwest	0.26	0.44	0.04	0.19	0.13	0.34	0.05	0.21	0.13	0.34	0.07	0.26	0.12	0.33
South	0.34	0.47	0.04	0.20	0.15	0.36	0.30	0.46	0.25	0.43	0.06	0.23	0.18	0.38
Wage	24.00	31.10	27.72	30.12	38.66	46.42	25.42	31.91	22.36	15.83	23.47	19.12	23.66	23.41
Log-Wage	2.85	0.76	3.05	0.71	3.23	0.91	2.87	0.79	2.87	0.72	2.91	0.70	2.91	0.69
Total	2,350,666		5,003		3,149		204		95		155		1,197	

Note: The statistics are weighted.

Table 3. Sample Characteristics for Women by Group

	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3		Group 4		Group 5		Group 6		Group 7	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Age	42.70	10.12	44.17	9.71	43.24	10.71	38.50	8.45	39.33	7.03	38.09	8.69	38.27	8.12
age * age	1925.28	883.37	2045.58	862.56	1983.99	944.39	1553.68	690.33	1596.39	540.68	1526.58	704.64	1530.84	654.86
Native born	0.93	0.26	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.80	0.40	0.66	0.47	0.81	0.39	0.74	0.44
Disability status	0.13	0.34	0.09	0.28	0.12	0.32	0.09	0.29	0.12	0.32	0.08	0.27	0.12	0.32
Military experience	0.01	0.12	0.01	0.11	0.01	0.08	0.03	0.16	0.07	0.25	0.01	0.08	0.03	0.17
Educational attainment														
less than high school	0.08	0.27	0.01	0.12	0.05	0.22	0.04	0.19	0.08	0.27	0.02	0.13	0.04	0.19
high school	0.29	0.45	0.12	0.32	0.19	0.39	0.22	0.41	0.11	0.32	0.11	0.32	0.19	0.39
some college	0.24	0.43	0.21	0.41	0.16	0.37	0.28	0.45	0.32	0.47	0.16	0.37	0.30	0.46
associate degree	0.09	0.28	0.11	0.31	0.16	0.36	0.11	0.31	0.12	0.33	0.09	0.28	0.10	0.30
college degree	0.20	0.40	0.39	0.49	0.30	0.46	0.27	0.45	0.16	0.36	0.41	0.49	0.27	0.44
more than college	0.11	0.31	0.16	0.37	0.14	0.35	0.09	0.28	0.21	0.40	0.21	0.41	0.11	0.31
Metropolitan area	0.75	0.44	0.90	0.30	0.93	0.25	0.86	0.35	0.90	0.31	0.92	0.27	0.86	0.35
Region														
Northeast	0.20	0.40	0.03	0.17	0.16	0.36	0.06	0.23	0.17	0.37	0.03	0.17	0.08	0.27
Midwest	0.26	0.44	0.05	0.22	0.10	0.29	0.12	0.33	0.21	0.41	0.06	0.24	0.12	0.32
South	0.34	0.47	0.04	0.20	0.16	0.37	0.21	0.41	0.28	0.45	0.11	0.32	0.16	0.37
Wage	16.97	23.53	21.95	25.59	19.48	26.21	17.13	14.90	24.94	26.02	21.24	21.83	19.34	24.31
Log-Wage	2.54	0.71	2.85	0.66	2.65	0.76	2.62	0.68	2.91	0.74	2.79	0.72	2.69	0.69
Total	2,037,295		4,618		2,945		189		86		180		1,156	

Note: The statistics are weighted.

Table 4. Estimates of OLS Regression of Years of Schooling

	Men				Women			
Racial Group (Group1)								
Group 2	1.54624	***	1.34705	***	1.40209	***	1.30649	***
Group 3	1.99486	***	3.20271	***	0.77273	***	1.72699	***
Group 4	0.49819	*	0.77662	***	0.33799		0.42389	*
Group 5	0.70686	*	1.13188	***	0.84109	**	1.07038	***
Group 6	1.97732	***	2.03695	***	1.68547	***	1.71807	***
Group 7	0.75899	***	1.04324	***	0.64262	***	0.76988	***
Age			0.02114	***			-0.00991	***
Native born			1.37111	***			1.02814	***
Disability status			-1.20451	***			-0.95522	***
Military experience			-0.22136	***			0.27375	***
Intercept	13.61946	***	11.68136	***	13.72286	***	13.31163	***
R squre	0.0013		0.0457		0.0009		0.0301	

Note: The value in parenthesis is the reference group.
*p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-tailed tests)

Table 5. Estimates of OLS Regression of Log-Wage

	Men		Women	
Racial Group				
(Group 1)				
Group 2	0.22475 ***	0.00823 ***	0.32651 ***	0.09306 ***
Group 3	0.40719 ***	0.25037	0.12081 ***	0.02364
Group 4	0.03169	0.01862 ***	0.07615	0.02674
Group 5	0.02575	0.00537	0.33224 ***	0.25293 ***
Group 6	0.10122	-0.08836	0.27137 ***	0.05382
Group 7	0.07277 **	0.02808	0.17336 ***	0.09737 ***
Age		0.00989 ***		0.00548 ***
Native born		0.10576 ***		0.06451 ***
Disability status		-0.10417 ***		-0.06764 ***
Military experience		-0.03793 ***		0.00375
Educational attainment				
(Less than high school)				
High school		0.17406 ***		0.16398 ***
Some college		0.29658 ***		0.3141 ***
Associate degree		0.34287 ***		0.44563 ***
College degree		0.59096 ***		0.64748 ***
More than college degree		0.81102 ***		0.85386 ***
Metropolitan area		0.19522 ***		0.19783 ***
Region				
South		-0.05751 ***		-0.06895 ***
Midwest		-0.03227 ***		-0.06855 ***
Northeast		0.0249 ***		0.02271 ***
Intercept	2.82364 ***	1.87812 ***	2.51533 ***	1.75834 ***
R-square	0.0006	0.1612	0.0006	0.1711

Note: The values in parenthesis are the reference groups.
*p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-tailed tests)