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What's New in Race and Residential Mobility? An Analysis of Individual and Ecological Factors

Historically, African-Americans and whites have had similar rates of residential mobility (Long 1988; South and Deane 1993). However, blacks are less likely than whites to realize expected residential mobility (Crowder 2001). Research indicates that the differentials in socioeconomic and structural constraints between Blacks and whites have an affect on the kind of mobility experienced between the races (Crowder et. al. 2001; Denton and Massey 1991; Johnson and Roseman 1990; Logan et. al. 1996; Massey and Denton 1993; Massey et. al. 1994; Price-Stratlen 1998; South and Crowder 1997a). In addition, attitudes, such as racial prejudice and neighborhood preference, have been shown to affect residential mobility (Bobo and Zubrinsky 1996; Emerson, Chai, Yancey 2001; Farley and Frey 1994; Quillian 1999; Wilson 1987).

This research is an effort to bridge the ecological theoretical assumptions of residential segregation for racial and ethnic minorities with the social demographic assumptions of individual residential mobility. This research addresses the following questions: What are the individual life-cycle, household, neighborhood and metropolitan area characteristics associated with residential mobility? More specifically, how does the interaction of these factors differ by race? Thus, (1) While residential segregation, home ownership and income may remain strong predictors of residential mobility, how have these factors changed over time, and what other variables are likely to figure prominently; (2) What are the current direction and magnitude of the variables that serve

as barriers and enablers to residential mobility, and how do they vary by race; (3) What has been the impact of suburbanization on these patterns?

This multilevel analysis will use 2001 and 2003 American Housing Survey data as well as Census 2000 metropolitan area-level variables. Using logistic regression, I will predict the likelihood of the head of household moving between 2001 and 2003 using the individual and neighborhood characteristics presented in 2001. In addition, metropolitan area characteristics, i.e. residential segregation, will be included from the 2000 U.S. Census. I will also enhance the analysis with the inclusion of the hierarchical linear modeling of the multilevel characteristics. Thus, I will be able to distinguish the effects of individual and structural characteristics on an individual's likelihood to move.

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