

## **ETHNICITY, IMMIGRATION, AND THE GENDER DIVISION OF LABOR IN MIAMI**

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The purpose of this study is to examine how gender, ethnicity, and immigrant status differentiate the labor market experiences of Miami City residents. The emphasis is on the foreign-born population. I focus on the labor force status, occupations, and journey to work of White, Latino and Black immigrants in order to see how gender differences in their employment patterns compare with those of non-immigrants. The findings from the study generally confirm that minority immigrant women often differ from non-immigrant women both in their social and spatial access to employment relative to men.

Most immigrants in the United States reside in cities, and Miami city is an especially appropriate choice for examining the multiple influences of immigrant status, ethnicity, and gender on labor market outcomes because the city contains large numbers of immigrants, especially recent immigrants (see for example, Winsberg, 1994). Migration into Miami city has continued unabated since 1960 creating a rapidly growing Hispanic population. By 1970, the city of Miami became 45% Hispanic, rising to 56% in 1980 and 63% in 1990. According to Hartshorn, the ethnic shift that Miami has experienced in the past 30 years is unparalleled in the annals of American history (Hartshorn, 1992, p. 287). The city of Miami also has the largest share of foreign-born population of any large American city.

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The prevalence of sex and ethnic segregation in the U.S. labor market is well known (e.g., Amott and Matthaehi, 1991). Women and ethnic minorities, especially Blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans remain segregated into different occupations, typically the low-paying jobs of the labor market. Some urban geographers have examined the ethnic division of labor among immigrants. For example, Wright and Ellis (1997) analyze changes in the sectoral division of labor in Los Angeles between 1970 and 1990, and find that both immigrant status and ethnicity are significant in the allocation of workers into specific industrial sector of the urban economy. Another study comparing the socioeconomic characteristics of immigrants and non-immigrants in major entry point cities in the U.S., including Miami, underscored the different experiences of immigrants, but the study did not examine gender differences (Clark, 1998). In order to shed light on the impact of immigrant status on gender disparities in employment conditions, this study compares gender differences among the immigrant population with the non-immigrant population. The paper is organized into three sections. The first section is a brief background and rationale of the study. The second section describes the data and presents results of the analysis. The paper concludes with a discussion of the study's findings.

### **Background and Rationale**

Studies of gender segmentation in the labor market are numerous, as are studies of ethnic/race segmentation. And even though a growing number of studies jointly examine the dimensions of gender and ethnic segmentation, there are as yet few studies that examine the additional dimension of immigration on the gender and ethnic division of local labor markets. Upon arrival in the United States, immigrants from all ethnic backgrounds (like native-born Americans) operate within a segmented job market. Furthermore, the labor market experiences of immigrant

women are different from those of immigrant men (Gabaccia, 1992). As female labor force participation has risen, more research has been devoted to examining gender differences in several work-related conditions, including the journey to work. There is a robust literature in urban geography on gender differences in the journey to work and a growing literature on ethnic differences in women's work trip behavior (e.g., Hanson and Pratt, 1990, McLafferty and Preston, 1991, 1992, 1996; Johnston-Anumonwo 1995), but very scanty research on the topic for the immigrant population. Are immigrant women and men likely to have dissimilar work trip behavior as has been observed for the majority native-born population, or will ethnic minority status blur the gender difference in work trip behavior?

The groundbreaking work by Preston et al. (1998) furnishes some of the first answers to questions on the interaction of gender, ethnicity, and immigrant status on geographical accessibility to employment. Although, the literature on women's labor market experiences links the journey to work with patterns of occupational segregation (e.g., Johnston-Anumonwo, 1998; Hanson and Pratt, 1990), there has been little attempt to combine the reality of labor market segmentation with the locational accessibility of immigrants to their workplaces. Yet, Preston et al.'s (1998) study of how access to employment is associated with immigrant status shows that previously overlooked geographical factors, especially the journey to work, should be included with the more well-known socioeconomic characteristics when studying the occupational segregation of women in American cities. In fact geographical and mobility barriers may feature more prominently for immigrant women. But the geography literature on immigrants has not sufficiently examined the gender division of labor and the journey to work literature does not include sufficient analyses of the immigrant population. This study examines gender differences in occupations and work trips among Miami's three largest

ethnic groups for the total immigrant population and also for the more recent immigrants.

### **Data Analysis and Results**

The city of Miami is selected given its primacy in U.S. immigration levels. Of all U.S. cities, Miami ranks first in the country for its percentage of foreign-born population. Although for the country as a whole, just 8% of the population was foreign born in 1990, in Miami the figure was above 40% (Isbister, 1996). The study focuses on the central city of Miami rather than the Dade County metropolitan area because of the overwhelming concentration of ethnic minority groups in the central cities of U.S. metropolitan areas. In the Miami central city, 62.3% and 27.3% of the population are Hispanic and Black respectively (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993). In terms of recent immigrant population, Miami ranked third in 1990 among eight cities in which half the immigrants who entered the United States in the 1980s resided.

The data examined is the U.S. 1990 census 5 percent Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS). PUMS is appropriate because it is a detailed individual-level database with information on respondents' socioeconomic characteristics, employment conditions, and their work-trip attributes (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1992). The PUMS data however contain no detailed information on residential or workplace location within metropolitan areas in order to protect respondents' confidentiality. The variables included in the study are sex, race, Hispanic origin, employment status, occupation, place of birth, immigrant status, year arrived in the U.S., as well as transportation mode and the time spent for the work trip.

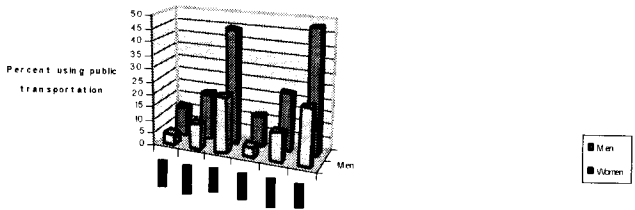
Only White and Black respondents (as specified in the census designations for 'race') who are sixteen years and older are selected. White respondents are then classified into Hispanic

**Table 1**  
**Gender Differences in Employment Characteristics by Immigrant Status (percentages)**

		WHITES		LATINOS		BLACKS	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>NON IMMIGRANTS</b>	Sample Size (N)	790	753	1576	1876	913	1226
Labor Force Participation	Working	63.8	47.4	64.6	51.2	50.3	43.1
	Unemployed	4.3	1.9	4.7	3.4	8.5	7.8
Occupation (N)	Professional	518	367	1039	982	474	541
	Sales/Clerical	43.2	40.6	22.8	23.1	9.5	17.4
	Services	28.5	45.2	26.6	51.4	13.3	34.6
	Crafts	8.5	10.9	13.6	12.9	22.6	38.4
	Operators	9.1	1.1	1.7	2.3	16.9	0.9
	Operators	9.5	1.9	18.5	10.1	31.4	7
<b>IMMIGRANTS</b>	Sample Size (N)	92	82	2485	2861	531	565
Labor Force Participation	Working	77.2	52.4	63.4	36.2	67.2	47.7
	Unemployed	1.1	6.1	6.6	5.6	12.1	15
Occupation (N)	Professional	72	43	1612	1061	364	278
	Sales/Clerical	26.4	27.9	8.9	8.8	4.9	5
	Services	25	39.5	17.3	34	8	23
	Crafts	22.2	20.9	17.6	29.1	32.4	40.3
	Operators	19.4	7	23.3	5.5	15.4	3.2
	Operators	4.2	4.7	30.1	21.9	33.5	23
<b>RECENT IMMIGRANTS</b>	Sample Size (N)	63	44	1466	1469	387	399
Labor Force Participation	Working	79.4	58.6	70.6	44.6	65.9	46.9
	Unemployed	0	9.1	8	7.6	12.4	16.5
Occupation (N)	Professional	51	25	1058	670	262	196
	Sales/Clerical	25.5	20	7.7	8.2	3.4	3.1
	Services	21.6	40	16	34.2	6.5	19.4
	Crafts	23.5	20	17.6	33.4	35.9	42.3
	Operators	21.6	12	23.6	4.6	16	4.1
	Operators	3.9	8	32.1	18.7	32.1	23.5

(Latino) or non-Hispanic. Thus the comparisons are based on three ethnic groups: (1) White non-Hispanics, (2) White Hispanics, and (3) Blacks. This classification enables a distinction between Blacks and non Blacks and thus a focus on race when relevant. In this paper, the terms Hispanic and Latino are used interchangeably and refer to Hispanic Whites. Those born in the United States of America are referred to as native-born or non-immigrants. Hence the term African American is used when re-

Figure 1  
 Non-Immigrant Workers' Use of Public Transportation

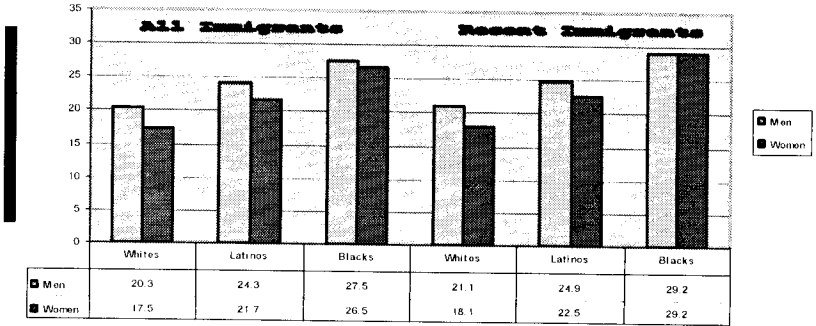


	Whites	Latinos	Blacks	Whites	Latinos	Blacks
Men	4.2	9.8	21.7	3.9	11.2	21.8
Women	11.8	18.2	44.2	12	22.4	45

ferring to native-born Blacks. Those who are born outside the United States are referred to as foreign-born or immigrants, while recent immigrants refer to those who arrived in the U.S. after 1980.

Workers' occupations are categorized into standard Census Bureau designations such as managers/professionals, sales/clerical/technical workers, service workers, craft/repair workers, and operative/industrial laborers. For transportation mode, private automobile users are distinguished from public transit users. Travel time is the measure of work-trip length provided in the PUMS. It is the actual number of minutes spent traveling from home to work as reported by the respondent. Apart from the findings on the time spent on the journey to work which are analyzed using student t-test, all results on gender and ethnic differences are simple descriptive percentages derived from cross tabulations. The analysis examines six groups: White men, White women, Latino men, Latina women, Black men and Black women. First, findings on the labor force participation levels and occupations of the US-born population (non-immigrants) are presented, followed by the findings on the journey to work of the foreign-born.

Figure 2  
Differences in Commuting Time of Immigrants (auto users)



*Comparisons of Gender Differences among Non-Immigrants and Immigrants*

For the non-immigrant population, clear gender differences are observed across the three ethnic groups. Women are less likely than men a) to be currently working and b) to be unemployed—see Table 1 (the table does not include percentages of respondents who are not in the labor force). Characteristic patterns of occupational sex segregation are evident among the non-immigrant population. Non-immigrant women are more likely than men to be in sales/clerical occupations, but less likely to be in craft/repair or operative/industrial jobs. This pink-collar versus blue-collar occupational differentiation between women and men is customary. Interestingly, although African Americans are less likely than Whites and Latinos to have professional jobs, it is among African American professionals that a large gender difference exists. A much higher percentage of African American women than men are in professional occupations than is the case among the two other ethnic groups; but at the same time, far more African American women than African American men hold service jobs (38.4% and 22.6% in Table 1). While US-born White men are most heavily concentrated in professional jobs (43.2%),

African American men are most heavily concentrated in operative/industrial labor jobs (31.4%), and the gender gap among US-born Blacks is also pronounced for operative/industrial labor jobs (31.4% of men versus 7.9% of women).

When the employment pattern of non-immigrants is compared to that of the immigrant population some significant differences arise. Most important of these is the fact that there is an increase in the gender gap for labor force participation levels. Across all three ethnic groups, the percentage of immigrant women who are working is *much lower* than the percentage of immigrant men (Table 1). The largest disparity is among immigrant Latinos and Latinas where 63.4% of men are working, compared to only 36.2% of the women. Unemployment levels of White and Black immigrant women are *higher* than for immigrant men. Except for White males, immigrant unemployment is higher than non-immigrant unemployment, with immigrant Blacks experiencing very high rates--12.1% and 15% for men and women respectively.

For those who are in the work force, there are key differences in the occupational distributions of immigrants and non-immigrants. Across all ethnic groups, the percentages of workers employed in professional/managerial jobs decline for immigrants of both sexes (when compared with non-immigrants), but there is a general increase in service occupations. In terms of gender differences, whereas the same percentage of non-immigrant Latino men and women work in service jobs (approximately 13%), foreign-born **Latina** women are significantly more likely than men to work in service jobs (29.1% versus 17.6%). Especially striking is the shift among the **Black** population with a change in immigrant status. Compared to US-born Blacks, a higher percentage of foreign-born Black men work in service occupations, while a much higher percentage of foreign-born Black women work as operators and industrial laborers. According to Table 1, the shift



is from 22% for male non-immigrant service workers to 32% for male immigrant service workers, and from 8% for female non-immigrant operators to 23% for female immigrant operators. Lastly, even though they are still less likely than men to work as operators, minority immigrant women are more likely to be operators--22% and 23% for Latina and Black female immigrants compared to 10% and 8% for the respective US-born population. Typical occupations of these immigrant women are assemblers or dressmakers and operators in the garment industry.

Lastly, gender differences are also evident among a subset of the foreign-born population--recent immigrants (i.e., those who arrived in the US after 1980). Recently arrived immigrant women have *lower* employment rates than recently arrived male counterparts (Table 1). The much smaller numbers of White workers represented in the sample for recent immigrants (N=51 men and 25 women) precludes conclusive commentary for recent White immigrants. One third of recent Latina immigrants and 42% of Black women are in service occupations. Foreign-born minority women in service occupations hold jobs such as hotel and house cleaners, food service workers, home health aides, and child care workers or related jobs that often support middle-class lifestyles. These findings about the comparisons of recent immigrants with all immigrants are similar to those of Clark (1998) who reports lower skill levels and incomes for immigrants in Miami compared to the native-born population, and even lower skills and poorer earnings for recent immigrants. However, the findings presented here shed additional light on the gender dimension. The final set of analyses concentrates on the journey to work of immigrant men and women--an aspect of immigrant work life that, as noted earlier, is still understudied.

*The Journey to Work of the Foreign-Born Population in Miami*

I examine the journey to work of the immigrant population in Miami with respect to gender differences in travel mode and commuting time. Differences in travel mode between employed men and women are very pronounced. Of the six groups, White men have the lowest percentage of workers using public transportation (4.2%) and Black women have the highest (44.2%). Regardless of ethnicity, immigrant men are much more likely than immigrant women to use private automobiles for the work trip, while more immigrant women than men rely on public transportation (see Figure 1 for percentages of workers using public transportation). The gender gap in public transit use is sharpest among the Black population. Relatively high proportions of immigrant Latina women (18.2%) and Black men (21.7%) use public transit for the work trip, but the very heavy dependence of Black immigrant women on public transit (44%) is the most remarkable finding (almost half (48%) of recently arrived Black immigrant women use public transportation--Figure 1). This finding underscores an aspect of the mobility constraint of inner city immigrant Black women. They experience more journey-to-work constraint than other groups by having to rely on this more time-consuming travel mode.

I also examined the length of time that immigrant men and women spend traveling to work. Since public transit users generally spend a longer time than commuters who use private vehicles (Taylor and Ong, 1995), I conduct the analysis for automobile users only. Gender differences among the three ethnic groups are analyzed using the t-test. For White women, the average travel time is 17.5 minutes and for Latina women, it is 21.7 minutes. Among the White and Latino population, women spend almost three minutes less than the men for their work trip, but the gender difference for Blacks is smaller--only one minute (i.e., 27.5 versus 26.5 minutes--Figure 2).

Among auto users, immigrant White and Latino workers all spend under 25 minutes for their commutes, but the average commute time of immigrant Black workers is over 25 minutes (see Figure 2). For the immigrant population, minority women in general, and Black women in particular, do not enjoy the relative convenience of short travel times that characterize the work trips of White women. Recently arrived White immigrant women in Miami spend only about 18 minutes. In addition, immigrant White women and Latina women spend a shorter time getting to work than the men, but recently arrived Black women have as long a commute as Black men. Recently arrived female and male Black auto users spend exactly the same time--29.2 minutes (Figure 2). This study's finding for Black immigrant workers corroborates McLafferty and Preston's (1991) study that noted the absence of a gender gap in the commuting times of Black workers. Figure 2 displays the ethnic/racial differences in travel time and highlights the case of Black female auto users in particular. Black female immigrants spend almost 5 minutes longer getting to work than Latina immigrants, and 9 minutes longer than White female immigrants. The racial disparity is even more among recent immigrants. Race remains a significant factor in the work-trip length of immigrants.

### **Conclusion and Discussion**

To summarize, the non Black immigrants residing in Miami, and who use an automobile for their work trip, spend less time commuting between home and work compared to Black immigrant male and female counterparts. Different job locations vis a vis residential locations for the three ethnic groups could be responsible for this difference in the work-trip times. One possible explanation is that White, Latino, and Black immigrants live in different sub-areas of Miami City, but the PUMS data do not allow sub-area analysis. The findings point to both an automobile

mismatch and a spatial mismatch between Black and non Black immigrants indicating that recent Black immigrants in Miami live in certain locations within the city that are more distant from their workplaces. Boswell and Cruz-Baez (1997) noted that even in 1990, the residential pattern of many Black families in Miami is a situation of spatial entrapment. A difference of 3 minutes for the one-way work trip (e.g., as is the case between immigrant Black and White men) becomes a 6-minute difference for the daily two-way trip and is the equivalent of at least 30 minutes over a 5-day workweek, which if multiplied by approximately 50 weeks in a year means 25 hours. In the extreme case, one can extrapolate the difference in excess travel time to almost 3 weeks of lost time that Black recent immigrant women spend longer than White counterparts. Spending several hours a year commuting more than non Black immigrants constitute a significant commute time burden for Black immigrants since it is time that could conceivably otherwise be spent on either an income-generating employment task or any discretionary activity.

When the findings about employment patterns are connected with the findings about the journey to work, this study shows that a high percentage of Black immigrant men and women in Miami are disproportionately concentrated in low status non professional jobs, and that Black immigrants are more likely than the two other groups to use public transportation for the work trip. Yet, even among those who do use an automobile, Black immigrants have longer commute times. The possibility arises then that, compared to non Black immigrants, many Black immigrant men and women in Miami are concentrated disproportionately in operative and service jobs, depend more on public transit to get to work, and even when they use a car, live in locations that are more distant to their jobs. This possibility of accessibility and locational barriers to employment has been examined and confirmed by Preston et al. (1998) in central locations of the New

York metropolitan area. Specifically, like this study, Preston et al. report that White immigrant women have better access to employment than minority immigrants. Similarly, Clark (1998) raises the possibility that a larger number of new immigrants in America's entry point cities such as Miami are likely to have a more difficult time making the transition to self sufficiency.

This study of Miami, based on data that allows a detailed look at gender differences in employment among the immigrant population, reports the continuation of many previous trends related to gender and race/ethnic differences in employment. The findings show that workers in Miami, like workers across the US, participate in a highly gender and ethnically differentiated labor market. By including an analysis on commuting behavior, the study also provides additional evidence about the mobility constraints of minority immigrants. Minority immigrants expend more time than White immigrants do in order to get to work. One cannot understate the importance of transportation and location in the employment outcomes of minority immigrant women. It is especially striking that this analysis of immigrant women yields the same conclusion reached in the earliest works of McLafferty and Preston that inner city minority women who spend a lot of time for their work trips, relative to White women, experience a more insidious form of spatial entrapment. The results of this ethnic-specific comparison of immigrants and non-immigrants also lend weight to the convictions of feminist geographers that researchers need to recognize racial and ethnic differences among women as well as other demographic differences, in this case, immigrant status, in order to avoid promoting the myth of universal womanhood (Sanders, 1990; Gilbert, 1997). The study has demonstrated the interconnections and critical role of gender, race-ethnicity, and immigrant status as underlying factors in analysis of employment patterns.

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