

Black Immigrant Residential Segregation: An Investigation of the Primacy of Race Model Determining Neighborhood Characteristics

Rebecca Tesfai

University of Pennsylvania

Sociologists have long viewed racial/ethnic residential segregation as a key aspect of assimilation. Research consistently shows that, despite laws prohibiting discrimination in the housing market, racial and ethnic segregation still exists at high levels. Blacks are highly segregated from whites even after controlling for socioeconomic differences (Alba, Logan et al. 2000; Darden and Kamel 2000; Charles 2003; Iceland and Wilkes 2006). Though immigrants are highly segregated from whites, the level of segregation varies by ethnicity (Alba and Logan 1993; Frey and Farley 1996; Alba, Logan et al. 2000) and decreases with time in the United States (Logan, Alba et al. 2002; Iceland and Scopilliti 2008).

Research focuses on two theories to explain racial/ethnic segregation in the United States. The first, spatial assimilation, predicts that residential mobility stems from an individual's acculturation and social mobility (Alba and Logan 1991) and that these individuals attain spatial outcomes based on personal characteristics, such as income and acculturation level (Alba and Logan 1992). Place stratification, by contrast, envisions that racial and ethnic minorities are sorted by place according to their group's relative standing in society, limiting the ability of even the socially mobile members of these groups to reside in the same communities as comparable whites (Alba and Logan 1993). In this theory, groups are hierarchically ordered with blacks at the bottom of the hierarchy within the American social structure.

While there are two extensive literatures on race and immigrant segregation, there is very little research on the group that combines these two literatures: black immigrants. Of the research investigating black immigrants' residential outcomes, there is no consensus on whether foreign-born blacks experience the same level and type of segregation as the US-born. Some research finds that black immigrants are less highly segregated than US-born blacks (Logan, Alba et al. 1996), are less likely to live in ethnic neighborhoods when they have higher incomes (Logan, Alba et al. 2002), and are less likely than the US-born to live in lower quality neighborhoods (Rosenbaum and Friedman 2001). Other researcher have found that foreign blacks are *more* segregated from whites than US-born blacks (Iceland and Scopilliti 2008) and black immigrants cluster in enclaves in major immigrant settlement areas but still live closer to US-born blacks and are just as highly segregated from whites as US-born blacks (Freeman 2002).

This paper focuses on the residential outcomes of black immigrants and improves on previous literature in three ways. First, I disaggregate non-Hispanic black immigrants into the two component groups: African and Caribbean-born blacks. These two groups have substantially different immigration histories, which have led to differences in the formation of ethnic enclaves. African-born blacks are more recent

immigrants and the growth of this population may serve to increase the segregation of this group because immigration can reinforce segregation in enclaves (Mumford Center 2001). Second, unlike previous work that either looks at all metropolitan areas combined or at traditional settlement areas, I investigate the residential segregation of black immigrants in the top ten settlement areas. These metropolitan areas not only include traditional settlement areas, but also former, post-WWII, and emerging settlement areas. Lack of immigration history in new gateways means that the place of immigrants in the class, racial, and ethnic hierarchies is less determined and immigrants may thus have more freedom to define their position (Waters and Jiménez 2005). Segregation patterns, therefore, may vary by settlement area. Finally, I investigate both racial and economic segregation. Previous research has investigated the racial residential segregation of black immigrants, but does not analyze the characteristics of these racially integrated neighborhoods. Though middle class blacks are less segregated from whites than poor blacks, they live in neighborhoods of lower average socioeconomic status than themselves (Alba, Logan et al. 2000); it is unclear if the same is true of black immigrants.

This paper addresses the flaws in previous work by investigating the locational attainment of black immigrants in the ten largest settlement areas of both African and Caribbean-born. Using the locational attainment model, I investigate the racial composition, average income, and average income of US-born black and white neighbors of black immigrant neighborhoods and compare these outcomes to US-born blacks.

Background

Previous literature focuses on three main theoretical explanations racial and ethnic residential segregation in the United States. First, the socioeconomic differences argument, which states that groups live separately as a result of differences in economic resources. There is a continuing role of socioeconomic status in segregation levels, however controlling for socioeconomic differences between racial and ethnic groups alleviates only a modest amount of high overall levels of segregation (Logan, Alba et al. 1996; Darden and Kamel 2000; Iceland and Wilkes 2006).

The inability of socioeconomic characteristics to explain racial segregation has shifted attention to individual level preferences and discrimination against blacks. In the preference (or taste) argument, blacks and whites may choose to live in different locations because they prefer to live with people of the same ethnic group. Evidence suggests that while both whites and blacks may have preferences for living in neighborhoods where their own race is in the majority, such preferences are still much stronger among whites, on average, than among blacks (Dawkins 2004). In particular, percentage of blacks in the neighborhood has 10 times greater effect on whites' assessment of their likelihood of buying a home in

the neighborhood than when the out-group is Asian or Hispanic (Emerson, Chai et al. 2001). Given that blacks have lower preferences for living with their own group and research has shown that blacks prefer more diverse neighborhoods than whites (Zubrinisky-Charles 2000), preferences can not be the only factor in explaining racial/ethnic segregation. Research has shown that blacks are not fully able to convert their socioeconomic gains into residence in the same communities as whites due to discrimination (Darden and Kamel 2000). Blacks face a more limited range of choices in the housing market and perceptions regarding discrimination and the perceived attitudes of majority residents likely play an important role in shaping residential outcomes (Dawkins 2004).

Data and Methods

In order to describe the neighborhoods of US and foreign-born blacks, I will use the locational attainment model (Alba and Logan 1992) to estimate the following:

1. Percent US born whites in the census tract
2. Percent US born black in the census tract
3. Census tract's median household income
4. Median household income of US born whites
5. Median household income of US born blacks.

This analysis uses data from the 2005-2009 pooled individual and geographic level ACS. The geographic level ACS files satisfy conditions 1 and 3 listed above, while the individual level pooled ACS satisfies conditions 2 and 4 (Alba and Logan 1992). I include both men and women who are 18 or older, either US born non-Hispanic whites and blacks or non-Hispanic black African or Caribbean immigrants who live in one of the top ten metropolitan areas for foreign-born black settlement in the United States. Foreign-born blacks make up a very small proportion of the United States population; therefore I focus on the top ten settlement areas rather than the entire nation in order to obtain a more accurate estimation of levels of segregation and locational attainment of foreign-born blacks

When the percent white or black is the dependent variable, the results are consistent with the exposure index (P^*) (Alba, Logan et al. 2000). The final two outcome variables characterize the US born whites and blacks with whom foreign born blacks reside. The locational attainment model is estimated at the individual level, but community level characteristics are the dependent variable. Though the US Census releases data separately for individual data and for geographic units, this method allows estimation of ordinary least squares regression (OLS) as if the individual level data included characteristics of the geographic unit. I will calculate the covariances between the dependent and each independent variable

using individual level data in order to estimate covariance among the independent variables. Covariances between independent and dependent variables are calculated by, first, summing the contribution of any geographic unit to $\sum XY$ across individuals. I will then accumulate the sum across communities and calculate the correlation with the following formula (Blalock 1979):

$$(N\sum XY - [\sum X][\sum Y])/([N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2])^{1/2}$$

I will then calculate the covariances among the individual level variables from the individual level sample. After both sets of covariances have been calculated, I will put these values into a matrix along with means and standard deviations and run regression models estimating five separate outcome variables. I will estimate the percent US born whites in the geographic unit, the percent US born black in the geographic unit, geographic unit's median household income, the median household income of US born whites and the median household income of US born blacks. When the percent white or black is the dependent variable, the results are consistent with the exposure index (P*) (Alba, Logan et al. 2000). The final two outcome variables characterize the US born whites and blacks with whom foreign born blacks reside.

No research to date has examined both the racial and socioeconomic segregation of foreign-born blacks. This paper will use the locational attainment model to describe the neighborhoods of US and foreign-born blacks. I will determine the level of exposure foreign born blacks have to US born whites and US born blacks as well as the income characteristics of black immigrants' neighborhoods. Results will indicate whether the primacy of race model accurately predicts the neighborhood characteristics of black immigrants in the same way as for US born blacks.

Preliminary Results

Descriptive Statistics

Foreign-born blacks are younger than the US-born with African-born blacks the youngest and US-born whites the oldest of all four groups. The age difference between the foreign-born and US-born whites is at least partially related to the marital status differences between these groups; a much larger proportion of US-born whites are married than foreign-born blacks. While a larger proportion of blacks are married than US-born blacks, fewer Caribbean heads of household are married and a larger proportion are divorced or widowed than the African-born, most likely due to the age difference between the two groups.

African immigrants also differ from Caribbean-born blacks in terms of human capital and immigration characteristics. A much larger proportion of African immigrants have earned at least a bachelor's degree.

The proportion of African-born blacks with at least a college degree is approximately 2.5 times higher than whites and nearly four and over five times higher than that of Caribbean and US-born blacks respectively. In terms of immigration characteristics, a larger proportion of African immigrants came to the United States 5-10 years prior to the survey period than Caribbean-born blacks. Because of the residency requirement of US-citizenship, Caribbean immigrants' time in the US, at least partially accounts for their much higher rates of citizenship relative to the African-born.

Despite living in the US longer than African-born blacks, the household income of Caribbean-born blacks is lower than that of African-born blacks in 2000 and 2007. Both African and Caribbean-born blacks have higher average household income than the US-born, possibly due to their larger households. Household income is highly correlated with homeownership, yet the foreign-born have lower levels of homeownership than the US-born, with the exception of Caribbean immigrants who have a higher rate of homeownership than US-born blacks. Immigration cohort, however, affects homeownership rates among immigrants. In each year, immigrants who have been in the United States longer have higher homeownership than the newer immigrants.

Regression Analyses

No research to date has examined both the racial and socioeconomic segregation of foreign born blacks. This paper will use the locational attainment model to describe the neighborhoods of US and foreign born blacks. I will determine the level of exposure foreign born blacks have to US born whites and US born blacks as well as the income characteristics of black immigrants' neighborhoods. Results will indicate whether the primacy of race model accurately predicts the neighborhood characteristics of black immigrants in the same way as for US born blacks.

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