

Re: Migration Project Hypothesis

Qiong Wu <qwu102@syr.edu>

Tue 12/5/2023 9:11 PM

To: Kristy Buzard <kbuzard@syr.edu>

Great, thank you so much!

Best,

Mars (they/them)

Syracuse University 2026

E: qwu102@syr.edu

From: Kristy Buzard <kbuzard@syr.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:35 PM

To: Qiong Wu <qwu102@syr.edu>

Subject: Re: Migration Project Hypothesis

This sounds good to me!

You can do the education thing too if you want; it's just likely to be a weaker result because education doesn't map directly into income, so if I was only going to do one, I'd do income/wage.

From: Qiong Wu <qwu102@syr.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 2:48 PM

To: Kristy Buzard <kbuzard@syr.edu>

Subject: Re: Migration Project Hypothesis

That is true. Would we then say that increased income among Black people living in the North reduced the racial wage gap and provided them with the means to migrate to the South in search of better economic opportunities?

I think this means we would look at the average annual income (individual and household) over time of Black and White people who moved from the North to the Southern states in our list.

Best,

Mars (they/them)

Syracuse University 2026

E: qwu102@syr.edu

From: Kristy Buzard <kbuzard@syr.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 2:39 PM

To: Qiong Wu <qwu102@syr.edu>

Subject: Re: Migration Project Hypothesis

This makes sense. But then I have a more fundamental question: if you really think it's the wage/income/wealth gap, why would you not just test for that directly?

Essentially, in your story, education is a proxy for financial means; some direct measure of income or wealth would be a much better proxy.

From: Qiong Wu <qwu102@syr.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:19 PM
To: Kristy Buzard <kbuzard@syr.edu>
Subject: Re: Migration Project Hypothesis

Our understanding is that a higher level of education among Black people increases their income and gives them the financial means to be able to migrate.

There is a section about the relationship between education and income in the Smith & Welch (1989) article. I think this sentence in the article sums up their main point: "It shows that [B]lack education has risen relative to [W]hite education, that the wage return on [B]lack educational investment has risen over time. These factors, together, have significantly narrowed the racial wage gap" (pg. 531).

We could examine average level of education and income among Black people who migrated to the South over time. (Variables: place of birth, residence 5 years ago, current residence, level of education, total personal income)

I think this could be significant because the narrowing racial wage gap is also mentioned in one of the other articles (Hunt et al., 2008), which should be a good sign that it is significant enough to focus on. A potential phrasing of the hypothesis could be: Higher levels of education among Black people led to higher incomes, which provided a means for them to migrate to the South in search of even better economic opportunities.

If we find a correlation between education and income, we could state that we found a correlation, but that our research is limited in its ability to determine causation between those two variables.

Thanks!

Mars (they/them)
Syracuse University 2026
E: qwu102@syr.edu

From: Kristy Buzard <kbuzard@syr.edu>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 5:30 PM
To: Qiong Wu <qwu102@syr.edu>; Dylan Eldred <deldred@syr.edu>
Cc: Karyne Brown <kbrown65@syr.edu>
Subject: Re: Migration Project Hypothesis

Hi Mars,

Can you say a little more about the theory underlying this paragraph?

The hypothesis is that if Black people living in the North have a higher level of education than their current neighbors (people in the North) and the people in their destination (the South), they are more likely to move to the South (but we would phrase this better in the actual report).

That is, what about having higher education levels would make people choose to migrate?

Do Smith & Welch (1989) test this hypothesis, or is it just something they throw out there as an idea?

From: Qiong Wu <qwu102@syr.edu>

Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 2:54 PM

To: Kristy Buzard <kbuzard@syr.edu>; Dylan Eldred <deldred@syr.edu>

Cc: Karyne Brown <kbrown65@syr.edu>

Subject: Migration Project Hypothesis

Hi Prof. Buzard and Dylan,

I hope you are doing well.

I just wanted to run our hypothesis by you before presenting it on Friday.

In the Smith & Welch (1989) article, the authors propose that one of the reasons behind the significant rate of migration of Black people to the South in the 1970s is "improvements in education among [Black people]." We are considering looking at the levels of education between Black people who migrated to the South (from other regions of the United States) vs. the level of education of people who are already living in the South vs. the people who live in other regions that did not move to the South.

The hypothesis is that if Black people living in the North have a higher level of education than their current neighbors (people in the North) and the people in their destination (the South), they are more likely to move to the South (but we would phrase this better in the actual report).

I did also check on IPUMS and we do have all the variables we would need: place of birth, where someone lived 5 years ago, where they live now (during the census year), race, level of education. Though the 5 years ago residence vs. current residence variables may not be the best measure of migration, I believe Cromartie & Stack (1989) used the same variables to determine whether people were return or nonreturn migrants to the South, so I thought this could work.

Please let me know what you think! Thank you so much.

Best Regards,

Qiong Wu (Mars), they/them

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