Teagan Zuniga

September 22, 2023

COGS 212

Course Project Proposal

Intellectual Merit

I have three interrelated research questions for this project: 1) how has internal migration within the United States changed over time? 2) when people do migrate internally, where do they migrate from and 3) where do they migrate to? Typically, migration research focuses on 1) cases outside of the United States and/or 2) cases of out-of-state (i.e., international) migration. Therefore, answering these questions would not only add to the existing research on migration, but would uniquely contribute to this growing body of research. Understanding migration is not just an international or comparative issue, but a domestic one as well.

Broader Impacts

Understanding these questions have implications for various aspects of American life. As an example, consider a situation in which migration has increased over time and this increase is concentrated within a single state, such as California. A clear consequence of this population increase is a potential strain on the state's infrastructure. Additionally, if we know that such a phenomenon exists, additional important questions arise, such as the following: why are Americans migrating to California, opposed to other states? Conversely, where are these migrants coming from and why are they leaving their home county/state? Understanding this, and other questions, can help us understand current American life as well as foresee future changes/implications.

Data and Methods

I will use a recently introduced dataset from Mathew Hauer and James Byars on county-to-county migration in the United States from 1990 to 2010 (Hauer Byars, 2019).[1] The data is at the dyad-year level and, hence, reports the number of migrants moving from one county to another

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[1] Hauer, M., Byars, J. (2019). IRS county-to-county migration data, 1990–2010. Demo- graphic Research, 40, 1153-1166.

in a given year. Therefore, this dataset would not only allow me to explore how the number of internal migrants has changed over time, but also allows me to track where they came from and where they went. This will be an exploratory data analysis, which will include descriptive summarizes, map plots, and other data visualizations.