Black Immigrants' Locational Attainment Outcomes and Returns to Socioeconomic Resources

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ABSTRACT

Using data from the five percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) of the 2000 Census, we investigate the degree to which native-born black Americans and black immigrants are able to translate their individual-level socioeconomic status attainments into residence in suburban versus central-city neighborhoods. In addition we also test to see if black immigrants' returns to their socioeconomic attainments differ from those of native-born blacks. In brief, the results reveal that black immigrants are no more likely than native-born black Americans to reside in suburban neighborhoods, when controlling for differences in socioeconomic status, acculturation, family/household, and the metropolitan area characteristics of where each group resides. In terms of differential returns to socioeconomic status, home ownership is the only attainment for which the returns black immigrants accrue statistically exceed those of native-born black Americans. Results underscore the need to revisit traditional theories of residential assimilation and locational attainment patterns for contemporary immigrant groups.

1. Introduction

A well-established fact amongst social scientists studying racial and ethnic locational attainment patterns is that increasing levels of education and income should enable immigrant group members to reside in qualitatively better neighborhoods (Alba and Logan 1991; Alba and Nee 2003; Logan and Alba 1993; Charles 2003). The positive relationship between socioeconomic resources and locational attainment is reflected in the residential outcomes for the majority of white European ethnic immigrants, and their descendants, throughout most of the twentieth century. Shifts in the country's racial/ethnic demographic landscape during the second half of the twentieth century has generated a new round of research testing the above relationship's relevance for contemporary immigrant groups' residential outcomes.

While the majority of these studies mostly focus on immigrant groups from South and Central America, and Asia, less attention has been given to the locational attainment outcomes of black immigrants whose population greatly increased during the 1990's[1]. The increase in size of the black immigrant population calls for a new round of research reexamining the relevance of traditional theories of socioeconomic and residential assimilation, which were formulated to capture the experience of white European ethnics arriving to the U.S. during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Alba and Nee 2003; Massey 1985; Lieberson 1980). It remains to be seen whether such theories can capture the experience of black non-European ethnics, since race, as it's defined in the U.S. context, can play a major role in determining their socioeconomic and residential mobility patterns.

[1] For an exception see Kasinitz 1992; Crowder 1999; Vickerman 1999; Waters 1999; Crowder and Tedrow 2001; Foner 2001; Konadu-Agyemang, Takyi, and Arthur 2006; Rosenbaum and Friedman 2007; and Shaw-Taylor and Tuch 2007.

The present study examines locational attainment outcomes and returns to socioeconomic levels among native-born black Americans and black immigrants. While immigrant blacks have higher socioeconomic status (SES) and reside in higher quality neighborhoods than native-born black Americans (Crowder and Tedrow 2001; Logan and Deane 2003; Friedman and Rosenbaum 2007), less is known on how and why black immigrants are able to translate their socioeconomic attainments to residence in qualitatively different neighborhoods compared to native-born black Americans. In addition, the study of black immigrants' locational attainment patterns relative to those of native-born black Americans identifies the degree to which race may or not hinder their prospects for socioeconomic and residential assimilation within mainstream America.

The main objective of the study is to evaluate the degree to which the spatial assimilation model can describe the locational outcomes of black immigrant ethnic groups. The spatial assimilation model posits that immigrants will initially reside in lower income central-city neighborhoods with other co-ethnic members, due to their relatively low SES and acculturation levels. Over time, as SES rises and acculturation occurs, immigrants should eventually be able to move to better neighborhoods, including those with higher income levels and those in the suburbs. Thus, in the traditional version of the model, spatial assimilation is linked with upward mobility. In addition, by moving to "better" neighborhoods, immigrants are able to achieve residential proximity to majority group members. In traditional applications of the model, the majority group is either whites (when the spatial assimilation of minority groups is examined) or the native born (when the spatial assimilation of immigrants is examined). In this study, we apply the spatial assimilation differently by examining the process *among* blacks, using residence in a suburban housing unit as our locational outcome.

2. Background

2.1 The Spatial Assimilation Model

Past and current research investigating immigrant socioeconomic and residential assimilation patterns has traditionally used the spatial assimilation model, which focuses on the racial/ethnic group's socioeconomic and cultural characteristics in order to explain its members' locational outcomes. The spatial assimilation model predicts that immigrants will face an initial residential disadvantage in terms of the quality of their neighborhoods. At first, immigrants will live in lower quality central-city neighborhoods with other co-ethnic members due to their low SES and acculturation levels. Upon time and with increasing SES and acculturation levels, immigrants should eventually be able to achieve residential proximity with the majority group (whites) and residence in higher income suburban[2] neighborhoods (Massey 1985; Massey and Mullan 1984).

Black immigrants' dual status places them in a unique position where their relative locational outcomes may differ depending upon the racial background of the reference group to which their outcomes are compared. On the one hand, black immigrants reside in poorer suburbs relative to where whites (native and foreign born) reside, even when controlling for socioeconomic characteristics (Alba and Logan 1991, 1993, Rosenbaum 1996); while black immigrants live in "higher quality" areas compared to where native-born black Americans reside (Crowder 1999; Crowder and Tedrow 2001; Logan and Deane 2003; Friedman and Rosenbaum 2005; Rosenbaum and Friedman 2007). Black immigrant's favorable residential outcomes compared to native-born black Americans, however, do not provide us with information on the processes of

[2] Recent studies, however, cast doubt on the importance of suburban location in the spatial assimilation process. In contrast to the spatial assimilation model's assumption, there has been an increase of immigrant households directly residing in suburban locations, which hints to the possibility that barriers to suburbanization have weakened for certain post-65 immigrant groups (Alba et al. 1999). However this does not mean that, in general, immigrant groups will have access to better quality conditions and neighborhoods (Friedman and Rosenbaum 2005).

how they are able to achieve those outcomes. Although black immigrants' locational outcomes will remain qualitatively better than native-born black Americans, the former group's locational attainment process will depart from the linear trajectory as outlined by the spatial assimilation model. This is because, despite black immigrants' high educational levels (Djamba 1999; Logan and Deane 2003), they experience a lower level of return in the form of earnings to each year of education (Butcher 1994; Dodoo 1997). This, in turn, will have an impact on black immigrants' locational attainment patterns in terms of being able to translate their human capital and income levels to commensurate returns in neighborhood quality relative to native-born black Americans.

The spatial assimilation model explains a large proportion of white, Asian, and Hispanic locational outcomes, in that acculturation and SES variables are positively related to residence in mostly white, suburban, high-income neighborhoods (Alba and Nee 2003; Iceland and Wilkes 2006; Rosenbaum and Friedman 2007). On the other hand, the spatial assimilation model fails to predict black ethnic groups' locational outcomes. Blacks are more likely to reside in lower quality neighborhoods and poorer suburbs relative to whites, Asians, and to a lesser extent Hispanics, even when controlling for socioeconomic characteristics (Alba and Logan 1991, 1993; Charles 2003; Rosenbaum 1996). The spatial assimilation model's inability to fully explain the locational outcomes of black ethnic groups, relative to those of whites has led to the development of an alternative framework, called the *place stratification* model, which focuses on factors beyond individual level characteristics that influence locational outcomes.

2.2 The Place Stratification Model

The *place stratification* model (Logan and Molotch 1987), posits that race, prejudice and other forms of institutional discrimination, such as actions by the real estate and mortgage

lending industries, appear to be the dominant force behind the locational attainment patterns for specific groups, especially for blacks and black Hispanics, net of socioeconomic status differences (Alba and Logan 1993). According to this model, ethnic/racial groups and places are hierarchically ordered where the most advantaged groups (i.e., whites) seek to distance themselves from less advantaged groups (Logan and Molotch 1987). The ways in which majority group members distance themselves is manifested in the various individual or institutional acts of discrimination towards prospective minority renters or homeseekers. Such acts are the negative treatment from financial lending institutions, landlords, real estate agents, and individuals towards prospective minority renters or homeseekers, as well as the actions of neighborhood associations that seek to exclude minorities from buying homes in predominantly white neighborhoods (Jackson 1985; Yinger 1995). Although the 1968 Fair Housing Act essentially eliminated overt acts of housing discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity; nonetheless such acts have gone "underground" which essentially channel minority households to lower quality neighborhoods (Turner et al. 2002).

All of the above actions serve to produce locational outcomes that vary by racial/ethnic origin. Whites, on average, are most likely to reside in better quality neighborhoods followed by Asians, Hispanics, and blacks (Alba and Logan 1991; Logan and Alba 1993; Rosenbaum 1996; Rosenbaum and Friedman 2001). Barriers in the housing market also produce distinct differences in racial/ethnic group members' returns to their individual level characteristics. Certain groups receive less "neighborhood quality" per year of education and income levels in the process of achieving a locational outcome similar to those of whites.

The differential impact of human capital and SES returns to locational outcomes conforms to Logan and Alba's (1993) *weak* and *strong* versions of the place stratification model.

Both versions examine how barriers in the housing market generate differences in racial/ethnic group members' returns to their individual level characteristics relative to whites. According the *weak* version, human capital and SES levels are more important in influencing locational attainment relative to that of whites. Although non-white groups start with lower neighborhood quality, they achieve greater or equal locational returns to those levels relative to whites. However, despite the bigger payoff to human capital and SES levels, non-white group members' neighborhood quality is still lower compared to whites. In addition, even when certain non-white successful group members are able to reside in qualitatively better neighborhoods than their lowest-status counterparts, their locational outcomes are "scarcely better than those of the lowest-status majority group members" (Logan and Alba 1993:245). The *stronger* version, on the other hand, predicts that both non-white groups' locational returns and outcomes never reach parity relative to whites, because the effect of human capital is weaker for the former group than for whites. In addition to starting with lower levels of human capital and SES, nonwhite group member's returns are also always lower compared to those of whites. A basic outcome of the above versions is that non-white group members begin their locational attainment process at lower levels, and achieve lower levels of neighborhood quality relative to whites. Both versions of the place stratification model point to the "race penalties" that non-white group members' receive in terms of their payoff to their human capital and SES levels. Although certain groups are able to receive high return to their educational and SES levels, they have to *pay more* to achieve commensurate returns similar to those of whites.

The *strong* and *weak* versions of the place stratification model provide the framework within which to describe nativity status differences in the effects of background characteristics among black groups' locational attainment outcomes. Both versions can be applied to describe

the various processes black immigrant groups experience in their attempt to translate their socioeconomic status attainments into locational outcomes.

Firstly, the strong version of the place stratification model predicts black immigrants' locational returns and outcomes never reach parity with those of the reference group (native-born black Americans). Under this scenario, both black immigrants' human capital returns and locational outcomes are lower than those of native-born black Americans. In other words, the effect of black immigrants' education and income levels on residence in better quality neighborhoods will be weaker than for native-born black Americans. As a result, the most successful black immigrant will live in a neighborhood of lower quality than does the least successful native-born black American. This scenario, however, is unlikely to occur since black immigrants start at a higher level of neighborhood quality because of their high human capital levels, as well as reside in qualitatively better neighborhoods relative to native-born black Americans (Crowder and Tedrow 2001).

The *weak* version of the place stratification model provides a different description of the relationship between black immigrants' locational attainment processes. Under this version, black immigrants' socioeconomic characteristics will have a weaker effect in determining their locational returns, even though they start at a higher level of neighborhood quality. In statistical terms, this means that black immigrants start at a higher point of neighborhood outcome (intercept) than native-born black Americans, because of their high human capital and income levels, however the slope will be flatter for black immigrants since they will receive less "neighborhood quality" per year of education (as well as for income levels). This is based on the assumption that black immigrants incur the same disadvantage, relative to native-born blacks, in

translating their education levels into commensurate housing as they do in translating their education into corresponding income levels (Dodoo 1997).

With respect to native-born black Americans' locational outcomes, a question that arises is will they eventually be able to reside in similar quality neighborhoods similar to those black immigrants reside? Despite the stronger effect of native-born black Americans' human capital and income levels, they enter the housing market with a disadvantage relative to black immigrants because of their much lower starting point (i.e., human capital levels). As a result the most affluent native-born black American will reside in a neighborhood of similar quality to the neighborhood in which the least affluent black immigrant lives.

A possible explanation for such a discrepancy in locational outcomes between black immigrants and native-born black Americans might lie in the perceived status of certain black groups in the racial hierarchy as accorded by the majority group, which in turn will influence the degree of "acceptance" of certain black groups. Despite black immigrant groups' high social distance levels from whites as supported by residential segregation measures (Logan and Deane 2003), they are more likely to reside in better quality suburban neighborhoods (Friedman and Rosenbaum 2007), as well as move into better quality neighborhoods in which the previous residents were white or other non-blacks compared to native-born black Americans (Crowder 1999). Such differential spatial patterns between black groups and whites raises the possibility that black immigrants might face relatively weaker obstacles in attaining favorable locational outcomes than native-born black Americans.

3. HYPOTHESES

The above discussion leads to the following hypotheses. Black immigrants' higher human capital levels relative to native-born black Americans is the primary way in which nativity differences among blacks do not conform to the main tenets of the spatial assimilation model. Black immigrants' likelihood of residence in the suburbs relative to the native-born should either decrease or disappear when controlling for socioeconomic status levels. Therefore,

Hypothesis 1: At the bivariate level, black immigrants are more likely to reside in the suburbs than native-born black Americans.

Hypothesis 2: Controlling for educational and income levels, black immigrants are no more likely to reside in the suburbs than native-born black Americans.

On the other hand, the strong and weak versions of the place stratification model predict that the influence of socioeconomic resources will vary among black groups' processes of locational attainment. The impact of human capital and income levels on residence in the suburbs will be stronger for native-born black Americans than black immigrants. Black immigrants will receive lower "suburban location" returns per year of education and income than native-born black Americans. Despite the black immigrants groups' differential locational returns to their human capital and income levels, they will still reside in the suburbs relative to native-born black Americans net of socioeconomic status levels. Thus,

Hypothesis 3: Native-born black Americans will receive higher suburban location returns to their human capital and income levels than black immigrants.

Hypothesis 4: Black immigrants will receive less suburban location returns for their human capital and income levels than native-born black Americans.

4. DATA AND METHODS

The data source used is the five percent public use microdata sample (PUMS) of the 2000 Census extracted from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) (Ruggles et al. 2010). The initial sample is further restricted to the head of household, which, according to the IPUMS dataset, refers to any related person in the household who was designated as the first person on the census form, and rents or own the property in which he/she resided in. In addition, the sample is also limited to the 25-64 year old age group to eliminate individuals who might be in college and those not in the paid labor force. As a result, the final dataset yields a total unweighted sample size of 42,178 black non-Hispanic ethnics, of which 20,687(49.0%) and 21,491 (51%) native-born black Americans and immigrant blacks[3].

In line with past and current research on racial/ethnic locational attainment patterns, the dependent variable is measured by the central-city/outside central-city dichotomy (Massey and Denton 1988; Frey and Speare 1988; Frey 2001; Rosenbaum and Friedman 2006; Friedman and Rosenbaum 2007). The predictors used in the present dissertation are similar to those used in previous studies (Alba and Logan 1991; Logan and Alba 1993), and are grouped into four categories, namely socioeconomic status (SES), acculturation, family/household status, and metropolitan area (contextual) characteristics.

The data analyses consist of two parts: bivariate and multivariate. The bivariate descriptive analyses explore the background characteristics and differences of the groups concerned, such as their socioeconomic, acculturation, household status levels, and metropolitan

[3] The weighted total is 1,011,129 of which 490,957 (48.6%) and 520,172 (51.4%) are native-born black Americans and immigrants blacks repsectively.

characteristics of the metropolitan areas in which they reside. The appropriate significance tests[4] are used to compare the background characteristics of the groups concerned differentiated by nativity status. In the last segment of the data analysis section, a series of logistic regression analyses are conducted in order to determine which predictors are more likely to predict each black ethnic group's locational outcome, that is either residing in a central-city or a suburb. The resulting coefficients from the logistic regression correspond to the change in the log odds of the dependent variable per one unit change in a particular predictor variable, while holding all other predictors constant. In addition to the coefficients, the results are also presented in the form of odds-ratios. An odds-ratio greater than 1.0 means that the event is more likely in the first group; whereas an odds-ratio below 1.0 indicates the event is less likely in the first group. All analyses are conducted using SPSS.

5. PRELIMINARY DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS

Table 1 presents selective descriptive characteristics of native-born and immigrant blacks. The spatial assimilation model predicts that black immigrants should be more likely than their native-born peers to reside in central-cities, but the literature to date demonstrates the reverse of this expectation. The results of table 5.1 mirror these findings in that native-born black American households are less likely than black immigrant households to reside in the suburbs. However, the difference, while statistically significant, is not large, with just under 46% of immigrants and 41% of the native born making their homes in suburban areas.

(insert Table 1 here)

[4] Tukey's B post-hoc tests are used to asses group differences on the selected variables.

Spatial assimilation theory predicts that suburban residence is linked to higher levels of individual-level socioeconomic attainments. Thus, given the greater likelihood of suburban residence among immigrant blacks, we might expect them to have more favorable socioeconomic profiles, relative to their native-born peers. The results of table 5.1 confirm this expectation, mirroring the results of other studies, i.e., that black immigrant households are more likely to have higher income, occupational, and educational levels.

In addition, there are also significant differences for the last socioeconomic status indicator, tenure status, between the groups concerned. According to the spatial assimilation model, black immigrant households should have lower homeownership rates than native-born black American households. Although the majority of both groups' households are more likely to rent their unit, we see that it is *native-born* black American households who a slight advantage in terms of home ownership. Thus, whereas immigrant blacks are advantaged relative to their native-born peers on most of the attainments that lead to suburban residence, they exhibit a small, but statistically significant, deficit on a major attainment – and a major prerequisite to suburban residence -- that is, homeownership.

The last sets of variables in table 1 describe the characteristics of the metropolitan areas in which native-born black American and black immigrant households reside. Starting with region, native-born black American households are most likely to reside in the South (44.8%), and almost equal proportions live in the Midwest (22.5%) and Northeast (20.8). In contrast, black immigrants are highly concentrated in two regions, with a slight majority -- just under 57% -- living in the Northeast and just under one-third in the South. Although black immigrant households live in metropolitan areas with slightly lower proportions suburban, they are slightly

more likely to reside in areas with higher suburban homeownership rates. However, while these differences attain statistical significance, they are substantively very small. Additionally, black immigrant households are also more likely to reside in metro areas with a slightly larger central city/suburban difference in median household income, suggesting greater income inequality. Lastly, black immigrants, relative to native-born blacks, live in metro areas with smaller shares of native-born blacks but slightly higher shares of co-ethnics, particularly immigrants originating from the Caribbean.

In sum, black immigrant households' higher income and educational levels and more advantageous occupational profiles likely underlie the group's relative advantage in attaining suburban residence. Working against the immigrant advantage in residence, however, is the finding that black immigrants are less likely to own their homes – practically a prerequisite of suburban location. The finding that black immigrants were more likely to reside in metropolitan areas with higher home ownership rates and in places where suburbs outranked cities in terms of income, relative to native-born blacks, suggests that black ethnic groups' outcomes may not necessarily follow the traditional path outlined by the spatial assimilation model. While these compositional differences between native-born and foreign-born blacks may explain why, contrary to traditional assimilation theory, immigrant blacks are more likely to live in the suburbs, the question of whether there is parity in the rate at which both groups are able to translate their socioeconomic achievements into suburban residence remains unanswered.

6. PRELIMINARY MULTIVARIATE RESULTS

Table 2 presents selected logistic results that estimate the effects of each predictor on the odds of residing in the suburbs relative to central-cities. For both groups, the odds of suburban

residence rise along with the size of the metropolitan area's suburban population, likely reflecting the greater opportunities afforded by larger suburbs. While both groups' odds of suburban residence decrease with higher suburban home ownership rates, for native-born blacks, location in metropolitan areas with greater income inequality between suburbs and the central city, is negatively associated with the odds of suburban residence. In contrast, for immigrant blacks,[5] location in such metropolitan areas enhances the odds of suburban residence. These findings suggest that although both groups' suburban residential choices are limited to areas with a higher share of rental units, immigrant blacks are more successful at gaining access to relatively wealthier suburbs (i.e., those that outrank their central city counterparts). This different effect of a key structural aspect of the housing market lends additional credence to the apparent advantages associated with foreign birth for blacks, namely, a seemingly greater degree of acceptance by potential neighbors.

(insert Table 2 here)

Controlling for the structure of the metropolitan area influences immigrant blacks' odds of suburban residence in ways that contradict the spatial assimilation perspective. That is, although controlling for the metropolitan-area context eliminates the significance of years in the United States and weakens the influence of English-language fluency and citizenship as predictors of suburban residence, the effects of the latter two variables continue to suggest that it is the least assimilated immigrant blacks – i.e., those who are most different from native-born blacks – who are better able to acquire homes in the suburbs. Adding the metropolitan area-

[5] T-tests for the coefficients revealed that the returns accrued to each group's odds of suburban residence to places with greater income inequality between central-cities and suburbs statistically differ, while the returns to places with higher share of owned suburban units remain statistically similar between both groups.

level controls reveal a stronger, overall, relationship between income and suburban residence for both groups. The apparent suppression effect for immigrant blacks is so large that it reduces the magnitude of native-born blacks' advantage in terms of the greater returns accruing to income, making the returns received by the two groups statistically indistinguishable.[6] Moreover, while the addition of metropolitan-area controls weakens the association between tenure status and suburban residence, t-tests confirm that immigrant blacks continue to accrue greater returns to owning a home. Thus, when all theoretically relevant controls are included in the model, the only indicator of SES that differs in the size of returns provided is home ownership, and it does so to the advantage of foreign-born blacks.

In sum, the analyses in Table 6.2 reveal two main findings. First, although each group's odds of suburban residence follow the general outlines of the spatial assimilation model, the returns each group receives from SES are statistically similar, with the exception of home ownership. Second, in the presence of controls for all theoretically relevant variables, two out of the three acculturation variables have a statistically significant effect on the odds of suburban residence for black immigrants, but in ways that contradict the tenets of the spatial assimilation model. Specifically, the theoretically unanticipated effects of English language fluency and citizenship status continue to support the argument that the black immigrants who are more likely to secure a suburban residence are those who are the "most" different from native-born black Americans, possibly because they are preferred as neighbors by other groups, especially whites. Further evidence to the above argument is provided by Figure 1, which shows the

[6] Differences in the returns to education continue to be statistically nonsignificant.

predicted probabilities of suburban location for native-born blacks, and the "least" and the "most" acculturated black immigrants.[7]

(insert Figure 1 here)

According to the figure, the *least* acculturated black immigrant households have higher predicted probabilities of suburban residence, relative to their *most* acculturated immigrant peers and native-born blacks. The finding that the predicted probability for the "most" acculturated blacks is closer to that for native-born blacks lends support to the notion that, for immigrant blacks, assimilation means becoming part of black America rather than the broader society (Rosenbaum and Friedman 2007; Waters 1999).

7. CONCLUSION

In sum, when taken as a whole, the results of this analysis underscore the persistent problems facing U.S.-born blacks who seek to gain access to the most desirable neighborhoods in this country. First is the higher status of immigrant blacks; according to theoretical models that describe well the experiences of other racial/ethnic groups in the United States, the more typical scenario has the U.S.-born segment of the group possessing higher levels of the full range of attainments. That the relative standing of native- and foreign-born groups among blacks is opposite that of other groups points to the historically limited opportunities available to blacks in the United States.

[7] "Most acculturated" black immigrant households are naturalized citizens, speak only English, and have been residing in the U.S. for over 20 years. The "least acculturated" are those who are non-citizens, do not speak English, and have been residing in the U.S. for less than 5 years. The values used for all other categorical variables are the reference categories, and for continuous variables, the group-specific means.

The second finding that points to the persistent housing disadvantages experienced by native-born blacks is really a set of findings. Specifically, that it is the least acculturated of immigrant blacks who have the highest odds of acquiring a home in the suburbs, and that the chances of suburban residence for the native born come to equal those of immigrant blacks only when structural features of the metropolitan housing market are statistically eliminated both reveal that not all blacks are treated equally in the housing market. While blacks are on average more likely than whites to encounter obstacles in their housing searches (Turner et al. 2002), our results indicate that some blacks are more impeded by housing market constraints than are others. This is not a new finding in that others have shown nativity-status differences in housing opportunities (Friedman and Rosenbaum 2007; Rosenbaum and Friedman 2007), which do not go unnoticed by many immigrant blacks (cf. Waters 1999). Similarly others have documented the preferential treatment afforded to blacks who use standard American English – and indicator of higher class standing – relative to Black Vernacular English (Fischer and Massey 2004). Future research should delve into the nature of these within-group differences more deeply, such as by conducting housing audits using markers of foreign birth as the "treatment." In addition to suggesting differential treatment of black subgroups in the housing market, our results indicate that structural aspects of the broader housing market may serve to hierarchically stratify black ethnic groups across suburbia depending upon their nativity status and place of birth.

Finally, our finding that black immigrants can receive "more" suburban location than do native-born blacks by owning a home, even after controlling for metropolitan area characteristics, points to a critical difference in the process of locational attainment. This suggests that foreign-born blacks' home owners' advantage lies in the ways of how they are perceived by institutional and individual housing agents during their encounter with the suburban

housing market. Relative to native-born black Americans, foreign-born blacks' "immigrant status" and the perceived positive characteristics associated with being an immigrant, along with the mechanisms black immigrants use to distance themselves from the negative stereotypes associated with native-born black Americans (Waters 1999), eventually leads to their more favorable treatment in the suburban housing market.

Future research should focus on nativity-status differences in home ownership among blacks, as the findings we report here may reflect more fundamental differences earlier in the overall process of locational attainment. That is, although we find that immigrant blacks receive greater returns, in terms of suburban location, to home ownership, the real difference may be located in differential returns to education or income in owning a home.

Another potential fruitful avenue for research lies in exploring whether the findings we uncovered here are contingent on the time period examined, or if they are replicated for other time periods (both past and future). Of perhaps greater importance is the question of whether black immigrant families tend to lose the advantages apparent here over time and generation, or if the social and economic advantages that follow from location in "better" neighborhoods stand the test of time. Working against families' ability to maintain whatever advantaged position they have earned is the apparent downward drift associated with assimilation among blacks. However, examining whether this downward drift truly occurs over generations within specific families requires collecting both retrospective data from members and their parents/grandparents, and prospective data on their children and grandchildren, a feat that is very difficult for the individual researcher.

Table 1 Descriptive characteristics of native-born blacks (N=20,687) and immigrant blacks (N=21,491), 2000

	Native-Born	Foreign-Born
Suburban residence	41.0*	45.9*
Socioeconomic Status		
Household Income		
$0-$19,999	28.0*	19.6*
$20,000-$39,999	27.2	26.9
$40,000-$59,999	18.6*	20.8*
$60,000-$79,999	12.1*	13.9*
$80,000 and up	14.0*	18.7*
Education of householder		
Less than high school diploma	18.8*	19.8*
High school diploma	29.2*	22.8*
Some college	34.8*	29.2*
College degree or more	17.3*	28.2*
Homeownership	45.5*	43.9*
Metropolitan Area Characteristics		
Region		
Northeast	20.8*	56.9*
Midwest	22.5*	5.3*
South	44.8*	32.5*
West	11.9*	5.4*
Percent of population living in suburbs	66.7*	65.9*
Percent suburban housing units owned	74.7*	76.2*
Ratio of suburban to central-city median household income	1.48*	1.50*
Missing metro dummy	0.03*	0.01*
Percent of the population that is:		
black American	17.7*	12.9*
black, foreign-born Caribbean	0.6*	1.7*
black, foreign-born African	0.3*	0.4*

Source : 2000 5% IPUMS, author's calculation

* $p < 0.05$

Table 6.2 Results of Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Suburban (versus Central-City) Outcomes for Native-Born Black Americans and Black Immigrants, 2000 (odds ratios)

	Native-Born	Foreign-Born
Acculturation/Foreign birth		
English language proficiency (ref. = Speaks only English)		
Does not speak English		2.442***
Speaks English well		1.138*
Speaks English very well		1.204*
Speaks English not well		1.434*
Citizenship (ref. = Naturalized Citizen)		
Not a Citizen		1.101*
Years in United States (ref. = 21+ years)		
0-5 years		1.021
6-10 years		0.957
11-15 years		0.971
16-20 years		1.001
Socioeconomic Status		
Household income (ref. = $80,000 and up)		
$0-$19,999	0.393*	0.374*
$20,000-$39,999	0.500*	0.521*
$40,000-$59,999	0.620*	0.594*
$60,000-$79,999	0.718*	0.751*
Occupation of householder (ref. = Managerial & professional)		
Technical, Sales, & Administrative	1.060	0.959
Service	0.917	0.944
Precision Production, Craft, & Repairs	1.112	0.837*
Operatives & Laborers	1.019	0.831*
Non-occupational Responses	0.881***	0.727*
Education of householder (ref. = College degree or more)		
Less than high school diploma	0.703*	0.706*
High school diploma	0.731*	0.874*
Some college	0.818*	0.901**
Renter (vs. owner)	0.754*	0.548*
N	20,687	21,491
Nagelkerke R Square	0.308	0.594

Source: 2000 5% IPUMS, author's calculation

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.10, *** p< 0.001

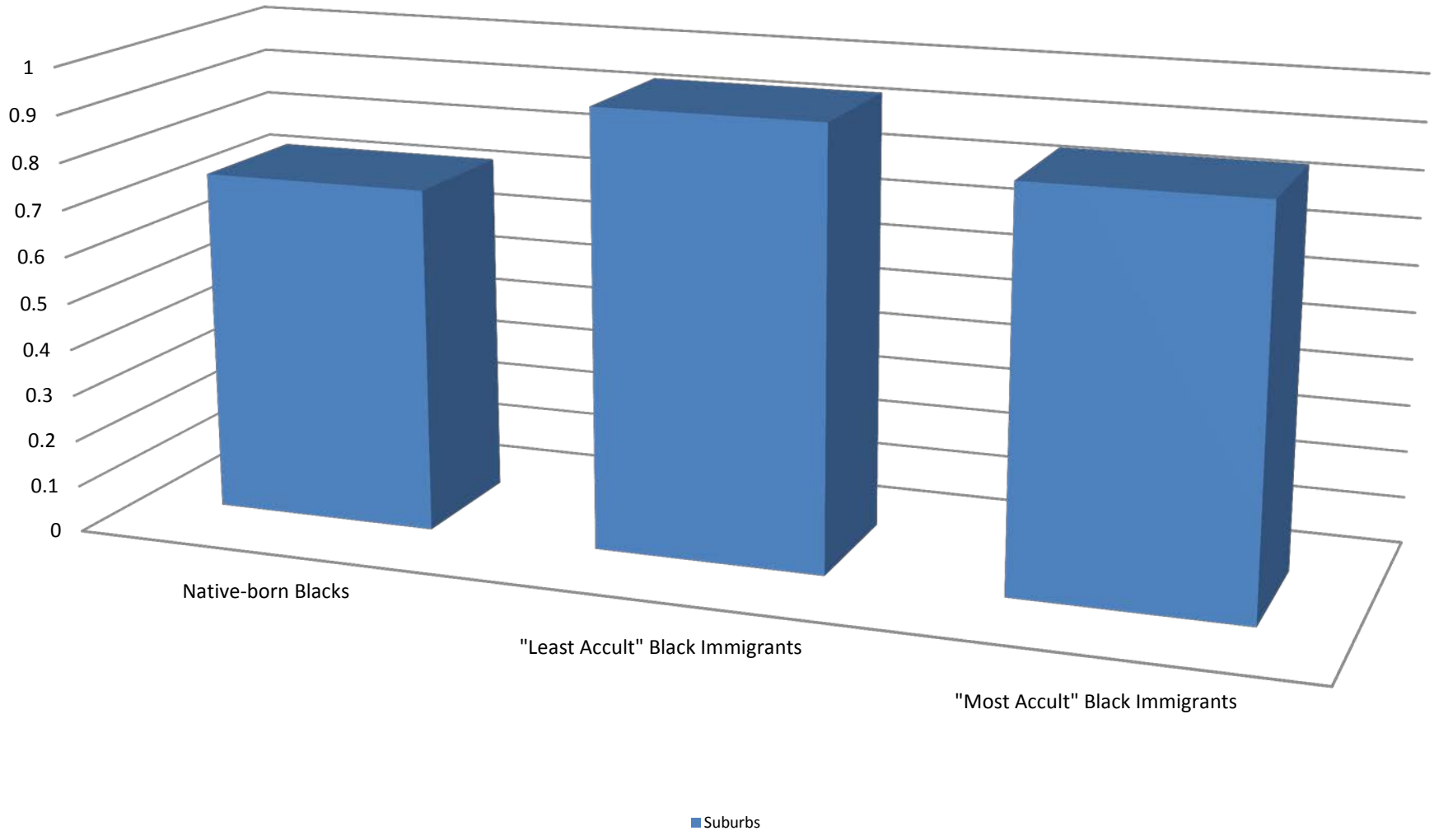
Table 6.2 cont'd Results of Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Suburban (versus Central-City) Outcomes for Native-Born Black Americans and Black Immigrants, 2000 (odds ratios)

	Native-Born	Foreign-Born
Metropolitan Area Characteristics		
Region (vs. West)		
Northeast	0.682*	0.205*
Midwest	0.619*	0.731**
South	0.898*	2.260*
Percent of population living in suburbs	1.053*	1.087*
Percent suburban housing units owned	0.972*	0.963*
Ratio of suburban to central-city median household income	0.674*	3.269*
Missing metro dummy	0.050*	0.544
Percent of the population that is:		
black American	1.009*	0.996
black, foreign-born Caribbean	0.975	1.665*
black, foreign-born African	1.572*	0.507*
N	20,687	21,491
Nagelkerke R Square	0.308	0.594

Source: 2000 5% IPUMS, author's calculation

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.10, *** p< 0.001

Figure 1 Predicted probabilities of suburban residence for native-born black American and immigrant Blacks by level of acculturation (controlling for all variables)



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