

Understanding Fertility Differences Between Asian and Hispanic Immigrant Women Over Time

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Background

- U.S. fertility—in terms of total children ever born—peaked several decades ago, but there is still substantial variation across race-ethnic groups and by nativity.
 - Higher Hispanic fertility (vs non-Hispanic whites) is often attributed to immigrants, largely Mexican.
 - But is high immigrant fertility an immigrant characteristic, or more unique to Mexican women?*
- Latin Americans have comprised largest immigrant group for many years, but Asian immigrants projected to be largest by 2055. According to the Migration Policy Institute, in 2014, the largest shares of the U.S. immigrant population were from Mexico (27.9%), India (5.2%), China (4.6%), and Philippines (4.5%).
- Asian and Latin Americans in the U.S. and abroad vary on key sociodemographic determinants of fertility.
 - Compositional shifts in immigrant population from these trends has implications for U.S. fertility trends.

Current Study

How did Asian immigrant fertility compare to Hispanic immigrant fertility over a 20-year span, and what role do compositional characteristics play?

This study examines the fertility differentials between Asian and Hispanic immigrant women (from Mexico, China, India, and Philippines) ages 40–44 from 1995 to 2014, and what key compositional characteristics account for those differences.

Data and Measures

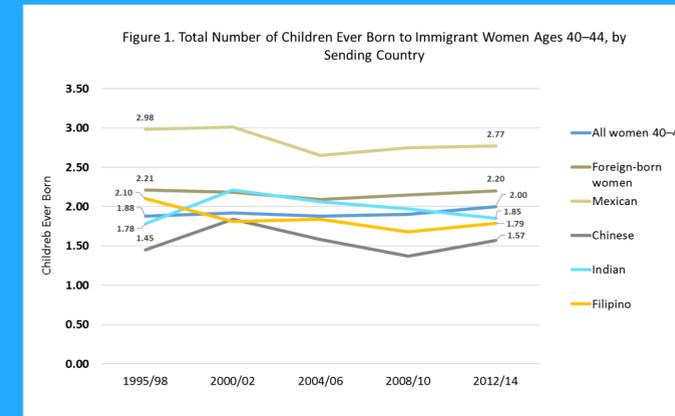
I use the June Fertility Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS), collected approximately every other year. I use 10 waves of data (pooled in pairs to maximize cell sizes): 1995/98, 2000/02, 2004/06, 2008/10, and 2012/14. I focus on foreign-born women ages 40–44. I focus on the historically largest sending countries from Asia and Latin America: Mexico, China, India, and Philippines. Key measures are:

- Fertility:** To approximate completed fertility, I use the *number of children ever born* among women ages 40–44.
- Nativity, ethnicity:** Women are coded as foreign-born if they were born outside the mainland U.S. (including Hawaii and Alaska). Ethnicity indicates women's country of birth, including Mexico, China, India, and Philippines.
- Compositional characteristics:** I include measures of *completed education* (bachelor's or higher); whether women have *ever been married*; *citizenship* (for foreign-born women, this means noncitizen or naturalized U.S. citizen); and *time in the U.S.*, women's reported date of arrival.

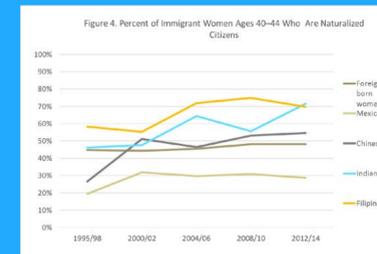
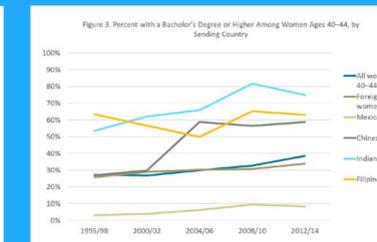
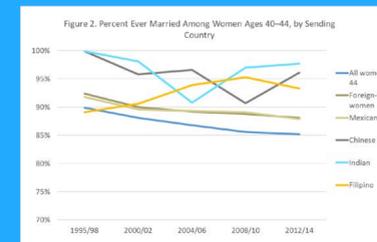
Analytic Plan

- Descriptive analyses chart the number of children ever born across groups from 1995 to 2014, focusing on:
 - Proportional within-group differences across survey years
 - Cross-group differences at survey year
 - Compositional characteristics by group across survey years
- Forthcoming analyses include multivariate Poisson regressions, interactions between compositional characteristics and survey year, and decomposition analyses (described on last panel).

Preliminary Results



- Foreign-born Mexican women had consistently higher fertility from 1995/98 to 2012/14 than women overall, and than other foreign-born women from China, India, and Philippines.
- Chinese, Indian, and Filipino women stayed largely under 2.0 children.
- In 2012/14, Mexican and Filipino women had lower fertility than in 1995/98, by about 7% and 15%, respectively.
- Chinese and Indian women had higher fertility in 2012/14 than in 1995/98, by 8% and 4%, respectively.



- We see the least variation in the share of women who were ever married (Figure 2).
- A greater share of foreign-born women had ever been married compared with all women ages 40–44.
- Most groups saw the share of women with a bachelor's degree or higher go up between 1995/98 and 2012/14.
- Foreign-born Mexican women consistently have lower education and shares of naturalized citizens.

Discussion and Limitations

- Among four of the largest U.S. immigrant groups Mexican women do appear to have uniquely high fertility, consistently from 1995/98 to 2012/14.
- The variation in both fertility and characteristics among Chinese, Indian, and Filipino women underscores the diversity among pan-ethnic "Asian" immigrants.
- For marriage and education, the events may have taken place 15 or 20 years before the survey year (e.g., marriages for 40- to 44-year-old women in 2012/14 may represent marriages that took place in the 1990s).
- I also cannot tap into cultural factors such as views on early childbearing, use of contraception, or religiosity.
- CPS data do not include whether foreign-born women completed their education in the U.S. or in their sending country, or about other socioeconomic circumstances in their sending country.
- Some Asian groups have cell sizes under 100.

Next Steps

- Add interaction terms between compositional characteristics and select survey years to assess whether their role in fertility differentials has changed.
- Start decomposition analysis assessing how the shifting Hispanic-Asian composition of U.S. immigrants has influenced immigrant fertility overall.