

A CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISON OF THE IMPACT OF FAMILY MIGRATION ON WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT STATUS*

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In this paper we consider the effects of family migration on women's employment status, using census microdata from Great Britain and the United States. We test a simple hypothesis that families tend to move long distances in favor of the male's career and that this can have a detrimental effect on women's employment status. Unlike many previous studies of this question, our work emphasizes the importance of identifying couples that have migrated together, rather than simply comparing long-distance (fe)male migrants with nonmigrant (fe)males individually. We demonstrate that women's employment status is harmed by family migration; the results we present are surprisingly consistent for Great Britain and the United States, despite differing economic situations and cultural norms regarding gender and migration. We also demonstrate that studies that fail to identify linked migrant couples are likely to underestimate the negative effects of family migration on women's employment status.

A large and growing literature in the developed world deals with the causes and consequences of internal labor migration. As argued by Halfacree and Boyle (1993), most of this work has adopted some version of a human capital approach (see, for example, Becker 1975; Blau and Duncan 1967; Greenwood 1975; Mincer 1978; Sandell 1977; Sjaastad 1962): essentially the researchers argue that individual and family moves are motivated by economic criteria. In short, movement is regarded as a response to job-related constraints at the place of origin and/or perceived job-related opportunities or incentives at the place of destination (Gordon 1992, 1995; Green 1992; Johnson and Salt 1990).

Our work is couched in the labor migration literature, as it addresses specifically the effect of family migration on partnered women's employment status. Like the broader labor migration literature, much of the work in this subfield also has been grounded in the human capital model. Thus it is usually assumed that family moves are undertaken to maximize economic potential, and consequently often fulfill the career aspirations of the (male) main "breadwinner" at the

expense of the (female) partner's career aspirations (Morrison and Lichter 1988; Snaith 1990). Hence partnered women's residential relocation is usually viewed as subservient to male labor market requirements (Gordon and Molho 1995), even if this outcome is justified as "rational" for the family as a whole. The result is "migration decisions...entirely different [to those that would be] made at the individual level" (Morrison and Lichter 1988:162).

This "unintentional" gendering of family labor migration can be explained by a number of factors, both "internal" and "external" to the family unit (see Halfacree 1995). One consequence, crucial for this discussion, is that female partners often "reside in labour markets that bear no relation to their skills and employment needs" (Hanson and Pratt 1995:125). Indeed, the bulk of the empirical evidence indicates that long-distance family migration is detrimental to the employment status of female partnered migrants (Boyle, Halfacree, and Smith 1999; Bielby and Bielby 1992; Cooke and Bailey 1999; Halfacree 1995; Lichter 1983). This is manifested in the prominent concept of the female "tied migrant" or "trailing spouse."

Recently the emphasis of this work has been questioned, not because employment considerations are unimportant to the migrants, but because the underlying causes of the "trailing spouse" phenomenon have yet to be adequately understood. In particular, a limited body of research on the causes of family migration indicates that the key explanatory variable is not the potential economic return to migration, but the extent to which traditional gender roles inhibit consideration of the woman's labor market activity when migration decisions are made (e.g., Bielby and Bielby 1992; Cooke 2001). In addition, even if the woman is a tied migrant, the type of labor market that the family moves into may well be very buoyant and ultimately may economically benefit her career as well (e.g., Bonney and Love 1991). This would clearly mitigate the economic and career inequality suggested by the "trailing spouse" concept.

In this paper we add to this evolving literature in four distinct ways. First, we report on an ongoing cross-national research project of Great Britain and the United States. We have constructed individual-level databases from the 1991 Great Britain Census Sample of Anonymised Records (SAR) 2% household file and the 1990 U.S. Census Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), which allow us to compare the employment status of migrant and nonmigrant women in two countries. Cross-national differences will encourage us to think more about the different institutional and ideological structures that might be responsible.

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Second, the large number of individuals in each of these samples provides statistical power to test key hypotheses that may have been ignored previously because of sample size limitations.

Third, and more important, we have emphasized the family in constructing these data sets. Rather than focusing on individuals, we have restricted our study to married or cohabiting couples: in each case we have extracted pairs of linked partners. In most previous studies the unit of analysis was the individual; it was usually assumed that the individual's family migrated if the individual was a migrant. As we demonstrate, this assumption can result in poorly specified models.

The fourth advance relates to the issue of identifying linked partners. Rather than treating all those who moved long distances as "cases" in our models, we have explicitly identified those partners who moved long distances *together*. We demonstrate here that the characteristics of this group are different from those of long-distance migrants who moved alone. Consequently many previous studies, which only identified long-distance migrants individually, will have underestimated the negative effect of family migration on women's employment status.

TOWARD CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARATIVE SAMPLES

Despite the obvious attraction of comparative work on internal migration, relatively few cross-national studies have been conducted (Fotheringham and Pelligrini 1996). Some have compared demographic rates between nations (e.g., Long 1988); others have investigated the usefulness of different measures for cross-national research (Bell et al. 1998). Still others have looked inward to compare migration-related patterns across nations (e.g., Kontuly 1998; Rees and Kupiszewski forthcoming; Rees et al. 1996). A particularly relevant example is the work of van Dijk et al. (1989), who compared the effects of migration on unemployment in the United States and the Netherlands. They suggested that the highly structured advertising of job vacancies throughout unemployment offices in the latter country negated the need for the high levels of mobility witnessed in the United States.

To date, however, no previous study of "tied migration" has been based on two large matching samples of individual-level data for two nations. Boyle, Cooke, et al. (1999) describe in some detail the data sets that have been constructed for this project. The data sets allow us to begin investigating the effects of institutional and ideological differences that exist between Great Britain and the United States in this regard. These include differences in financial support for child care, child-rearing support from husband and relatives, the purchase of child-rearing services, maternity benefits, equal opportunity legislation, employer/employee incentives for part-time and full-time work, and the social acceptance of full- and part-time work for women and men with children (Dex and Shaw 1986; Gornick and Jacobs 1996; Kahn and Meehan 1992; Meehan 1985; Scott and Duncombe 1991).

Here we provide results from the SAR and PUMS that are directly comparable, both in terms of the individuals cho-

sen and the variables extracted for each individual. In each case, we identified heads of household¹ and their married or cohabiting partners living in nuclear-family households, who were age 16 to 59. Couples were excluded if one or both partners were above or below this broad age group, living in institutions, in the armed forces, students, permanently sick, or international migrants.² Same-sex couples were also excluded from the U.S. data set because they could not be identified in the Great Britain census data (Brown and Boyle 2000; Office of Population Censuses and Surveys 1993). As a result, there are 164,496 individuals in our Great Britain sample drawn from the SAR household file, which is a 1% sample of all households enumerated in the 1991 census.

In the United States, both the 1% and the 5% PUMS are difficult to work with at the national level, not only because of the size of the files, but also because the data are divided into one file per state. For computational ease, then, we relied on a data set compiled by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), located within the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. This file is a 2% sample of the 5% PUMS; as such, it is a randomly drawn sample of 0.1% of the U.S. population. On the basis of our criteria described above, we extracted 58,730 married or cohabiting individuals from this sample.

The variables extracted for each individual are described in detail elsewhere (Boyle, Cooke, et al. 1999). Of particular interest here, however, is the definition of migration. In the SAR, migrants are defined as those whose address at the time of enumeration was different to that one year previously. Of course, this definition misses numerous migration events. Multiple moves made by an individual during the year are ignored, and any person moving away from and back to the same address during the year will be treated as a nonmigrant. The PUMS defines migrants as those whose residential address was different five years before that at the time of enumeration. Again, multiple and return migrations within this period will be missed. Therefore a drawback is the difference in time interval used to define migrants in the two censuses: female migrants in the United States will have had a longer time to search for employment and to establish supportive social networks to aid the search process (Hanson and Pratt 1995; Pratt and Hanson 1994). Even so, it is useful to compare the results for the two countries.

We focus here on long-distance migrants who we expect are more likely to have moved because of employment. We were particularly concerned, however, to identify couples that had moved long distances *together*; the methodology for this is outlined below. As in studies elsewhere (e.g., Boyle 1995), we chose 50 kilometers as a cutoff, making the crude assumption that moves of less than this distance are more likely to be residentially motivated. Such an approach is

1. In the U.S. census, head of household is referred to as *householder*. We use the former term throughout.

2. In the United States, migrants from Hawaii and Alaska were treated as having moved from outside the study area. We excluded them and their partners from the analysis.

forced upon us because, like many cross-sectional data sources used to examine migration behavior, the census gives us no information on the reasons for moving. Even so, it seems likely that most of the migrants moving 50 kilometers or more will have been motivated by employment factors related to one or both individuals.

THE FAMILY AS A UNIT OF ANALYSIS

In many previous studies based on cross-sectional secondary data sources, the definition of long-distance family migration was based on individual-level data (e.g., Gordon 1992). Thus the unit of analysis is the individual, and it is assumed that the individual's family migrated if the individual was identified as a migrant. We refer to this as the *orthodox definition*. This definition is inappropriate here because it includes a number of long-distance migrants who moved alone. More theoretically, and in line with Hanson and Pratt (1995), we argue that the orthodox definition also implies that long-distance family migration is a matter for individual choice; this is clearly not always the case (Green 1995). As Kitching (1990) observes:

[T]he migrant is often perceived as an individual actor rather than as part of a migrating household. Although information on household size and type is sometimes incorporated into analyses of reasons for movement, there have been few attempts to study the way in which a collection of household members contribute to migration decisions which involve them all. (p. 175)

Indeed, we maintain that the *family*, rather than the household, is the relevant unit of analysis that should be adopted in studies of this type. Households occasionally can be quite complex, involving more than one family or extended-family groups who may not all move together. We are interested in how women's careers are affected by moving as part of a family unit, and take an approach in which partners in the same family are linked. Therefore, unlike most previous studies of "tied migration," we adopt the family as the unit of analysis and acknowledge the alliance between migrant partners.

The relative neglect of the family in the "tied migration" literature is surprising, given the volume of family-based literature that emphasizes the internal heterogeneity of contemporary family systems: for example, the research dealing with gender-role ideology in the allocation of and commitment to paid and unpaid work (e.g., Perry-Jenkins and Folk 1994; Pittman and Blanchard 1996; Zvonkovic et al. 1996). Admittedly, some of this literature has permeated into qualitative studies of long-distance family migration, especially in the British literature (e.g., Bruegel 1996, 1999; Green 1995; Hardill et al. 1997); at the very least, there is a growing appreciation of the importance of family/household structures to processes of migration (e.g., Bailey and Cooke 1998; Boyle, Halfacree, and Smith 1999; Green 1997; Hayes, Al-Hamad, and Geddes 1995; Jarvis 1997, 1999a,

1999b). This work, however, has exerted less influence in quantitative analyses of "tied migration."

Of particular interest in this study was whether couples had moved *together* rather than individually. The Great Britain census includes a category that records whether a household moved together ("wholly moving households"), but it is used rarely because of problems with the use of the household as the unit of analysis. Many households do not move as a whole, even though more than one member of the household may have moved together.³ Consequently the SAR household file contains no record indicating that two or more migrants in a household necessarily moved together. Also, we do not know the precise place from which each migrant originated; we know only that the move was made from one of 12 regions. In the light of these problems, to identify couples that "moved together," we used the "distance moved" variable that is provided for each individual. Thirteen bands are recorded; most are either 5 or 10 kilometers wide.⁴ Individuals in the same household who moved within the same distance band were treated as moving together (we refer to this as the *alternative definition*). Of course, some individuals will have moved within the same distance band but will have come from different origins. For our purposes, however, only those who moved the same distance over 50 kilometers were relevant. Two individuals who had moved more than 50 kilometers would be more likely to have come from the same origin than two individuals who moved between 0 and 4 kilometers, because far more moves occur over short distances.

Couples that moved together were easier to identify in the PUMS because a more precise geographical location is provided for the origin. In this case, the origin and destination Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) are recorded, and a couple that moved between the same pair of PUMAs was treated as having moved together. Unfortunately the PUMS does not provide the distance that each couple moved, so we calculated the distance between origin and destination PUMAs using the great circle distance measured between population-weighted PUMA centroids.

Our samples of *linked partners* therefore allowed the identification of couples that had moved together. Below we demonstrate that this is a more precise method for examining the effects of family migration on women's employment status. Thus, in the modeling work, we distinguished three categories of individual: "others," who were nonmigrants or short-distance migrants who moved less than 50 kilometers (162,309 in Great Britain and 50,451 in the United States); long-distance individual migrants, who did not move with their partner (we refer to these as long-distance "joining migrants"; there were 431 in Great Britain and 2,251 in the United States); and long-distance individual migrants, who did move with their partner (1,756 in Great Britain and 6,028

3. This has led to a call for the identification of "moving units" in the 2001 census (Flowerdew 1998).

4. We know whether the individual moved 0–4, 5–9, 10–14, 15–19, 20–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–79, 80–99, 100–149, 150–199, or 200+ kilometers.

in the United States). Most previous individually based studies combined the second and third categories, but here we provide separate results for long-distance migrants who moved as a couple. Thus the first and second categories deal with individuals, but the third category includes only linked partners. This strategy allows us to consider the limitations of previous research. It not only directs attention to the role of family structure in determining the causes and consequences of the “trailing spouse” phenomenon, but also quantifies this phenomenon in employment terms more sharply than has been achieved in the past.

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

Table 1 provides a percentage distribution of the long-distance movers in the G.B. and U.S. samples by sex and by the individual-level variables used in this analysis, based on both the orthodox and the alternative definitions. Predictably, the number of long-distance migrants recorded by the orthodox definition is larger than for the alternative definition in all cases. For example, in Great Britain 1,125 women moved a long distance, while only 878 moved *with* their male partner—a difference of 22%. Note also that the number of males and females recorded according to the alternative definition must be equal in both Great Britain and the United States because these are individuals who moved together.

By including all long-distance migrants, the orthodox definition of long-distance family migrants both over- and underemphasizes certain characteristics of female migrants. On the other hand, there are fewer differences between the orthodox and alternative definitions of the male long-distance migrants. This general pattern may indicate that previous studies were likely to be less reliable for drawing conclusions about women.

First and most strikingly, for women, we found significantly higher percentages of migrants both in younger age groups (16–24 in Great Britain and 16–34 in the United States) and in full-time employment when we used the orthodox definition than when we used the alternative definition. On the other hand, the orthodox definition includes smaller percentages of older age groups (significantly so in the United States). More important, in both Great Britain and the United States the percentage of females who were economically inactive was significantly lower when we used the orthodox definition. In addition, differences between the percentages in full-time work and those who were economically inactive were not significant for men in either Great Britain or the United States. These results suggest that when the orthodox definition is adopted, the analyses will include a higher percentage of relatively young long-distance migrants, who are more likely to move on their own.

Second, because full-time female workers are represented more strongly in the orthodox figures, analyses made on this basis may have understated the incidence of female “tied migrants” in both Great Britain and the United States. Perhaps not surprisingly, the orthodox definition involves significantly higher percentages of cohabiting men and women in both Great Britain and the United States.

Finally, in both Great Britain and the United States the orthodox definition tends to understate the percentage of long-distance migrants with dependent children (although not all of these differences were significant), especially with a youngest dependent child age 0–4. In comparison, childless migrant couples are overemphasized by the orthodox definition in both countries. Given claims that traditional gender relations still influence most work and family decisions (e.g., Bruegel 1996; Zvonkovic et al. 1996), whereby the female partner generally fulfills child-rearing tasks, this may explain the high percentages of female migrants whose postmigration employment status suggests that they are “tied migrants.” Note also that couples with no children are more common in Great Britain than in the United States, whether the orthodox or the alternative definitions are used.

In other words, the alternative definition provides profiles of women migrants with higher levels of economic activity, lower levels of full-time employment, and a lower probability of having no children.

MODELING METHODS AND RESULTS

To test whether female partners’ employment status suffers as a result of long-distance family migration, we fitted a series of logit models that estimated the probability of unemployment or economic inactivity, compared with full- or part-time employment, for each individual. This distinction facilitates comparison and is consistent with other studies of long-distance family migration that have used similar measures (e.g., Bailey and Cooke 1998; Lee and Roseman 1999). Both men and women were included in these models, which we estimated separately for Great Britain and the United States. The key explanatory variables of interest were those that related to sex and to the three migrant status categories identified above.⁵

Initially we fitted independent models for Great Britain and the United States, which included only these two explanatory variables and the interaction between them. All of the parameter estimates, including those for the interaction terms, were significant at .05. The results of these baseline models are provided in Table 2, expressed as the probability of unemployment for each of our six migrant/sex groups.

The baseline models show that female long-distance migrants who moved with their partners were the most likely, by a considerable margin, to be unemployed or economically inactive. This was particularly so in Great Britain, where the percentage unemployed (47.5%) was much higher than in any other group. Also, in both Great Britain and the United States, women migrants who moved long distances to join their partners were actually *less* likely to be unemployed or

5. A potential problem with this approach is that our observations are clustered because the male and female partners are dependent on one another, and we might expect this to influence the standard errors in the models. For reasons of comparability with previous studies of this type, we refitted our models separately for men and for women in analyses not reported here. The parameters for the male- and female-specific models were similar, and the small differences had no impact at all on the rankings provided in Tables 2 and 3.

TABLE 1. ORTHODOX AND ALTERNATIVE DEFINITIONS OF LONG-DISTANCE MIGRANTS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES: PERCENTAGES

	Great Britain				United States			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Orthodox n = 1,062	Alternative n = 878	Orthodox n = 1,125	Alternative n = 878	Orthodox n = 4,114	Alternative n = 3,014	Orthodox n = 4,165	Alternative n = 3,014
Employment Status^a								
Full-time (30 hours or more)	78.2	80.1	40.3	32.3*	80.3	80.2	45.2	41.5*
Part-time (less than 30 hours)	1.4	1.1	14.7	16.7	4.1	3.5	14.3	14.8
Self-employed	9.9	10.1	3.6	3.4	9.2	10.0	4.9	5.3
Unemployed	10.2	8.4	9.3	9.0	4.0	3.6	4.5	4.0
Economically inactive	0.3	0.2	32.2	38.5*	2.5	2.7	31.2	34.4*
Age Group								
16–24	9.6	7.1*	18.5	13.1*	6.6	3.8*	12.6	7.5*
25–34	44.1	43.3	48.8	48.3	42.4	38.2*	47.0	44.0*
35–44	29.8	31.7	22.0	25.6	32.3	36.4*	27.7	32.8*
45–54	13.6	14.7	9.7	11.2	14.7	16.8*	10.9	13.3*
55–59	2.9	3.3	1.5	1.8	4.1	4.9	1.8	2.5*
Educational Qualifications								
Nongraduate of university	56.4	56.3	64.6	67.7	55.8	53.9	63.5	64.5
Graduate	43.6	43.7	35.4	32.3	44.2	46.1	36.5	35.5
Marital Status								
Married	74.7	83.7*	73.8	83.7*	92.3	96.6*	92.3	96.6*
Cohabiting	25.3	16.3*	26.2	16.3*	7.7	3.4*	7.7	3.4*
Ethnicity								
White	95.8	96.0	96.3	96.4	88.4	89.1	88.5	88.5
Caribbean black	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Black other	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	3.8	3.2	3.6	3.2
South Asian	1.9	1.8	1.4	1.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4
Chinese	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Other South Asian	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.2
Other	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.6	6.1	5.8	5.9	6.1
Country of Origin								
Native	89.5	89.7	90.0	89.3	93.3	92.8	93.4	92.9
Foreign-born	10.5	10.3	10.0	10.7	6.7	7.2	6.6	7.1
Occupational Status^b								
Legislators, senior officials, and managers	26.3	28.2	8.6	9.9	20.1	22.3*	8.8	8.4
Professionals	30.6	31.0	12.6	12.5	19.0	19.6	18.4	18.9
Technical and associated professionals	9.9	9.6	22.5	20.6	12.8	12.5	11.1	9.8
Clerks	5.0	4.8	8.5	7.3	3.6	3.2	23.9	23.7
Service workers, sales	6.6	6.8	26.4	27.0	6.5	6.0	15.1	14.4
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	1.2	1.4	13.5	14.1	1.0	0.9	0.2	0.2
Craft and related trades workers	8.6	8.1	0.2	0.2	18.5	18.2	2.2	2.4
Plant and machine operators and assistants	6.2	5.2	1.2	1.4	11.7	10.9	4.7	4.6
Elementary occupations	4.5	3.8	2.6	2.7	6.3	6.0	4.5	4.3
No occupation	1.1	1.1	3.9	4.0	0.4	0.4	11.0	13.5*

(continued)

(Table 1, continued)

	Great Britain				United States			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Orthodox <i>n</i> = 1,062	Alternative <i>n</i> = 878	Orthodox <i>n</i> = 1,125	Alternative <i>n</i> = 878	Orthodox <i>n</i> = 4,114	Alternative <i>n</i> = 3,014	Orthodox <i>n</i> = 4,165	Alternative <i>n</i> = 3,014
Housing Tenure								
Owner-occupied, bought	3.4	3.5	3.2	3.5	4.4	4.5	4.7	4.5
Owner-occupied, buying	58.7	61.2	61.5	61.2	52.1	55.2*	52.4	55.2*
Renting	37.9	35.3	35.3	35.3	43.5	40.3*	42.9	40.3*
Car Ownership								
No car	9.5	8.4	8.2	8.4	1.8	1.5	1.7	1.5
One car	46.0	45.9	46.0	45.9	17.5	16.2	17.4	16.2
Two or more cars	44.4	45.7	45.9	45.7	80.7	82.3	81.0	82.3
Family Life Course								
No children present	45.7	40.2*	50.0	40.2*	34.0	28.2*	34.1	28.2*
Youngest dependent child (0–4)	31.9	35.5	29.5	35.5*	34.8	35.6	34.9	35.6
Youngest dependent child (5–10)	10.1	11.4	9.3	11.4	17.2	20.0*	17.6	20.0*
Youngest dependent child (11–16)	8.6	8.9	7.6	8.9	9.7	11.4*	9.5	11.4*
Nondependent child(ren) only	3.8	4.0	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.7	3.9	4.7

Notes: *Orthodox* denotes all long-distance migrants. *Alternative* denotes two long-distance migrants moving together. *Long-distance movers* includes both those who move together and those who move individually to join their partners.

^aOne week before census.

^bBased on the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO).

**p* ≤ .05

economically inactive than either the long-distance migrants moving as a couple or the nonmigrants/short-distance migrants. This suggests that defining long-distance migrants at the individual level, using the orthodox definition (i.e., grouping the second and third migrant categories together), would result in an underestimate of the negative effects of family migration on partnered women. Overall, although the probability of unemployment or economic inactivity was considerably higher in Great Britain than in the United States in this period, it seemed to have little immediate impact on the gendering of migration. The general conclusions concerning the effect of family migration on women's employment status were broadly consistent for the two countries.

The results for men were also similar in Great Britain and the United States, at least in regard to rankings. The highest probabilities of unemployment or economic inactivity were actually found for male long-distance joining migrants. Again, although in the opposite direction to the women, this phenomenon was most noticeable in Great Britain: there the probabilities for this group were more than twice as great as for the other male groups. In addition, in both nations the nonmigrant/short-distance migrant men were most likely to be employed. Two contrasting hypotheses might be drawn from this finding: first, migration actually has a negative effect on men's employment; second,

TABLE 2. BASELINE MODELS FOR GREAT BRITAIN AND UNITED STATES^a

Individual Characteristics	Probability of Unemployment or Economic Inactivity	Rank
G.B. Baseline Model		
Male, non- or short-distance migrant	0.080	6
Male, long-distance migrant (joining)	0.178	4
Male, long-distance migrant (together)	0.087	5
Female, non- or short-distance migrant	0.301	2
Female, long-distance migrant (joining)	0.198	3
Female, long-distance migrant (together)	0.475	1
U.S. Baseline Model		
Male, non- or short-distance migrant	0.053	6
Male, long-distance migrant (joining)	0.069	4
Male, long-distance migrant (together)	0.063	5
Female, non- or short-distance migrant	0.291	2
Female, long-distance migrant (joining)	0.286	3
Female, long-distance migrant (together)	0.384	1

^aThe dependent variable contrasts those in employment with the unemployed and economically inactive. The sample size is 164,496 in Great Britain and 58,730 in the United States.

unemployed men are more likely to “get on their bikes” to seek work. Although such findings clearly have important implications for the debate about migration and responses to labor market factors, our cross-sectional data do not allow us to confirm either of these hypotheses because we do not know when unemployment/economic inactivity and migration events occurred relative to each other. Finally, in both Great Britain and the United States all three male groups were more likely to be employed than all three female groups (although in Great Britain, the probabilities for male and female long-distance joining migrants were relatively similar).

Table 3 presents the probabilities for the same migrant/sex groups for models including an array of additional individual-level variables (listed in Table 1), which are expected to affect the probability of unemployment or economic inactivity. (The full model parameters and standard errors are provided in Table 4.)⁶ These models are more robust because we are controlling for confounding effects rather than simply including the effects of two independent variables. Despite the inclusion of the eight additional variables, the results remain similar to those presented in Table 2.

The inclusion of the additional individual-level variables had relatively little impact on the migrant/sex group probabilities for those in Great Britain and the United States (compare Tables 2 and 3). In Great Britain the probability of unemployment or economic inactivity increased for female long-distance joining migrants (rising to the second highest probability), but the probabilities declined slightly for the remaining five groups. The results for the United States were different because the probabilities rose for all the migrant/sex groups except female nonmigrants or short-distance migrants; for this group the probability decreased slightly. The rankings did change, however, in line with the results for Great Britain: the probability for female long-distance joining migrants rose to the second highest.

Broadly, the conclusions remain consistent. Women who migrate long distances with their partners are most likely to be unemployed or economically inactive in both Great Britain and the United States. Men are much more likely than women to be employed in both nations (men's probability of unemployment or economic inactivity was lower for each of the three equivalent male/female migrant groups). Among men in Great Britain, we found the highest probability of unemployment or economic inactivity among those who moved long distances without a partner; this probability was over twice as great as for the other two male groups. In the United States, the probabilities were high both for men who joined their partner and for men who moved with their part-

6. We calculate the probabilities by keeping at zero all variables except those associated with sex and migration. Therefore the probabilities are specific to individuals with the following characteristics, who make up the base categories for the models: age 16–24; noncollege graduate; married; white; native-born; legislative, senior official, or managerial occupation; owner-occupier, bought; no car; and with no children present. Because this latter set of variables is entered into the model additively, and because we used no interaction terms between these and the migrant/sex variables, the relative probabilities will remain the same for all possible population groups.

TABLE 3. BASELINE MODELS FOR GREAT BRITAIN AND UNITED STATES, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL VARIABLES^a

Individual Characteristics	Probability of Unemployment or Economic Inactivity	Rank
G.B. Baseline Model		
Male, non- or short-distance migrant	0.048	6
Male, long-distance migrant (joining)	0.172	4
Male, long-distance migrant (together)	0.060	5
Female, non- or short-distance migrant	0.188	3
Female, long-distance migrant (joining)	0.261	2
Female, long-distance migrant (together)	0.425	1
U.S. Baseline Model		
Male, non- or short-distance migrant	0.068	6
Male, long-distance migrant (joining)	0.085	5
Male, long-distance migrant (together)	0.086	4
Female, non- or short-distance migrant	0.276	3
Female, long-distance migrant (joining)	0.352	2
Female, long-distance migrant (together)	0.407	1

^aThe dependent variable contrasts those in employment with the unemployed and economically inactive. The sample size is 164,496 in Great Britain and 58,730 in the United States.

^bUnlike Table 2, these specific probabilities are calculated for individuals who were age 16–24; nongraduates; married; owner-occupiers who owned their properties outright; white; native-born; legislators; senior officials or managers; without a car; without children. Yet because the additional variables in this model were included additively, the sex/migrant ranks would not change for the different categories of each of these variables.

ner. Male nonmigrants or short-distance migrants were the most likely to be employed in both Great Britain and the United States.

The probabilities for each of the migrant/sex groups provided in Table 3 are calculated from models that include an array of explanatory variables. For comparison, we discuss the parameter estimates for the individual-level variables for Great Britain and the United States (Table 4), other than sex and migrant status.

In the model for Great Britain, most of the parameter estimates are in the direction we would expect; only four were insignificant. Persons age 25–44 were less likely to be unemployed or economically inactive than those in the base category (16–24) or those age 45 and above. College or university graduates were more likely to be employed than nongraduates; car owners, especially if they had two or more cars, also were more likely to be employed. Those in rented accommodation (public or private) were less likely to be employed; much of this finding may be explained by those living in public housing, who are more likely to be jobless (Smith and Mallinson 1996).

Those who were buying their house were less likely to be unemployed or economically inactive than those who owned their house outright, perhaps partly because the latter

TABLE 4. GREAT BRITAIN AND UNITED STATES BASELINE MODELS, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL VARIABLES: COMPLETE MODEL PARAMETERS AND STANDARD ERRORS

Individual Characteristics	Great Britain		United States	
	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error
Intercept	-2.991	0.0618	-2.6242	0.123
Migrant Status				
Long-distance migrant (joining)	1.418	0.2262	0.2531	0.1303
Long-distance migrant (together)	0.2333	0.1335 ^b	0.2628	0.0852
Sex				
Female	1.526	0.0512	1.6606	0.04
Sex/Migrant Status ^a				
Female long-distance migrant (joining)	-0.992	0.2957	0.1003	0.1501 ^b
Female long-distance migrant (together)	0.931	0.1554	0.3258	0.0978
Age Group				
25-34	-0.0955	0.0336	-0.2062	0.0536
35-44	-0.1996	0.0369	-0.2283	0.0592
45-54	0.1005	0.0411	-0.0056	0.0672 ^b
55-59	0.5616	0.0512	0.383	0.0871
Educational Qualifications				
Graduate	-0.25	0.0337	-0.3102	0.0403
Marital Status				
Cohabiting	0.0799	0.0283	0.0881	0.0617 ^b
Ethnicity				
Caribbean black	-0.5629	0.1133	-0.4581	0.3495 ^b
Black other	-0.1982	0.1438 ^b	-0.2328	0.0645
South Asian	0.0738	0.0688 ^b	0.0504	0.3158 ^b
Chinese	-0.5442	0.2085	-0.2891	0.2556 ^b
Other South Asian	-0.1142	0.1554 ^b	-0.3466	0.1794
Other	0.288	0.14	0.0511	0.0596 ^b
Country of Origin				
Foreign-born	0.1008	0.0386	-0.0461	0.0659
Occupational Status				
Professionals	-0.1399	0.0444	-0.0092	0.0677 ^b
Technical and associated professionals	0.1161	0.0438	0.1618	0.0685
Clerks	0.3283	0.0339	0.3898	0.0592
Service workers, sales	0.2542	0.0359	0.7334	0.0618
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	0.2938	0.1059	-0.0023	0.1847 ^b
Craft and related trades workers	0.6028	0.0373	0.6399	0.0699
Plant and machine operators and assistants	0.4651	0.0406	0.6066	0.0658
Elementary occupations	0.3855	0.0386	0.9999	0.0683
No occupation	5.356	0.057	10.2766	1.0015
Housing Tenure				
Owner-occupied, buying	-0.3949	0.0331	-0.4035	0.044
Renting	0.2814	0.0364	-0.1589	0.0506
Car Ownership				
One car	-0.6805	0.0259	-0.407	0.087
Two or more cars	-0.8645	0.029	-0.9512	0.0846

(continued)

(Table 4, continued)

Individual Characteristics	Great Britain		United States	
	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error
Family Life Course				
Youngest dependent child (0–4)	1.9	0.0266	1.0514	0.0435
Youngest dependent child (5–10)	0.7735	0.0325	0.3869	0.049
Youngest dependent child (11–16)	0.1997	0.0327	0.1546	0.0531
Nondependent child(ren) only	0.0228	0.0386 ^b	–0.025	0.06 ^b

Notes: The dependent variable contrasts those in employment with the unemployed and economically inactive. The sample size is 164,496 in Great Britain and 58,730 in the United States.

^aIn the United States, migrants from Hawaii and Alaska were treated as having moved from outside the study area. They and their partners were excluded from the analysis.

^bNot significant at .05.

have less need to be employed. All the occupational groups except professionals had a higher probability of being unemployed or economically inactive than the base category (legislators, senior officials, and managers). We would expect a high positive parameter for those with no occupation, who would include a large number of economically inactive individuals. Those with children, especially young children, were more likely to be out of work than those with no children. Obviously, because of the commitment of bringing up young children, at least one partner is likely to be out of work.

Some of our findings, however, are more unexpected. First, those who were cohabiting were slightly more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive than those who were married. Here perhaps we can see some evidence of a “marriage premium” (Cohen 1999) for both men and women. Second, the parameters for the ethnic group variable reject the stereotypical assumption that members of ethnic minorities are more likely to be out of work. Only one ethnic minority group, the “others,” was significantly more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive than the white base category. We found no significant difference in the probability of unemployment or economic inactivity between whites and the black others, the South Asians (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi), and other South Asians. The Chinese and the Caribbean blacks were more likely to be employed than whites. Those born outside Great Britain were less likely to be employed. Together these variables suggest that second-generation ethnic minorities fare better than first-generation ethnic minorities in the British labor market. In our sample of married or cohabiting couples, rates of employment were comparatively high among ethnic minorities.

The U.S. parameters were surprisingly consistent with those for Great Britain, given the acknowledged differences in the treatment of women in these labor markets (Gornick and Jacobs 1996). Only five were in a different direction in Great Britain than in the United States; nearly all of the remaining 30 were similar in magnitude. The parameters for

the housing tenure variable were different because renters in the United States were more likely to be employed than owner-occupiers who owned their properties outright, whereas in Great Britain renters were the most likely of the three housing tenure categories to be unemployed or economically inactive. The differences between the two housing markets help to explain this finding: private renting is much more common in the United States, while the amount of publicly provided property is small.⁷ Therefore, in contrast to Great Britain, there is less reason for those out of work to “end up” in rented property.

We also found a few differences in the size of the parameter estimates between the ethnic minority and occupational groups in Great Britain and the United States. South Asians, other South Asians, and the “other” ethnic minorities were less likely to be out of work in the United States than in Great Britain; even the “other” ethnic minorities group, which includes Hispanics, was not significantly more likely to be out of work than whites in the United States. Occupationally, service and sales workers and those in elementary occupations were more likely to be out of work in the United States than in Great Britain. On the other hand, skilled agricultural and fishery workers were more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive in Great Britain than in the United States. Overall, however, differences in the probability of unemployment for these samples were surprisingly small.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

We have presented the most comprehensive cross-national analysis conducted to date of the effects of family migration on women's employment status. Our study, however, has limitations.

First, although the samples comprise large numbers of linked men and women whose employment status can be compared at the beginning of the 1990s, we have focused on

7. Publicly rented housing is not even distinguished in the U.S. census output.

couples in nuclear-family households and have excluded partners in multicouple households.

Second, census information tell us nothing about motivations. Consequently, and in line with previous studies, we can only infer that long-distance moves are associated with employment opportunities. Although this seems highly likely given that most long-distance moves are job-related (Owen and Green 1992), a number of these moves will have been made for totally unrelated reasons such as housing or lifestyle considerations.

Third, it is possible that the decision making associated with these employment-related migration events leads to separation because one partner is unwilling to make the sacrifices that the other seeks. Such separated individuals would not be recorded as married or cohabiting couples in the census and therefore are excluded from the analysis. This could mean that those (women) remaining in the sample are self-selected, insofar as they have been willing to participate in the move. A more general self-selection issue is that women who are most likely, or more determined, to succeed in the employment market by staying may be less willing to become "tied migrants" (and vice versa). This problem is difficult to control with cross-sectional census data where we do not know who has rejected the possibility of a move (see Cooke 2001). A two-stage modeling solution has been proposed by Heckman (1979), but the method requires the estimation of a model of migration (the stage 1 model) using at least one explanatory variable that is exogenous to the probability of employment (the stage 2 model, employment status). Careful examination of both censuses suggests that such a variable does not exist; even if it were available, increasing evidence suggests that the Heckman two-step method is of limited utility in correcting for self-selection bias (see Stolzenberg and Relles 1997). More specifically, previous studies (Cooke and Bailey 1999) have suggested that selection effects may not explain why women who move long distances in families are more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive.

Fourth, and related to the point above, we cannot anticipate these couples' future circumstances. For some, the choice of moving may be tempting because longer-term plans, such as the birth of children, may be influential. Some of those women who are unemployed or economically inactive after moving may have been expecting to bear children in the near future; thus the move is more "rational" than might appear initially.

These problems exist in all quantitative analyses of census (and other survey) data. The importance of these effects can be assessed only with detailed qualitative analysis. We plan such work in the second stage of our research.

Despite these problems, the present study contributes to the "tied migration" literature in the following ways. First, women in both Great Britain and the United States were much less likely to be employed than men, regardless of whether they migrated short or long distances or were nonmigrants. Such a finding for our specific sample of partnered individuals is in line with the literature on women's

experiences in the labor market (e.g., Bielby and Bielby 1992; Bruegel 1996; Lichter 1983; Morrison and Lichter 1988; Shihadeh 1991; Smits 1999).

Second, and confirming our major hypothesis and most prior research, women who migrated long distances with their partners were the most likely migrant/sex group to be unemployed or economically inactive. This finding holds in both Great Britain and the United States. Thus it appears that family migration in fact has a negative effect on women's employment status in both countries, even when we take into account an array of individual-level variables expected to influence employment status. Most previous research that considered this phenomenon suggests that women suffer from family migration; our study confirms this. Admittedly, as noted earlier, a number of geographically specific studies do not support this conclusion (e.g., Bonney and Love 1991; Cooke and Bailey 1996). Again, future work in our project will address geographical variations within these two nations.

Third, in contrast to many previous studies, we have attempted to identify linked partners, rather than simply comparing those individuals who migrated long distances with those who did not. Conflation of these two groups reduces the apparent negative effects of family migration on women's employment status because women who moved long distances without their partners were more likely to be employed than those who moved long distances with their partners. Families rather than individuals—or even households—should be the unit of analysis in work of this type. An additional benefit is that relational variables, based on both partners' characteristics, can be derived. In subsequent stages of our work we will compare the effects of these relational variables in Great Britain and the United States.

Fourth, of the six migrant/sex groups, male nonmigrants or short-distance migrants were the most likely to be employed in both Great Britain and the United States. Perhaps more surprising, among men in Great Britain the highest probability of unemployment or economic inactivity was found for men moving long distances without their partner. Long-distance migration does not appear to reduce the probability of being out of work. Although this may be an indication that the unemployed are migrating to seek employment elsewhere, such a possibility seems unlikely, given the growing awareness in the literature that speculative migration is rare (Flowerdew 1992).

Finally, the results for Great Britain and the United States are extremely similar. The groups that were particularly likely to be out of work in Great Britain were generally the same as those in the United States, even though we were forced to use a one-year migration interval in Great Britain and a five-year interval in the United States. We must be careful in our interpretations because there are differences between Great Britain and the United States that are not controlled here. Even so, these initial results suggest that the labor market conditions for the various groups identified in our models were broadly consistent. Although national unemployment was more of a problem in Great Britain than in the

United States in the early 1990s, the probabilities of unemployment or economic inactivity for four of our six migrant/sex groups were actually *lower* in Great Britain, once other individual-level characteristics were controlled. This finding is doubly surprising when we remember that the U.S. five-year migration interval might be expected to allow many migrants more time to adjust to their new residential environment than Great Britain's one-year measure.

With these results in mind, we can return briefly to the broader debate around the intersection of gender and migration in the context of economic activity, which we raised in the introduction. First, gender remains an important component that we must allow for when studying economic activity rates. In spite of initiatives and changes following the "second wave" of feminism (Blunt and Wills 2000), gender inequality in outcome remains clear. Second, gender has an "independent" association with the migration process. This is seen most clearly in the differences in propensity to migrate: women often are less likely to move than men (Halfacree, Flowerdew, and Johnson 1992; Markham and Pleck 1986; Owen and Green 1992; see Boyle, Halfacree, and Smith 1999). Third, migration has an independent association with economic activity. This, of course, is a key assumption of the human capital, neoclassical, and even more structural models of migration (see Boyle, Halfacree, and Robinson 1998: chap. 3). From this perspective, labor migration comes to be defined almost by default as a "good thing" (see Halfacree and Boyle 1999).

Our study informs us about a subset of each side of this triangular relationship. Thus we have focused on a relatively narrow sample of partnered women in nuclear families, with particular attention to those who have moved long distances with their partners. Although Table 4 demonstrates the presence of many of the "traditional" structural factors seen to influence economic activity, female partners in general are shown to be more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive.

Our study also demonstrates that although migration is usually assumed to be associated with economic betterment, this is not the case for all groups. In Great Britain and the United States, both male and female nonmigrants or short-distance migrants were less likely to be economically inactive or unemployed than long-distance migrants, whether the latter moved individually or with their partners. Although migration may be beneficial economically for single individuals, this is not necessarily the case for partnered individuals. Further, however, the intervention of gender relations—internal or external to the family unit (see Halfacree 1995)—exerts a strong additional effect. In every migrant group, partnered women are more likely than men to be economically inactive or unemployed. So ingrained are these relations that they appear consistent in Great Britain and the United States, in spite of many differences between the countries regarding the broader structural environment in which "gender" is embedded (see, for example, Dex and Shaw 1986).

In conclusion, in this paper we have demonstrated the value of conducting a cross-national comparison of the ef-

fects of family migration on women's employment status. Through direct comparison we can identify both structural regularities and interesting differences in the gender experiences of Great Britain and the United States. Thus the simplifications inherent in dominant theoretical constructs, such as the human capital model, can be qualified progressively.

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