

Implications of Intra-Racial/ethnic Composition for Age-Specific Segregation Patterns

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“The seeds of diversity are being sown today by immigration and high fertility, which are revealed in growing racial and ethnic diversity among America’s children and youth. In many parts of the United States, the future is now” (Johnson and Lichter 2010: 151).

Extended Abstract:

This quote by Glenn Johnson and Daniel Lichter underscores a rapid transition, in which the population of the United States is changing demographically. Although there are many cultural and demographic characteristics that are likely to change as a result of this transition, it is the racial/ethnic shift in the population that is most obvious and well-publicized. It has been well documented that a disproportionate amount of the recent growth in the U.S. population is due to increases in minority populations, specifically Hispanic (Johnson and Lichter 2010). As a result, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that, within the next century and for the first time in its history, the United States will cease to have a majority Non-Hispanic White population. Lichter and Johnson (2010) expect that “America’s rapidly changing racial and ethnic composition will undoubtedly shape ethnic identities, electoral politics, and inter-group relations in the foreseeable future”. By focusing on the youngest age cohorts in their research (a group in which this trend is even further exaggerated), Lichter and Johnson give us a glimpse of the future, as in our youngest cohort (0-5) Non-Hispanic Whites already account for less than 50 percent of the population. In addition, with the U.S. Census Bureau projecting nearly a doubling of the population aged 0-18 by 2100, this trend is likely to push racial and ethnic diversity to a level far beyond what we currently see given the much of this growth is expected to be largely attributable to the increase in the number of minority children. To put this in the context of the entire U.S. population, currently, the overall percentage of “minorities” was 36.6 percent in 2011. Hispanics were the largest and fastest-growing minority group in the United States in 2011, with 52 million or nearly 17 percent of the nation’s population. Also, African-Americans made up close to 12 percent, and Asians were the second-fastest growing population in the nation with 18 million people, or three percent of the population.

These trends beg specific questions as they relate to what we know about intra-racial/ethnic relations in the United States. One such question revolves specifically around the dynamic shifts that have occurred in regard to residential segregation, as these populations have

become more diverse. Research has consistently shown that the larger the proportion of the population that is minority, the more segregated the community (see Massey and Denton 1989, among many others). Furthermore, we also know that living in segregated communities can be disproportionately damaging to minority groups. However, other authors point out that diversity has a very small impact on segregation except for blacks, who show lower levels of segregation as diversity increases (Iceland 2002).

Although there is literature on life cycle-specific segregation influenced by marriage and family formation encouraging people to live in safer and wealthier areas, relatively little is known about the potential consequences of such variations in growth rates across the age cohorts.

The potential experiences of segregation, which vary throughout the life course, as well as its explanations, are interesting from a demographic perspective. However, the social policy implications are much more thought provoking. For instance, inequality and difference in social capital are strongly connected to segregation. As Sampson pointed out, racial disparities in social capital don't come from diversity, but rest "on racially shaped mechanisms of spatial inequality" (2012: 248). Residential segregation on the basis of race and socioeconomic status has gotten immense attention in the social sciences, because it is a phenomenon that can be easily observed in the United States and it has important social implications for the people being segregated. In general, we can state in cases of extreme segregation like in urban ghettos, there is a combination of poverty and isolation from the rest of society, which makes it exceptionally hard for an individual to live up to society's expectations in school, the labor market, and in noncriminal activities generally. Furthermore, many authors conclude that the lower social interaction and trust associated with ethnic diversity is due to social disadvantage in different neighborhoods (Stolle/ Soroka/ Johnston: 2008). The people in these neighborhoods experience powerlessness and a lack of social support and therefore start mistrusting others and withdraw from society. Robert Sampson also finds for his study of social efficacy in 2002 that "Concentrated disadvantage... serves to depress collective efficacy" (2012: 199). Although he also looks at diversity as an independent variable, his resource-driven approach stands in contrast (to Putnam's position 2007), because diversity as such is not seen as the actual problem, but does not play a role at all besides other more influential factors like residential stability and organizational services. Regardless of these contrasts, both make the point that neighborhood socio-economic deprivation and the degree of social integration and segregation of individuals within their neighborhoods need to be examined by both policymakers and academicians.

Here we hope to shed light on the associations between segregation and its potential implications by focusing on recent literature that highlights the nation's shifting demographic identify and the timing of those shifts (i.e., cohort effects). We specifically seek to better understand the demographic shift, in regard to race and ethnicity, as it is stratified by age cohorts. Preliminary analyses have shown that patterns of age-specific segregation can be explained by local conditions associated with region of the country, size of city, education levels of population, school options, and others. However, these same patterns are quite different when we dissect them by age cohort. The presented tables show preliminary data collected from the 1990 and 2000 US Census Bureau for all Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs) combined with information on race. We have computed segregation measures using tract counts of race populations for different age groups (under 5, 5-17, 18-65, over 65 years). So far, our results illustrate the recent trends of increasing diversity among populations in all CBSAs and also in the Top 25 Metropolitan Areas, highlighting the increasingly important role the Hispanic community is playing and the decrease in segregation for almost all race specific relationships and age categories. Interestingly, the largest decreases were in Hispanic to White segregation among the "under 5" and "5-17" age categories, while increases occurred only among Blacks and Whites in these age categories (see attached tables: Table 1 is the change in group proportional representation and Table 2 is the change in segregation levels between groups). We are currently in the process of adding the 2010 Census figures to this analysis, which would give us three decades of trends to analyze (1980-1990, 1990-2000, and 2000-2010).

The questions we want to address are: How has segregation changed over time for different age cohorts, ethnic and racial groups, and places? To that point, if there is a substantially higher level of diversity among youth, in comparison to the rest of the population, are they living in a more segregated world? Alternatively, is it possible that they are living in a less segregated world (if so, why)? Also, what are the potential age-specific causes (predictors) of varying levels of segregation and what are the consequences? Finally, this research hopes to contribute to our understanding of the dynamic nature of segregation as it pertains to age-specific cohorts, given that the most dramatic shifts in racial/ethnic change have taken place among our youngest age cohorts and there is no evidence of a break in this pattern.

1. Proportion and Proportion Change of Racial/Ethnic Specific Group Relationships all Core Based Statistical Areas (N = 445)

	Hispanic - White ¹			Hispanic - Black ²			Black - White ³		
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Δ 90 - 00</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Δ 90 - 00</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Δ 90 - 00</u>
All Ages	0.05	0.08	0.03	0.38	0.46	0.08	0.10	0.11	0.01
> 5 yrs.	0.08	0.13	0.05	0.41	0.52	0.11	0.13	0.14	0.01
5 - 17 yrs.	0.07	0.11	0.04	0.39	0.47	0.08	0.13	0.14	0.01
18 - 65 yrs.	0.05	0.08	0.03	0.37	0.46	0.09	0.10	0.11	0.01
≤ 65 yrs.	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.32	0.40	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.00

¹ Proportions represent the Hispanic population as a proportion of the county summed Hispanic - White sub-population

² Proportions represent the Hispanic population as a proportion of the county summed Hispanic - Black sub-population

³ Proportions represent the Black population as a proportion of the county summed Black - White sub-population

2. Segregation and Change in Segregation of Racial/Ethnic Specific Group Relationships, all Core Based Statistical Areas (N = 445)

	Evenness of Population Distribution (Dissimilarity Index)								
	Hispanic - White ¹			Hispanic - Black ²			Black - White ³		
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Δ 90 - 00</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Δ 90 - 00</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Δ 90 - 00</u>
All Ages	0.34	0.30	-0.04	0.45	0.38	-0.07	0.48	0.47	-0.01
> 5 yrs.	0.49	0.33	-0.16	0.54	0.47	-0.07	0.50	0.55	0.05
5 - 17 yrs.	0.45	0.32	-0.13	0.53	0.43	-0.10	0.51	0.54	0.03
18 - 65 yrs.	0.34	0.31	-0.03	0.47	0.37	-0.10	0.48	0.47	-0.01
≤ 65 yrs.	0.61	0.34	-0.27	0.67	0.54	-0.13	0.57	0.59	0.02

References:

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