



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Social Science Research

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ssresearch

Individuals' openness to migrate and job mobility



Johannes Huinink^{a,*}, Sergi Vidal^a, Stefanie Kley^b

^a Institute for Empirical and Applied Sociology, University of Bremen, Germany

^b Department of Social Sciences, University of Hamburg, Germany

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 16 August 2013

Revised 24 October 2013

Accepted 24 October 2013

Available online 6 November 2013

Keywords:

Job mobility

Job search

Migration

Openness to migrate

Life course

ABSTRACT

In this article we extend the scope of the interdependence between migration and job mobility: We investigate whether an individual's openness to migrate not only increases the probability of migration but also the likelihood to conduct a job search and exhibit job mobility. Using data from a three-wave panel study, which allows the analysis of temporal links between decision-making and subsequent events regarding migration and job mobility, a joint estimation of multiple equations is performed. We show that considering migration as an option for the future, which is our indicator of individuals' openness to migrate, is positively associated with both migration and job mobility. It even increases job mobility independently of whether migration takes place or not. These findings contribute significantly to our body of knowledge about the interdependence of migration and job mobility. Additionally, they enhance our understanding of the mechanisms behind a common selectivity of migrants and job mobile individuals.

© 2013 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

The interdependence between migration and job mobility has become a topic of great importance in the scholarly literature. According to the neo-classical economic model, people are willing to migrate if they can obtain a higher income or find a job elsewhere (more suitable to their qualifications), given that migration costs do not exceed the expected gains (Sjaastad, 1962; Schultz, 1964; Todaro, 1969; Speare, 1971; da Vanzo, 1981; de Jong and Fawcett, 1981). This means that migration is seen as an instrument with which to gain a (better) job when job opportunities are unevenly distributed across geographies.¹

More recent economic research, however, has criticized that the empirical evidence might be partly attributed to selective migration (Borjas, 1999). This means that individuals who migrate may have generally more aspirations, skills or a more suitable pool of opportunities than those who stay. Sophisticated statistical models can account for effects of self-selection to estimate unbiased effects of migration on employment outcomes (e.g. Nakosteen et al., 2008). Less advancement has been made in understanding the selective factors that commonly lead to migration and job mobility.

In our research we contribute to this neglected area of research theoretically and empirically. We extend the empirical analysis of the interdependence between migration and job mobility by explicitly addressing the relevance of early stages of each decision process. In particular, we investigate whether already being open to migrate – which is a behavioral disposition (Ajzen 2005: 3) – impacts the likelihood of job search and of exhibiting job mobility. Being open to migrate in our empirical analysis is indicated by the information that an individual is considering migration as an option for the future.

* Corresponding author. Address: Institute for Empirical and Applied Sociology, University of Bremen, Celsiusstraße, FVG-Mitte, R 1010, 28359 Bremen, Germany. Fax: +49 421 218 67341.

E-mail address: huinink@empas.uni-bremen.de (J. Huinink).

¹ Studies considering that migration may induce job mobility (Blau and Duncan, 1967; Linneman and Graves, 1983) are less numerous. It was shown that migration can have positive effects on individual occupational achievement in the long run (van Ham, 2002; Mulder and van Ham, 2005) and effects of family migration on job careers of men and woman have been studied (e.g. Boyle et al., 2009; Shauman and Noonan, 2007).

Individuals who are merely considering migration are explicitly distinguished from the group of those who are already planning it. Making concrete plans indicates that individuals have already decided in favor of migration – for example as a consequence of a job change – as previous, theory-guided research suggests (Kalter, 1997; Kley, 2011). Our model is based on the usual understanding that “migration is a change of residence that disrupts the basic ties with the local community and is a move that prevents commuting at least at any reasonable cost” (Clark, 1986: 20).

Beyond the differences between movers and stayers in regard to employment outcomes, we already expect differences between those who are open to move and those who are not, because individuals’ openness to migrate likely coincides with higher aspirations and perceived opportunities elsewhere. Therefore, those open to migrate may be more likely to accomplish their (job-related) goals than those who are not open, independently of whether they actually migrate or not. These expectations are formulated in theory-based hypotheses that we derive on the basis of an enriched subjective expected utility (SEU) model (Ormel et al., 1999).

To test this hypothesis we use data from a three-wave panel study gathered between 2006 and 2008 in two German towns with respondents aged 18–50 years at the time of the first survey (Huinink and Kley, 2011). We analyze the temporal dynamics of considering migration as an option for the future on both job mobility and migration. To achieve this we perform a joint estimation of multiple equations (i.e. multiprocess estimation) by combining hazard rate estimation with a categorical outcome estimation of panel data (Lillard and Panis, 1996). The consistency of our results is tested by the application of Markov Chain Monte Carlo methods (Browne et al., 2009).

The findings show that considering migration as an option for the future is positively associated with job mobility. More specifically, openness to migrate has positive effects on job search behavior and increases job mobility rates independently of whether migration takes place or not, as expected. More generally, we find exemplary support for the assumption that an individual disposition regarding one life domain (migration) impacts behavior in another dimension of the life course (employment).

2. Previous research

In their groundbreaking work, Blau and Duncan devoted a whole chapter to the relationship between migration and job mobility. They were probably the first to introduce behavioral dispositions towards migration into the discussion: “A man’s economic chances are improved by his *motility*, that is, his not being rooted to his place of birth but free to leave it for better opportunities elsewhere” (Blau and Duncan, 1967: 250). Motility refers to the “capacity to move” and, for these authors, “migration is simply an operational measure” of it. They deduce its significance from the empirical evidence that (interregional) migrants outperform to non-migrants in regard to occupational success. Blau and Duncan were well aware of the question of the correct direction of causality and selective migration. They found more evidence for selective migration of individuals with greater potential for occupational achievement but did not rule out that migration could promote the career simply because it improves the opportunity structure of job mobility for migrants (Blau and Duncan, 1967: 259, 274).

Other studies also show that migration can trigger job mobility (e.g. Linneman and Graves, 1983; van Ham et al., 2001; van Ham, 2002; van Ham and Hooimeijer, 2009). Differences in local housing conditions or life-cycle-specific changes in the demands of local-specific amenities (e.g. because of the birth of a child) might be a reason to leave town leading to job mobility “to optimally coordinate job and residence sites” (Linneman and Graves, 1983: 265). Linneman and Graves (1983: 275) conclude “that the migration and job change decisions are interrelated and more complicated than previously recognized”. Even though these authors do not look into the decision-making process explicitly, their analysis gives reason to expect that individuals’ openness to migrate plays an important part in improving the occupational career, because it enhances the likelihood of actually finding a (new) job.

Referring to theoretical considerations offered by Simpson (1992), van Ham proposes conceiving of spatial mobility in general, i.e. short- and long-distance moves as well as circular mobility like commuting, as an instrument of occupational achievement (van Ham, 2002: 6). He and his colleagues address the relevance of behavioral dispositions to match job opportunities across space by what they call “spatial flexibility in job mobility” (van Ham et al., 2001; van Ham, 2002; van Ham and Hooimeijer, 2009). They define it as the “possibility of accepting a job at a greater distance” given more or less willingness and constraints to migrate or commute (van Ham et al., 2001: 924). A higher spatial flexibility, they argue, should positively affect the readiness to accept a new job at a greater distance, which either has migration as a consequence or implies long-distance commuting.²

In the rich body of previous literature, individual and household characteristics such as age, gender, education, and household composition have been identified as important predictors of spatial flexibility and the likelihood of accepting a new job at a greater distance. Van Ham et al. (2001) found that in the case of job mobility, age has a negative and educational achievement a positive effect on the likelihood that it is accompanied by increasing the distance to the workplace. Married women and mothers commute or perform a job-related migration less often than unmarried women without children (Hanson and

² Indeed, as well as migration, commuting also has to be addressed in research on linking spatial mobility and job mobility (e.g. Simpson, 1980; Evers, 1989; Kalter, 1997; van Ommeren et al., 1999). The commuting distance positively impacts job mobility. Commuting distance is also positively correlated with the likelihood to migrate and migration can lead to a change in commuting distance (see Zax and Kain, 1991; Clark et al., 2003). Therefore, even though our study does not focus on commuting, we have theoretical reasons to account for it in our analyses. It is plausible to assume that it is positively correlated with an individual’s openness to migrate (van Ham et al., 2001).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7339351>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7339351>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)