Accounting for dynamic families and communities in place-based evaluations

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Motivation

• Place-based initiatives have dual aims to benefit people and neighborhoods

• Residential mobility key factor affecting both:
  – Individuals may move to better situations, but moves can also be disruptive
  – Neighborhoods instability can reduce collective efficacy, but neighborhood choice adds vitality

• Elements of theory (e.g. exposure, engagement and social processes) may falter due to mobility
A look at Neighborhood Stability

• Residential instability a concern in poor neighborhoods
  – Churning moves can lead to worse outcomes for families and, in particular, kids
  – Negative effect on collective efficacy
  – Resident engagement and leadership difficult to sustain

• Knowing what types of households, housing units, and neighborhoods are prone to instability can guide stabilization efforts
Making Connections Sites

White Center (Seattle)
Oakland
San Antonio
Des Moines
Indianapolis
Louisville
Denver
Milwaukee
Hartford
Providence
Housing Unit Panel Ideal for Investigating Residential Mobility in Neighborhoods

- Track representative sample of same units (nested within neighborhoods) over multiple waves
  - Wave I (2002-03)
  - Wave II (2005-06)
  - Wave III (2008-09)

- Follow families over-time after they leave the neighborhood
Using Resident Defined Neighborhoods

Providence
Target neighborhoods Disadvantaged:

Average: 39.3%
Children Start in Low Performing Schools

The graph shows the percent of children in different percent state rank categories for School Period 1. The categories range from 0% to 100% with increments of 10%. The data indicates a higher concentration of children in schools ranked at the lower end of the spectrum.
Question 1

- How mobile are families?
High Mobility Rates Over ~3 Years

Average: 56.5%
Questions 2a and 2b

- How often do children switch schools?
- How does school switching intersect with residential mobility?
80% of Children Changed Schools in 3 Years, Of Those Who Could Stay, Half Left

- Same School: 20%
- Non-promotional change: 22%
- Promotional change: 57%
Most Children Making a Non-promotional School Change Move Homes

- Move homes: 29%
- Stay in home: 8%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Type</th>
<th>Move homes</th>
<th>Stay in home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same School</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-promotional change</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotional change</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wave 1 – Children Mostly Attend Schools in Providence MC Site
Wave 2 - Some Families Move, More Children Attend School Outside MC Site
Wave 3 - Many Children Attend Schools Outside MC Site
Questions 3a and 3b

- Are moves helpful or harmful for residents?
- How often do children switch to higher performing schools, and which types of children do so?
Most Stayers and Newcomers Stay or Come for Positive Reasons; Most Movers are Churning

Movers

- Churning: 46%
- Up-and-out: 30%
- Nearby attached: 24%

Newcomers

- Dissatisfied renters: 36%
- Positive: 40%
- Low-income retired: 24%

Stayers

- Dissatisfied: 22%
- Long-term, older: 31%
- Positive: 47%
Large Variation in School Performance Change

- Share of Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Proficiency State Rank</th>
<th>Change (Period 2-1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>below 3%</td>
<td>-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-50-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-40-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-30-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-20-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>-10-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>30-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>40-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>50-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Over 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting to better/worse schools

• Controlling for other factors (including site and period 1 school performance)

• Better schools
  – Residential move to a new school district
  – Higher parental education

• Worse schools
  – Children with Black or Hispanic parents
  – Children in families that experience hardship (unable to afford food)
No Association with Switching to Better/Worse Schools (all else equal)

- Age of child
- Gender of child
- Promotional/non-promotional change
- Parental employment, income, homeownership
- Parental satisfaction with school at time 1
- Neighborhood poverty, racial conditions
Research Question 4

• What characteristics of households, housing units, and neighborhoods are associated with the higher rates of turnover?
Age a big driver in turnover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percent Increase/Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 or younger</td>
<td>+139%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>+57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 (reference)</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>-27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or older</td>
<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Low-income households turn over more

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income</th>
<th>Percent Increase/Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$10,000</td>
<td>+29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000-$20,000</td>
<td>+21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000-$30,000</td>
<td>+11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000+ (reference group)</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Employment, Financial Distress, and Collective Efficacy Matter

Percent Increase/Decrease Likelihood Odds of Turnover

- Employed adult (vs. no employed adult): -14%
- Difficulty affording food (vs. no difficulty): +23%
- Collective efficacy (1 unit change, 5 pt scale): -9%
Small difference by race/ethnicity or nativity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Nativity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Foreign born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+8% (not significant)</td>
<td>+1% (not significant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>White (reference group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-16%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (reference group)</td>
<td>Foreign born (vs. US born)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Turnover lower single-family homes

Single family home
(vs. Multi-family home)

Percent Increase/Decrease Likelihood Odds of Turnover

-13%
Individual & neighborhood ownership associated with less turnover

Difference in log-odds associated with ownership vs. market rent by neighborhood ownership rates
Subsidized rent protective in high rental neighborhoods, but not high owner.

Difference in log-odds associated with subsidized rent vs. market rent by neighborhood ownership rates.
Research Question 5

• How much does mobility contribute to neighborhood change
Components of Neighborhood Change: Conceptual Approach

Changing Circumstances for Stayers

Changes as Out-movers replaced by Newcomers

Non-poor  Poor
Components of Neighborhood Change

Net percentage point change shown in parenthesis.
Takeaways

- Poor neighborhoods experience high residential mobility
- There are positive and negative reasons for moving out, staying put and moving in
- Age and homeownership are strongest predictive factors, but economic factors, collective efficacy, and built environment matter too
- Subsidized housing may be platform to reduce instability
- Right mix of tenure, income and age can lower neighborhood turnover, but poor, young renter families may continue to churn
Takeaways 2

• Changes in poverty occurred primarily through mobility, not because of changing circumstances for stayers
  – Few communities with poverty-rate reductions among stayers

• Reductions in neighborhood poverty occurred
  – Through a sizable departure of poor residents, or
  – Through an influx of better-off households

• Fates of stayers and movers were linked in surprisingly few neighborhoods—only in worsening neighborhoods did they change in the same direction
Takeaways 3

• Complexity of residential mobility and neighborhood change pose critical challenges for community-change initiatives
  – Theory of change assumes duration of exposure
  – But being able to move to opportunity a sign of family success
  – Focus on the characteristics and needs of households moving through a neighborhood as well as those of longer-term residents
  – Qualitative differences in the way neighborhoods function demonstrates the limitations of point-in-time and one-dimensional metrics
Questions for Practice

• How best to support families who will move homes or switch schools, so they can reach areas of opportunity?

• How best to reduce residential and school moves to worse schools or neighborhoods?

• How best to help families and children remain in higher performing schools and neighborhoods?

• Can investments in community participation/collective efficacy reduce instability?
Resources


- *Getting to Better Performing Schools: The Role of Residential Mobility in School Attainment in Low-income Neighborhoods*, under review, available upon request

- *Neighborhood Stability and Neighborhood Change: A Study of Housing Unit Turnover in Making Connections Neighborhoods*, draft, available upon request