Labour market integration of refugees to Sweden: Does intermarriage matter?

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Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare (MIM)
• Overview of the labour market participation of refugees in Sweden

• Analysis of the link between intermarriage and labour market outcomes of immigrants – with focus on refugees – in Sweden
First time residence permits in Sweden

Source: Author's analysis based on data from the Migration Agency.
Resettled refugees (%)

Source: Author's analysis based on data from the Migration Agency.
Asylum seekers (convention refugees)
- 1985-1994 settlement/dispersion policies
- Since 1994 they are allowed to live with friends/relatives while their application is considered (%50)
- After that, they can choose the location for their integration courses

Resettled refugees
- Placed by the Migration Board in municipalities where they also attend integration courses
- Smaller towns, less economic opportunities
• Civic integration/Introduction courses:
  – Since 1985 (Migration Board-Municipalities)
  – Optional but allowance subject to participation
  – Language, societal and labour market
  – For refugees and their reunited families
  – 24 months
  – Policy shift 2010:
    • Responsibility to the Swedish Public Employment Agency at the state level (back to pre-1985)
    • More resources
    • Focus on employment
    • Results still uncertain
• Immigrants lower employment rates and job income than Swedes (Bevelander 2009; Nordin and Rooth 2009)
  – Lower human capital
  – Swedish immigration policies
  – Discrimination

• Refugees lower employment rates and job income than other immigrants (Bevelander and Pendakur 2009; DeVoretz and Pivnenko 2004; Hammerstedt and Mikkonen 2007)
  – Same reasons
  – PLUS health issues, higher difficulties in foreign credential recognition, etc.
• Resettled refugees lower employment rates than asylum seekers (Bevelander and Pendakur 2009; Bevelander and Pendakur 2014; Bevelander 2016)
  – Integration/settlement policies
    ➢ Internal migration increases the household income for refugees (Rashid 2009; Rooth and Åslund 2006)
  – Social capital

• Other factors that increase the odds of employment for both groups:
  • Human capital
  • Socio-demographics: age, gender, children
  • City of residence: Stockholm
  • Country of birth: Vietnam, Bosnia-Herzegovina
• **Intermarriage and social capital:**
  
  – **Intermarriage premium hypothesis**
    • Meng and Gregory (2005): Australia
    • Meng and Meurs (2006): France
    • Gevrek (2009): Netherlands

  – **Selection hypothesis**
    • Kantarevic (2004): United States
    • Nekby (2010): Sweden
    • Dribe and Nystedt (2014): Sweden
• To analyze the link btw intermarriage and immigrants’ economic performance in Sweden:
  – Employment rates
  – Job income
• Three groups:
  – Immigrants married to natives
    = intermarried immigrants
  – Immigrants married to other immigrants
    = intramarrried immigrants
  – Natives married to natives
    = intramarrried Swedes
Research questions:

(1) Differences in employment and job income between intermarried immigrants vs. intramarried immigrants in Sweden?

(2) Explained by intermarriage or selection?

(3) Differences by type of migration?
• Data:
  – Swedish individual register data (1997 and 2007)
  – Entire population of Sweden
  – Initial sample: 1,935,205 individuals
    ➢ Married or cohabiting in 2007
  – Final sample: 395,101 individuals
    ➢ Married or cohabiting in 2007 but single in 1997
    ➢ 25 to 60 year-old
    ➢ 11% immigrants
  ➢ Couples:
    • 80% intramarried Swedes
    • 13.5% intermarried immigrants
    • 6.5% intramarried immigrants
• **Dependent variables:**
  – Employed
  – Job income
  – Change in employment (1997 to 2007)
  – Income growth (1997 to 2007)

• **Independent variables:**
  – Human capital and socio-demographic: age, gender, education, occupation
  – Migration-related: origin country and IHDI (ref., spouse, parents), years in Sweden, type of migration
  – Environmental: city of residence, local employment rates
• Methodology:
  – Differences in employment and income btw intermarried vs. intramarried immigrants?
    · Binomial logistic regression on Employed
    · Linear regression on Job income
    · Different models for men and women
• **Methodology:**
  
  – Intermarriage premium or selection?
    
    · Chi-Square test and Independent samples t-test on employment and income btw to-be-intermarried vs. not to-be-intermarried single immigrants in 1997
      
      ➢ *Selection hypothesis*
    
    · Chi-Square test and Independent samples t-test on employment change and income growth (1997-2007) btw intermarried vs. intramarrried immigrants
      
      ➢ *Intermarriage premium hypothesis*
The probability of being employed and their job income are lower for immigrants than for natives
  - Exception: immigrants from higher IHDI countries
The same is true for immigrants married to immigrants versus natives
These findings are confirmed for men and women
  - Exception: intramarried women
Labour migrants are likely to perform better than other types of migrants
Other findings: male immigrants and naturalized ones are likely to perform better than females and non-naturalized migrants
• **Interruamrigation premium or selection?**

Chi-Square test for single to-be-intermarried versus to-be-intramarried immigrants’ employment (1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Future partner is foreign-born</th>
<th>Future partner is Swedish-born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not employed</td>
<td>15333 (58.4%)</td>
<td>5993 (32.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>10909 (41.6%)</td>
<td>12473 (67.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: \( \chi^2 = 2931.40 \) (p = 0.00), df = 1. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.*

Chi-Square test for single to-be-intermarried versus to-be-intramarried REFUGEE migrants’ employment (1997)

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Future partner is foreign-born</th>
<th>Future partner is Swedish-born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not employed</td>
<td>618 (53.6%)</td>
<td>7647 (70.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>534 (53.6%)</td>
<td>3218 (29.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: \( \chi^2 = 135.08 \) (p = 0.00), df = 1. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages.*
• Intermarriage premium or selection?

Independent samples t-test for single to-be-intermarried versus to-be-intramarrried immigrants’ income (1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual gross income (SEK)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future-partner is Swedish-born</td>
<td>188,715</td>
<td>990.838</td>
<td>-20.75</td>
<td>23378</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future-partner is Foreign-born</td>
<td>163,126</td>
<td>879.773</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Independent samples t-test for single to-be-intermarried versus to-be-intramarrried REFUGEE migrants’ income (1997)

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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future-partner is Swedish-born</td>
<td>138,086</td>
<td>753.43</td>
<td>-2.500</td>
<td>3748</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future-partner is Foreign-born</td>
<td>146,856</td>
<td>729.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Interrmarriage premium or selection?**

Chi-Square test for intermarried versus intramarried immigrants’ mobility in employment status (1997-2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Intramarried immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upward mobility</td>
<td>4382</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change: employed</td>
<td>11305</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change: out of employment</td>
<td>1611</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downward mobility</td>
<td>1168</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18466</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \( \chi^2 = 3623.19 \) (p = 0.00), df = 3

Chi-Square test for intermarried versus intramarried REFUGEE migrants’ mobility in employment status (1997-2007)

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upward mobility</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change: employed</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change: out of employment</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downward mobility</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1152</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \( \chi^2 = 216.42 \) (p = 0.00), df = 3.
• **Interracial premium or selection?**

**Independent samples t-test for intermarried versus intramarried immigrants’ income growth (1997-2007)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income growth 1997-2007 (SEK)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-3.72</td>
<td>19990.08</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intramarried immigrants</td>
<td>132,656</td>
<td>1526.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermarried immigrants</td>
<td>142,160</td>
<td>2092.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Independent samples t-test for intermarried versus intramarried REFUGEE migrants’ income growth (1997-2007)**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income growth 1997-2007 (SEK)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>3077</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intramarried immigrants</td>
<td>144,916</td>
<td>1410.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermarried immigrants</td>
<td>146,437</td>
<td>1419.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Intermarried immigrants more likely to be employed and earn more than the intramarried
• Even when they were single
  - Selection hypothesis supported
    • BUT REJECTED FOR REFUGEES
• Their employment status and income improved significantly after marriage relative to intramarried immigrants
  - Intermarriage premium hypothesis supported
    • ONLY EMPLOYMENT FOR REFUGEES
• Immigrants from less wealthier countries than Sweden not doing as well as natives
• Refugees the most disadvantaged group
  - Resettled refugees’ labour market outcomes lower than asylum refugees’ outcomes
    > Settlement policies?
• Self-selection and social capital among potential reasons behind these differences
• Our empirical study on intermarriage supports these hypotheses
Thank you!

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www.mah.se/mim