

Immigrants' Mobility:

A Longitudinal Study of Internal Migration Linking LSIC and IMDB Data

Abstract

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This study examines the internal migration behaviour of immigrants to Canada. Although the literature suggests hypermobility of immigrants in the short-run upon their arrival, the studies examining the long-term mobility of immigrants are very scanty. Understanding both short- and long-term mobility of immigrants is important as it helps to make population and labour market projection for the destination provinces and regions. To examine the internal migration of immigrants to Canada, scholars largely use the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) which covers a detail socio-economic characteristic of nearly 12,000 immigrants, who arrived in Canada between October 1, 2000, and September 2001. In the LSIC, the same group of immigrants were interviewed three times: six months, two years, and four years of their arrival in Canada. Any research based on the LSIC data could not examine immigrants' mobility pattern after four years of their arrival as the LSIC discontinued after 2005. Existing studies also use the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB). The advantage of IMDB is that it is available longitudinally for many years. However, it only covers immigrants' landing records and tax information. This study uses the linked LSIC-IMDB data to examine the short- and long-term retention rate (at their initial destination) and mobility of immigrants upon their arrival to Canada. Our preliminary investigation using the binary choice models suggest that although the mobility drops after the initial settlement period, it takes many years to stabilize the retention rate of immigrants. We observe that, in New Brunswick, it took 10 years to stabilize the retention rate for the immigrant cohort arrived in 2001. The rate also varies across provinces and immigration categories (e.g. economic, business, family). We also investigate which socio-economic factors affect the internal mobility of immigrants between Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Provinces and whether there are differences between factors affecting mobility in three different time frames (2001-2005, 2006-2010, and 2011-2015). Applying a Zero-Inflated Poisson regression, we observe that factors such as the region of Canada lived in, the category of immigrants, and the age group significantly affect the mobility pattern of immigrants. These factors have an effect both on the Poisson Count model and on the number of excess zeros. Our findings will help policymakers, especially in the smaller provinces to formulate policies for better integration of newcomers at their initial destination. This study is first of its kind considering the linked LSIC-IMDB dataset.

Biography:

Dr. Murshed Chowdhury is an Associate Professor of Economics at the University of New Brunswick (UNB), Fredericton. His research mainly focuses on internal and international migration, open economy macroeconomics, remittances, financial regulations, and public policy. He is currently working on several projects, funded by the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation, examining the retention rate and labour market performance of immigrants in New Brunswick. Moreover, using several uniquely linked administrative datasets, Dr. Chowdhury is examining how various provincial and federal training programs influence immigrants' integration into their initial destination and the economic performance of movers, stayers, and return migrants. He has published in various journals including, Empirical Economics, Canadian Public Policy, Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance, Journal of Economic Studies, and Review of Economics.

Samuel R. Cookson is currently pursuing undergraduate studies at the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton. He is the recipient of NSERC-USRA fellowship where he works on the longitudinal aspect of modelling related to the retention and integration of immigrants across Canadian provinces and regions.

Dr. Tariq Hasan is a Professor of Statistics at the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton. His research interests include mixed models for temporal, clustered and longitudinal count, binary and skewed data, mixed model for semi continuous data, zero inflated data, modelling for spatial and spatiotemporal data, and joint modelling. He has numerous publications in different outlets including the Journal of Royal Statistical Society, Journal of Applied Statistics, Biometrical Journal, Environmental and Ecological Statistics. Dr. Hasan is currently serving as the Director of Graduate Studies at the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at UNB.