

Union formation after migration: Influences on Moroccans' transition to marriage in Spain

Xiana Bueno (xbueno@ced.uab.es)

Albert Esteve (aesteve@ced.uab.es)

Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics

Abstract.-

We use data from the 2007 National Immigrant Survey to examine transitions to marriage among Moroccan-born in Spain. The analysis is restricted to immigrants arrived since 1980 that were at least 16 years old and were not in union at the time of arrival. Multilevel event history methods are used to ascertain the influence of individual and contextual factors on union formation. Separate models are built for men and women. We also distinguish between endogamous and exogamous marriages. Analyses show that the transitions to marriage among men are clearly shaped by age and years of residence. Compared to endogamous unions, however, exogamous unions occur after a longer duration. For women, years of residence, when significant, has the opposite effect. The hidden influence of imported wives that get married just after arrival may explain this discrepancy. Similar for men and women, university education increases the likelihood of marrying out. The influence of relatives and/or friends who migrated before the reference person on his/her migration decision has a positive effect on the transition to an endogamous marriage and a negative effect on exogamy. Variance among regions is not significant except for the analysis of men's exogamy. To account for regional differences, we have considered two contextual variables: group size and share of men working in agriculture. The region's share of men working in agriculture accounts for part of the regional variation but does not suffice to explain it all. Moroccans living in provinces with higher proportion of agricultural workers have lower likelihood of marrying out of their group.

Motivation.-

Marriage patterns among first generation international migrants are barely investigated. In countries with long immigratory tradition, first generation immigrants are far from recent times. Thus, current research focuses on second or later generations. In addition to that, international migrants have different family status at the time of arrival. This clearly challenges the analysis if no information about it is provided in the available statistical data sources. Any attempt to study union formation patterns of international migrants should distinguish between those who enter

in union before or after migration. The implications for assimilation or integration of migrants cannot be properly established if the family status at arrival and age of arrival are not taken into account. Studies based on census data have often used 'age of arrival' to limit the sample of individuals if only married individuals after migration were of interest. However, this clearly restricts the number of individuals who eventually got married in the country of destination.

In this paper we use data from the National Immigrant Survey to investigate marriage formation patterns of Moroccan immigrants in Spain that were not in union at the time of arrival. Spain is a new country of immigration that in recent years has experienced an extraordinary increase of foreign-born population. Until 2008, Moroccans were the largest group in Spain and still the oldest one. Immigration from Morocco spread quickly since the early 80s and has grown at different speed since nowadays. Our research hypotheses (not developed here) are drawn from three main backgrounds: i) migration and the life-course, ii) assimilation and intermarriage studies; iii) previous findings on Moroccan marriage patterns in other European countries (i.e. Belgium and the Netherlands).

Data and methodology.-

The National Immigrant Survey published by the National Statistics Institute (henceforth INE) was carried out between November 2006 and February 2007. The survey contains retrospective information based on a sample of 15,465 people born abroad and aged 16 years or over at the time of the survey and who had been resident in Spain for at least one year or, that not being the case, intended to reside in the country for at least one year. Those born abroad but who had Spanish nationality from birth and arrived in Spain before they were two years old were excluded from the sample population of the survey (Reher, Requena 2009). The survey provides information on socioeconomic characteristics, migration experience, conditions in the origin country, arrival in Spain, labour and residence experience, the relationship with their country of birth, social participation and legal documentation status. In addition we have information on the other members of the household where the interviewee lives. This information is limited to their country and date of birth, sex, year of arrival in Spain, nationality or nationalities, and whether they have Spanish nationality and, if so, the year this was obtained. When the partner does not live with the interviewee, the latter provides information about his/her spouse (only about spouses, not partners), which is the same as that given about the members of the interviewee's household as well as the place of residence of the spouse at the time of the survey.

The analysis is restricted to Moroccan immigrants arrived since 1980 that were at least 16 years old and were not in union at the time of arrival (481 men and 184 women). Table 1 provides information on the sample characteristics and the variables included in the models. We use multilevel event history regression to model the transition to marriage. Discret-hazard models

are estimated using logistic regression analysis of person years. We compute two separate models: one for endogamous marriages and the other for exogamous marriages. Men and women are estimated separately. Independent variables belong to three different levels: person-year (age, years since migration), individual (education, education completed in Spain, citizenship, relative's influence on migration decision), and region (group size and share of Moroccan men employed in agriculture).

Summary of findings.-

Analyses show that the transitions to marriage among men are clearly shaped by age and years of residence. Compared to endogamous unions, however, exogamous unions occur after a longer duration. For women, years of residence, when significant, has the opposite effect. The hidden influence of imported wives that get married just after arrival may explain this discrepancy. Similar for men and women, university education increases the likelihood of marrying out. The influence of relatives and/or friends who migrated before the reference person on his/her migration decision has a positive effect on the transition to an endogamous marriage and a negative effect on exogamy. Variance among regions is not significant except for the analysis of men's exogamy. To account for regional differences, we have considered two contextual variables: group size and share of men working in agriculture. The region's share of men working in agriculture accounts for part of the regional variation but does not suffice to explain it all. Moroccans living in provinces with higher proportion of agricultural workers have lower likelihood of marrying out of their group.

References

- ALBA, R. D.; NEE, V. (1997) "Rethinking Assimilation Theory for a New Era of Immigration". *International Migration Review*. 31(4): pp. 826-874.
- CORTINA, C. y ESTEVE, A. (2009): "Pathways to family formation of international migrants". XXVI IUSSP International Population Conference, Marrakech.
- ESTEVE, A. y JIMÉNEZ, E. (in press): "La formación de la pareja entre los/las marroquíes en España". *Migraciones*.
- KALMIJN, M. (1998). "Intermarriage and Homogamy: Causes, Patterns, Trends". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24: 395-421.
- LIEVENS, J. (1999) "Family-Forming Migration from Turkey and Morocco to Belgium: The Demand of Marriage Partners from the countries of origin". *International Migration Review*. 33(3): p. 717.
- PORTES, A.; ZHOU, M., (1993) "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants among Post-1965 Immigrant Youth". *Annals of the American Academy of Political Sciences*. 53: 75-98.
- QIAN, Z.; LICHTER, D. T. (2001) "Measuring Marital Assimilation: Intermarriage among Natives and Immigrants". *Social Science Research*. 30: 289-312.

Table 1: Mean of individual and contextual variables for single Moroccan migrants since 1980 who got married after migration to Spain.

	Men	Women
	%	%
DEPENDENT VARIABLE		
<i>Conyugal Status</i>		
Still single	0,56	0,51
Married edogamous	0,33	0,35
Married exogamous	0,11	0,14
INDENDENT VARIABLES		
Contextual variables		
<i>Size</i>	10,08	10,09
<i>Sex ratio</i>	0,62	0,50
<i>% agriculture</i>	0,25	0,18
Individual variables		
<i>Age</i>	35,65	32,15
<i>Years since immigration</i>		
0-2 years	0,19	0,36
3-6 years	0,53	0,33
more than 7	0,28	0,32
<i>Period of arrival</i>		
1980s	0,10	0,10
1990s	0,32	0,40
2000s	0,57	0,50
<i>Education</i>		
Less than primary	0,27	0,39
Primary	0,32	0,34
Secondary	0,30	0,22
University	0,11	0,05
<i>Education completed in Spain</i>	0,08	0,05
<i>Spanish citizenship</i>	0,03	0,07
<i>Influence on migration decision</i>	0,64	0,62
<hr/>		
N	481	184
N (person/year)	2719	1179

Source: National Immigrant Survey, 2007.