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WOMEN AND THE ECONOMICS OF FAMILY MIGRATION

Steven H. Sandell*

Woman is a greater migrant than man. This may surprise those who associate women with domestic life, but the figures of the census clearly prove it.

NOTWITHSTANDING this early statement by Ravenstein (1885, p. 196), the separate study of geographic mobility among women has been virtually ignored by students of migration.¹ The reason is obvious: women are assumed to migrate because their husbands do.²

While it is undoubtedly true that most migration involves family units (the migration of husband and wife occurring jointly), the possibility that the wife's welfare is considered in the family's decision to migrate should not be ruled out. It is at least desirable to test the hypothesis that the wife's employment is considered in the migration decision and to examine the effect of that decision on women's earnings.

In this paper an economic model is developed to explain the family's decision to migrate and the effect of migration on the labor market earnings of men and women. It is

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¹Lansing and Mueller (1967), Gallaway (1969), and de Beauvoir (1970) subscribe to the hypothesis of tied movement of women. Although Miller (1966), Masnik (1968), and Long (1974) have analyzed migration rates of men according to their marital status and the employment status of their wives, only relatively simple tabular analyses and no explicit modeling is reported. Becker (1974, p. 1077), however, writing about social interaction, illustrates a more general argument about decision making of the head of household with the following statement: "For example, he would not move to another city if his spouse's or children's income would be decreased by more than his own income would be increased."

²For nonmarried women who move, application of male migration models is presumably appropriate.

based on the tenet that family utility, defined operationally as the husband's and wife's labor market earnings and leisure, is maximized. The model suggests that the wife's labor market involvement is a significant consideration in a (husband-wife) family's decision to migrate.

The data from the National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) are well suited for empirical testing of this model.³ The surveys provide the opportunity to examine the change in labor market earnings of families and individuals over a five-year period. Availability of data on migratory status as well as on other personal characteristics of women and their families permits the direct testing of the model.

In section I a family utility maximization model is used to derive implications with regard to the probability of migration by the family and the effect of migration on individual and family earnings. These implications are tested in section II using multiple regression analysis and the NLS data for white women who were 35 to 49 years of age in 1972. The implications of the empirical estimates for the economic welfare of women and for interpreting the observed earnings distribution are discussed in section III.

I. A Theory of Family Migration

The Model

In the two-location, work-leisure choice model developed in this section, nonpecuniary benefits from working or living in either location are ignored. The family attempts to maximize its utility (equation (1)), which depends on total family income, the wife's leisure, and the husband's leisure.

The first three constraints (equations (2a) and (2b) and the first budget constraint, equation (3)) are similar to those established in the conventional labor supply literature.⁴ The

³A description of these data can be found in Shea, Spitz, and Zeller (1970).

⁴Neither nonlabor income, the distinction between leisure and nonmarket work, age, nor education is considered in the theoretical model in order to concentrate on the effect of the wife's employment on the migration decision.

present model differs from the standard labor supply model in that the family is allowed to migrate, thereby changing its budget constraint. The family could choose a budget constraint with the set of wage rates available to it at the new place of residence (equation (4)). If the family does migrate, moving costs are subtracted from total family income. Hence, the family chooses a budget constraint as well as a point on it in order to maximize its utility.

$$U = U(L_w, L_h, Y_f) \quad (1)$$

$$D_w + L_w = \bar{T}_w \quad (2a)$$

$$D_h + L_h = \bar{T}_h \quad (2b)$$

$$Y_f = Y_w + Y_h = W_w D_w + W_h D_h \quad (3)$$

$$Y'_f = Y'_w + Y'_h - M = W'_w D'_w + W'_h D'_h - M \quad (4)$$

where

U = family utility

L_w = the wife's leisure (including nonmarket work)

L_h = the husband's leisure

Y_f = total family (labor market) earnings

D_w = the wife's labor supply

D_h = the husband's labor supply

\bar{T}_w = the wife's total available time (a constant)

\bar{T}_h = the husband's total available time (a constant)

Y_w = the wife's (labor market) earnings

Y_h = the husband's (labor market) earnings

W_w = the wife's wage rate

W_h = the husband's wage rate

M = moving costs

$Y'_f, Y'_w, Y'_h, D'_w, D'_h, W'_w, W'_h$ are the respective variables after migration has taken place.

The choice of residence depends not only on the wage rates obtainable by the husband and wife but also on their tastes for market work. A high potential wage for the wife in a new location would *not* provide an incentive for the family to migrate if the wife would not choose to work at that wage. Hence, for families where the wife would not work at any conceivable wage, the decision to migrate becomes a function of the husband's labor market opportunities only. If the wife is willing to work at certain wage rates (the husband's wage is also a determinant of the number of hours the wife offers to the labor market), her labor market

opportunities become a consideration in the family's location choice. The greater utility achieved in the new location for the migrant family can be associated with a change in its labor supply.

Within a family context, the reduction in the earnings of a spouse is a cost of migration. Since this reduction is potentially quite large for the husband, it often does not pay for the wife to search for a job in a distant area until her husband has obtained some satisfactory employment there. Given the low market wage opportunities for many married women, their husband's employment precludes their initiation of job search outside of the area of current residence.⁵ Likewise, potential reduction in the wife's earnings is considered by the husband to be a cost of a geographical job change on his part and will constrain both his search behavior and actual family migration. Hence, we would expect to observe, *ceteris paribus*, less geographic movement among families where husband and wife are working and expect to remain in the labor market than among other families.⁶

As a consequence of migration, the family faces a new set of temporary and permanent market prices upon which it bases its behavior. Since there are costs to job switching, and job search often requires flexible hours, newly migrant women might refuse low paying jobs that would be immediately available in order to search the new labor market extensively. In addition, the increased value the family places on the wife's time in setting up the new household might initially keep her out of the labor force. Therefore, we would expect to observe higher unemployment rates and lower labor force participation among new migrants than among other married women.

The model can be extended to consider explicitly the welfare of children and other family members. Family migration imposes a cost on children. Their schooling might be interrupted and their friendships terminated. In order to minimize these costs, inter-city

⁵ Following Stigler (1962), the optimal amount of job search for husbands exceeds that for wives because the expected labor force participation of married women is less than that of married men.

⁶ It is possible that the wife will reduce her hours of work in the new location due to the increased earnings of her husband or her own reduced wage offer.

migration is likely to be timed to occur during the summer months when school is not in session. Families with school aged children are less likely to move than otherwise similar families.

Family Income and the Migration Decision

In this section a model of the migration decision is presented based on the assumption that the family's objective is to maximize total family income. Let the present value of the family's earnings stream be equal to the sum of the present value of the husband's labor market earnings plus the present value of the wife's labor market earnings.

$$\sum_{t=1}^{t=R} Y_{ft}(1+i)^{-t} = \sum_{t=1}^{t=R_w} Y_{wt}(1+i)^{-t} + \sum_{t=1}^{t=R_h} Y_{ht}(1+i)^{-t} \quad (5a)$$

or

$$F = W + H \quad (5b)$$

where

Y_{ft} = family's earnings in year t
(without migration)

Y_{wt} (Y_{ht}) = the wife's (husband's)
earnings in year t

i = rate of discount

R = year of retirement; R_w ,
(R_h) is the year of retire-
ment for the wife (hus-
band)

F, W, H = the present value of fam-
ily, the wife's and the
husband's lifetime earn-
ings (without migration)

M = the present value of the
moving cost

$Y'_{ft}, Y'_{wt}, Y'_{ht}$ = earnings after migration

$Y', W',$ and H' = the present value of
earnings after migration.

If a family acts rationally and decides to move, it must expect the present value of the returns to migration to exceed the cost of migration. Excluding nonpecuniary costs and returns, this condition can be stated as

$$F' - M > F. \quad (6)$$

If moving costs are positive and the family moves, (6) implies

$$H' + W' > H + W \quad (7a)$$

if both husband and wife are willing to work,

$$H' > H \quad (7b)$$

if only the husband is in the labor market, or

$$W' > W \quad (7c)$$

for the household with only the wife in the labor market.⁷

That is, the expected earnings stream after migration must be greater than the expected earnings without migration. For the household with two persons willing to work it is not possible to say anything about the income stream of either partner *separately* without additional information. Maximization of family earnings implies that the sum of the two persons' income streams must increase. This can happen if both increase *or* if the increase in the income stream of one partner is greater than the reduction of the income stream of the other partner (plus the cost of moving). The motivation for a family's migration could be due solely to improvement of the husband's earnings if the negative effect on the wife's earnings is offset by the husband's improve-
ment.

The model immediately yields a testable hypothesis: migrant families expect their total labor market earnings stream after migration to be greater than their expected earnings would have been without migration. If expectations are met (in the aggregate) and earnings in a single year can serve as a proxy for the earnings stream, the hypothesis can be tested using the NLS data. When relevant personal and labor market characteristics are controlled, it is hypothesized that the increase in labor market earnings of migrant families (between a year before and after migration) should be

⁷If the variance of expected family earnings rises with the number of family workers and if people are risk averters, then the labor force participation of the wife will reduce the family's propensity to migrate. The wife might receive a "rent" at her present job because of intense job search if the husband considers it unlikely to migrate (say, for physicians in private practice) or if her labor force participation is the result of her extraordinary job opportunity. These factors, pointed out by an anonymous referee, work in the direction of reducing the probability of migration of families with working wives.

greater than the increase for nonmigrant families.⁸ For married women the relevant earnings figure is the sum of their own plus their husbands' labor market earnings, while for single women only their personal earnings are relevant.

II. Empirical Results

In this section, hypotheses developed from the model of family migration are subjected to empirical tests. These involve two aspects of migration: the determinants of migration and the effect of the geographic movement on family and individual earnings.

The Likelihood of Migration

The dependent variable used in the regression analyses is the logit constructed from a dummy variable with the value "1" if the family is migratory and the value "0" otherwise (Theil, 1971, pp. 632–633). Solving the estimated logit equation we can determine the probability of migration for a family with the observed characteristics. A family is considered to have migrated if it reports its county or SMSA of residence to be different in at least one survey year (1968, 1969, 1971, 1972) than it was in 1967.⁹

The probability of a family's moving depends on labor-market-related personal characteristics of each labor force participant. If migration is viewed as an investment, it is clear that the incentive to move should decrease with age since the length of time for the person to reap benefits from moving decreases and the psychic costs of moving probably increase with age. Inasmuch as the geographic scope of the labor market is likely to be larger for the more highly educated, migration is expected to be positively related to education.¹⁰ In addition,

⁸ Factors other than migration (e.g., level of education and age) affect the change in a person's earnings. Theoretical explanations of the effects of these variables can be found in Becker (1964).

⁹ Approximately 11% (248) of the families of white, married women (same spouse present all survey years) are considered to be migrants under this definition. Between 1968 and 1971 (the only period in which data on distance moved are available), 68% of the migrants moved more than 100 miles, and 81% moved more than 50 miles. In 1971 78% of the 1967–1971 migrants were living in the same Census division as they did in 1967.

¹⁰ Bowles (1970) and Schwartz (1968) explain the

TABLE 1.—LOGIT EQUATIONS OF THE LIKELIHOOD OF FAMILY MIGRATION 1967–1972

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	-1.99 (-23.98) ^a	-1.80 (-2.93) ^a	-1.97 (-26.60) ^a	-1.83 (-3.01) ^a
Employed wife, 1967 (dummy)	-0.356 (-2.51) ^a	-0.266 (-1.84) ^b		
Husband's age, 1967		-0.044 (-3.53) ^a		-0.040 (-3.26) ^a
Husband's education, 1967		0.134 (5.90) ^a		0.132 (5.85) ^a
Children aged 6–18 (dummy)		-0.188 (-1.04)		-0.235 (-1.30) ^c
Wife's job tenure, 1967			-0.148 (-3.20) ^a	-0.135 (-2.69) ^a
Wife's tenure squared			0.004 (1.55) ^c	0.004 (1.47) ^c
Pseudo R ^{2d} Likelihood ratio test	.006 6.50	.057 66.67	.017 19.47	.066 77.09

Universe: 2,322 white married women, spouse present.

Note: *t*-statistics are in parentheses. The author will send summary statistics on request.

^a Significant at $\alpha < .01$.

^b Significant at $\alpha < .05$.

^c Significant at $\alpha < .10$.

^d Equal $[1 - \exp\{Z(L_w - L_r)/T\}] / [1 - \exp\{Z(L_w - L_m)/T\}]$. L_w is the maximum of the log likelihood function using a constant; L_r is the maximum using all variables; L_m is the maximum possible.

the presence of school aged children is expected to inhibit family migration.

For our purposes, however, the above variables may be considered control variables; our chief interest lies in examining the effect of the wife's labor force commitment on the migration decision. Because it has been shown that a family is probably less likely to improve its economic position by migration if two persons rather than one are working, the propensity of the family to move is expected to be inversely related to the labor force commitment of the wife. Thus, coefficients of the dummy variable for the 1967 employment status and tenure with the 1967 employer are crucial.

The regression results are presented in table 1. The regression coefficients exhibit the expected signs. The significant (at the 1% level, one-tail test) negative signs of the regression coefficients for labor force commitment

positive correlation between migration and education by hypothesizing that the more highly educated have greater access to job market information in distant regions.

variables when used separately in the equations confirm our hypothesis. That is, the families of women who work are less likely to move than are families of other married women, and the likelihood of migration decreases the longer they have worked for their 1967 employer.

When the only independent variable in the regression equation is employment status, its regression coefficient can be interpreted as the gross effect of working on the natural logarithm of the odds in favor of family migration. The respective net effects of employment status and tenure on family migration are the coefficients of these variables in those equations where the husband's age and education are also included as independent variables. The observed positive differential between the gross and net effect of the wife's labor force participation on migration is an indication of the correlation of some of the other independent variables with both the dependent variable (migration) and the employment status of the wife. In particular, greater husbands' educational attainment is associated with lower wives' labor force participation and a higher probability of family mobility.

We evaluate the logit of equation (4) for a (white) family with the husband's mean education (11.8 years) and husband's mean age (40.4 years) and find that the likelihood of family migration between 1967 and 1972 was 13.2% if there were no children in the

household and the wife did not work in 1967. The likelihood was only 4.4% if there were school aged children present and the wife's 1967 job tenure was 10 years. Not only does family migration vary inversely with the wife's employment status, but this inverse relationship is stronger the longer she has worked at her job (peaking at 17 years).

The Effect of Migration on Earnings of Husband-Wife Families

The coefficient of the dummy variable representing migration status in a regression equation where the dependent variable is change in wife's, husband's or family's (husband plus wife) labor market earnings represents the effect of migration on earnings. By controlling for personal characteristics (i.e., age and education) and base year income it is possible to isolate the net effect of migration on earnings.¹¹ Table 2 shows the regression results when change in the husband's earnings and change in the wife's earnings between 1966 and 1971 are the dependent variables. Table 3 shows the effect of migration on family earnings.

The control variables in the regression equation are worthy of some discussion. The negative coefficient for the husband's age

¹¹The estimates of the effect of migration on earnings are similar when base year earnings are not included as an independent variable.

TABLE 2.—REGRESSIONS OF CHANGE IN HUSBAND'S AND WIFE'S EARNINGS 1966–1971, BY YEAR, FREQUENCY, OR REASON FOR MIGRATION

Independent Variables	1967–1971 Migrants				Multiple Migrants		Intrafirm Transfers	
	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Constant	2891 (3.35) ^a	-968 (-1.42) ^c	2966 (3.43) ^a	-959 (-1.41) ^c	2965 (3.44) ^a	-1029 (-1.51) ^c	2922 (3.39) ^a	-1022 (-1.50) ^c
Education	154 (4.18) ^a	156 (5.52) ^a	153 (4.16) ^a	154 (5.45) ^a	156 (4.28) ^a	155 (5.48) ^a	156 (4.28) ^a	154 (5.46) ^a
Age, 1967	-58.7 (-3.30) ^a	10.3 (0.68)	-60.1 (-3.37) ^a	10.4 (0.68)	-60.1 (-3.38) ^a	11.9 (0.78)	-58.4 (-3.28) ^a	11.4 (0.75)
Earnings, 1966	0.087 (2.64) ^a	-0.099 (-2.73) ^a	0.087 (2.64) ^a	-0.099 (-2.76) ^a	0.086 (2.62) ^a	-0.100 (-2.77) ^a	0.082 (2.48) ^a	-0.098 (-2.71) ^a
Migration dummy, 1967–1971	832 (2.32) ^a	-372 (-1.58) ^c			3229 (2.99) ^a	-1289 (-1.81) ^b	1869 (2.65) ^a	-120 (-0.26)
Migration dummy, 1967–1969			980 (2.24) ^b	246 (0.86)				
Migration dummy, 1969–1971			-29 (-0.05)	-947 (-2.67) ^a				
\bar{R}^2	.053	.028	.052	.031	.056	.028	.055	.026
S.E.E.	3398	2246	3400	2242	3393	2245	3396	2248
F-ratio	17.7	9.4	14.1	8.7	18.7	9.6	18.1	8.8

Universe: 1,186 white married women, spouse present.

^{a,b,c}See table 1 for significance levels.

TABLE 3.—REGRESSIONS OF CHANGE IN FAMILY EARNINGS 1966-1971, BY YEAR, FREQUENCY, OR REASON FOR MIGRATION

Independent Variables	1967-1971 Migrants		Multiple Migrants		Intrafirm Migrants	
	Husband's Variables	Wife's Variables	Husband's Variables	Wife's Variables	Husband's Variables	Wife's Variables
Constant	3661 (3.72) ^a	1467 (1.26)	3702 (3.76) ^a	1572 (1.35) ^c	3675 (3.74) ^a	1461 (1.26)
Education	253 (6.12) ^a	413 (7.97) ^a	254 (6.17) ^a	415 (8.02) ^a	250 (6.09) ^a	414 (8.01) ^a
Age, 1967	-58.5 (-2.85) ^a	-52.1 (-1.98) ^b	-59.2 (-2.89) ^a	-54.8 (-2.09) ^b	-57.2 (-2.79) ^a	-50.6 (-1.93) ^b
Family earnings, 1966	-0.013 (-0.38)	-0.015 (-0.43)	-0.012 (-0.35)	-0.014 (-0.43)	-0.017 (-0.48)	-0.020 (-0.59)
Migration dummy, 1967-1971	424 (1.04)	669 (1.66) ^b	1881 (1.52) ^c	2551 (2.09) ^b	1835 (2.28) ^b	2262 (2.84) ^a
Migration dummy, 1967-1969	1220 (2.45) ^a	1409 (2.87) ^a				
Migration dummy, 1969-1971	-967 (-1.58) ^c	-775 (-1.27)				
R ²	.048	.063	.049	.065	.052	.067
S.E.E.	3881	3851	3879	3848	3875	3842
F-ratio	16.0	21.0	16.4	21.4	17.1	22.4

Note: See table 2 for universe.
^{a,b,c} See table 1 for significance levels.

(experience) and the positive coefficient for the variable reflecting the number of years of education are consistent with the theory of human capital. Since the dependent variable is the change in earnings, we are actually examining an experience/earnings profile. Theory suggests that investment in on-the-job training is positively associated with education and negatively associated with age; therefore, it is expected that younger individuals and more educated individuals will exhibit, *ceteris paribus*, faster earnings growth than their older and/or less educated counterparts. Thus, our finding, which employs the longitudinal panel, is consistent with the cross-sectional results of other researchers.¹²

Tables 2 and 3 show the net effect of migration between 1966 and 1971 on the separate and combined labor market earnings of the husband and wife. The earnings of 1967-1971 migrant husbands increased more than those of nonmigrant husbands, and family earnings of migrants increased more than those of nonmigrant families for our measures of migration. However, the earnings of nonmigrant wives went up faster than those of migrant wives.¹³ Although migration seems to lead to an improvement in the earnings of the family unit, which implies that the move is economically rational, the earnings of the wife do not increase as a result of the move.

Separating 1967-1969 migrants from 1969-1971 migrants and regressing change in earnings on both dummy variables (as well as the control variables) sheds additional light on the effect of migration on earnings. Migrant wives living in a new geographic area less than two years experienced \$950 less growth in annual earnings than nonmobile wives, while the difference between the 1966 to 1971

¹² As we have seen in the likelihood of migration equations, the probability of migration is positively associated with education and negatively associated with age. Hence, the omission of age and education from the change in earnings equation would lead to an overstatement of the returns to migration.

¹³ Although the difference between the earnings of migrant and nonmigrant wives barely reaches statistical significance, it is clear that the change in the earnings position of mobile wives is significantly different than that of mobile husbands. The difference between the change in the earnings of mobile spouses is about three times the standard error of the husband's mobility coefficient and five times the standard error of the wife's mobility coefficient.

TABLE 4.—LEAST SQUARES REGRESSIONS OF CHANGE IN WIFE'S WEEKS WORKED 1966–1971, BY YEAR, FREQUENCY, OR REASON FOR MIGRATION

Independent Variable	1967–1971 Migrants		Multiple Migrants	Intrafirm Transfers (1968–1971)
Constant	15.11 (19.09) ^a	14.87 (18.82) ^a	14.66 (19.01) ^a	14.71 (19.00) ^a
Weeks worked, 1966	-0.47 (-17.94) ^a	-0.47 (-17.93) ^a	-0.47 (-17.83) ^a	-0.47 (-17.84) ^a
Migration dummy, 1967–1971	-5.66 (-2.64) ^a		-7.26 (-1.11)	-5.35 (-1.26)
Migration dummy, 1967–1969		2.02 (0.77)		
Migration dummy, 1969–1971		-10.24 (-3.15) ^a		
\bar{R}^2	.21	.22	.21	.21
S.E.E.	20.53	20.51	28.58	28.58
F-ratio	162.7	109.7	159.1	159.3

Note: See table 2 for universe.

^aSee table 1 for significance level.

earnings growth wives who moved before the 1969 survey was not statistically different from that of nonmigrant wives. Husbands who moved between 1967 and 1969 experienced earnings growth of \$980 per year more than nonmigrant men, while the earnings growth of 1969–1971 migrant husbands was not statistically different from that of nonmovers. It is apparent that while migrant wives only recoup their relative earnings position after two years, their husbands reap significant improvements in earnings in the same time period.

To provide some insight into the source of the earnings loss to migrant wives, we regressed the change in the number of weeks worked on the migration dummy variables and the number of weeks worked in 1966 (table 4). The statistically significant negative coefficients for the migration dummies in these equations indicate that the slower growth in the earnings of migrant wives as compared to nonmobile women is due to reduced market work. Multiplying the wives' average 1966 weekly earnings (\$167) by the decline in weeks worked following migration (5.7), we can explain the apparent decline in wives' earnings shown in table 2.

An examination of the change in weeks worked for 1967–1969 compared to 1969–1971 migrants shows that the difference in weeks worked between migrants and nonmigrants narrows with the passing of time. This implies that the initial reduced work effort represents a cost of migration for the wife rather than a change in taste for work by migrants. It seems to be optimal from the point of view of the

family for the migrant wife to forgo market work in order to set up the new household as well as search for a desirable job. After two years in their new residence the labor supply of migrant wives is not significantly different from that of nonmigrant wives.

The regression results (see tables 2 and 3) show that for families that moved more than once between 1967 and 1971 (multiple migrants) and for those families that moved because the husband received an intrafirm transfer between 1968 and 1971, labor market earnings grew substantially faster than the earnings of other migrant families. The reason for the above average gain can be traced to the improvement in the earnings of the husbands since the wives in these groups fared slightly worse than the wives of all other migrants.

Marital Status and the Effect of Migration on Women's Earnings and Labor Supply

A clear implication of the model is that for single women (all one-person families) migration will occur only if the move is expected to lead to an increase in utility. Since this condition does not necessarily hold for married women (or any individual members of multi-person households), we would expect to observe, on average, a greater increase in the personal welfare due to migration for single women compared to married women. While own earnings may not be a good proxy for welfare of all married women, change in earnings may be regarded as a first approximation change in welfare of those women who desire to work full time. Hence, changes in

earnings and weeks worked of migratory women who worked more than 1,400 hours in 1966 have been analyzed.

To examine the differential effect of migration on the labor market earnings and labor supply of married versus single women, regression analyses were performed using a sample containing both married (spouse present) and never married women. Although we found that single migrants fared much better than married migrants in terms of changes in earnings partly due to their greater number of weeks worked after migration, there were only 10 single women in the sample who migrated between 1967 and 1971. As a consequence, the empirical support for the model was not statistically significant and is not reported here.

III. Conclusions

The empirical results are consistent with the theory. On the one hand, the labor market orientation of the wife seems to be taken into consideration in the decision of a family to migrate. On the other hand, the migration of the family increases the earnings of the husband but does not increase the labor market earnings of the wife. In contrast, the earnings of never married women increased after moving. Since family earnings have been shown to increase as a result of migration, the decision to migrate is rational from the viewpoint of the family.

It seems that the contribution of the wife to family income is considered, but the positive effect of migration on husband's earnings often outweighs the (initial) negative effect of migration on the wife's weeks worked and, consequently, her earnings. This is not to say that migration is involuntary for them in the usual sense, but to emphasize that what is beneficial to the welfare of the family (and the wife as a family member and consumer of family income) is nevertheless consistent with lower labor market earnings of the wife. The interruption of women's careers is often an effect of migration and the maximization of the utility of the family unit. If the participation of women in the labor force continues to increase, this may have a limiting effect on the geographic mobility of the male labor force. To the extent that female employment becomes less casual and women develop greater at-

tachment to their jobs (i.e., there is more firm-specific training and concomitant earnings premiums), this effect could be intensified.

This study documents the effects of migration on the earnings of married women. We have uncovered no evidence that the labor market earnings of the husband are a more important consideration than those of the wife. Our data only tell us that, given the jobs held by men and those held by women, the earnings improvement for men resulting from geographic movement is large enough to offset their wives' losses in market earnings. Furthermore, the wives' losses seem to be only temporary, a consequence of reduced market work in the period immediately following the move to allow for job search and household establishment.

Finally, it seems that we have shown an additional reason for differences in the earnings of men and women. Family decision making often restricts the wife's choice of job and reduces her continuity of employment. An employer's awareness of the possibility of her leaving her current residence and therefore her current job, in spite of pay premiums which would make this job the best available to her, will be likely to lower his investment in her human capital. Even if, on average, the tenure of males in particular firms is no greater than that of females, the lack of influence of differential salary payments on the behavior of some married women employees might rationally lead employers to treat male and female employees differently. On the other hand, if the woman's geographical mobility is restricted by the permanence of her husband's job, the employer is able to discriminate and pay her lower wages than she could be receiving at an alternative job (in a different geographic area).

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