

Economic Recession, Anti-Immigrant Climate, and Hispanic Immigrant Mobility

in New and Established Destinations

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Introduction

The economic boom of the 1990s and early 2000s coincided with two salient population trends affecting the Hispanic population. The first was the rapid growth of the foreign-born which doubled between 1990 and 2000 and reached 18 million or 6 percent of the U.S. population in 2007. The second was the dramatic dispersion of the Hispanic immigrant population into new destination areas that emerged across the Southeast and Midwest in particular, altering long-established patterns of Hispanic concentration in a handful of Southwestern states. These new destinations include cities which had prior or little experience with immigrants as well as rural areas. Prior studies have documented the close connection between emerging areas of destination and labor market changes, especially growth in the construction and meat processing industries. These very labor market processes have been significantly affected by the current economic recession. Specifically, the collapse of the housing bubble has significantly deteriorated employment opportunities in the construction industry with unclear consequences for the mobility and settlement patterns of the foreign born Hispanic population.

Accordingly, this paper investigates and compares patterns of growth and mobility of Hispanic immigrant destinations before and after the recession. A main objective of the analysis is to understand whether the economic recession has altered the relative attraction of new and established areas of destination and what its implications are for the arrival, mobility, and return of the foreign-born Hispanic population. In addition, we investigate the extent to which these changes are connected with the growing anti-immigrant climate that in some cases corresponds with deteriorating employment opportunity. Finally, we explore linkages between migration responses of the foreign-born population and ethnic community size. Effects of the recession and the anti-immigrant climate may be ameliorated depending on the extent to which resources emanating from ethnic communities alter mobility responses of the foreign-born population between new and established areas of destination.

Data and Analytical Strategy:

Data for the analysis come from the American Community Survey from 2006, 2007, and 2008. We concentrate on the behavior of foreign-born Latino men between the ages of 18-45 to capture prime working and mobility years. The analysis will be conducted at two geographic units of analysis: the State and the Metropolitan area. Analysis of mobility patterns across metropolitan areas will also consider rural Public Use Microsample Areas (PUMAs).

We explore several dependent variables. The first is the change in foreign-born Hispanic male population between 2006-2007 and 2007-2008. A preliminary analysis of these results is presented below. One of our main objectives is to identify changes in growth and decline before and after the

recession as well as particular areas where the foreign born population is growing or declining. Among these areas we distinguish between established and new destinations, and in our models, we will control for employment structure, climate towards immigrants, and ethnic community size.

The second group of dependent variables includes in, out, and net migration rates. Using ACS data on place of residence in the prior year, we assess the number of in-migrants, out-migrants, and net migrants at the State and Metropolitan level. Using the population equation we estimate the number of foreign-born Hispanics that have migrated within the U.S. and those that have migrated abroad. We also correlate this information with employment structure, immigrant climate, and ethnic community size.

Among three critical Independent variables considered, the first measures industrial sector labor market composition and change during the period. The second measures ethnic community size using the Hispanic proportion of the local population. The third measures immigrant climate using indicators of local immigration law enforcement such as participation in the Secure Community Program (SCP) which encourages information sharing between local and state law enforcement agencies and the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration Control and Enforcement (ICE) agency. The SCP is generally regarded as a measure of negative immigrant climate since it tends to be enforced in areas where undocumented immigrants are more directly persecuted. Two dimensions, program availability and year of incorporation, are available at the county level and will be incorporated into our analysis.

We will estimate regression models at the state and metropolitan level for the dependent variables outlined. Our primary objective is to distinguish the unique effect of changing economic conditions, negative immigrant climate, and size of the ethnic community. We will also elaborate on the extent of their overlap and association and their implications for foreign-born Hispanics.

Background: New and Established Destinations

Prior studies have found that foreign-born Hispanic population dispersion was driven in part by the rapid expansion of particular industries, especially construction in urban areas and meat processing in rural counties. Considerable scholarly attention to new immigrant destinations implies that such places, while experiencing population flux, have established themselves as permanent features in the American demographic landscape. Recent migration trends, however, suggest a reassessment may be useful. In the last several years, the economic recession stemming largely from the nation-wide housing market collapse, and growing anti-immigrant sentiment as formalized in local and state ordinances intended to reduce unauthorized immigration, have measurably stymied what appeared to be an inexorable expansion and dispersion of immigrant population geography. It remains unclear how changing period conditions, including the recession, has affected the settlement options of foreign born Hispanics. Despite considerable ambiguity on how rapidly growing immigrant populations affect local communities unaccustomed to recent immigration, the same structural forces attracting foreign-born Hispanics to new destinations are very likely to have been affected by the recession. This study addresses the extent to which new destination areas continue to constitute new settlement areas for Hispanic immigrants, and evaluate their growth patterns to those of more established immigrant destinations.

A distinguishing feature of new immigrant destinations is the degree to which the pioneering foreign-born residents creating them rely less on existing populations of co-ethnics than their compatriots who settle in established immigrant destinations. A central tenet of immigrant incorporation and settlement is the presence of other immigrants who provide information, networks, and other forms of support to new immigrants. While such activity undoubtedly occurs in new immigrant destinations, the rapidity of their development and their disparate geography in cities and towns with limited numbers of established immigrants imply that new arrivals face more challenging environments for social if not economic incorporation. For these and other reasons, immigrant community establishment in new immigrant destinations such as Dalton, Georgia or Grand Island, Nebraska remains more challenging than in established destinations such as Los Angeles or Chicago.

The economic recession, greater state and federal enforcement efforts focused on illegal immigration, and growing localized anti-immigrant measures, have demonstrably affected both international migration flows from Latin America and internal migration patterns of foreign-born Hispanics. We hypothesize that under such conditions, foreign-born Hispanics may be more inclined to migrate from newer to more established immigrant destinations, both for economic support through social networks and to some extent for more socially tolerant locales.

Preliminary Results

Table 1 reports estimates for the size of the foreign born male Latin American population between 2006 and 2008 by Census region. We restrict the analysis to the working age of 18 to 45. Overall results show the Latin American population in the U.S. increasing by 47,651 between 2006-07 but decreasing by a substantial 193,682 between 2007-08, almost 3 percent. There is considerable variation though according to region and national origin. Results show the Mexican population increasing in all regions between 2006-07 but also decreasing in all regions between 2007-08. Overall, the Mexican male population declined 3.5 percent (156,520) between 2007-08, with the largest decline occurring in the Pacific region (92,972) which includes California.

The Central America population exhibits a more complex pattern, declining already between 2006-07 (21,197) and recovering only slightly between 2007-08 (7,298). The Northeast and South evidenced the largest declines and gains in the respective years. A pattern similar to the Mexican one occurred in the Pacific region, where the Central American male population grew 4.1% between 2006-07 and subsequently declined 6.5% between 2007-08. Overall, the table documents considerable variation within the background of a declining Latin American male immigrant population. Our full analysis will extend this table with a state-level classification of traditional/new Hispanic immigrant destinations.

Table 2 expands the analysis by documenting considerable variation across selected States. Even in traditional States of destination, such as California, Arizona, and Texas, the foreign born Latin American male population grew considerably between 2006-007. At the same time, these States experienced sizeable declines in their immigrant populations. California in particular, lost 91,230 immigrant Latinos between 2007-08. New areas of destination on the other hand exhibited a more complex pattern with differences appearing by national origin group. Mexicans grew in all States

between 2006-07, in contrast with Central Americans. Overall, the selected new destination States exhibit growing Latino immigrant populations in 2006-07. A similar diverse pattern is evidence for 2007-08. The Hispanic immigrant population declined dramatically in Nevada (10,452) but exhibit little change in North Carolina and Alabama. The lack of change is the consequence of opposing movement for Mexicans and Central Americans.

The bottom panel of Table 2, which presents correlation coefficients between Latino immigrant population change in 2006-07 and 2007-08, shows a clear negative association overall. For all Hispanics the coefficient is large and significant (-0.619). The same is evident for Mexicans (-0.529) and Central Americans (-0.585). This implies that population change occurred in opposite directions in the periods immediately before and after the recession. States that grew rapidly before the recession experienced a decline in the growth of the immigrant Hispanic population afterwards. Such trends could highlight a redistribution of the Hispanic immigrant population within the U.S. as a result of the recession.

Figure 1 further documents the negative relationship between growth between 2006-07 and 2007-08. We decompose population change across 244 metropolitan areas with at least 1000 immigrant Latin Americans in 2006. Following the two-axis, the graph allows us to identify 4 types of metropolitan areas: A) areas that grew in 2006-07 but declined in 2007-08; B) areas that grew between 2006-07 as well as 2007-08; C) areas that declined in 2006-07 but grew in 2007-08; and finally D) areas that declined in 2006-07 as well as 2007-08. The overall Pearson's correlation coefficient is -.38 with $p < .05$.

Tables 3a and 3b list the top metropolitan areas in each category. Most areas fall under Type A (39%) and exhibit a pattern of growth before the recession and decline immediately afterwards. This category also includes many non-metropolitan areas. Our analysis will distinguish these areas by PUMA to better assess the effect of the recession on the Latino immigrant population in rural areas. In addition to non-metropolitan areas, Type A includes large metro areas, most of them in traditional areas of destination, such as San Francisco, Fresno, CA and Miami.

Type B exhibits the pattern where the recession has not altered the growth of the immigrant Latino population. These locales tend to be smaller metropolitan areas, including those in new immigrant destination areas such as Raleigh-Durham and Augusta, Georgia. Type C, which reverses the pattern, includes metropolitan areas where the immigrant population was declining before the recession but rebounded after the economic downturn. It appears to include major metropolitan areas in new destinations, like Atlanta, Portland, Oregon, and Omaha. Finally, category D includes areas in continuous decline. They tend to be major areas of traditional immigrant destination, including San Diego, New York City, and Los Angeles.

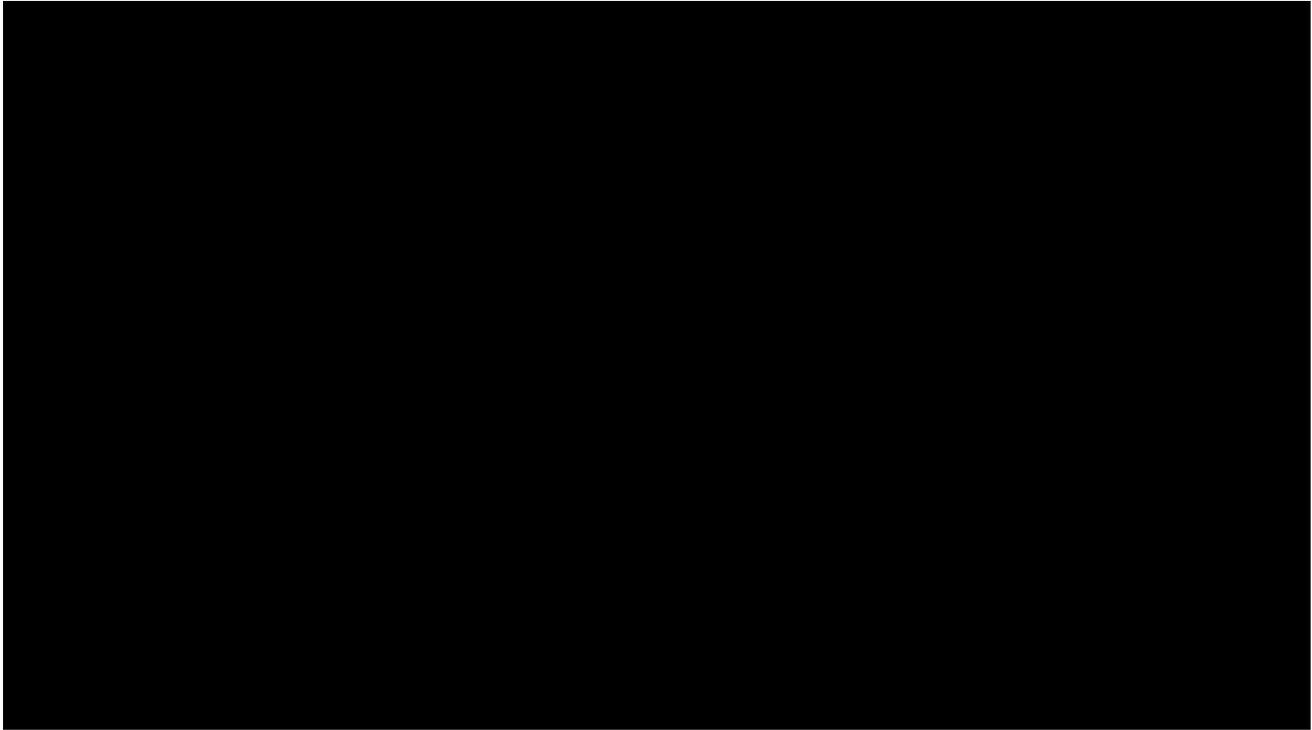
Analytical Plan

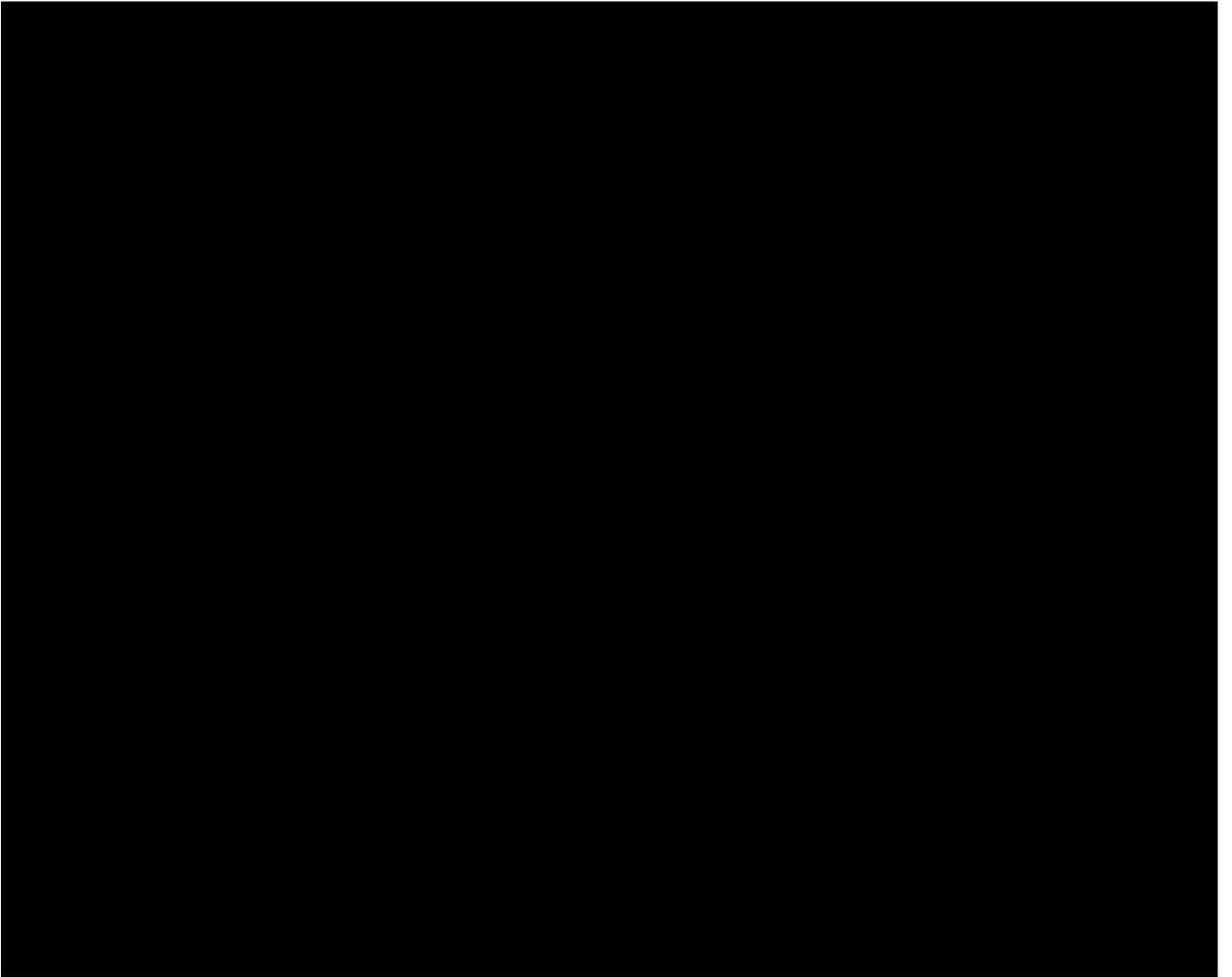
In sum, our main objective in this analysis is to describe and model the diversity of Latin American immigrant population growth and decline before and after the recession at two geographic levels, and controlling for measures of employment structure, immigrant climate, and ethnic community size. We expect that population trends will correlate with characteristics of the local labor market, including minority representation, industrial composition, and labor supply. In addition, we will analyze these

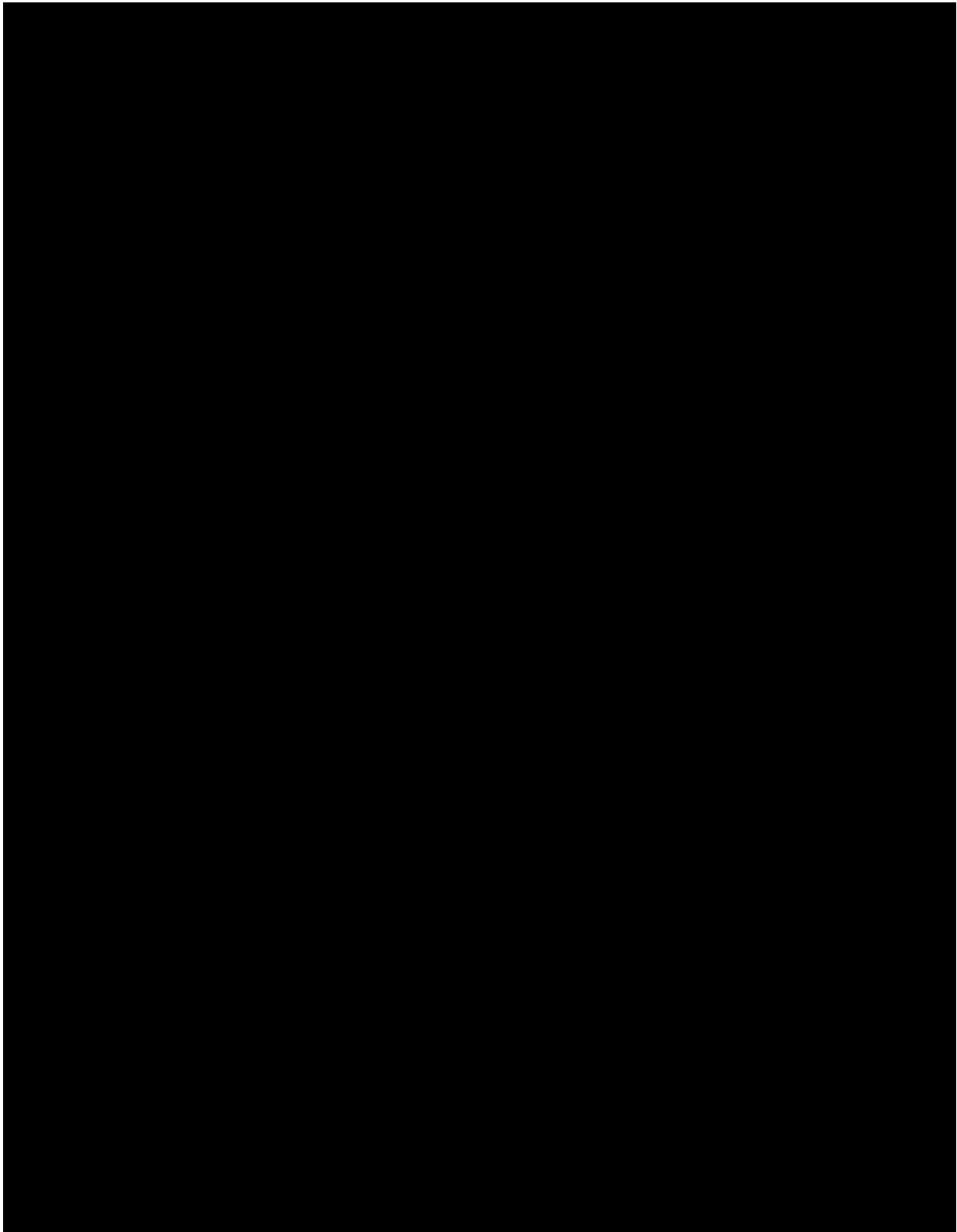
patterns by regional origin since different Latin American groups might not be responding to changing economic and social conditions in similar fashion. Finally, we will investigate different specifications of our dependent variable. The prior exploratory analyses reported absolute changes which directly capture the number of people leaving or staying within an area. Since population size affects absolute measurements, we will investigate percentage change and rate of growth or decline.

An additional study objective will be to identify the extent to which the Latino immigrant population is moving within the United States or returning to countries of origin. Data limitations pose some restriction on our ability to obtain such estimates. Our strategy will rely on the question on place of residence in the prior year which we can use to construct a measure of out- migration flow from particular areas. In the absence of return migration to countries of origin, this measure, together with in-migration will result in overall population change.

A central question organizing the analysis is the extent to which the economic recession has affected the behavior of the Hispanic immigrant population in traditional versus new immigrant destinations. Results for our analysis have implications for understanding internal migration patterns of the foreign born and the geographic distribution of the Hispanic immigrant population. If geographic growth and distribution of the foreign born Latin American population differs before and after the commencement of the recent recession it may signal a reverse in Hispanic population dispersion evidenced during the 1990s and promote a scholarly reassessment and redefinition of the new immigrant destination construct.







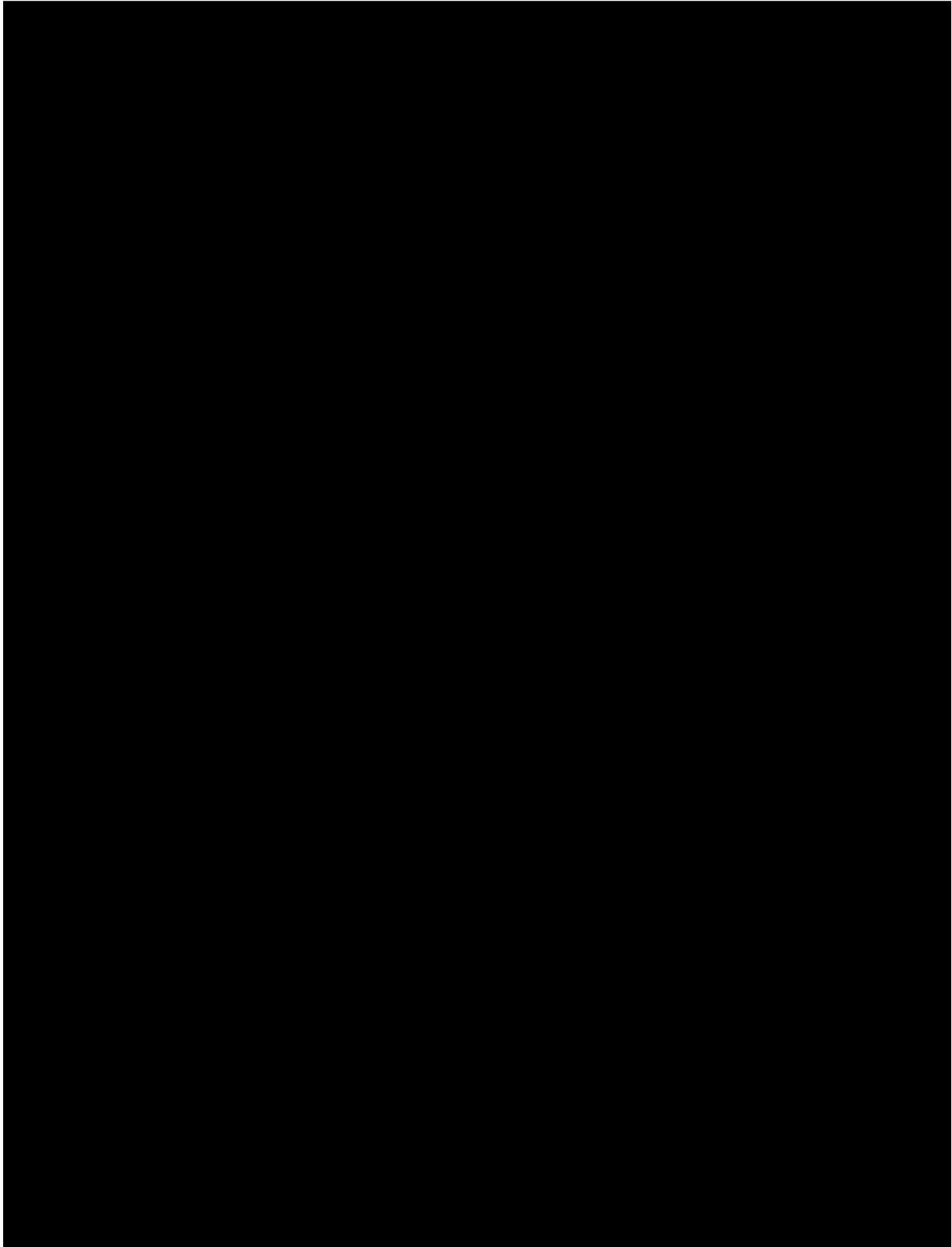


Figure 1: The Recession and Absolute Change in Foreign Born Hispanic Male Population: Comparison of 2006-2007 and 2007-2008

