

Media Relations

Hispanic Immigrant-Native Marriages Rose After Sept. 11, New UNH Research Finds

October 26, 2011

DURHAM, N.H. – Marriages between Hispanic immigrants and U.S.-born natives have risen since Sept. 11, 2001, as immigrants have looked for alternative ways to stabilize their lives following an increase in anti-immigrant policies and sentiment in America, new research from the University of New Hampshire finds.

“The tragic event of the Sept. 11 attacks actually increased Hispanic immigrants’ probability of being married to a native. After Sept. 11, the deteriorated labor market conditions, along with tightened immigration policies, led to increased incentives of immigrants to marry natives. This effect is large relative to the potential discrimination effect, if any, that could reduce natives’ willingness to marry an immigrant,” the researchers said.

The research by Le Wang, assistant professor of economics at UNH, and Chunbei Wang, assistant professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, is presented in the journal the “Review of Economics of the Household.”

Marriages between Hispanic immigrants and natives increased by more than 2 percent throughout the decade following the attacks of Sept. 11. These marriages partly offset the deterioration in job prospects for Hispanic immigrants that resulted from discrimination following the attacks, the researchers found.

“Being married to a native increases employment rates by 1.2 percent and earnings by 21.8 percent,” they found. “The offsetting effect may not be particularly large, given the estimated effect of Sept. 11 on intermarriage being about 2 percent. Nevertheless, this result highlights the possible importance of the labor market incentives that are associated with the increased rates of intermarriage among Hispanics.”

According to the researchers, immigration policies after Sept. 11 at both federal and state levels may have changed Hispanic immigrants’ living conditions and incentives to marry natives. In addition to enacting new laws, the government also put more efforts into enforcing existing immigration policies, resulting in diminished job opportunities for illegal immigrants.

“These collective efforts of federal and state governments mostly targeted illegal immigrants. Since the majority of illegal immigrants in the U.S. are Hispanic immigrants, these policies may have drastically harmed their job market opportunities and various aspects of their everyday lives. Not only may illegal Hispanic immigrants be affected, but legal Hispanic immigrants and the Hispanic community as a whole may also be harmed because of potential discrimination in the labor market,” the researchers said.

The researchers relied on the March Current Population Survey 1995-2010 and a difference-in-differences approach to estimate the impact of 9/11 on intermarriage among Hispanic immigrants to conduct their analysis.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state’s flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

 
SHARE
 Print
 Email
 Subscribe
Facebook
Tweet
<input type="text"/>

Media Contact: [Lori Wright](#) | 603-862-0574 | UNH Media Relations

Research Contact: [Le Wang](#) | 603-862-0818 | Whittemore School of Business and Economics



T-hall

Copyright © 2012 UNH Media Relations, 15 Strafford Ave, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824.
UNH is part of the University System of New Hampshire.
[ADA Acknowledgement](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [UNH Home](#) | [E-mail Webmaster](#)