

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Alfred University

The Ins and Outs of Residential Mobility:
Insights on Complex Issues from A Literature Review

by
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Preface

Initially, I was going to study Greek life at Alfred State. I think that an interesting dynamic exists by having two colleges located across the street from each other, one which banished Greek life and one that continues to have Greek life. Specifically, I was going to look at the perspectives of college students on a variety of topics and whether being a member of Greek life influenced their outlook. I was interested in how both Greek and non-Greek members perceive romantic relationships, sexual intercourse, Greek life, gender roles, drinking/using drugs, academics, and health. However, upon contacting Alfred State to receive approval to survey their students, I was told that they were about to conduct a “major SUNY-mandated survey of their entire student body” and that they were weary of “survey fatigue.” I was also informed that I’d have to apply to conduct my study through both Alfred State and Alfred University’s IRB. I had a limited amount of time to apply to both IRB’s, gain approval, acquire a list of participants from Alfred State, distribute the survey, and then analyze my results. As a result, I decided to pursue a different route because of the time constraints.

The head of my Honors Thesis Committee, Dr. Porter, was approached in January by the Allegany Senior Foundation, a volunteer organization who focuses on the needs of senior citizens in Allegany County, NY. The organization contacted Dr. Porter to discuss the need for assistance with data gathering for possible projects related to seniors and senior living in Allegany County. Dr. Porter suggested to them that perhaps a student could conduct a literature review of the scholarship on mobility with a focus on Allegany County. When I was presented with this idea, I agreed to do so, which is how my current focus on residential mobility came about.

I conducted an extensive literature review on a wide variety of scholarship for my thesis on residential mobility and its application to Allegany County. To begin, I sifted through the Herrick Library Databases to find reliable sources. I went to Herrick Library's website, clicked on Databases A-Z, and then looked through the Sociology databases. I primarily used JSTOR, Social Science Database, Social Sciences Full Text, and Sociology Database. The search terms that I employed included items such as "residential mobility," "residential mobility and age/gender," "residential mobility and education," "residential mobility and happiness," "residential mobility and health," "senior citizens," and "location attainment," to name a few. These terms and databases helped me to find scholarly articles on studies pertaining to residential mobility. However, I needed to locate information on the U.S. and Allegany County as well. So, I looked at the U.S. Census Bureau, which identified the rate of mobility within the U.S., in addition to the rate of mobility in Allegany County since 1920.

As I read through the studies that I eventually decided upon, I recognized a theme of push and pull factors which influence whether a move takes place or not. Ravenstein (as cited in Morris, Manley and Sabel 2018) stated that "unfavourable living conditions 'push' people out of one location while favourable conditions 'pull' them into another" (p. 114). Moreover, I found that many of the studies looked at residential mobility in terms of the life course perspective, meaning that their focus was on how people of different age groups, such as adolescents, adults, or senior citizens, were influenced by moving (Myers 1999; Morris et al. 2018). Therefore, I decided to look at how push and pull factors affect people across the life course.

There are a plethora of push and pull factors that are intertwined in the moving process. For example, many Americans move in pursuit of advancing their lives, whether that be in terms of a better job or education, new or safer housing, or in an attempt to be happier (Florida and

Schmitt as cited in Oishi 2010). These reasons are classified as “pull factors” because they are pulling people to new locations based on better opportunities. However, there are also many push factors that unfortunately force people out of their homes without them wanting to and usually for bad reason. Push factors can range anywhere from socioeconomic status (Hango 2006) to a lack of jobs in one’s place of residence (United Van Lines 2017). Families of lower income may be forced to move more often because their living conditions as renters force them to do so or because they cannot afford their home anymore. Ultimately, push and pull factors are what make residential mobility such a complex matter; moving is not always a choice, nor is it always forced.

In conducting the literature review, I found that adolescents experience push factors more often than adults because adults have more control in the moving process. Morris (2018) states that “...because children do not actively seek to move home or initiate the moving process we can see them more as ‘passengers’” (p. 115). Therefore, it is not surprising to find that adolescents are adversely impacted by residential mobility. A study conducted by Haynie and South (2005) looked at the relationship between residential mobility during childhood and adolescent violence. Their study focused on four mediating variables to explain this relationship including peer social networks, victimization, parent-child relationship, and psychological distress (Haynie and South 2005:364-366). Their findings showed that adolescents who participate in more moves in turn exhibit more violent behavior than those who are less mobile (Haynie and South 2005:361). The dismantling of an adolescent’s peer social network can be particularly detrimental to adolescents when they move (Haynie and South 2005:363). This is because adolescents must find new friends and tend to become friends with new peer

groups who are deviant (Haynie and South 2005:363). Thus, moving can have harmful effects on adolescents.

On the other hand, I found that mobile adults may not experience the same negative effects that mobile children do, which is supported by Myers' (1999) study on the intergenerational similarities between mobile parents and their offspring. Myers (1999) used data from the Study of Marital Instability Over the Life Course which included four waves of interviews with married people, while one wave also included a sample of their offspring (Myers 1999:874). Myers (1999) specifically focused on if the sample of offspring moved while living with their parents, as well as on their own, once they moved out of their parents' home. The findings of Myers' (1999) study showed that compared to offspring who did not move while living with their parents, offspring who did move while living with their parents made an average of 60% more moves once they left their parents' home (p.877). Ultimately, there are intergenerational similarities between mobile parents and their offspring. At the same time, these results illustrate how residential mobility of adults does not bear the same negative impacts that it does on adolescents.

Lastly, residential mobility influences senior citizens and the elderly in that they often want to remain in their homes while growing older yet are forced to move by certain factors. I looked at a 2014 article produced by the AARP titled, "State of 50+ in New York State" which focused on the opinions of voters 50 years old or older in relation to topics such as retirement and mobility in the future. Their results showed that "A majority of 50+ New York State voters say they would be more likely to stay in the state as they age if improvements were made in the areas of health (77%), housing (70%), transportation (66%) and jobs (61%) for older residents" (AARP 2014:5). Evidently, older adults value these aspects when it comes to aging in place.

However, these findings illustrate how older adults may be pushed to move out of their homes due to a lack of resources, like adequate housing and plentiful jobs.

My literature review concludes by applying what I found on residential mobility to Allegany County, NY. I created a table which consists of the population in Allegany County organized by age groups and begins with the year 1920 and ends with the year 2017. The data shows that between 2000 and 2016, the population declines for every age group except 45-64 and 65 and over. Therefore, I concluded that the decrease in individuals who are 18-years-old may be because they are being pulled to other towns, cities, or states to pursue a higher education elsewhere after high school. Simultaneously, there is a decrease in individuals between the ages of 25 and 44, in addition to those between 45 and 64. Therefore, these age groups may be moving their children (who are 18 and under) for a variety of push and pull reasons. Whereas, the population of those 65 and older is steadily increasing in Allegany County. This reflects the prediction that the population of Baby Boomers is going to grow rapidly between 2010 and 2050 (Vincent and Velkoff 2010:1). Therefore, it can be said that the senior citizen population in Allegany County has been more prominent than the youthful population.

In conclusion, my literature review examined residential mobility and how push and pull factors influence people across the life course. I found that adolescents tend to suffer more negative effects than adults, which may be because adolescents often have less choice in moving or because the social group that they identify with must be replaced. On the other hand, senior citizens prefer to age in their homes, but report experiencing push factors, like limited resources in terms of health and transportation. All in all, I have concluded that residential mobility is multifaceted and requires an in-depth look to fully comprehend all of its layers.

Introduction

According to many researchers, the U.S. is a highly mobile society (Hango 2006; Myers 1999; Oishi 2010; Oishi et al. 2011). As long ago as 1835, when the famous French diplomat, historian, and political scientist, Alexis de Tocqueville traveled to America, he commented on the tremendously mobile nature of the U.S. population (Oishi 2010:9). In his work on American society, de Tocqueville called attention to how Americans believed that “moving in search of better opportunities” and being hard workers would benefit them economically (Myers 1999:871). This notion stands true, even 183 years later. Florida and Schmitt (as cited in Oishi 2010) remark on how “millions of Americans move to a new city for a better education or job or in pursuit of happiness” (p. 5). Additionally, United Van Lines (2017), a well-known national moving company, conducted a study on their “customers’ state-to-state migration patterns over 2017” and asked their customers what their reasons for moving were. The results showed that a vast majority of movement was towards Western and Southern states that had more comfortable climates, lower housing costs, and job growth at or above the national average (United Van Lines 2017). Evidently, Americans have been propelled by various *pull factors* to relocate due to their desire to enhance their lives.

On the other hand, Americans have been forced by many *push factors* to move out of their homes due to undesirable circumstances. The results of the United Van Lines (2017) study found that the South had the largest number of people (61%) leaving to find jobs elsewhere. Modifications in neighborhood development may push people to move as well. Popkin et al. (as cited in Keels et al. 2005) claimed that “the demolition of many high-rise public housing buildings is forcing a large number of public housing residents to move from their condemned unites” (p. 52). Socioeconomic status is another factor which may push people to move (Hango

2006). Schachter (as cited in Hango 2016) determined that because lower incomes are strongly correlated with renting, families with lower incomes move more often because renters are not as tied to their households as homeowners are (p. 633). Additionally, the housing market influences whether people are forced to move from their homes or not. Imbroscio (2012) and Mulder (2013) (as cited in Coulter, van Ham, and Findlay 2016) claimed that “the global economic crisis (GEC) impacted the housing markets within which residential mobility occurs” and “also re-positioned the key actors involved in household moves through changes in power relations, material inequalities and intergenerational relationships” (p. 353). As stated above, individuals may not be able to move because of the instability of the housing market and poverty. In other words, people are forced to grapple with not having the power or resources to move because of the GEC’s influence on the housing market. Clearly, people are forced to relocate for a variety of reasons, whether it be related to one’s job, destruction of their residence, socioeconomic status, or their home-owner status.

Despite the distinction between choosing to move and being forced to move, “a positive move for one individual may manifest itself as an adverse move for another,” says Morris, Manley, and Sabel (2018). For example, being forced to move from one neighborhood to another due to high crime rates may be viewed by one individual as negative. Yet, another individual might view the same move as positive because the new destination is safer. So, as you can see, residential mobility is multifaceted and therefore cannot be reduced to one single deciding factor. Rather, I argue that whether people are moving by choice or by force, residential mobility is a complex manner which has both positive and negative impacts on Americans of all ages, including adolescents, adults, and senior citizens. In this paper, I review studies of residential

mobility which delve into the convoluted nature of residential mobility over the life course through the lens of push and pull factors.

Definitions of Residential Mobility

There are many ways in which researchers define residential mobility which, in turn, directly influences their findings. Residential mobility “can be defined as the frequency to which individuals change their residence” (Oishi 2010:6). The U.S. Census Bureau, on the other hand, describes residential mobility in much broader terms. The U.S. Census recognizes both mobile and *non*-mobile people. The U.S. Census Bureau focuses on the different types of moves that mobile people make, such as same county, different county but same state, different state but same division, and abroad are recorded (Jordan 2016). In 1988, though, the definition of residential mobility varies from that of Oishi and the U.S. Census Bureau. Coleman (as cited in Hango 2006) determined that residential mobility is a matter of whether one changes schools or not (p. 631). Some researchers even look at residential mobility according to the age at which the move took place (Myers 1999; Haynie and South 2005; Hango 2006). Hango (2006) measured residential mobility during *childhood* as “the number of communities one lived in between birth and age 15,” which allows each respondent to define community by their own terms and it sets a specific age gap in which the move had to have taken place (p. 635). As you can see, residential mobility is defined in a plethora of manners. The lack of a universal definition for residential mobility highlights the complexities associated with people remaining stable or moving from place to place. Some of the nuances of residential mobility include different types of moves, the effects on individuals and communities, as well as the robust list of reasons for moving and the age in which the move took place.

Most importantly, all the various ways that researchers explain residential mobility ultimately shapes the way that sociologists and the rest of the world view and understand the movement of people. Hango (2006) points out how Long (1992:862) uses the following question to ask participants about their mobility: “Did you live in this housing unit on this date one year ago?” (p. 640). Yet, recall how Hango (2006) defines residential mobility as “the number of communities one lived in between birth and age 15” (p. 635). Hango (2006) then points out how definitions such as that by Long “should always result in a greater rate of mobility than the current one that uses community as the reference point regardless of how community is defined” (p. 640). By simply altering the way each question is asked about moving, researcher’s conclusions on residential mobility have changed. This is important because agencies such as the U.S. Census Bureau, and researchers like Oishi (2010) and Hango (2006), share their findings with the world and make conclusions based on their data. Therefore, it is essential to keep in mind the multi-faceted nature of mobility considering that each researcher’s overarching deductions about residential mobility varies based on how they define residential mobility.

The definition of residential mobility differs on an individual and societal level too. According to Oishi (2010), residential mobility takes place on both a micro and macro level (p. 6). “The number of residential moves that an individual experiences during a select time period or expects during the future” is a specification of mobility on the micro level (Oishi 2010:6). On the macro level, residential mobility can be specified as “the proportion of residents in a given neighborhood, city, state, or country who moved during a certain period of time or expect to move in the future” (Oishi 2010:6). Residential mobility has many worldwide implications too. When looking at residential mobility in terms of countries, Americans being able to easily move from place to place is unique to the United States. In comparison to other countries, states, and

even specific groups of people, the United States is a highly mobile country. Long (as cited in Oishi 2010) stated that “The United States is one of the most mobile nations in the world, whereas East Asian nations tend to be less mobile” (p. 8). Countries, such as Japan, as well as states, and groups of people, like traditional tribes in Kenya, are said to be residentially stable and traditional, unlike the United States (Oishi 2010:9). In short, residential mobility is more prevalent in the United States than many countries.

Oishi stated that locations either high or low in residential mobility exhibit cross-societal differences in terms of the impact on the personal and the collective self (2010:8). By examining the use of pronouns in varying countries, it becomes quite clear that countries which are highly mobile, like the United States, are more individualistic than countries low in mobility, like East Asian countries, which are deemed collectivists (Oishi 2010:9). Specifically, English languages require individuals to use pronouns, whereas that is not the case in East Asian languages, such as Japanese or Korean (Oishi 2010:9). Pronouns are used in conversation to reference either the person speaking or another individual. Thus, the use of pronouns is an individualistic act because the personal self, rather than the collective self, is being accentuated. Similarly, Kashima and Kashima (as cited in Oishi 2010) found that dropping the pronoun is more prevalent in collectivist countries, where the individual is less emphasized, than in individualist countries, where the individual is more significant (p. 9). As cited in Oishi (2010), Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, and Nishida, stated that these findings also show that people in residentially mobile countries must be more direct when speaking, which is why pronouns are required, because they often interact with strangers, unlike residentially stable countries (p. 9). Essentially, the analysis of languages in the United States and East Asian countries illustrate how

residentially mobile countries are individualistic, whereas countries low in residential mobility are collectivistic.

As demonstrated through the variations in definition, in addition to the micro and macro approaches, residential mobility is a highly intricate and complicated matter which has many layers. There is not one single reason that residential mobility takes place. Instead, there is an endless number of push and pull factors which result in an individual or group of people moving. These push and pull factors are not limited to one age group either; adolescents, adults, senior citizens, and the elderly are all affected by residential mobility, which is why residential mobility can be best understood through the life course perspective (Myers 1999; Morris et al. 2018).

Impacts of Residential Mobility Across the Life Course

Adolescents

According to the U.S. Census, a total of 34,000,000 moves took place between 2016 and 2017 (Jordan 2016). There were an estimated 125 million households in the U.S. in 2016 (Statista 2018). These moves were accounted for by a variety of reasons with wanting a new or better home/apartment as the top reason (16.4%), the desire to establish one's own household as the second most common reason to move (11.8%), "other family reason" as the third most common reason (11.6%), and "new job or job transfer" (10.2%) and "natural disaster" (0.3%) as two of the last reasons listed (Jordan 2016). Evidently, residential mobility is a process which impacts the lives of an enormous number of people for many reasons.

However, research has shown that residential mobility has many damaging effects, particularly on adolescents. In a representative sample referenced by Oishi (2010), 18% of children who moved often had four or more behavioral issues compared to 7% of children who

have never moved or moved infrequently having the same issues (p.14). More specifically, adolescents who moved during childhood have exhibited more violent behavior than those who have not moved during childhood (Haynie 2005:361). Using respondents from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, Haynie and South (2005) found that adolescents who are mobile report higher levels of violence than adolescents who are non-mobile (p.367). In this study, adolescent violence was measured by summing respondent's answers to their involvement to the following items: "a serious physical fight, seriously injured another, involvement in a group fight, used or threatened to use a weapon, pulled a knife/gun on someone, and shot or stabbed someone" (Haynie and South 2005:364). As Oishi's (2010) reference and Haynie and South's (2005) data exemplify, there are negative impacts particularly on one's behavior when they move as adolescents.

You might then ask, *why* are mobile adolescents more prone to involvement in violent behavior than non-mobile adolescents? Haynie and South (2005) identify four mediating variables which they use to explain the correlation between moving and violent behavior in adolescents. Adolescents' participation in violent behavior can be explained by the psychological distress caused by the move, the strains placed on the child's relationship with their parent, victimization of the adolescent, and disruption in the adolescent's peer social networks (Haynie and South 2005:364-366). Moving can initiate psychosocial and psychological distress for adolescents because they are separated from their established peer network and school (Haynie and South 2005:362-363). Simultaneously, youth often struggle with self-identity and finding a set group of friends (Haynie and South 2005:362). Therefore, moving during this time of personal confusion often adds to the stress that adolescents are already experiencing.

Oishi (2010) recognizes the psychological implications that moving has for adolescents as well. In a sample of 8,000 participants, residential mobility in childhood was shown to be associated with depression (Oishi 2010). Moving during childhood is so influential that individuals who have moved as a child are more likely to have attempted suicide later in life (Oishi 2010). Similarly, Haynie and South (2005) argue that due to the detrimental psychological effects of moving, adolescents may use aggression and violence to relieve themselves of the stress that they're experiencing (p.363). Clearly, moving can have severe psychological consequences for children.

The relationship that an adolescent has with the adult actors in their life, such as their parents and those located in their school and community, is greatly impacted when relocating (Haynie and South 2005; Hango 2006). Before a child moves, the adults in their life are closely intertwined thus ensuring that the child's behavior is closely monitored (Haynie and South 2005). However, once the child moves, their connections with the adults closest to them are severed because the child is now located in a new community which consists of a new set of teachers, friends and friend's parents (Haynie and South 2005). Hango (2006) describes how upon moving, families "break ties with significant others, and the result is the disruption of important relationships that parents and children have with others in the community" (p. 633). Adolescents often find new peer groups that are unfamiliar to their parents, in turn making it more difficult for their behavior to be supervised by the adults in their lives (Haynie and South 2005). Since the vital relationships between adult actors and children are detached upon moving, children are more at risk for engaging in violent behavior (Haynie and South 2005).

One of the factors most often used to describe the negative impacts that moving has on children was the dismantling of an adolescent's peer network upon moving (Morris et al. 2018;

Haynie and South 2005). Morris et al. (2018) takes a health-related approach by looking at how residential mobility relates to the health of individuals who move. Morris et al. (2018) contends that “children are more reliant on smaller and closer peer networks than adults and therefore may be more susceptible to the consequences of exogenous environmental or social change” (p. 115). As cited in Morris et al. (2018), Haveman et al. (1991) and Popham et al. (2015) claim that people who move as adolescents are more likely to experience “disorder and disruption that cause stress,” meanwhile Compas (1987) and Pearlin et al. (1981) state that mobile adolescents experience negative impacts on their development and wellbeing (p. 117). To reiterate this claim, Haynie and South (2005) focus the most extensively on adolescents’ “Peer Social Networks” to explain the relationship between adolescents moving and their violent behavior. Specifically, the behavioral aspect of an individual’s peer social network may be part of the explanation as to why mobile adolescents participate in violent behavior more than their non-mobile peers. When adolescents are new to a school, they are said to associate with peer groups who encourage “deviant” and “otherwise problematic behaviors” (Haynie and South 2005:363). Both the social learning extensions and differential association theory postulate that adolescents conform to the behaviors that they are exposed to (Haynie and South 2005:363). According to both of these theories, when adolescents belong to peer groups who participate in violent behavior, adolescents are more likely to follow in suit. All in all, the research shows that there is mainly a negative effect on individuals when they move as adolescents. However, once the long-term effects of residential mobility are taken into consideration, the results prove to be more positive.

Adults

Most of the research done on residential mobility focuses on the consequences that children face upon moving. Nevertheless, research has shown that the impacts of residential

mobility are not specific to adolescents alone; being mobile makes an impression on adults as well (Prasad and Johnson 1964; Myers 1999; Hango 2006). Studies have found that it is more common for people to move during adulthood, especially if they moved often as a child (Prasad and Johnson 1964; Myers 1999). This finding isn't necessarily positive or negative. Corson and McConnell's studies (as cited in Prasad and Johnson 1964) suggested that "many earlier life-patterns contribute to the determination to change one's residence in later years" (p. 220). Myers (1999) study suggests the same notion; offspring are more likely to move as adults if they moved earlier in life with their family (p. 877). Myers (1999) uses the socialization model and the status-inheritance model to expand on the reasoning behind "intergenerational similarities," otherwise known as similar mobility patterns between parents and their offspring.

Myers (1999) states that "the socialization model argues that children learn from their parents' mobility behaviors and replicate these behaviors in adulthood," whereas "the status-inheritance model argues that parent-adults child similarity in mobility behaviors is a result of parents and adult children sharing characteristics that are associated with mobility" (p. 871). Myers' (1999) findings provide ample support for the socialization model in that the mobility behaviors of the adult offspring interviewed in the study were similar to their parents' mobility behaviors they witnessed as children (p. 877). For example, offspring who moved twice while living with their parents from 1980 to 1992, made an average of 60% more moves once they left their parents' home compared to offspring who did not move while living with their parents (Myers 1999:877). At the same time, the status-inheritance model of mobility was just as significant, if not more significant, than the socialization model in understanding the link between parents' mobility and their offspring's mobility as an adult (Myers 1999:878). Residential mobility has long-lasting impacts on adults that can be explained by both the

socialization and status-inheritance model of mobility, yet again supporting the complexity of residential mobility.

Senior Citizens and the Elderly

Residential mobility bears a significant weight for those who are 65 years and older. As individuals grow older, they begin to question whether their individual aging process will take place in their home or whether they'll be forced to relocate to a facility, such as a nursing home. Universally, most people desire to stay in their homes and communities while they grow older, yet that is not always possible (AARP 2014:4). As the Baby Boomer generation ages every year, the number of people ages 65 years and older is rapidly growing (AARP 2014:4). In 2035, nearly one in five people are expected to be 65 years or older in The Empire State (AARP 2014:4). That means that one in five people are going to be faced with the difficult decision of whether they will have to leave their homes or not.

The AARP's 2014 article titled, "State of the 50+ in New York State" calls attention to the variety of push and pull factors that contribute to whether an individual 50 years or older can age in their home. For example, "More than half of 50+ voters in the labor force (56%) say their retirement will be delayed for financial reasons" and "Half of all 50+ New York State voters (49%) are extremely or very concerned about being able to afford utility costs in the coming years" (AARP 2014:4). Additionally, the AARP's (2014) findings state that "A majority of 50+ New York State voters say they would be more likely to stay in the state as they age if improvements were made in the areas of health (77%), housing (70%), transportation (66%) and jobs (61%) for older residents" (p. 5). Thus, some of the push factors that are impacting older adults include delayed retirement due to finances, high utility costs in the near future, and lack of adequate health, housing, transportation, and jobs for older residents in New York (AARP 2014).

Therefore, I have concluded that senior citizens and the elderly are experiencing a greater amount of push factors which are forcing them to reconsider whether they are able to age in their homes or not.

The literature shows that senior citizens value having resources and their family at their fingers tips, which I argue is not unlike many other individuals of different age groups. Most people want to be able to rely on their community to fulfill their medical needs, religious services, social needs, and so on. Therefore, I stress that we pay attention to the older population's needs and desires because they are not unlike our own and we too will one day face the pressing issue of whether we'll be able to age in our homes or not.

Non-U.S. Studies

As you can see, most of the studies mentioned thus far refer to residential mobility in the United States. Whereas, the following studies take place in Canada and the Netherlands, two countries which differ greatly from the United States. Unlike most researchers, Hango (2006) looked at the *long-term effects* of residential mobility, particularly on the educational attainment of individuals in Canada. Hango (2006) used participant data from the 1986 Canadian General Social Survey which includes telephone interviews of 16,390 individuals from all regions of Canada who are 15 and older (p. 637). In her study, Hango (2006) focused on respondent's education, residential mobility, which is defined as the number of communities one lived in between birth and age 15, and "two subsequent measures that tap into residential stability: (1) the average length of time spent (between birth and age 15) in the community where the respondent was born, and (2) whether the respondent lived in the same province in 1986 (the year of the survey) as they did most during childhood (from birth to age 15)" (p. 638-641). Hango (2006) found that there was a positive relationship between the odds of completing high school and the

number of communities lived in between birth and age 15 (p. 645). These findings illustrate how residential mobility does bear some positive long-term impacts, particularly on adults.

On the other hand, van Diepen and Mulder (2009) look at how residential mobility influences older adults in the Netherlands. One of the reasons that older adults desire to age in their homes is because they greatly value their family networks, and so their “family networks play an important role in their residential satisfaction and their well-being” (van Diepen and Mulder 2009:32). van Diepen and Mulder’s (2009) study dealt with the relocation behavior of those 79 years or younger in the Netherlands (p. 32). Relocation behavior is defined as whether there has been relocation or not, with a focus on the direction of the relocation (van Diepen and Mulder 2009:32). This study is essentially asking: are the young elderly moving towards or away from their closest family member? (van Diepen and Mulder 2009).

van Diepen and Mulder’s (2009) findings show that “the distance to family members before a potential relocation influences the chance that relocation takes place in the direction of those family members, both of children and siblings” (p. 43). Specifically, older adults are more likely to move closer to their family members if they initially live farther away (van Diepen and Mulder 2009:43). Despite expectations though, the distance of relocation towards children was not greater than the distance away from children for those between the ages of 50 and 59 years old in the study (van Diepen and Mulder 2009:38). However, those in their 70s did in fact “live somewhat closer to their children more often than they did before,” yet the evidence for this conclusion is not strong (van Diepen and Mulder 2009:43). The researchers also looked at variables such as having grandchildren or experiencing health issues. The results showed that being a grandparent influences the chance that older adults move in the direction of their children, whereas having health problems showed no significant effect (van Diepen and Mulder

2009:43). These unexpected findings may be in part due to the Netherlands's extensive and accessible healthcare system and the age cap on the participants in the study (van Diepen and Mulder 2009:43-44). Overall, there are many factors, as well as limitations of the study, which play into the researcher's findings.

Studies which take place in other countries may bear different results when than if they were conducted in the U.S. For example, Canada and the Netherlands both have massively different healthcare systems than the U.S. When looking at health problems in older adults as a variable, we would expect that elderly adults would move closer to family members so that they could rely on their family to take care of them. This notion is supported by Long as cited in van Diepen and Mulder (2009:33). However, the results of the Netherlands study show otherwise; health status does not influence whether older adults relocate (van Diepen and Mulder 2009:43). As stated, this may be due to the wide-ranging healthcare in the Netherlands that is readily available for older adults (van Diepen and Mulder 2009:44). Therefore, we must be hesitant in applying the results of residential mobility studies that take place in other countries to the United States because of varying circumstances, such as healthcare systems.

Sociological and Gerontological Implications of Residential Mobility

As a sociology and gerontology major, I recognize the importance in having a comprehensive understanding of residential mobility. Residential mobility consists of the movement of people in and out of states, counties, towns, neighborhoods, and so on. Thus, that means it inherently impacts both people and communities. So, how does a community survive if there isn't a stable population? The research has shown that the well-being of a society is highly dependent on whether people are mobile or not (Oishi 2010). As Oishi (2010) highlights,

residents of stable societies have overall better relationships with their community in the sense that they engage in more prosocial behaviors and less antisocial behaviors (p. 15). When people remain in one location for a long duration of time, they are able to form stronger relationships and therefore engage more with the community (Oishi 2010:15). As cited in Oishi (2010), Kang and Kwak (2003), Kasarda and Janowitz (1974), and Sampson (1988, 1991), have offered the explanation that people form more local friendships and stronger psychological attachments to their community when they live in one place for a long time (p. 15). Societies benefit to a certain extent when they are less mobile due to the relationships that individuals are able to create and their relationship with the community.

As stated, residential mobility takes place on a micro level as well (Oishi 2010:6). Holdsworth (as cited in Coulter et al. 2016) calls attention to how the structure of family-life and social networks is re-configured on a micro-level (p. 358). This notion is reiterated time and time again in the literature on residential mobility (Haynie and South 2005; Morris et al. 2018; Oishi 2010). When familial relationships and social networks are altered, re-configured, or completely dismantled because of residential mobility, there are sociological consequences in the sense that levels of adolescent violence increase (Haynie and South 2005) and the overall community consequently becomes more unstable.

On a macro level, Horschelmann (as cited in Coulter et al. 2016) argued that “residential mobility and immobility is inherently tied to the projection of power and there are consequences for life courses and social norms because of this” (p. 364). Battu et al. (as cited in Coulter et al. 2016) highlights how residential mobility is intended to “induce flexible social mobility and labor markets” (p. 364). Yet, poor urban minority families are less likely to escape from their poor neighborhoods due to socioeconomic status, race, and institutional barriers, like the policies

and procedures of realty businesses, to name a few (Massey and Lundy 2001; Keels et al. 2005). Poor minority families are far more likely to live in safe neighborhoods that are higher in economic status when they are physically moved to a different neighborhood through residential mobility programs, such as the Gautreaux program, which was authorized by the Supreme Court (Keels et al. 2005). Dorothy Gautreaux sued the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 1996 because she alleged that the CHA and HUD were involved in “systematic and illegal segregation” (Keels et al. 2005:53). The court ruled in favor of the public housing residents and, in turn, the Supreme Court authorized the Gautreaux residential mobility program (Keels et al. 2005). The program allowed the placement of low-income black families (who were either on the waiting list to live in public housing or lived in public housing units) into mostly white neighborhoods throughout the suburban area of Chicago (Keels et al. 2005).

The Gautreaux program was successful in producing long-term improvements for the poor urban minority families who volunteered to be moved. This is because the families were successfully moved into high-SES and lower-crime neighborhoods (Keels et al. 2005). Specifically, “two thirds of those who initially moved to the suburbs continued to live in the suburbs some 6 to 22 years after their initial moves” (Keels et al. 2005:69). Ultimately, individuals who are of minority status and reside in poor neighborhoods have far more of a difficult time relocating to better neighborhoods than those who are white and of higher economic status (Keels et al. 2005). So, I conclude that residential mobility is not easily obtained by everyone; there are many informal and institutional barriers that minorities in particular have to face which differs from other groups of people, like whites.

An institutional barrier that has been briefly touched upon thus far is poverty. Poverty can be viewed as either a push or pull factor in the sense that it either forces people to move or inhibits their ability to do so. This is because the act of moving is often extremely costly. Thus, when people who are poor aspire to better their living conditions by upgrading their housing, they are unable to move. At the same time, people may be forced out of their homes due to insufficient funds. As Keels et al. (2005) states, “rates of residential mobility among poor urban minority families are high, but relatively few manage to escape from poor neighborhoods” (p. 52). The high mobility rate of poor urban minority families is in part due to being poor. Being evicted or nearing the end of a lease may cause poor families to move frequently. However, a limited number of these families cannot leave their poor neighborhoods which is most likely because they cannot afford the move itself, nor can they afford better housing in middle-class neighborhoods. As you can see, poverty can be described as both a push and pull factor which negatively influences people and families.

Thus far, I have covered residential mobility in terms of society and the individual across the life course. Yet, residential mobility has a name and a face; it impacts real groups of people in real counties that fluctuate in population growth. Therefore, I apply the literature on residential mobility presented in this review to Allegany County, a county situated in the southern tier of New York State and has an estimated population of 46,894 (Data USA 2016).

Application to Allegany County, New York

In the Fall of 2014, I relocated to Allegany County, NY where I attended Alfred University in the town of Alfred. For the past four years, I have considered Alfred my home. During my time in Alfred, I became aware of the considerably high poverty level, particularly

when driving through Wellsville on my way to my internship at Ardent Solutions. Allegany County has a poverty level of 17.1%, which is higher than the U.S. poverty level of 14% (Data USA 2016). I have also noticed how the town of Alfred has a way of attracting people, especially college students who move to Alfred to attend either Alfred University or Alfred State. However, after each student's education is completed, whether that be in 2 or 4 years, they leave Alfred and disperse from there. Many students return to where their parents are located or move larger distances in pursuit of a new career. Students often relocate to bigger cities where they can utilize their newfound degree in a life-long career. Many students do not stay in the town of Alfred, let alone Allegany County, after graduation. For me, this is what makes residential mobility in Allegany County so intriguing. Why are students relocating after they receive their degree? What do other locations have that Allegany County lacks? After conducting a comprehensive literature review on residential mobility and re-evaluating my four years of experience in Alfred, I propose that Allegany County is deficient in the local and plentiful resources (i.e. jobs) that people, such as students, are in pursuit of when they move.

To paint a clearer picture of Allegany County, I have utilized data from the U.S. Census Bureau (1995; 2000; 2017) to create a table, located in the Appendix, which illustrates the population in Allegany County organized by age groups. The table includes every decade between 1920 and 2010. After 2010, every consecutive year is included. As the table demonstrates, the population in Allegany County increased between 1920 and 1980 and has been steadily declining ever since (See Appendix). In the early 80's, the United States experienced a recession from July 1981 to November 1982 (Auxier 2010). It was during this time that the unemployment rate reached an all-time high of 10.8% in December of 1982, meanwhile federal budget deficits were increasing (Auxier 2010). It is possible then that the economic downfall in

the early 80's played a role in the population decline that Allegany County experienced between 1980 and 1990. Families may have been leaving Allegany County in search of better employment opportunities or more available resources due to the recession.

When looking at the population changes for each age group between 2000 and 2016, every age group except 45-64 and 65 and over experienced an overall decrease (See Appendix). Specifically, the population of individuals between 45 and 64 grew between 2000 and 2011, but then fell between 2012 and 2016 (See Appendix). Meanwhile, those 65 and over in Allegany County have continued to grow in size since 2000 (See Appendix). On a nationwide level, “the older population (those aged 65 and older) is projected to experience rapid growth between 2010 and 2050” and “the baby boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964) are largely responsible for this increase in the older population” (Vincent and Velkoff 2010:1). Therefore, Allegany County's swift increase in those aged 65 and older is consistent with the nationwide trend.

There is a slight, but consistent, decrease in individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 and 18-year-olds are also included in this age group. It is likely that 18-year-olds may be relocating to other towns, cities, or even states to pursue a higher education after high school. The desire to move in pursuit of a higher education is considered a pull factor and is evidently influencing 18-year-olds. Allegany County could also be seeing a decrease in those 18 and under because they are forced, or pushed, to move when their parents move. Most moves occur due to the parent's discretion. As Morris et al. (2018) states, “...because children do not actively seek to move home or initiate the moving process we can view them more as ‘passengers’” (p. 115). In other words, children often do not have a say in when, where, or how a move takes place. Allegany County is also seeing more people between the ages of 25 and 44, in addition to those 45 and 64, move. Therefore, those 18 and under may be moving out of the county with their

parents (who are between the ages of 25 and 64) due to a host of reasons declared by their parents including better employment opportunities, more resources elsewhere, overall happiness, and so on (Morris et al. 2018:114-115). With all of this in mind, it's clear that Allegany County has been effective in maintaining a stable senior citizen population, rather than a youthful population, which has contributed heavily to an overall decline in their population of people 64 and younger.

Conclusion

All in all, residential mobility is applicable to countries, states, towns, counties, and people of all ages. When people move, population size fluctuates, and structures, such as the family structure, the peer social network, and the stability of a community, are directly impacted. In turn, residential mobility has many implications for society. This literature review expands on the multitude of definitions of mobility, residential mobility across the life course, and the application of mobility to a real county. However, one major limitation of this literature review is the lack of adequate studies pertaining to race and/or the criminal justice system. Considering that certain races have more accessibility to mobility than others (Keels et al. 2005) and that an increase in mobility leads to adolescent violence (Haynie and South 2005), I recognize the high likelihood that an abundance of literature exists on the topic of residential mobility, race, and/or criminal activity. Nonetheless, I propose that this literature review on residential mobility covers a host of topics which nicely illustrate the multi-layered and complex nature of residential mobility.

Recommendations for Further Research

To conclude, there are a handful of recommendations that I have for future research which I will incorporate into a second paper. Specifically, eviction is a highly influential push factor that touches the lives of many. There were almost 900,000 eviction judgements in 2016, as recorded by Matthew Desmond, an American sociologist who teaches at Princeton University (Badger and Bui 2018). After completing this literature review, I discovered the well-known and highly recognized book *Evicted* by Matthew Desmond. The book covers the lives of eight families in Milwaukee who are evicted and sink even deeper into poverty as a result (Badger and Bui 2018). So, utilizing Desmond's book to illustrate the widespread push factor of eviction would be extremely beneficial to the literature on residential mobility. Furthermore, there are many other tangents that relate to residential mobility, including poverty, race, and the comparison of countries besides the United States, which could be expanded upon. Therefore, I recommend that future research look at these new tangents and topics.

Appendix

Resident Population for Selected Age Groups in Allegany County, NY: 1920-2017

AGE

YEAR	AGE					
	Total Population	Under 18	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+
1920*	36,842					
1930*	38,025					
1940*	39,681					
1950*	43,784					
1960*	43,978					
1970*	46,458					
1980*	51,742					
1990*	50,470					
2000	49,927	15,181**	4,737***	11,942	11,067	7,000
2010	48,968	10,576	7,748	10,069	13,110	7,443
2011	48,818	10,409	7,680	10,041	13,196	7,492
2012	48,226	10,216	7,381	9,908	13,005	7,737
2013	47,932	10,078	7,249	9,862	12,865	7,951
2014	47,694	9,847	7,230	9,812	12,728	8,148
2015	47,372	9,724	7,186	9,691	12,563	8,243
2016	47,110	9,591	7,146	9,570	12,418	8,352
2017*	46,894					

*No data available for specific age groups for either 1920-1990 or 2017 in the Census data

**Compilation of ">5, 5-9, 10-14,15-19" data used for the year 2000 in place of "Under 18" category

***"20-24" used for the year 2000 in place of "18-24" category

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