

**FERTILITY OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN
IN CALIFORNIA**

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APRIL 1995

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared by **Mary Heim** and **Nancy Austin** under the general direction of **Linda Gage**, Chief, Demographic Research Unit. **Christine Stroiney** provided data processing. **Nancy Taylor** provided production support.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America
April 1995, San Francisco, California.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The estimate of foreign-born women in our target group (aged 15 to 54 years old) counted in the 1990 census is 2.4 million. This is double the 1.2 million enumerated in the 1980 census and a 300 percent increase from the 1970 figure.
- Nearly half the foreign-born women in California have come to the United States since 1980 and half of these have come into the country since 1985.
- In 1990 almost 80 percent of the foreign-born women in the target group are from Mexico, other Central American countries, or Asia.
- In 1990, foreign-born women 45 to 54 years old have a children-ever-born (CEB) ratio 23 percent higher than native-born women, 2.97 and 2.42 respectively.
- The race/ethnic composition of the foreign-born women rather than their likelihood to have children explains most of the difference in the ratio between foreign-born and native-born women.
- Immigrant women tend to have a higher children-ever-born ratio at younger ages than natives.
- Year of immigration seems to have a twofold effect on the fertility of women: very recent immigration lowers fertility and long-ago immigration lowers fertility.
- The CEB ratio for foreign-born White women is consistently lower than for the native-born, in general and across all socio-economic strata.
- Educational attainment has the greatest affect on the CEB ratio. The more education, the lower the CEB ratio.

INTRODUCTION

Many statements have been made about the fertility of immigrant women as compared to native-born. The purpose of this research is to use sample data from the 1970, 1980 and 1990 censuses to explore differences in fertility and, if found, measure those differences.

At the most basic level, does fertility of women in the child-bearing years vary between immigrants and native-born? The census does not specifically request information on immigrant status but does ask questions about place of birth and the year moved into the United States. Therefore, census tabulations on foreign-born women are used as a surrogate for immigrant women.

METHODOLOGY

The data were primarily developed from the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files from the 1990, 1980 and 1970 censuses. The five percent sample was used for 1990 and 1980. In 1970, a five percent sample was not created so the one percent sample was used.

The PUMS files are a subset of the full census sample. The data summarized from this file are estimates of the actual figures that would have been obtained from a 100-percent enumeration. Estimates derived from this sample are expected to be different from the 100-percent figures because they are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors. A further explanation of error rates is included in Appendix A.

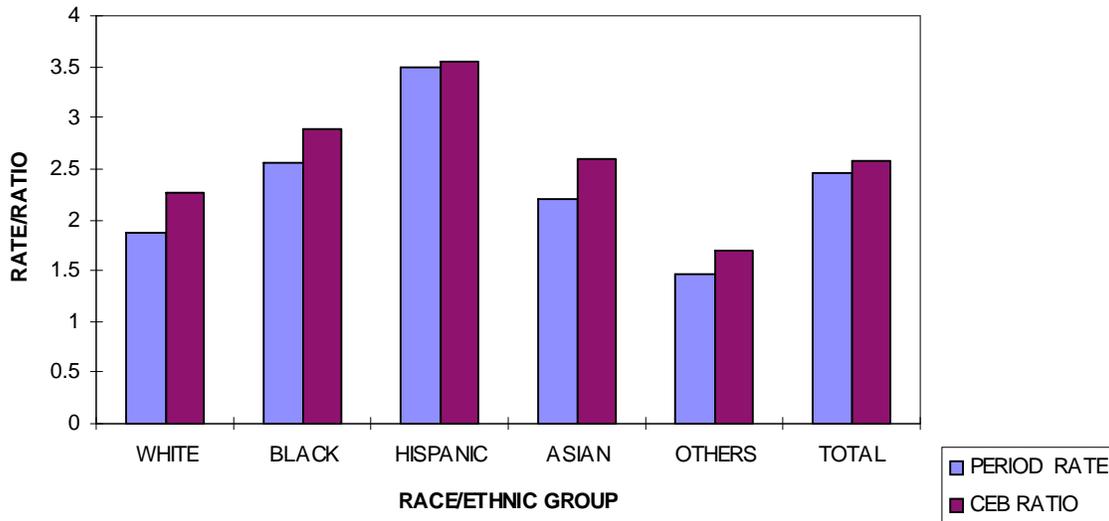
Data were developed for age groups 15-24, 25-34, and 35-44 to analyze timing differences among the various groups and for 45 to 54 to measure cohort or completed fertility. These measures have been calculated for 1970 and 1980 as well as 1990. The following characteristics were examined:

Race/ethnicity - In the 1970 census, the race and ethnicity categories were White, not Hispanic; Black, not Hispanic; Hispanic; and Other races, not Hispanic. In 1980 and 1990, however, we were able to break out the Asian and Pacific Islander, not Hispanic group, which is referred to as Asian, from Other races.

In 1970, "Hispanic" was measured using Spanish surname rather than a self-identified classification as in 1980 and 1990.

Place of birth - Place of birth was used to determine native or foreign-born. Foreign-born were further delineated by country of birth and year of immigration.

GRAPH 1 - 1990 COMPARISON OF PERIOD RATE AND CEB RATIO

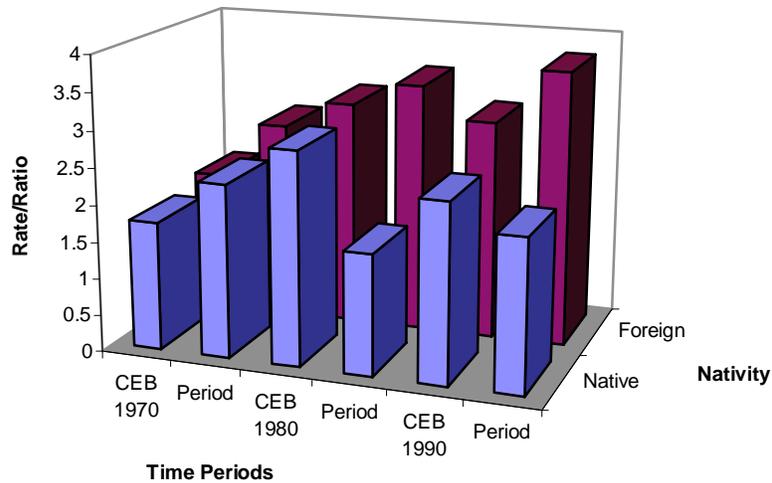


Fertility measures - The primary measure of immigrant fertility used in this analysis is the number of children-ever-born divided by the number of women (CEB ratio). This ratio is calculated by age, race/ethnicity, country of birth and year of entry to this country. For all women in California age 15 to 44 the period fertility rate for 1990, using vital statistics, was 2.45 compared to the 1990 CEB ratio for women age 45-54 ratio of 2.57. For Whites the comparable figures are 1.88 and 2.26; Blacks 2.53 and 2.88; Hispanics 3.49 and 3.55; and Asians and Others 2.17 and 2.62. (Graph 1)

The California State Department of Health Services also provided births for calendar year 1970, 1980 and 1990 by race/ethnicity of mother and her place of birth. Using the PUMS estimates of foreign and native-born women by age and race/ethnicity, period fertility rates were computed for the target group categories. Age groupings were in 10 year cohorts rather than 5 year and births to women under 15 and over 44 were added to the youngest and oldest groups respectively. From the three age groupings a period fertility rate was computed and, for 1990, a cohort fertility rate was estimated.

At all time points, the differences between native-born and foreign-born were much more pronounced in the period fertility measures, and the differences have recently become more pronounced. At any specific year the timing of births may vary with the cohort as well as nativity. However, over the entire cycle of childbearing, women have less variation in fertility. Therefore, a specific cohort varies the timing of fertility which compensates for some of the period differences. This is especially important to note when using period measures only. (Graph 2)

Graph 2 - Comparison of CEB Ratio and Period Fertility Across Time



For 1990, in addition to a CEB ratio and a total period rate, a cohort fertility rate was computed. (Graph 3)

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The estimate of foreign-born women in our target group (aged 15 to 54 years old) counted in the 1990 census is 2.4 million. This is double the 1.2 million enumerated in the 1980 census and a 300 percent increase from 1970. Over the same 20-year period the number of native-born women increased at less than one-tenth the foreign-born rate. Over time, the age structure of the native and foreign-born women has become more similar. The age structure for foreign-born women has changed very little. On the other hand, the age structure for native-born women has become older across time due to the aging of the baby boomers.

More than 80 percent of California's foreign-born women in the target age group are Hispanic or Asian. For native-born women the proportion is less than 20 percent. Hispanics and Asians also represented the vast majority of foreign-born women in 1980, more than 70 percent. The proportion of White foreign-born women dropped from 25 percent in 1980 to 16 percent in 1990. In 1970, however, the majority of foreign-born women were classified as White.

Graph 3 - 1990 Comparison

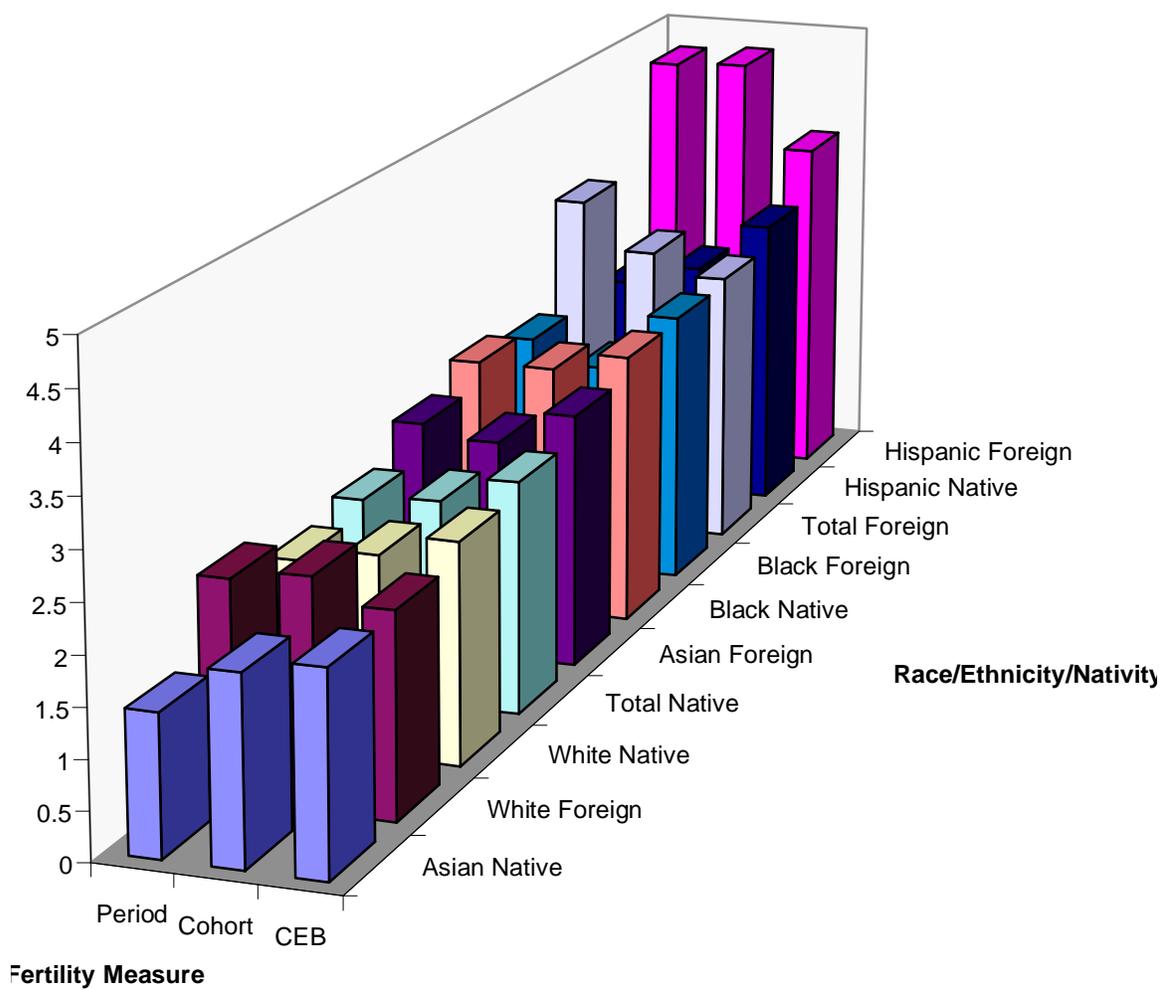


TABLE 1
RACE/ETHNICITY

<u>RACE GROUP</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>FOREIGN BORN</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>NATIVE</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
1990					
TOTAL	8,647,483	2,393,244	100.00%	6,254,239	100.00%
WHITE,NH	4,898,339	388,120	16.22%	4,510,219	72.11%
HISPANIC	2,154,631	1,245,061	52.02%	909,570	14.54%
ASIAN,NH	881,079	718,806	30.03%	162,273	2.59%
BLACK,NH	633,545	32,426	1.35%	601,119	9.61%
OTHER,NH	79,889	8,831	0.37%	71,058	1.14%
1980					
TOTAL	6,902,780	1,195,940	100.00%	5,706,840	100.00%
WHITE,NH	4,557,760	301,560	25.22%	4,256,200	74.58%
HISPANIC	1,304,280	584,280	48.86%	720,000	12.62%
BLACK,NH	548,980	13,340	1.12%	535,640	9.39%
ASIAN,NH	413,900	288,060	24.09%	125,840	2.21%
OTHER,NH	77,860	8,700	0.73%	69,160	1.21%
1970					
TOTAL	5,444,100	558,800	100.00%	4,885,300	100.00%
WHITE,NH	4,271,900	309,700	55.42%	3,962,200	81.10%
HISPANIC	596,100	167,900	30.05%	428,200	8.77%
BLACK,NH	383,000	4,800	0.86%	378,200	7.74%
ASIAN,NH	193,100	76,400	13.67%	116,700	2.39%

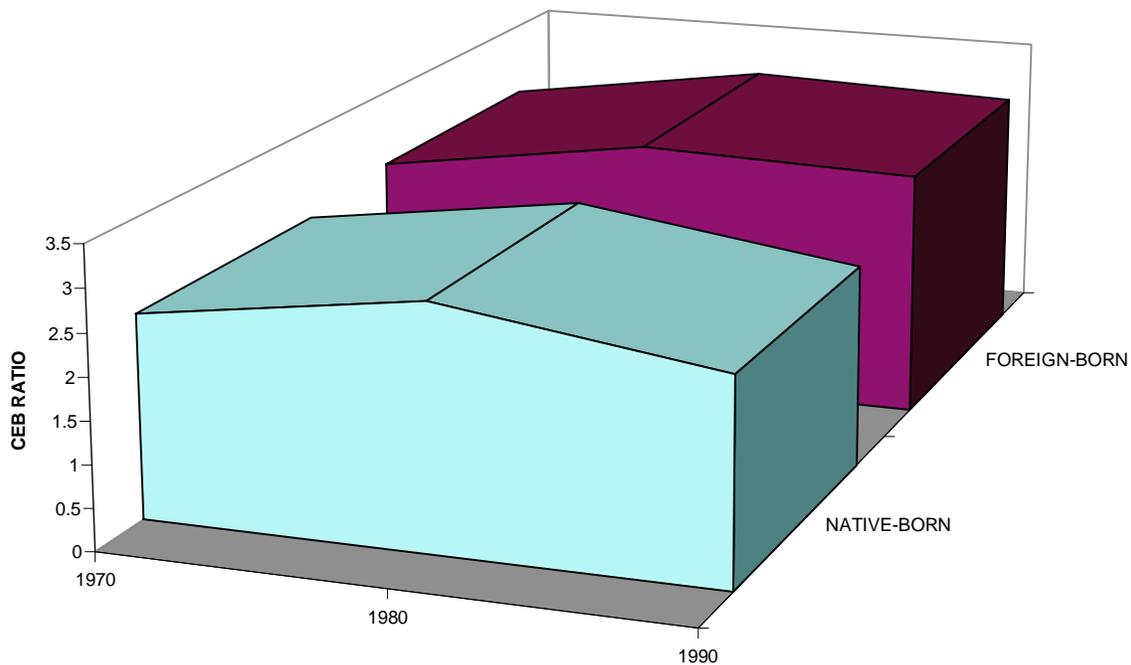
In 1990 almost 80 percent of foreign-born women in the target group are from Mexico, other Central American countries, or Asia. In 1980 just over 70 percent came from these areas and in 1970 the proportion was just over 50 percent. Nearly half the foreign-born women in California have come to the United States since 1980 and half of these have come into the country since 1985. About 30 percent came to the country in the 1970's and about 20 percent prior to 1970. A more detailed breakdown is shown on Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: FOREIGN-BORN WOMEN BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
TOTAL	2,275,261	100.00%	1,185,040	100.00%	693,800	100.00%
MEXICO	871,642	38.31%	433,080	36.55%	142,600	20.55%
ASIA	781,214	34.34%	338,180	28.54%	114,800	16.55%
OTHER CENTRAL AMERICA	222,228	9.77%	74,340	6.27%	142,600	20.55%
EUROPE	215,007	9.45%	200,620	16.93%	181,800	26.20%
CARIBBEAN & S. AMERICA	94,694	4.16%	64,220	5.42%	37,200	5.36%
NORTH AMERICA	48,558	2.13%	51,200	4.32%	61,500	8.86%
AFRICA	23,676	1.04%	11,920	1.01%	3,400	0.49%
OCEANIA	18,242	0.80%	11,480	0.97%	9,900	1.43%

In 1990, foreign-born women 45 to 54 years old have a CEB ratio 23 percent higher than native-born women, 2.97 and 2.42 respectively. In 1970 and 1980 the difference between foreign-born and native-born was six percent. Over time, the CEB ratio for foreign-born women 45-54 years old rose from the 1970 level of 2.56 to 3.07 in 1980 and by 1990 had dropped slightly to 2.97. At the same time, native-born women followed a similar pattern starting at 2.41 in 1970, rising to 2.89 in 1980 and falling back to 2.42 in 1990. The CEB ratios for 45 to 54 year olds for 1990 relate to women born between the years 1936 and 1945, pre-baby boom women. (Graph 4)

GRAPH 4 - CHANGE IN CEB RATIO OVER TIME



A cross-sectional analysis shown in Table 3, indicates that, although the foreign-born CEB ratio is 23 percent higher in the 45 to 54 age group, it is 54 percent higher for foreign-born women aged 15 to 24 years old. For the age group 25 to 34, it is 36 percent higher and; for those 35 to 44, it is 40 percent higher. Of foreign-born women age 45 to 54 years, Hispanics have the highest CEB ratio at 3.76 followed by Asians. Foreign-born White women have the lowest fertility at 2.09. The pattern for native-born women follows a similar pattern with the exception of Asian women who record a lower CEB ratio than native-born White women.

TABLE 3

CHILDREN EVER BORN (CEB) - 1990 Census
(UNIVERSE: WOMEN 15-54 IN CALIFORNIA)**1990****TOTAL**

AGE GROUP	FOREIGN-BORN			NATIVE-BORN		
	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB
15-24	566,504	242,316	0.43	1,518,229	427,471	0.28
25-34	797,267	1,264,987	1.59	1,960,618	2,295,388	1.17
35-44	633,232	1,518,788	2.40	1,682,705	2,894,477	1.72
45-54	396,241	1,177,374	2.97	1,092,687	2,645,237	2.42
TOTAL	2,393,244	4,203,465	1.76	6,254,239	8,262,573	1.32

WHITE

AGE GROUP	FOREIGN-BORN			NATIVE-BORN		
	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB
15-24	58,679	11,505	0.20	950,151	217,426	0.23
25-34	114,311	114,068	1.00	1,407,281	1,495,247	1.06
35-44	112,840	187,131	1.66	1,293,621	2,085,340	1.61
45-54	102,290	213,345	2.09	859,166	1,955,588	2.28
TOTAL	388,120	526,049	1.36	4,510,219	5,753,601	1.28

BLACK

AGE GROUP	FOREIGN-BORN			NATIVE-BORN		
	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB
15-24	7,705	2,402	0.31	152,989	72,456	0.47
25-34	13,404	16,961	1.27	193,598	282,245	1.46
35-44	7,805	16,001	2.05	152,857	305,547	2.00
45-54	3,512	10,217	2.91	101,675	293,022	2.88
TOTAL	32,426	45,581	1.41	601,119	953,270	1.59

ASIAN

AGE GROUP	FOREIGN-BORN			NATIVE-BORN		
	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB
15-24	153,809	26,375	0.17	59,303	4,890	0.08
25-34	220,565	255,066	1.16	48,871	31,949	0.65
35-44	217,769	435,689	2.00	34,589	48,572	1.40
45-54	126,663	337,972	2.67	19,510	39,990	2.05
TOTAL	718,806	1,055,102	1.47	162,273	125,401	0.77

HISPANIC

AGE GROUP	FOREIGN-BORN			NATIVE-BORN		
	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB	WOMEN	BIRTHS	CEB
15-24	343,995	201,243	0.59	338,330	124,726	0.37
25-34	446,083	874,052	1.96	289,263	452,416	1.56
35-44	292,326	873,999	2.99	181,897	413,353	2.27
45-54	162,657	612,335	3.76	100,080	319,992	3.20
TOTAL	1,245,061	2,561,629	2.06	909,570	1,310,487	1.44

The CEB ratio for foreign-born White women is consistently lower than for the native-born, in general and across all socio-economic strata. They have historically migrated from Europe. However, this is shifting to countries of the former Soviet Union. Since Europe has a lower total fertility rate than the United States, 1.7 to 2.1; and the former Soviet Union has a total fertility rate of 2.3 (Jamison, 1994), we may see a rise in the CEB ratio for this group in the future. From 1990 to 1992, the number of immigrants from the former Soviet Union have increased 52.3 percent while Europeans have increased at half that rate. Therefore, year of entry is important when looking at the CEB ratio for foreign-born White women. Recent immigrants have a CEB ratio of 2.56 compared to the 2.17 for all foreign-born White women.

Hispanic women consistently had the highest CEB ratio within each socio-economic segment. Their CEB ratio was often over 5.0. The foreign-born women had more children than the native-born.

A cohort CEB ratio was computed for women born between 1946 and 1955 who were foreign-born. In 1970, when they were between 15 and 24 years old, the CEB ratio was 0.423. This was about seven percent higher than native-born women. By 1980 the cohort CEB ratio had quadrupled and was now a third higher than the native-born cohort. In 1990, nearing the end of their fertility, the foreign-born CEB ratio had nearly doubled and was about 40 percent higher than native-born women.

The CEB ratios for foreign-born women by country of birth follow the same pattern as that of women by race and ethnicity. The Mexican ratio is more than twice the level of the European ratio which is less than two. The second highest ratio is for other Central American countries. For Asian countries, the CEB ratio was slightly higher than for native-born women in general.

Year of immigration seems to have a two pronged effect on the fertility of women. For women in the target age group, 15 to 44 years old, recent immigration (within 5 years) lowers the CEB ratio except for women 45 to 54 where there is no effect. This is most likely because they have already completed bearing children. For women who have been in the United States for 20 or more years, the CEB ratio drops. The CEB ratios peak for women who arrived during the 1970s.

In general, the CEB ratios are lower for foreign-born women who have been in the country longer. However, a detailed analysis by country of birth and year of entry would be necessary to attribute this to assimilation rather than the changing characteristics of the immigrants. (Kahn, 1991) There is a sharp increase, 37 percent, in the CEB ratio of Asian women arriving from 1980 to 1984 over those who arrived prior to 1980. This is probably due to the increase of refugees from rural Cambodia and Laos rather than the cities of Vietnam.

For Hispanic women, the CEB ratio of foreign-born women is always higher than for native-born. Although the magnitude of the difference may change the relationship remains consistent regardless of the year of entry for the foreign-born.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Increased Numbers of Foreign-born Women The number of women in the target age group coming to the United States has increased significantly since 1970. There are a number of reasons for this increase. The Bureau of the Census estimates that undocumented immigration began increasing in the 1970s and continued strong into the 1980s. It is believed that this undocumented immigration was job-driven and probably concentrated in men of working age. Beginning in 1976, the nation and California began to receive large numbers of Southeast Asian refugees as the Vietnam War ended. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, commonly referred to as IRCA, allowed many of the undocumented immigrants who had been residing in the country since 1982 to legalize. Today the largest immigration categories are relatives of legal immigrants and United States citizens. Because California has in the past received large shares of both undocumented and refugee flows, the State continues to receive large numbers of legal immigrants through family reunification. For these reasons, it is reasonable that the majority of foreign-born women are from Mexico, other Central American countries and Asia. These are also the countries from which we can expect to receive Hispanic and Asian immigrants.

Fertility Differences As was shown in Table 3, foreign-born women in the 1990 census have a higher CEB ratio than native-born women, 2.97 versus 2.42 for women aged 45 to 54. This phenomena is apparent for each race/ethnic group with the exception of White women where the foreign-born CEB is 2.09 while the native-born CEB is 2.28.

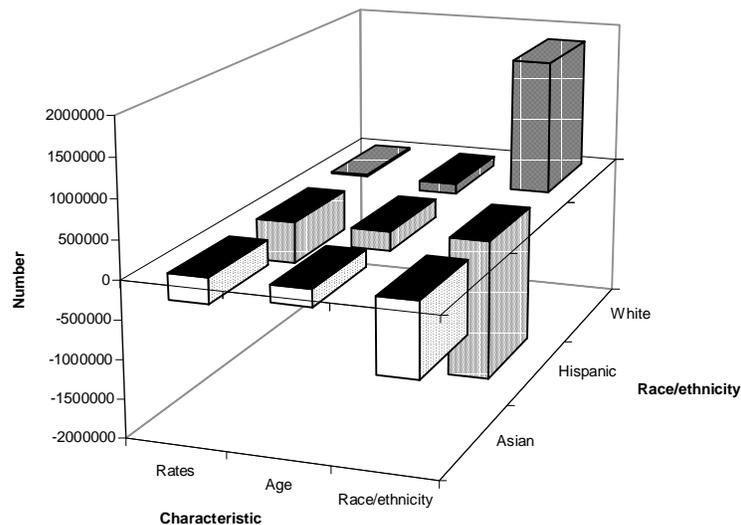
The underlying causes of the higher CEB ratios for foreign-born women are shown in Graph 5. Applying native-born CEB ratios by race to foreign-born women of the same race causes the number of Asian births to decline by a little over 300,000 and the number of Hispanic births to drop more than a half a million. White births, on the other hand, would increase nearly 25,000. Because of the small differences between the native and foreign-born ratios and the few number of Black women and Other women, the number of births does not change significantly.

To measure the effect of composition, the race/ethnic composition of the native population was imposed on the foreign-born women. Limiting Hispanic immigrants to the same proportion they represent in the native population, decreases the number of births by almost 2 million, four times the impact of differential CEB ratios. Similar analysis for the Asian population shows that limiting the immigrants to the native proportions lowers the number of births by nearly 1 million compared to 300,000 due to differential fertility. In contrast, there would be nearly 2 million more White births if

White women represented their native proportion in the immigrant population. As these numbers demonstrate, the major differences between immigrant and native CEB ratios are due to the race/ethnic composition of the immigrants. As discussed earlier, race/ethnic identification is closely related to country of birth (Kahn, 1991).

Age differences between the native and foreign-born populations consistently result in fewer births for native-born women, demonstrating that foreign-born women are more concentrated in the higher childbearing age groups. For White women the number is relatively small, less than 150,000, but almost six times greater than the fertility difference. For Asians the difference is almost exactly the same as fertility and for Hispanics the effect is about twice as much as fertility.

Graph 5 - Birth Differences In Foreign-Born Applying Native Characteristics



(Graph 5) Most of the difference in the number of children of native-born and foreign-born women is due to country of birth of the foreign-born women, as measured by their race group, and that immigrants tend to be younger than the native population. In total these factors are offsetting and not apparent.

CEB Ratios for the Youngest Age Group The PUMS information also highlights some timing differences in fertility between native and immigrant women. Immigrant women tend to have a higher CEB ratio at younger ages than natives. Eighteen percent of native women are married, while 28 percent of foreign-born women are married in the same age group. The younger age at marriage is a probable cause of higher fertility in that age group.

Timing of Immigration and Fertility The effects of timing on fertility seem to support previous studies (Bean, *etal*, 1984; Rumbaut, Weeks 1986; Kahn, 1991) which show that initially the disruption of immigration has a short-term lowering effect on fertility. The different pattern for the women past childbearing age is explained by the fact that their children were born prior to immigration.

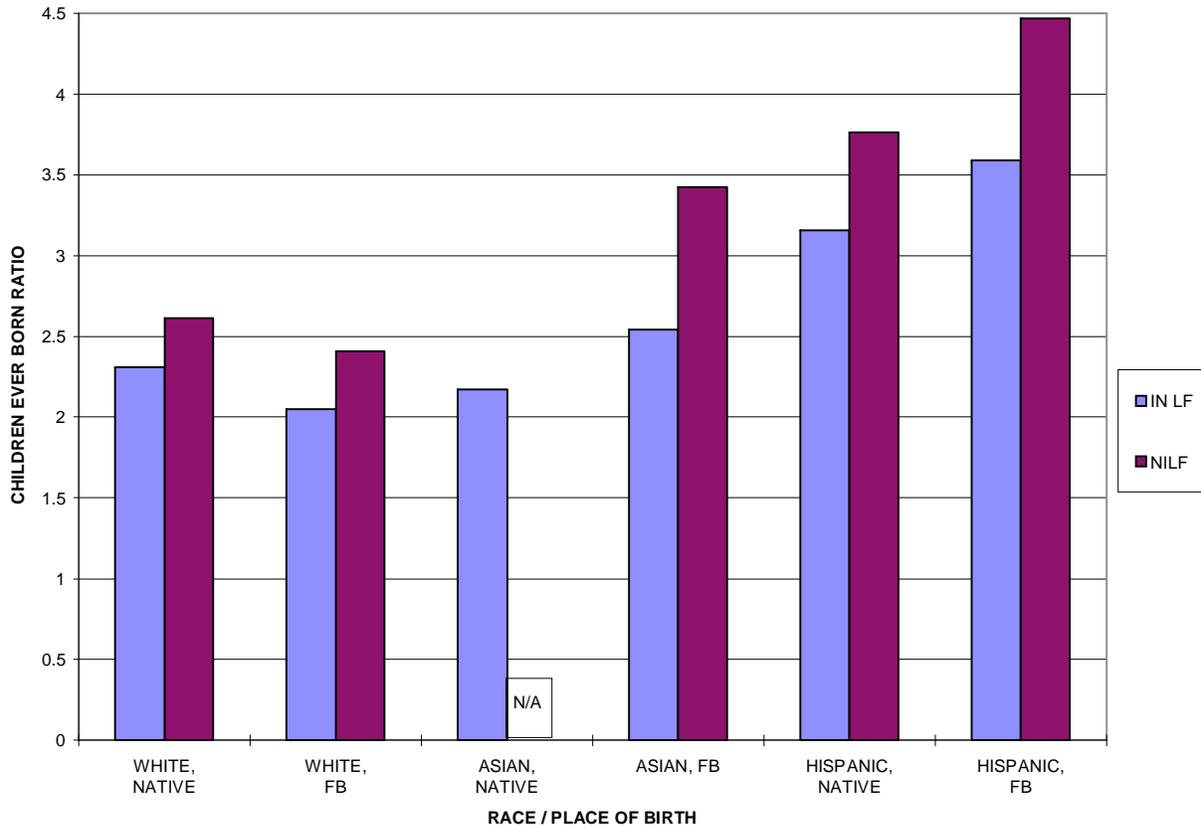
Differences in fertility by country of birth for the most part reflect differences in fertility in those countries. However, for Asian and African countries, there is wide variation among the many individual countries.

Socio-economic Effects The factors investigated were: labor force status, educational attainment, and household income. We also looked for possible effects of year of entry into the United States on the CEB ratio.

In an effort to reduce the influence of age and marital status of the different race groups on their CEB ratio, analysis focused on ever-married women, age 45 to 54 residing in California during the 1990 census. Analysis of marital status is not possible for California given the relatively small number of never-married women with children. Also the limited number of foreign-born Black women and the Other races women preclude separate analysis.

Labor Force Status: Women not in the labor force have a much higher CEB ratio than those in the labor force regardless of nativity or race. The largest difference between CEB ratios is in foreign-born Asian women - 3.424 for women not in the labor force and 2.544 for women in the labor force, a difference of 34.6 percent. Within either labor force cohort, the pattern is the same - the lowest CEB ratio is for foreign-born White women and the highest is for foreign-born Hispanic women.

GRAPH 6 - LABOR FORCE STATUS



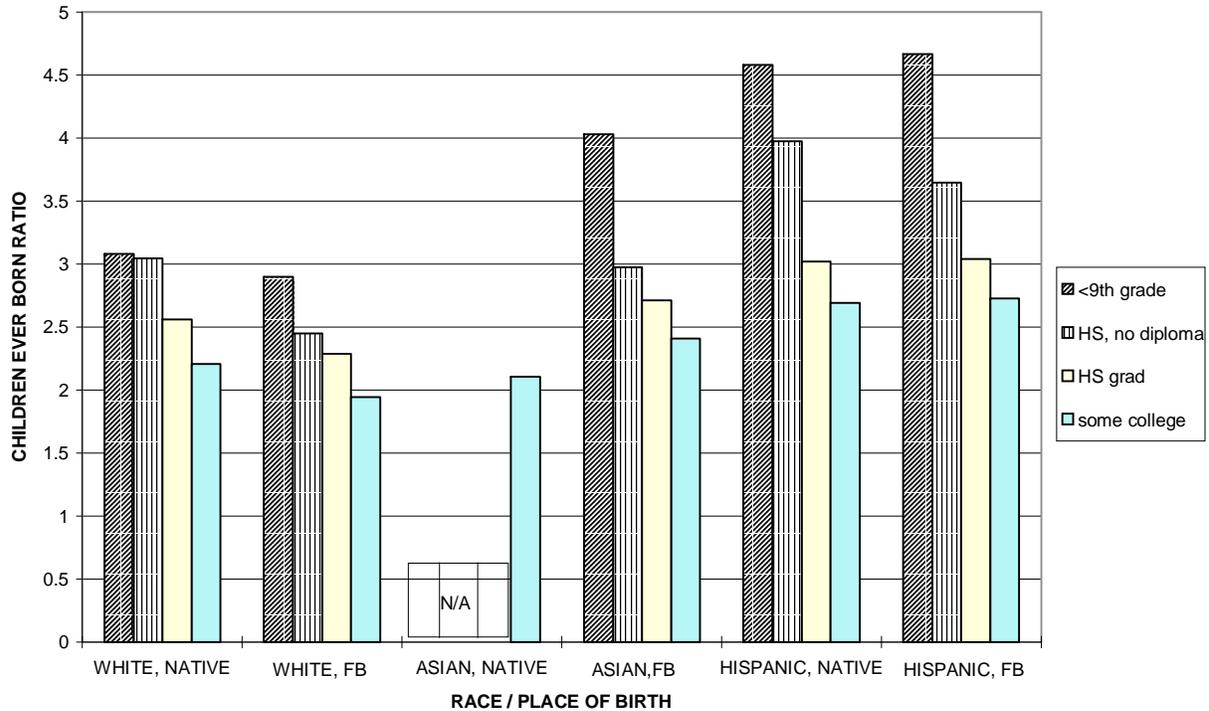
For foreign-born Hispanic women who have been in the United States for 20 or more years, the CEB ratio for women in the labor force is very close to that of native-born women but still higher. For women not in the labor force the CEB ratio for foreign-born women is over 4.0 for all years of entry. The CEB ratio for Hispanic women is significantly higher than the other two race groups. In fact the CEB ratio for foreign-born Hispanic women in the labor force is higher than that for the foreign-born Asian women not in the labor force.

Analysis for Asian women is hampered by the small number of native-born not in the labor force. However, analysis for those in the labor force reveal that the CEB ratio for native-born Asian women is lower than that for native-born White women but higher than for foreign-born Whites.

Educational Attainment: Educational attainment has the greatest affect on the CEB ratio of any of the socio-economic factors studied. The four levels of education were: less than 9th grade, some high school but no diploma, high school graduation and some college or degree.

Women who had an educational level of less than ninth grade had a dramatically higher CEB ratio than those with some college or a degree. The more education - the lower the CEB ratio. The one exception to this was native-born White women. They had very little change from less than 9th grade to some high school but no diploma while other groups had a noticeable drop in CEB ratio.

GRAPH 7 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



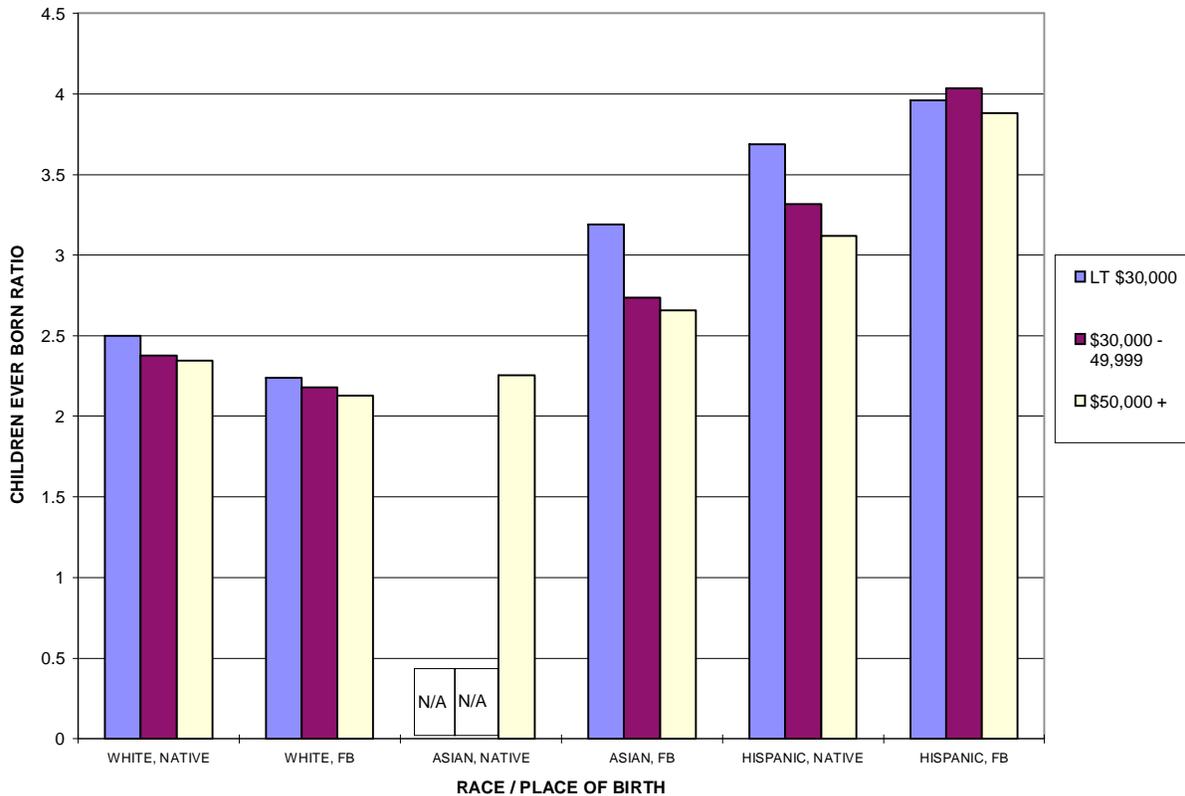
The widest spread was for Hispanic women 4.66 for less than ninth grade to 2.73 for college - a difference of 41.5 percent or almost two children. These data are for foreign-born women, however, the difference for native-born was the same although the CEB ratios were slightly lower - 4.58 and 2.69.

Because of their small numbers, there are no reliable data for native-born Asian women for the three lower educational levels. However, the importance of education in the Asian community is indicated since 72 percent of the native-born Asian women have some college or a degree. This compares to 63 percent for White women and 30 percent for Hispanic women, native-born. For foreign-born, Asian and White women were college-educated half the time compared to 17 percent for Hispanics.

Household Income: To develop reliable estimates three ranges of household income were used - less than \$30,000, \$30,000 to \$49,999, and \$50,000 or more. The median household income for California was \$35,798.

Household income appears to have little effect on the CEB ratio within each nativity and race cohort. In fact for foreign-born Hispanic and White women and native-born White women, there is no significant difference. Foreign-born White women with a household income of less than \$30,000 had a lower CEB ratio than all other groups.

GRAPH 8 - HOUSEHOLD INCOME



CONCLUSION

In California there has been much discussion of immigration and its long term effects on the State. This paper has explored the question of differential fertility between immigrants and native-born Californians. We know from the decennial censuses that the proportion of immigrants to total Californians has increased significantly over the past 20-years. In addition, the characteristics of the immigrants has changed over time. The CEB ratios developed from the census enumeration and compared to other measures of fertility do show that immigrant women have higher fertility than native-born. However, a more detailed look shows that the country of birth composition, as measured by race/ethnicity, explains most of this difference.

APPENDIX A

Since these estimates were developed from a sample, they are expected to be different from those that would be calculated if the entire population were enumerated. They are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors.

For the total women in California across most age and race/ethnicity groups, the error rate for all three years, 1970, 1980 and 1990, was ten percent or less. The error rates in 1990 and 1980 were about half those in 1970 since the sample for those censuses was larger.

The width of the confidence interval also varied within age groups by race/ethnicity group. For example, the error rate for White, not Hispanic women age 35-44 years was 0.7 percent in 1990; while the rate for women of Other races, not Hispanic in the same age group was 5.8 percent.

Due to their relatively small representation in the foreign-born population, the estimates for Black, not Hispanic and Other races, not Hispanic are suspect. However, for the other race/ethnic groups, the error rates were less than seven percent.

As it was for the total, the error rates for the 1970 data were higher than for the 1980 and 1990 data. As in the later censuses the smaller representation for Black women in the foreign-born population results in a high error rate.

The table below presents the error rates for women by race/ethnicity for the 1990, 1980 and 1970 censuses as developed from the PUMS files:

<u>Total women:</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1970</u>
Total	0.2	0.3	0.7
White, not Hispanic	0.4	0.4	0.8
Black, not Hispanic	1.1	1.1	2.9
Asian, not Hispanic	0.9	1.3	---
Other races, not Hispanic	3.0	3.1	4.1 **
Hispanic	0.6	0.7	2.3

Foreign-born women:

Total	1.0	1.3	2.8
White, not Hispanic	2.5	2.7	3.8
Black, not Hispanic	8.8	13.0	30.7
Asian, not Hispanic	1.8	2.8	---
Other races, not Hispanic	16.8	16.1	7.7 **
Hispanic	1.4	1.9	5.2

** Includes Asian & Pacific Islander, not Hispanic

A complete listing of the error rates and confidence intervals is available upon request.

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