Community Conditions and Employment Insecurity in Chicago
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**INTRODUCTION**

- Prominent sociological arguments suggest that labor market expectations and opportunities are influenced by community context, but empirical tests of the association are rare.
- I examine perceived and objective employment insecurity in a large, diverse sample of residents of widely varying Chicago neighborhoods, drawing on multiple theories:
  - Neighborhood concentrated disadvantage
  - Spatial mismatch between jobs and residential locations
  - Queueing and competition between immigrants and native born
  - Value of immigrant or ethnic enclaves for different workers
- Also examined whether importance of community conditions varies by race/ethnicity, immigrant status and socioeconomic status of individual residents

**METHODS**

- Chicago Community Adult Health Study (CCAHs) 2001-2003
  - New information on employment insecurity for immigrants and Hispanic Americans, plus whites and African Americans
  - N = 3,622 employed, 2,135 employed or looking for work
  - Sample drawn from 341 neighborhood clusters (HC = 2 census tracts/2,000 residents) defined by PHNCH project
  - Community data drawn from 2000 U.S. Census, 3 digit occupation-level data drawn from Current Population Survey
- Outcomes:
  - Perceived job insecurity (worried about losing job)
  - Perceived labor market insecurity (worried about finding another if lost current job)
  - Currently looking for work
  - Had a recent job loss or unemployment spell
- Key predictors:
  - Individual: human capital measures & sociodemographic characteristics, occupation-level unemployment rate
  - NC-level: dummies of unemployment rate, dummies of N African American residents, top quartile % foreign born residents
  - Multilevel models estimated using HLM 4.0 can assess contribution of individual and neighborhood characteristics, as well as cross-level interactions – do community conditions matter more for some workers?

**RESULTS**

- CCAHS respondents vary in perceived and actual employment insecurity and in human capital

**LIMITATIONS & DISCUSSION**

- Data are unique, designed to study community effects, compare understudied R/LU groups, but still have weaknesses
  - Self-selection into communities likely and could bias results
  - Don’t have: network data, organizational firm information, information on respondents’ job searching
  - Analysis omits discouraged workers (by definition)

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