

**Mobility and Mobility Contexts: Modeling and Interpreting
Residential Change in Australia***

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Abstract

Models of mobility confirm the applicability of the disequilibrium (or adjustment) approach to residential change in Australia. Households who are younger move more often and family change precipitates residential change, and for longer distance moves being unemployed increases the probability of moving. The disruption of divorce and separation, as expected, increased the probability of moving. Measures of home, neighborhood and community satisfaction provide modest support for the relevance of place effects on the likelihood of mobility. The measures of neighborhood and community satisfaction are marginally significant and indicate that geography and place matter in the chance of moving. Place matters for both long and short distance moves and satisfaction with neighborhood as well as the house decreases the likelihood of a long distance move. The examination of reasons for moves and their translation into residential outcomes paints a positive picture for housing change but a less positive scenario for job opportunity satisfaction. I report evidence that supports the concept that we “move to improve”. A substantial proportion of movers, either maintain their locality status or improve their satisfaction with the move.

Keywords: Mobility, migration, housing satisfaction, neighborhoods

JEL classification: J62, R21, R23

Introduction

Residential mobility and migration are the processes whereby families change their houses and their residential locations whether it is a neighborhood, a city or a state. Mobility and migration have been central in modern western society especially with the economic expansion of cities in the 20th century, and have been fundamental in changing metropolitan neighborhoods and communities. The outcomes of the myriad individual changes can be seen in changing ethnic neighborhoods and the rise and decline of towns and cities in Europe, America, Australia, and increasingly across global metropolitan areas. While natural population increase is still important in demographic change increasingly it is the moves of families and individuals which is modifying the residential fabric of cities. Moreover, mobility is more complex than three or four decades ago when not only was there less international movement, the moves were more clearly structured into those which involved job changes and job seeking and those which involved improving housing and neighborhood locations.

Three decades ago we reliably argued that households moved long distances for employment reasons and short distances to adjust their housing needs and both were linked to categories of the life cycle. Now with changing family structures, the increase in two worker households and changing organization of labor markets, that dichotomy is less persuasive as a conceptual structure for understanding residential change. The life course is both a better organizing structure and provides a way of incorporating the richness of changing residential behaviors. It is also a way in which we can explore the levels of satisfaction that arise from residential moves. The rich detail of the HILDA survey is unusual in its depth of questioning on both mobility and levels of satisfaction. This paper explores the intersection of reasons for moves and residential outcomes and the levels of expressed satisfaction drawn from these moves. Do households resolve dissatisfaction by moving and to what extent do they make gains in their levels of satisfaction. To do this the paper re-examines the disequilibrium model of residential change in the Australian context and explores the variation in mobility behavior from the detailed reasons for move from the Australian Housing Income and Labor Survey. Specifically, I ask, does mobility bring increased satisfaction across housing, community and employment outcomes.

The Context and Previous Research

Research on mobility in Australia already provides substantive findings on mobility and migration and has confirmed the broad international findings that younger households who are renters have significantly higher mobility propensities than married owner households with children (Hassan et al 1996;

Bill and Mitchell, 2006; Andrienko, 2010). A specific study of the reasons for move from the 2007-2008 Survey of Income and Housing also emphasized that mobility is age dependent, related to family structure, and is closely tied to the life course (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The survey also examined barriers to moving and the way in which younger households are increasingly likely to move back to the parental home, a finding which reflects the difficulty of entering the housing market.

Much of the concern with mobility both in the international context and Australia has been with whether or not disadvantaged households can escape poverty and improve their residential opportunities. In aggregate studies it appears that groups characterized as socially disadvantaged, such as the low-income and unemployed, generally exhibit lower levels of geographic mobility than the population in general (Maher, 1992, Maher, 1994). Further, the studies also suggest that these low rates of mobility can lead to increasing concentrations of poverty (Ryan and Whelan, 2010). The unemployed often move to areas where the living costs are lower (Dockery, 2000) and mobility overall across neighborhoods tends to favor those with higher SES levels relative to the areas they are leaving. It is this process that in turn can generate increasing area deprivation (Ryan and Whelan, 2010).

But the general view is that neighborhood characteristics have a relatively small impact on the overall power of the regression models to explain mobility (Shields and Wooden, 2003). At the same time they, like many other studies, suggest that where you live does play a role in determining your life satisfaction. This finding is consistent with North American and European research which suggests that living in poor neighborhoods can influence a range of outcomes including school outcomes and the health of urban populations (Brooks-Gunn, 1983). Several papers in the European context have suggested that neighborhood deprivation does have negative implication for households in those neighborhoods (Freidrichs, et al 2003). However, nearly all of this research is based on trying to tie outcomes causally to particular characteristics of neighborhoods. That is the research has usually focused on objective measures rather than subjective evaluations of neighborhoods. In general studies have not asked people whether neighborhoods matter to households and to which households. If they do express concerns with neighborhood do they translate those concerns into particular choices and outcomes? That is a question which guides a central part of the present analysis. By focusing on what people say may be as important as trying to link observed behaviors with objective neighborhood characteristics.

Recent work in a New Zealand context of neighborhood deprivation also suggests that the level of deprivation per se measured at the neighborhood of origin plays only a minor role in accounting for the likelihood of changing address

whether controlling for the attributes of the population movers and stayers or not (Clark and Morrison, 2011). However, when people do end up moving, the relative deprivation score of the neighborhood of origin plays a highly statistically significant role in constraining the degree to which deprivation levels can be reduced (or raised). Where you begin matters on your outcome choices and may affect your overall outcomes by constraining you to certain kinds of neighborhoods.

Related to the neighborhood issue is the overall issue of satisfaction with living environments. The general consensus is that those who report dissatisfaction with their housing are more likely to move and that housing satisfaction plays a mediating role between the individual's residential characteristics and their moving propensities (Lu, 2002; Joong-Hwan, 2003; Diaz-Serrano and Stoyanova, 2010). Clearly, satisfaction matters in the mobility migration process, at least for those who can make moves to deal with their disequilibrium between what they have and what they perceive as their housing and neighborhood needs. Much of that work has stressed the role of housing space, and so households move in order to adjust their new household size to their housing needs. Substantial research in the United States and Europe (Clark and Dieleman, 1996, Clark, and Huang, 2003, 2004) has shown that there is a direct link between the need for more space and household relocation decisions. But at the same time we know that some move for opportunity and others for necessity and it may be the former which bring the greater long term success (Marshall, 2004). This paper will specifically address the issue of constrained/involuntary moves.

Theory and Concepts

A now substantial body of research has shown how residential mobility and migration are embedded in the functioning of our modern society (Clark and Dieleman, 1996, DiPasquale, and Wheaton, 1996 for reviews). As households and individuals make their myriad individual decisions to move and relocate within or from one city to another they change the places they move to and the places they leave. The underlying drive to change houses and relocate between cities is part of a strong desire that all individuals have to improve their position in the world. We have codified much of our work on residential mobility and migration in the context of the human capital model in which households seek the best location for occupational success, for raising a family, and improving their socioeconomic status more generally. We know of course that households do not *just* make an economic decision about where to live or where to move. Family structure itself, especially with the changing role of women in the household, has an important role to play in residential and migratory outcomes (Boyle et al 2001).

The core of the residential /migration model is the notion of disequilibrium between the current context and a perceived future context whether it is an employment opportunity or the opportunity to bring housing consumption into balance with housing needs (Hanushek and Quigley, 1978). The events which occur in the life course are the triggering events which can stimulate residential change. These triggers have been the focus of substantial research on migration and mobility in the attempts to understand the role of family change. These studies focus on the effects of childbirth (Clark, Deurloo and Dieleman, 1994), divorce (Dieleman and Schouw, 1989), and marriage (Odland and Shumway, 1993, Mulder and Wagner, 1993) on migration and mobility. Migration and mobility are then adjustment processes which allow individuals and households to bring their locations in equilibrium with their perceived needs for specific locations and quantities of housing. Clearly changes in any one of the occupational, family or housing careers can lead to changes in the others and often those changes are age-related.

Our theory of mobility has been enriched by being embedded within the life course approach to mobility and migration (Mulder and Wagner, 1993). To reiterate people transition through a variety of “states” and their moves are linked to specific changes in occupations, relationships, and additions and deletions to the family composition. The advantage of the life course over the earlier use of the “stage” in the life cycle is that it does not categorize or segment people into particular age groups, and then attempt to examine their behavior as a response to being in that age group. Rather, the life course examines the process of change, where age is important, but is no longer the defining characteristic of the changes that occur. Thus, of two individuals one may marry early, or right out of college and another much later in their thirties, but both can proceed in a somewhat linear fashion to buy a house and have children, though at quite different points in their age trajectory. Clearly, the marriage “event” occurred at two very different ages but the process is part of a life course and it is that course that is important in the outcome not the age cohort per se.

Unlike traditional life cycle research that focused on the normative sequencing and timing of events, the life-course perspective emphasizes the variability in the number, timing, and sequencing of events in parallel careers across people’s lives, and in so doing, draws attention to the variability and unpredictable nature of the life course (Rindfuss et al. 1987). The ‘disorder’ calls into question the utility of thinking in terms of orderly paths in the housing and occupational careers of families. In fact we know that where once marriage occurred in the early 20s and was rapidly followed by children and further residential moves. Now, marriage takes place much later if at all, and many households remain without children, or children are also deferred until later in the life course. I suggest that there is more complexity in the migration and

mobility process than is revealed by using a mobility-housing/migration-employment dichotomy, and that outcomes themselves maybe more contextualized than simply assuming that migration brings better jobs and local moves improve housing.

Data, contexts and Models

The data which is the basis for this research is from Waves 8 and 9 of the Household, Income and Labor Dynamics in Australia survey (HILDA). The survey is a longitudinal survey of approximately 7,600 households with about 19,900 respondents. The survey is modeled on and is similar to surveys in the US (the Panel Study of Income Dynamics , PSID) and the British Households Panel Survey, now the “Understanding Society” study. In the present study the mobility measures and variables are drawn from the primary respondent representing the household. A consequent analysis will explore the effects of multiple person responses in the household for multi-person households. It is a yearly survey begun in 2001 and is ongoing. The survey in Australia covers a wide array of economic and labor market measures but also has detailed data on household composition and migration. Unlike most other panel surveys the HILDA survey collects data on perceived outcomes of residential location and satisfaction with a set of measures of housing and job satisfaction. These values will be an integral part of the analysis of the outcomes of migration and mobility in the present study.

The present study selected variables from the household file and the continuing respondent file (Appendix 1). The analysis relies on the standard variables used in models of mobility including age, marital status, family status (presence of children), a measure of mobility and distance-moved, tenure, income and employment status. As the study also asks about the potential effect of place characteristics, measures of satisfaction (subjective evaluations) of these characteristics were incorporated into the models of mobility. As the focus of the study is also on the outcomes of mobility and migration these same measures of satisfaction were used to compute the changes in satisfaction with a change in residence. The change in satisfaction is then the dependent variable with controls for family composition and estimates of the significance of the move on satisfaction outcomes. I also include measures of change in family composition – specifically the birth of a child and change in marital status between the waves.

In Australia as in other countries residential change is highly distance dependent. Most moves involve quite short distances – nearly two thirds of all moves are less than 10 kilometers involving quite local changes (Figure 1). The mean distance moved for the 2008-2009 moves (constrained to only moves less than 100k) was slightly more than 12 kilometers though with a fairly large

standard deviation (17.4K). Still, there are a significant number of moves of more than 30 kilometers, a distance which usually signifies a change in labor markets. About 12 percent of moves (234) are of distances greater than 100k. The results are consistent with those reported by Wilkins, Warren and Hahn (2009).

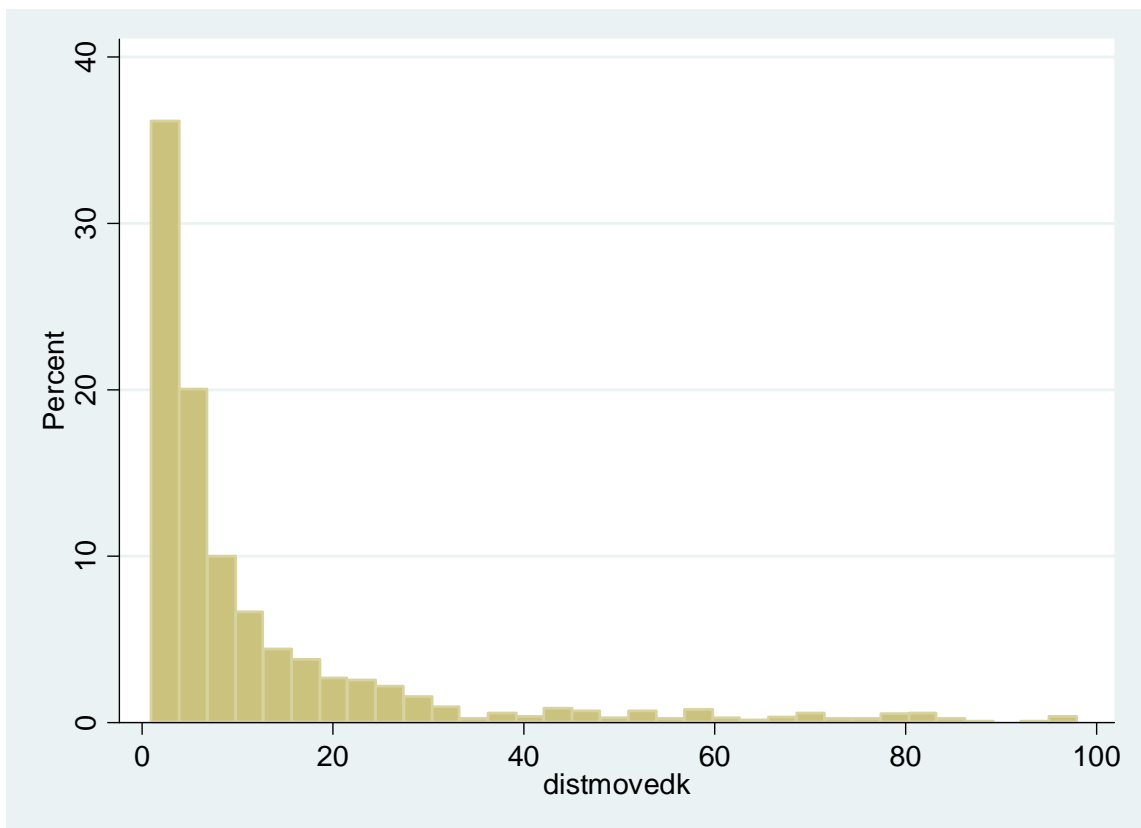


Figure 1: The distance decay of moves less than 100k between 2008-2009

The presentation has four sections. Before focusing on the new analyses and findings, the first section (1) re-estimates the disequilibrium (adjustment) model of mobility in Australian contexts. These models are the context and background for (2) studies of the potential effect of measures of satisfaction and their significance in the mobility process and (3) the role of reasons in the mobility process. The final section (4) of the analysis asks whether movers are more satisfied and models the “move to improve” hypothesis. In essence, does the move bring greater satisfaction across measures of the house, neighborhood, community and jobs?

Analysis and Findings

The context-disequilibrium models of mobility

The disequilibrium model of mobility which fits mobility data in the US and Europe is also a good predictor of mobility in Australia (Table 1). Age, family structure and family change (especially divorce) are all significant and with the correct sign. Older households are less likely to move as are households with children, but marital breakup stimulates mobility. In most cases at least one of the partners will move. Being a renter, higher income and positive income change are all marginally (<.10) likely to stimulate a move. The findings are broadly comparable to those reported by Bill and Mitchell (2006) who also model the move as a function of age, family status, (though not change in status) tenure and income. They also use measures of previous movement, whether the spouse is employed and metropolitan location.

Table 1: Logit model of the probability of a move between 2008-2009 for all movers

| Move/no move | Coef. | Std. Err. | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|
| age | -.1231142 | .0139488 | -8.83 | 0.000 | -.1504581 - .0957703 |
| age squared | .0008232 | .0001715 | 4.80 | 0.000 | .0004869 .0011594 |
| child | -.3697018 | .1120092 | -3.30 | 0.001 | -.5892733 -.1501304 |
| divorce/sep | 2.612761 | .3612235 | 7.23 | 0.000 | 1.904655 3.320867 |
| married | .8183862 | .4953703 | 1.65 | 0.099 | -.1526876 1.78946 |
| widowed | .542061 | .7521398 | 0.72 | 0.471 | -.9323579 2.01648 |
| persons/bedrm | .0673411 | .0834177 | 0.81 | 0.420 | -.0961826 .2308648 |
| new baby | -.2379153 | .1880132 | -1.27 | 0.206 | -.6064775 .1306469 |
| own | -.3661888 | .2492842 | -1.47 | 0.142 | -.8548604 .1224828 |
| rent | .4639192 | .2462617 | 1.88 | 0.060 | -.0188274 .9466657 |
| gross income | 1.96e-06 | 1.05e-06 | 1.86 | 0.063 | -1.10e-07 4.02e-06 |
| income change | 2.79e-06 | 1.54e-06 | 1.81 | 0.070 | -2.33e-07 5.82e-06 |
| in workforce | .0368018 | .1395746 | 0.26 | 0.792 | -.2368062 .3104098 |
| constant | 1.580541 | .3202751 | 4.93 | 0.000 | .9527061 2.208376 |

F (13,7071) =53.3 P>F= .0000

Previous studies have not modeled mobility across distance so rather than add additional variables I explore a distance based approach to the mobility outcome and specifically the effect of changing labor markets defined as moving more than 30k. The selection is not arbitrary, it is consistent with other studies on labor market mobility and 30k does seem to capture longer distance moves which break the ties to local communities.

We gain considerable additional insight when we estimate these models for short and long distance moves (Tables 2 and 3). Age of course remains a significant predictor of short distance mobility as does marital breakup. But marital status itself is also a significant predictor of a local move reflecting in all likelihood the changes related to newly married households setting up

households or moving up the housing ladder. This is a hypothesis which will be tested with a longer sequence of the HILDA data. Owners are less likely to move, the effect of the costs of moving when you are an owner. Income does not appear as a predictor of local moves.

Table 2: Logit model of the probability of a move between 2008-2009 for households that moved less than 30 kilometers

| Move/no move | Coef. | Std. Err. | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| age | -.1361692 | .0164508 | -8.28 | 0.000 | -.1684179 | -.1039204 |
| age squared | .0009774 | .0002038 | 4.80 | 0.000 | .0005779 | .0013768 |
| child | -.1917976 | .1278974 | -1.50 | 0.134 | -.4425166 | .0589215 |
| divorce/sep | 2.629913 | .3952802 | 6.65 | 0.000 | 1.855039 | 3.404786 |
| married | 1.098665 | .510592 | 2.15 | 0.031 | .0977444 | 2.099586 |
| widowed | .1326814 | 1.035153 | 0.13 | 0.898 | -1.896544 | 2.161907 |
| persons/bedrm | .1054814 | .0861398 | 1.22 | 0.221 | -.0633796 | .2743424 |
| new baby | -.1246797 | .2037552 | -0.61 | 0.541 | -.5241039 | .2747446 |
| own | -.5508369 | .2708884 | -2.03 | 0.042 | -1.081863 | -.0198106 |
| rent | .4089455 | .2633105 | 1.55 | 0.120 | -.1072258 | .9251168 |
| gross income | 1.55e-06 | 1.26e-06 | 1.22 | 0.221 | -9.31e-07 | 4.03e-06 |
| income change | 2.24e-06 | 1.80e-06 | 1.24 | 0.214 | -1.29e-06 | 5.77e-06 |
| in workforce | .1653519 | .1630833 | 1.01 | 0.311 | -.1543427 | .4850465 |
| constant | 1.485428 | .3537821 | 4.20 | 0.000 | .7919042 | 2.178952 |

F(13,6765)= 47.81 P> F= .0000

Table 3: Logit model of the probability of a move between 2008-2009 for households that moved more than 30 kilometers

| Move/no move | Coef. | Std. Err. | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| age | -.1015398 | .0205409 | -4.94 | 0.000 | -.1418072 | -.0612724 |
| age squared | .0005381 | .0002289 | 2.35 | 0.019 | .0000894 | .0009868 |
| child | -.8619583 | .1917933 | -4.49 | 0.000 | -1.23794 | -.4859766 |
| divorce/sep | 2.407865 | .4604171 | 5.23 | 0.000 | 1.505287 | 3.310443 |
| married | -.020654 | .8205862 | -0.03 | 0.980 | -1.629289 | 1.587981 |
| widowed | 1.203241 | 1.037846 | 1.16 | 0.246 | -.831298 | 3.23778 |
| persons/bedrm | -.1308658 | .1550609 | -0.84 | 0.399 | -.4348392 | .1731076 |
| new baby | -.6662416 | .3660632 | -1.82 | 0.069 | -1.383853 | .0513698 |
| own | .6084811 | .3956409 | 1.54 | 0.124 | -.1671129 | 1.384075 |
| rent | .8603031 | .3872412 | 2.22 | 0.026 | .1011755 | 1.619431 |
| gross income | 3.00e-06 | 1.36e-06 | 2.20 | 0.028 | 3.32e-07 | 5.67e-06 |
| income change | 4.47e-06 | 1.97e-06 | 2.27 | 0.023 | 6.16e-07 | 8.33e-06 |
| in workforce | -.3312272 | .2129257 | -1.56 | 0.120 | -.7486357 | .0861812 |
| constant | -.4724921 | .5067517 | -0.93 | 0.351 | -1.465902 | .5209176 |

F(13,6161)=19.17 P>F=.0000

The model for long distance moves has considerable similarity to that for short distance moves – age and family status are significant, including a marginally negative value for a new baby (<.10) and tenure (being a renter) positively stimulates long distance moves. Household income and income change both stimulate long distance moves. Does higher income along with less attachment make moving more likely – it seems so from these coefficients.

Income and income change income act as enablers of long distance moves. Space, as measure by persons per room does not predict the probability of a move. This is in contrast to the strong role that room stress (lack of space) plays in both US and European contexts.

It is possible to explore un-weighted models for the move outcomes which enable an estimate of the explanatory fit of the mobility model. The variable estimates (not reported here, but available) are quite similar to those for the weighted estimates. Importantly, pseudo R^2 is significant and of modest size. Certainly the values of .22 for all movers and .16 for short and long distance moves separately are reasonable for such large sample social science models.

Does place matter?

The first specific research question is whether there are significant place effects on mobility. As there is currently strong interest in how place can affect life course outcomes in both the US and the United Kingdom, political discourse has focused on the notions of healthy neighborhoods and communities as essential to the function of modern urban society. Naturally, the question then arises as to how much localities are a part of the decision making of households considering mobility. To evaluate place effects I introduce measures of satisfaction with the house, the neighborhood, the community and job opportunities.¹ These are subjective assessments rather than the usual objective measures. In this way the model is evaluating how people feel about places rather than some quantitative measure of the place itself. It is entirely possible that two quite different places measured objectively across some dimension may yield the same level of satisfaction to different households.

For both short and long distance there are modest place effects but it is housing which dominates the relationships and mobility outcomes (Tables 4 and 5). The measures of age, family composition, change in marital status (divorce and separation) play important roles in the probability of a move. That is, these effects are still predictors after measures of housing, neighborhood and community are added. For short distance moves children in the house previously not significant now have a marginally negative affect on moving (an outcome of adding place measures) and housing and community are significant though the latter is marginal at $<.10$.

For longer distance moves the modest new baby effect without place measures now goes away - possibly related to levels of housing satisfaction

¹ The Hilda question on satisfaction is "I am now going to ask about how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with some of the things happening in your life. I am going to read a list of different aspects of life and, using the scale on the SHOW CARD, I want you to pick a number between 0 and 10 that indicates your level of satisfaction with each. The more satisfied you are, the higher the number you should pick. The less satisfied you are, the lower the number.

which may be capturing some of the space effects also. Household income is no longer significant though income change is and being in the work force now constrains the likelihood of making a labor market change, a result which is consistent with human capital approaches to regional labor markets. Housing is significant and neighborhood too but not community.

Table 4: Logit model of the probability of a move between 2008-2009 with measures of housing, neighborhood, community quality and job opportunity for households that moved less than 30 kilometers

| Move/no move | Coef. | Std. Err. | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| age | -.1716497 | .0198037 | -8.67 | 0.000 | -.2104734 | -.132826 |
| age squared | .0015667 | .0002794 | 5.61 | 0.000 | .001019 | .0021144 |
| child | -.255976 | .1347353 | -1.90 | 0.058 | -.5201146 | .0081626 |
| divorce/sep | 2.375434 | .4468904 | 5.32 | 0.000 | 1.499338 | 3.25153 |
| married | 1.226975 | .5141626 | 2.39 | 0.017 | .2189969 | 2.234953 |
| widowed | 1.337899 | .9920663 | 1.35 | 0.178 | -.606974 | 3.282772 |
| persons/bedrm | .0890435 | .0874151 | 1.02 | 0.308 | -.0823274 | .2604143 |
| new baby | -.1538348 | .2070111 | -0.74 | 0.457 | -.5596648 | .2519952 |
| own | -.6171923 | .2914414 | -2.12 | 0.034 | -1.188542 | -.0458428 |
| rent | .2370749 | .2826942 | 0.84 | 0.402 | -.3171264 | .7912762 |
| gross income | 9.00e-07 | 1.31e-06 | 0.69 | 0.490 | -1.66e-06 | 3.46e-06 |
| income change | 9.58e-07 | 2.05e-06 | 0.47 | 0.640 | -3.06e-06 | 4.97e-06 |
| in workforce | .2274507 | .1898112 | 1.20 | 0.231 | -.1446601 | .5995615 |
| neighborhood | .0333027 | .0389853 | 0.85 | 0.393 | -.0431251 | .1097304 |
| housing | -.1897241 | .0316228 | -6.00 | 0.000 | -.2517183 | -.1277299 |
| community | -.0534249 | .0293815 | -1.82 | 0.069 | -.1110252 | .0041754 |
| employment | -.0423427 | .0313415 | -1.35 | 0.177 | -.0191001 | .1037855 |
| constant | 3.235119 | .5050404 | 6.41 | 0.000 | 2.245024 | 4.225213 |

F(16,4563)= 14.19 P>F=.0000

Table 5: Logit model of the probability of a move between 2008-2009 with measures of housing, neighborhood, community quality, and job opportunity for households that moved more than 30 kilometers

| Move/no move | Coef. | Std. Err. | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| age | -.1429959 | .0248394 | -5.76 | 0.000 | -.1916931 | -.0942987 |
| age squared | .0012756 | .0003049 | 4.18 | 0.000 | .0006779 | .0018734 |
| child | -.8721063 | .2071468 | -4.21 | 0.000 | -1.278214 | -.4659986 |
| divorce/sep | 2.535725 | .4504455 | 5.63 | 0.000 | 1.652634 | 3.418815 |
| married | .2034922 | .8011789 | 0.25 | 0.800 | -1.367205 | 1.774189 |
| widowed | 1.291500 | 1.067751 | 1.21 | 0.226 | -.7997041 | 3.382703 |
| persons/bedrm | -.2154711 | .1862201 | -1.16 | 0.247 | -.5805522 | .1496101 |
| new baby | -.5176992 | .3735218 | -1.39 | 0.166 | -1.249982 | .2145836 |
| own | .6194686 | .4290458 | 1.44 | 0.149 | -.2216681 | 1.460605 |
| rent | .835844 | .4147759 | 2.02 | 0.044 | .0226832 | 1.649005 |
| gross income | 2.27e-06 | 1.46e-06 | 1.55 | 0.122 | -6.03e-07 | 5.14e-06 |
| income change | 5.05e-06 | 2.20e-06 | 2.29 | 0.022 | 7.25e-07 | 9.37e-06 |
| in workforce | -.5399711 | .2479225 | -2.18 | 0.029 | -1.026019 | -.0539234 |
| neighborhood | -.0967545 | .0559437 | -1.73 | 0.084 | -.2064312 | .0129222 |
| housing | -.129047 | .045897 | -2.81 | 0.005 | -.2190272 | -.0390668 |
| community | -.0159047 | .0425759 | -0.37 | 0.709 | -.0993741 | .0675646 |
| employment | .0716279 | .0449069 | 1.60 | 0.111 | -.0164114 | .1596621 |
| constant | 1.513327 | .6958363 | 2.17 | 0.030 | .1491518 | 2.877501 |

F(17,5114) =30.38 P>F= .0000

In these models the housing effect is the strongest of the dissatisfaction “place” effects. For both long and short distance moves the housing effect is negative (reducing the chance of moving) and relatively strong. Place effects measured by dissatisfaction with neighborhood and community are marginally significant – community for moves of less than 30 k, and neighborhood for moves of more than 30k. Does this mean that place does not matter? While studies have hypothesized the importance of neighborhood for a variety of life course outcomes it has been difficult to attribute much explanatory power to locality. Previous studies have suggested additive explanation to the probability of a move in the range of 5-10%. Most of these studies were not able to distinguish between the role of the house itself against the role of the surrounding context, the neighborhood or community.² One way of interpreting the strong outcome of housing is to recognize, in economic terms that the house likely has built into it (in hedonic terms) the value of the neighborhood and community within which it is located. Still, the relatively weak separate effects for locality suggest that we proceed with caution in any policy approaches to neighborhood specifically and place more generally.

Reasons and explanations – one size does not fit all relocations

While the models with locality measures provide new interpretations of what drives mobility we gain further understanding of the process by decomposing reasons for move and asking about neighborhood affects separately. What do households say? Further it is important to do this analysis by distance. In this way we can test the oft repeated explanation of mobility as a process where people moved short distances to solve housing problems and long distances to deal with employment needs. It is also possible to see locality effects in the broader picture of explanations of mobility behavior.

The division of mobility into short distance housing drivers and long distance job drivers was enshrined in much of the early analyses of residential relocation. Indeed that structure is partially embedded in the initial disequilibrium models in the first sections of this paper. However, as the research on the life course developed and reflected changing family structures, the increase in two worker households, and the changing organization of labor markets, it made that dichotomy less useful. Now we must set mobility within a more nuanced interpretation of why people move and the choices they make. Clearly, the models can still invoke housing tenure for local moves and

² The measures of satisfaction on housing, neighborhood, community and employment are only modestly correlated. The highest association is between community and neighborhood satisfaction for movers (.52) but the other measures are inter-correlated with correlations of about .2. These findings suggest that the satisfaction measures may be capturing independent effects of the independent variables.

employment for long distance moves but not only is housing an important factor in long distance moves, family reasons and other events complicate the former simple dichotomy.

The decomposition of the detailed data on moves in the HILDA survey shows that family and life style and unintended moves all play a role in the complex decisions to change locations and they vary across the distance moved (Table 6). Although neighborhood effects are clearly important they range from about 12 percent of reasons for local moves to nearly a fifth of reasons for long distance moves. They are in fact the largest reason for moves after jobs for long distance moves. Clearly place matters in these subjective responses. It is true that nearly half of all short distance movers cite housing reasons and approximately a third of long distance moves cite jobs, family explanations are important for both categories of movers and life styles (which are likely family related) are important for long distance movers. Well more than half cite something other than job reasons for relocations of more than 30k. It is this dichotomy which helps us understand why we do not have stronger affects for workforce participation on the probability of move. Employment is statistically significant but not a strong force in the probability of a long distance move.

Table 6: Reasons for move by distance of move

| Reason for move | Less than 30k | | More than 30k | |
|-----------------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Job | 53 | 6.2 | 111 | 33.2 |
| Family | 154 | 17.9 | 61 | 18.3 |
| Neighborhood | 107 | 12.4 | 64 | 19.2 |
| Involuntary | 159 | 18.5 | 20 | 6.0 |
| Residence | 411 | 47.4 | 46 | 13.8 |
| Lifestyle | 50 | 5.8 | 52 | 15.6 |
| Health | 21 | 2.4 | 8 | 2.4 |
| International | 3 | .4 | 6 | 1.8 |
| Other | 52 | 6.0 | 29 | 8.7 |
| | | | | |

The other observation to be drawn from the reasons for move is the significance of involuntary explanations for local moves. That nearly 20 percent of moves within the local housing market are involuntary, speaks to the fragility of housing for sections of the population. In the HILDA data, involuntary or unintended moves are those relating to an eviction or a when a house or flat was no longer available for a variety of reasons. As expected the population of involuntary movers includes those with lower incomes (they earn on average about 20 percent less than all movers) and they are often single parents and those in precarious housing situations.

Overall, the findings from reasons for moves by distance moved are consistent with our disequilibrium models - family plays a role (especially family status change) in mobility at both short and long distance scales. Employment comes into play for long distance moves. The coefficients on tenure are interesting and tell a story which reflects the way in which flexibility enters into the mobility process. Housing matters in the reasons for moves but it is owners who are significantly less likely to move in local changes, and renters who are significantly positively like to move if a change in labor markets is contemplated.

Moving to improve - are movers satisfied with their outcomes

The long term interest in residential change comes from the argument that, for the most part “we move to improve”, or at the very least we move to try and improve our residential situation. The question which then arises is whether a household is more satisfied after moving and how does that satisfaction relate to the reason for moving. That is do those who move for housing, jobs, or neighborhood reasons have greater or lesser satisfaction related to their reason for moving?

The analysis of satisfaction outcomes has three components – (1) distributions of changes in satisfaction after moving for housing, neighborhood, community and jobs (2) a series of multinomial regression models of greater or lesser satisfaction compared to not increasing or decreasing satisfaction, and (3) ordered logit models for housing and neighborhood satisfaction controlling for age, family composition and whether there was a move.

The distributions of change in satisfaction are slightly positively skewed for housing and neighborhood outcomes. That is, a move brings on average greater satisfaction with the relocation (Figures 2 and 3). The distributions are simply the difference of satisfaction with housing, neighborhood, community and job opportunities from wave 8 to wave 9. Perhaps surprisingly, although the priors are not totally obvious, a not insignificant number of moves do not change housing or neighborhood outcomes though clearly there is a wide spread in outcomes. The majority of the outcomes are no difference or a change of -1 or +1.

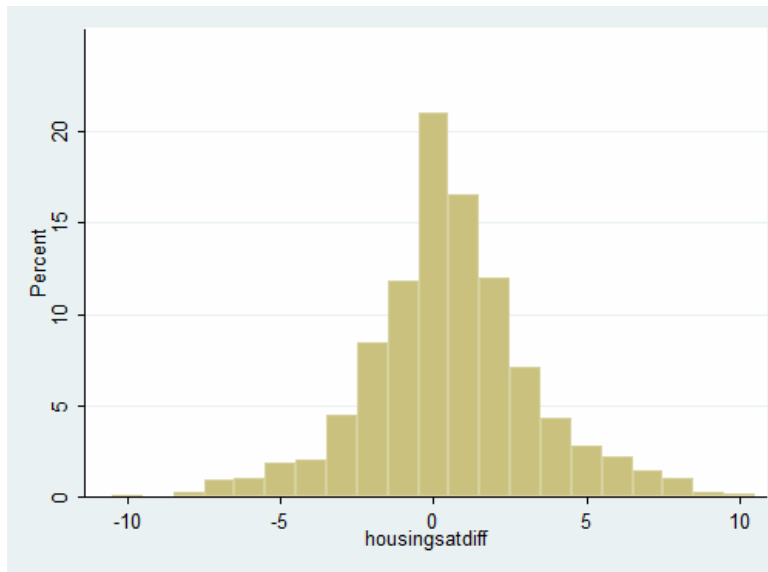


Figure 2: The distribution of changes in satisfaction with housing for all movers

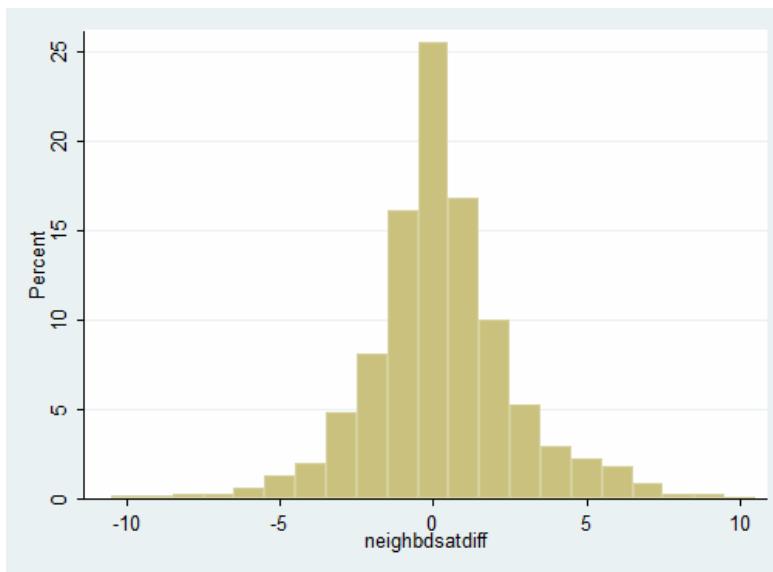


Figure 3: The distribution of changes in neighborhood satisfaction for all movers

By classifying moves which are 0 and -1 or +1 as no “gain or loss” and moves of more than +1 or -1 as increasing satisfaction or decreasing satisfaction it is possible to provide an easily interpretable summary measure for the outcomes on all four variables,

housing, neighborhood, community and job opportunities. Of course this calculation widens the no change interval but it does then emphasize the difference between gains and losses across the variables. At one level we can say that 75- 82% of households have either increased their satisfaction or maintained their status. Somewhere around a fifth of the sample who move decrease their satisfaction. The greatest gains are for housing satisfaction and the lowest for job opportunity satisfaction. While more increase their satisfaction for housing and neighborhood, the outcomes for community and employment with respect to gains and losses are about evenly balanced (Table 7). Naturally the question arises about the levels of satisfaction for the nearly 20 percent of involuntary movers. While they earn about \$10,000-\$11,000 less than all movers (thus somewhat poorer) their distribution of satisfactions are not statistically different from movers as a whole. Their mean satisfaction is above 7 on the 10 point scale for housing, neighborhood, and employment opportunities and just above 6 for community satisfaction. It is the latter which seems to be more problematic for movers than housing or neighborhood. Still, we move to improve or at the least to maintain our status.

Table 7: Levels of satisfaction for movers

| | % Increased Satisfaction | % No change | % Decreased Satisfaction |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Housing Satisfaction | 31.3 | 49.4 | 19.2 |
| Neighborhood Satisfaction | 23.8 | 58.5 | 17.7 |
| Community Satisfaction | 22.1 | 55.4 | 22.7 |
| Employment Satisfaction | 16.6 | 62.8 | 20.6 |

It is possible to further examine the satisfaction/dissatisfaction outcomes by the reason for move (Table 8). Specifically it is possible to classify the outcomes by whether a respondent indicated the move was a housing, neighborhood, community or job related move and cross classify that with the level of satisfaction. The prior is obviously that those who said housing or neighborhood, or community or job opportunity would be likely to report greater satisfaction. There is modest evidence in favor of positive outcomes for house, neighborhood and community but a much less sanguine view for those who were looking to improve job opportunities. While we move to improve and those who have specific reasons for moving are able to action those reasons the gains are not overwhelming. Still, there is a real difference between the increased satisfaction between Tables 7 and 8. Smaller proportions have decreased satisfaction. It may be the classic interpretation of whether the glass is half full or half empty. Most moves generate improvement or no change -the glass half full perspective. In contrast as many as a fifth of movers do not make gains – for them moving is a mixed blessing. But all this must be put in the

perspective of the life course. The move did not bring an improvement in one of the stated characteristics but it is possible that the household moved closer to family, or improved their lifestyle in some other dimension.

Table 8: Association of reasons for move and levels of satisfaction

| Reason | % Increased Satisfaction | % No change | % Decreased Satisfaction |
|--------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| House | 38.5 | 47.3 | 13.3 |
| Neighborhood | 24.8 | 49.8 | 12.1 |
| Community | 29.5 | 51.5 | 20.0 |
| Job | 17.3 | 63.7 | 20.0 |

We can formalize the results in a series of multinomial logit models where the reference is no change and the outcomes are a positive gain in satisfaction (2) or a loss of satisfaction with the move (1). In these models the dependent variable is a measure of whether the household made a gain or loss or no change in satisfaction (the difference between waves 8 and 9). In each of the models for house, neighborhood, community and job the independent variables are age, family status (presence of a child) tenure, income , income change and employment. Mobility is included as an independent variable to test for the association of residential change and satisfaction.

The household-moved variable is significant for housing satisfaction change, neighborhood and community satisfaction change, but not for employment satisfaction. For the housing measure, age and having a child lead to higher gains in satisfaction. The size of the coefficient for the actual move suggests just how important the move is in generating increased satisfaction. The emerging story is that the level of contentment with the house is overwhelmingly important in the outcomes. There is a similar story for neighborhood satisfaction where an income gain is an important explanatory variable for increased satisfaction. For community satisfaction only the move is statistically significant. And, for the measure of employment satisfaction moving does not appear to generate increased satisfaction outcomes. Levels of income are negatively related to both gains and losses in comparison with the reference category.

Table 9: Multinomial logit model of change in housing satisfaction with a move between 2008-2009

| Housing satisf | Linearized | | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|---------------------|------------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| | Coef. | Std. Err. | | | | |
| 1-decreased | | | | | | |
| age | -.0141282 | .0030942 | -4.57 | 0.000 | -.0201939 | -.0080626 |
| child | .1927716 | .0911264 | 2.12 | 0.034 | .0141367 | .3714065 |
| own | -.152464 | .2104366 | -0.72 | 0.469 | -.5649822 | .2600542 |
| rent | .2365567 | .2200278 | 1.08 | 0.282 | -.1947631 | .6678766 |
| gross income | -2.06e-06 | 9.58e-07 | -2.15 | 0.032 | -3.94e-06 | -1.80e-07 |
| inc._change | -2.26e-06 | 1.53e-06 | -1.48 | 0.139 | -5.25e-06 | 7.37e-07 |
| in workforce | -.1317446 | .1110585 | -1.19 | 0.236 | -.3494523 | .085963 |
| moved | .2823793 | .1236925 | 2.28 | 0.022 | .0399053 | .5248533 |
| constant | .5777801 | .2770199 | 2.09 | 0.037 | .0347387 | 1.120821 |
| 2- increased | | | | | | |
| age | -.0031827 | .0027311 | -1.17 | 0.244 | -.0085364 | .002171 |
| child | .2818455 | .0835847 | 3.37 | 0.001 | .1179948 | .4456963 |
| own | -.4569041 | .2048155 | -2.23 | 0.026 | -.8584033 | -.0554049 |
| rent | .0429711 | .2111525 | 0.20 | 0.839 | -.3709504 | .4568927 |
| gross income | -1.01e-06 | 8.45e-07 | -1.19 | 0.233 | -2.67e-06 | 6.48e-07 |
| inc._change | -3.70e-07 | 1.16e-06 | -0.32 | 0.751 | -2.65e-06 | 1.91e-06 |
| in workforce | .0368566 | .1095121 | 0.34 | 0.736 | -.1778196 | .2515328 |
| moved | 1.037206 | .114138 | 9.09 | 0.000 | .8134618 | 1.260951 |
| constant | -.0253175 | .2596759 | -0.10 | 0.922 | -.5343594 | .4837244 |

housing satisfaction dummy=0 (no change) is the base outcome

F(16,7111)=15.76 P>F=.0000

Table 10: Multinomial logit model of change in neighborhood satisfaction with a move between 2008-2009

| Neighbd satisf | Linearized | | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| | Coef. | Std. Err. | | | | |
| 1-decreased | | | | | | |
| age | -.0017201 | .0029322 | -0.59 | 0.557 | -.0074681 | .0040279 |
| child | .0678746 | .0891048 | 0.76 | 0.446 | -.1067974 | .2425465 |
| own | -.1243872 | .2094792 | -0.59 | 0.553 | -.5350287 | .2862543 |
| rent | .0910567 | .2180381 | 0.42 | 0.676 | -.3363627 | .518476 |
| gross income | -2.86e-06 | 1.07e-06 | -2.67 | 0.008 | -4.96e-06 | -7.56e-07 |
| inc._change | 7.38e-07 | 1.50e-06 | 0.49 | 0.623 | -2.20e-06 | 3.68e-06 |
| in workforce | -.2197335 | .1098834 | -2.00 | 0.046 | -.4351377 | -.0043293 |
| moved | .4258236 | .1184428 | 3.60 | 0.000 | .1936406 | .6580066 |
| constant | .0852356 | .2735026 | 0.31 | 0.755 | -.4509108 | .621382 |
| 2-increased | | | | | | |
| age | -.0030078 | .0026841 | -1.12 | 0.263 | -.0082694 | .0022539 |
| child | .1019056 | .082384 | 1.24 | 0.216 | -.0595915 | .2634027 |
| own | -.2504687 | .1949985 | -1.28 | 0.199 | -.6327237 | .1317862 |
| rent | -.0024186 | .2017222 | -0.01 | 0.990 | -.397854 | .3930168 |
| gross income | -2.90e-07 | 8.39e-07 | -0.35 | 0.730 | -1.93e-06 | 1.35e-06 |
| inc._change | 2.99e-06 | 1.30e-06 | 2.29 | 0.022 | 4.35e-07 | 5.55e-06 |
| in workforce | -.2567742 | .1069124 | -2.40 | 0.016 | -.4663542 | -.0471942 |
| moved | .5753187 | .1123909 | 5.12 | 0.000 | .3549991 | .7956383 |
| constant | .130609 | .2480373 | 0.53 | 0.599 | -.3556178 | .6168358 |

Neighborhood satisfaction dummy=0 (no change) is the base outcome

F(16,7111) = 5.47 P>F= .0000

Table 11: Multinomial logit model of change in community satisfaction with a move between 2008-2009

| Community sat | Linearized | | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| | Coef. | Std. Err. | | | | |
| 1-decreased | | | | | | |
| age | .0001948 | .0029361 | 0.07 | 0.947 | -.0055609 | .0059505 |
| child | -.0193671 | .0881841 | -0.22 | 0.826 | -.1922341 | .1534999 |
| own | -.2567713 | .2182398 | -1.18 | 0.239 | -.6845862 | .1710437 |
| rent | -.1618727 | .2260499 | -0.72 | 0.474 | -.6049977 | .2812524 |
| gross income | -1.55e-06 | 9.07e-07 | -1.71 | 0.088 | -3.33e-06 | 2.29e-07 |
| inc._change | 1.10e-06 | 1.35e-06 | 0.81 | 0.415 | -1.55e-06 | 3.75e-06 |
| in workforce | -.1046371 | .1095906 | -0.95 | 0.340 | -.3194673 | .1101931 |
| moved | .3769701 | .1169907 | 3.22 | 0.001 | .1476336 | .6063067 |
| constant | .4445763 | .2811126 | 1.58 | 0.114 | -.106488 | .9956406 |
| 2-increased | | | | | | |
| age | -.0005252 | .0028323 | -0.19 | 0.853 | -.0060775 | .005027 |
| child | -.067406 | .0853548 | -0.79 | 0.430 | -.2347269 | .0999149 |
| own | -.37073 | .203403 | -1.82 | 0.068 | -.7694604 | .0280004 |
| rent | -.0989283 | .2111779 | -0.47 | 0.639 | -.5128998 | .3150432 |
| gross income | -6.90e-07 | 8.55e-07 | -0.81 | 0.420 | -2.37e-06 | 9.87e-07 |
| inc._change | 6.19e-07 | 1.32e-06 | 0.47 | 0.639 | -1.97e-06 | 3.20e-06 |
| in workforce | -.2824163 | .1095386 | -2.58 | 0.010 | -.4971445 | -.0676881 |
| moved | .2722975 | .1183113 | 2.30 | 0.021 | .0403722 | .5042229 |
| constant | .6039111 | .2655346 | 2.27 | 0.023 | .0833845 | 1.124438 |

community satisfaction dummy=0 (no change) is the base outcome
 $F(11,7107)=6.20$ $P>F=.0000$

Table 12: Multinomial logit model of change in employment satisfaction with a move between 2008-2009

| Employmt sat | Linearized | | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| | Coef. | Std. Err. | | | | |
| 1-decreased | | | | | | |
| age | -.0026696 | .0034416 | -0.78 | 0.438 | -.0094166 | .0040773 |
| child | .0924318 | .0900262 | 1.03 | 0.305 | -.0840573 | .2689208 |
| own | -.2994266 | .263437 | -1.14 | 0.256 | -.8158733 | .2170201 |
| rent | -.1270124 | .2647815 | -0.48 | 0.631 | -.6460949 | .3920701 |
| gross income | -4.85e-06 | 1.09e-06 | -4.45 | 0.000 | -6.98e-06 | -2.71e-06 |
| inc._change | -2.60e-06 | 1.74e-06 | -1.50 | 0.134 | -6.01e-06 | 8.03e-07 |
| in workforce | -.1116937 | .1557984 | -0.72 | 0.473 | -.4171237 | .1937363 |
| moved | -.2151708 | .1181054 | -1.82 | 0.069 | -.4467068 | .0163652 |
| constant | .8487484 | .2991402 | 2.84 | 0.005 | .2623084 | 1.435188 |
| 2-increased | | | | | | |
| age | -.001424 | .0037122 | -0.38 | 0.701 | -.0087015 | .0058536 |
| child | .162965 | .097666 | 1.67 | 0.095 | -.0285013 | .3544314 |
| own | .0037154 | .281685 | 0.01 | 0.989 | -.5485051 | .5559359 |
| rent | .0446139 | .2842853 | 0.16 | 0.875 | -.5127042 | .6019319 |
| gross income | -5.44e-06 | 1.22e-06 | -4.47 | 0.000 | -7.83e-06 | -3.05e-06 |
| inc.change | -3.47e-06 | 1.70e-06 | -2.04 | 0.041 | -6.79e-06 | -1.41e-07 |
| in workforce | -.5641907 | .1522077 | -3.71 | 0.000 | -.8625814 | -.2658 |
| moved | -.0051026 | .1293939 | -0.04 | 0.969 | -.2587688 | .2485635 |
| constant | .7083559 | .3318302 | 2.13 | 0.033 | .0578298 | 1.358882 |

Employment sction dummy =0 (no change) is the base outcome

$F(16,5207)=4.88$ $P>F=.0000$

What can we conclude from the analysis of satisfaction outcomes and mobility? Clearly, “moving to improve” works much of the time. Still, moving is not a totally positive process. Many households find themselves in situations and places which are not an improvement. But again the real gains seem to be associated with the change in the level of satisfaction with the dwelling itself. However, neighborhood matters if not at the same level.

To examine these outcomes further I use ordered logit models to examine the change in the outcome across the distribution. With an ordered logit model it is possible to examine the significance of the cut-points, the changes between satisfaction levels of the distribution from extreme gains in satisfaction to extreme losses in satisfaction with the move (Tables 13 and 14). These cut-points or thresholds are used to differentiate the adjacent levels of the response variable. Thus the cut-points are differentiating successive levels of low and high levels of change in satisfaction.

Table 13: Ordered logit estimates of change in housing satisfaction with a move between 2008-2009

| Housing satisf | Linearized | | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|----------------|------------|-----------|--------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| | Coef. | Std. Err. | | | | |
| age | .0094276 | .0022055 | 4.27 | 0.000 | .0051042 | .013751 |
| child | .0842748 | .0690472 | 1.22 | 0.222 | -.0510782 | .2196277 |
| gross/income | 8.72e-07 | 5.62e-07 | 1.55 | 0.121 | -2.29e-07 | 1.97e-06 |
| inc/change | 1.43e-06 | 8.73e-07 | 1.63 | 0.102 | -2.85e-07 | 3.14e-06 |
| in workforce | .1494834 | .0791762 | 1.89 | 0.059 | -.0057256 | .3046924 |
| owner | -.1550522 | .1771506 | -0.88 | 0.381 | -.50232 | .1922156 |
| hrenter | -.0830867 | .1907539 | -0.44 | 0.663 | -.4570212 | .2908477 |
| divorce/sep | -1.076688 | .5057208 | -2.13 | 0.033 | -2.068051 | -.0853249 |
| married | .1560564 | .5063945 | 0.31 | 0.758 | -.8366274 | 1.14874 |
| widow | .2027056 | .3315845 | 0.61 | 0.541 | -.4472987 | .8527099 |
| moved/house | .8304119 | .1166894 | 7.12 | 0.000 | .601666 | 1.059158 |
| /cut1 | -7.472261 | .7735637 | -9.66 | 0.000 | -8.988676 | -5.955846 |
| /cut2 | -6.831945 | .5665341 | -12.06 | 0.000 | -7.942521 | -5.72137 |
| /cut3 | -6.041006 | .4124276 | -14.65 | 0.000 | -6.849487 | -5.232525 |
| /cut4 | -4.988166 | .3011035 | -16.57 | 0.000 | -5.578419 | -4.397914 |
| /cut5 | -4.196506 | .2707014 | -15.50 | 0.000 | -4.727162 | -3.665851 |
| /cut6 | -3.52547 | .2662589 | -13.24 | 0.000 | -4.047417 | -3.003523 |
| /cut7 | -2.850421 | .2521292 | -11.31 | 0.000 | -3.344669 | -2.356173 |
| /cut8 | -2.198655 | .2405469 | -9.14 | 0.000 | -2.670198 | -1.727111 |
| /cut9 | -1.314496 | .2324552 | -5.65 | 0.000 | -1.770177 | -.8588149 |
| /cut10 | -.1974547 | .2265317 | -0.87 | 0.383 | -.6415242 | .2466148 |
| /cut11 | 1.39918 | .2278686 | 6.14 | 0.000 | .9524896 | 1.84587 |
| /cut12 | 2.523261 | .2318791 | 10.88 | 0.000 | 2.068709 | 2.977813 |
| /cut13 | 3.364351 | .2338807 | 14.38 | 0.000 | 2.905875 | 3.822826 |
| /cut14 | 4.013257 | .2364789 | 16.97 | 0.000 | 3.549688 | 4.476826 |
| /cut15 | 4.592301 | .2518537 | 18.23 | 0.000 | 4.098593 | 5.086009 |
| /cut16 | 5.292195 | .2645976 | 20.00 | 0.000 | 4.773505 | 5.810885 |
| /cut17 | 5.841446 | .2929146 | 19.94 | 0.000 | 5.267246 | 6.415646 |
| /cut18 | 6.413682 | .3409179 | 18.81 | 0.000 | 5.745381 | 7.081982 |
| /cut19 | 7.56545 | .511227 | 14.80 | 0.000 | 6.563293 | 8.567607 |
| /cut20 | 8.116482 | .7227825 | 11.23 | 0.000 | 6.699613 | 9.53335 |

F(11,7107) = 6.20 P>F = .0000

Table 14: Ordered logit estimates of change in neighborhood satisfaction with a move between 2008-2009

| Neighbd satisf | Linearized | | t | P> t | [95% Conf. Interval] | |
|----------------|------------|-----------|--------|-------|----------------------|-----------|
| | Coef. | Std. Err. | | | | |
| age | -.0008215 | .0025845 | -0.32 | 0.751 | -.0058879 | .0042449 |
| child | .0215757 | .074273 | 0.29 | 0.771 | -.1240214 | .1671729 |
| gross/inc | 1.24e-06 | 5.50e-07 | 2.25 | 0.024 | 1.62e-07 | 2.32e-06 |
| inc/change | 9.22e-07 | 8.29e-07 | 1.11 | 0.266 | -7.03e-07 | 2.55e-06 |
| in workforce | .0001953 | .083522 | 0.00 | 0.998 | -.1635327 | .1639233 |
| owner | -.0783065 | .1666672 | -0.47 | 0.638 | -.4050238 | .2484108 |
| hrenter | -.0720828 | .17917 | -0.40 | 0.687 | -.4233093 | .2791437 |
| div/sep | -.0667796 | .3529687 | -0.19 | 0.850 | -.7587033 | .6251441 |
| married | .1321626 | .8278892 | 0.16 | 0.873 | -1.490746 | 1.755072 |
| widow | .1430063 | .2553656 | 0.56 | 0.575 | -.3575863 | .6435989 |
| moved/house | .2078399 | .1037911 | 2.00 | 0.045 | .0043785 | .4113013 |
| /cut1 | -7.148647 | .5337027 | -13.39 | 0.000 | -8.194863 | -6.102431 |
| /cut2 | -7.011593 | .4953869 | -14.15 | 0.000 | -7.982699 | -6.040488 |
| /cut3 | -5.410192 | .5397523 | -10.02 | 0.000 | -6.468267 | -4.352117 |
| /cut4 | -5.194662 | .4449608 | -11.67 | 0.000 | -6.066918 | -4.322407 |
| /cut5 | -4.800472 | .3324249 | -14.44 | 0.000 | -5.452124 | -4.14882 |
| /cut6 | -4.263303 | .2535923 | -16.81 | 0.000 | -4.760419 | -3.766186 |
| /cut7 | -3.618212 | .2388751 | -15.15 | 0.000 | -4.086478 | -3.149945 |
| /cut8 | -2.815304 | .2227759 | -12.64 | 0.000 | -3.252011 | -2.378597 |
| /cut9 | -2.019754 | .2214472 | -9.12 | 0.000 | -2.453856 | -1.585652 |
| /cut10 | -.832349 | .2207024 | -3.77 | 0.000 | -1.264991 | -.3997069 |
| /cut11 | .7882774 | .2219267 | 3.55 | 0.000 | .353235 | 1.22332 |
| /cut12 | 2.025143 | .2255171 | 8.98 | 0.000 | 1.583062 | 2.467223 |
| /cut13 | 2.929150 | .2315971 | 12.65 | 0.000 | 2.475151 | 3.383149 |
| /cut14 | 3.638791 | .2425051 | 15.01 | 0.000 | 3.163409 | 4.114173 |
| /cut15 | 4.127999 | .2630757 | 15.69 | 0.000 | 3.612292 | 4.643705 |
| /cut16 | 4.903781 | .2752474 | 17.82 | 0.000 | 4.364214 | 5.443348 |
| /cut17 | 5.542435 | .3355812 | 16.52 | 0.000 | 4.884596 | 6.200274 |
| /cut18 | 6.432870 | .4381463 | 14.68 | 0.000 | 5.573972 | 7.291767 |
| /cut19 | 7.763655 | .5320429 | 14.59 | 0.000 | 6.720693 | 8.806617 |
| /cut20 | 9.826219 | 1.024751 | 9.59 | 0.000 | 7.817403 | 11.83504 |

F(11,7107) = 1.15 P > F = .0000

The move variable is significant in both models and age is also a predictor for housing satisfaction (older households are more satisfied with a move) but age is not a significant predictor for neighborhood satisfaction. However, income is a predictor of greater satisfaction with neighborhood. The coefficients from the ordered logit captures the decreasing satisfaction (the coefficients become more negative and the increasing satisfaction (the coefficients become more positive) as the cut points shift from little change in satisfaction. Cut 10 is the change from 0 to -1 in satisfaction, and cut 11 is the change from 0 to +1 in satisfaction. The other cut points are sequentially greater and lesser satisfaction. In effect the cut point values are the boundaries between decrease of x or increases of x where x is the change in satisfaction.³

³ I am aware that in all likelihood the assumption of parallel regression is violated. Still, the coefficients tell an interesting story of change as one moves away from no change in satisfaction.

Observations and Conclusions

The adjustment or disequilibrium approach to residential change is consistent with mobility behavior in Australia. Households who are younger move more often, family change precipitates residential change and being unemployed increases the probability of moving longer distances. The disruption of divorce and separation, as expected, increased the probability of moving. However, housing space as measured as persons per bedroom does not show a significant relationship with the probability of moving. This is contrary to findings in Europe and North America and may reflect the design of the variable, or the relatively well housed situation for a majority of Australian households. Overall, the findings largely parallel similar studies in North America and Europe and other work in Australia.

What is new and how do the findings increase our understanding of mobility in Australian contexts? The rich detail of the HILDA survey is unusual in the depth of questioning on mobility, reasons for moves and levels of satisfaction with mobility outcomes. The data allow an intensive examination of the role of local contexts in the mobility decision and responses to reasons for moves and their translation into residential outcomes. Specifically the paper examines both the way in which satisfaction with housing and place characteristics motivates moves and the extent to which change in satisfaction occurs with a move. In addition, the HILDA data allow us to decompose satisfaction into the separate elements of house and place. In most studies the estimation of satisfaction is a general overall measure rather than the elements of place. Introducing these measures of home, neighborhood and community satisfaction as measures of local impacts on mobility provides support for the relevance, although modest, of place effects on mobility.

Evaluating the outcomes of mobility with respect to the reasons for moves and comparing pre and post move satisfaction provides support for the proposition that households do move to improve and that while some “lose”, for the majority the move at least sustains or preserves status and for a not insignificant number increases satisfaction. The measures of neighborhood and community satisfaction are marginally significant, but while it seems that geography and place matter in the likelihood of moving, they are not strong influences on the moving process. The moving process is closely interwoven with the life course and those fundamental changes are at the core of residential change.

The examination of mobility behavior in terms of both reasons for moves and the decision to move locally or across labor markets provides new findings on the relative role of family, house and jobs in the mobility process. While housing related decisions dominate local move decisions, more than half of short

distance moves are explained by family, life style, jobs and neighborhood reasons. Long distance moves are not dominated by jobs as we might expect from the macro models using human capital explanations; rather family, life style and neighborhood are chosen by more than half of longer distance movers. For policy makers and those concerned with the larger societal issues of how households navigate the complexities of their changing family structures and housing and labor markets, there is much to be learned from the HILDA data. At the most straight forward level, mobility still provides the mechanism for affecting change in response to household needs. At the more nuanced level, we still have much to learn about the process of residential change over time and across space.

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Appendix: Variables in the analysis of mobility

Dependent variables in the models

Moved between waves 8 and 9 (dummy 1 yes)
Moved less than 30k between wave 8 and wave 9.
Moved more than 30k between waves 8 and 9
Change in satisfaction (difference) between waves 8 and 9 for
 Housing (The home in which you live)
 Neighborhood (The neighborhood in which you live)
 Community (Feeling a part of your local community)
 Employment (Your employment opportunities)

Explanatory variables

Age (years)
Child (child in the house in wave 8)
Marital status change between waves 8 and 9
 Became divorced/ separated
 Became married
 Became widowed
Space use (number of persons per bedroom)
Birth (new baby between waves 8 and 9)
Tenure
 Own in wave 8
 Rent in wave 8
Household income in wave 8
Change in household income between wave 8 and 9
Employed (in the workforce)
Perceived housing quality – measured from satisfaction wave 8
Perceived neighborhood quality - measured from satisfaction wave 8
Perceived community quality - measured from satisfaction wave 8
Perceived job opportunities- measured from satisfaction wave 8

Other Variables

Reasons for move recoded from questionnaire responses
 JOB (nj, wp, cs, wt, ob, rb, lw, wr) FAMILY/FAMILY CHANGE (mr, mb, fm, pf)
 NEIGHBORHOOD (bn, ff, as, hn) RESIDENCE(lb, sn, po) LIFESTYLE (ls,)
 HEALTH (hr) INVOLUNTARY (pn, ev) INTERNATIONAL (ro, ma)
 OTHER (st, tr, na, rf, dk)
 CHECK (os)