Reasons for Migration and Associations with HIV Risk among Sexual Minority Men

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BACKGROUND

- The U.S. population of immigrants has grown rapidly over the past two decades. Knowledge about reasons for migration and their association with HIV-related behaviors is limited.
- We explored patterns in reasons for migrating to the U.S. among cisgender gay, bisexual, and other sexual minority men (**SMM**) and determined their associations with HIV risk and prevention behaviors.

METHODS

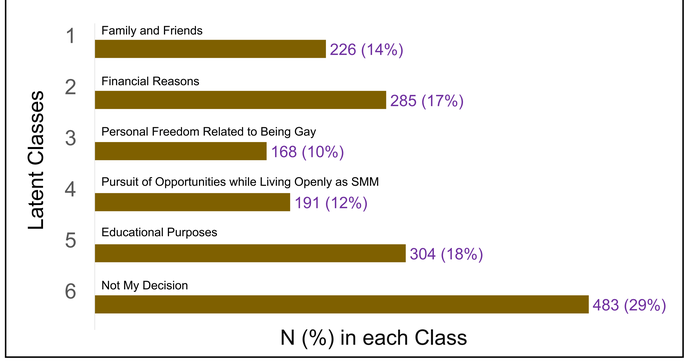
- We used data from the American Men's Internet Survey (**AMIS**) (2018-2020) and performed a Latent Class Analysis (**LCA**) to identify patterns in the reasons for migration. SMM were aged ≥15 years, assigned male at birth, resided in the U.S., and reported oral/anal sex with a man at least once.
- We restricted analyses to participants who were born outside of the U.S., reported no prior HIV diagnosis, and reported a reason for migrating to the U.S. (**n=1,657**).
- Chi-square or Fisher's exact tests were used to determine whether demographic characteristics, HIV risk and drug use behaviors, and HIV prevention behaviors differed by class.*
- Multivariate logistic regression controlling for demographic characteristics (See Table) assessed class associations with condomless anal sex (**CAS**), illicit drug use, marijuana use, other drug use, HIV testing, and PrEP use.*

*All outcomes reported for the last 12 months

RESULTS

- LCA identified 6 distinct classes in reasons for migration:

Figure: Migration Classes Identified by the LCA (n=1,657)



Patterns emerged in sexual minority men's motivations for **migrating** to the U.S. and were linked to specific **HIV risk and prevention behaviors**.

Table: Demographic Characteristics of SMM by Migration Class Membership

	Total		Class 1 Family & Friends		Class 2 Financial Reasons		Class 3 Personal Freedom Related to Being Gay		Class 4 Pursue Opportunities while Living Openly		Class 5 Educational Purposes		Class 6 Not My Decision		
	n=1657		n=226		n=285		n=168		n=191		n=304		n=483		
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	P value
Age															<.001
15-24	628	(37.9)	87	(38.5)	104	(36.5)	40	(23.8)	58	(30.4)	116	(38.2)	223	(46.2)	
25-29	374	(22.6)	61	(27)	61	(21.4)	24	(14.3)	47	(24.6)	69	(22.7)	112	(23.2)	
30-39	320	(19.3)	34	(15)	54	(18.9)	42	(25)	44	(23)	64	(21.1)	82	(17)	
40+	335	(20.2)	44	(19.5)	66	(23.2)	62	(36.9)	42	(22)	55	(18.1)	66	(13.7)	
Education[a]															
<High school	67	(4.1)	9	(13.4)	14	(5)	6	(3.8)	9	(4.8)	7	(2.3)	22	(4.6)	
≥High school	234	(14.3)	39	(17.5)	43	(15.2)	13	(8.1)	28	(14.8)	33	(10.9)	78	(16.2)	<.001
Some college	451	(27.6)	68	(30.5)	78	(27.7)	53	(33.1)	43	(22.8)	41	(13.6)	168	(34.9)	
College or beyond	885	(54.1)	107	(48)	147	(52.1)	88	(55)	109	(57.7)	221	(73.2)	213	(44.3)	
Country/Region of Birth															<.001
Mexico	346	(20.9)	47	(20.8)	76	(26.7)	26	(15.5)	17	(8.9)	23	(7.6)	157	(32.5)	
Canada	76	(4.6)	14	(6.2)	12	(4.2)	7	(4.2)	6	(3.1)	18	(5.9)	19	(3.9)	
Caribbean	129	(7.8)	21	(9.3)	22	(7.7)	20	(11.9)	24	(12.6)	12	(3.9)	30	(6.2)	
Central America	113	(6.8)	18	(8.9)	9	(3.2)	15	(8.9)	20	(10.5)	8	(2.6)	43	(8.9)	
South America	214	(12.9)	27	(11.9)	39	(13.7)	17	(10.1)	35	(18.3)	45	(14.8)	51	(10.6)	
East Asia	116	(7)	12	(5.3)	11	(3.9)	1	(0.6)	10	(5.2)	50	(16.4)	32	(6.6)	
Southeast Asia	140	(8.4)	21	(9.3)	32	(11.2)	6	(3.6)	19	(9.9)	35	(11.5)	27	(5.6)	
South/Central Asia	85	(5.1)	8	(3.5)	17	6)	12	(7.1)	14	(7.3)	29	(9.5)	5	(1)	
Southwest Asia/North Africa	54	(3.3)	2	(0.9)	8	(2.8)	12	(7.1)	14	(7.3)	12	(3.9)	6	(1.2)	
Sub-Saharan Africa	57	(3.4)	8	(3.5)	9	(3.2)	5	(3)	7	(3.7)	21	(6.9)	7	(1.4)	
Oceania	22	(1.3)	1	(0.4)	5	(1.8)	6	(3.6)	2	(1)	2	(0.7)	6	(1.2)	
Europe	305	(18.4)	47	(20.8)	45	(15.8)	41	(24.4)	23	(12)	49	(16.1)	100	(20.7)	
Length of Time in U.S.															<.001
0-5 years	344	(21.6)	15	(6.9)	52	(18.8)	47	(29.6)	76	(41.8)	146	(49)	8	(1.7)	
6-10 years	208	(13.1)	25	(11.6)	32	(11.6)	20	(12.6)	47	(25.8)	64	(21.5)	20	(4.3)	
11-20 years	543	(34.1)	95	(44)	125	(45.3)	38	(23.9)	42	(23.1)	47	(15.8)	196	(42.6)	
21+ years	496	(31.2)	81	(37.5)	67	(24.3)	54	(34)	17	(9.3)	41	(13.8)	236	(51.3)	
Primary Language															<.001
English	1183	(71.4)	186	(82.3)	200	(70.2)	104	(61.9)	106	(55.5)	171	(56.3)	416	(86.1)	
Spanish	277	(16.7)	26	(11.5)	56	(19.6)	37	(22)	48	(25.1)	55	(18.1)	55	(11.4)	
Other Language[b]	197	(11.9)	14	(6.2)	29	(10.2)	27	(16.1)	37	(19.4)	78	(25.7)	12	(2.5)	
Census Region of Residence															0.002
Northeast	354	(21.4)	40	(17.7)	56	(19.6)	42	(25)	48	(25.1)	82	(27)	86	(17.8)	
Midwest	249	(15)	23	(10.2)	41	(14.4)	27	(16.1)	22	(11.5)	57	(18.8)	79	(16.4)	
South	591	(35.7)	99	(43.8)	110	(38.6)	61	(36.3)	67	(35.1)	80	(26.3)	174	(36)	
West	458	(27.6)	64	(28.3)	78	(27.4)	38	(22.6)	52	(27.2)	85	(28)	141	(29.2)	
Dependent areas	5	(0.3)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	2	(1)	0	(0)	3	(0.6)	
Health Insurance															<.001
None	240	(15.1)	30	(13.8)	46	(17)	28	(17.4)	27	(14.7)	28	(9.5)	81	(17.4)	
Private only	1050	(66)	141	(65)	177	(65.6)	108	(67.1)	117	(63.6)	200	(68)	307	(66)	
Public only	161	(10.1)	31	(14.3)	31	(11.5)	16	(9.9)	20	(10.9)	18	(6.1)	45	(9.7)	
Other/multiple	140	(8.8)	15	(6.9)	16	(5.9)	9	(5.6)	20	(10.9)	48	(16.3)	32	(6.9)	

[a]Total ns may not equal 1657 due to missing data
[b] Include all other languages and participants who indicated that they preferred not to answer
Note: Income and urban/rural residence are not listed in this table due to space constraints

***Multivariate Analyses*:**

- Class 4 (pursue opportunities while living openly) had greater odds of CAS (**aOR: 1.56, 95%CI: 1.03-2.36**) and other drug use (**aOR: 1.79, 95%CI: 1.08-2.96**) than Class 5 (not my decision).
- Class 1 (family and friends) had greater odds of other drug use than Class 5 (not my decision) (**aOR: 1.79, 95%CI: 1.07-2.98**).
- Class 3 (personal freedom related to being gay) was less likely to report marijuana use (**aOR:0.52, 95%CI: 0.29-0.93**) and have tested for HIV (**aOR:0.52, 95%CI: 0.29-0.93**) than Class 4 (pursue opportunities while living openly) (**aOR:0.60, 95%CI: 0.37-0.96**).
- Class 1 (family and friends) had greater odds of illicit drug use (**aOR: 1.70, 95%CI: 1.02-2.83**) and marijuana use than Class 3 (personal freedom related to being gay) (**aOR:1.80, 95%CI: 1.03-3.15**).

LIMITATIONS

- The AMIS survey was only available in English and our sample excludes immigrant SMM who were unable to complete the survey in English.
- AMIS survey respondents are recruited using convenience sampling and our results may not be generalizable to all SMM who have immigrated to the U.S.

CONCLUSIONS

- Observed differences in HIV-related risk and prevention behaviors in this sample of foreign-born SMM highlights the need to consider the diverse reasons for migrating to the U.S. as a potential strategy for improving HIV prevention efforts for immigrant communities.
- Future research should consider the buffering effects of social and contextual factors that may interact with or shape the influence of the reasons for migrating to the U.S. on HIV prevention outcomes.

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