

# Nativity's Influence on Cohabitation

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## BACKGROUND

Research has shown that cohabitation is becoming a normative experience among Americans. Less is known about the cohabitation experiences of those who are foreign born or have foreign-born parents.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

This study utilizes a more complete measure of cohabitation and respondents' nativity, and their reports on parents' nativity to examine if:  
1) cohabitation varies by generational status and  
2) predictors of cohabitation change by generational status

## DATA, METHODS, SAMPLE

**Data**  
The Current Population Survey's (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) is a useful data set for analysis on the current living arrangements of adults in the United States because of the extensive questions on the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of adults. The current study uses data collected in 2015.

**Primary Measures:**  
*Cohabitation*- a question asking respondents if they had a boyfriend/girlfriend or partner in the household.  
*Respondent/ Mother/ Father Nativity*- three separate questions asking--in what country were [you/mother/father] born. Respondents choose from a list of countries.

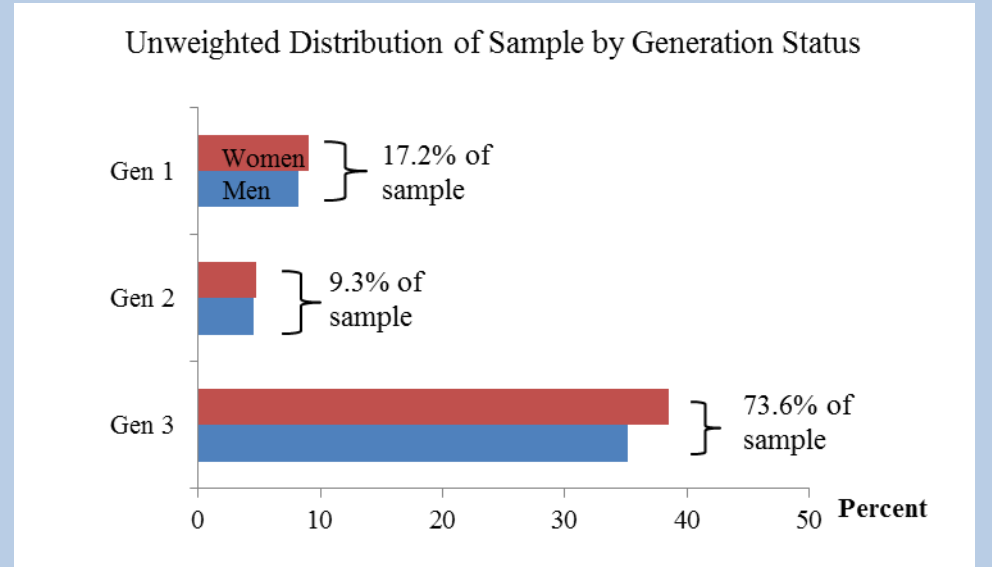
**Methods**  
1) A multinomial logistic regression model using generation status as a covariate while controlling for socioeconomic conditions such as poverty status, age, and education by union status (cohabitation versus unpartnered and cohabitation versus married).  
2) Multinomial logistic regression model to identify significant differences between generational groups for union status while controlling for socioeconomic conditions such as poverty status, age, and education.  
\*Note that not all controls are displayed in model outputs shown here.

## Sample

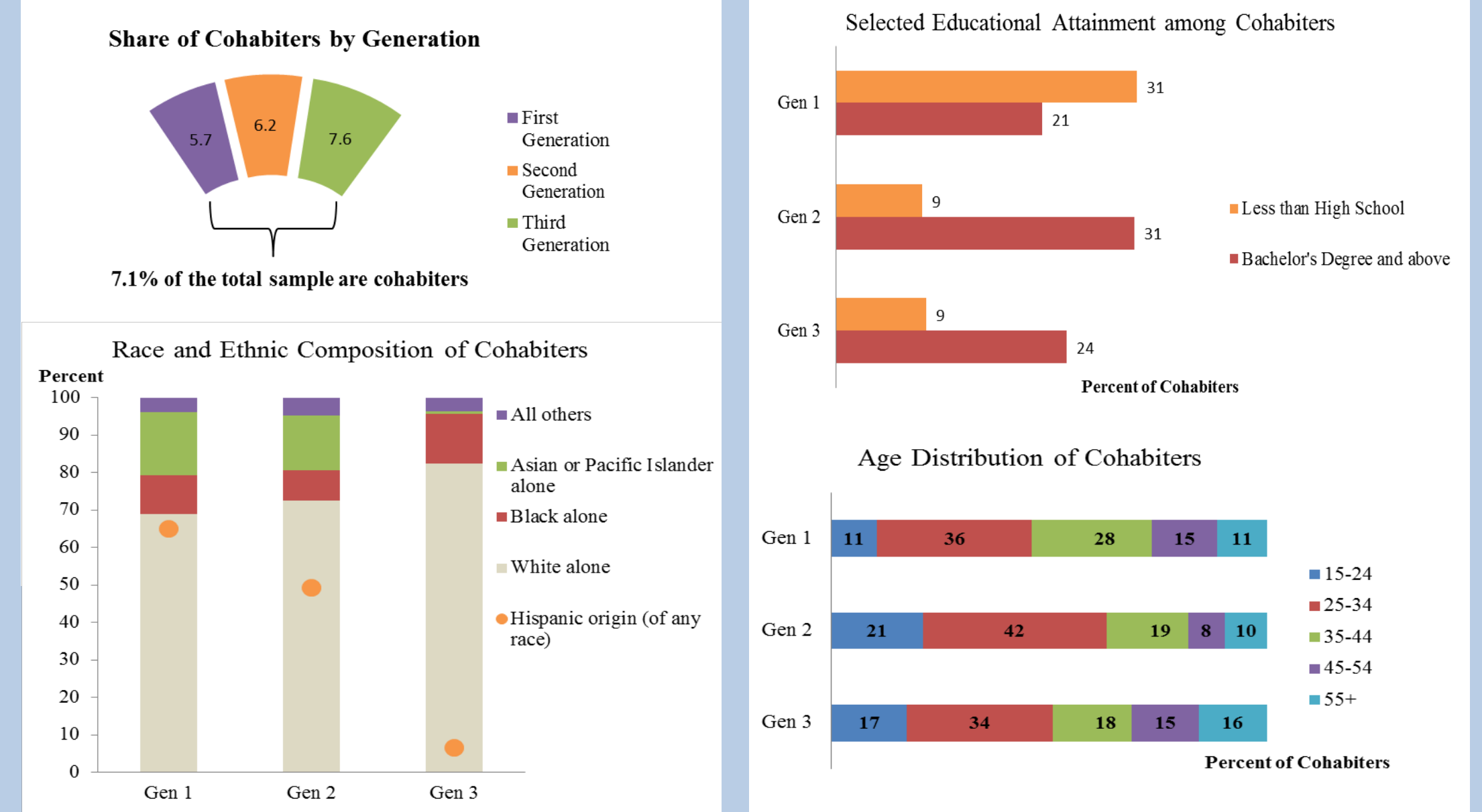
CPS ASEC 2015: 198,909 respondents  
drop 45,098 respondents who are under 15 years of age  
drop 598 respondents who are foreign born with native born parents  
drop 641 respondents who are foreign born with one native born parent  
n=152,572 (unweighted)

Composition of Generation Status			
	Generation 1 <sup>1</sup>	Generation 2	Generation 3
Respondent	Foreign Born and	Native Born and	Native Born and
Mother	Foreign Born and	Foreign Born or	Native Born and
Father	Foreign Born	Foreign Born	Native Born

<sup>1</sup> Referred to as Gen 1, Gen 2, and Gen 3 throughout figures.



## SELECTED DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS BY GENERATION STATUS



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015

## MULTIVARIATE TABLES

	Cohabiting vs Unpartnered	Cohabiting vs Married
Non-Hispanic:		
White alone	1 <sup>1</sup>	1
Black alone	↓	↑
Asian alone or Pacific Islander alone	↓	↓
All other single races or combinations	ns	↑
Hispanic origin (of any race)	ns	↑
Own children under 18	↓	↓
In poverty	↑	↑
Less than high school	↓	↑
High school degree or equivalent	1	1
Some college or associate's degree	↓	ns
Bachelor's degree and above	ns	↓
Full-time	1	1
Part-time	↓	↓
Unemployed	↓	↑
Not in labor force	↓	↓
First generation	↓	↓
Second generation	↓	ns
Third generation	1	1

All covariates are significant at p<.05 level unless otherwise noted  
<sup>1</sup> 1= Reference; ns= Not Significant

	Generation 1		Generation 2		Generation 3	
	Cohabiting vs Unpartnered	Cohabiting vs Married	Cohabiting vs Unpartnered	Cohabiting vs Married	Cohabiting vs Unpartnered	Cohabiting vs Married
Non-Hispanic:						
White alone	1 <sup>1</sup>	1	1	1	1	1
Black alone	ns	↑	ns	↑	↓	↑
Asian alone or Pacific Islander alone	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
All other single races or combinations	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	↑
Hispanic origin (of any race)	↑	↑	ns	ns	ns	↑
In poverty	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
Less than high school	↓	ns	↓	ns	↓	↑
High school degree or equivalent	1	1	1	1	1	1
Some college or Associate's degree	↓	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Bachelor's degree and above	ns	↓	ns	↓	↓	↓
Full-time	1	1	1	1	1	1
Part-time	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Unemployed	↓	ns	↓	ns	↓	↑
Not in labor force	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

All covariates are significant at p<.05 level unless otherwise noted  
<sup>1</sup> 1= Reference; ns= Not Significant

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015

## MULTIVARIATE RESULTS

**Generational Status as a Predictor**  
Cohabiting versus Unpartnered:  
• First and second generation respondents had lower odds of being in a cohabiting relationship than the third generation.  
Cohabiting versus Married:  
• First generation respondents had lower odds of cohabiting than being married.  
• There was not a significant difference between cohabiting and being married for the second generation.

**Cohabitation by Generation Status**  
Cohabiting versus Unpartnered:  
• For first and second generation respondents, race was not significantly related to cohabitation.  
• Unemployment, part-time employment, and not being in the labor force were associated with lower odds of cohabitation.  
• Higher educational attainment was not significantly related to cohabitation for generation one or two.  
Cohabiting versus Married:  
• For all generations, Blacks had higher odds of cohabitation compared to marriage.  
• Unemployment was not significantly related to cohabitation for generation one or two (part-time employment and not in labor force had higher odds of cohabitation).  
• Higher education was associated with lower odds of cohabitation versus marriage for all generations.

## SUMMARY

This study improved upon prior research by including previously missed groups of cohabitors who were not partnered with the householder, examining the relationship between parent and respondent nativity, and examining all nationalities.  
Generational status is related to union formation, and also is related to the kinds of predictors that are significant for union formation.  
While there are stark differences in union formation behaviors for generation one and generation three, generation two seems to be a mix of both sets of characteristics, in line with assimilation theory.  
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