



Modern Hawaiian Migration: Brain Drain or Brain Gain?

PASE REPORT

Policy Analysis &
System
Evaluation

Kamehameha
Schools

Presented by

Nolan J. Malone

Research
Conference on
the Education
and Well-Being
of Hawaiians

Turtle Bay Resort
Hawai`i

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Research Conference on the Education and
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19 September 2003

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Background

- Between 1995 and 2000...
 - 125,000 people moved to Hawai'i
 - 201,000 people moved from Hawai'i
 - Net loss of 76,000 residents
- Recurring theme in media, political campaigns and industry
- Little attention to migration of Native Hawaiians



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Definition: Brain Drain

- The systematic loss of highly skilled and/or highly educated individuals from one area to another
- Commonly cited causes:
 - Lack of economic opportunities
 - Social ties in destination
 - Personal development



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Research Questions

- Does a Brain Drain exist among Hawaiians?
- Is there any form of *Brain Gain* among Hawaiians?
- Does migrant status influence socio-economic outcomes?



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Hawaiian Context

- *Kuleana ‘ohana:*
 - Reciprocal familial bonds
- *Aloha ‘āina:*
 - Love for the land
- *Kuleana kupuna:*
 - Responsibility to elders and ancestors

*Ho‘i hou i ka iwi kuamo‘o
(Return to the backbone)*



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Hypotheses

If a Brain Drain really exists, then
Hawaiians who leave the state will
have...

...higher wages

...higher SES levels

...higher educational attainment



Data and Methods

- Census 2000 Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) 1-percent file
- Limited to:
 - Hawaiian race/ancestry
 - Adults, 25 years & older
 - Born in Hawai'i

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Migrant Categories

- **Islander**
 - Hawai'i at birth, 1995, 2000
- **Departee**
 - Hawai'i at birth, continent by 2000
- **Returnee**
 - Continent once, Hawai'i by 2000



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Selected Characteristics by Migrant Status

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Characteristic	Islander	Departee	Returnee
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Mean Age	41.3	46.2	51.5
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Married to Hawaiian	33.1%	13.3%	41.3%
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Pure Hawaiian	39.4%	45.2%	40.5%
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Enrolled in school	7.7%	6.0%	4.5%
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Veteran	9.6%	22.3%	18.1%
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Employed civilian	66.8%	71.5%	64.1%
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Selected Outcomes by Migrant Status

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Characteristic	Islander	Departee	Returnee
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Mean Wage Income	20,375	25,650	25,329
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Mean Total Income	26,151	31,249	32,635
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College Education	11.0%	19.3%	16.4%
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Self-Employed	5.9%	8.9%	4.7%
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Home Ownership	27.5%	60.3%	71.4%
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Regression Results: **Wage & Salary Income**

Parameter	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Migrant status</i>						
<i>Departee</i>	++	+	none	none	none	none
<i>Returnee</i>	++	+	+	+	none	none
<i>Demg. Chars.</i>		+++	+++	+++	+++	+++
<i>Ethnicity</i>			none	none	none	none
<i>Education</i>				++	++	++
<i>Individual Chars.</i>					+	++
<i>Employment</i>						++

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Regression Results: Home Ownership

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Parameter	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Migrant status</i>						
<i>Departee</i>	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	
<i>Returnee</i>	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	
<i>Demg. Chars.</i>		+++	+++	+++	+++	
<i>Ethnicity</i>			none	none	none	
<i>Education</i>				+	+	
<i>Individual Chars.</i>					+	
<i>Employment</i>						



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Regression Results: **College Education**

Parameter	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Migrant status</i>						
Departee	++	+	+		+	+
Returnee	none	none	none		none	none
<i>Demg. Chars.</i>		+	+		+	+
<i>Ethnicity</i>			+		+	+
<i>Education</i>					n/a	n/a
<i>Individual Chars.</i>					none	none
<i>Employment</i>						++

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Conclusions

- Does a *Brain Drain* exist?
 - Yes, in educational attainment
- Is there a *Brain Gain*?
 - Yes, in home ownership
- Does migrant status influence socio-economic outcomes?
 - Yes (above) and no (wages)

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Next Steps

- Examine motivations for migration
- Seek out longitudinal data sources
- Implement adjustments to data for cost-of-living differences
- Incorporate macro-level indicators
- Consult narratives



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Mahalo iā ‘oukou.