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ABSTRACT

Towing Norms through the American Dream

This paper takes advantage of a natural experiment, in which Soviet Jewish immigrants were quasi-randomly allocated of to the U.S. and Israel. I find that young women who immigrated as children follow similar fertility profiles in the two host countries. In Israel, they are also similar to native-born women by exercising almost no selection into motherhood and postnatal labor force participation. By contrast, and away from native-born American women, immigrants to the U.S. either combine family and career or become low-educated non-working mothers. This non-trivial segregation arises from a combination of the American Dream with origin-determined fertility norms.

JEL Classification: J13, J61

Keywords: immigration, Soviet Jews, female labor force participation, immigrant fertility

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1 Introduction

In this paper, I provide evidence that sheds light on how immigrants to the United States path the way for realization of origin-determined fertility norms. The quasi-random allocation of Soviet Jewish immigrants to the U.S. and Israel in 1989–1991 allows me to consider immigrants to Israel as a control group for immigrants to the United States. I focus on 25–34 years old women who immigrated as children or teenagers and have around 17 years of post-immigration tenure. I find that immigrants to Israel and the U.S. target very similar childbearing profiles, showing the dominance of origin-determined norms. However, they have different paths to the same target. Similarly to native-born Israelis, immigrants to Israel exhibit only weak relationship between childbearing, observable human capital, and postnatal labor market activity. Meanwhile, immigrants to the U.S. sharply deviate from immigrants to Israel and native-born Americans in terms of selection into motherhood by observable human capital and postnatal labor market activity. They exercise segregation, when most immigrant mothers are academic-educated and working, while minority are low-educated and non-working. This segregation is away from the standard career-family trade-off.

In summary, most Soviet Jewish immigrants to the U.S. combine relative intensive childbearing with career, ignoring the substitution between the two. However, they are also elastic by holding an alternative motherhood model of no-education-no-work. The intrigue in this observation is that it does not support a naive hypothesis that outcomes of immigrants to the U.S. should lie "between" those of similar immigrants to Israel and those of native-born Americans. I interpret this finding as the effect of the immigrants' American Dream combined with origin-determined childbearing preferences. When the desire to have two children at a relatively early age is as strong as the desire for career, immigrants deviate from the naive quality-quantity and family-career trade-offs. Most Soviet Jewish immigrants to the U.S. study and work hard to realize their desired family model without compromising on standards of living. Therefore, the main contribution of this paper is in providing experimental evidence showing that immigrants to the U.S. are more tenacious than naive Beckerian agents. A by-side contribution is in investigation of the Soviet Jewish immigrants

to the United States, a group overlooked by the main economic literature.[1]

The study departs from a two-stage natural experiment. In the early 1980s, the Soviet Union allowed almost no emigration. In the first stage of change, with the weakening of the Iron Curtain in the late 1980s, increasing number of Soviet Jews applied for emigration to Israel. Practically, Israeli invitation was almost the only channel to receive the "exit visa" from the Soviet Union. However, there were no diplomatic relationships and no direct transportation between the two countries. After receiving the exit permit, Jewish emigrants went as transit travellers to Europe, where they stayed for some period of time and were assisted by either American Jewish charity or Israeli representatives. Rather than proceeding to their "official" destination, Israel, vast majority of the migrants took advantage of the nondiscriminatory American refugee policy for escaping Soviets and proceeded to the United States.

In the second stage, on October 1st, 1989, the U.S. unexpectedly changed its policy and set its embassy in Moscow as the sole location where Soviet citizens can apply for the refugee status. This change efficiently blocked the American channel for Soviet Jews. While in Moscow, there were not treated as refugees. Following introduction of quotas, only those reunifying with a family in the U.S. were granted American visas. As a result, the share of Israel among destinations rose from a few to 90%, and that of the U.S. dropped to only 3%. This discontinuity is the quasi-random treatment that I utilize in this paper.

The 1989 event has three features important for causal inference. First, on the receiving side, Israel (always) and the U.S. (until October 1st, 1989) accepted the Soviet Jewish immigrants indiscriminately, regardless of their demographics, education, and resources. In particular, none of the variables that I analyze was a condition for entrance. Second, on the sending side, many Soviet Jews were highly motivated to emigrate, and the American policy change did not demotivate them. The flow of Jewish emigrants rather continued to

[1]Frequently cited studies on immigration to the U.S. focus on other groups (Abramitzky et al., 2014, 2020, Alexander et al., 2018, Bandiera et al., 2019, Card, 2001, Tabellini, 2020, Xu and Zhang, 2020). Meanwhile. only a few Israeli economists address the integration of Former Soviet Union (FSU) immigrants to Israel (Buchinsky et al., 2014; Cohen-Goldner and Paserman, 2011; Eckstein and Weiss, 2004; Friedberg, 2000). They focus on wages, analyze only short and medium-run perspective, and do not compare the FSU immigrants to Israel and other destinations. Meanwhile, sociologists contributed multiple articles and books dealing with the 1990s Russian immigrants to Israel, the U.S., Germany, and Canada, and delivering in-depth analysis of their integration process (Remennick, 2017, Cohen et al., 2011).

strengthen over the following years. Therefore, there is little concern that the policy change generated self-selection in the short term. Third, even though Israel was not the first choice of most Soviet Jewish emigrants, further migration of those who went to Israel was relatively low. The estimated population of women, who immigrated to Israel as children and teenagers in 1990–1991, decreased by only 7.33% between the censuses of 1995 and 2008. This decrease constitutes attrition rate of 0.58% annually, a low figure relatively to the universe of field experiments in economics (Ghanem et al., 2021).

Theories explaining the effect of immigration on demographic behavior include the socialization, assimilation, adaptation, selection, and disruption hypotheses (Adserà and Ferrer, 2015). In a nutshell, these hypotheses suggest that immigrants share origin-determined culture but are also affected by the host country norms and the disruptive friction of immigration itself. The standard empirical approach is to focus on testing these hypotheses (Marcén et al., 2018; Mayer and Riphahn, 2000; Impicciatore et al., 2020). In my results, the similarity of childbearing profiles of immigrants to Israel and the U.S. supports the socialization hypothesis. However, the rare experimental setting that I utilize[2] allows me to extend the empirical question beyond the existing literature and to provide new insights arising from comparison between similar immigrants in different destinations.

The paper proceeds with the overview of the historical context in Section 2 and provides more details that support the main identification assumption in Section 3. Section 4 introduces the data and reports summary statistics. Section 5 presents the findings, and Section 6 discusses the results and concludes.

[2]Random allocation of voluntary migrants is rare by definition of voluntary migration. Differently from voluntary migrants, refugees are often randomly allocated, but they are a disadvantaged group relatively to voluntary migrants (Brell et al., 2020). In addition, some studies address exogenous resettlement of internal migrants. For instance, Azlor et al. (2020) focus on the integration of refugees in Denmark who were allocated to different cities, and Derenoncourt (2022) and Fouka et al. (2022) analyze the Great Migration across the U.S.. Bazzi et al. (2016) analyze the random allocation of rural-to-rural internal migrants in Indonesia, and some papers address the forced replacement of Germans after World War II (Bauer et al., 2013; Becker et al., 2020; Becker and Ferrara, 2019; Braun and Dwenger, 2020; Braun and Mahmoud, 2014). Geographic variation of resettlement is used to estimate the effect of local labor markets on employment of immigrants (Azlor et al., 2020; Bauer et al., 2013), but more studies are concerned with the effect of immigrants on natives (Borjas, 2003; Braun and Kvasnicka, 2014; Bryan and Morten, 2019; Card, 2001; Friedberg and Hunt, 1995; Peri, 2016).

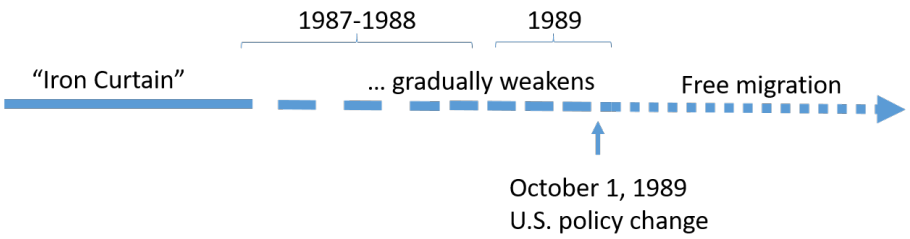

Figure 1: Historical timeline

2 Background

2.1 Historical context

Figure 1 outlines the historical timeline that provides context for the 1989 event. Since the late 1960s, the growing exodus desire of Soviet Jews, who suffered from antisemitism, latent discrimination, and deprivation of cultural autonomy and freedom of faith, was crashing against the Iron Curtain. The emigration bar was an ideological show of the Soviet Union as a socialist paradise that no one should leave to a capitalist country. Moreover, the Soviet anti-Israeli rhetoric undermined the very right of the Jewish state to exist, making it ideologically "impossible" to allow masses of Soviet citizens to emigrate to Israel. In the early 1980s the situation worsened, and emigration was limited to a few thousands and even a few hundreds annually. Many *refusniks*, Jews who wished but were not allowed to leave the Soviet Union, were persecuted as "traitors."

When Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms intensified and the Iron Curtain weakened, Soviet Jews started to emigrate. The numbers became increasingly significant starting with 1989. Because the Israeli channel was almost the only possibility to emigrate from the Soviet Union, almost all Soviet emigrants were Jewish. Initially, Soviet Jews used invitations from Israel in order to obtain a permit to leave the Soviet Union on family reunification basis. Yet there were no diplomatic relationship and no direct flights between the Soviet Union and Israel. Jewish migrants arrived to Vienna, from where they were supposed to proceed to Israel. However, vast majority of the 1989 migrants relied on American policy of nondiscriminatory granting refugee status to escaping Soviets. Migrants were assisted by the Hebrew Immigrant

Aid Society in what was labelled as "Vienna-Rome pipeline." They applied to the American embassy in Rome and received the American refugee visa.

On October 1st, 1989, the U.S. changed its policy. It required to apply for the refugee status at the American embassy in Moscow. Efficiently, this decision blocked the American refugee channel for migrants who fled the Soviet Union with Israeli visa. The flow was redirected, and in 1990 as much as 90% of Soviet Jewish migrants arrived to Israel, starting the mass *Aliya*[3] of 1990s, which brought more than one million Jews and their family members from the Former Soviet Union (FSU) to Israel. Rosenberg (2014) provides the following description of this event:

> In March 1989, Secretary of State James Baker told American Jewish leaders that the Soviet Jewish refugee issue was one of the State Department's largest budgetary problems. This budgetary issue would continue to affect American policy. Beginning on October 1, 1989, the administration implemented the policy of processing Soviet refugees in Moscow rather than in Vienna and Rome. In doing so, it intended both to save money in an increasingly expensive process and to inform would-be refugees of their status before they left the Soviet Union. In essence, the measure meant that Soviet Jews, all of whom left with Israeli visas, would not be able to apply for admission to the U.S. as refugees once they were in a third country (i.e., Austria or Italy). As Immigration and Nationalization Service Commissioner Nelson pointed out, the Soviet Jews did have the option of going to Israel: "Elsewhere, and under normal procedures, such 'offers of firm resettlement' are bars against further consideration for the U.S. refugee program.

Table 1 shows the Jewish immigrants to the U.S. and Israel[4] in 1989–1991. The number of Jews and their family members who immigrated in 1989 to the U.S. is 56,000, constituting 77% of all Soviet Jewish emigrants in that year. The share would be higher if one excludes

[3] *Aliya* (Ascent) is the Hebrew term for Jewish immigration to Israel.

[4] The U.S. is 35 times larger than Israel in terms of population and 400 times larger in terms of area. Both countries are economically developed, absorb many immigrants, and are also relatively unequal. However, the U.S. has a 50% higher than Israel level of GDP (PPP) per capita and higher income inequality. The 10% R/P ratio in the U.S. is 18.5 vs 13.4 in Israel, and the 20% R/P ratio is 9.4 vs 8.5. Gini coefficient is 0.395 in the U.S. vs 0.348 in Israel. Source: the R/P ratio figures are from the UN Development Programme, Gini figures are from OECD.

Table 1: Soviet Jewish emigration in 1989–1991

Year of immigration	Number of immigrants	% to destination
	A: To the Unites States	
1989	56,000	77%
1990	6,500	3.2%
	B: To Israel	
1989	12,932	18% .
1990	185,227	90.3%
1990–1991	333,066	83%

Source: Tolts (2009) and Israeli Statistical Yearbook. The percents indicate the destination's share from all Soviet Jewish emigrants.

the post-October 1st period, when the American channel efficiently closed. Overall 54,288 Soviet-born individuals who immigrated to the U.S. in 1989 were naturalized during the 1989–2000 period.[5] Furthermore, the 2000 Census estimates the population of Soviet-born immigrants of 1989 as 49,434, and the American Community Survey (ACS) of 2002–2010 estimates this population as 44,454. The number of Soviet immigrants to Israel in 1989 was 12,932 or 18% of the total that year, including the post-October 1st preiod. However, in 1990, only 6,500 or 3.2% of all Jews and their family members who escaped the Soviet Union immigrated to the United States. Meanwhile, 185,227 or 90.3% immigrated to Israel. Over 1990–1991, Israel received 333,000 or 83% of Soviet Jewish emigrants, compared to 10.4% received by the United States. The main destination of the remaining was Germany. The Israeli Census of 1995 estimates the Soviet immigrant population of 1990–1991 as 289,500, and the Census of 2008 estimates it as 253,748. Therefore, ACS of 2002–2010 estimates the population of Soviet 1989 immigrants to the U.S. as 79.4% of the initial figure, while the Israeli 2008 Census estimates the population of Soviet 1990–1991 immigrants as 76.2% of the initial figure.

An important institutional feature of the 1989 Soviet immigration to the U.S. and the 1990s immigration to Israel is that Soviet immigrants were welcomed in both host countries.

[5]Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Immigrants Admitted to the United States.

Those who went to the U.S. received financial and other support upon arrival and naturalized in the following years. Those who went to Israel naturalized immediately and received a generous package of financial and other benefits.

2.2 Demographic context

Soviet Jews were mostly assimilated among urban Soviets. The Soviet Union (except of its Muslim population) delivered an unusual set of gender attitudes and demographic patterns. The Soviet family model consisted of universal and early marriage, early first childbearing, and complete fertility of around two children. This model arose from two contradicting cultural sources. On the one hand, the Soviet social attitudes were traditionalist. They included puritanism,[6] low age at marriage, early age at first birth, prevalent sexism, homophobia, and widespread domestic violence. On the other hand, the Soviet socialism designed an industrialized secular society, where women were educated and participated in the labor force, including its high-skilled segment. They had relatively low fertility and high divorce rates with widespread single motherhood. In particular, fertility rate in the FSU is similar to the one in the U.S. but much lower than the one in Israel. The two contradicting effects, i.e., traditionalist patriarchy and socialist feminism, were accompanied among the Soviet Jews by a third effect, special to them: desire for education. A combination of these three effects designed a Soviet Jewish model where births are given universally and at early age, but mother's education and investment in children are also important.

Although Soviet Jews were almost not exercising Judaism, they considered themselves and were treated by others as a separate ethnic group. Jews were among the most educated minorities in the Soviet Union even though their access to top universities was restricted by latent discrimination. The preference of the Soviet Jews to resettle in the U.S., revealed before the American policy change, is related to the tendency of educated migrants to be particularly concerned about institutions and economy of the host country (Arif, 2020; Bertocchi and Strozzi, 2008; Geis et al., 2013). The American Dream of high returns to

[6] In one of the first joint Soviet-American TV shows in 1986, a Soviet woman, responding on a question from the American floor, famously said "we have no sex." The actual context was presence of sex in advertisements, but the quote became anecdotal in the context of Soviet puritanism. The same show also touched the issue of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. See video.

skills and effort attracts high-skilled immigrants despite the relatively low social mobility in countries associated with it (Lumpe, 2019; Grogger and Hanson, 2011). Correspondingly, not only in 1989 but also during the 1990s, in the period not overlapping with the natural experiment utilized in this paper, FSU immigrants to the U.S. were more educated than FSU immigrants to Israel.

3 Identification

I identify the causal effect of destination on later-in-life outcomes by assuming that Soviet immigrants to the U.S. in 1989 and Soviet immigrants to Israel in 1990–1991 where allocated as good as randomly. I start the discussion of this assumption with soft arguments and then support it with data. The American policy change in October 1989 redirected the migration flow of the Soviet Jews in favor of Israel. Table 1 shows this redirection from 77% to the U.S. in 1989 to 90% to Israel in 1990. The U.S. figure in 1989 would be higher if one considers only the first nine months of the year, preceding the American policy change. The mechanism of emigration from the Soviet Union supports the assumption that the policy change was as good as random for those Soviet Jews who were in the process of exodus. In order to escape the Soviet Union, in addition to holding Israeli invitation, one had to apply for exit visa. Emigrants lost Soviet citizenship and rarely came back as visitors. They could not let any property behind, because almost all housing was public. Thus, storage of any property was impossible. Therefore, emigrants had to get rid of everything they had, which took time.

News articles from that time confirm that the American policy change on October 1, 1989, was an unpleasant surprise for the emigration-seeking Soviet Jews. American press recognized on the eve of the policy change that the effect would be redirection of the flow toward resettlement in Israel. For instance, on September 7, 1989, *The Washington Post* publishes an article titled "U.S. plans to bar thousands of Soviet Jews," stating that

> the U.S. now faces the acutely embarrassing situation of turning away thousands of Soviet Jews who had hoped to begin a new life in this country... within the next few days, the administration is expected to announce tentative new rules that will make large numbers of future Soviet Jewish emigres ineligible to come here

> as refugees and force them to seek admittance through other immigrant programs that are too expensive or time-consuming for most to pursue... the practical effect of the new policy will be to redirect most of them toward resettlement in Israel – a destination few of the would-be immigrants have sought in recent years... In Rome and Vienna, the number of Soviet Jews stacked up waiting for decisions on their applications for U.S. refugee status has reached scandalous proportions.

Correspondingly, on October 28, 1989, *Los Angeles Times* writes that

> The new U.S. regulations, which went into effect Oct. 1, require that virtually all Soviets allowed to immigrate to the U.S. have a mother, father, brother, sister, son, daughter, wife or husband living there. Those who do not have a close relative there should consider seeking immigration to some other country, U.S. officials say. ... Officials in Washington ... will be looking solely at the close-relative requirement.

In addition to the soft arguments in support of the identification assumption, Table 2 provides some facts. First, although Israel was not the first choice for most treated immigrants, further migration from Israel did not generate large attrition. Panel A of Table 2 shows that between 1995 and 2008 (years of successive Israeli censuses of population), the estimated population of treated women born in 1971–1985 decreased by only 7.33% or 0.58% annually.[7] This rate of attrition is very small compared to the universe of field experiments (Ghanem et al., 2021). In line with being the U.S. the first choice for most immigrants, the rate of attrition of young women who immigrated as children to the U.S. is close to zero.[8]

Second, Panel B shows that the treated in the two countries have identical sex ratio.[9] Among the treated born in 1974–1983, the share of males is 0.520 in Israel versus 0.516 in the United States. While the difference between the two groups is only 0.004 and statistically

[7] The analysis in the paper focus on women born in 1974–1983 and observed in the 2008 Census. However, because of a different grouping of years of birth in the Public Use File of the 1995 Census, the range of years of births in Panel A of Table 2 is different.

[8] This figure is $min(0, \beta)$, where β is the regression slope of year on the log of the treated female population born in 1974–1983. The data is from 2000 Census and 2002–2020 ACS. They first ACS year 2001 is omitted from the regression because of an abnormally high treated population estimate.

[9] See data details in Section 4.

Table 2: Attrition, sex ratio, and balance test

A: Mean annual attrition of treated[1]				
Israel (1995–2008)			Unites States (2000–2020)	
0.584%			0%	
B: Share of males				
Israel[2]		United States[3]		Israel-U.S. difference
Treated	Natives	Treated	Natives	Treated
0.520	0.505	0.516	0.498	0.004
(0.007)	(0.002)	(0.029)	(0.000)	(0.029)
C: Balance test[4]				
American treated vs. Israeli treated			American natives vs. Israeli natives	
F. statistics	P-value		F. statistics	P-value
0.550	0.838		11.184	0.000
(9; 1,583)			(9; 1,047,791)	

Notes: (1) Born 1971–1985 and immigrated from the Soviet Union to Israel in 1990–1991. (2) Figure from the 2008 Israel Census. Individuals born in 1974–1983 and immigrated from the Soviet Union to Israel in 1990–1991. (3) Figure from 2002–2010 ACS. Individuals born in 1974–1983 and immigrated from the Soviet Union to the U.S. in 1989. (4) The panel reports F-statistics and, in parentheses, the degrees of freedom from linear probability regressions for survey data, where the dependent variable is a dummy that discriminates between the U.S. and Israel, according to each column's heading. Explanatory variables are dummies for years of birth. The population is women born in 1974–1983. American data is the same as in Panel B, Israeli data is the IPUMS file of Israeli 2008 Census, where year of birth is explicit.

indistinguishable from zero, they are different from the native-born populations in their host countries. In both countries the share of males among native-born is close to 0.5. Finally, Panel C reports the results of a balance test of origin-determined demographic moments of women born in 1974–1983. The table shows F-statistics and their p-values from survey-data linear regressions,[10] where the dependent variable is a dummy for the U.S. versus Israel. The explanatory side is a set of dummies for years of birth. I estimate the regression separately for treated and native-born women. The F-statistic of treated is only 0.55 (would be only 0.165 in an OLS regression), or 20 times smaller than that of natives. Correspondingly, the p-value of treated is 0.84 (would be as high as 0.997 in OLS) but close to zero for natives. These figures are evident of persisting similarity in origin-determined demographics of American and Israeli treated.

4 Data and summary statistics

I employ American and Israeli public-use census data. For Israel, it is the 2008 Israeli Census of Population Public Use File (PUF), where the treated immigrants are observed 17–18 years after immigration (the mean is 17.6). Age is grouped in the Israeli Census PUF, and I focus on the group of 25–34 years old (born in 1974–1983). Therefore, I consider as treated females, who immigrated from the Soviet-Union in 1990–1991 at ages 7–17. There are 2,688 treated and 61,648 corresponding native-born women in the Israeli data. For drawing Figures 2, 3 and 4, where the horizontal axis is age, I use the IPUMS[11] version of the Israeli Census PUF. The IPUMS file includes explicit age but has only 50% of the observations. Therefore, I use it for drawing figures but not for statistical inference.

For American treated and natives, I use the American Community Survey (ACS) from 2002–2010 (Ruggles et al., 2022). This data provides 254 observations of 25–34 years old female Soviet immigrants of 1989. Their mean tenure in the U.S. is 17.7 years, similarly to the treated in the Israeli data. The American treated population is much smaller than the Israeli one. There are only around 30 observations in each ACS wave. Thus, it would be

[10] All analyses in the paper employ STATA *svy* estimation commands.

[11] Minnesota Population Center. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, International: Version 7.3 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020. https://doi.org/10.18128/D020.V7.3.

statistically inefficient to limit American data to exactly the same criteria as Israeli data, in particular in terms of post-immigration tenure and years of birth. By employing the 2002–2010 waves, I keep the same range of ages as in the Israeli data, but exploit a slightly wider (and mean-preserving) range of post-immigration tenure and years of birth. In addition to the treated, there are 1,033,007 observations of corresponding native-born women in the American data.

In addition to the constraint of age grouping in the Israeli Census PUF, there are two reasons to consider the 25–34 years old women for analysis of childbearing. First, these women immigrated as children and teenagers, and all of their reproductive history takes place in the host country. Second, ACS does not record actual childbearing. Women are only asked about the number of own children living in their household. This indicator is a good proxy for actual childbearing for young women, whose children are likely to be young and to live in the parental household. Figure 2 shows the share of Israeli treated women with at least one and at least two children (number of live births) and the share of American treated women with at least one and at least two own children in the household. The figure documents a very strong correlation between the American and the Israeli lines until mid-thirties. For older ages, the share of American treated women with children in the household drops, likely because some children leave the parental house. Therefore, the 25–34 years old are the group for which the fertility measurement error in the American data should be relatively small.

Table 3 reports the summary statistics of the treated in the U.S. and Israel. For reference, columns 3 and 4 provide corresponding means of native-born Americans and Israelis. The summary statistics imply two insights. First, young women who immigrated as children are very similar in the two host countries. Second, the treated-natives gap is large in the U.S. and very small in Israel. This is somewhat surprising, given the cultural and linguistic distance between Soviet Jews and native Israelis.[12]

Panel A shows that among treated in the U.S. and Israel, the same share of 67.8%

[12]The Israeli society is a mix of 20% Arabs and 80% Jews and their non-Jewish family members. The Jewish population has Sephardi majority, culturally remote from the Soviet Jews. The remaining Ashkenazi Jews include large ultra-orthodox and orthodox populations, also culturally remote from the mostly secular Soviet Jews. Finally, almost none of the Soviet immigrants was familiar with Hebrew language prior to immigration.

live with a partner, similarly to native-born Israelis. The corresponding figure for native-born Americans is twenty points lower. However, the share of ever-married is identical in the U.S. and Israel. The low figure of native-born American women living in partnership arises from the much lower marital stability among native-born Americans than among all treated and native-born Israelis. In addition, treated in both host countries are similarly endogamous, with the share of Soviet-born partners being 74.4% for American and 71.8% for Israeli treated.

Panel B shows that American treated are more likely than Israeli treated to hold an academic degree (51.3% versus 43.6%), but both figures lie far above the corresponding figures for native-born women, which are, respectively, 33.6% and 36.5%. Despite being more educated than Israeli treated, American treated are less likely to participate in the labor force. The figures are 75.3% and 89.1%, respectively. Yet the American treated have a higher than Israeli treated mean wage percentile (58.2 versus 50.2). Both figures lie above the mean wage percentile of native-born Americans (45.2) and Israelis (46.5). The partners of the treated have a ten-points lower share of academic degree holders than the treated. The educational spousal gap is larger for treated than for native-born Americans but similar for treated and native-born Israelis. Meanwhile, the mean partner's wage percentile is higher for treated Israelis than treated Americans (71.1 versus 67.8), but both figures lie above the mean partner's wage percentile of native-born women (64 in both countries).

Panel C shows that American treated enjoy significantly higher than Israeli treated living standards. They live in houses with 5 rooms, while Israeli treated have only 3.5 rooms.[13] 92.6% of American treated have a car in the household, and 63.1% have more than one car in the household. The corresponding figures for Israeli treated are only 74.6% and 21.2%. American and Israeli treated have similar to the average native-born women in their host countries living standards, except that native-born Americans have slightly larger houses. However, this gap may arise from different from treated location choices of the natives.

Panel D refers to children. 57.9% of treated in the U.S. have children versus 60.6% in Israel. The corresponding figures for native-born women are 55.7% and 61.4%, respectively. 33.5% and 36.1% of treated women in the U.S. and Israel, respectively, have at least two

[13]In the Israeli data, the number of rooms is right-censored at 5. There is no censorship in the American data.

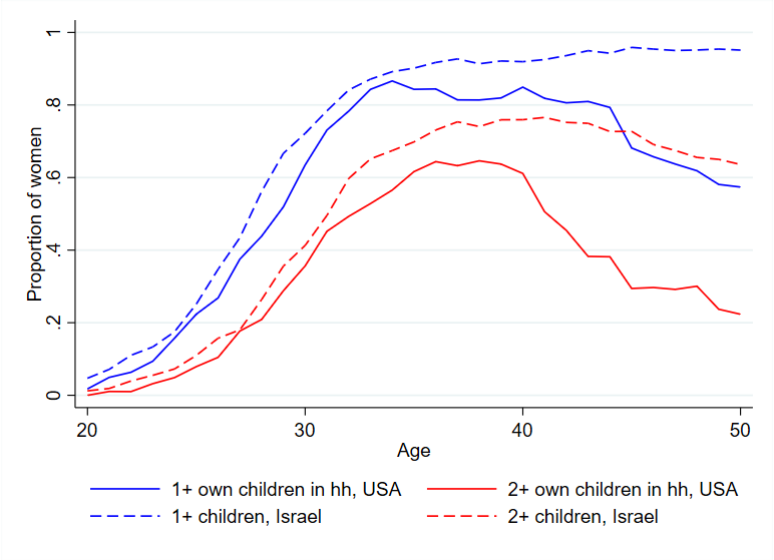

Figure 2: Childbearing (Israel) and own children in the household (U.S.)

Notes: The figure shows the estimated proportion of women with one child or two and more children. Israeli data refers to live births, while American data refers to the number of own children in the household.

children. The figures are similar for native-born Americans but 10 points higher for native-born Israelis. The mean number of children is 1.07 and 1.09 for treated Americans and Israelis, respectively. The figure is similar for native-born Americans and is 0.4 children higher for native-born Israelis. The mean number of children, conditional on having children, is close to two and similar to the figure for native-born Americans but half a child lower than for native-born Israelis.

5 Fertility and postnatal labor market activity

The question in this paper is how immigration destination affects the correlation between human capital investment, childbearing, and postnatal labor market activity. Let us start with childbearing. Figure 3 plots the mean number of children and the propensity of motherhood by age. The "eyeball econometrics" recognizes that the treated women in Israel and the U.S. have almost identical childbearing profiles. Moreover, the two groups are much more

Table 3: Summary Statistics

	Treated		Native-born	
	U.S.	Israel	U.S.	Israel
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Observations	254	2,668	1,033,007	61,648
		A: Family		
Lives with a partner	0.678	0.678	0.481	0.706
	(0.039)	(0.010)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Ever-married	0.762	0.718	0.723	0.723
	(0.033)	(0.009)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Ever-divorced	0.078	0.093	0.132	0.044
	(0.029)	(0.006)	(0.000)	(0.001)
FSU-born partner	0.744	0.718	0.001	0.014
	(0.039)	(0.011)	(0.000)	(0.001)
		B: Education and work		
Academic degree	0.513	0.436	0.336	0.365
	(0.042)	(0.010)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Labor force participation	0.753	0.891	0.784	0.739
	(0.039)	(0.006)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Wage percentile	58.154	50.170	45.161	46.484
	(2.175)	(0.511)	(0.035)	(0.125)
Partner has academic degree	0.421	0.344	0.321	0.278
	(0.049)	(0.012)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Partner's wage percentile	67.821	71.100	63.910	63.587
	(2.517)	(0.583)	(0.043)	(0.154)
		C: Living standards		
Number of rooms	5.031	3.526	5.684	3.568
	(0.165)	(0.018)	(0.002)	(0.004)
Household with a car	0.926	0.746	0.934	0.734
	(0.022)	(0.009)	(0.000)	(0.002)
Household with several cars	0.631	0.212	0.673	0.253
	(0.040)	(0.009)	(0.001)	(0.002)
		D: Children		
Has children	0.579	0.606	0.557	0.614
	(0.040)	(0.010)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Has 2+ children	0.335	0.361	0.356	0.463
	(0.002)	(0.0,001)	(0.010)	(0.040)
Number of children	1.065	1.088	1.077	1.471
	(0.085)	(0.022)	(0.002)	(0.007)
Number of children	1.838	1.783	1.935	2.378
(conditional on positive)	(0.098)	(0.022)	(0.002)	(0.007)

Notes: The table presents summary statistics of 25–34 years old women, as observed in the 2008 Israeli Census and 2002–2010 ACS. Treated are women who immigrated from the Soviet Union to the U.S. in 1989 or to Israel in 1990–1991. The method is survey mean.

Table 4: U.S.-Israel fertility difference

All		Low-educated		Academic- educated	
Treated	Natives	Treated	Natives	Treated	Natives
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
A: Propensity of motherhood					
-0.027	-0.058***	-0.037	-0.022***	0.001	-0.140***
(0.041)	(0.002)	(0.058)	(0.003)	(0.059)	(0.004)
B: Mean number of children					
-0.023	-0.394***	0.049	-0.437***	-0.031	-0.371***
(0.088)	(0.007)	(0.143)	(0.010)	(0.106)	(0.009)

Notes: The table reports first difference between the means in the U.S. and Israel. The method is survey proportion (panel A) and survey mean (panel B). ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

similar to each other than to the native-born women in their host countries. In particular, the treated have a higher than the native-born in both countries propensity of motherhood by mid-thirties. The mean number of children in the thirties is higher for treated than for native-born Americans but lower than for native-born Israelis. The similar childbearing profiles are evident of persisting influence of the Soviet model, i.e., universal and early childbearing with a mean close to two children by mid-thirties.

Table 4 reports the estimates of U.S.-Israel fertility difference by education. Odd columns relate to the treated population, while even columns relate to the native-born population. The U.S-Israel difference in propensity of motherhood is -0.027 for all treated, -0.037 for treated without an academic degree, and as small as 0.001 for treated with an academic degree. These figures are statistically indistinguishable from zero. The U.S.-Israel gap in the mean number of children is also statistically zero. Meanwhile, native-born Americans with academic degree have as much as 14 points lower propensity to have children than corresponding native-born Israelis. With regard to the mean number of children, native-born Americans have around 0.4 children less than native-born Israelis, and the gap is slightly higher for academic-educated than for low-educated.

In summary, Figure 3 and Table 4 establish clear identity between childbearing profiles of treated women in the U.S. and Israel. This identity is evident of the effect of origin-

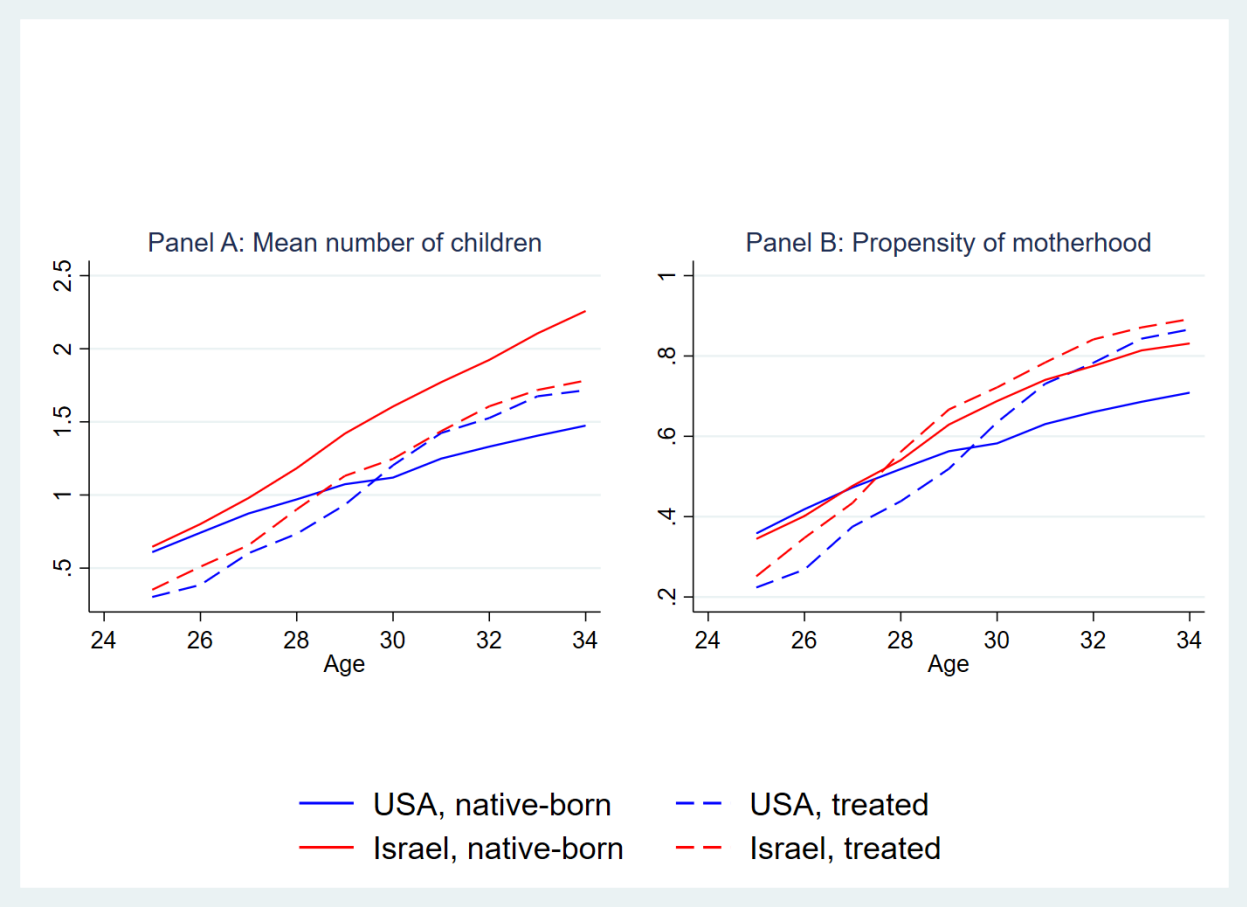

Figure 3: Fertility profiles

Note: The figure shows the mean number of children (panel A) and propensity of having any children (panel B). In the Israeli data, the number of children is the number of live births. In the American data, the number of children is the number of own children in the household.

Table 5: Relationship between motherhood and potential wage percentile

	(1)	(2)
Treated×Any children×U.S.	5.567***	
	(1.660)	
Treated×One Child×U.S.		6.469***
		(1.998)
Treated×Two and more children×U.S.		4.778**
		(1.982)
Any children×U.S.	-3.718***	
	(0.082)	
One Child×U.S.		-3.396***
		(0.117)
Two and more children×U.S.		-4.114***
		(0.089)
Treated×U.S.	1.519	1.519
	(1.203)	(1.203)
Treated×Any children	-0.366	
	(0.324)	
Treated×One child		-0.712*
		(0.406)
Treated×Two and more children		-0.462
		(0.367)
Treated	0.061	0.061
	(0.250)	(0.250)
Observations	1,001,981	1,001,981
Population size	14,812,272	14,812,272

Notes: The table presents coefficients of interest from the survey-data linear regressions output, where the dependent variable is PWP. The explanatory variables are dummies for treated, U.S., motherhood, and all interaction terms. Motherhood is captured by a dummy for any children (column 1) or dummies for one child and at least two children (column 2). ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 6: Child effect on the house size

	Israel	United States
	(1)	(2)
Treated×PWP×Number of children	0.006*	0.010
	(0.003)	(0.015)
Treated×Number of children	-0.145	-0.434
	(0.153)	(0.699)
PWP×Number of children	0.015***	0.019***
	(0.001)	(0.000)
Treated×PWP	-0.001	-0.010
	(0.005)	(0.021)
Observations	44,185	952,806
Population size	320,021	14,438,812

Notes: The table presents coefficients of interest from the survey-data tobit regression output, where the dependent variable is the number of rooms in house. Number of rooms is left-censored at 0, and in Israeli data it is also right-censored at 5. The explanatory variables are dummies for treated, PWP, number of children, and all interaction terms. ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

Table 7: U.S.-Israel difference in women's market work

	Low-educated		Academic-educated		High-low difference	
	Treated	Treated-natives	Treated	Treated-natives	Treated	Treated-natives
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
			A: Labor force participation			
Childless	-0.048	-0.064	0.033	0.031	0.081	0.095
	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.073)	(0.072)
One child	-0.590***	-0.622***	-0.021	0.075	0.569***	0.697***
	(0.140)	(0.140)	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.152)	(0.151)
2+ children	-0.39***	-0.546***	0.016	0.191***	0.408***	0.738***
	(0.085)	(0.085)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.089)	(0.089)
			B: Working hours			
Childless	-3.483	-3.810	-2.427	-2.691*	1.056	1.119
	(2.327)	(2.332)	(1.475)	(1.483)	(2.764)	(2.755)
One child	-0.128	1.374	1.226	1.529	1.355	0.155
	(1.186)	(1.207)	(1.886)	(1.900)	(2.251)	(2.228)
2+ children	-9.587***	-11.010***	0.424	-0.069	10.011***	10.941***
	(2.347)	(2.351)	(1.460)	(1.471)	(2.773)	(2.764)

Notes: The table presents the U.S.-Israel difference in the labor force participation and working hours (conditional on a positive number), by academic education. The method is survey proportion (panel A) and survey mean (panel B). ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1.

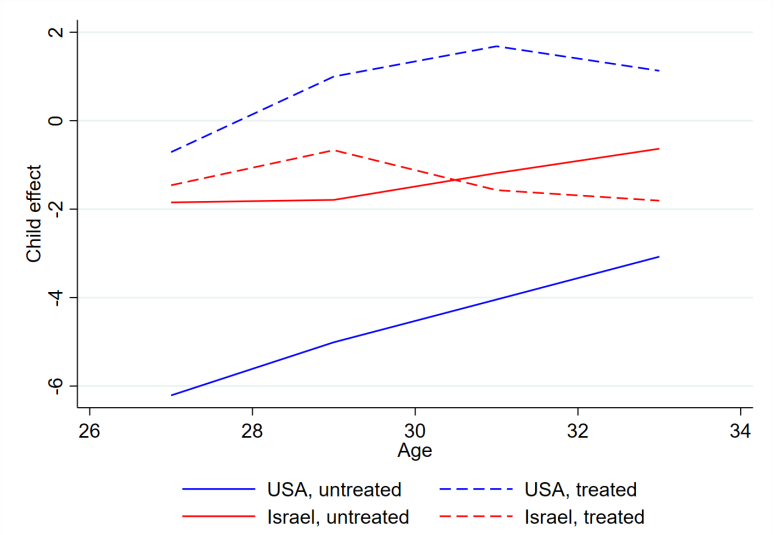

Figure 4: Selection into motherhood by PWP

Notes: The figure shows the PWP (three-year moving average) gap between women with and without children.

determined common cultural norms. However, further analysis shows that immigrant women in the two host countries have different paths to the realization of these norms. To assess selection into motherhood, I consider the women's potential wage percentile (PWP). The potential wage percentile is the mean wage percentile of childless native-born 25–29 years old women.[14] The mean wage percentile is estimated with respect to the education (with/without academic degree) and occupation (according to the grouping of occupations in 10 categories in the Israeli census). Figure 4 documents the relationship between motherhood and PWP. It shows the PWP gap between women with and without children, by woman's age. The figure reveals that Israeli treated are indistinguishable from native-born Israelis by having slightly negative (around -2 points) selection into motherhood. American treated exhibit almost no selection into motherhood (0 to 2 points). By contrast, American native-born women are negatively selected into motherhood, but their selection is positively

[14]The reason not to consider the 30–34 years old women for calculation of PWP is that wage percentiles of 30–34 years old childless women are significantly different from those of 25–29 years old, evident of strong selection into childlessness at this age.

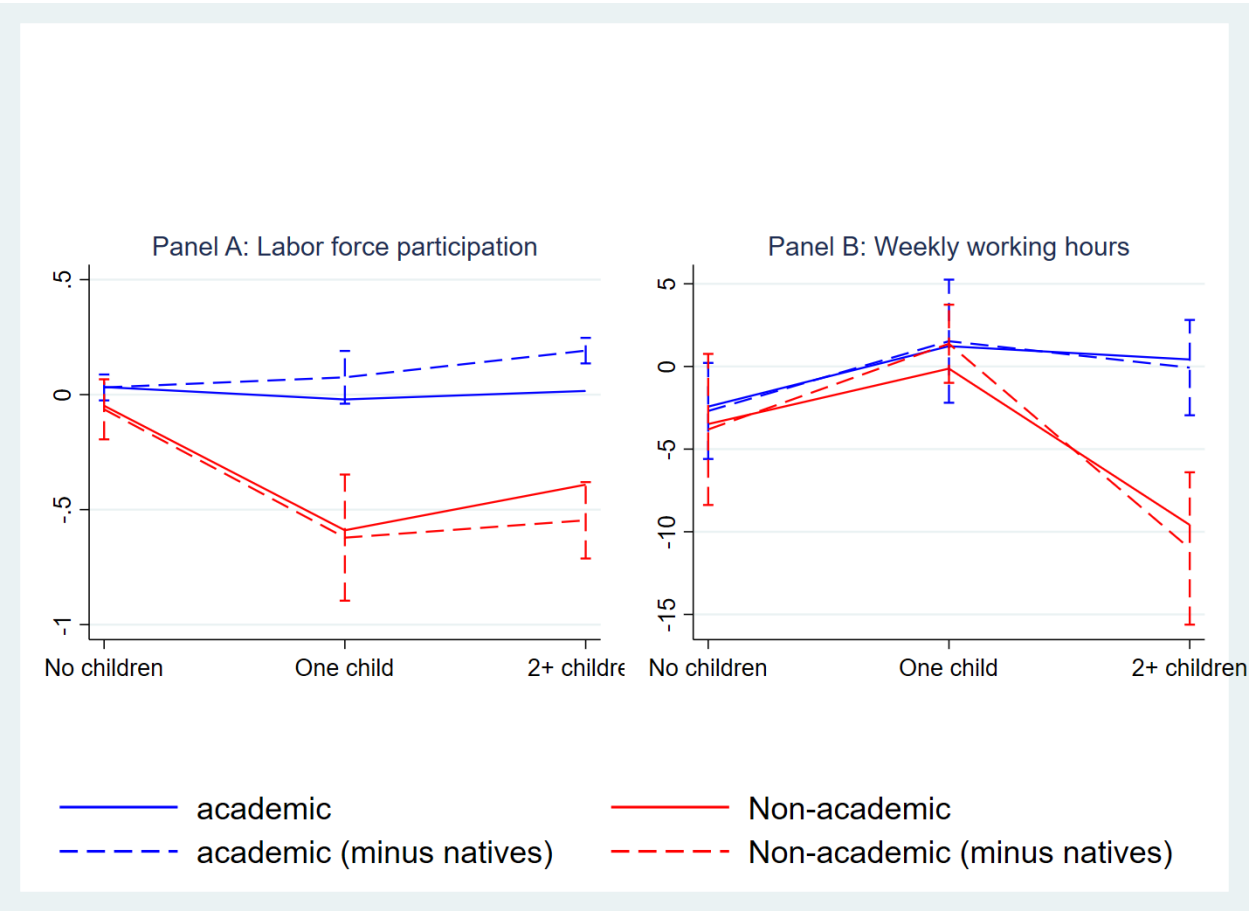

Figure 5: U.S.-Israel difference in the market work of the treated

Note: The figure shows the first difference (solid lines) and the difference-in-differences (dash lines) effects, reported in Table 7, including the 95% confidence intervals of the differnce-in-differences effects.

correlated with age. PWP of native-born Americans who are mothers at age 27 is 6-point lower than that of childless, and PWP of those who are mothers at age 33 is 3-point lower than that of childless.

Table 5 summarizes this evidence in a linear regression. I regress PWP on the dummies for treated, host country, motherhood, and all interaction terms. Column 1 refers to a regression where motherhood appears as a single dummy variable, while column 2 refers to a regression where motherhood is a set of two dummies: one child or at least two children. The table reports the important coefficients from the regressions. The coefficient of a triple interaction *Treated*×*Motherhood*×*U.S.* is around 6 points and slightly lower for women with at least two children than for women with one child. By contrast, for native-born, the coefficient of *Motherhood*×*U.S.* is minus 4 points. There is no such treated-natives gap for childless women: the *Treated*×*U.S.* coefficient is only 1.5 with a standard error of 1.2. Finally, and correspondingly to Figure 4, there is no selection into motherhood and no treated-natives gap in Israel. The *Treated*×*Any children* coefficient is -0.366 (s.e. 0.324), while the simple *Treated* coefficient, showing the treated-natives PWP gap among childless in Israel, is statistically zero.

To summarize evidence in Figure 4 and Table 5, young treated women in the U.S. who give birth have significantly higher than native-born Americans PWP relatively to childless women. In Israel, there is no such relationship neither among treated nor among natives. This difference between treated in the U.S. and Israel is an opposite of what a standard theory should predict. Given their country's lower income, Israelis should have stronger elasticities than the Americans. Moreover, I execute an additional test for the argument that income effect does not explain the results in Figure 4 and Table 5. To this end, I utilize the inquiry of American and Israeli censuses about the size of the respondent's house. Using the size of the house as a measure of standards of living, I test whether presence of children changes the relationship between mother's PWP and standards of living differently for treated than for native-born women. I estimate tobit regressions, where the dependent variable is the number of rooms in house.[15] The model includes a dummy for treated, PWP, number of children, and all interaction terms. Table 6 reports the coefficients of the important interaction terms. Because houses are larger in the United States, and the number of rooms is differently

[15]Number of rooms is left-censored at 0, and in Israeli data it is also right-censored at 5.

censored in the American and Israeli data, I estimate separate regressions for the U.S. and Israel. The results show that PWP interacted with number of children is associated with larger houses in both countries, but the relationship for treated is not different from that for natives. The term *Treated*×*PWP*×*Number of children* is statistically zero in both countries. These results are evident that income effect cannot explain the different selection of American treated and native-born women into motherhood.

I further analyze the relationship between childbearing and women's labor market outcomes. Panel A of Table 7 reports the U.S.-Israel difference in labor force participation (LFP) by number of children and education. Columns 1 and 2 show the difference for treated women without and with academic degree, respectively. Columns 3 and 4 are corresponding difference-in-differences estimators, where the native-born means are deducted from the treated means. The latter estimator can be seen as controlling for host country effect. Columns 5 and 6 show the differences between columns 3 and 1 and between columns 4 and 2, respectively. Panel A of Figure 5 shows the effects graphically. The U.S.-Israel gap is statistically indistinguishable from zero for childless treated women. However, low-educated treated women with one child are 59 points less likely to be in the labor force in the U.S. than in Israel. This effect is even stronger (62.2 ponts) after controlling for host country effect. By contrast, LFP of academic-educated treated women is similarly affected by the first child in both countries, and the U.S.-Israel gap is statistically zero.

For low-educated treated women with at least two children, the U.S.-Israel gap is minus 39 points without and minus 55 points with host country effect. Meanwhile, for academic-educated treated, the U.S.-Israel gap is close to zero. However, controlling for host country effect, the U.S.-Israel gap for academic-educated is positive and constitutes 19 points. It means that academic-educated treated mothers in the U.S. remain in the labor force similarly to academic-educated treated mothers in Israel and in much higher proportion than academic-educated native-born American mothers. The resulting triple-difference estimator in column 6 (the by-education difference between difference-in-differences estimators) is similar for mothers with one and mothers with at least two children, 69.7 and 73.9 points, respectively.

Panel B of Table 7 reports, and Panel B of Figure 5 shows graphically, the U.S.-Israel gap in the weekly working hours for those women who work a positive number of hours. For

childless women and women with one child, the differences are statistically indistinguishable from zero. However, for women with at least two children, low-educated treated women work 10 hours less in the U.S. than in Israel, and the gap is 11 hours controlling for host country effect.

6 Discussion

In this paper, I show that young women who immigrated as children and teenagers and were randomly allocated to the U.S. and Israel follow similar childbearing profiles, complying to the Soviet model of early and universal childbearing. They target giving birth to close to two children by mid-thirties. Immigrants to Israel show weak correlation between realization of this model and other outcomes. In particular, they are similar to native-born Israelis in not conditioning childbearing on academic education and postnatal LFP on extensive and intensive margins. However, immigrants to the U.S. deviate from native-born American women in their realization of the identical to Israeli treated fertility profile. Put together, evidence in Tables 4–7 and Figures 3–5 suggests that immigrants to the U.S. link their childbearing profile to investment in human capital and postnatal labor market activity. However, they do it differently from native-born Americans. The majority earn an academic degree, give birth, and stay in the labor force on extensive and intensive margins. The alternative and less common path is to earn no academic degree and to quit the labor market after the first birth or to drop working hours by 10 after the second birth.

In summary, Soviet Jewish women who immigrated as children to the U.S. and Israel target the same or very similar childbearing profiles, revealing the importance of origin-determined norms. However, they are different in the correlation between childbearing and other outcomes. One could try to explain the differences between treated in the two countries and between treated and natives in the U.S. by arguing that childcare costs are higher in the U.S. than in Israel, and childrearing requires either high PWP or exiting the labor force and spending own time with children. One could also argue that native-born American women do not face the same childcare prices as immigrants. For instance, they may rely on help from grandparents, less available for immigrants. While that might be true, such a standard model should also predict that immigrants to the U.S. trade off children against

standards of living in order to meet their fertility target. However, they do not. Therefore, estimates in Table 6, which examines the relationship between PWP, children, and standards of living, are important for understanding this paper's message. Soviet Jewish immigrants to the U.S. do not "purchase" targeted fertility by compromising on standards of living. They rather attempt to realize simultaneously their origin-determined fertility preferences and their American Dream of high standards of living, away from the naive quality-quantity and career-family trade-offs.

To conclude, this paper's findings show that the behavior of female immigrants to the U.S. is complex. Family size preferences, designed by the country of origin, lead to close-to-zero selection into motherhood by PWP, strong education-LFP correlation, and segregation into academic-educated working mothers and low-educated non-working mothers. By contrast, young native-born American women follow the family-career trade-off. They negatively select themselves into motherhood by PWP. In addition, academic-educated native women are much less likely than immigrants to stay in the labor force after second birth. The difference in the immigrants' behavior in Israel and the U.S. is not explained by income effect. Income and standards of living are higher in the U.S. than in Israel. Moreover, the correlation between PWP and standards of living is similarly conditioned on children for treated and native-born women in both countries.

Soviet Jewish immigrants are an exceptionally educated group that also exercises early childbearing. They are tenacious in realizing their American Dream without compromising on origin-determined family model. However, by trying to optimize the multi-dimensional outcome of career and family, immigrants develop segregation into academic-educated working mothers and low-educated non-working mothers. This segregation is not observed neither among similar immigrants to an alternative destination nor among native-born Americans. It prevents some human capital investment and decreases postnatal labor force participation.

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