Educational and labor market outcomes of Ghanaian, Liberian, Nigerian, and Sierra Leonean Americans, 2010–2017

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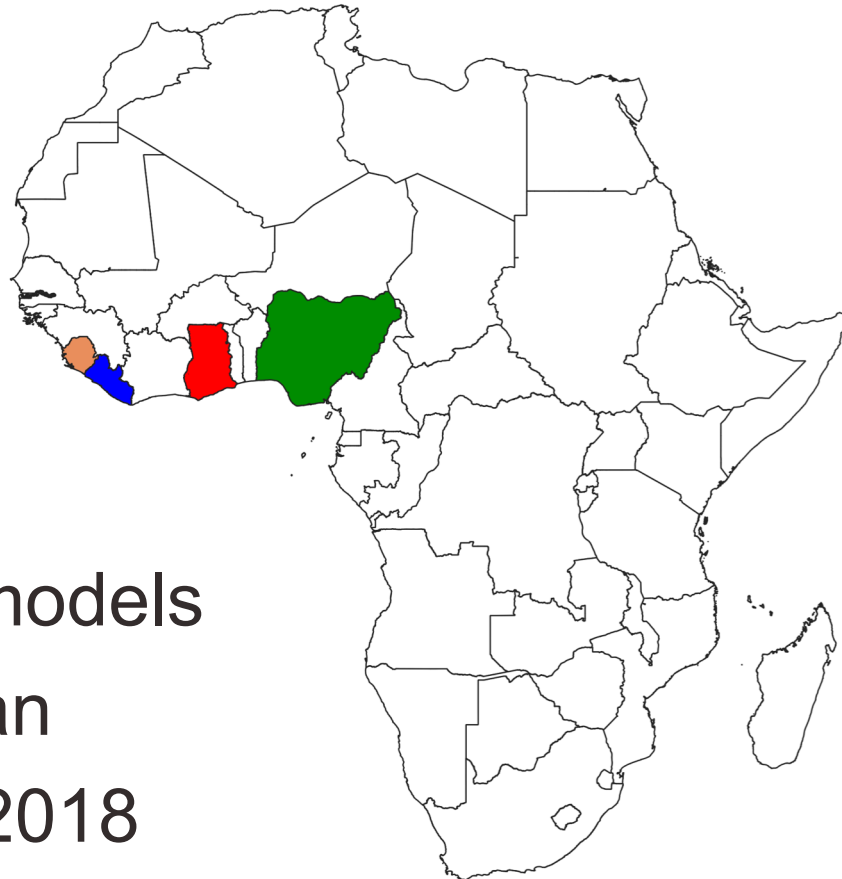**Courtney Nelson**
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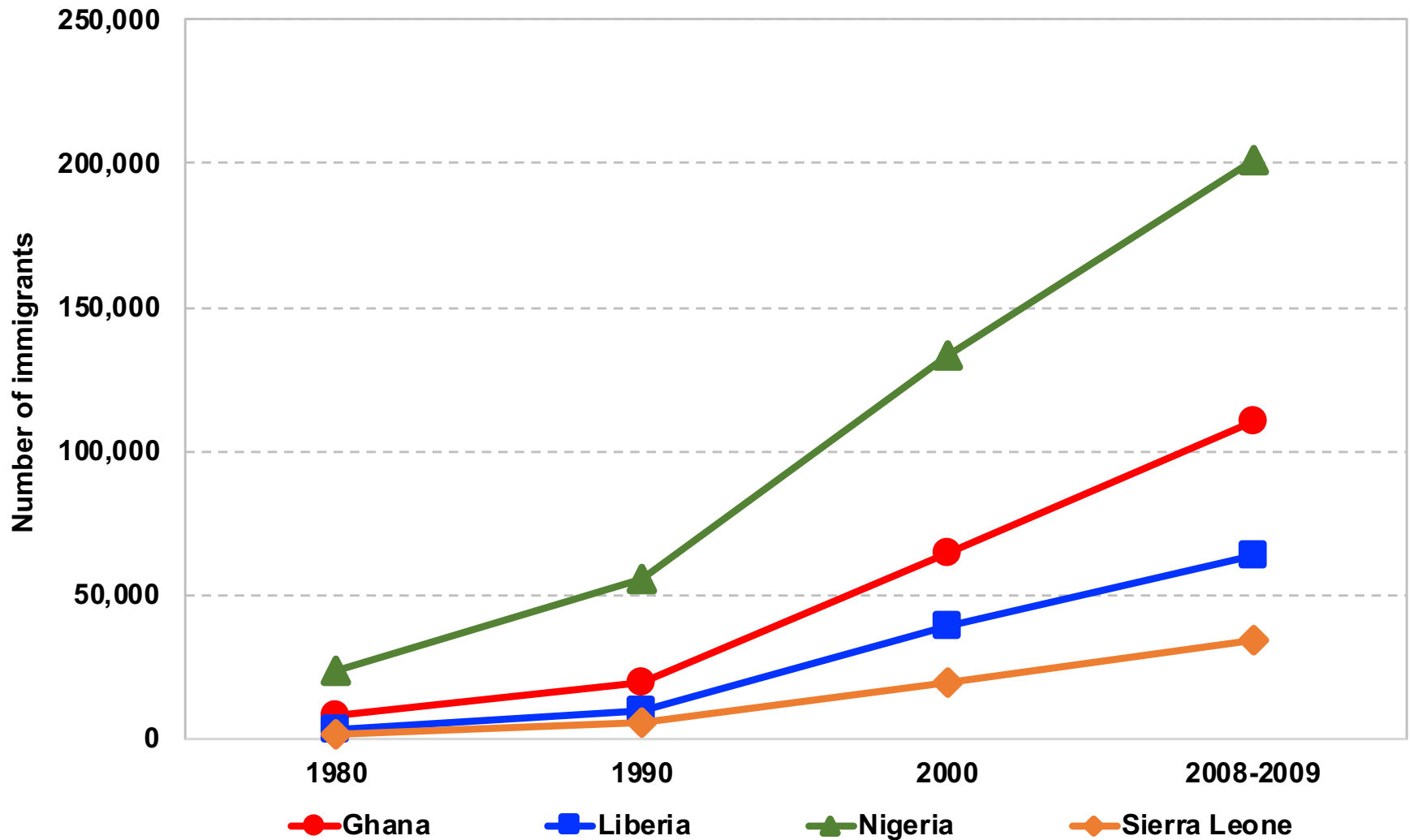**Sharron X. Wang**
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Objective

- We investigate education and wages among second-generation African Americans, 2010–2017
  - **Ghana**
  - **Liberia**
  - **Nigeria**
  - **Sierra Leone**

- We also estimate models focusing on Nigerian Americans, 2009–2018

Increasing GLNS immigrants

Source: Capps (2012).

Diversity among immigrants

- Generations
  - 1st generation: born outside the U.S.
  - 1.5th generation: born outside the U.S., immigrated at age ≤ 13
  - 2nd generation: born in the U.S., parents' born outside the U.S.
  - 3rd generation: born in the U.S., parents' born in the U.S.

- Black immigrants are a diverse subgroup (Hamilton 2014)
  - 2nd generation GLNS may be slightly advantaged over other 2nd generation blacks, because families are more fluent or dominant in English (Waters and Pineau 2015)
  - Parents from Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone arrive with better labor and educational outcomes (Capps 2012)

Prior literature on **socioeconomic outcomes** of 2nd generation African Americans	Hypotheses	
	Relative to 3+ generation Blacks	Relative to 3+ generation Whites
Lower class vulnerability (Gans 1992; Portes and Zhou 1993)	Equal to	Lower than
Segmented assimilation (Waters 1994)	Greater than	Lower than
Immigrant optimism (selectivity) (Kao and Tienda 1995; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 1995)	Greater than	Lower than or equal to
Voluntary immigration (Ogbu 1978)	Greater than	Equal to
New second generation (post-1965) (Farley and Alba 2002)	Greater than	Equal to or greater than

Data

- 2009–2018 Current Population Surveys (CPS)
  - Information on parental place of birth

- People with 25–54 years of age

- Separate models for men and women

- Due to the rotational sampling design of the CPS, we deleted duplicate records of the same individual

Main independent variable

- Generation and race/ethnicity groups

- 3+ Generation of Non-Hispanic Whites

- 3+ Generation of Blacks

- 1.5th and 2nd Generation of Non-Hispanic Asians

- 1.5th and 2nd Generation of GLNS (or Nigerians)

- 2nd Generation of Non-Hispanic Whites

- 2nd Generation of Blacks

Dependent variables

- Educational attainment

  1. Less than high school

  2. High school or GED

  3. Some college or Associate degree

  4. Bachelor's degree

  5. Master's degree

  6. Professional or PhD degree

- Log-hourly wages

  – Total hourly and salary earnings from the previous calendar year divided by total hours worked during that year

  – Total hours is total number of weeks worked multiplied by the usual hours worked per week

  – Paid employees (exclude those with self-employment earnings)

Models for education

- Generalized ordered logit models (GLNS)
  - Odds ratios indicate the factor change in odds of observing a value at least at the specified category versus observing values below the specified category
    1. At least high school or GED
    2. At least some college or Associate degree
    3. **At least Bachelor's degree**
    4. At least Master's degree
    5. At least Professional or PhD degree
  - Control for age, disability status
- Ordered logit models (Nigerians)
  - Control for age, disability status
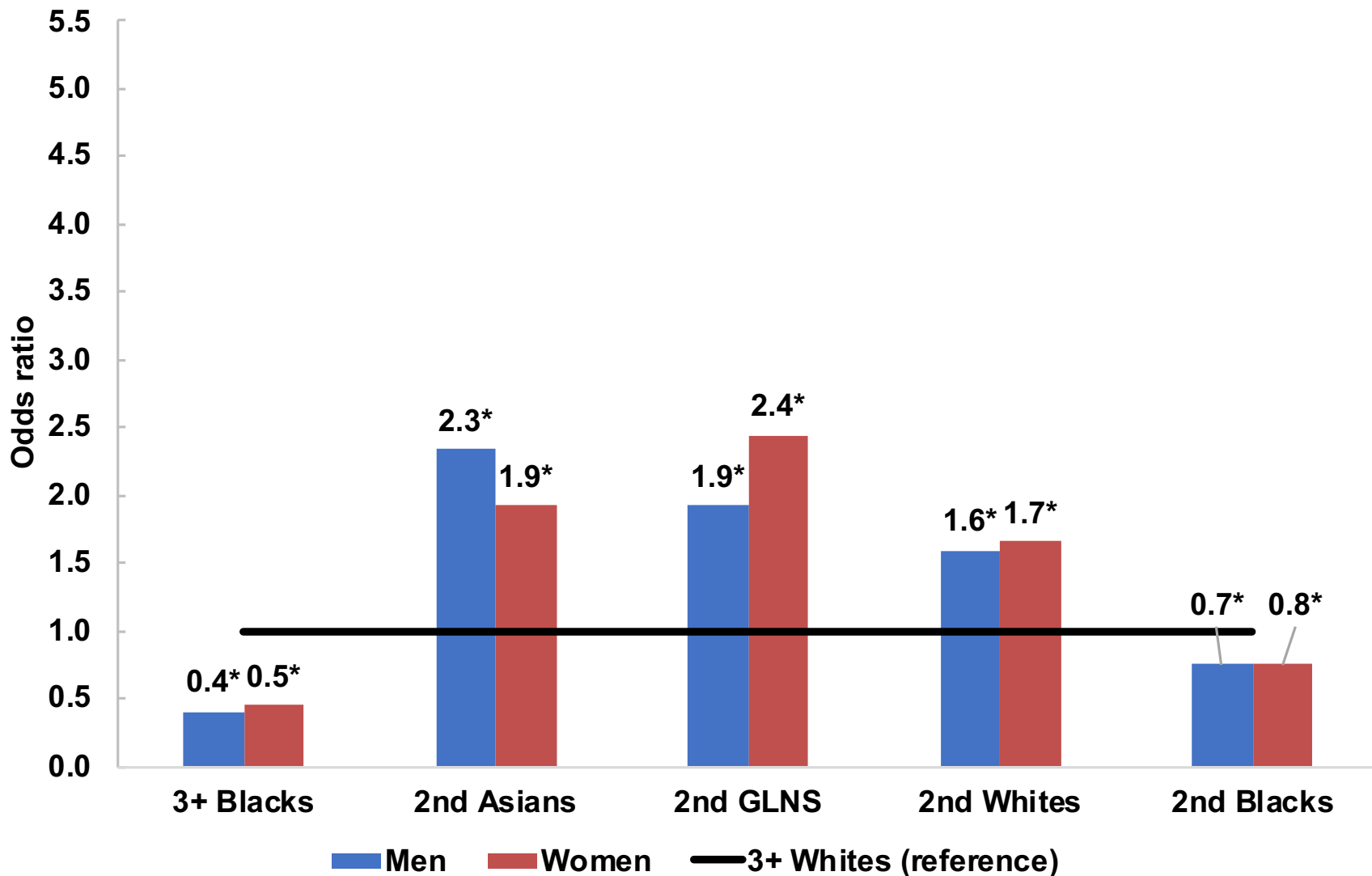
Models for wages

- Ordinary least squares (OLS) models for log-hourly wages

- Control for
  - Age and age-squared
  - Educational attainment
  - Disability status
  - Marital status
  - Own child in household
  - Region of residence
  - Live in metropolitan area

Sample size

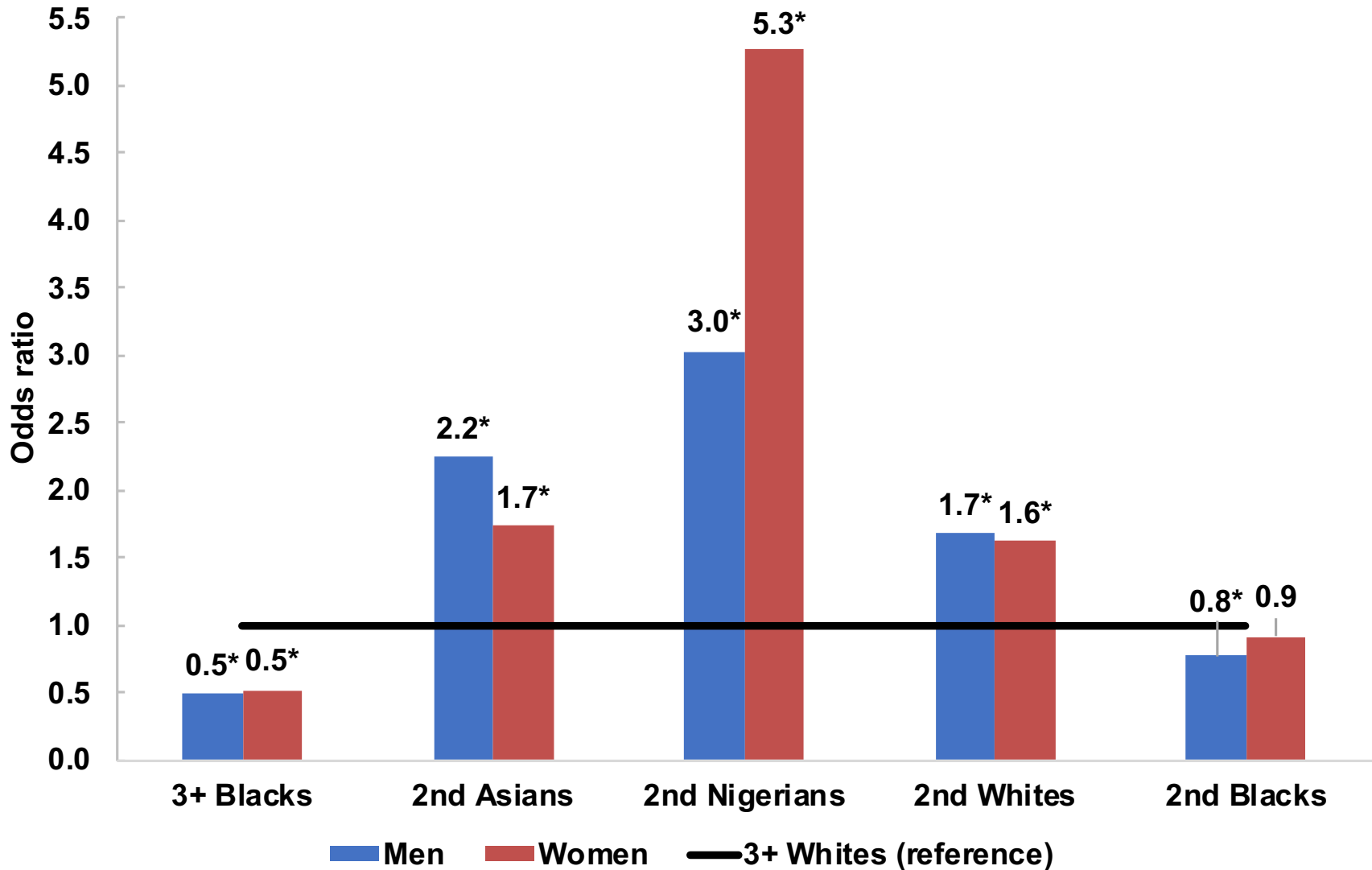| Generation and Race/ethnicity	2010–2017 (GLNS combined)		2009–2018 (Nigerians separated)	
	Educational attainment	Log-hourly wages	Educational attainment	Log-hourly wages
3+ Gen. Non-Hispanic Whites	175,066	137,724	215,872	165,169
3+ Gen. Blacks	26,672	19,424	32,780	23,546
1.5th & 2nd Gen. Non-Hispanic Asians	5,405	4,356	6,529	5,146
1.5th & 2nd Gen. GLNS (or Nigerians)	**170**	**134**	**131**	**104**
2nd Gen. Non-Hispanic Whites	7,552	6,034	9,383	7,325
2nd Gen. Blacks	1,212	972	1,502	1,168
Total	**216,077**	**168,644**	**266,197**	**202,458**

Odds ratios of having at least a Bachelor's degree versus having lower education, GLNS

Note: Model controls for age, age squared, and any disability. * Significant at p<.01.
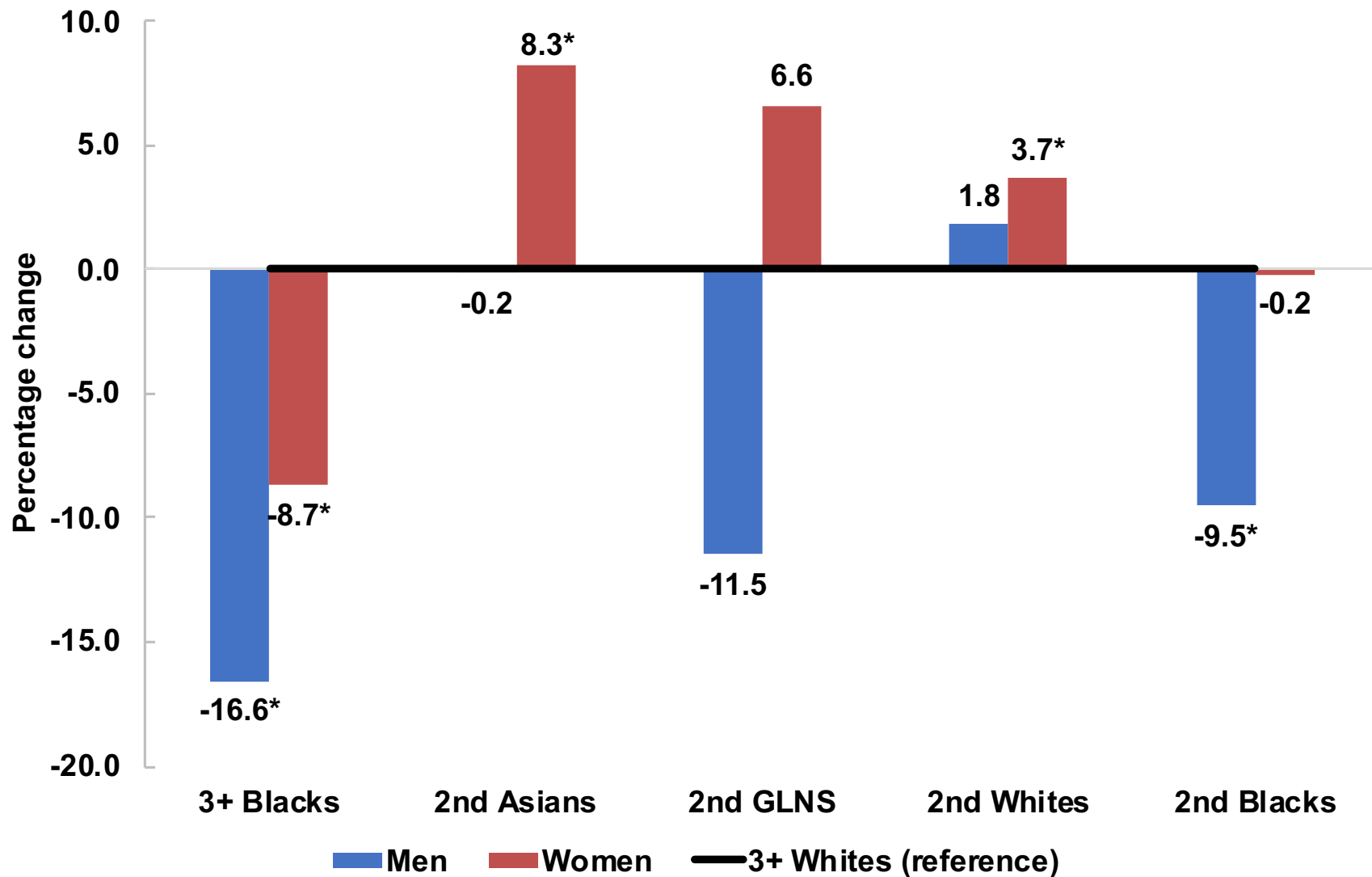Source: 2010–2017 Current Population Survey (CPS).

Odds ratios from ordered logit models for educational attainment, Nigerians

Note: Model controls for age, age squared, and any disability. * Significant at p<.01.
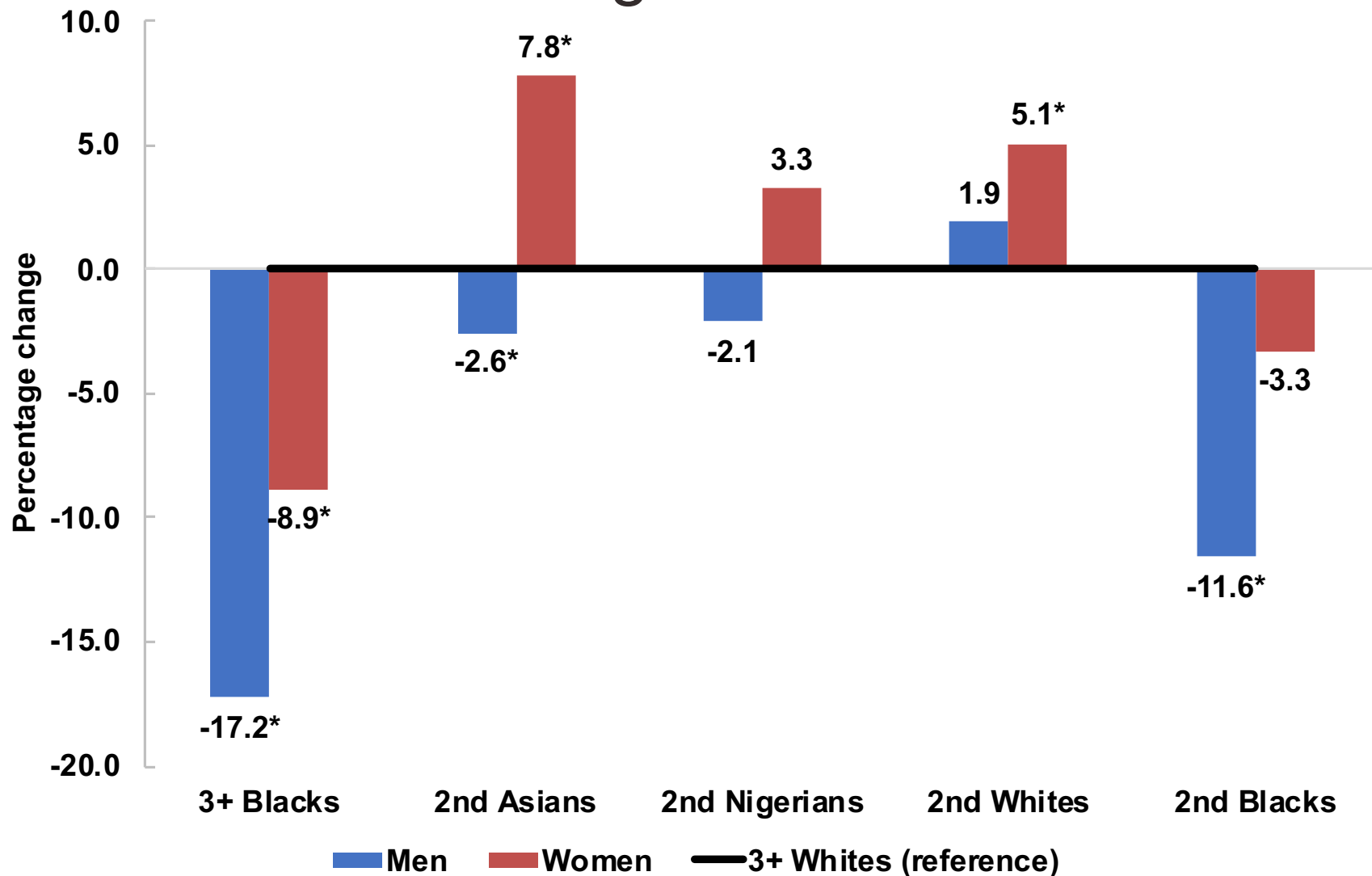Source: 2009–2018 Current Population Survey (CPS).

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Percentage change in hourly wages, GLNS

Note: Model controls for age, age squared, educational attainment, marital status, own child in household, region, and live in metropolitan area. * Significant at p<.01. Source: 2010–2017 Current Population Survey (CPS).

Percentage change in hourly wages, Nigerians

Percentage change (y-axis): 10.0, 5.0, 0.0, -5.0, -10.0, -15.0, -20.0

3+ Blacks: Men -17.2*, Women -8.9*
2nd Asians: Men -2.6*, Women 7.8*
2nd Nigerians: Men -2.1, Women 3.3
2nd Whites: Men 1.9, Women 5.1*
2nd Blacks: Men -11.6*, Women -3.3

Legend: Men, Women, 3+ Whites (reference)

Note: Model controls for age, age squared, any disability, educational attainment, marital status, own child in household, region, and live in metropolitan area. * Significant at p<.01. Source: 2010–2017 Current Population Survey (CPS).

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Final considerations

- Contrary to the usual pattern of socioeconomic disadvantage for African Americans

    - 1.5th and 2nd gen. GLNS and Nigerian Americans have exceeded whites in educational attainment

- Better education did not translate into higher wages for GLNS and Nigerian Americans compared to whites

    - Issue of small sample size

    - This could be a result of discrimination in the labor market experienced by these immigrants

- We view our results as being only suggestive

    - Need more research on the socioeconomic outcomes of 1.5th and 2nd gen. African Americans who have been relatively neglected in immigration studies