Factors Affecting the Job Satisfaction of Latino/a Immigrants in the Midwest

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Introduction

- Rapid growth of foreign-born population

- 11% of the U.S. population, most (53%) of whom come from Latin American countries
Work opportunities is a major pull factor

In comparison to other foreign-born groups, Latinos tend to be younger, have lower levels of education, lower incomes, larger households, and higher poverty rates

More likely to be in the labor force and to work in low-skilled, physically demanding, low paying jobs
Introduction, cont’d

- Psychology can contribute valuable knowledge regarding the immigrant experience

- Lags behind other disciplines in producing scholarship in this area

- Psychology literature has examined immigrants’ mental health and adjustment

- Little attention in vocational psychology literature
Introduction, cont’d

- Migration patterns are changing

- Labor demands in manufacturing and processing companies in rural counties

- Moving has a negative impact on earnings (Dozi & Valdivia, 2008)

- Understanding what contributes to job satisfaction of Latino immigrants is an important question.
Purpose of Current Study

In response to calls for more research on immigrant workers, we seek to explore the effects of...

- Psychosocial
- Environmental
- Work-related factors

...on Latino immigrants’ job satisfaction
Livelihood Strategies Model

Livelihood Outcomes

+Building Assets: economic and social wellbeing

-Vulnerability: - mobility

Livelihood Strategies

Capabilities: the ability to act

Community Climate

(Context of Reception)

Integrating (+)

Alienating (-)

Economic Capital

(Savings & Assets)

Human Capital

(Education, Skill, Language Proficiency, Nutrition Health)

Cultural Capital

(Identity & Institutions)

Social Capital

(Networks of Support Bridging and Bonding)
Participants

- 253 Latino immigrants
  - 58.5% female, 41.5% male
- Average 35.28 years (SD = 9.98; range = 18-77)
- Average 11.22 years (SD = 7.29) in U.S.
- Average 5 years (SD = 5.17) in Midwest
- 54.5% were married
Participants, cont’d
Participants, cont’d

- Mexico: 68%
Participants, cont’d
Communities

- Community A
  - Population of 1,863; 22% Latino
  - Agricultural, processing firms

- Community B
  - Population of 20,196; 5.6% Latino
  - Manufacturing, services and retail

- Community C
  - Population of 6,050; 4% Latino
  - Hospitality industry, retirement centers, construction
Measures

- Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised (Phinney & Ong, 2007) – 6 items
- Bidimensional Acculturation Scale for Hispanics (Marin & Gamba, 1996) – 24 items
- Community Climate Scale (Social/cultural relations; discrimination and racism; language use) – 27 items
- Job Satisfaction – 2 items
- Demographic survey asked about current employment (employer, duration on job, hours worked per week, and monthly wages)
Procedures

- Worked with trusted organizations (churches, community centers) and gatekeepers in the immigrant community

- Interviewers administered the survey one-on-one

- All interviews conducted in Spanish

- Interviews took 45 minutes to 1 hour
Results: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

- Step 1: Ethnic identity, Anglo acculturation, Latino acculturation \( F(3, 249) = 5.30, p < .001 \) explained 6% of variance

- Step 2: Social/cultural relations, discrimination & racism, language use \( \Delta R^2 = .10, \Delta F(3, 246) = 9.42, p < .001 \)

- Step 3: job tenure, hours worked per week, monthly salary \( \Delta R^2 = <.01; \Delta F(3, 243) = .67, p = .57 \)
Results, cont’d

Significant individual predictors of Latino/a immigrant workers’ job satisfaction were:

- Ethnic identity ($\beta = .15$, $t = 2.35$, $p < .05$)
- Anglo oriented acculturation ($\beta = .14$, $t = -3.07$, $p < .05$)
- Perceived discrimination and racism in the community ($\beta = -.25$, $t = 2.35$, $p < .01$)
Results, cont’d

- Latino acculturation, perceptions of the community related to social relations and language pressures, job tenure, hours worked, and salary had not significant effects on Latino immigrant workers’ job satisfaction.

- Economic factors are not primary source of Latino immigrants’ job satisfaction.
Implications

- Promote strong levels of ethnic identity in immigrant workers

- Anglo acculturation—emphasis on language usage and fluency—has positive effect on Latino’s career development.
  - Provide opportunities for English language acquisition
  - Courses need to be accessible (location, time)
  - Language CDs that can be used at home
Implications, cont’d

- Discuss differences between urban and rural living to prepare newcomers

- Educate members of receiving community about Latino and immigrant cultures

- Help newcomers identify discrimination and to develop effective strategies for responding to these situation.