

A Synopsis of Literature on Immigration

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This synopsis highlights some of the current literature on Hispanic immigration. Articles were selected that might be of use to the practitioner.

Authors: Marc Cooper and Mark Grey

Title: The Heartland's Raw Deal: How Meatpacking is Creating a New Immigrant Underclass

Journal: The Nation

Vol./No./Year: v.264/i4/February 3, 1997

This article focuses on the current meatpacking industry in the Midwestern United States. In particular, the authors examine the community of Storm Lake, Iowa, home to several such plants. The community has experienced rapid growth in their Laotian and Latino populations due to changes in the meatpacking industry. The authors highlight the high injury rates and turnover in this industry. There is also discussion of the conscious recruiting of immigrants from border towns in California and Texas.

This article provides an overview of the current problems in the meatpacking industry in the Midwest. Of particular interest, the authors highlight the contradictions in the government practice of simultaneously importing and deporting immigrant labor. The relationship between the INS and meatpacking plants is examined. The INS has not sanctioned these plants, however, they continue to raid and deport the plants' illegal employees. The response from officials representing the meatpacking industry is presented.

Authors: Fitzgerald, J.; Garcia, G.; Jimenez, R. & Barrera, R.

Title: How will Bilingual/ESL Programs in Literacy Change in the Next Millennium?

Journal: Reading Research Quarterly

Vol./No./Year: v.35/i.4/Oct.-Dec. 2000

This compilation discusses possible changes in literacy programming for bilingual and ESL education. The article discusses the need for appreciation of bilingualism as the United States continues to grow more diverse. There is also discussion about the role of bilingual literacy education in assisting the acculturation process. Garcia provides suggestions for implementing and actualizing a model for bilingual education. The article also addresses the need for literacy that translates into political literacy for Hispanics. The article then suggests through such political literacy that economic development and better health care can be obtained.

This article is helpful as it provides a model for bilingual education that discusses the importance of incorporating bilingual education into all areas even those traditional all-English settings and ESL. The article also calls for educators to emphasize the positives of bilingual education. A need for more materials that are culturally and linguistically relevant for Mexican students is discussed. This need for more appropriate materials includes a need for software to be developed and access to digitized books in classrooms. The article ends by acknowledging the importance of the politics of literacy and its role in this change process.

Authors: Robert Bell and Rina Alcalay

Title: The Impact of the Wellness Guide/Guia on Hispanic Women's Well-Being-Related Knowledge, Efficacy, Beliefs, and Behaviors: The Mediating Role of Acculturation

Journal: Health Education and Behavior

Vol./No./Year: v.24/i.3/June 1997

The article presents the California Wellness Guide Distribution Project. The California Wellness Guide/Guia was developed with cultural sensitivity in mind to raise awareness of health problems, provide information about addressing such problems, and list community resources. The investigation found large gaps in knowledge between more and less acculturated women. The researchers also found the participants who received the Wellness Guide/Guia were effective in strengthening existing knowledge, confident in the knowledge, able to acquire the information, and effective in seeking assistance.

The article sheds light on what appears to be an effective strategy in transferring health information to diverse populations. Lessons can be learned for all fields desiring to transfer information to this population. The article gives examples of how the guide was shaped into the Guia that was culturally sensitive to the diverse Hispanic population in California. The Guia is comprehensive as it provides information about all stages of life development and associated health risks. Levels of acculturation did relate to differences in knowledge, but did not account for other factors. High and low acculturated respondents were just as likely to keep and use their copies of the Guia, to predict future use of the Guia, and to make changes in their behavior as a result of the Guia.

Authors: E. Arcia, M. Skinner, D. Bailey and V. Correa

Title: Models of Acculturation and Health Behaviors Among Latino Immigrants to the US

Journal: Social Science and Medicine

Vol./No./Year: v.53/i.1/July 2001

These authors link Hispanic culture with the differences in health and use of services between Latinos and non-Hispanic Whites. They look at acculturation as well as country of origin and gender. They found that females tend to use less English and perceive more social acceptance than males. The results also indicate more perceived social acceptance with increasing generational status. Puerto Ricans tend to be more bicultural than Mexicans who tend to be more Latino oriented.

The article gives a background on past research on acculturation and health. Previous findings indicate that Latinos with lower acculturation tend to rate themselves lower on health than those who are more acculturated. However, there is some evidence that those Latinos who are less acculturated have better health than those who are more acculturated. This finding may be due to the good health that is needed to immigrate illegally. Acculturation measure need to be modified to address the diversity within the Hispanic population unaccounted for in current models. For example, Puerto Ricans are more Americanized in their schools than are Mexicans.

Authors: Margaret E. Weigers and Margaret S. Sherraden

Title: A Critical Examination of Acculturation: The Impact of Health Behaviors, Social Support and Economic Resources on Birth Weight among Women of Mexican Descent

Journal: International Migration Review

Vol./No./Year: v.35/no.3/Fall 2001

The authors investigate acculturation and its relationship to birth weight, the strongest predictor of infant mortality. The article attempts to refute a current model linking acculturation to negative health behaviors and in turn to low birth weight. The researchers studied first and second generation women in Detroit and Chicago. Findings show that sending and receiving communities greatly influence levels of acculturation. The authors also examine social support and poverty in relation to health factors.

These authors acknowledge past research has failed to recognize the environments in sending and receiving communities when studying acculturation. The authors discuss the "birth weight paradox," higher rates of low birth weight in second generation Mexican immigrants than first generation immigrants. Many of the women who were poor did not have poor health behaviors. The researchers found that many women with medium or high levels of social support did have poor health behaviors.

Editors: Pastora San Juan Cafferty and David W. Engstrom

Book: Hispanics in the United States: An Agenda for the Twenty-First Century

Publishing Information: 2000. Transaction Publishers: New Brunswick, NJ.

Chapter: 7, Hispanics and Health Care

Chapter Author: Zulema E. Sudrez

This chapter investigates predisposing characteristics of the Hispanic population to health care utilization. These predisposing characteristics include age, sex, education, occupational status, poverty, language, migration status, levels of acculturation, ethnicity and culture; and the extended family. The enabling characteristics discussed are managed care, insurance coverage, regular source of care, the Immigrant Responsibility Act, Welfare Reform, and availability of minority physicians and other health care providers. The authors discuss health issues the Hispanic population is encountering that put them in need of health care.

The author summarizes reasons why Hispanics are not utilizing health care services at the rate of other groups in the U.S. Hispanics have the highest chance of being uninsured despite the high numbers of Hispanics in the workforce. Other researchers argue the difference in health care utilization in Hispanics versus the greater U.S. population is due to reliance on the family for needs. Health issues discussed are higher fertility rates, teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and infant mortality. The author recommends investing in education as way to increase utilization.

Author: Bobby Guinn

Title: Acculturation and Health Locus of Control Among Mexican American Adolescents

Journal: Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences

Vol./No./Year: v.20/i.4/November 1998

The author studies the health locus of control and acculturation level of Mexican American adolescents in the Lower Rio Grande Valley area of Texas. The author uses existing scales to measure locus of control and acculturation. Those who identified with Mexicanism tended to believe their health was controlled by another more powerful one. This group contrasts with those who identified with biculturalism and Americanism who felt they controlled their own health.

The author discusses past findings that Mexican Americans conceptualize health conditions through supernatural sanction and fatalistic acceptance. Internal locus of control is important, as it has been deemed critical for taking responsibility for one's own health. The author sheds light on past findings that link high-acculturated adolescents to dangerous health behaviors such as substance abuse and sexual activity.

Authors: Gladys Gonzalez-Ramos and Milagros Sanchez-Nester

Title: Responding to Immigrant Children's Mental Health Needs in the Schools: Project Mi Tierra/My Country

Journal: Children and Schools

Vol./No./Year: v.23/i.1/Jan 2001

This article presents the program Mi Tierra/My Country, developed to address the mental health of immigrant children in New York City. The in-school program promotes ownership of the new country and aids children in navigating through the education system. It consists of five parts: including short-term groups for immigrant children, a weekly mentoring program, field trips for the families to the university collaborating in this project, and workshops for immigrant parents. Although a formal evaluation is needed, initial response from participants has been favorable.

This innovative program that can be replicated in different places and with children of different origins. The framework for the program follows a three stage model of migration: premigration/departure stage, transition stage, and resettlement stage. The model is processed in the short-term groups. These groups use drawing as the facilitator for discourse. The article also discusses the role of religion as a source of comfort because of its consistency with prior experience for the children. Resiliency of children is also discussed as a factor in mediating the coping skills needed to meet the challenges at school. Immigrant parents are addressed in the workshops. Topics discussed at the workshops include parent-teacher conferences and cultural values of the US.

Authors: Julie F. Smart and David W. Smart

Title: Acculturation, Biculturalism and Rehabilitation of Mexican Americans

Journal: Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling

Vol./No./Year: v.24/ 2/Summer 1993

This article begins by differentiating Mexican Americans from other Hispanics. The article then examines different research beliefs about acculturation. Mental health counselors need to consider acculturation level not ethnicity. The article examines the

relationship between level of acculturation and rehabilitation (incidence, psychometric evaluations, acceptance and adaptation to disability). The article looks at current measures of Mexican-American acculturation and biculturalism. In conclusion, the authors discuss the implications for rehabilitation practice.

The article highlights different researchers' beliefs about factors that influence acculturation. One such belief is that the rate of acculturation for Mexican Americans is related to the ratio of Anglos to Hispanics in the community. It defines assimilation, deculturation, biculturalism, and multiculturalism. The MMPI, a common psychometric evaluation, may test acculturation not intelligence on some items. The authors suggest acculturation assessments could aid in matching clients with counselors.

Authors: Julie F. Smart and David W. Smart

Title: Acculturative Stress of Hispanics: Loss and Challenge

Journal: Journal of Counseling and Development

Vol./Year: v.73/March-April 1995

Acculturative stress is discussed in terms of its characteristics and stages. The authors differentiate between European and Hispanic acculturation. These differentiating factors are discrimination on the basis of skin color, Hispanic emphasis on social-family ties, illegal immigration, geographic proximity, legacy of armed conflict and Hispanic reliance of physical labor. The authors conclude with implications for counseling under these headings: accurate assessment of stress level, unique language needs, need for social support, use of "loss and adaptation" model and familiarity with immigration law.

This piece of literature acknowledges the great loss experienced by immigrants. The authors discuss the losses of social support and familiarity in acculturative stress. Discrimination and labeling are mentioned as well as the importance of family to Hispanics. The authors look at the close proximity of Mexico as a factor that may prolong acculturative stress because of the consistent stream of immigrants. The article calls for the use of loss and adaptation models in counseling efforts and lists such models.

Authors: Lloyd H. Rogler, Dharma E. Cortes, and Robert G. Malgady

Title: Acculturation and Mental Health Status Among Hispanics: Convergence and New Directions for Research

Journal: American Psychologist

Vol./No./Year: v.46/no.6/June 1991

The relationship between acculturation and mental health status is examined using thirty existing studies. The authors found much diversity in the measures of mental health status. They describe the relationship between acculturation and mental health status as negative, positive and linear. The article concludes by pointing out where the existing research converges and calling for new directions in research.

The researchers found that the majority of the literature was on Mexican Americans. The wide variety of measures for mental health status implies that acculturation has many different affects on the psychological well being of Hispanics. One important point of convergence is the importance of English language skills in acculturation. The article provides a helpful appendix that includes a table showing some of the articles studied in reference to acculturation measures, measures of mental health status, and major findings.

Author: Gerardo M. Gonzalez

Title: The Emergence of Chicanos in the Twenty-First Century: Implications for Counseling, Research, and Policy

Journal: Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development

Vol./No./Year: v.25/i.2/April 1997

The author discusses immigration, language, education, family, geographic distribution, income, health care and age of Chicanos in the U.S. Census. He examines availability and use of mental health services for this population. He concludes with implications for mental health professionals.

The author distinguishes between Hispanics, Latinos, Chicanos and Mexican Americans. The Census statistics illustrate that the majority of Chicanos were born in the U.S. The author concludes that because Chicanos continue to speak Spanish, language is a part of their identity. Although Chicanos comprise more of the workforce, they do not receive proportionate health and mental health coverage. Studies show that Chicanos have a lower rate of outpatient services for mental health than Non-Hispanic Whites. The author acknowledges the vulnerability to mental health problems for this population.

Author: Edward A. Delgado-Romero

Title: Counseling a Hispanic/Latino Client-Mr. X

Journal: Journal of Mental Health Counseling

Vol./No./Year: v.23/i.3/July 2001

The author examines the hypothetical case example of Mr. X, a Latino client in need of counseling. The author summarizes the following models: Racial/Cultural Identity Development Model, counselor client interactional model, and the culturally specific and clinically derived Chicano/Latino ethnic development model. He also illustrates how the models influence his work with this client. The author provides the reader with his assessment of client Mr. X.

The counselor recognizes that although he is Latino that is not the most important factor in working with the client. This article provides a good reference for current models to guide counselors in working with ethnic minorities. The author also provides advice in working with these clients as one sees what the author factors into his assessment process. The counselor highlights the belief that pride in one's ethnic and racial identity is linked to mental health in the Chicano/Latino model.

Author: Ken C. Erickson

Title: New Immigrants and the Social Service Agency: Changing Relations at SRS

Journal: Urban Anthropology

Vol./No./Year: v.19/i.4/1990

This is an ethnographic study of how a local welfare office in the small city of Garden City, Kansas faces the challenges an influx of new immigrants bring to a community. Erickson discusses the different professionals in the agency and their interactions with the new Vietnamese and Hispanic immigrants. The agency starts a refugee program to acknowledge the needs of the Vietnamese refugees. The article ends by discussing meeting these new clients' needs.

This article provides information from inside a social service agency, as the author was an employee at the agency. The author includes examples of discriminatory practices committed by certain individuals. It touches on stereotyping done by certain staff who do not acknowledge the diversity of the new immigrants. It also adds information on which services these newcomers were eligible for and which they were not. The author even discusses how some of these newcomers find employment within the agency.

Authors: Ruth W. Edwards, Pamela Jumper-Thurman, Barbara A. Plested, Eugene R. Oetting, and Louis Swanson

Title: Community Readiness: Research to Practice

Journal: Journal of Community Psychology

Vol./No./Year: v.28/no.3/2000

The authors discuss the community readiness model as it is developed. They compiled previous research on individual and community readiness. The model has nine stages that are briefly described. Community readiness can be addressed through the use of key informants. The article concludes with strategies for increasing community awareness at each of the nine levels.

Originally the community readiness model was developed for substance abuse prevention programs, but currently it is being used for many prevention programs. In community readiness, it is important to recognize that readiness for change may vary according to each problem. The model and suggestive strategies are useful in understanding where a community is regarding the problem and how to increase their desire to promote effective change.

Editors: Pastora San Juan Cafferty and David W. Engstrom

Book: Hispanics in the United States: An Agenda for the Twenty-First Century

Publishing Information: 2000. Transaction Publishers: New Brunswick, NJ.

Chapter: 9, Hispanics and the Criminal Justice System

Chapter Author: Cruz Reynoso

This chapter focuses on the relationship between Hispanics and the criminal justice system in the U.S., in particular issues of perception, excessive force, Hispanic representation on police forces and more. It also examines roles of Hispanic lawyers and judges, courtroom interpreters, jurors, Hispanics as crime victims, and Hispanics in prison.

The author acknowledges the Hispanic population's distrust of the criminal justice system. A poll in Orange County, California found that Hispanics perceived themselves to be more mistreated by the police than other groups. Hispanic representation on police forces seems to be related to the proportion of Hispanics in a community. Thus communities with a large number of Hispanics will have a larger number of Hispanics on their police force than smaller communities with less Hispanics. The author discusses the ambiguities between the relationships between local policing entities and the INS. Courts need to ensure the accuracy of their interpreters. Hate crimes are discussed briefly.

Authors: Cornelia Butler Flora, Jan L. Flora, Jacqueline D. Spears, and Louis E. Swanson.

Title: Generating Community Change

Book Title: Rural Communities: Legacy and Changes

Publishing Information: 1992. Boulder: Westview Press.

This chapter looks at three models of community development: self-help, technical and conflict. The article describes, compares, and contrasts the three models. The authors describe steps of implementation for each approach. The article also touches on models of economic development.

This work is important as it gives a background of current community development models that are helpful to those interested in enacting some change in their community. The authors include a helpful table that contrasts the three models of community development. The table is a quick reference as to when and how each model is used. The authors also acknowledge the need for outside resources or linkages in all models of community development. They also encourage studying other communities that have faced the same problems and speaking with those community members.

Author: Michael J. Broadway

Title: Planning for Change in Small Towns or Trying to Avoid the Slaughterhouse Blues

Journal: Journal of Rural Studies

Vol./Year: v.16/2000

This article gives an inside look at the food processing industry as it shifts in its practices. One highlighted shift discussed is the movement of these processing plants from urban areas to rural communities. The author describes the changes these rural communities are facing and will continue to face. Examples of such changes are increases in population growth, increased immigrant populations, and shortages of available housing for the new workers. The author discusses how these rural communities prepare for change by giving suggestions for easing this transition.

The author provides insight for those unfamiliar with the changes occurring in this industry and the trickle down effects on rural communities. The article includes a table that serves as a quick reference for impacts and the author's recommended response to each impact on the community. The author points out the need for communities to view multiculturalism as a strength of their community. Another recommendation is for the authorities to make certain that behavior expectations are communicated through a liaison to the new community members who are often immigrants. The author not only discusses the impacts, but gives illustrates them through the example of a project in Brooks, Alberta.

Author: Leo R. Chavez

Title: Coresidence and Resistance: Strategies for Survival Among Undocumented Mexicans and Central Americans in the United States

Journal: Urban Anthropology

Vol./No./Year: v.19/i.1-2/1990

The author begins by acknowledging a deficiency in the literature about undocumented Hispanics and their adaptation process in the U.S. Chavez recognizes the diversity in co-residence of Hispanics. Thus, he chose to examine this variance through

interviews of 600 Hispanics in Dallas and San Diego. He found that many Mexicans and Central Americans in the U.S. often live in residence with non-relatives. About half of the respondents lived in simple families. The author cites different case examples of the varied living arrangements.

The article brings light to the varied residential arrangements of immigrants. The author concludes that regardless of reason for coming, the immigrants consistently find low paying, temporary work without benefits. Reasons for immigration are discussed. Findings show that about ½ of the Central Americans investigated left their countries for political reasons. Housing is discussed in relation to economics: co-residing singles are living more adequately and comfortably than single families.

Authors: Alejandro Portez and Jozsef Borocz

Title: Contemporary Immigration: Theoretical Perspectives on Its Determinants and Modes of Incorporation

Journal: International Migration Review

Vol./No.: v.23/no.3/1989

This article reviews current theories of labor migration and suggests improvements. The push-pull theories are reviewed in terms of their limitations in explaining many factors in migration. Labor migration is discussed. Settlement patterns are discussed in terms of conditions of exit, class origins, and context of reception. The authors then describe a classification for modes of immigrant incorporation. The article concludes with immigration and the international system.

The authors discuss Puerto Ricans and their history of immigration to the mainland U.S. The newcomers to the U.S. from Mexico are mentioned as being able to find labor quickly because of family connections. The authors discuss context of reception by differentiating three situations of different receptions. Examples are given for immigrant groups who received negative, positive and neutral contexts of receptions.

Author: Sofia Villenas

Title: Latina Mothers and Small-Town Racisms: Creating Narratives of Dignity and Moral Education in North Carolina

Journal: Anthropology & Education Quarterly

Vol./No.: 32/1/2001

This is an ethnographic study examining the contrast in perspectives between long time residents of a North Carolina community and Latina newcomers. The concept of benevolent racism is examined. It is particularly useful in offering an alternative view of Latinas as poor, uneducated people in need of help. The article effectively employs a strengths perspective to demonstrate strategies Latinas use to counteract racism.