Latinos in the Rural Midwest – Newcomers' Assets and Expectations, and Integration Policies

Stephen Jeanetta, Domingo Martínez, Corinne Valdivia, Lisa Flores, Pedro Dozi,
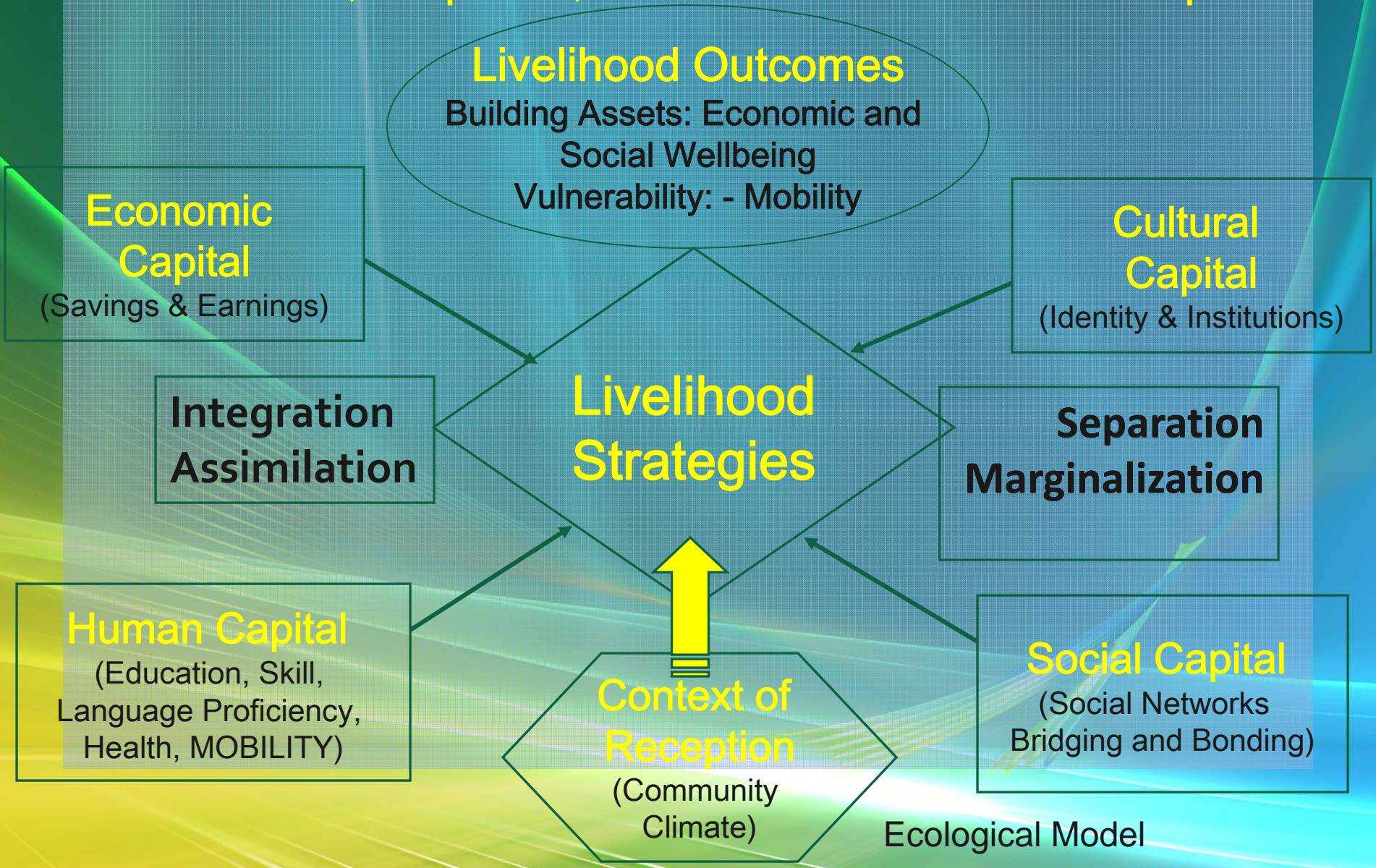
University of Missouri

Research Summary

General objective:
- To examine the strategies newcomers use to accumulate assets, minimize vulnerabilities, and to integrate in their communities.
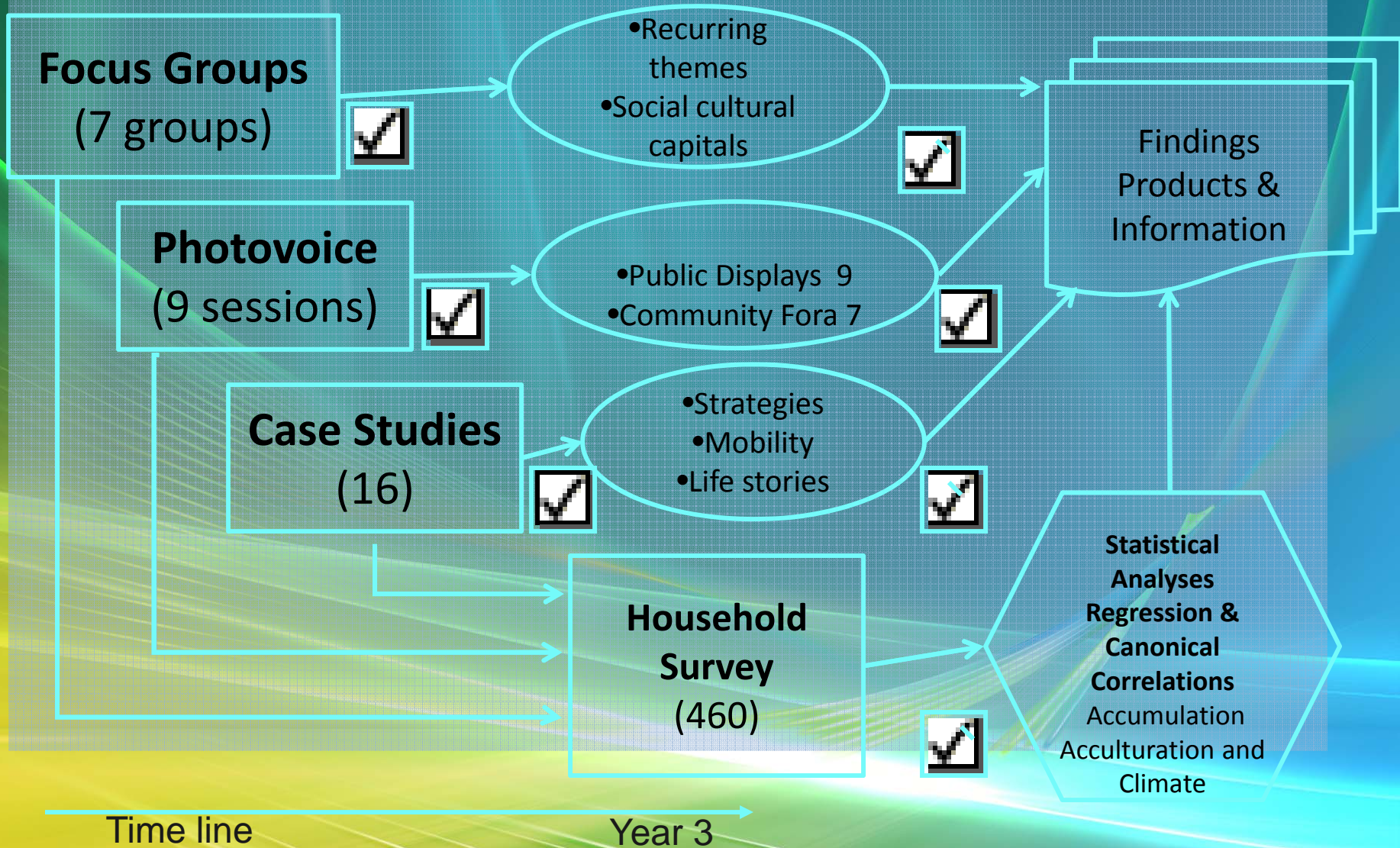- How do Latino newcomers get by and get ahead?

Approach:
- Livelihoods Strategies
- Study all assets (economic, financial, cultural, community), focus on strengths

Strengths Based Model:
Livelihoods, Capitals, and the Context of Reception

Livelihood Outcomes
Building Assets: Economic and Social Wellbeing
Vulnerability: - Mobility

Economic Capital
(Savings & Earnings)

Cultural Capital
(Identity & Institutions)

Integration Assimilation

Livelihood Strategies

Separation Marginalization

Human Capital
(Education, Skill, Language Proficiency, Health, MOBILITY)

Context of Reception
(Community Climate)

Social Capital
(Social Networks Bridging and Bonding)

Ecological Model

Project Design and Progress to Date (Year 3)

Focus Groups (7 groups) ☑

- Recurring themes
- Social cultural capitals ☑

Photovoice (9 sessions) ☑

- Public Displays 9
- Community Fora 7 ☑

Case Studies (16) ☑

- Strategies
- Mobility
- Life stories ☑

Household Survey (460) ☑

Findings Products & Information

Statistical Analyses Regression & Canonical Correlations Accumulation Acculturation and Climate

Time line   Year 3

Focus Groups

Social Capital
Acculturation
Perceptions of Community
Perceived Racism
Barriers to Integration

Social Capital

- ## Church
  - ### *Bridging*
    - *"I went to a church and there they gave me information and directions, how to search for doctors, the hospital and a little bit of English, I was already able to fill out applications and all that."*

- ## Friends and Family
  - ### *Bonding and Support*
    - *"The help with the children comes from friends, I have my daughters, my mother takes care of my daughters when I am working with my wife"*

Acculturation

- ## Individual
  - Strong maintenance of ties to culture of origin
    - Language use & Traditional beliefs and practices (ex: gender roles and religion)
  - Change and adaptation to host culture
    - Desire to learn English; adjusting to "American" customs

      "My son doesn't want to speak Spanish with me. He tells me he doesn't like it."

      "You identify with the order…wake up at certain times and be punctual."

- ## Community Level
  - Little interaction between newcomers and receiving community; adjustments on both sides

    "For example, if your children were raised here, you have to celebrate the rabbit. I haven't found any meaning in it but they do."

PhotoVoice:

Community Welcoming
&
Belonging

Photovoice Themes

Facilitating Integration

- Sense of Place : Parks, Businesses, Landscapes & Skylines
- Bridging Institutions : Centers, Churches, Employers
- Systems of Support : Churches, Friends and Family & Public Services
- Sense of Belonging : Work, Language, Culture, Schools & Services

Impeding Integration

- Access to Resources : Health Care, Credit, Higher Education and Local Services
- Communication : Language and Culture
- Documentation : Drivers License, Insurance, Housing and Credit
- Discrimination : Work, Shopping, Healthcare and Law Enforcement

Bridging Institutions

They have always offered us help, like English classes, Care Mobile and infomation about immigration. I like to help at the church in what I can, singing during masses and I count the collection. The church tries to help us with what us Hispanics may need.

It is something that makes me feel welcome because it is a place that helps all the Hispanics and they help resolve problems like translating and others. For example, if you have court or something, [she] comes with you, interprets and it is free. I arrived here and did not find a place to rent and she got a list of houses to rent, she finds the way.

The household survey

Three regions in Missouri:

North, Central, and South

Model of Income Capitals Acculturation and Climate (Valdivia et al 2008)

Two specified: for Native (N) and for Foreign born (F):

$$L(Wage)_i = X_{ij}\beta_j + Z_t\,\delta + \sigma_{ij}\lambda_j + \eta_{ij}$$

- L (Wage) is a logarithm of wages - *earnings*

- **X** is a vector of individual characteristics - *capitals*

- **Z** is a vector of community characteristics – *networks and climate*

- λ is the inverse Mill's ratio

- η is an error term

- DATA: CENSUS 2000 for three regions in Missouri

  – AG Disparity Index 2000 for the corresponding regions

Earnings Model Proof of Concept (Valdivia et al 2008)

Variables	Origin	
	Natives	Foreign
Work Experience	0.293	0.202
Acculturation-integration	**0.280**	**0.137**
Acculturation-assimilation	**0.024#**	**0.042**
Good English and Educ. cross effect	0.061	0.064
Able to speak another language	0.264#	0.461
Racial profiling	**-0.046**	**-0.081**
Gender: Female	**-0.174**	**-0.512**
Mobility	0.022#	**-0.018**
Age	0.031	0.219
Education	0.064	0.052
Social Capital index	**0.174**	**0.074**

- Only significant values presented except those with #

Means of selected demographic and context of reception variables, 3 Regions of Missouri 2009

Variables	Regions		
	Central	North	South
Work Experience (in yrs)/hrs worked per week [a]	9.7/40	9.9/39.8	10.9/41.9
Acculturation-integration	24.5%	10%	29.2%
Acculturation-assimilation	2%	.1%	.6%
Context: Socio-Cultural	4.19	4.24	4.29
Context: Discrimination	3.56	3.69	3.73
Context: Language pressures	4.10	4.19	4.29
Female Working (non-working) n	35 (43)	43 (31)	63 (15)
Mobility*	3	4	6

Social Capital (% sample with)
    Bonding
    Bridging
	Family members before moving 44%
	Belong to sporting/recreations group 28%
	Belong to religious groups 41%
	Voluntary work 36%		

[a] Years working in this community plus years worked in own country. *Mean of times individuals moved before coming to this community

Acculturation Groups: Berry's multidimensional model - The Survey Data

N = 96 ; 22%

High

N = 4 ; 1%

English (mean) > 2.5
Spanish (mean) > 2.5

English (mean) > 2.5
Spanish (mean) < 2.5

Integration

Assimilation

LATINO

**Language Use
Linguistic Proficiency
Electronic Media**

High

Low

Separation

AMERICAN

Marginalization

English (mean) < 2.5
Spanish (mean) > 2.5

English (mean) < 2.5
Spanish (mean) < 2.5

Low

N = 335; 75%

N = 8; 2%

Mobility Characteristics by Acculturation Path

Categories (Means)	Total Sample	Integration	Separation
Age	36	34	33
Education	10th grade	30% HS diploma +	7% HS diploma +
Years in Current Job	3.6	4.0	3.9
Years in this Community & Years in the Previous Community	6 5	7 6	5 7
Unemployed last 12 months Currently Working %	3.9 72%	3.8 75%	6.7 58%
Mean Monthly Salary $	1,710	2,244	1,236
Last Year Earnings $	18,113	25,344	16,732
Remittances ($ per year)	2327	2430	2250

Wellbeing, sample questions

Question Wellbeing Mean	4.8	Integration	Separation
My life is close to my ideal	4.7	4.9	4.7
Conditions of my life are excellent	4.9	5.2	4.8
Are satisfied with my life	5.4	5.7	5.3
So far I have gotten the important things in my life	4.9	5.1	4.9
If I could live forever I would change almost nothing	4.2	4.5	4.2

1 is strongly disagree
4 is neutral
7 is strongly agree

Climate & Context of Reception:

Racism & Discrimination (mean of 8 qs.)	3.6	Int	Sep
My appearance makes it hard to fit in the community	3.7	3.2	3.8
People in this community have stereotypes about my culture	4.5	4.2	4.6
Language (mean of 7 questions)	4.2	Int	Sep
I feel pressured to learn English	5.4	4.2	5.7
My language makes it hard to fit into this community	4.4	2.4	5.0
Social Cultural Environment (mean 7 qs.)	4.3	Int.	Sep
I feel that I have to change to fit into this community P<.10	4.0	3.5	4.2
This community is an unfriendly place	3.6	NS	

Score > 4
Negative Context of Reception

Scale from 1 to 7
1 is strongly disagree
4 is neutral
7 strongly agree

Climate & Context of Reception: Language

| Language (7) Mean	4.2	Int	Sep
I feel pressured to learn English	5.4	4.2	5.7
My language makes it hard to fit into this community	4.4	2.4	5.0
Since I don't speak English well people have treated me rudely or unfairly	3.5	2.9	3.7
I have been discriminated against because I have difficulty speaking English	3.6	2.7	3.7
It bothers me that I speak English with an accent	3.7	2.5	3.7
I feel uncomfortable being around people who only speak English	4.2	3.6	4.4

Scores> than 4 = Negative Context of Reception

Probability of Staying in this Community & Change in Quality of Life (%)
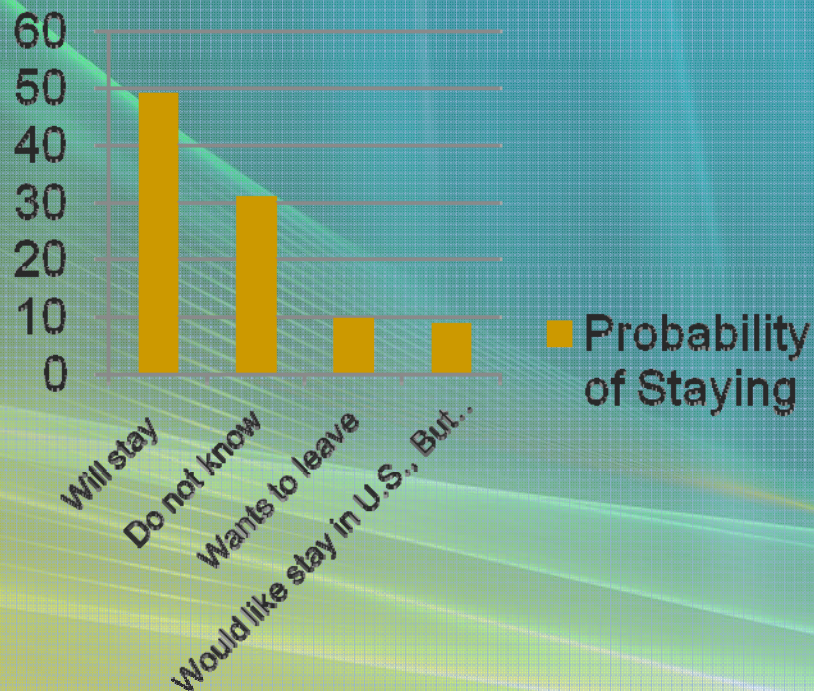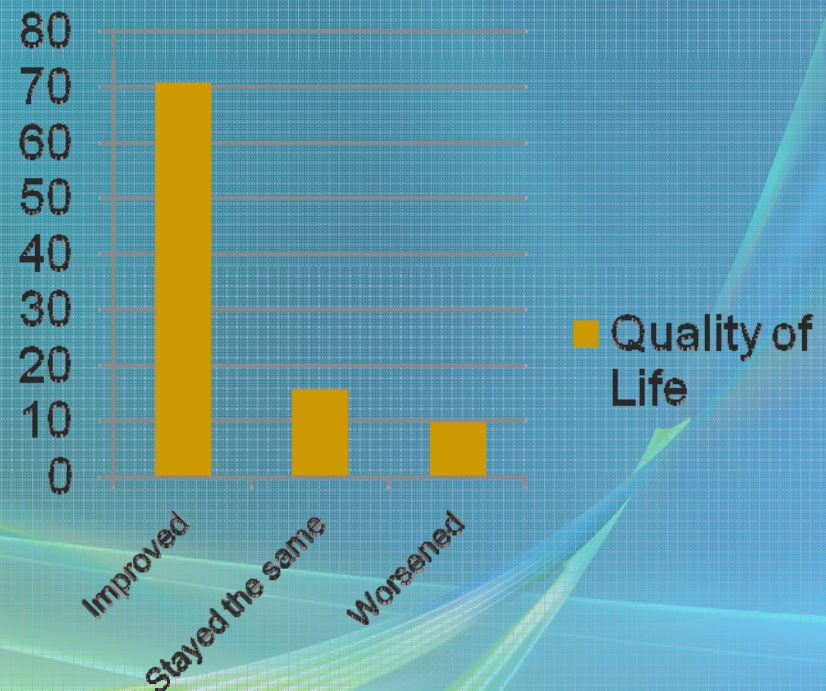
Household Survey 460 (Missouri 2009)

Summary & implications

- Newcomers have been in the US for a while and plan to stay --- coming for work & family
- Dominant paths of acculturation – Separation and Integration --- networks are mostly closed
- Context of reception --- difference on issues related to language, stereotypes, acceptance
- Most indicate Quality of Life improved
- Next steps
  - Community Fora
  - Strategic communication

Household Survey, On Going Analyses

- The relationship between social network and wellbeing (sustainability and improvement)
- How assets and activities impacting on income generation by region
- Asset accumulation as a function of mobility capitals and context of reception -canonical
- Employee job satisfaction

Information Outlets

- Examples:
  - Community Fora with receiving community and newcomers
  - Sharing results with stakeholders through briefings and conferences like Cambio de Colores and JSRI.

Research Team @ MU

- Stephen Jeanetta, Assistant Professor Rural Sociology
- Lisa Flores, Associate Professor Educational and Counseling Psychology
- Pedro Dozi, PhD student Agricultural Economics
- Domingo Martínez, Director MU Cambio Center
- Anne Dannerbeck, Cambio Center Fellow

References

- Valdivia, C., P. Dozi, S. Jeanetta, L. Flores, D. Martinez and A. Dannerbeck. 2008. The Impact of Networks and the Context of Reception on Asset Accumulation Strategies of Latino Newcomers in New Settlement Communities of the Midwest. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. 90 (5): 1319-1325.

- Valdivia, C. and A. Dannerbeck. Moving Around to Get By and Try to Get Ahead: Immigration Experiences in New Settlement Communities of the Midwest. *Professional Development*, The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education. 12 (3): 29-41

Acknowledgements

Community facilitators, team of interviewers, and the individuals who were willing to participate and share their experiences and insights

Project Site

http://www.cambio.missouri.edu/Assets/

Appendices

- Reflections from the qualitative research
- Reasons for migrating, quality of life and likelihood of staying
- Theoretical constructs and the ecological model
- Examples of context of reception questions in the questionnaire

Reflections on the Process

- The newcomers love the places; many were farmers in their countries of origin-they took many photos of the local environment
- Local bridge builders are important connectors to local resources
- When there are relationships with people from the local community members the outcomes they report are generally good--but there are few relationships
- Level of fear ebbs and flows in reaction to policy discussions
- Serious concerns about health care access
- There is a great deal of isolation among the women

Reflections on the Process

- It appears very little integration has taken place so far socially and culturally
- The lines being drawn at state and national policy levels are having negative effects at the local level
  - There is a great deal of fear among immigrants.
  - Some communities ignore federal laws and others are "souring the milk"--very confusing to the immigrant.
- The communities themselves are relatively isolated and self-reliant when it comes to addressing issues of immigration
- Community integration can be positively affected by facilitating those things that make newcomers feel welcome and reducing the number of barriers

How important in your decision to leave your country (%) was ...
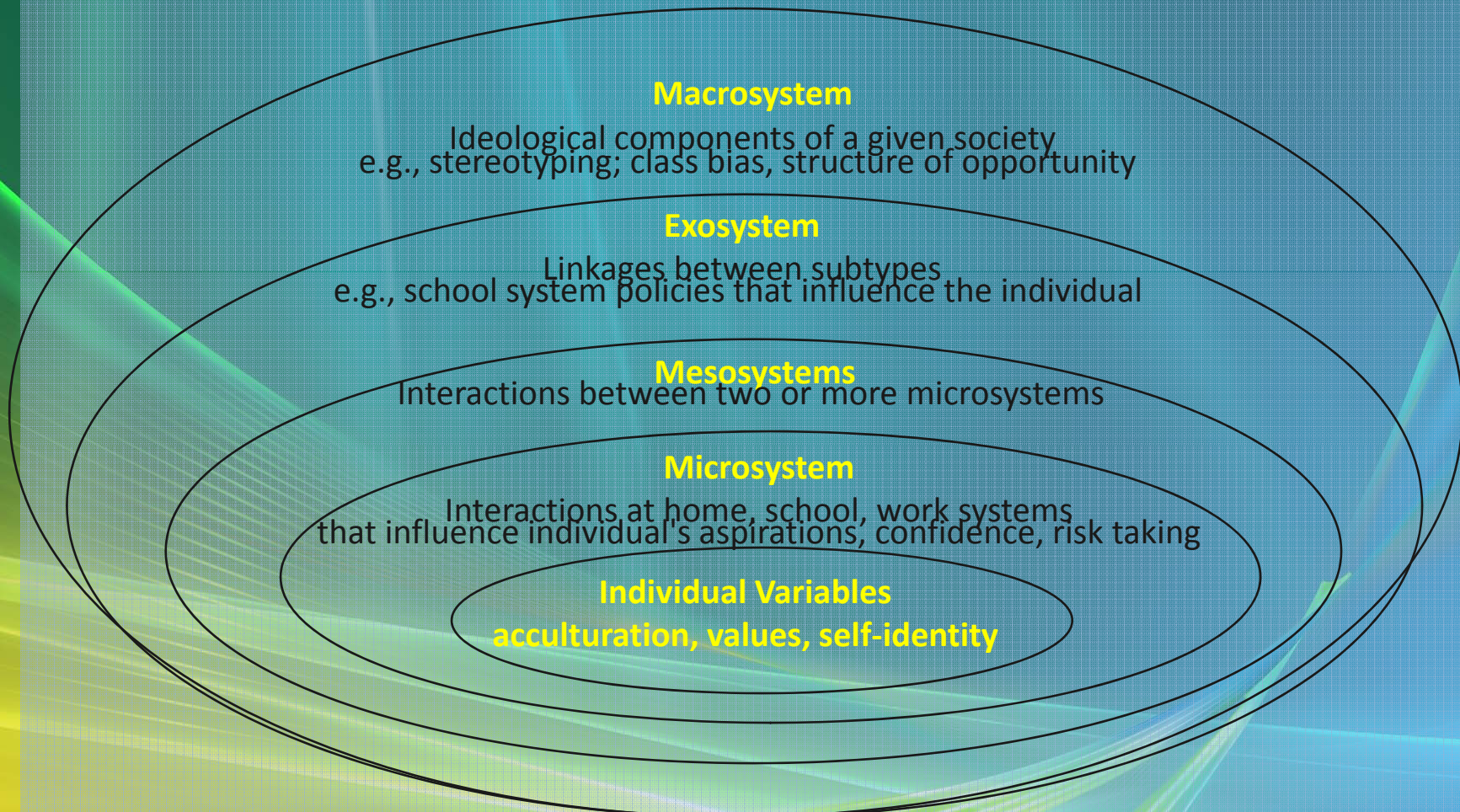

Household Survey 460 (Missouri 2009)

Measuring the theoretical constructs

- Wellbeing: questions about life satisfaction (scale of 1-7); economic through earnings
- Human Capital: number of years of work experience, of education, mobility
- Cultural Capital: acculturation process – assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization
- Social Capital: the networks, relationships with people and organizations; who do you go to …
- Economic capital: income earnings, savings
- Demographics: age, gender and family
- Context of reception: social cultural and environment; racism and discrimination; language

Community Climate:
Context is important

Macrosystem
Ideological components of a given society
e.g., stereotyping; class bias, structure of opportunity

Exosystem
Linkages between subtypes
e.g., school system policies that influence the individual

Mesosystems
Interactions between two or more microsystems

Microsystem
Interactions at home, school, work systems
that influence individual's aspirations, confidence, risk taking

Individual Variables
acculturation, values, self-identity

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Model

Climate & Context of Reception: Social Cultural & Environment

QUESTIONS		Int.	Sep
This community feels like a cold and uncaring place to me	4.0	NS	
I feel uncomfortable living in this community	3.3	NS	
I feel that I have to change to fit into this community P<.10	**4.03**	**3.48**	**4.16**
This community is an unfriendly place	3.6	NS	

Scale from 1 to 7
1 is strongly disagree
4 is neutral
7 strongly agree

Scores > 4
Negative Context of Reception