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Abstract

This study examined the job satisfaction of 253 Latino/a newcomers in three rural communities in the Midwest. Specifically, the authors explored the effects of ethnic identity, Anglo acculturation, Latino/a acculturation, perceptions of the community (social relations, discrimination/racism, and language pressures), job tenure, work hours, and salary on participants' job satisfaction. Results of a hierarchical regression analysis indicated that ethnic identity and Anglo acculturation had a positive effect, while perceptions of the community related to discrimination/racism had a negative effect on job satisfaction. Latino/a acculturation, perceived social relations in the community, perceived language pressures in the community, job tenure, hours worked, and wages were not significantly related to job satisfaction. The regression model accounted for 16% of the variance in job satisfaction. The implications of the findings for career counseling practice are discussed, and suggestions for future research on Latino/a immigrants' career development are provided.

Keywords

Latino/as, job satisfaction, acculturation, context of reception, livelihoods, career development

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Migration is part of the livelihood strategies of people around the world. At least 160 million people lived outside their country of birth in 2000 (Martin & Widgren, 2002), and the United States is one of the countries in the world that has historically attracted immigrants seeking new opportunities. In spite of the significant presence of immigrants in the United States, many of whom come for work opportunities, little attention is given in the vocational literature on immigrants' career development. The current study responds to recent calls to increase research with immigrant communities to inform career counseling practice (Yakushko, 2009; Yakushko, Backhaus, Watson, Ngaruiya, & Gonzalez, 2008). Using data from a household survey conducted in three rural regions of the Midwest, the current study explores the effects of psychosocial, environmental, and work-related factors, defined through the sustainable livelihoods model of capitals and context of reception (Valdivia et al., 2008) on Latino/a immigrants' job satisfaction.

The migration patterns of Latino/as changed dramatically in the 1990s, with immigrants moving from large metropolitan areas to small rural towns (Lazos & Jeanetta, 2002). Important economic factors in this movement were the labor demands of manufacturing and processing companies that settled in the main beef, pork, and poultry producing counties of the South and Midwest regions as a result of tax incentives provided by local governments (Artz, 2009; Artz, Orazem, & Otto, 2007). The Latino/a population growth in nonmetro regions has alleviated decades of population decline and contributed to the economic vigor of rural communities (Kandel & Cromartie, 2004). However, the rapid growth of the Latino/a population in rural communities of the Midwest has presented challenges. Recent studies show that moving has a negative impact on earnings for foreign-born Latinos (Dozi & Valdivia, 2008) and wages are low (Hernández, 2005). The significant growth of the Latino/a population in rural areas and the fact that this group moves frequently for work, resulting in lower earnings, point to a need to learn about the factors that contribute to their job satisfaction as a means to improving their settlement in rural areas and reducing mobility. Understanding what contributes to the job satisfaction of Latino/as is a key question both for counseling Latino/a immigrants who are settling and working in rural areas and for the health of the communities where they are settling.

Mobility, Livelihoods, and Context of Reception

Migration is traditionally seen as the effect of push and pull forces (Engstrom, 2000). Economic, political, or social conditions can attract people to a place or force them to leave. Job opportunities, higher wages, education, and the opportunity to reunite with families are some of the pull forces that attract newcomers to certain communities (Engstrom, 2000). For many years, Latino/as migrated mostly to Texas, California, and large urban centers where the family networks facilitated this process (Engstrom, 2000). However, there has been a shift in the migration patterns from these regions to rural areas over the past two decades. The Latino

population in the Midwest region grew by 36.5% between 2000 and 2008 (Martinez, 2010); in Missouri, this population group nearly doubled through the 1990s (Dozi, 2004).

New patterns of Latino/a migration have shifted from temporary and predominantly male to permanent male and female settlements in nonmetro areas of the Midwest (Hernández, 2005). Latino/a immigrants continue to settle in small towns throughout the Midwest (Kandel & Cromartie, 2004) and indicate that work was the main reason for migration (Case & Campbell, 2003).

Mobility and Earnings

Pull forces attracting Latino/a newcomers to rural areas have a positive effect in employment growth; however, wages in rural communities with meat packing and processing companies are not growing (Artz et al., 2007; Kochhar, 2005). Wage earnings may not be the main impetus for Latino/a immigrants' decision to migrate to the Midwest. Regression analyses with the 2000 Census data with Latino respondents in nonmetro Missouri and rural regions of Missouri found that those who were foreign born and who moved experienced lower income earnings (Dozi & Valdivia, 2008; Valdivia et al., 2008). Indeed, in a qualitative examination of Mexican immigrants' career development, Shinnar (2007) found that some workers in Las Vegas did not pursue upward mobility (moving into supervisory or managerial jobs) because it meant loss of seniority and job security or increased time away from family. Rather, their main motive for switching jobs or positions was related to family well-being. Similarly, Valdivia and Dannerbeck (2009) reported that although Mexican immigrant women's wages had not increased, they perceived that they were getting ahead (Valdivia & Dannerbeck, 2009).

Livelihoods, Capitals, and the Context of Reception

In this study, a variety of factors in understanding job satisfaction are defined within the sustainable livelihoods framework. This is a strengths-based, interdisciplinary model that postulates that an individual's capitals and capabilities are key factors in developing meaningful livelihoods (Bebbington, 1999; Valdivia & Gilles, 2001). The framework allows for the exploration of multiple social, economic, and psychological factors on one's ability to make a living and their sense of well-being.

Economic, human, and cultural capitals are key aspects of the sustainable livelihoods framework and represent those assets that newcomers draw upon to develop livelihoods. Economic capital comprises the assets and cash generating activities that are sources of liquidity (Bebbington, 1999; Valdivia & Gilles, 2001). We used work hours and salary earnings to assess the economic capital portion of the livelihoods framework in the current study.

Human capital has been measured through language proficiency, job tenure, and education. Specifically, researchers found that low education levels and low English

language proficiency had a negative effect on earnings (Dozi, 2004) and moderated the relationship between perceived job discrimination and job satisfaction (Sanchez & Brock, 1996) among Latino/a immigrants. Low level of education and low English language proficiency had negative effects on earnings in Missouri (Dozi & Valdivia, 2005) and on occupational advancement in Las Vegas (Shinnar, 2007). Finally, work experience had a positive effect on income earnings of native-born and foreign-born Latinos in nonmetro areas of Missouri (Valdivia et al., 2008). In the current study, human capital is assessed through job tenure.

Acculturation is an important variable when studying the career development of people of color and immigrants (Miller & Kerlow-Myers, 2009; Yakushko et al., 2008). Berry (2003) defines acculturation as the adaptation process of newcomers to the sociocultural context of the new or receiving society. A multidimensional acculturation model implies that there are several paths in acculturation (Berry, 2003), including degree of adaptation to former communities and adaptation within new communities, and these models are more appropriate and informative than using single dimensional acculturation models (Miller & Kerlow-Myers, 2009). Several of the acculturation measures, including the measure used in the current study, relate to proficiency and use of language (English and Spanish), which are elements of human capital. Thus, we also operationalize human capital in the current study through the assessment of Anglo and Latino acculturation.

In a review of acculturation research in the career development literature, Miller and Kerlow-Myers (2009) reported mixed findings on the relation between acculturation on job satisfaction. Leong (2001) found a strong and positive relationship between acculturation and job performance ratings for Latino/a workers. A qualitative analysis of Mexican immigrants' career development found that limited education, low English language proficiency, and limited access to information are barriers to career progression (Shinnar, 2007). Finally, another study found that bicultural and assimilation acculturation strategies, measured through English and Spanish language use at work and at home, were positive predictors of the income earnings of foreign-born Latino/as in the Midwest (Valdivia et al., 2008).

Cultural capital includes the cultural values, norms, and traditions, often measured through ethnic identity. Ethnic identity includes how people self-identify, their sense of belonging to a group, and exploration of ethnic group identity, values, and beliefs (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Shinnar (2007) found that being associated with Latino culture gave Mexican workers a sense of pride due to this group's strong work ethic. Prior research with Latina high school samples indicated that high levels of ethnic identity were related to high career self-efficacy (Gushue, 2006; Gushue & Whitson, 2006). In a study of Mexican immigrant workers in Las Vegas, research found that the social group's sense of worth (e.g., being hard working, Latinos work harder than Anglos) was an important positive work motivator (Shinnar, 2007). Shinnar (2007) concluded that ethnic identity, and other variables such as acculturation, language proficiency, and cultural values may affect immigrants' career development. She found that *familialism* and *personalismo/simpatía*, valuing family time,

and friendliness and kindness, were brought up when discussing the undesirable consequences of career progression.

In addition to the capitals that comprise the livelihoods framework, we believe that the context of reception, or the environment in which livelihood strategies evolve, also affects how individuals make a living and how they see themselves (Valdivia et al., 2008). To understand how Latino/a immigrant newcomers adapt to new jobs and communities, it is also critical to understand, from the newcomers' point of view, the context in which adjustments are occurring (Flores, Jeanetta, Valdivia, & Martinez, 2009; Yakushko, 2009; Yakushko et al., 2008). The environment in which decisions are made are likely to affect the individual (Shinnar, 2007; Dozi & Valdivia, 2008; Lazos, 2002). Indeed, Sanchez and Brock (1996) found that perceived discrimination at work has a negative impact on job satisfaction among Latino/as. Moreover, racial profiling (Decker, 2005) had a negative effect on income earning for both native and foreign-born Latino/as in the Midwest (Dozi & Valdivia, 2008). In the current study, Latino immigrants' perceptions of the community are used to assess context of reception.

Summary

Utilizing the livelihood strategies framework, the current study aims to explore the effects of human, cultural, and economic capitals and extends the framework to examine the impact of contextual variables on Latino/a immigrants' job satisfaction. Specifically, we examine the contribution of job tenure, Anglo acculturation and Latino/a acculturation (human capital), ethnic identity (cultural capital), work hours and wages (economic capital), and perceptions of the community (contextual variable) to job satisfaction among a sample of Latino/a immigrant workers in the Midwest.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 253 (58.5% female; 41.5% male) Latino/a immigrant workers. On average, participants lived in these communities for 5 years ($SD = 5.17$) and lived in the United States for 11.22 years ($SD = 7.29$). Most participants were married (54.5%; $n=138$), followed by participants who were single (21.3%; $n = 54$), living with partner (17.8%; $n = 45$), divorced or separated (4%, $n = 10$), and widowed (0.8%; $n = 2$). Four participants (1.6%) did not report their relationship status. Participants' age ranged from 18 to 77 years ($M = 35.28$ years; $SD = 9.98$). Table 1 provides descriptive data of the sample for education, country of origin, and employment areas.

Participants were drawn from three rural communities in the Midwest. These sites were chosen to ensure that a variety of employment opportunities and migration patterns were included. Community A ($n = 69$; 27.3%) has a population of 1,863; 22%

Table 1. Sample Demographic, Education, and Job Characteristics

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age (years)	35.28	9.98
Length of stay in the community (years)	5	5.17
Education	<i>n</i>	Percentage
0–6th grade	110	43.5
8–11th grade	68	26.9
High school graduation	42	16.6
College education (some)	23	9.1
College graduation	8	3.2
Origin	<i>n</i>	Percentage
Mexico	169	66.8
El Salvador	38	15
Guatemala	19	7.5
Honduras	16	6.3
Other Latin America	9	3.6
Employment	<i>n</i>	Percentage
Production	134	53
Hospitality and tourism	43	17
Food preparation and services	25	17
Construction	21	8.3

Note. Education and country of origin data is missing for two participants. Only the four most frequent areas of employment are reported.

are Latino/a. This is an agricultural region with new large corporate agriculture firms. Community B ($n = 91$; 36%) has a population of 20,196, where 5.6% are Latino/a. The economy is diverse, including a variety of manufacturing plants, of services, and retail. About 25% of the labor force commutes from surrounding communities. Community C ($n = 93$; 36.8%) has a population of 6,050, of which 4% are Latino/a. The main pull factor in this community is employment in the hospitality industry, retirement centers, and construction.

Measures

With the exception of the acculturation measure, which was already available in Spanish, translation and back-translation procedures were used to ensure consistency between the English and Spanish versions of the surveys. In addition, the final Spanish version was evaluated by another person who was not involved in the translation/back-translation process to ensure cultural accuracy and fluency.

Ethnic identity. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure–Revised (MEIM-R; Phinney & Ong, 2007) is a 6-item short version of the MEIM (Phinney, 1992) that was used to assess participants' sense of self as a member of a specific ethnic group.

Participants respond to the items using a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*), and these responses are averaged to obtain a scale score. High scores are indicative of strong levels of self-concept related to ethnic group membership. Using a diverse sample of college students, a two-factor structure (exploration and commitment) was reported for scores on the MEIM-R and the scale showed good internal consistency (.81; [Phinney & Ong, 2007](#)). Alpha coefficients for the original MEIM ranged from .78 to .91 with adult Latino samples ([Gamst et al., 2002](#)). In addition, prior studies with Latino adults reported that MEIM scores were positively correlated with Mexican orientation, negatively correlated with Anglo acculturation and generation level ([Abreu, Goodyear, Campos, & Newcomb, 2000](#); [Gamst et al., 2002](#)), positively related to traditional masculinity ideology ([Abreu et al., 2000](#)), and negatively related to pain measures ([Rahim-Williams et al., 2007](#)). In the current study, the estimated internal consistency reliability for MEIM-R scores was .84 (Table 2).

Acculturation. The Bidimensional Acculturation Scale for Hispanics ([Marin & Gamba, 1996](#)) was used to measure behavioral adaptations to Latino/a and Anglo cultures. The scale includes 24 English and Spanish language-based items to which participants respond on a 4-point scale (1 = *poorly*; 4 = *very well*). Two subscale scores are obtained for Latino/a and Anglo acculturation by averaging the responses for the Spanish and English items, respectively. High scores reflect high language-related behaviors for the respective subscale.

Scale scores from prior studies have yielded Cronbach's alphas ranging from .77 to .90 for the Latino subscale and .95 to .97 for the Anglo subscale with samples of Latino/a adults ([Dawson, 2009](#); [Marin & Gamba, 1996](#); [Zayas, Bright, Alvarez-Sanchez, & Cabassa, 2009](#)). [Marin and Gamba](#) reported a three-factor solution for the language items: language use (6 items), linguistic proficiency (12 items), and electronic media (6 items). The Latino/a and Anglo acculturation subscales were significantly correlated in the expected directions with generation level, age at arrival, residence in the United States, proportion of life spent in the United States, and another acculturation measure ([Marin & Gamba, 1996](#)). Latino/a and Anglo acculturation subscale scores in the current study had Cronbach's alphas of .78 and .94, respectively.

Community perceptions. Community climate was assessed with 27 items that measured perceptions of the context of reception and community environment in the areas of social/cultural relations (12 items), discrimination and racism (8 items), and language use (7 items). The items were adapted from other measures developed to assess students' perceptions of the academic environment ([Gloria & Robinson-Kurpius, 1996](#)) and acculturative stress ([Mena, Padilla, & Maldonado, 1987](#); [Rodriguez, Myers, Mira, Flores, & Garcia-Hernandez, 2002](#); [Saldana, 1994](#)). For example, the following social/cultural relations subscale item, "This university seems like a cold, uncaring place to me," was taken from the University

Environment Scale (Gloria & Robinson-Kurpius, 1996) and changed to “This community feels like a cold, uncaring place to me.” Sample items for the discrimination/racism subscale include “People in this community have stereotypes about my culture” and “I have been discriminated against in this community as a newcomer.” Sample items for the language use subscale are “I feel pressure to learn English” and “My language makes it hard to fit into this community.” Participants respond to the items using a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 7 = *strongly agree*), and responses for each subscale are averaged to obtain subscale scores. High scores reflect strong negative perceptions of the community related to social interactions, discrimination and racism, and language pressures on the three respective subscales. Social relations and discrimination/racism scores were negatively related with life satisfaction in our sample, providing some validity support. In the current study, the subscale scores demonstrated good internal consistency reliability (Cronbach’s alphas = .76, .89, and .74) for the social relations, discrimination/racism, and language use subscales, respectively.

Employment variables. A series of open-ended questions were included to obtain current employment information, including employer, duration of time on this job (job tenure), hours worked per week, and monthly wages.

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was assessed with 2 items that asked participants to rate levels of satisfaction with their job and employer (e.g., “How satisfied are you with your present job position?”). Participants responded to the items using a 10-point scale ranking from 0 (*completely dissatisfied*) to 10 (*completely satisfied*). Item responses were averaged to obtain a scale score, and high scores reflected high levels of contentment with current job. Job satisfaction scores were positively related to life satisfaction. In the current study, job satisfaction had a coefficient alpha of .91.

Demographic information. A demographic survey was included to gather information about participants’ age, gender, education level, and relationship status. In addition, information was obtained on length of time in the community, length of time in the United States, and country of origin.

Procedures

We followed professional guidelines for conducting research with culturally diverse populations (American Psychological Association [APA], 2003; Chang & Sue, 2005; Council of National Psychological Associations for the Advancement of Ethnic Minority Interests [CNPAEMI], 2000; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992) throughout the research process. Some ways in which we met these research standards included cross-disciplinary collaboration of scholars with expertise on Latino and immigrant cultures, developing a research advisory board comprised

of scholars and community members, developing relationships with key stakeholders in the Latino immigrant communities from the three areas that we sampled, hiring and training culturally competent interviewers, using standardized interview protocols, and translating/back-translating the survey.

Latino/a adults were invited to participate through trusted organizations and individuals in each region. Snowball sampling was used, along with strategies to ensure that every sector of the community was included. We obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality to protect the participants because they are considered to be a vulnerable group. Because of potential language and literacy concerns, we trained a team of bilingual graduate students to administer the survey. Interviewers completed 4–5 hr of training that included an overview of the project and participating in mock interviews as both the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewers traveled to the community to conduct the survey interviews one-on-one at a time and place preferred by the interviewee. All items were read to the participant and the interviewers recorded responses. Participants had the option of having the survey administered in Spanish or English; all interviews were conducted in Spanish and lasted 45 min to 1 hr. A total of 329 interviews with employed immigrants were conducted and were included in this study.

Results

Data were examined for accuracy of data entry, missing values, and statistical assumptions (normality, linearity, and multicollinearity). From the original 329 cases of data collected from employed Latino/as, 37 were dropped because participants were missing all data for at least one of the study's variables. A regression substitution method was used to replace missing values for all other cases with some but not all data missing from a variable. When examining the variable distributions, an additional 39 cases were dropped because they were univariate ($n = 38$) or multivariate ($n = 1$) outliers. Following these deletions, we determined that the data met the assumptions for multivariate analysis. Thus, 253 of the original 329 original participants were included in the subsequent data analyses.

A power analysis was conducted (GPOWER; Faul & Erdfelder, 1992) to identify the minimum sample size needed to test the hypotheses. To achieve a power of .80 and a medium effect size (.15), a sample size of at least 114 is needed to detect a significant model ($F[9, 104] = 1.97$). See Table 1 for the means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for the study's variables.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression

We conducted a two-step hierarchical regression analysis to determine the degree to which capital and contextual variable sets uniquely predicted job satisfaction. At Step 1, the capital variables of job tenure, Anglo oriented acculturation, Latino/a-oriented acculturation, ethnic identity, hours worked per week, and monthly salary

were significant ($F[6, 246] = 3.18, p < .01$) and accounted for 7% of the variance of job satisfaction. At Step 2, the addition of the community perception variables of social relations, discrimination/racism, and language pressures resulted in a significant increment to the prediction of job satisfaction, $\Delta R^2 = .09, \Delta F(3, 243) = 8.89, p < .001$). Together, the capital and contextual variables explained 16% of the variance of job satisfaction. Ethnic identity ($\beta = .15, t = 2.35, p < .05$), Anglo-oriented acculturation ($\beta = .14, t = -2.12, p < .05$), and perceived discrimination and racism in the community ($\beta = -.25, t = -3.07, p < .01$) were significant individual predictors of Latino/a immigrant workers' job satisfaction. These results are summarized in Table 2.

Discussion

This study contributes to the limited knowledge base on Latino/a immigrants' career development by focusing on a large sample of immigrants living in three rural communities in the Midwest. Our findings indicate that immigrants who had strong levels of ethnic identity, who were more acculturated to Anglo culture, and who perceived low levels of discrimination and racism within the community reported high levels of job satisfaction. Latino/a acculturation, perceptions of the community related to social relations and language pressures, job tenure, hours worked, and salary had no significant effects on job satisfaction.

Participants' strong sense of identity had a positive effect on job satisfaction. This is consistent with prior research that found significant links between ethnic identity and career-related variables among Latina high school students (Gushue, 2006; Gushue & Whitson, 2006) and Mexican immigrant workers (Shinnar, 2007). Specifically, Shinnar (2007) found that individuals with a higher value of ethnic identity had greater job satisfaction. Her qualitative study of Mexican immigrant workers in the hospitality industry showed that participants derived pride from the quality of their work and in the belief that they worked harder than their Anglo counterparts. These prior findings extend to the participants in our study who were living in a rural community and who were more diverse in the types of jobs in which they were employed and in their country of origin. It appears that work is intricately linked to Latino/as' ethnic identity and that positive attitudes about Latino/a culture contribute in a number of positive ways to Latino/as' career development.

Consistent with other studies (e.g., Flores, Navarro, & Dewitz, 2008; Flores, Ojeda, Huang, Gee, & Lee, 2006; Flores, Robitschek, Celebi, Andersen, & Hoang, 2010; Rivera, Chen, Flores, Blumberg, & Ponterotto, 2007), we found that Anglo acculturation had a positive effect on career development, but Latino/a acculturation was not a significant predictor. Prior research on the role of acculturation on income earnings of Latinos in Missouri found that a bicultural acculturation strategy, measured by use of English at work and use of another language at home, increased incomes at a higher proportion than the assimilation strategy (Valdivia et al.,

Table 2. Descriptives, Alphas, and Correlations Among the Study's Variables

Variable	M	SD	α	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. EthID	3.06	.58	.84	.13*	.17*	-.16*	.02	.12	.07	-.10	-.10	.20**
2. Anglo Acc	1.92	.69	.94	.19**	-.06	-.08	-.08	-.32**	.06	-.02	.05	.16*
3. Latino Acc	3.44	.40	.78	-.09	-.09	-.04	-.06	.02	.01	-.04	-.08	.11
4. CP Social	3.48	.93	.76	.54**	.54**	.29**	.01	.01	-.05	.01	-.03	-.28*
5. CP Disc/Racism	3.74	1.41	.89	.54**	.54**	.02	.01	.01	.02	.01	.11	-.29**
6. CP Lang	4.22	1.22	.74	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	-.05	-.07	-.11
7. Tenure	3.53	2.87	-	.08	.08	.08	.08	.08	.08	.08	.25**	.04
8. Hours	39.65	6.09	-	.48*	.48*	.48*	.48*	.48*	.48*	.48*	.48*	-.01
9. Salary	1520.92	430.64	-	.10	.10	.10	.10	.10	.10	.10	.10	-.10
10. Job Satisfaction	7.42	2.38	.91									

Note. N = 253; Anglo Acc = Anglo acculturation; CP Disc/Racism = Perceived Discrimination and Racism in Community; CP Lang = Perceived English Language Pressure in Community; CP Social = Perceived Social Relations in Community; EthID = ethnic identity; Hours = Hours worked per week; Latino Acc = Latino acculturation; Tenure = Job tenure; Salary = Monthly salary.

2008). The study showed that assimilation (high Anglo acculturation and low Latino acculturation) was not the only path to increased incomes.

Because most work environments in the United States, particularly those in emerging immigrant communities in the Midwest, have policies and practices that reflect majority U.S. culture, it is not surprising that Anglo acculturation would play a significant role in newcomers' career development. These monocultural work environments require basic English language proficiency, and it makes sense that Latino/a immigrant workers who have fluency in English will report higher job satisfaction than their counterparts with lower levels of English language acculturation. On the other hand, Latino language acculturation is not likely to either advantage or disadvantage Latino immigrant workers' career development if these skills are not valued in the workplace or if management is not expected to develop these language skills to communicate with the workers they supervise. It is important to emphasize that the findings do not imply that maintaining a strong level of Latino/a acculturation is related to negative attitudes about one's job. Rather, they suggest that the development of English language skills may serve to enhance these workers' job experiences by improving communication on the job with supervisors and coworkers as well as increasing access to information about jobs. In fact, Shinnar (2007) reported that the career progression of Mexican immigrant food industry workers was influenced by acculturation and language fluency. Immigrant workers with high levels of Anglo acculturation may have easier access to information about jobs and may have greater flexibility in selecting. It is important to keep in mind that acculturation is a complex, multifaceted construct that goes beyond language use (Yakushko et al., 2008). Because our acculturation measure focused solely on language acculturation, future research can explore if other dimensions of acculturation are related to Latino/a immigrant job outcomes.

To identify strategies that reduce mobility, it is necessary to understand other factors that may push immigrant workers out of the receiving (new settlement) community. This may be related to their perceptions of the climate in these communities or the context of reception. We examined the relationship between the community climate and immigrant workers' job satisfaction, and our findings indicated that perceived discrimination and racism was the only construct with a significant, negative effect on job satisfaction. Participants who perceived that members of the community held stereotypes about their culture or had negative attitudes about the newcomers reported lower levels of job satisfaction than those participants who perceived that members of the receiving community held more positive attitudes about immigrants. While previous research has found that perceived work discrimination was related to employee outcomes (e.g., Sanchez & Brock, 1996), we are not aware of any study that has examined the effects of the larger community on job satisfaction.

Latino/a acculturation and job characteristics such as salary, tenure, and number of hours worked per week, had no effect on job satisfaction. In a case study analysis of women living in these regions, women expressed a sense of satisfaction in having

a job and felt that they made advancements in comparison to where they previously lived, even though their earnings had not increased (Valdivia & Dannerbeck, 2009). Furthermore, Mexican immigrants who previously had been unemployed reported increased job satisfaction (Shinnar, 2007). These results appear to indicate that Latino/a newcomer's job satisfaction may be relative based on their prior living conditions and unemployment. More research is needed to explore the effects of life and job satisfaction in previous communities and jobs, respectively, on current well-being indices.

The nonsignificant effects of the work variables suggest that noneconomic factors may be a primary source of Latino/a immigrants' job satisfaction. This may be related to the socioeconomic characteristics, a low mean salary, or the different types of jobs held by participants in our sample when compared to other studies (e.g., Sanchez & Brock, 1996). That is, Latino/as in nonmetro areas are mostly in low skill jobs, earn low wages, and are a young growing ethnic group (Rosenbloom, 2003; Chiswick & Hurst, 2000) that has not been able to move upwardly in recent years (Gibbs, Kusmin, & Cromatie, 2005). Our findings are consistent with prior research that found that foreign-born immigrants' migration patterns to rural counties in the Midwest and South were influenced by the number of jobs rather than by the level of income at these jobs (Dust, Orazem, & Wohlgemuth, 2008). In addition, it is possible that the benefits to living in small rural communities, such as good education for children, safe communities to raise a family, and low cost of living, may outweigh factors like low wages in determining Latino/a immigrants' job satisfaction (Shinnar, 2007). Future research might explore the effects of family values and community safety-related variables on immigrant workers' job satisfaction.

Practice and Training Implications

Our findings can be used to inform career counseling practice with Latino/a immigrants. A strong sense of ethnic identity can be enriched by encouraging these clients to maintain their cultural ties to their country of origin and by reinforcing Latino/a cultural strengths. Moreover, Latino/a immigrants have shown a genuine concern in learning English (Wirth, 2001). Career counselors can connect these clients with English language courses in the community, and they can appeal to employers to provide language skills workshops (in Spanish, English, and other common languages spoken by employees) to all employees before or after work shifts or during lunch breaks to increase access to these services. This may in turn have overall positive effects on the work environment, can broaden the work opportunities of these employees within the organization, and may extend employees' job tenure with an organization if they are satisfied with their job.

Our findings point to the importance of attending to the larger community context when working with Latino/a immigrants and to understanding how the "welcome mat" affects their work satisfaction and economic integration in the community. Many of these newcomers may have made great sacrifices to move to the rural

community, and it seems that their satisfaction and comfort in the community at large is a critical factor in how they feel about their jobs. Career counselors working with Latino/a immigrants can work to enhance the social integration and improve the adjustment to the new community by addressing differences between rural and urban communities in terms of racial and ethnic diversity with Latino/a newcomers. Workshops and presentations geared to potential employers and members of the receiving community in general about these diverse newcomers to their community may help to reduce stereotypes and improve the overall climate for immigrants. Moreover, career counselors can work with Latino/a immigrant clients to identify and effectively respond to and cope with discrimination and racism in the community and in the workplace. Future research is needed to explore if lower job satisfaction operates as a push factor and leads them to move to another job or community. Other research also can examine the relationship between context of reception variables and participation in social and work networks.

In terms of training, career counselors should receive specific instruction on the immigrant experience so that they can better assess their needs, tailor intervention strategies that are congruent with immigrants' cultural orientation, and develop appropriate goals related to their occupational well-being. Familiarity with acculturation models and assessment, knowledge of the push and pull factors related to clients' immigration, and cultural knowledge can help to enhance the working relationship and can facilitate an effective career counseling process with immigrant clients. Finally, career counseling trainees should gain experience in developing relationships with key stakeholders in the immigrant community to ensure their access to helping members of the immigrant community in their work-related quests.

Limitations of the Current Study

Our findings should be considered in light of the study's limitations. First, our sample was drawn from three small, rural communities in the Midwest. Thus, conclusions may be extended to Latino/a immigrants living in similar communities. Second, our sample was comprised of Latino/as who immigrated to the United States from different countries and who may have experienced different push factors for leaving their home countries as well as pull factors for moving to these Midwest communities. Future research can compare the work experiences across subgroups of Latino immigrants (i.e., gender and country of origin) to understand those work aspects that are variant across groups. Finally, the instrument that we used to assess community climate was developed for the purpose of this study by adapting items from other measures. We developed this measure because existing environmental climate and acculturative stress measures were geared primarily toward college students and/or included stressors that we were not interested in studying (i.e., Latino/a acculturation stress). In developing this measure, we studied commonalities across these measures in terms of community perceptions and adapted the items to fit a

newcomer's experiences. More research is needed to evaluate the validity estimates of scores from this measure.

Conclusion

The findings of the current study indicate that ethnic identity, Anglo acculturation, and perceptions of discrimination and racism in the community were significantly related to job satisfaction among a sample of Latino/a immigrants in three rural Midwest communities. The significant growth of Latino/a newcomers to these communities presents some challenges to the newcomers, employers, and receiving communities, and more research is needed to illuminate those factors that are related to these immigrants' positive adjustments in the workforce and in the community at large.

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