

## The importance of social networks on Latino Immigrants' Wellbeing in Rural Missouri

BY  
PEDRO DOZI AND CORINNE VALDIVIA  
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-COLUMBIA

## Outline

- **Context**
  - Socio-economic reality in rural Missouri
- **Analytical Approach**
  - The Sustainable Livelihood Strategies Model (SLMS)
- **Empirical Method**
  - Latent Variable Analysis
- **Results and Implications**
  - The implication of linking, bridging and bonding on wellbeing

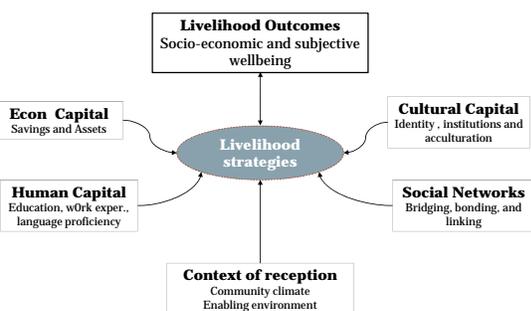
## Context

- **There are changing patterns of Latino immigration:**
  - Settling rural vs. urban areas
  - Mostly males
  - Staying for a longer period of time in the communities.
- **Recent concerns expressed on this pattern shift:**
  - What are the benefits to local communities?
  - How are immigrants sustaining their wellbeing?
  - What is the importance of social networks on wellbeing?
    - × This is the main topic of this study.

## Analytical Approach

- **The SLSM provides a framework for the study of wellbeing**
  - The models is based on access and control of assets (or "capitals").
  - These capitals are: social, cultural, economic/financial, and human.
  - It analyzes assets' contribution to livelihood outcomes.
- **The model is ideal for the assessment of wellbeing:**
  - Incorporates community context variables, appropriate because:
    - × Of the differences in culture, race and country of origin.
    - × It evaluates how capitals interplay in order to sustain wellbeing
- **"Context of reception" is subjective, i.e., individuals**
  - Indicate how they perceive the region;
  - Evaluate how the community perceives them; and

## Sustainable Livelihoods Strength Model

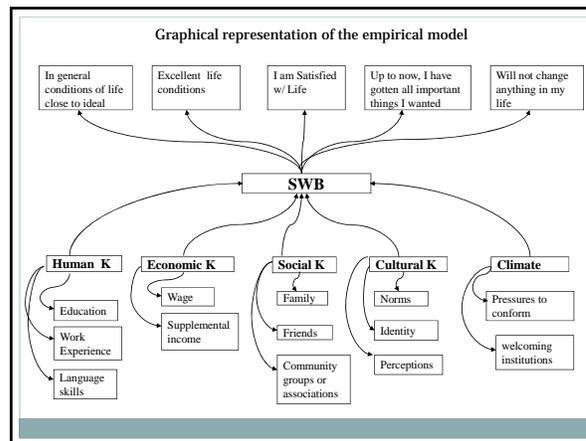


## Empirical Approach

- **The study uses Structural Equation Modeling:**
  - To define the Latent variables :
    - × Social Network (SK), Human (HK), cultural (CK), economic (EK), and Subjective Wellbeing (SWB)
  - To carryout the analysis of the impact SK on SWB
  - Two types of latent variable analyses were conducted:
    - × Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA); and
    - × Path Analysis (PA)
- **Two hypotheses guided the study:**
  - (a) is there a single dominant form of SWB and SK or are there multiple indicators of both?
    - × CFA was used to identify the most relevant indicators of both factors.
  - (b) SKs have a significant and positive impact on SWB.
    - × PA measured the impact of SK on SWB, using factors identified in (a).

### The study set up

- **Area of interest:**
  - Region A: a diversified employment community; and
  - Region B: a one main employer community
- **Variables used:**
  - Dependent: Subjective Well Being (SWB):
    - Satisfaction with life scale
  - Human capital:
    - Language (both English and Spanish) skills and education
  - Financial/economic capital:
    - Wage earnings and alternative sources of income
  - Cultural capital:
    - Bidimensional acculturation scale.
  - Social (network) capital (SK):
    - Membership in informal and formal groups, family residing in the area previously, and use of community services



### Results and Implications

**CFA for SWB:**  
There is no single dominant indicator of SWB, which confirms the first part of hypothesis (a)  
All results are significant at 1% level

Latent dependent variable	Indicators	Std. Estimate	Unstd. Estimate	S.E.
Subjective Well Being	Will not change anything in life	.605	.428	.177
	Achieved important things	.615	.825	.122
	Satisfied w/ life	.728	.749	.100
	Life conditions are excellent	.773	.907	.118
	Life is close to ideal	.656	.782	.112

### Results and Implications

**CFA for Social networks:**  
The second part of hypothesis (a) is confirmed that there is no single dominant factor for social networks

Latent dependent variable	Indicators	Std. Estimate	Unstd. Estimate	S.E.
Social Networks	Social Group participation	.497	.729	.232
	Informal Group participation	.565	.411	.278
	Family member present	.500	.882	.281
	Community Brokers	-.054	-.273	.491

Social and informal group participation are considered as bridging SK;  
Family members represent bonding;  
Community brokers represent linking.

### Results (PA for region A)

Only financial and social networks variables are significant

Latent dependent variable	Exogenous Latent variable	Std. Estimate	Unstd. Estimate	S.E.
Subjective Well Being (SWB)	Human capital	.134	2.041	2.737
	Context of Reception	.345	1.732	1.034
	Cultural capital	-.394	-1.433	1.211
	Social capital (SK)	.410	.053	.133
	Financial Capital	.397	1.675	1.455
	Human capital	.134	2.041	2.737

### Results (PA for Region B)

PA for the Impact of SKs on SWB in region B:  
The effect of SK on SWB here is even larger than in the previous community;

Latent dependent variable	Exogenous Latent variable	Std. Estimate	Unstd. Estimate	S.E.
Subjective Well Being (SWB)	Human capital	.667	1.881	4.118
	Context of Reception	.042	1.354	3.533
	Cultural capital	-.713	-3.738	3.985
	Social capital	.793	2.330	4.267
	Financial Capital	.395	1.805	3.872
	Human capital	.667	1.881	4.118

### Implications: SK and SWB indicators' results

- **In terms of individual elements that make up SK:**
  - Bonding SK; and bridging SK have the largest importance (*effect*) on SWB in these regions.
- **SWB results suggest that:**
  - SWB is more important in region B;
  - Since SWB increases in *degrees* (Likert scale), so
    - as SK increases by one std. unit (i.e., increase in size of the network) SWB in region A increases by .410 standardized units.
    - This std. units are enough to move an individual's perception from neutral to positive feeling about own SWB

### Implications: SK effect on SWB

- Possible reasons for the disparity in results is that region B Latinos tend to be :
  - Male, young, single, uncertain of their future, less educated, and most likely to move on to other places.
- **Region A offers a different scenario. Comparatively:**
  - The gender balance is not as skewed; has older individuals; more married people; and
  - Many have expressed a desire to stay in the community longer.
- **Region A people would tend to see themselves as**
  - Active members of their town and willing to participate in its development.
  - Become part to the "creative class"
- **Concluding: the smaller the region the higher the impact of SK**

Thank you.  
 Questions?  
 Comments and/or suggestions are welcome.