

Predictors of Psychological Distress among Working Poor and Working Non-Poor Immigrants

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Mamta Ojha, MSW, CSW

Jennifer Swanberg, Ph.D.

University of Kentucky

The United States: A Nation of Immigrants

Immigrant is defined as a person who leaves ones birth country to settle into another country





Factors that Drive Immigration

- National Economies
- Labor Market Demands
- Economic and Political Stability/Unstability
- Values toward Immigrants/Immigration
- Immigration Laws

Immigrants and their Mental Health

- High rates of depression among immigrants
(Mui, 1996; 2001, Shibusama & Mui 2001, Haller, Weggenmans, Ferry, & Guigoz, 1996)
- Association between immigrant status and mental illness; an effect of higher incidence of social and economic disadvantage (Tinghog, Hemmingsson, & Lundberg, 2007 , Tinghog Hemmingsson, Lundberg, 2007, Lin & Hung, 2007)
- Negative correlation between social support and depression (Lin & Hung, 2007, Wong, Yoo & Stewart, 2007)
- Depression, anxiety, and substance abuse common among Hispanic migrants (Grzywacz, *et.al*, 2006, Vega , Kolody , Aguilar-Gaxiola , Alderete, Catalano , Caraveo-Anduaga , 1998).

Immigrants and their Mental Health

- Living with spouse & children increased the risk for overall psychological distress as compared to those who live alone (Wong, Yoo & Stewart, 2007)
- Emotional/Companionship support significantly contributed to lower overall psychological distress and decreased depression (Wong, Yoo & Stewart, 2007)




Immigrants and Poverty

- Poverty rates among immigrant workers are significantly higher than non immigrants (Tienda, 2002; Clark, 1998)
- 11.9% of the non immigrant population & 15.2% of the immigrant population below poverty line in 2006 (Migration policy Institute, 2007)

Working Immigrants

- Immigrant workers in the civilian workforce grew from 6.7% in 1980 to 14.7% in 2005 (Migration Policy Institute, 2007)
- In 2006, 23 million, or 1 in 7 workers were immigrants (Orazag, 2007)
- 3 out of 4 immigrant workers are employed in low-wage and low-skill jobs (Capps, Fortuny, and Fix, 2007)
- Immigrant workers account for 1/5 of low-wage and almost 1/2 of low-skilled jobs (Tienda, 2002)



Challenges faced by Working Immigrants

- Language barriers
- Non-recognition of their native educational credential
- Declining educational attainment
- Inaccessibility of adequate healthcare for self & family
- Limited family support for child care & elder care support

Impact of Poor Quality Jobs

Low-wage and low-skilled jobs are more likely to be poor quality jobs





Research Objectives

- To determine whether individual, family and job characteristics differ among working poor and working non-poor immigrants
- To determine which individual, family and job characteristics are predictive of psychological distress among working poor and working non-poor immigrants

Research Methods

- **Data**
 - Secondary data analysis using 2002 NSCW data set
 - Data set contains job, job quality, personal & household characteristics, and well being variables
- **Data Collection Procedure**
 - Computer assisted telephone interviewing
 - Random digit dialing method
 - Questionnaire developed by Families and Work Institute
 - Interviews completed nationwide by employed adults
 - Interviews conducted in English and Spanish

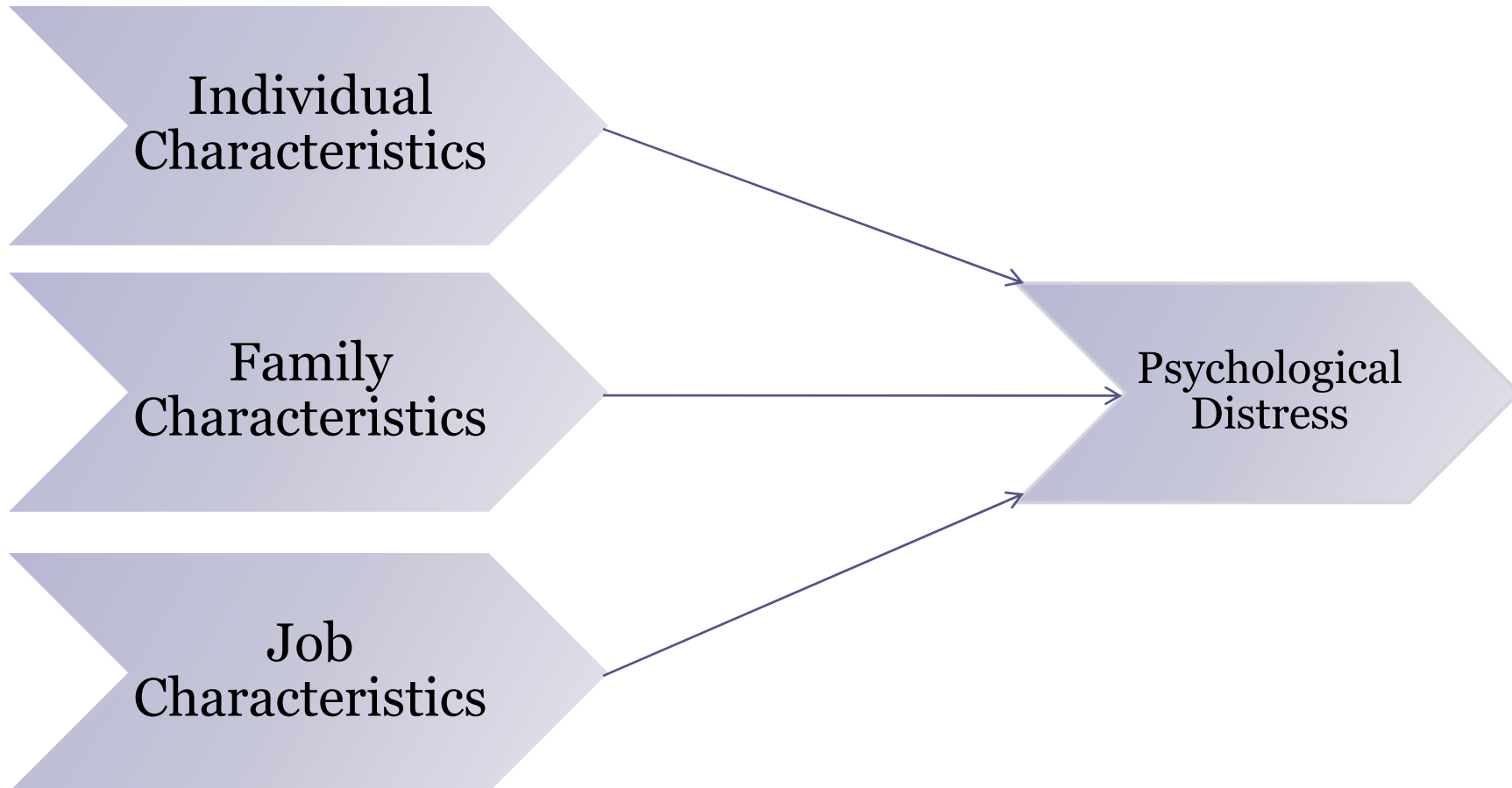
Research Methods

- Total sample
 - N=3504; hourly waged, salaried, and self-employed
 - N=2810; hourly waged, and salaried
- Study Sample
 - N=256 “Immigrants”
 - N=105 “working poor” family income < 250% guideline
 - N=107 “working non-poor” family income => 250% guideline
- Analyses
 - Bi-variate analyses
 - Factor analyses
 - Logistic regression done using the two models

Sample Description

- 36.83 mean years
 - Male 65%
 - Age < 38 years 53%
 - Legally married/partner 60%
 - Education
 - High School/GED 55%
 - Some post secondary 21%
 - 4 yr collage degree 25%
 - Race/Ethnicity
 - White non Hispanic 22%
 - Black non Hispanic 9%
 - Hispanic 53%
 - Other 16%
- U.S. Citizen 57%
 - Years in U.S. 16.77Yrs.
 - Interview in Spanish 40%
 - Total Family Income \$51,694
 - Family income 2002 (<\$28K) 50%
 - Any child < 18 46%
 - Age of youngest child
 - <6 23%
 - 6-12 16%
 - 13-17 8%
 - None-<18 54%

Conceptual Model



DV: Psychological Distress

- Index of Mental health : stress, coping & depression
 - 7 items
 - Depression & hopelessness
 - Minor health problems
 - Sleep problems
 - Feel nervous stresses
 - Feeling of inability to control & overcoming difficulties
 - 1 Factor with eigen value > 1 accounted for 49% variance
 - alpha = .79
- Low values indicated lower psychological distress
- For logistic regression variable was split using the median value

IV: Individual & Family Characteristics

Individual Characteristics

- Age
- Gender

Family Characteristics

- Children <18
- Social Support
 - Has financial support needed from family/friends
 - Has support needed for personal problems from family/friends
 - Alpha = .63

Job Characteristics Model

Advancement
Opportunity

Health &
Safety

Job Security

Work
Schedule

Wages

Fairness and
worker voice

Benefits

Mental Health/
Psychological Well-
being/ Stress

IV: Job Characteristics

- Learning and advancement opportunities
 - 4-item measures, $\alpha = .68$
- Traditional employee benefits
 - average of 10 traditional benefits
- Job insecurity
 - layoff or reduction in hrs when work slow
- Job demands (measure of 4 items)
 - 4 item-measures, $\alpha = .63$
- Work schedule
 - All hrs/wk at all jobs
- Discrimination by national origin

Individual Characteristics

Gender**	Working Poor (n=105)	Working Non-Poor (n=107)
Male	75%	55%
Female	25%	45%
Race/Ethnicity ***	(n=105)	(n=108)
White Non Hispanic	16%	26%
Black Non Hispanic	7%	12%
Hispanic	72%	36%
Other	5%	30%
Marital Status ***	(n=104)	(n=106)
Legally Married/ partner	51%	70%
Single	49%	30%
Education**	(n=105)	(n=107)
HS/GED	84%	29%
Some Post Sec / 4 year collage degree	16%	71%

Individual Characteristics

Language of Interview**	Working Poor (n=105)	Working Non-Poor (n=107)
English	33%	85%
Spanish	67%	15%

US Citizen ***	(n=105)	(n=107)
Yes	45%	70%
No	55%	30%

Respondent age in years ***	(n=105)	(n=107)
Mean	32.66	40.99

Years in US ***	(n=105)	(n=105)
Mean years	12.83	20.69

Family Characteristics

Current elder care responsibility	Working Poor (n=106)	Working Non-Poor (n=107)
Yes	93%	86%
No	3%	14%
Children < 18	(n=106)	(n=107)
Yes	45%	51%
No	55%	49%
Measure of Social Support from Family		
Mean Score	3.85	3.68
Social Support: Financial support from family/friends	(n=106)	(n=104)
Disagree	73%	71%
Agree	27%	29%
Social Support: Problems support from family/friends	(n=106)	(n=107)
Disagree	88%	92%
Agree	12%	8%

Job Characteristics: Learning & Advancement Opportunity

Learning & Advancement Opportunities	Working Poor	Working Non-Poor
Mean Score	12.4	13.10
Learn new things**	(n=105)	(n=106)
Disagree	15%	5%
Agree	85%	95%
Be creative*	(n=106)	(n=107)
Disagree	23%	11%
Agree	77%	89%
Opportunity to develop own special abilities *	(n=105)	(n=106)
Disagree	33%	22%
Agree	67%	78%
Chance of own advancement in organization	(n=105)	(n=106)
Disagree	43%	37%
Agree	57%	63%

Job Characteristics: Job Demands

Measure of Job Demands*	Working Poor	Working Non-Poor
mean score	11.12	12.10
Job requires work fast **	(n=104)	(n=106)
Disagree	46%	26%
Agree	54%	74%
Job requires work hard **	(n=105)	(n=106)
Disagree	38%	16%
Agree	62%	84%
Emotionally demanding	(n=104)	(n=106)
Disagree	31%	38%
Agree	69%	62%
Never enough time to do everything on job	(n=106)	(n=106)
Disagree	47%	38%
Agree	53%	62%

Job Characteristics: Traditional Benefits

Index of Traditional Health Benefits***	Working Poor (n=102)	Working Non-Poor (N=107)
Mean	1.38	1.78
Health Insurance ***	(n=105)	(n=107)
Yes	46%	83%
No	54%	17%
Health Insurance Paid by Employer ***	(n=102)	(n=107)
Yes Part/whole	40%	80%
No Not available	60%	20%
Family health Insurance ***	(n=102)	(n=107)
Yes	31%	80%
No	69%	21%
Family Health Insurance Paid Employer ***	(n=102)	(n=107)
Yes all part	28%	74%
No not available	72%	26%

Job Characteristics: Traditional Benefits

Employer contributes pension / retire plan ***	Working Poor (n=99)	Working Non-Poor (n=106)
Yes	33%	69%
No	67%	31%
Pd. Vacation days ***	(n=106)	(n=106)
Yes	44%	88%
No	56%	12%
Receive Pd. Holidays ***	(n=103)	(n=107)
Yes	39%	83%
No	61%	17%
Personal illness vacation days***	(n=106)	(n=106)
Yes	44%	73%
No	56%	27%

Job Characteristics

Job Insecurity**	Working Poor (n=106)	Working Non-Poor (n=107)
Yes	54%	20%
No	45%	80%
Work Schedule ** (Number hours work/week)	(n=105)	(n=107)
Mean	41.78	46.64
Discrimination	(n=105)	(n=107)
No Discrimination	83%	87%
Discrimination	17%	13%

Working Poor: Psychological Distress

Variable	I		II		III	
	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
Age	-.947**	.915-.981	-.943**	.908-.980	-.957*	.915-1.001
Gender	1.535	.581-4.06	1.44	.524-3.98	-.347	.077-1.56
Child<18			-.925	.349-2.45	-.270	.064-1.139
Social Support			1.176	.902-1.53	-.956	.696-1.314
Learning & advancement opportunity					2.475	.817-7.50
Traditional benefits					1.06	.247-4.58
Job insecurity					6.723*	1.50-30.07
Job demand					-.287*	.099-.835
Discrimination					3.14	.645-15.24
Work Schedule					1.111**	1.04-1.18
Omnibus		.003		.012		.000
Classification Table		71.4%		71.4%		77.3%
Model Summary						
-2log likelihood		115.73		114.24		89.407
Cox & Snell R square		.111		.125		.353
Nagelkerke R square		.15		.170		.474

* significant P < 0.05; **significant P < 0.01

Working Non-Poor: Psychological Distress

Variable	I		II		OR	95% CI
Age	-.968	.932-1.006	-.965	.928-1.004	-.957*	.920-1.01
Gender	-.746	.334-1.67	-.791	.350-1.788	-.981	.491-3.54
Child<18			-.625	.271-1.439	-.537	.240-1.71
Social Support			1.120	.848-1.479	-.980	.813-1.63
Learning & advancement opportunity					1.34	.552-2.79
Traditional benefits					-.646	.576-13.53
Job insecurity					1.73	.548-4.76
Job demand					1.022	.975-1.415
Discrimination					4.018	1.39-16.93
Work Schedule					-.942**	.888-.980
Omnibus		.175		.285		.03
Classification Table		58.8		59.6%		73.4%
Model Summary						
-2log likelihood		135		134		119.24
Cox & Snell R square		.034		.049		.179
Nagelkerke R square		.046		.065		.239

* significant P < 0.05; **significant P < 0.01

Working poor/non-poor: Psychological Distress

Variable

	<u>Working Poor</u>		<u>Working non-poor</u>	
	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
<i>Age</i>	-0.957*	.915-1.001	-0.957*	.920-1.01
<i>Gender</i>	-0.347	.077-1.56	-0.981	.491-3.54
<i>Child<18</i>	-0.270	.064-1.139	-0.537	.240-1.71
<i>Social Support</i>	-0.956	.696-1.314	-0.980	.813-1.63
<i>Learning & advancement opportunity</i>	2.475	.817-7.50	1.34	.552-2.79
<i>Traditional benefits</i>	1.06	.247-4.58	-0.646	.576-13.53
<i>Job insecurity</i>	6.723*	1.50-30.07	1.73	.548-4.76
<i>Job demand</i>	-0.287*	.099-.835	1.022	.975-1.415
<i>Discrimination</i>	3.14	.645-15.24	4.018	1.39-16.93
<i>Work Schedule</i>	1.111**	1.04-1.18	-0.942**	.888-.980
<i>Omnibus</i>		.000		.03
<i>Classification Table</i>		77.3%		73.4%
<i>Model Summary</i>				
<i>-2log likelihood</i>		89.407		119.24
<i>Cox & Snell R square</i>		.353		.179
<i>Nagelkerke R square</i>		.474		.239

* significant P < 0.05; **significant P < 0.01


Implications

- Job Characteristics and quality of work has effects on psychological distress experienced
- Factors of job characteristics creating distress are different for different population
 - Working poor vs. working non-poor
 - Domestic work force vs. immigrant work force
- Implications for social work practice
- Implications for policy

Limitations &

Future Research Directions

- Limitations:
 - Secondary data set
 - Small N
 - Variables included fit in with the domestic work force
 - Understand the meaning of good and bad jobs from an immigrants perspective
- Future Directions:
 - In-depth analysis to better understand the relationship between working conditions and psychological distress among immigrant workers
 - Determine how factors such as enculturation, work values enculturation, and language competency may contribute to distress



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Discussion Questions

Mamta Ojha – muojha2@uky.edu
Jennifer E. Swanberg -- jswanberg@uky.edu