National AgrAbility Project

Mental Health and Transnational Migration

Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Clinical Internal Medicine
Director, Center for Reducing Health Disparities
University of California, Davis

September 13, 2012
## Transnational Migration

### Immigrants Admitted from Top Countries of Birth: 1990-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Admission</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mexico*</td>
<td>4,298,000</td>
<td>9,659,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China, People's Republic*</td>
<td>921,000</td>
<td>1,448,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines*</td>
<td>913,000</td>
<td>1,429,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India*</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>1,305,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba*</td>
<td>737,000</td>
<td>920,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam*</td>
<td>543,000</td>
<td>819,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador*</td>
<td>465,000</td>
<td>869,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>568,000</td>
<td>757,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic*</td>
<td>348,000</td>
<td>653,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>745,000</td>
<td>713,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>712,000</td>
<td>636,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Union*</td>
<td>334,000</td>
<td>624,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>640,000</td>
<td>605,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Change from 1990 to 2000 is statistically significant
Adapted from US Census, 2002

Source: Suárez-Orozco, 2007
## Trends in Transnational Migration


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Oceania</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
<th>North America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>34,244,000</td>
<td>4,661,000</td>
<td>8,685,000</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>18,314,000</td>
<td>n.a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>19,767,316</td>
<td>4,350,403</td>
<td>4,979,037</td>
<td>363,819</td>
<td>104,145</td>
<td>8,407,837</td>
<td>753,917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>14,079,906</td>
<td>5,149,572</td>
<td>2,539,777</td>
<td>199,723</td>
<td>77,577</td>
<td>4,372,487</td>
<td>853,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9,619,302</td>
<td>5,740,891</td>
<td>824,887</td>
<td>80,143</td>
<td>41,258</td>
<td>1,803,970</td>
<td>812,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>9,738,091</td>
<td>7,256,311</td>
<td>490,996</td>
<td>35,355</td>
<td>34,730</td>
<td>908,309</td>
<td>952,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>14,204,149</td>
<td>11,784,010</td>
<td>275,665</td>
<td>18,326</td>
<td>17,343</td>
<td>791,840</td>
<td>1,310,369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>13,920,692</td>
<td>11,916,048</td>
<td>237,950</td>
<td>16,126</td>
<td>14,626</td>
<td>588,843</td>
<td>1,138,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>13,515,886</td>
<td>11,810,115</td>
<td>191,484</td>
<td>3,992</td>
<td>11,450</td>
<td>279,514</td>
<td>1,209,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>10,341,276</td>
<td>8,881,548</td>
<td>120,248</td>
<td>2,538</td>
<td>8,820</td>
<td>137,458</td>
<td>1,179,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>9,249,547</td>
<td>8,030,347</td>
<td>113,383</td>
<td>2,207</td>
<td>9,353</td>
<td>107,307</td>
<td>980,938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>6,679,943</td>
<td>5,751,823</td>
<td>107,630</td>
<td>2,204</td>
<td>6,859</td>
<td>90,073</td>
<td>717,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>5,567,229</td>
<td>4,941,049</td>
<td>64,565</td>
<td>2,657</td>
<td>4,028</td>
<td>57,871</td>
<td>493,467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>4,138,697</td>
<td>3,807,062</td>
<td>36,796</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>2,140</td>
<td>38,315</td>
<td>249,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>2,244,602</td>
<td>2,031,867</td>
<td>1,135</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>20,773</td>
<td>147,711</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The sum of the regions for a particular year will not equal the total. Totals include significant numbers of immigrants for whom no region of birth was reported.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, February 22nd, 2005.

Source: http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0778579.html
Any systematic attempt to examine worldwide immigration dynamics has to look at the U.S. experience – and Latinos are at the center of that experience.

Any systematic attempt to examine the Latino population of the U.S. has to have immigration at the center. In 2005, approximately 40 percent of all Latinos were foreign-born.

Any systematic attempt to examine the U.S., has to focus on Latinos; any systematic attempt to focus on Latin America has to focus on U.S. Latinos.

Source: Suárez-Orozco, 2007
Unique Features of Latino Immigration

- Sustained immigration throughout 20th century.
- Major impact of Latino immigration on the demography and the economy of the US.
- **Mexican prominence** in U.S. foreign-born population—12 million Mexican-born people:
  - 25% of the total U.S. Latino population of close to 50 million
  - 30% of the foreign-born U.S. population
  - 10% of the Mexican-born population on both sides of the Mexico-US border

Source: Grieco, 2010
75% of the U.S. Latino population are immigrants or children of immigrants.

47.5% are foreign born.

78% speak Spanish at home.

The U.S. Latino GDP at $600 billion dollars is now larger than the GDP of Spain and Mexico. By 2010 it will reach a trillion dollars.

Most of Latino population growth results from birth not immigration.
Looking at the Crystal Ball

Figure 13
Hispanic Population by Generation, Actual and Projected:
1960–2050
(% in each generation)

Source: Pew Research Center, 2008
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Populations

- Three million workers earn their living through migrant and seasonal farm labor, traveling the nation to support an agricultural industry.

- 96% migrant and seasonal farmworkers are foreign-born.

- 70% permanently reside in the United States.

- They travel frequently between states for their employment.

- They face significant language barriers—about 9 in 10 say they read and speak little or no English.

- They are predominantly male (88%), over half are married (52%), and over four in ten have children (44%).

Source: Rosenbaum & Shin, April 2005; Kaiser Family Foundation
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Populations

Figure 1

Migrant Farmworkers: Median Annual Income

- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers: $8,260
- U.S. Workers: $42,000

Source: National Agricultural Workers Survey, 2000

Source: Rosenbaum & Shin, April 2005; Kaiser Family Foundation
In 2000, only 20% of migrant and seasonal farmworkers reported using any healthcare services in the preceding two years.

Source: Rosenbaum & Shin, April 2005; Kaiser Family Foundation
Figure 1.4 The vicious cycle of poverty and mental disorders

Poverty
Economic deprivation
Low education
Unemployment

Mental and behavioural disorders
Higher prevalence
Lack of care
More severe course

Economic impact
Increased health expenditure
Loss of job
Reduced productivity

The World Health Report 2001
Mental Health: New Understanding, New Hope
Mental disorders:

- Are among **the most prevalent** classes of chronic diseases in the general population.
- Co-exist within themselves, with substance use disorders, and with many medical conditions.
- Typically have **much earlier ages of onset** than other chronic diseases.
Mental disorders:

- Only a minority with mental health needs receive treatment in the preceding year.
- Are among the most disabling of all chronic diseases.
Among the top ten main causes of disability, five are mental disorders:

- major depression
- schizophrenia
- bipolar disorders
- alcohol use
- obsessive-compulsive disorders

All five mental disorders appear by age 24!
MAPSS

Mexican American Prevalence and Services Survey (MAPSS)

NIMH: 1RO1 MH51192-01

P.I. William A. Vega, Ph.D.
Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey

On-Site P.I. Sergio A. Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., Ph.D.
University of California, Davis
Lifetime Prevalence of CIDI Disorders in MAPSS, Mexico City, and NCS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>MAPSS</th>
<th>Native-born</th>
<th>México City</th>
<th>NCS Hispanic</th>
<th>NCS Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vega, Kolody, Aguilar-Gaxiola et al., Archives of General Psychiatry, 1998
Lifetime Prevalence of CIDI Disorders in MAPSS, México City, and NCS

- Any Mood Disorder
- Any Anxiety Disorder
- Any SAD

Vega, Kolody, Aguilar-Gaxiola et al., Archives of General Psychiatry, 1998
NLAAS Lifetime Prevalence of Psychiatric Disorders*

- **For lifetime disorder:**
  - Whites: 43.2%
  - Latinos: 29.7%

- **Differences by Latino sub-ethnic group:**
  - Puerto Ricans: 37.4%
  - Mexicans: 29.5%
  - Cubans: 28.2%
  - Other Latinos: 27.0%

- **Differences by Latinos and nativity:**
  - US-born: 37.1%
  - Immigrants: 24.9%

* Adjusted for age and sex

Source: Alegria et al., 2008; Cook, 2009
### NLAAS Lifetime Prevalence of MDE and Substance Abuse for Latinos by Immigrant Status*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>Cuban</th>
<th>Mexican</th>
<th>Other Latino</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>US-Born</strong></td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Immigrant</strong></td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>Cuban</th>
<th>Mexican</th>
<th>Other Latino</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>US-Born</strong></td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Immigrant</strong></td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Adjusted for age, sex, education & income

Source: Alegria et al., 2008; Cook, 2009
Beyond Nativity

- Past studies are not consistent regarding risk of psychopathology for U.S. Latinos by nativity

- Possibly due to differences across immigrants in:
  - age of arrival to the U.S.
  - length of residence in the U.S.
  - birth-cohort differences

- Current studies are looking at age of arrival, time in the U.S., and cohort effects on the risk of onset of psychiatric disorders

Source: Alegria et al., 2008; Cook, 2009
RATES OF SERVICE UTILIZATION

- 37.5% of U.S. born received care
- 15.4% of immigrants received care
- 9% of migrant agricultural workers received care
Lack of Engagement in Behavioral Healthcare

- Latinos are more likely than Non-Hispanic Whites to terminate treatment prematurely, with as many as 60–75% of Latinos dropping out after just one session.

- Only 57.1% of respondents in treatment in the NLAAS say they completed the treatment.

- Mode number of visits is 1 and median is 3 to both psychiatrists and psychologists.

Source: Alegria, 2007; McCabe, 2002
The Good News

- Latinos, despite low income and many risk factors, are a very healthy population.

- Many Latino immigrants come to the US with better health status than would be expected given their SES.

- Cultural norms are protective health factors.

- Latinos have very durable, transnational, family and social networks, and use these for meeting instrumental and emotional needs very effectively.

- Healthy habits seem to contribute to good health outcomes.

- Need to reinforce these behaviors (la cultura cura).