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Living And Thriving In The Land Of Milk And Honey: Religion And The Success Of Mexican Immigrants To The United States

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LIVING AND THRIVING IN THE LAND OF MILK AND HONEY: RELIGION AND THE SUCCESS OF MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of religion in promoting the success of Mexican immigrants, as measured by typical U.S. standards of success, including income, education, assets (such as homeownership), and health, including access to health insurance, controlling for age, education, gender, and ability to speak English. These measures are analyzed against various indicators of religiosity. The hypothesis driving the research is: religiosity increases an immigrant's success in the United States. This hypothesis was informed by social capital theory, and a distinction is made between bridging and bonding forms of social capital. The results show only a very weak correlation between religion and success, as measured by the data. Also, immigrants attending churches where Spanish is spoken, and those with mainly Mexican immigrant populations are less likely to enjoy success, implying that bonding forms of social capital actually work against them.

This work is dedicated to my dad, Jim Gutierrez, who has been dedicated to his family for longer than I have been alive. You have encouraged me, been proud of me, and made it possible for me to spend so much time figuring out what I wanted to do when I grew up—your work ethic coupled with your devotion to those you love make you a Man among men, and an all around excellent human being. I'm so blessed and lucky to call you my Daddy.

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I realize that this thesis is small, but it represents my entry into the world of academic publishing, and there are several people in my personal life who must be thanked for helping me to get to this place:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

United States immigration policy has always behaved like a pendulum (Hines 2002), where support and legislation have shifted with social and economic factors. At various times in our history, different minority groups have been identified somewhere on the continuum between either enthusiastically-welcomed guest workers, or demonized intruders taking resources away from deserving citizens. As history unfolds, pro- or anti- immigration attitudes are formed, and these opinions shape public policy.

The United States and Mexico have a unique relationship in that the border between the two nations is not a natural one—there is no ocean to cross, and that border has changed shape and moved farther south as recently as the mid-1850s. As some residents in the U.S. southwest who can trace their roots back before this time are fond of saying, their people never crossed the border to enter this country—the border crossed them. Also, unlike with Canada, the United States has a history of conflict with Mexico, and a much higher level of economic development (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2003). These facts add to the complexity of the issue of Mexican immigration into the United States, and creates a feeling of conflict here—U.S. citizens feel that their jobs and culture are threatened, as increasing numbers of Mexicans migrate here and stay.

The events of 9/11 sparked a nativist energy in the United States, where residents, regardless of nationality or legal status, grieved together, wore flag buttons and proclaimed that “we are all Americans.” Five years later, media reports were decidedly less receptive to “foreigners.” Across the country, citizens and immigrants

protested HR4437, a bill that would have made it a felony to cross into the U.S. without the proper documents. Non-U.S. flags were flown at these protests, the Mexican flag in particular, which added fuel to a different kind of nativist sentiment, one that found Mexicans on the outside looking in, regardless of their legal status (Acuna 2007).

As it stands now, U.S. Mexican immigration policy is a volatile issue, one that politicians have to use their most advanced diplomatic skills to address, particularly as, with every Census, the Mexican American population multiplies faster than all other groups, and as Mexican immigrants are increasingly being used as a scapegoat for societal ills. This population is over-represented at the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum, and it is difficult for the group as a whole to have access to resources that can help them to advance out of their current marginal position (and this does not only include recent immigrants).

For all of these reasons, it is critical for social researchers to examine this growing segment of our society. One important question we must answer is: what factors make it possible for some Mexican immigrants to achieve success, while others continue to flounder in an ethnic and economic underclass? This research attempts to contribute in a small way toward finding an answer to that complicated, multifaceted question.

Success in the United States is typically measured in terms of dollars, as well as the luxuries these dollars can pay for, such as property and prominence (“the person who dies with the most toys wins”). Those who are able to obtain resources necessary to increase economic wealth (such as advanced education, high status employment, the “right” spouse or acquaintances) are considered to be more successful than those at the

bottom of the socioeconomic spectrum. Immigrants who excel and are able to make positive contributions are not considered threats in the way that poor immigrants are often perceived to be. The United States is a capitalist entity, and so we reward and respect those who embrace capitalist ideals and "succeed" on those terms.

While many factors are clearly involved in allowing some to succeed and others to fail (the most obvious being access to resources), this paper examines the potential importance of religion in helping Mexican immigrants achieve what is lovingly referred to as "the American dream."

Religion was chosen for this investigation for a number of reasons. There is a theoretical basis for the choice: social capital theory suggests that, especially in the absence of financial assets and the connections such luxuries are likely to buy, having someone in your corner (social capital) can increase your productivity and achievement. It cannot be debated that a strong church "family" is a powerful example of social capital. Also, because immigration has become a dangerous, and sometimes deadly proposition for some would-be border crossers, immigration has become a social justice issue. Churches are often credited with helping bring about the Civil Rights Movement, and have banded together to promote or reject legislation even in recent years—stem cell research and gay marriage[1] are two examples of modern issues that have sparked the activist interests of religious groups.

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[1] Churches that consider it part of their mission to "protect the unborn" might consider stem cell research a social justice issue. With regard to gay marriage, however, many activist churches position themselves in favor or tradition over promotion of equal rights to homosexuals.

Another reason why religion was chosen for this research has to do with the Judeo-Christian sentiment embraced in this nation: while scholars for generations have been predicting the increasing secularization of U.S. society and the eminent death of religion (see the work of Rodney Starks and William Simms Bainbridge for the opposing view), even mainstream authors write bestsellers about this "Christian nation," and the powerful and growing "Religious Right." Whether or not we are becoming more secular, religion remains a divisive issue in the United States (even without reference to the current "War on Terror" fueled anti-Muslim atmosphere). In the Old Testament, God leads the Israelites to the "promised land," a "land flowing with milk and honey."[2] Many immigrants think of this country as that land.

Given this sentiment, does the embracing of Judeo-Christian values make it more likely that eager new immigrants will be allowed to eat and drink from this pool of plenty? If so, then Mexican immigrants should be at a distinct advantage, as most enter this country with mainstream Christian beliefs in tow. In contrast, it would seem likely that immigrants who adhere to "anti-Christian" faiths (Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindis, and especially Muslims) would be less likely to experience success, given that they would have to cross the additional hurdle of religious bigotry in addition to any other barriers to economic and social "assimilation."

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[2] And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey: unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.--Exodus 3: 8 (KJV)

The dependent variable in this study is success, as measured by several indicators, including income, homeownership, business and transportation ownership, access to health insurance and perceived health. The independent variable is religiosity, as measured by frequency of church attendance, self-identification as a member of a congregation, and presence of religious icons in the home.

The following research is exploratory in nature. It attempts to discover whether there is a correlation between religiosity and success in the Mexican immigrant population of the United States, as well as to determine the strength of that relationship. Additionally, several control variables are utilized, including education, sex, English fluency, and age, to paint an even clearer description of the factors dividing immigrants who win the struggle for success in this country and those who do not. The main hypothesis driving the research is: religiosity increases an immigrant's success in the United States.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

A Brief History of Mexican Immigration to the United States

Mexican immigrants represent an extremely marginalized sector of U.S. society, and those who are here illegally are even more likely to experience isolation and personal struggle. Members of this group tend to be over-represented in low wage jobs and poor neighborhoods with low quality educational opportunities (Catanzarite and Aguilera 2002; Cobb-Clark and Kossoudjii 1999). Undocumented Latinos face further isolation because of the constant risk of apprehension, severely limiting their job opportunities regardless of ability or experience level (Cobb-Clark and Kossoudjii 1999); this population also often struggles with lower educational attainment than other groups (Baker 1997) and a far lower level of English proficiency (Catanzarite and Aguilera 2002).

Prior to the 19th Century, there were no legal restrictions placed on immigrating to the United States (Massey, Durand, and Malone 2003). For several decades, the United States has invited foreign nationals to fill jobs that are not being covered by citizens; this country has actively recruited immigrants to work during labor shortages, with specific ethnicities being targeting at different times throughout history. Mexicans were recruited during World Wars I and II, and at times when the economy was particularly booming (Daniels 2004).

During times of economic downturn, efforts were made to return these immigrants to their home countries (Daniels 2004). After 1920, the public began to feel

threatened by the increasing influx of foreign born residents, demanding that restrictions be placed on immigration (Sanders 2006). Most of the fears associated with illegal immigration are economic in nature (Ender 2005), although sometimes the concern is about preserving U.S. culture (Sanders 2006). Mexican immigrants are less likely than other groups to assimilate to the level that other immigrants have (Mexican flags fly from balconies in neighborhoods with high immigrant populations, for example) a phenomenon that might frighten other groups, and their numbers are enough to seem like a threat. This has led to an increase in nativism and the motivation to drive out anything or any one who might compromise our fictionalized “melting pot” ideal.

Illegal immigration continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s, leaving politicians and citizens clamoring for immigration controls to halt the flow of undocumented workers (Helton 1988). People from various national origins have been allowed to enter the United States since the mid-1960s, but visa requests increasingly began to exceed U. S. limits, prompting an influx of undocumented residents and requests for more restrictive policies (Donato, Aguilera, and Wakabayashi 2005).

A wealth of literature exists on the concept of “minority threat,” where majority groups, fearful of a loss of power, institute racist or anti-minority policies in order to protect their social positions (Alba, Rumbaut, and Marotz 2005; Houvouras 2001). Those who feel threatened in this way are likely to perceive the existence of a much larger minority group population than actually exists (Alba, Rumbaut, and Marotz 2005). These individuals and groups are likely to fear minority groups and oppose affirmative action and lenient immigration policies (Alba, Rumbaut, and Marotz 2005; Hood III and Morris 1997; Hood III, Morris, and Shirkey 1997).

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA)

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) was first introduced in 1982 by Wyoming Senator Alan Simpson (Durand, Massey, and Parrado 1999), who referred to illegal aliens as “a demographic time bomb that threatens to harm American values, traditions, institutions and…our way of life” (Tobar 1988), along with colleague, Representative Peter Rodino of New Jersey (Durand, Massey, and Parrado 1999).

Then President Ronald Reagan was among the first to frame illegal immigration as a matter of national security, connecting undocumented workers with drug smuggling and criminal activity, and encouraging voters to demand and Congress to pass legislation to alleviate the situation (Durand, Massey, and Parrado 1999). Other politicians and pundits warned the public that illegal immigrants presented a drain on resources meant for taxpaying citizens, such as education, healthcare and public services (Durand, Massey, and Parrado 1999).

IRCA gave legal status to individuals who could demonstrate continuous U.S. residence for a certain period of time, and provided undocumented farm workers with temporary resident status if they could show 90 days of agricultural employment over the previous year (Sorensen and Bean 1994); this status could be converted to permanent legal status after one to two years of continuous U.S. residence (Orrenius and Zavodny 2003). Assistance grants totaling $4 billion were provided for services to immigrants seeking legal status (Meissner 2005). The main reason for including an

amnesty provision was to gain support of immigrant advocates, civil rights groups, and Latinos (Durand, Massey, and Parrado 1999).

IRCA also authorized a 50 percent increase in funding for Border Patrol, which added two million dollars worth of Border Patrol hours (Davila, Pagan, and Grau 1998). The purpose of this was to address public demands for a more secure border.

Finally, employers were required to provide documentation that they had seen proof that an individual had a legal right to work in the United States, or they could be subject to increasing penalties, including fines and imprisonment (Donato and Massey 1993).

One major unintended consequence of IRCA was a negative backlash against legal immigrants (Tobar 1988). More then 50 percent of amnesty recipients are reported to have immediately applied for family migration (Baker 1997). Because the increased numbers of legal immigrants led to an additional increase in immigration (Balistreri and Van Hook 2004), the public began to voice opposition to anyone who looked foreign, regardless of country of birth or legal status (Baker 1997). Legal U.S. workers from Mexico suffered an eight percent drop in wages after IRCA (Sorensen and Bean 1994), possibly because employers were afraid of accidentally hiring undocumented workers (Bansak 2005; Lowell, Teachman, and Jing 1995). Employers began to refuse employment to people based on whether they spoke with a Spanish accent or looked Latino (Tobar 1988).

One year after the legislation took effect, there were over 60 reported cases in New York alone of employers discriminating against people “just because they looked foreign” (Helton 1988). The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has

received more claims about unfavorable treatment of Latinos than other groups, but has experienced no statistically significant increase since the passing of IRCA (Bansak and Raphael 2001). Large-scale employers in areas with higher rates of Latino employment were more likely to know about IRCA, and were more likely to discriminate against Latino workers; smaller companies did not have the same experience (Lowell, Teachman, and Jing 1995).

Mexican Immigration Today

Since the 1990s, southern border enforcement in the United States has become increasingly militarized, opening the way for human smugglers, or *coyotes*, to charge up to $4000 per immigrant to aid in crossing (Hagan and Ebaugh 2003). Because the safer passages are heavily policed, immigrants cross in dangerous terrain which results in an estimated 300-400 deaths annually (Hagan 2006).

It is extremely difficult to know the actual number of undocumented Mexicans currently in the United States. The U.S. Census does not ask the legal status of their survey respondents, and illegal immigrants obviously try to remain hidden for fear of deportation. As the United States has more than quadrupled spending to combat illegal immigration over the last 15 years, increasingly higher numbers of Mexicans illegally enter this country every year (Cornelius 2005; Massey and Capoferro 2004). Various reports suggest that anywhere from 300,000 (Orrenius and Zavodny 2005) to 500,000 (Ruiz-Beltran and Kamau 2001) Mexicans successfully enter the United States illegally every year. Those who are apprehended in their attempt to cross (mostly, but not all, of

Mexican origin) number from as low as 1 million (Sapkota, Kohl III, Gilchrist, McAuliffe, Parks, England, Flood, Sewell, Perotta, Escobedo, Stern, Zane, and Knolte 2006) to over 1.5 million (Orrenius and Zavodny 2005). These numbers do not appear to account for repeat crossings, and, while it will likely be extremely difficult to achieve an accurate count, the literature would benefit from multiple attempts to do so. According to some estimates, 80 percent of undocumented immigrants are from Mexico (Massey and Capoferro 2004).

A growing fear among many U.S. citizens is that admitting so many Latinos into the country, including providing amnesty to those who are already here, puts us at risk of creating a powerful electorate who will vote against U.S. interests in favor of their own (Wood 1999). Also, with regard to economics, some estimates show that Mexican migrants send tens of billions of dollars per year to relatives in Mexico, in what are known as remittances (Boucher and Taylor 2007). Latinos are also less likely than other groups to show an interest in assimilating, and this interest in preserving the home culture is perceived as a threat to U.S. culture.

Anti-immigrant legislation reflects an increasing amount of hostility toward Latinos, regardless of their legal status or country of origin, centering around such issues as denying critical social services to those without proper documentation to the elimination of bilingual education for all immigrants (Aguirre and Saenz 2002; Baquedano-Lopez 2004).

The backlash against legal immigrants has caused naturalized citizens from Mexico and other countries to turn on those who did not follow U.S. law to get here. These individuals are likely to oppose amnesty programs currently being recommended.

One summed it up as follows: “I view illegal aliens as line-jumpers who respect neither the law nor other immigrants. By coming illegally, their very first act in this country was to break the law” (de Silva 2006).

Most United States citizens object to the idea of a national identification card, though this trend is starting to shift (Meissner 2005; Pagan 1998), and some studies find that a majority of Mexican Americans actually want such a card to be distributed. Researchers speculate that this difference of opinion might be because Mexican Americans are often assumed to be undocumented, and an identification card will give them more legitimacy as citizens and possibly prevent their jobs from going to undocumented workers (Binder, Polinard, and Wrinkle 1997). Native born U.S. citizens have also begun movements to severely limit immigration, and to change the constitution to disallow children of illegal immigrants from having automatic legal citizenship just by being born on this side of the border (Wood 1999).

It is clear that illegal immigration is a problem, and that the push and pull factors leading Mexicans to migrate to the United States in such enormous numbers represents a number of institutional failures on both sides of the border. Some analysts believe that, if Mexico’s Gross National Product were to increase by 10 percent, illegal immigration to the United States would drop by more than 10 percent, and legal immigration would slow by over six percent (Bratsbert 1995). There is much debate as to whether illegal workers threaten documented foreign workers and U.S. citizens—some estimates suggest that documented Mexican workers earn an average of $7.50 per hour compared with $5.70 for undocumented laborers (Aguilera and Massey 2003).

Those who see the issue as one of safety and security, in particular after 9/11, see a more limited legal immigration program and tighter border control as a way to protect against future terrorist attacks (Hines 2002; Rudolph 2003). There is increasing demand to help increase employer compliance (Binder, Polinard, and Wrinkle 1997) and to make it more difficult for undocumented workers to fake the necessary paperwork (Meissner 2005; Pagan 1998).

Perhaps one of the biggest consequences of current illegal immigration policy is the fact that anywhere from 200 to 400 would-be migrants die each year trying to cross the border into the United States (Cornelius 2005; Hagan and Ebaugh 2003; Sapkota et al. 2006). While the United States government blames *coyotes* for the increase in immigrant deaths, humanitarian activists attribute the human loss to the border policy which heavily monitors safe crossing points and virtually ignores the more treacherous ones, encouraging migrants to cross where extreme heat and lack of water put their lives in jeopardy (Hagan 2006). Citizen vigilante groups have also organized, in cohesion with the border patrol, to protect the border against the threat of illegal entry (Cornelius 2005).

Once immigrants obtain legal status, they move into a position where they can be more visible and, as such, they are able to participate in the political process, even if they cannot vote until they become naturalized citizens. Also, because the U.S. Constitution guarantees automatic citizenship to anyone who is born inside of our borders through the rule of *jus soli* (the right of the soil or the land), more and more Mexicans become voters (or potential voters) every day. Because of their numbers, it might be possible over time for Mexican immigrants to share in the development of

public policy (Barreto and Munoz 2003). For this reason, it is important that policy makers do not ignore immigrant groups. After Californians passed Proposition 187, Mexican immigrant communities mobilized, helping their undocumented counterparts change their legal status, and eventually voted out state legislators who had supported anti-immigrant policy (Alvarez and Butterfeld 2000).

Especially in light of the fact that Latinos (including Mexicans) are increasing in numbers at a rate faster than other racial and ethnic groups in the United States, it is useful for us to identify which members of this population are able to achieve the national definition of success. It is especially interesting and helpful to determine which tools and resources helped them meet the challenges of advancing up the socioeconomic ladder.

The Role of Religion in Immigration

While not much currently exists in the literature linking religion with long term achievement of Mexican immigrants, there is a great deal of work connecting religion with helping Mexicans make the dangerous pilgrimage across the border into the United States.

Despite the hostility toward illegal immigration by the general population, many churches have taken a position in favor of providing humanitarian, financial, psychological and spiritual aid to immigrants regardless of their legal status (Menjivar 2003; Vasquez and Williams 2005). Churches have also historically mobilized their

congregations in regard to human rights issues, the most obvious example being the role of the Black Churches in the Civil Rights Movement (Wuthnow 1989).

As Mexican immigration continues to add hundreds of thousands of new residents to the United States annually, various social institutions have responded by adding Spanish language facilities and services. Churches across the country have responded by incorporating Spanish language services, and even by opening parishes devoted exclusively to Latino members.

Many U.S. church congregations consist mainly of members of a particular ethnicity, and teach cultural preservation along with religious instruction (Ebaugh and Chafetz 1999). A great deal of literature exists analyzing immigrant churches in the Houston area as part of the “religion and the new immigrants of the United States project,” or RENIR (Ebaugh and Chafetz 1999; Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000; Hagan and Ebaugh 2003). In the Chicago area, the Catholic church, as of 2001, was holding mass in Spanish for 4,000 parishioners (Badillo 2004). Also in the Chicago area, the Inter-Faith Leadership Coalition, led by Latino Catholics, actively lobbies for social services and amnesty for undocumented workers (Badillo 2004). This may help new immigrants build social capital, improving their chances of long-term success. They also allow newcomers to use their home language while they begin the process of adapting to a new culture (Baquedano-Lopez 2004; Ebaugh and Chafetz 1999).

Other studies examine immigrant churches in San Francisco, at a church whose congregation is 90 percent Spanish-speaking migrants (Lorentzen and Mira 2005), churches in Doraville, Georgia, whose population is 30 percent Mexican (Marquardt 2005), Pentecostals in southern Texas (Ramirez 1999) and Mexican communities in

Southern California (Reese 2001).

Catholic clergy have made it their mission to provide humanitarian relief to migrants regardless of their legal status (Menjivar 2003; Vasquez and Williams 2005), equating migrants with Mary and Joseph in Egypt (Hagan 2006), and Abraham in his pilgrimage across the Egyptian desert (Levitt 2003). One particularly symbolic parallel they make is comparing the poverty and discrimination of Jesus with the plight of immigrants (Menjivar 2003).

The largest Mexican immigrant humanitarian efforts by the Catholic church are administered by the Scalabrini Fathers, also known as the missionaries of St. Charles (Badillo 2004), who actively support immigrants and lobby for humanitarian treatment of all people, regardless of legal status (Hagan 2006). The Scalabrini Fathers have as their sole mission the protection and assistance of migrants and their families, and can be found throughout Mexico and the United States, where they provide education, shelter and psychological support (Hagan 2006). They maintain a presence in 26 countries throughout the world (Badillo 2004), including two locations in southern Florida.[3]

Created in Italy in 1886 by Bishop John Baptiste Scalabrini, this congregation objects to unfair or unscrupulous treatment of emigrants and helps people locate themselves in the country of their choice, even if their relocation violates the laws of their chosen country (Hagan 2006).

[3] The Florida locations include the Misión Nuestra Señora de la Paz in Delray Beach and the Iglesia Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Immokalee.

Protestant clergy are often less likely to take an official stand on illegal immigration, yet still provide counseling and humanitarian aid to parishioners who are either attempting to migrate, or who have arrived in the United States without papers (Hagan 2006; Ramirez 1999). Many also encourage congregants to provide help to the needy, including new immigrants (Hirschman 2004). The missionary focus of Protestant churches also encourages congregants to welcome newcomers, including those of other ethnicities (Warner 1998; Yang and Ebaugh 2001). Evangelicals (Hirschman 2004) and other Protestant congregations learn Spanish and hold services in multiple languages in an effort to gain converts (Marquardt 2005; Stevens 2004).

The American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker organization, has taken an active role in protesting U.S. border enforcement policy, since the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (Hagan 2006). They were the first to sponsor a major study of deaths related to border crossing, which documented more than 1600 such occurrences between 1993 and 1997, often from hyperthermia, hypothermia, and dehydration (Eschbach, Rodriguez, Hernandez-Leon, and Bailey 1999). Currently, Quakers provide humanitarian aid to illegal immigrants at the border (Hagan 2006).

Many aspiring immigrants consult clergy in their country of origin for spiritual and financial advice and support on making the crossing to the United States (Hagan and Ebaugh 2003; Ramirez 1999). Protestant churches in Mexico and Central America, with the notable exception of Pentecostal or Evangelical denominations, do not generally assist their congregants in illegal migratory pursuits, though they do often provide counseling and spiritual advice to families considering emigration (Hagan 2006). One

Pentecostal religious leader in Guatemala estimated that 50 percent of aspiring migrants seek spiritual assistance before attempting the journey (Hagan and Ebaugh 2003).

Immigrants who enter the country illegally experience a tremendous amount of danger and fear, and even those who arrive with proper documentation might initially feel a lack of stability or control in a new place. Having an affiliation with a religious group might help ease feelings of loss of stability of place (Hagan and Ebaugh 2003). Youth experience unique stressors as a result of immigrating, and they, too, credit religion with easing the transition (Thompson and Gurney 2003).

When questioned, some immigrants report that their religious affiliation is critical to their survival in the United States. This was even true of respondents who did not consider themselves to be spiritual in nature; the implication here is that the institution of religion, with its social and emotional support, and their providing of specific resources for immigrants, is the major factor in the survival of these individuals (Menjivar 2003). Historically, religious institutions, namely schools, have helped immigrants to more quickly assimilate into U.S. culture than their non-affiliated peers. Areas with high concentrations of Spanish speakers experience only a marginal advance toward assimilation, in comparison with English speaking institutions (Alba 2005).

Research suggests that a main effect of religion is to allow immigrants to preserve their ethnic culture (Aranda 2008; Menjivar 2003). Perhaps the most important cultural tradition to be maintained is the veneration of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Mexican incarnation of the Virgin Mary (Baquedano-Lopez 2004), celebrated in feasts, festivals and masses on both sides of the border (Badillo 2004). The other critical

cultural link is the language spoken in church (Badillo 2004; Baquedano-Lopez 2004); one study refers to immigrant churches as “a home away from home,” where sharing spiritual lessons in their native tongue helps immigrants feel a sense of family, of belonging, in a new country (Warner 1997). Another shows that older Latino immigrants suffer less psychological distress if they participate in church activities (Aranda 2008).

Other important cultural rituals include preparing and consuming specific foods, which allows family and friends to strengthen their bonds with one another through celebration (Hirschman 2004); this also allows women the opportunity to teach their daughters important life skills (Ebaugh and Chafetz 1999). After immigrant children have grown and moved out of the neighborhood, they often return home every Sunday to have a meal with the family and attend services (Ebaugh, O'Brien, and Chafetz 2000). Some churches have introduced mariachi or other Spanish language music to the services, facilitating a spiritual connection transcending spoken language (Badillo 2004; Warner 1997). Some border churches participate in a ritual known as Posada of the Migrant, a roving pageant depicting the nativity story, which enables Mexican churches to share their faith and culture with their surrounding community (Hagan 2006).

In the spirit of attracting converts and welcoming newcomers, clergy often make an effort to include Mexican traditions into their services. Catholic priests, in response to an influx of Mexican immigrants in nontraditional immigration locations, such as the Southeast, have learned Spanish and immersed themselves in Mexican culture in an effort to make their new congregants feel welcome (Badillo 2004). In some English-speaking parishes in areas with immigrant populations, monolingual priests hold special

Spanish-language services, even if the only way to accomplish this is to struggle through reading prepared sermons and texts to patient parishioners (Baquedano-Lopez 2004).

There is evidence that many churches with ethnic majority congregations regularly reassess their efforts and change according to the specific needs of their immigrant populations (Menjivar 2003). One possibly over-ambitious case, a Lutheran church in Doraville, incorporated so much Catholic tradition, including displaying crucifixes and the stations of the cross, that the majority of congregants erroneously thought they had been attending a Catholic church and were shocked to learn otherwise (Marquardt 2005).

When Mexican and other Latin American parents bring their children to the United States, they are often disappointed with the differences in moral and ethical values compared with their homeland, and express fear that their children will be negatively influenced by U. S. culture (Allen 2006; Reese 2001). Their specific worries relate to “too much freedom,” such as parents allowing their children to disrespect their elders and choose “bad friends;” other concerns include U.S. sanctions against strict discipline, and crime-filled neighborhoods (Reese 2001). They rely on their religious participation to keep their children out of harm’s way (Reese 2001).

One study provides evidence that immigrant youth are equally afraid of their values being compromised by U.S. influence. Seventy-seven percent of Latino youth, ages 14 through 19, expressed the importance of God and religion in their lives. When asked about the role of religion in their lives, they discussed their faith and religious ritual participation, along with expressing the following: God protects them from evil,

provides them with a connection to their culture, equips them with guidelines for behavior, gives life meaning, increases their sense of worth, and is a trusted friend. Clearly, religious participation facilitates the process of immigration for teenagers (Thompson and Gurney 2003). This is particularly important given that U.S.-born Latino youth often embrace values that, if adopted by immigrant youth, may strain relationships between young people and their elders (Bankston III 2004).

Church members work together to make sure their children are not lost in a world of permissiveness (Reese 2001). Women dominate in religious education positions, such as teaching religion and language classes, giving them an important role in teaching ethnic values to their children (Ebaugh and Chafetz 1999). Fictive kin, or relatives not linked by blood or marriage, such as godparents, are also tasked with helping children maintain ethnic values and culture in their adopted home (Ebaugh and Curry 2000). While immigrant parents want their children to learn English, they worry that the loss of their native language will contribute to the loss of their ethnic culture; intergenerational conflict often revolves around this issue (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000; Reese 2001; Warner 1998).

Immigrants might seek to preserve their culture through religious involvement, but religion in this country also teaches them how to blend their particular beliefs with those of their new country of residence, resulting in a syncretism of sorts (Badillo 2004; Stevens 2004; Warner 1997; Yang and Ebaugh 2001). This effect is clearly evident in the area of gender roles. Several studies link religion with an improvement in the lives of female immigrants from countries which normally value men over women. Women who previously had been taught to maintain a subservient role in their homes, now find

themselves in lay leadership positions (Ebaugh and Chafetz 1999); they also gain valuable skills, which can convert to employment or other leadership opportunities (Lorentzen and Mira 2005). There is evidence that some congregations help women find strength enough to assert themselves in their relationships (Lorentzen and Mira 2005; Marquardt 2005) while also teaching men to treat their wives with respect (Marquardt 2005).

Other research has pointed to the assimilative efforts of churches to teach their congregants to be “exemplary immigrants,” in order to encourage citizens and leaders to approve of their presence and, by extension, to support more liberal immigration policy (Lorentzen and Mira 2005).

Some immigrants, even after they achieve citizenship, maintain communication with their congregations in Mexico (Hagan and Ebaugh 2003; Levitt 2003), or even return to them, partially to solidify their cultural preservation (Badillo 2004). Upwardly mobile Mexicans also make financial contributions to their ethnic churches on both sides of the border long after they have moved away from home (Ebaugh, O'Brien, and Chafetz 2000). An ethnic Pentecostal church in San Francisco sends money and other support when necessary to churches in Mexico and Central America, and engages in clergy swaps, to reinforce their “religious kinship” across borders (Lorentzen and Mira 2005).

One of the most important roles immigrant churches play in the lives of their congregants is to encourage civic participation (Hagan 2006; Marquardt 2005; Menjivar 2003; Ramirez 1999; Vasquez and Williams 2005). One study found a congregation discussing which politicians would best support immigration issues and voting together

on behalf of the majority of congregants who could not vote (Lorentzen and Mira 2005). Participation in church-related committees, fundraisers and other events, also helps immigrants develop public communication and financial management confidence and skills (Marquardt 2005). The question remains whether this motivation translates into the acquisition of a green card and, ultimately, active voting; future research is critical in this area, as Mexican immigrants could become a major force in this country should they become voters.

Despite some evidence that churches provide positive support to immigrants, other evidence suggests that some immigrants face additional challenges to achievement in this country specifically because of their religious traditions. Members of groups considered "religiously other" often find that it takes longer or is extremely difficult to thrive let alone assimilate in a culture that embraces one type of religion; the Ku Klux Klan exerted powerful pressure against incoming Catholics and Jews in the early 1900s, for example (Alba 2005). Today, particularly after 9/11, practicing Muslims are often viewed with distain and suspicion.

On the other hand, it is entirely possible that Mexican immigrants who are religious will be less successful as a result of their church affiliation. As Marx famously touted, religion can be considered the "opiate for the masses," lulling them into accepting their fate with the promise of a happier eternity. There is evidence in the literature that religion can have a negative impact on poor believers, by allowing members to remain isolated from outside resources that might help members succeed (Beyerlein and Hipp 2006).

It is clear that religion plays a role in the immigration experience for many Mexican immigrants. It is upon this evidence that the hypothesis for this research is based. Also, given that churches take great efforts to recruit and keep immigrant members, it seems logical that the faithful will earn social capital through religious participation, and that this valuable resource will help them to succeed above those who do not participate in the religious institution.

Social Capital and Social Justice

Social capital refers to social networks, and the connections and resources a person is able to accumulate by virtue of participating in a group. This type of capital can be accumulated regardless of income, socioeconomic status or education, and, as such, can sometimes be the easiest and most valuable resource acquired by low status groups. For Mexican immigrants, there is evidence that, the higher the amount of social capital, the greater the likelihood of undocumented immigration. Specifically, those would-be immigrants who have friends or family who have already successfully crossed into the United States (whether or not they have maintained a permanent residence here) are more likely to be successful in their own attempt (Massey and Espinosa 1997).

Existing research utilizing the Mexican Migration Project (MMP) uses the following as indicators of social capital: prior U.S. experience by respondents' parent or sibling and the proportion of people in the respondents' home community aged 15 or over who have been to the United States (Singer and Massey 1998). One study using

MMP data links social capital and increased wages for Mexican immigrants, and argues that social capital has a stronger impact for undocumented immigrants than it does for those who are here legally (Aguilera and Massey 2003).

Several studies examine the role of social capital, or resources built through relationships, in illegal immigration. In order to successfully cross to the United States, undocumented immigrants utilize all available social capital to help them avoid capture. They seek advice or direct guidance from friends and family who have already successfully crossed (Singer and Massey 1998).

There is evidence that, for those who enter the United States illegally, having family members or friends who navigated the clandestine border crossing path first are more likely to be successful on their first attempt, and overall undergo less apprehensions than those without this valuable social capital (Singer and Massey 1998). The likelihood of successfully entering the United States illegally particularly increases if a parent has already gained access (Singer and Massey 1998).

Once here, immigrants send money, known as “remittances,” to their loved ones who remain in Mexico (Badillo 2004), serving as economic capital for future migrants and solidifying the existence of social capital for the next wage of border crossers.

Ebaugh and Curry (2000) examined the role of a vital religious source of social capital, fictive kin, in the lives of immigrants. In Catholicism, fictive kin consist of godparents, witnesses at confirmations, and wedding witnesses. All of these linkages are accompanied by lifelong social and financial obligations; it is not uncommon for fictive kin who have already immigrated to finance the migration of their younger “relatives” (Ebaugh and Curry 2000).

Fictive kin also help ease the transition of new immigrants as they adjust to life in the United States (Ebaugh and Curry 2000). For non-Catholics, church members can act as fictive kin for immigrants who might be away from their extended blood relatives for the first time in their lives (Hirschman 2004). In some communities, especially those with newer Mexican populations, churches provide a haven to immigrants in the midst of racism and discrimination (Marquardt 2005; Menjivar 2003).

While it may seem as though any social capital would be beneficial and positive, there is also evidence in the literature, specifically with regard to bonding versus bridging social capital, that show that this is not always the case (Putnam 1995). Bridging social capital connects diverse groups to one another and benefits all involved. Bonding social capital, such as that formed by those who unite around a particular belief or ideology, is more insular, and has been documented to produce negative effects on members (Beyerlein and Hipp 2006).

Religious congregations, particularly those that allow immigrants to maintain their foreign language and culture, are more likely to provide their members with bonding social capital (Wuthnow 2002), and, as such, may not prove to be helpful in building connections with better employment, homeownership, or other indicators of success (Lockhart 2005). This is particularly the case in ethnic churches located in low income neighborhoods (Wuthnow 2002).

Researchers who sought to illustrate potential negative effects of social capital found that mainline churches in poor neighborhoods are often associated with bridging capital and a decrease in crime, while more insular churches (evangelical protestants, in this case) build bonding capital only and are associated with higher rates of crime

(Beyerlein and Hipp 2006).

A few studies have demonstrated that the potential negative effects of religion on social capital do not always manifest themselves. One study found that church based employment programs were able to help low income people build bridging social capital as long as they successfully recruited the participation of volunteers from different races and socioeconomic statuses (Lockhart 2005). Another shows that black organizations formed in minority communities can successfully build bridging capital and promote civic participation among a traditionally underrepresented population (Mc Kenzie 2008).

The other area where churches can and have provided direct advocacy for immigrants is when their situation becomes related to social justice, much the way the demanded fair treatment of African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement (Wuthnow 1989).

Religious workers, both Catholic and Protestant, have called for better treatment of would-be border crossers (Hagan 2006). The Catholic church, in particular, has taken the official stance that migration is a fundamental right, and that host countries must take into consideration migrant safety and dignity regardless of whether they are entering a country according to official rules (Hagan 2006).

Existing Research on Immigrant Success

Immigrant success, and success in the U.S. in general, are usually measured in terms of economics (Allen 2006), including income, advanced education and homeownership.

One study shows that ethnic retention, or refusing to assimilate into the dominant U.S. culture, actually correlates with increased academic success in immigrant and black populations (Akiba 2007). Another shows that immigrants tend to consider themselves successful in the United States in comparison with their status in their home county, even though Mexican immigrants are currently at risk of forming a poor underclass on this side of the border (Allen 2006).

There doesn't appear to be much data available about the success immigrants achieve specifically as a result of their spirituality and church affiliation. Demographics of Mexican congregations are rather sparse in the literature beyond ethnicity and a basic overview of employment sectors represented. In Doraville, few members had completed high school, and seven percent earned less than $20,000 per year (Marquardt 2005). The Southern California study included a population comprised mainly of unskilled workers, and was 90 percent low income (Reese 2001). This creates the question of whether church membership converts to U.S.-defined measures of success, including homeownership and economic prosperity. It is also possible that lack of prosperity among immigrants is a multidimensional problem, and that the lack of education, racism, and other factors are beyond the scope of what churches can provide or help with.

The current research adds a valuable piece of information to the existing literature, and especially to those who aspire to risk their lives to cross into the "promised land" of the United States. If immigrants who participate in religious groups before and after their arrival in this country end up achieving more indicators of success than those who do not, this information should be valuable to Mexican nationals on both

sides of the border. Such a finding also provides a foundation for future study with regard to what aspects of religiosity are responsible for that success. A positive correlation between religiosity and immigrant success would be valuable information for would-be Mexican immigrants and Mexicans currently living in the United States. An absence of a correlation, or a negative one, may mean that churches who advocate for immigrants may have to reevaluate their efforts, or it may more likely mean that advocacy alone is not enough.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Data and Measures

This analysis uses data from the latest New Immigrant Survey (NIS)[4], a multi-cohort prospective-retrospective longitudinal panel study of new legal immigrants to the United States, collected by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago (NORC). This study is based on a nationally representative sample of records compiled by using the administrative records of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and includes only individuals who are newly admitted to permanent residence in the U.S. Also recorded are the number of times an individual and each family member have gone back and forth from Mexico to the United States, including unsuccessful attempts. Though it does not specifically ask respondents to report how much time they spent here illegally, it does ask about each trip, including what type of documentation was held at the time of entry.

The sampling frame included 12,500 adults and 1,250 children, of which 8,573 adults and 810 children completed the survey, or 68.6 percent and 64.8 percent respectively. These include interviews with immigrants from 38 countries, including Mexico and other Latin American countries. This particular research is limited to the

[4] Jasso, Guillermina, Douglas S. Massey, Mark R. Rosenzweig and James P. Smith. "The New Immigrant Survey 2003 Round 1 (NIS-2003-1) Public Release Data." March 2006. Retrieved October 26, 2007. Funded by NIH HD33843, NSF, USCIS, ASPE & Pew. http://nis.princeton.edu.

1158 Mexican respondents in the first full cohort survey. This study does not utilize the child data.

The first full cohort (NIS-2003) sampled immigrants in the period May through November 2003. The baseline survey was conducted from June 2003 to June 2004, and is the dataset used for this research. The sampling frame consists of immigrants arriving in the United States with immigrant documents acquired abroad, as well as "adjustee immigrants," those who are already in the United States with a temporary nonimmigrant visa (or, in some cases, illegally) and adjusted to lawful permanent residence. Though the sample consists mainly of newly legal residents, many respondents and their families spent varying degrees of time as undocumented residents, and have, arguably reached a certain baseline level of success by simply becoming lawful permanent U.S. residents. Possibly to protect the identity of those in the sample, information about whether or when respondents received green cards is not accessible in the data set.

Respondents were interviewed in the language of their choice; 26 percent of the surveys were conducted in Spanish. Longitudinal results are not yet available, so this research represents a snapshot of their degree of economic success in the U.S. in the first year following their achievement of "green card" or permanent legal residency status.

The hypothesis driving the research is: religiosity increases an immigrant's success in the United States, that is, respondents who self identify as religious are more likely to be successful than those who have little or no religiosity (as measured by questions asked in the NIS; see below).

The strategy for analysis is detailed below, but a brief explanation is required as to why certain variables are operationalized the way they are. The first part of the analysis includes the examination of simple cross tabs between various measures of religiosity and various measures of success. Also, because linear regression is used later in the analysis, this section includes an explanation of how certain variables are collapsed into binary categories. In each of these situations, the categories have been recoded from (1) [affirmative response] and (2) [negative response] to (1) [affirmative] and (0) [negative]. Following this strategy with the variables used in this analysis does not significantly affect sample size; in most cases, less than five values need to be recoded. Descriptive statistics for all of the variables are compiled in Table 1, located at the beginning of Chapter 4.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in this research are operational indicators of success, as measured by the following: income, homeownership, business ownership, ownership of transportation, access to healthcare and health. For all of the variables, responses of "don't know" or "refuse to answer" are recoded as missing and eliminated from the analysis.

Income from employment is measured in several separate categories in the NIS. The major categories used in this analysis include how much the respondent earned in the past 12 months from wages and salary, professional practice or trade, self-employment, and tips. Responses were recorded in real dollars, and for this analysis,

they are collapsed into smaller categories to create cross tabs in order to make the responses more meaningful. Later, they are used at the interval level, as originally obtained, for the regression phase of the analysis.

For wages and salary, the categories are collapsed as follows: (1) under $5,000; (2) $5,000 - $9,999; (3) $10,000 - $19,999; (4) $20,000 - $29,999; (5) $30,000 - $39,999; and (6) $40,000 or greater. For self-employment income, the categories include: (1) up to $20,000; (2) $21,000 - $50,000; and (3) over $50,000. There were only 20 respondents in the professional practice or trade category and 36 respondents in the tips category, so these variables are not included in the analysis. This method was used instead of combining all types of income into one variable to record whether there was a difference between respondents who are self-employed and those who are wage earners.

Homeownership is another measure of economic success. This is measured through a question of whether respondents own or are buying their home. For the regression, this indicator is recoded to (1) homeowner; and (0) non-homeowner.

Ownership of a business and ownership of transportation comprise the next set of dependent variables. Respondents were asked whether they own a business or a farm. Responses were recoded to (1) yes and (0) no. For transportation, respondents were asked if they own any form of transportation, and results are recoded here to (1) yes and (0) no.

Health is included as an indicator of success; the reasoning is that people who are successful are more likely to have access to resources to keep them healthy, from nutritious food to a clean living environment (this is heavily supported in the literature).

Respondents were asked to compare their health at the time of the interview with their health before they entered the United States. Response categories included (1) worse, (2) the same, and (3) better. For the regression, this indicator is recoded to (1) better; and (0) not better.

The final dependent variable is health insurance, chosen because health insurance is often unaffordable and unavailable for those at the bottom of the socioeconomic spectrum; most bearers of private insurance have their insurance costs paid as a fringe benefit by their employers. Respondents were asked if they are currently covered by any health insurance, with responses recoded for this analysis to (1) yes; and (0) no.

Education, which might be considered an indicator of success, is not included as a dependent variable, because can be debatable whether education indicates success or whether it allows a person to succeed in the first place. For this reason, it is included as a control variable, as explained below. Whether religiosity is a catalyst for education is a topic that can be explored in future research.

Independent Variables

The independent variable is religiosity, operationalized with the following indicators: identification with a specific religious tradition, frequency of church attendance prior to entry into the United States, self identification as a member of a congregation (as well as family participation in that congregation), and presence of religious icons in the home. Also included as independent variables are some specifics

about the current congregation of the respondent, including what language the services are conducted in, how many other members are from Mexico, and which ones speak Spanish. Again, for all of the variables, responses of “don’t know” or “refuse to answer” are recoded as missing and eliminated from the analysis.

The NIS asked respondents whether they were members of a particular religious tradition, and provided a list of common religions, as well as a provision for the respondent to select their own unlisted religion. Respondents in the Mexico subset answered in only five categories: (1) Catholic; (2) Orthodox Protestant; (3) Protestant; (6) Buddhist; and (8) None. Since only one person responded in the Buddhist category, this response is recoded as missing and eliminated from the analysis, and since only 35 respondents identified as Orthodox Protestants, these values are added to the Protestant category. The remaining variables are recoded as follows: (1) Catholic; (2) Protestant; and (3) no religion.

In order to determine whether religious affiliation is part of one’s family value structure, this study includes answers to the question of whether the respondent was raised in the currently identified religious tradition and whether the respondent’s children are being raised in the same. These responses are recoded to (1) yes and (0) no.

The next independent variable is useful to determine the importance of religion in the life of the respondent before immigration. This includes the answers to the question, “before you entered the United States, how often did you attend religious services in your country of last foreign residence?” recoded to include the following categories: (1) never; (2) yearly to several times a year; (3) monthly to almost weekly; and (4) weekly; and (5) more than once a week.

Instead of asking the same question with regard to church attendance after immigration, respondents were asked the following: “Since becoming a permanent resident, how many times have you attended religious services?” Instead of asking respondents how often they attend annually, responses are actual numbers of times since immigrating. Because it is not possible to know from the existing data set how long ago a respondent achieved legal residency, this variable is not included as an indicator in this analysis.

Another indicator of religiosity is whether or not the respondent considers himself or herself to be the member of a specific religious congregation in the United States. These are recoded to (1) yes and (0) no. Immigrants who affiliate themselves with a specific congregation are likely to enjoy the benefits of social capital in their adopted country. Respondents were also asked how often their spouses and children attend this same congregation with the respondent. These responses are recoded as (1) always; (2) often; (3) sometimes; and (4) never.

The next question asked, “Do you have a shrine, altar, or religious icons, paintings, or statues in your home?” recoded to (1) yes and (0) no. This indicator is selected because it provides information about whether religion is important enough to the respondents that it goes beyond public church attendance and into the privacy of their homes.

Finally, three additional independent variables, though not specifically indicators of religiosity, provide information about potential social capital through religion. The first question asks respondents what percentage of adult members of the congregation that they attend most often come from the respondent’s country of origin. The second

question asks respondents what percentage of adult members in the congregation that they attend most often speaks the respondent's native language. Response categories for these two questions are collapsed into the following: (1) none; (2) 1 to 20%; (3) 21 to 40%; (4) 41 to 60%; (5) 61 to 80%; (6) 81 to 99%; and (7) 100%.

The third question asks what in language or languages services are conducted in the congregation respondent attends most often. Respondents in the Mexican sub-sample mentioned (1) English; (2) Spanish; and (7) Chinese. Only one person selected Chinese, so this response is recoded as missing and eliminated from the analysis.

Control Variables

The purpose of this study is to determine whether religiosity helps Mexican immigrants succeed in the United States. It is important to include control variables in this analysis in order provide information on other variables that might promote success for Mexican immigrants. This also facilitates the isolation of the effects of the independent variable, religiosity, on the dependent variable, success, net of other correlated factors. Secondary hypotheses exist for each of the control variables, predicting their impact on immigrant success.

The first control variable is sex, whether the respondent is male or female, coded as (1) male and (0) female for this analysis. The prediction is that Mexican males are more likely than their counterpart females to be given opportunities for success in the United States. Female Mexican immigrants are also more likely to work in unpaid positions, and are less likely to be the heads of household in this population.

It seems clear that immigrants will be provided with more opportunities in the U.S. if they are able to speak the native language. It is predicted that English fluency will be the major factor in the success of all newcomers. For this reason, how well respondents can speak English is included as a control variable, recoded as follows: (1) not at all; (2) not well; and (3) well to very well (the original coding was in the opposite direction and included four categories). The accompanying hypothesis is that the greater a respondent's ability to speak English, the more successful he or she will be.

The older a person is, the more likely they are to have had opportunities to advance in a new country, particularly if they have been here for many years. For this reason, age is included as a control variable, recorded in this data set by asking respondents to list what year they were born. This variable is collapsed into the following categories: (1) before 1940; (2) 1940 –1949; (3) 1950 – 1959; (4) 1960 – 1969; (5) 1970 – 1979; and (6) 1980 to present. It is hypothesized that the older respondents are, the more successful they will be.

Education, as mentioned above, is possibly a predictor of success more than an indicator of it. For this reason, education is included as a control variable, measured in the NIS by asking respondents to list the highest degree they have earned, from elementary school completion through the achievement of advanced degrees. There were two responses of "unspecified," so these items are recoded as missing and eliminated from the analysis. The remaining data is collapsed into larger, more meaningful categories, and recoded as follows: (1) less than high school; (2) high school; (3) college degree; and (4) graduate degree or higher. The final hypothesis is that, the more educated a person is, the more success that person will enjoy.

Strategy for Analysis

This study begins with a cross tabulation of each dependent variable against each independent variable in order to determine whether or not there is a zero-order relationship between each indicator of religiosity and each indicator of success. The Pearson Chi-Square ($\chi 2$) is used to determine the statistical significance of the results. Table 2 provides a list of the significant pairings, and the relevant cross tabulations are included in Appendix A.

After determining whether there are any statistically significant relationships among the indicators, the next step is to determine the strength and direction of that association. This is done by constructing a correlation matrix for each relevant pairing (each of the associations listed on Table 2), and computing a Pearson's correlation coefficient (*r*) for each one. The results of this analysis are compiled in Table 3, and the relevant correlation matrixes are included in Appendix B. The closer the r value is to 1 or negative 1, the stronger the relationship between the two indicators.

Finally, each dependent variable that has been part of a statistically significant correlation pairing, regardless of the strength of that relationship, is analyzed in a multiple linear regression model. Multiple linear regression is conducted first using only the main dependent and independent variables, and then is repeated, controlling for the effects of sex, education, English fluency, and education.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1 exhibits the descriptive statistics for the dependent, independent, and control variables. Approximately 59% of the sample is female. The mean for age is 3.90, which translates to an average of early to mid 50s at the time of the interview. Respondents report not to speak English well, and the mean for education is the completion of high school with little or no college.

With regard to religiosity, a strong majority refer to themselves as Catholic, a religion almost all of them report both being raised in, and raising their children in. Less than 25% consider themselves to be current members of a congregation, however. Before coming to the United States, church attendance was weekly on average. Families are likely to attend services with the respondent. Slightly over half of them report having religious relics in their homes, such as a saint statue or a shrine. When they do attend, the majority go to services that are conducted in Spanish. With regard to church composition, between 50 and 75% of congregants are from Mexico, and nearly all of them speak Spanish. In terms of religiosity, this population, though identifying themselves with religion in general, is not necessarily actively religious.

Respondents tend to be renters as opposed to homeowners, and less than a quarter of them own their own businesses. Slightly more than 50% own their own transportation, yet only 26% have access to private health insurance. Since coming to the U.S., the average respondent reports better or equal health. Average income tends to be in the $20,000 range, whether from wages and salary, or from self-employment.

This is extremely low, compared with the national average of $48,200 for 2005 – 2006, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Dependent, Independent, and Control Variables

VARIABLES	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Homeownership (1=yes)	55%	.80
Business or Farm Ownership	3%	.16
Health before Arrival in U.S. (1=healthier)	23%	.42
Access to Health Insurance (1=yes)	26%	.44
Own Transportation (1=yes)	51%	.50
Income from Wages	$23,022.11	24,761.89
Income from Self Employment	$20,661.32	34,337.89
Religious Affiliation	1.19	.49
Church Attendance before Immigration	3.41	1.05
Raised in Same Religion (1=yes)	99%	.10
Member of Congregation	24%	.42
Spouse Attends with Respondent	1.84	1.03
Children Attend with Respondent	1.67	.91
Raising Children in Same Religion (1=yes)	96%	.20
Religious Relics in Home (1=yes)	55%	.50
Religious Services in Spanish	1.9	.30
Congregants from Mexico	3.66	1.23
Congregants who Speak Spanish	4.21	1.18
Sex (1=Male)	39% male	.49
Education	2.10	.76
English Fluency	2.08	.83
Year Born	3.90	1.50

Overall, this group does not represent a successful population, according to the indicators established for this study.

Table 2 provides a summary of the crosstabulation matrixes that produce statistically significant results. Most of the independent variables in some way have an effect on at least one of dependent variables. Altogether 11 independent measures of religiosity were cross-tabbed with nine measures of success, creating a total of 99 crosstabs. Of these, 15 were found to contain statistically significant differences. This exceeds the number of “significant” results. The crosstabs showing statistically significant differences are located in Appendix A.

Table 2: Summary of Statistically Significant Crosstabulations

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	DEPENDENT VARIABLE	$\chi 2$	ASYMP.SIG. (2-SIDED)
Religious Affiliation	Health Insurance	12.86	.002*
Religious Affiliation	Self Employ. Income	16.86	.002*
Attend. in Mexico	Own Home	15.03	.005*
Congregation Affiliation	Health Insurance	6.58	.01*
Raising Children in Rel.	Self Employ. Income	6.41	.041*
Children attend w/Resp.	Wages and Salary	27.78	.023*
Religious Relics	Health before U.S.	13.17	.001**
Religious Relics	Transportation	24.45	.000**
Spanish Service	Health Insurance	23.64	.000**
Spanish Service	Transportation	5.99	.05*
Spanish Service	Wages and Salary	11.71	.039*
Immigrant Congregation	Own Home	9.65	.047*
Immigrant Congregation	Health Insurance	10.77	.029*
Immigrant Congregation	Transportation	12.04	.017*
Immigrant Congregation	Wages and Salary	35.21	.019*

*p<.05; **p<.005

Crosstabulation Findings

Slightly more Catholics than Protestants are likely to earn over $50,000 per year through self employment, and members of both types of religions are more likely than those who do not affiliate themselves with a religious group to be self employed in the first place. There appears to be a curvilinear relationship between religion and access to private health insurance. In the sample, 46.7% of non-religious respondents have health insurance, compared with 25.4% of Catholics and 19.0% of Protestants (Table A1).

One interesting finding in support of the hypothesis of religion influencing success is that attending religious services in Mexico prior to immigration is a predictor of homeownership. Of respondents who attended church weekly, 52.6% (N=226) are homeowners, as well as 72.9% (N=43) of those who attended more than once a week. In contrast, only 45.7% (N=32) of those who reported never attending church are homeowners (Table A3).

Respondents who affiliate themselves with a specific congregation are more likely to have private health insurance than those who do not (Table A4). Those who are raising their children in their own favored religious tradition are more likely to earn a significant amount of money from self-employment (Table A5).

Some of the most interesting findings are with regard to having religious relics in the home: respondents who report having religious items are slightly more likely to believe that their health is better now that they are in the United States than it was before they immigrated (Table A7). They are also more likely to own their own transportation—59.3% who have religious items have transportation compared with

42.3% who do not have these items in their homes (Table A8). Of all of the religiosity indicators in this analysis, this one is the least attached to social capital, yet it appears to be more indicative of success than most of the others.

There is a negative linear correlation between attending a service conducted in Spanish and having access to private health insurance. While 48.6% of those who attend English language congregations have health insurance, only 22.6% of their Spanish language counterparts do (Table A9). The same negative correlation exists for ownership of transportation (Table A10) as well as wages and salary (Table A11).

A curvilinear relationship exists between having a congregation composed of fellow Mexican immigrants and owning a home—of those who attend churches without members of their ethnic cohort, 66.7% own homes, while 33.3% do not; at the other end of the spectrum, 64.6% of those attending all-Mexican churches own homes, while 35.4% do not (Table A12). Of those who attend mixed congregations, half to less than half are homeowners. Those attending all-immigrant congregations are slightly less likely to have health insurance (Table A13). They also tend to have lower wages and salaries (Table A15). These findings are consistent with the idea that bonding social capital, such as the one surely obtained in immigrant churches, might have an insulating effect and actually limit participants' chances of obtaining success.

Bivariate Correlation Findings

The Pearson's R correlations of the variables are presented in Table 2. The higher the absolute value of *r*, the stronger the correlation. It should be noted that the

correlation between most of these variables is quite weak, as is shown by the small *r* values, and provide little, if any, support for the hypotheses. The relevant correlation matrixes are reported in Appendix B.

Table 3: Summary of Correlations between Table 2 Variables

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	DEPENDENT VARIABLE	PEARSON R CORRELATION	SIG. (2-TAILED)
Religious Affiliation	Health Insurance	.054	.082
Religious Affiliation	Self Employ. Income	.215	.078
Attend. in Mexico	Own Home	.059	.088
Congregation Affiliation	Health Insurance	.079	.01*
Raising Children in Rel.	Self Employ. Income	-.190	.182
Children attend w/Resp.	Wages and Salary	.091	.273
Religious Relics	Health before U.S.	.066	.03*
Religious Relics	Transportation	.17	.000**
Spanish Service	Health Insurance	-.178	.000**
Spanish Service	Transportation	-.094	.024*
Spanish Service	Wages and Salary	-.154	.01*
Immigrant Congregation	Own Home	.12	.009*
Immigrant Congregation	Health Insurance	-.055	.181
Immigrant Congregation	Transportation	-.031	.498
Immigrant Congregation	Wages and Salary	-.060	.371

*p<.05; **p<.005

The two religiosity indicators for which there is a consistent statistically significant correlation with the dependent variables include some of the ones mentioned above as having surprising, contradictory results, including having religious items in the home and attending services that are conducted in Spanish. Having religious items very slightly increases a person's likelihood of owning transportation and having improved health compared to health before entering the U.S. This finding might be the result of a spurious correlation, where successful people are more likely to have the space and resources to acquire and store religious items. More likely, however, it is evidence that religious participation has a positive impact on immigrant success, given the amount of faith that Catholics, especially, attach to religious relics.

Attending a Spanish-speaking congregation has an inverse correlation with regard to success, and results in decreased wages and salary, less access to personal transportation and private health insurance. One possibility for this finding is that, by attending a church where English is not spoken, the immigrant is being denied the opportunity to use a non-threatening environment to practice assimilation, and loses the chance to gain confidence in speaking the language that will open up opportunities for advancement. Again, this finding gives support to bonding social capital isolating effect.

All of the above findings have been weak, at best, and most are not statistically significant. The next step in the data analysis, especially because most of the statistical methods used thus far have yielded weak or nonexistent correlations, is to create multivariate regression models, if only to determine whether the control variables have a meaningful impact on immigrant success.

Multiple Regression Findings

The results of the various multiple linear regression analyses are compiled in Appendix C.

Table C1 exhibits the results of the multiple linear regression models on access to health insurance. Model I explains three percent of the variance between those who have private health insurance and those who do not. Respondents who have religious relics in their homes are slightly more likely to have private health insurance, as are those who affiliate with a specific congregation. Attendance at religious services conducted in Spanish and to a lesser degree being a part of a largely immigrant congregation, reduce the likelihood of having private health insurance. These findings support the isolating affects of bonding social capital; by attending religious services conducted only in Spanish, immigrants, even if they are building social capital, are ultimately denying themselves the chance to build real-world skills and networks that they will need for financial advancement.

Model II controls for sex, education, English fluency, and age, and renders all effects of religiosity insignificant. Of these controls, only age affects access to health insurance, as younger respondents are slightly more likely to have private insurance. English fluency, sex, and education do not show a statistically significant effect. This complete model explains 6.6% of the variance between insurance owners.

With regard to self-perception of improved health after immigration, members of immigrant congregations are slightly less likely to feel that their health is better (see

Table C2). In contrast, those with religious relics in their homes are more likely to report better health. These results are significant at the .05 level. Despite these results, the entire model explains only 1.4% of the variance in perceptions of improved health between respondents.

Model II in this case reinforces the small significance of having religious relics in the home. It also shows a small statistically significant positive contribution of being able to speak English. Perception of success is relative, and perhaps members of immigrant populations, particularly because they are less likely to enjoy other types of success, do not feel improved health, or don't have access to health services to make themselves feel better, and are simply reporting this accordingly. Those with religious relics in the home may have more resources to improve their health, or they may simply be more optimistic, and report feeling better accordingly.

Transportation ownership is the independent variable in Table C3. Respondents who affiliate themselves with a particular congregation are more likely to have their own transportation. This could be a reflection of social capital in action, as the question does not ask how the vehicle was acquired, and may, in some cases, be the result of the use of a social network. Those who have religious relics in their homes are more likely to own transportation, a finding which remains significant even when controlling for non-religious influences. Model I explains 11.2% of the variance between vehicle owners and those who do not have their own transportation.

Controlling for sex, education, English fluency, and age brings the explanation of variance up to 20.6% in Model II. Ownership of religious relics is still important. English fluency and age make a person more likely to own transportation, while education is not

statistically significant. The older a person is, the more time he or she has had to acquire assets, and it has already been established that ability to speak English opens the door for better earning potential, which promotes the acquisition of such things as cars. Males are also more likely than females to own their own cars.

Table C4 exhibits the regression results for the dependent variable of homeownership. Affiliation with a congregation slightly improves the chances of owning a home. This might provide some support for social capital theory, in that those who own homes may have acquired them in part by using their social networks to find financing and a location that they could qualify for. Unsurprisingly, when controls are introduced, younger respondents are less likely to be homeowners.

Religiosity, as measured by the remaining significant indicators, does not have a positive measurable affect on wages and salary (see table C5, Model I). However, controlling for sex, education, English fluency, and age (Model II) results in the explanation of 13.9% of the variance in this category. Over all, religiosity, as measured here, accounts for very little in terms of helping a person achieve enough earnings to qualify as a success in this capitalist society. English fluency is far more important, and age (and the experience that accompanies age, including the development of social capital over time) unsurprisingly provides the immigrant with more in terms of financial success. Males are also earn higher wages, on average, than females do.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

Particularly given the evidence in the literature that churches recruit Spanish speaking congregants, help people cross the border illegally, and involve themselves in social justice issues, it is surprising that there is not a stronger statistical link between religiosity and immigrant success. Even more surprising, perhaps, is the weakness of correlation between the control variables and success.

Due to the weakness of correlations between the chosen indicators of religiosity and success in this research, the null for the research question cannot be decisively rejected. While the findings do not define religion as a major factor in explaining variation in immigrant success, they do present a foundation upon which other research can be built. That religiosity is not a strong predictor of success gives strength to the idea, contrary to sensationalist media reports, that this country is becoming more secular, despite the strength of the “Religious Right.”

It is not surprising that simply identifying oneself as a Catholic (or a Protestant) has little to no bearing on success, particularly when respondents report that they were raised in this religious tradition and plan to continue this trend with their own offspring. It is particularly telling that only a quarter of respondents refer to themselves as members of a particular congregation while the great majority of the sample self identifies as having a specific religion. There is a saying that converts make the best missionaries, meaning that those who choose a religion are far more likely to devote themselves to getting the most out of (and putting the most into) the practice of religion. Clearly, the

most active devotees will be more likely to benefit from social capital, as well as from any other resources a particular institution may provide.

The finding that active churchgoers are more likely to be homeowners lends support to the social capital theory explanation of why religiosity should promote success. Many ethnic churches provide financial planning and technical assistance to their congregants, and some even specifically teach homeownership classes, especially in low-income communities. This might also explain why individuals who are members of a specific congregation may be more likely to have private health insurance.

Members of immigrant congregations are also more likely to be homeowners. This also lends support for social capital theory, as explained above. When newcomers to the country affiliate themselves with individuals who have already successfully navigated the immigration process, they link themselves with a wealth of resources, if that consists of nothing more than emotional support. Still, even though homeownership is higher among members of immigrant congregations, it isn't much higher.

Attending a church where the services are conducted in Spanish appears to have a slightly negative affect on success. This might be because, instead of putting themselves into challenging situations where they will have to quickly adopt the dominant language and culture of the United States, these churches are allowing their parishioners to remain isolated. Attendance at Spanish language churches might prolong the time an immigrant cannot easily obtain quality employment, reducing the chances of achieving other indicators of success. All of this is evidence of the isolating affect of bonding versus bridging social capital.

One thing that is not addressed in this study is the fact that, given the push factors that convinced the respondents to leave Mexico in the first place, the success indicators might not be indicative of what this population might at this point in life refer to as success. The fact that they have achieved legal permanent residence is, in itself, an achievement. Also, the respondents in this study might be, through the sending of remittances, helping their loved ones still on the other side of the border to achieve a higher level of success than they themselves enjoy.

Though the effects were small, it is possible to reject the null with regard to English fluency, as this factor is indicative of higher wages and other aspects of success. If more Mexican immigrants have the ability to speak English well, there will be less of a need to conduct church services in Spanish, which would likely reduce the negative effect of attending an immigrant congregation and allow the members to provide one another with valuable social and human capital instead.

Surprisingly, it is necessary to accept the null with regard to both education and sex, as these did not have a significant effect on immigrant success. Age is only marginally related, so the null cannot fully be rejected in this case.

This study presents interesting implications for churches, particularly the ones who help immigrants come to this country, and those who concern themselves with social justice. If it is a valuable part of a church's mission to help someone immigrate, is it any less important to make sure they don't starve once they get here? Particularly given that churches recruit this population and even conduct services in Spanish, *phonetically if necessary*, it is in everyone's best interest to make sure that this population eventually move out of the underclass status they might have entered with.

Finally, the data set used in this analysis is the first complete part of what will eventually be a longitudinal study. The respondents have only recently achieved permanent residential status, which, as mentioned above, can be considered an additional indicator of success. When future data is analyzed, the results might show a stronger relationship between religiosity and success, especially because it will be possible to measure how much closer each respondent has come to achieving the U.S. definition of success.

Weaknesses

One potential weakness of this research is the fact that it mainly examines legal immigrants. Respondents report a wide range of experience with illegal border crossing, but ultimately this sample consists of people who are not living in fear of deportation. It seems logical that, the more marginalized a population, the more they will benefit from any resources they might have access to, including social and economic capital.

Also, because the respondents in this data set are not undocumented immigrants, they are not necessarily the population that churches would consider to be in need of social justice advocacy. Not being a homeowner or a business owner, for example, does not mean that a person is in any sort of danger, physically or emotionally.

Survey research is expensive and time consuming, so it is customary for researchers to share data sets. This often includes using data to answer questions that are marginally connected, or not connected at all, with the original intent of the

research. In this case, the analysis is limited by the questions asked about religion, and the measured indicators of success. It is particularly disappointing that the single question about current church attendance (how many times total, as opposed to how many times a week/month/year) was subjective enough to merit its exclusion.

That there was not enough evidence to reject the null implies that religiosity may have some impact on immigrant success; more specific questions about religiosity—in particular about specific beliefs and worship practices—may provide stronger support for the hypothesis, and perhaps offer some explanatory data with regard to why religion is important for Mexican immigrants regardless of legal status.

Either way, there is some subjectivity involved in defining success, as well as religiosity. Had the indicators of religiosity been stronger in this case, the results would have been more useful.

Suggestions for Further Research

While it is difficult to interview undocumented residents in any sort of representative way, it is important to learn all we can about this population, particularly how they can (and do) positively contribute to U.S. society. This might involve survey research, using alternative sampling techniques, such as snowball sampling, in order to get enough respondents for the information to be at all meaningful. It will more likely have to involve ethnographic studies, which will allow researchers to probe into areas that a survey developer might not think of given the unique situation Mexican immigrants are in at this time in U.S. history.

Future research might specifically ask members of this population for their definitions of success, and should examine how they are able to achieve this ideal, as well as identify reasons that might keep them from succeeding. This should also include specific questions about family members on both sides of the border.

Churches are one suggested location for ethnographic study, particularly congregations that have a history of helping immigrants cross the border, as well as those who have involved themselves in social justice issues, such as those who have helped residents of poor neighborhoods to mobilize against NIMBY issues.

Another interesting way to test the hypotheses in this research is to interview and organize case studies around Mexican immigrants who have undoubtedly achieved success. This might include people in the public eye, but could also examine the lives of doctors, lawyers, college professors, and others who have received advanced degrees and are working in their chosen fields.

Summary

Mexican immigrants to the United States do not need to cross oceans to get here. Our history with Mexico is complex, and our future with her citizens is clear only in the fact that more and more of these individuals and families will become permanent residents in the coming years. Instead of fighting to build fences, and rather than drafting ballot proposals to make their lives more difficult once they get here (regardless of their legal status), it would be better to devote our energies to learning how we all can succeed together.

Because we live together, and because Mexican Americans represent one of the fastest growing population groups in the United States, it is particularly important that we learn to live together and that we do what we can to facilitate the success of new immigrants. Instead of complaining that immigrants present a dangerous drain on public resources, we must first learn whether or not this is actually true, while at the same time we must learn what factors promote their success—every immigrant who is able to become a positively contributing member of U.S. society improves our society in their own way.

This research has, in a small way, provided information about one aspect of new immigrant life, and connected an important social institution, religion, with the question of what makes some immigrants succeed over others. Is the United States truly a land "flowing with milk and honey?" Certainly not for everyone who comes here, but it does have something that makes people risk their lives and break laws to get here; despite our current immigration policy, people are willing to make that pilgrimage every day. There is evidence in the literature that religion has a positive impact on helping people get to this country in the first place. Once they are here, religiosity has a small but significant impact on immigrant success, both a positive one and, in the case of foreign language only congregations, a potential negative one. This is important to know, and future research can build on this foundation.

APPENDIX A: CROSSTABULATIONS

APPENDIX A: CROSSTABULATIONS

Table 4 (A1): Health Insurance by Religious Affiliation (N=1037)

	Religious Affiliation		
Health Insurance	Catholic	Protestant	No Religion
No Insurance	74.6% (662)	81.0% (85)	53.3% (24)
Insurance	25.4% (225)	19.0% (20)	46.7% (21)

$\chi 2=12.860$; df=2 ; $p<.005$

Table 5 (A2): Self-Employment by Religious Affiliation (N=68)

	Religious Affiliation		
Self Employment	Catholic	Protestant	No Religion
Up to $20,000	83.0% (44)	91.7% (11)	33.3% (1)
$21,001 - $50,000	11.3% (6)	8.3% (1)	0% (0)
Greater than $50,000	5.7% (3)	0% (0)	66.7% (2)

$\chi 2=16.855$; df=4 ; p<.005

Table 6 (A3): Homeownership by Church Attendance in Mexico (N=826)

	Church Attendance				
Homeownership	Never	Yearly-several times/yr.	Monthly – Nearly wkly.	Weekly	Over once/wk.
Don't Own Home	54.3% (38)	48.4% (45)	37.9% (66)	47.4% (204)	27.1% (16)
Own Home	45.7% (32)	51.6% (48)	62.1% (108)	52.6% (226)	72.9% (43)

$\chi 2=15.026$; df=4; p<.005

Table 7 (A4): Health Insurance by Congregation Affiliation (N=1067)

	Congregation Affiliation	
Health Insurance	Not Member	Member
No Insurance	76.3%	68.3%
	(622)	(172)
Insurance	23.7%	31.7%
	(193)	(80)

$\chi 2=6.576$; df=1; $p<.05$

Table 8 (A5): Self-Employment Income by Raising Children in Religion (N=51)

	Raising Children in Religion	
Self Employment Income	Not Religious	Religious
Up to $20,000	0%	82.0%
	(0)	(41)
$20,000 to $50,000	100.0%	12.0%
	(1)	(6)
Greater than $50,000	0%	6.0%
	(0)	(3)

$\chi 2=6.411$; df=2; $p<.05$

Table 9 (A6): Wages and Salary by Children Attend with Respondent (N=147)

	Children Attend with Respondent			
Wages and Salary	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
Under $5,000	25.8% (25)	19.0% (4)	26.9% (7)	33.3% (1)
$5,000 - $9,999	10.3% (10)	4.8% (1)	7.7% (2)	0% (0)
$10,000 - $19,999	20.6% (20)	47.6% (10)	15.4% (4)	33.3% (1)
$20,000 - $29,999	26.8% (26)	23.8% (5)	11.5% (3)	0% (0)
$30,000 - $39,999	7.2% (7)	0% (0)	3.8% (1)	33.3% (1)
$40,000 or more	9.3% (9)	4.8% (1)	34.6% (9)	0% (0)

$\chi 2=27.708$; df=15; $p<.05$

Table 10 (A7): Health Before U.S. by Religious Relics (N=1067)

	Religious Relics	
Health Before U.S.	No Items	Items
Not Better	79.9%	74.2%
	(381)	(438)
Better	20.1%	25.8%
	(96)	(152)

$\chi 2$= 4.698; df=1 ; p<.05

Table 11 (A8): Transportation by Religious Relics (N=847)

	Religious Relics	
Transportation	No Items	Items
No Transportation	57.7%	40.7%
	(229)	(183)
Transportation	42.3%	59.3%
	(168)	(267)

$\chi 2$=24.446; df=1; p<.001

Table 12 (A9): Health Insurance by Language of Service (N=735)

	Language of Service	
Health Insurance	English	Spanish
No Insurance	51.4%	77.4%
	(37)	(513)
Insurance	48.6%	22.6%
	(35)	(150)

$\chi 2=23.286$; df=1; $p<.001$

Table 13 (A10): Transportation by Language of Service (N=574)

	Language of Service	
Health Insurance	English	Spanish
No Transportation	33.3%	49.4%
	(18)	(257)
Own Transportation	66.7%	50.6%
	(36)	(263)

$\chi 2=5.075$; df=1; $p<.05$

Table 14 (A11): Wages and Salary by Language of Service (N=277)

	Language of Service	
Wages and Salary	English	Spanish
Under $5,000	23.4% (8)	30.9% (75)
$5,000 - $9,999	5.9% (2)	12.8% (31)
$10,000 - $19,999	14.7% (5)	22.2% (54)
$20,000 - $29,999	23.5% (8)	18.5% (45)
$30,000 - $39,999	5.9% (2)	7.0% (17)
$40,000 or more	26.5% (9)	8.6% (21)

$\chi 2=11.709$; df=5; $p<.05$

Table 15 (A12): Homeownership by Immigrant Congregation (N=468)

	Immigrant Congregation				
Homeownership	None	< 50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
Don't Own Home	33.3%	50.0%	54.3%	38.6%	41.7%
	(2)	(56)	(25)	(54)	(58)
Own Home	66.7%	50.0%	45.7%	61.4%	64.6%
	(6)	(112)	(46)	(140)	(164)

$\chi 2=9.645$; df=4; $p<.05$

Table 16 (A13): Health Insurance by Immigrant Congregation (N=597)

	Immigrant Congregation				
Health Insurance	None	< 50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
No Insurance	72.7%	72.6%	81.1%	68.0%	81.5%
	(8)	(114)	(43)	(123)	(159)
Insurance	27.3%	27.4%	18.9%	32.0%	18.5%
	(3)	(43)	(10)	(58)	(36)

$\chi 2=10.766$; df=4; $p<.05$

Table 17 (A14): Transportation by Immigrant Congregation (N=471)

	Immigrant Congregation				
Health Insurance	None	< 50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
No Transportation	33.3% (2)	46.9% (53)	56.5% (26)	35.9% (51)	53.7% (88)
Transportation	66.7% (4)	53.1% (60)	43.5% (20)	64.1% (91)	46.3% (76)

$\chi 2=12.040$; df=4; $p<.05$

Table 18 (A15): Wages and Salary by Immigrant Congregation (N=226)

	Immigrant Congregation				
Health Insurance	None	< 50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
Under $5,000	25.0%	18.6%	50.0%	34.7%	20.9%
	(1)	(11)	(12)	(25)	(14)
$5,000 - $9,999	0%	16.9%	8.3%	8.3%	16.4%
	(0)	(10)	(2)	(6)	(11)
$10,000 - $19,999	25.0%	20.3%	12.5%	16.7%	26.9%
	(1)	(12)	(3)	(12)	(18)
$20,000 - $29,999	0%	28.8%	8.3%	18.1%	20.9%
	(0)	(17)	(2)	(13)	(14)
$30,000 - $39,999	0%	0%	4.2%	9.7%	10.4%
	(0)	(0)	(1)	(7)	(7)
$40,000 or more	50.0%	15.3%	16.7%	12.5%	4.5%
	(4)	(59)	(24)	(72)	(67)

χ^2=35.209; df=; p<.05

APPENDIX B: BIVARIATE CORRELATION TABLES

APPENDIX B: BICARIATE CORRELATION TABLES

Table 19 (B1): Correlation Matrix for Health Insurance and Congregational Affiliation

	Health Insurance	Congregational Affiliation
Health Insurance	--	.079*
Congregational Affiliation	.079*	--

*p<.05

Table 20 (B2): Correlation Matrix for Health before U.S. and Religious Relics

	Health before U.S.	Religious Relics
Health before U.S.	--	.066*
Religious Relics	.066*	--

*p<.05

Table 21 (B3): Correlation Matrix for Transportation and Religious Relics

	Transportation	Religious Relics
Transportation	170**	--
Religious Relics	--	170**

*p<.01

Table 22 (B4): Correlation Matrix for Health Insurance and Language of Service

	Health Insurance	Language of Service
Health Insurance	-.178**	--
Language of Service	--	-.178**

*p<.01

Table 23 (B5): Correlation Matrix for Transportation and Language of Service

	Transportation	Language of Service
Transportation	-.094*	--
Language of Service	--	-.094*

*p<.05

Table 24 (B6): Correlation Matrix for Wages and Salary and Language of Service

	Wages and Salary	Language of Service
Wages and Salary	-.154*	--
Language of Service	--	-.154*

*p<.05

Table 25 (B7): Correlation Matrix for Homeownership and Immigrant Congregation

	Homeownership	Immigrant Congregation
Homeownership	.120*	--
Immigrant Congregation	--	.120*

*p<.01

APPENDIX C: MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION TABLES

APPENDIX C: MILTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION TABLES

Table 26 (C1): Multiple Linear Regression Results: Effects of Religiosity and Control Variables on Access to Health Insurance

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	Model I	Model II
Congregation Affiliation	.080/.088* (.038)	.072/.079 (.038)
Religious Relics	.093/.104* (.038)	.075/.085* (.038)
Spanish Service	-.183/-.125** (.064)	-.145/-.098* (.066)
Immigrant Congregation	-.008/-.021** (.016)	-.001/-.004 (.016)
Sex (1=Male)		.027/.030 (.038)
Degree Earned (1=Yes)		.018/.021 (.040)
English Fluency		-.043/-.075 (.027)
Age (Year Born)		-.024/.054** (.012)
Constant	.369	.230
N	567	567
R^2	.033	.066

Note: Cell entries are given as unstandardized regression coefficient/standardized (beta) coefficient with the standard error given in parentheses. (*p<.05; **p<.01)

Table 27 (C2): Multiple Linear Regression Results: Effects of Religiosity and Control Variables on Improvement of Health after Immigration to United States

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	Model I	Model II
Congregation Affiliation	-.018/-.020 (.037)	.021/-.025 (.037)
Religious Relics	.082/.097* (.037)	.082/.097* (.037)
Spanish Service	.053/.038 (.062)	.080/.057 (.065)
Immigrant Congregation	-.030/-.089* (.016)	-.030/-.088 (.016)
Sex (1=Male)		-.001/-.001 (.037)
Degree Earned (1=Yes)		-.053/-.064 (.039)
English Fluency		-.067/-.123* (.027)
Age (Year Born)		-.011/-.034 (.015)
Constant	.248	.455
N	566	566
R^2	.014	.026

Note: Cell entries are given as unstandardized regression coefficient/standardized (beta) coefficient with the standard error given in parentheses. (*p<.05; **p<.01)

Table 28 (C3): Multiple Linear Regression Results: Effects of Religiosity and Control Variables on Ownership of Transportation Device

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	Model I	Model II
Congregation Affiliation	.102/.098* (.048)	.084/.080 (.046)
Religious Relics	.332/.332** (.047)	.300/.300** (.045)
Spanish Service	-.119/-.070 (.036)	-.043/-.025 (.080)
Immigrant Congregation	-.028/-.067 (.020)	-.014/-.033 (.019)
Sex (1=Male)		.096/.094* (.031)
Degree Earned (1=Yes)		.057/.058 (.048)
English Fluency		-.066/-.104* (.033)
Age (Year Born)		.071/.199** (.017)
Constant	.544	.251
N	442	442
R^2	.112	.206

Note: Cell entries are given as unstandardized regression coefficient/standardized (beta) coefficient with the standard error given in parentheses. (*p<.05; **p<.01)

Table 29 (C4): Multiple Linear Regression Results: Effects of Religiosity and Control Variables on Homeownership

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	Model I	Model II
Congregation Affiliation	.080/.084 (.048)	.103/.109* (.048)
Religious Relics	-.011/-.013 (.047)	1.00E-005/.000 (.047)
Spanish Service	.006/.004 (.078)	-.035/-.023 (.081)
Immigrant Congregation	.035/.093 (.020)	.029/.077 (.020)
Sex (1=Male)		.086/.093 (.048)
Degree Earned (1=Yes)		-.038/-.042 (.051)
English Fluency		.040/-.069 (.035)
Age (Year Born)		-.039/-.121* (.018)
Constant	.557	.648
N	402	402
R^2	.013	.049

Note: Cell entries are given as unstandardized regression coefficient/standardized (beta) coefficient with the standard error given in parentheses. (*p<.05; **p<.01)

Table 30 (C5): Multiple Linear Regression Results: Effects of Religiosity and Control Variables on Wages and Salary

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	Model I	Model II
Congregation Affiliation	.181/.052 (.243)	.293/.084 (.233)
Religious Relics	-.003/-.001 (.242)	-.050/-.015 (.229)
Spanish Service	-.446/-.085 (.369)	-.247/-.047 (.362)
Immigrant Congregation	-.009/-.006 (.103)	.055/.039 (.098)
Sex (1=Male)		.775/.229** (.224)
Degree Earned (1=Yes)		-.184/-.054 (.238)
English Fluency		-.392/-.186* (.162)
Age (Year Born)		-.401/-.261** (.110)
Constant	3.358	5.247
N	219	219
R^2	.011	.139

Note: Cell entries are given as unstandardized regression coefficient/standardized (beta) coefficient with the standard error given in parentheses. (*p<.05; **p<.01)

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