PATHWAYS TO MOBILITY: Engaging Mexican American Youth through Photo-Mapping

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Mobility challenges and disparities\(^1\)
- Educational attainment\(^2,3\)
- Poverty rates\(^4\)
- Early childbearing & incarceration\(^5\)

Disproportion residence in disadvantaged neighborhoods\(^6,7,8\)
- Parental capital & legal status
- Racial & ethnic discrimination
- Structural racism (race-based residential segregation)
- Pre-existing networks/linkages
NEIGHBORHOODS MATTER FOR MOBILITY

- Why neighborhoods matter
  - Social ties, social networks, & social capital
  - Norms, collective efficacy, & shared expectations
  - Access to youth-serving organizations & good schools
  - Land use patterns/transportation routes/locations of resources

- Youth outcomes linked to neighborhoods\(^9,10,11\)
  - Delinquency; violence; depression; high-risk behavior
  - Early childbearing & gang activity

- Neighborhoods are NOT destiny
  - Even in “disadvantaged” areas youth can thrive\(^12,13\)
PATHWAYS TO MOBILITY STUDY

- **Research Aims**
  - Engage youth in photographing & mapping their neighborhoods
  - Identify neighborhood barriers & facilitators to mobility
  - Support youth capacity for leadership & policy advocacy

- **Participants**
  - 25 2\textsuperscript{nd}-generation Mexican American
  - Areas: St. John’s; PSU; SE Portland; Hood River

- **Methods: Participatory Photo-mapping**
  - Photovoice\textsuperscript{14}
  - Neighborhood Assessments & Mapping
We...wouldn’t want to live in a place where we don’t feel like we belong...So we [Mexicans] get placed away from a better environment.

When I got to college, I felt I didn’t deserve it, so now I’m trying to give back...we want them to know that college is an option for them.

My friends who dropped out or didn’t go to college, it wasn’t because they didn’t want to, but they had to help their family out.

Just having a mentor, a teacher who’s willing to...lend a hand... it changed my life. A simple action like that.
Current questions & analyses
- How do neighborhood characteristics compare to photos & narratives?
- What assets & barriers are identified in areas of “low opportunity”?
- How do photos in a given area compare to the existing infrastructure?

Informing policy
- Engaging youth
- Highlighting key resources
- Aligns with Equity Atlas approach
THANK YOU

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