# Finding Community and Opportunity: Navigating Assimilation and Racialization as Second-Generation Immigrants Living in Ethnic Enclaves

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## Research Question

How do second-generation young adult immigrants living in ethnic neighborhoods perceive belonging and opportunity in their residential communities?

## Theoretical Framework

### Assimilation
- Classical assimilation: describe as an upward, linear process towards the white, middle-class
- Segmented assimilation: life outcomes may be better, just as good or worse than mainstream
- Spatial assimilation: process in which immigrants settle from ethnic, low-resource areas into white, high resource areas

### Racialization:
- Process of social undesirability
- Promotes stratification and socioeconomic exploitation

## Data & Methods

- Participants recruited via social media and snowball sampling techniques
- 26 interviews were conducted with second-generation immigrants of Latin American heritage, living in the Chicagoland area
- Ages 18-26
- Each interview lasted between 45-90 minutes and was qualitatively coded for themes
- Participants were compensated with $40 online VISA gift card
- Most participants happened to be the first in their families to attend post-secondary school

## Results

### Belonging
- Experienced exclusion in white spaces; experienced policing by institutions and white neighbors
- Experienced ethnic solidarity with community members in the face of exclusion through organizing and mutual aid

### Opportunity
- Defined resource rich communities as those with quality schools and white-collar career opportunities
- Viewed ethnic communities as resource deficient, expressed desires to move to resource rich neighborhoods in the future

## Discussion

Results demonstrate nuance as participants want to maintain cultural ties (while facing racialization) yet desire socioeconomic advancement.