

COMMUNITY ROVING: A METHOD TO IMPROVE ECOLOGICAL VALIDITY AND ASSET ORIENTATION

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*The William T. Grant Scholar Award supported this research.



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Issue Statement

We have extensive, detailed quantitative information about community factors that pose health risks to individuals living within their borders. However, the leading neighborhood scholars admit that existing research proves difficult to translate into feasible community-level interventions (R.J. Sampson, 2011)

Current Methodological Limitations

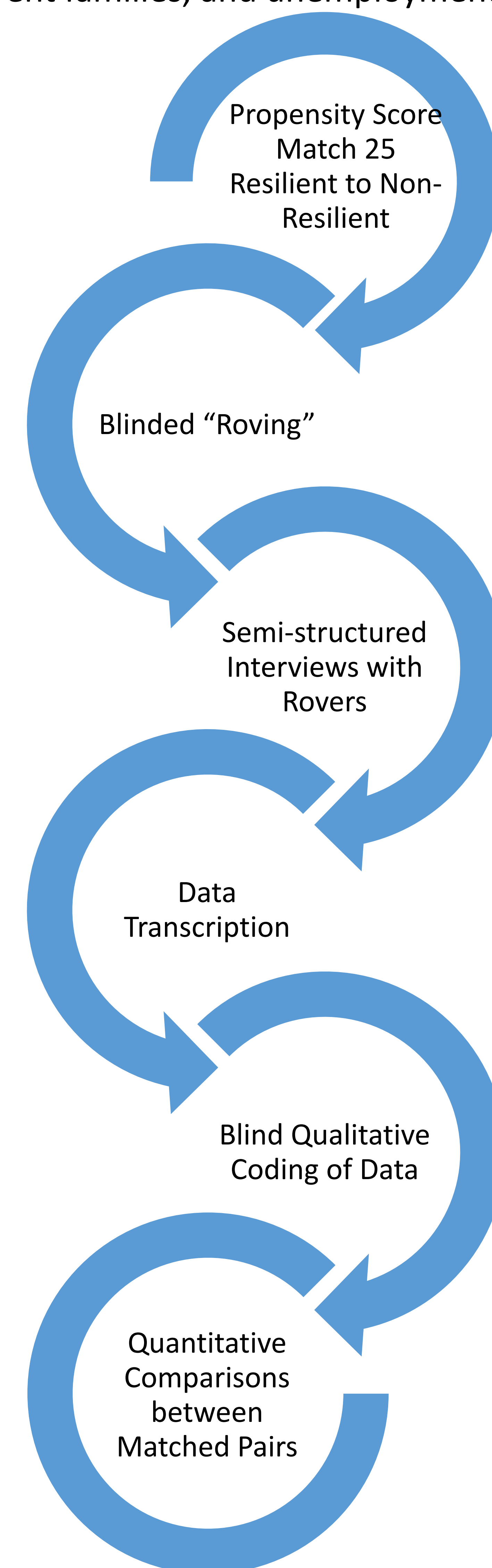
- Statistical comparisons make “all else equal,” but in practice policy, economic and social structures are not equal
- Ethnography, Systematic Social Observation, and other avenues for ecological validity can be time and resource prohibitive
- **Concentrated Disadvantage = Health Risk;**
Concentrated Disadvantage ≠ Illness

Roving Method Background

- Investigate heterogeneity of neighborhood-level outcomes within the same limited structural opportunities
- Take methodological advantage of neighborhood-level resilience
- Borrow from emerging “thin slice methodology” approaches – (Ambady, 2010)
- Integrate community members into research team as rovers – (Kelley, 2012)
- Asset based community development (ABCD)– (Tessler et al, 2011)

Method Overview

In areas with high poverty, single parent families, and unemployment



The Roving Process

- Recruit ABCD local practitioners
- Assign geographic areas (distribute maps)
- Each rover spends specified amount of time in location
 - 4 hours during specific time of day
 - Paired location during same time within 48 hours
 - Blinded as to which location is resilient
- Rover maintains jottings on stories, systematic observations, interactions
- Semi-structured interview based on jottings within 24 hours



Sample Data Use 1: Clarify Quantitative Anomalies

**Quantitative Result:
Rent/Own Ratio Does NOT Matter**

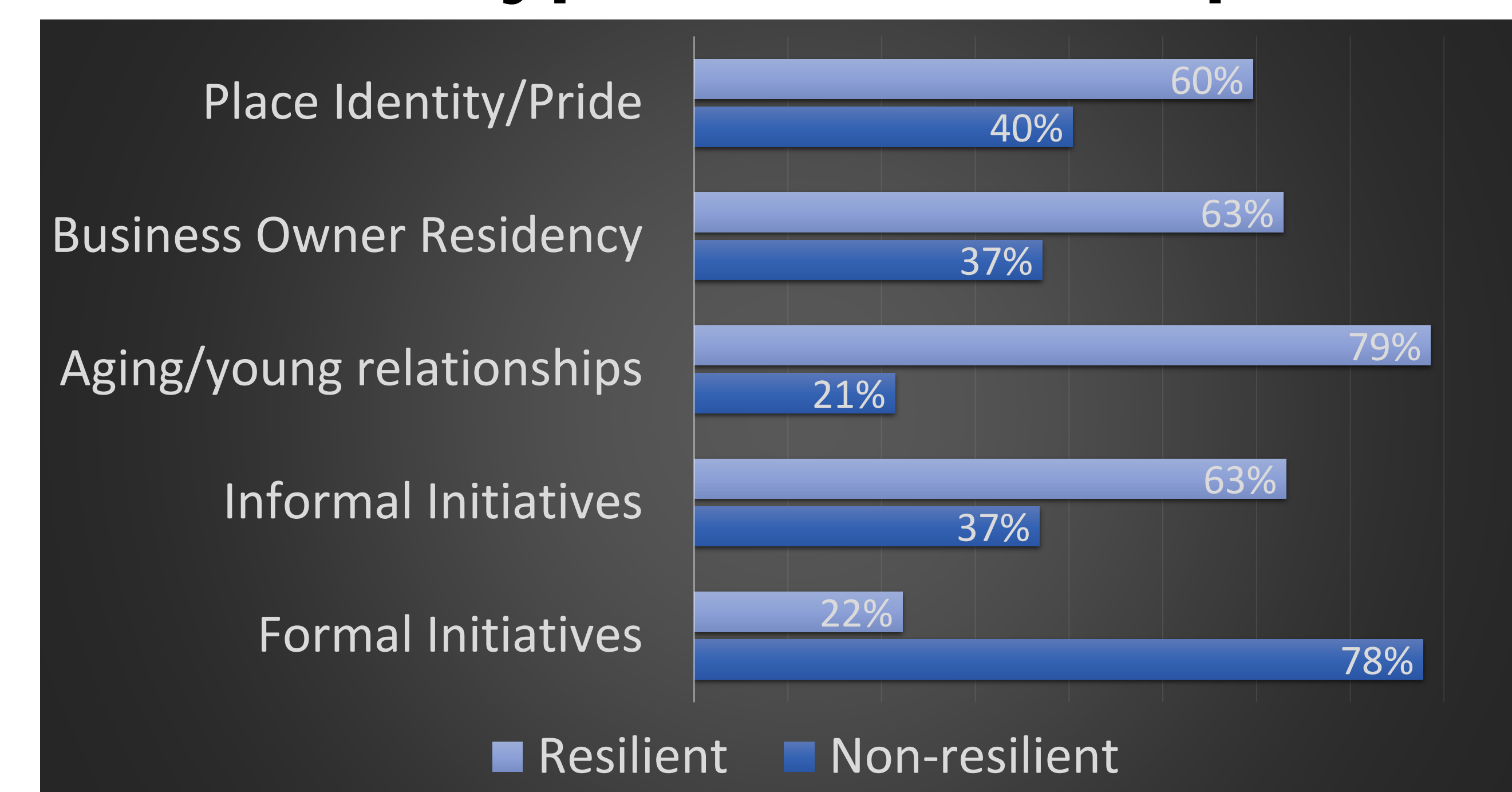
“Danny is retired, a security guard. He was on the porch, watching his grandkids play. He was an MP in the Marine corp. He did three tours of duty, was a volunteer fireman, and spent most of his life as a security guard. He loved that type of work. He retired from both of those. He gave me the whole, blizzard of 78. I had to listen to that whole story. He and his daughter and grandkids are renting.”

- **Emerging theme from roving data like this is that intergenerational residency matters more than renting.**

Data Use 2: Practical Information

KEY INFORMANTS	ACTIVITY INTEREST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Contact information for 26 individuals not associated with institutions ➤ 32 phone calls, 16 emails expressing interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fishing ➤ Gardening ➤ Auto Repair ➤ Internet <p>*Common interests specific to block groups.</p>

Sample Data Use 3: New Hypotheses to Explore



References

Ambady, N. (2010). The perils of pondering: Intuition and thin slice judgments. *Psychological Inquiry*, 21(4), 271-278.

Kelley, M. A. (2012). Improving Local Health and Development Through Community-Based Participatory Research. *Handbook for Public Health Social Work*, 287.

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Tessler Lindau, S., Makelarski, J. A., Chin, M. H., Desautels, S., Johnson, D., Johnson Jr, W. E., ... & Whitaker, E. (2011). Building community-engaged health research and discovery infrastructure on the South Side of Chicago: Science in service to community priorities. *Preventive medicine*, 52(3), 200-207.