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## EFFECTIVENESS OF A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S WELLNESS CENTER EVIDENCED-BASED PRACTICES ON PUSH FACTORS IN LATINX STUDENTS

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EFFECTIVENESS OF A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S  
WELLNESS CENTER EVIDENCED-BASED  
PRACTICES ON PUSH FACTORS IN LATINX STUDENTS

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Leslie Abarea  
Yeraldin Ismerio

May 2025

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## ABSTRACT

This scoping literature review proposal explores the effectiveness of a Southern California School District's wellness center evidenced-based practices on push factors that impact Latinx students. Push factors such as low grades, low test scores, poor behavior, absenteeism, and suspensions/expulsions expose Latinx youth to mental health issues that influence academic success. By analyzing existing research on wellness center approaches, evidenced-based practices, culturally responsive practices, and academic support, this scoping literature review proposal would aim to assess the impact these practices have on student academic success. This proposed study would have the intent of assisting this school district to create an evaluation tool of their wellness center to determine if they are effectively impacting push factors in Latinx students.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my wonderful husband, Cesar, for being my support throughout this program. Thank you for pushing me to pursue a higher education. I am so grateful for you and your willingness to take on the financial responsibility of taking care of me and our girls, Phoebe and Phyllis. I would like to thank my parents for their continuous support throughout my academic journey. Thank you for allowing Cesar, Phoebe, Phyllis, and me to live in your home while I focus on pursuing a higher education to better prepare for our future. I could not have done this without any of you. I love you all.

-Leslie Abarea

I want to thank my family for their support throughout my journey in the MSW program. First, I would like to thank my beautiful sisters for encouraging me through the process; your words of encouragement and constant support helped get me to the finish line. Mom gracias por todo tus sacrificios que as echo por nosotros, sin ti no fuera la persona quien soy hoy. Tia Erica, you inspired me to pursue an education since I was a child. Your wisdom and guidance have brightened my path, reminding me of the strength found in perseverance. To Giselle and Emmanuel, thank you for your unwavering support and friendship. To my amazing husband and children, thank you for allowing me to pursue my dreams and for all the sacrifices you have made on my behalf. You all have been

instrumental in this achievement; I am deeply grateful for having such a loving and supporting family by my side. I hope to make you all proud.

-Yeraldin Ismerio

## DEDICATION

To my loving husband and best friend, Cesar. You have seen me at my highest and my lowest and continue to love me unconditionally. You have always been by my side to comfort me and make me laugh. You have been the greatest blessing of my life. Thank you for being the calm to my storm.

-Leslie Abarea

I want to dedicate this project to my husband Bryant and my three children, Elias, Jesiah, and Mylene, for all your support. All my efforts would not have been possible without your continued love and sacrifice. I know it wasn't always an easy journey; you all kept me centered and determined to get to the finish line. Love you, 3000.

También me gustaría dedicar este proyecto a mi Ama. Por medio de tus fuerza y resiliencia marcaste el camino para que todos tengamos una vida mejor. Tu legado me inspira todos los días, recordándome que todo esto no hubiera sido posible sin tu amor incondicional y determinación. Espero que estés orgullosa de mí; Deseamos cada segundo del día que todavía estuviste aquí con nosotros te extrañemos.

“Al final del día, podemos aguantar mucho más de lo que pensamos que Podemos”. -Frida Kahlo

-Yeraldin Ismerio



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## CHAPTER ONE:

### PROBLEM FORMULATION

#### Background Information

An individual who decides to drop out of high school no longer attends school and does not receive a high school diploma. Students have the autonomy to drop out of high school between the ages of 16-18 years old, depending on the state they reside in. The overall U.S. dropout rates have decreased from 8.3 percent in 2010 to 5.2 percent in 2021. The Latinx community has also experienced a decrease in dropout rates from 16.7 percent in 2010 to 7.8 percent in 2021, higher than the overall U.S. dropout rates (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). These statistics demonstrate disparities in dropout rates within the Latinx community. Although dropout rates have decreased, they continue to affect individuals and communities on a micro and macro level.

One major cause of student's dropping out of high school is push factors. A student is pushed out of school when they experience consequences in the school environment following adverse situations, such as poor attendance, low test scores, low grades, poor behavior, and suspensions/expulsions (Doll et al., 2013). These factors expose Latinx youth to mental health issues that influence their school completion rates (Garrison et al., 1999). Although many American schools implement social-emotional learning (SEL) programs that intend to enhance resilience among the youth, such programs are hardly validated with culturally and linguistically diverse populations (Castro-Olivo & Merrell, 2012).

Consequently, the social-emotional needs of minority and migrant communities, such as Latinx, are not sufficiently met.

### Micro Issues

Individuals who drop out of high school experience an increase in health issues in the future. Research shows that education is a high predictor of health outcomes (Lansford et al., 2016). Individuals who dropout of high school are more likely to develop chronic and acute health issues (Lansford et al., 2016). Dropping out of high school also increases the likelihood of experiencing at least 4 or more negative outcomes in adulthood by 24 times compared to those who graduate. These negative outcomes can range from receiving government assistance, being fired from a job, laid off, arrested, or usage of illicit drugs (Lansford et al., 2016). Latinx students are more likely than other ethnic groups to drop out of high school, creating a greater risk for health and legal issues in the Latinx community (Behnke et al., 2010). These micro level issues affect the mezzo and macro levels, causing issues for communities and society.

### Mezzo and Macro Issues

Dropout rates not only affect individuals, but they also have a negative impact on their communities and society. On a mezzo level, those who drop out of high school are more likely to live in unsafe neighborhoods due to their low income. Living in these unsafe neighborhoods can lead to more criminal activity and poverty, affecting the community (Lansford et al., 2016). Research suggests that dropout rates within Latinx students in North Carolina have decreased jobs,

increased unemployment, and increased poverty (Behnke et al., 2010). On a macro level, dropping out of high school causes a \$17 billion dollar increase in Medicaid and other health care expenses due to the increase in health issues (Lansford et al., 2016). Dropout rates increase money spent on the welfare system, the criminal justice system, and creates an increase in tax revenues due to the increase of legal issues, drug use and government assistance in individuals who drop out of high school (Lansford et al., 2016).

### Policies

The No Child Left Behind Act (2002) was implemented “to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind.” The No Child Left Behind Act set a high proficiency mean standard for children around the country that negatively affected high poverty schools due to having no regard of their current proficiency level (Kim & Sunderman, 2005). As a response to the pressure standardized testing, school districts, with a substantial minority population and those in high-poverty areas, allocated less time to instructing subjects such as geography, the arts, foreign languages, civics, and history and instead prioritized additional time for reading and mathematics instruction (Casas, 2008).

As a consequence of the requirements set forth by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) on school districts, the arts were not given sufficient priority (Casas, 2008). This deficiency in the curriculum negatively affected all students, but it disproportionately impacted those with limited English proficiency, such as

Latinx. Students who speak limited to no English may not be able to communicate in English but are able to express themselves through drawing and dance. With these courses no longer being provided Latinx students have been negatively impacted (Casas, 2008).

Zero-Tolerance policies, which remove students from school who disturb the learning environment, was initially used in the fight against drugs but then was adopted by several public schools (Intercultural Development Research Association, 2023). States such as Texas, that enforce zero tolerance policies, have higher Latinx dropout rates than states that do not implement such policies. Data from Texas indicates that the implementation of zero tolerance policies in public schools are characterized by disproportionately high disciplinary action rates against males, blacks, and Latinx students (Intercultural Development Research Association, 2023). Constant punishments create an adverse school environment that then pushes them out of school. Therefore, zero-tolerance policies that are practiced in some American schools are partially responsible for the relatively higher dropout rates among Latinx students.

#### Theoretical Perspectives on Dropout Rates

One theory that can be used to explain dropout rates in the Latinx community is the ecological systems theory. The ecological systems theory states that different environmental systems affect an individual's behavior (Langer & Lietz, 2015). This theory is comprised of 5 systems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. The environment in

which individuals have social interactions, such as families, classmates, friends, and neighbors are a microsystem. The mesosystem is the interactions between the microsystems in your life and how they affect one another. An exosystem is two systems interacting and affecting another system indirectly. The macrosystem is described as a larger system that affects the life of an individual, such as the education system. The chronosystem are events that affect the individual, such as a child moving to a new country when they are ten years old. The ecological systems theory is comprised of these systems interacting with one another (Langer & Lietz, 2015). This theory suggests that push factors that affect dropout rates within Latinx students are impacted by how all the systems interact with one another. The theory helps to identify factors that affect dropout rates in Latinx students. Understanding these factors can lead to implementing programs and interventions that address push factors in Latinx students.

Another theory relevant to the current study is the social learning theory, which proposes that social behavior is learned through the process of observing and imitating the actions of others (Thyer, 2017). Social learning theory can be used to explain high rates of school dropouts among members of the same demographic. According to social learning theory, positive or negative behavior can be taught or adapted through observation. Therefore, one does not have to be convinced or directly influenced by someone to engage in negative behavior, such as dropping out of school. The social learning theory can inform social workers of the possible behavioral models that a client could be emulating. This

information is then used to help the client in correcting the negative behavior (Thyer, 2017). Additionally, a social worker can use the social learning theory by intentionally exposing the client to an environment in which they are likely to emulate positive behaviors.

### Finding Contributions and Research Question

The findings in this study will contribute to the social work profession with knowledge about push factors and dropout rates and their influence on educational patterns among various demographic groups. Although dropout rates for various ethnicities in the United States have declined significantly in the last decade, this study will provide additional information on interventions that impact push factors and lead to further declining dropout rates among Latinx students. It will facilitate a deeper comprehension of the distinctive and complex challenges faced by minorities such as challenges that cannot be fully comprehended within the confines of educational institutions (Stepick, 2003). The purpose of this study is to assess whether the proposed program is effective in addressing push factors that lead to dropout rates in the target demographic. Therefore, the research question for this study is: Are the current evidenced-based practices used at a Southern California School District's wellness center effective practices in addressing push factors in Latinx students?



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

Chapter two will discuss relevant literature on Latinx student graduation rates and push factors that lead students to leave school. This chapter discusses effective evidenced-based practices utilized in high schools that address push factors. This chapter will also discuss key features of school-based wellness centers.

### Latinx Graduation Rates

Statistics demonstrate a disparity in Latinx high school graduation rates in the United States. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2021) Latinx high school graduation rates in 2020-2021 was 83 percent while the U.S. average was 87 percent. Latinx high school graduation rates were 8 percent lower than whites at 90 percent during that same year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). It is also important to note that graduation rates vary between states. In the 2019-2020 school year, Latinx students had the largest gap in graduation rates in the District of Columbia (64 percent) compared to white students (98 percent), creating a 29 percent difference (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). Although statistics continue to demonstrate disparities in Latinx high school graduation rates, the average dropout rate in the U.S has decreased throughout the years due to the significant decrease in Latinx

student dropout rates. The National Center for Education Statistics (2023) shows that Latinx students had the largest decrease in dropout rates from 16.7 percent in 2010 to 7.8 percent in 2021.

### Risk Factors That Lead to Dropping Out of School

There are several factors that contribute to student's failing to graduate from high school. Although there are several reasons that could lead an individual to leave school before graduation, Doll and colleagues (2013) have designed a model that explains these factors into the categories of push, pull and fall out factors.

#### Push Factors

Push factors are categorized as consequences experienced in the school environment such as suspensions, expulsions, poor behavior, low grades, low test scores, and poor attendance (Doll et al., 2013). Research demonstrates that dropout rates differ based on race, gender, and SES (Bradley & Renzulli, 2011). Recent reports demonstrate that chronic absenteeism rates in Latinx students have increased from 13.4 percent in 2018-2019 to 28.9 percent in 2022-2023 (California Department of Education, 2019; California Department of Education, 2023). Gender and race also have an impact on push factors that lead to dropping out of school. Male students are more likely to drop out of school for academic reasons (Christle et al., 2007). Low SES is associated with low poverty schools which inadvertently impacts the school environment, affecting push factors (Bradley & Renzulli, 2011). Black and Latinx students from a low

socioeconomic status (SES) have a higher likelihood of dropping out of school compared to white students. The Census reports that Latinx children have the highest rate of poverty compared to children from other ethnicities (Shrider & Creamer, 2023). Research continuously demonstrates the disparities in graduation rates and push factors of Latinx students.

School climate such as teacher characteristics, parental involvement, and school physical condition also have an impact on dropout rates. Schools who utilize expulsion discipline practices reinforce academic failure due to students having less opportunities to learn appropriate social behaviors and academic skills (Christle et al., 2007). Research demonstrates that Latinx students disproportionately experience punitive discipline and teacher biases which creates a negative school climate (Campbell & Ronfeldt, 2018). Latinx students who experience school race-related stress demonstrate a decrease in academic success as well as lack of belonging and connectedness in their school environment (Saleem et al., 2022). Studies show that schools with higher teacher engagement, higher parental involvement and better physical conditions have higher graduation rates. These factors impact student's connectedness to the school, leading to better attendance and engagement in school (Christle et al., 2007). Carver-Thomas (2016) found that schools with diverse staff have higher rates of graduation among minority students as well as higher math and reading scores. Research continuously demonstrates how school climate contributes to academic success and GPA of Latinx high school students (Dighero et al., 2023).

## Pull Factors

Pull factors are categorized as adverse situations that are experienced from external factors that impact student's education such as illness, employment, financial stress, and family issues (Doll et al., 2013). Dropping out of school is viewed as a developmental process that begins in early development before the child starts elementary school. Research has found that early predictors of dropping out of school are early home environment, parental involvement, quality of caregiving, gender, behavior problems, peer competence and SES (Jimerson et al., 2000). Black and Latinx female students are more likely to drop out of school due to family reasons compared to white female students (Stearns & Glennie, 2006). Older adolescents are also more likely to drop out of school to seek employment for their family's financial necessity (Stearns & Glennie, 2006).

A major issue experienced by the Latinx population is discrimination and immigration status. Research shows that Latinx student's experience a disproportionate amount of stress related to discrimination and immigration status (Roche & Kuperminc, 2012). Studies demonstrate that stress related to race, discrimination and immigration status has an impact on Latinx student's grades, academic success and engagement in school (Roche & Kuperminc, 2012; Saleem et al., 2022).

Family structure also has an impact on high school dropout rates. Research shows that children who experience parental divorce at a younger age

are more likely to drop out of school than children who experience parental divorce at an older age (Strohschein et al., 2008). Data demonstrates that U.S. born Latinx women between the ages of 35-44 have the third highest divorce rates compared to other racial groups (Raley et al., 2015). Changes in school due to necessity have an impact on a child's risk of dropping out of school. Research shows that students who moved schools between the 4th and 8th grade were more likely to drop out of school (Herbers et al., 2013). Low SES and minority students are more likely to change schools (Welsh, 2016). Changes in schools during these years can influence children's ability to strengthen peer relationships due to being introduced to new social situations. A minority population that is highly impacted by changes in school are foster children. In 2020, foster children had the lowest graduation rate at 58.2 percent compared to other social groups (California Department of Education, 2020). Data shows that in 2021 approximately 85,000 Latinx children were placed in foster care in the United States, ranking the third highest compared to other racial groups (Statista, 2018). Research continues to show the disparities that Latinx students experience that impact their educational attainment.

### Fall Out Factors

Fall out factors do not solely include school or external factors but refer to student's gradual loss of engagement in school. Students who experience falling out of school lack support in their home and school environment (Doll et al., 2013). Research shows that Latinx students who experience racial discrimination

at school lose a sense of identity and importance in their culture which leads to a disconnect in their school environment causing a decrease in academic success (Roche & Kuperminc, 2012; Saleem et al., 2022). A student's gradual loss of engagement in school can be attributed to both push and pull factors. There are limitations in research that discuss the impact of fall out factors in the general population as well as Latinx students.

### Trends and Implications of Risk Factors

The causes of student's dropping out have high school have shifted throughout the years. Research demonstrated that pull out factors were prominent in causing students to drop out of high school in the 1950's to 1980's. Push factors became the leading cause of student's dropping out of high school in the 2000's. The shift from pull to push factors was attributed to The No Child Left Behind Act, which was passed in 2002 (Doll et al., 2013). The No Child Left Behind Act (2002) was passed "to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind." Research has demonstrated that the No Child Left Behind Act greatly affected schools in high poverty areas due to the unrealistic high proficiency standard that was set for every child in the U.S. regardless of the child's current proficiency level (Kim & Sunderman, 2005). Research has also shown that The No Child Left Behind Act widened the achievement gap between white and Latinx students in less integrated schools (Reardon et al., 2013). Although the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) was meant "to close the achievement gap," it disproportionately affected Latinx students.

According to the T4PA (2020), push, pull and fall out factors can interact with one another, causing an accumulation over time. This accumulation negatively impacts students leading to dropping out of high school. The interaction between all three factors can cause students to show a gradual decrease in school engagement. Interventions to address school engagement in Latinx students need to consider school factors, external factors, and the student's belief in their ability to graduate high school (T4PA Center, 2020).

### Latinx Mental Health

Research on the psychosocial health of Latinx youth has proved to be very revealing because of the unique difficulties associated with it, such as acculturation, discrimination, and socioeconomic matters. Though the current literature has provided some fundamental data and insights into the mental health disparities related to the Latinx community, the specific mental health needs of Latinx youth in school settings are unknown. This disparity demonstrates the need to look for school-based mental health programs that are relatively culturally and contextually sensitive in line with the cultural factors affecting the wellbeing of this ethnic group.

A considerable number of studies have been conducted discussing the mental health problems of Latinx youth. This population faces unusual pressures associated with acculturation, discrimination, and socioeconomic factors (California School-Based Health Alliance, 2024). Understanding context and reasoning are vital components in analyzing this literature, which may involve

recognizing cultural differences, socioeconomic challenges, and historical factors that contribute to the prevalence of mental health issues among Latinx youth (Safa et al., 2019). Current research has helped identify the mental health disparities that exist within Latinx youth, specifically regarding anxiety, depression, and substance.

Numerous studies have explored the impact cultural factors had on Latinx youths' mental health, such as the acculturation process. The acculturation process involves individuals adapting to another culture while preserving part of their own culture. Research has shown that acculturation plays a significant role in mental health outcomes, with both positive and negative effects depending on contextual factors. Additionally, research indicates that family and community connections serve as protective factors for mental health among the young Latinx generation. The key pillars of strong family relationships, cultural pride, and robust community social networks have been shown to be effective. (Safa et al., 2019). The discovery of these protective factors is critically essential for intervention that can connect with the cultural base of Latinx communities.

### School-Based Mental Health

School-based mental health services bring many benefits to students. Informal interaction increases the probability that the students and their families have access to psychological support, and thus, reducing the need for parents to take time off from work and find transportation to and from mental health sessions (California School-Based Health Alliance, 2024). By offering access to



mental health care, students have the support they need. This fosters a supportive environment, where students feel comfortable seeking help for their mental health concerns, thereby promoting the health and welfare of the entire school community. Having school-based mental health services actively reach out to the school community normalizes mental health support. They engage in campaigns to make the services known, defeat the stigma of mental health, and as a result, create a space where students can be open and seek support (California School-Based Health Alliance, 2024).

In addition to providing individual counseling, school-based mental health services are shown to prevent mental health issues and maintain the overall health of the whole population (California School-Based Health Alliance, 2024). They run peer and classroom education, whole-school assessments, and intervention programs to tackle the social causes of mental health and ensure the well-being of all the students in school. By identifying and addressing mental health issues at early stages it decreases the likely hood of the issue to worsening over time.

#### School-Based Mental Health Centers

School-based mental health centers (SBMHCs) are developed to provide the community with comprehensive student mental health services. It addresses accessibility, affordability, and integration issues with the community. SBMHC-s prioritize equitable access to mental health services, offering services to students with diverse needs including, chronic diseases (e.g., diabetes, asthma)

management, mental health (i.e., behavioral issues) addressing, crisis handling and students/families accessing resources available (Safa et al., 2019). They also work with outside healthcare systems to provide a holistic approach to student well-being (Safa et al., 2019). Generally, these centers comprise of various psychiatrists, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, part-time physicians, and student medics, allowing access to a variety of services tailored to the student's needs. (Areson et al., 2019). The team in the SBMHC not only works towards achieving mental health goals but also sees the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and support in a comprehensive manner.

An essential aspect of SBMHCs is that they do their best to offer services without having their patients stress about financial cost. They do this so that students in their community get what they need regardless of income. As with private health providers, cost can hinder access to care in some cases, yet SBHCs put prime focus on equitable facility sharing for mental health services (Richter et al., 2022). No student is denied the right to service because the person cannot pay the cost of services requested (California School-Based Health Alliance, 2024).

### Evidenced-Based Practices That Increase Student Engagement and Graduation Rates

Emotional stability is an essential part of a student's overall well-being. Many experts claim that there is a strong relationship between mental health and behavior issues, which, in turn, is associated with high dropout rates.

Nevertheless, students who engage in professional mental health services show an improvement in conduct and demonstrate a higher chance of remaining active in school.

Children tend to be more satisfied, less absent, and have better academic performance in school, with easier access to professionals, like a counselor or therapist, lowers mental health-related dismissals. When considering team members, representation should be factored in. Hiring staff with the same cultural backgrounds and who have experienced life from different angles creates an environment of diversity and a welcoming cultural (Cultural School-Based Health Alliance, 2021). One of the key findings from the Youth, Male Engagement, and Empowerment (YMEC) project is that the presence of counselors who are authentic and interactive is crucial for the success of the project. It is not only an emphasis on representative staffing that supports the effectiveness of therapy, but it also validates students' diverse experience, thus leading to understanding and connection.

Comprehensive school mental health programs benefit students' academic success and provide opportunities for the experience that develop leadership, social skills, self-awareness, and positive relationships with fellow students and adults in their school and community. Academic achievement and graduation rates of Latinx youth can improve by schools that work with community partners. Collaborations with community partners significantly reduce absenteeism and punishment rates, improve academic performance, and

establish a good learning environment where students can succeed academically and in the community.

Just like providing a comforting environment for the whole student body is important, it is also important to recognize and deal with how deep the trauma can be for some individuals. With a large pool of students with different backgrounds, there is a possibility that some of them may experience negative consequences from the harmful incidents they have witnessed, including symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), complex PTSD, depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders (California School-Based Health Alliance, 2021). In most cases, it becomes necessary to adjust the support services rendered to the unique nature of these problems, and a multi-pronged approach usually proves more successful.

This statement suggests that when students are directly exposed to traumatic events, such as violence, abuse, or natural disasters, it is essential to provide tailored or personalized therapeutic interventions to address their psychosocial health difficulties effectively. "Personalized therapeutic interventions" refers to treatment approaches that are customized to meet the specific needs, preferences, and circumstances of each individual student. These interventions may include various therapeutic techniques, counseling modalities, or support services designed to address the unique psychological and emotional challenges faced by students following exposure to trauma.

There is a need for schools and educational institutions to prioritize running personalized therapeutic interventions to support students who have experienced trauma. By offering tailored support and resources, schools can help students cope with their psychosocial health difficulties, promote resilience, and facilitate their healing and recovery process so that they can focus on completing their studies. Personalized therapeutic intervention aims to provide tailored therapeutic intervention that effectively addresses students' psychosocial health difficulties, promoting their general development.

### Gaps in Literature

Current literature provides valuable insight into the mental health of Latinx youth, but there is a big gap in current studies. While there is significant attention given to the mental health of immigrant youth, there is comparatively less emphasis on understanding the mental health issues faced by American-born Latinx youth within the school setting (Safa et al., 2019). Such a variation is essential as schools play a crucial role in shaping the development of young individuals, providing the backdrop on which young people reflect and develop themselves as whole individuals. Focusing on mental health within schools can initiate interventions early, potentially mitigating the impact of mental health issues and fostering healthier student development (California School-Based Health Alliance, 2024).

The existing research on immigrant youth may reflect the situation of the school environment for Latino students, which might not be exact because of the

different circumstances and stressors faced by them. The aspects of identity, belonging, and discrimination may be experienced by the great-granddaughter of those who have been in their host country for generations and the newly arrived immigrants. To refine studies and develop comprehensive, broadly acceptable intervention strategies, it is essential to consider a more nuanced understanding of the psychosocial process occurring at educational sites. (Safa et al., 2019).

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Introduction

A scoping literature review is the most effective at analyzing the proposed research data related to factors that impact the learning experience of Latinx students and how school-based mental health centers address those factors. This chapter will discuss a proposed study design and its appropriateness to the pending study, the sampling procedure, the data collection tools and the factors affecting the data variables, the expected procedure in examining the evidenced-based practices, the protection of study participants, the proposed methods to analyze the effectiveness of evidence-based practices addressing push factors and an overall summary.

#### Study Design

The proposed study will utilize a scoping literature review. Researching peer data, specifically scoping literature review is appropriate for under-researched topics (Hunter et al., 2019). Therefore, the proposed method is the most suitable for studying how push factors affect the education patterns among different student demographics and informing the interventions social workers use to increase the graduation rates among Latinx students. A scoping literature review precisely identifies knowledge gaps and can serve as the foundation for systematic literature reviews (Munn et al., 2018). Additionally, it is effective in

confirming the relevance of the proposed research questions in push factors to mental distress among Latinx students and affirming the proper inclusion criteria. The study is expected to investigate Latinx students' lived experiences and analyze the proposed literature on evidence-based practices for push factors to understand both factors comprehensively. In the proposal, strong points of study using exploratory research will be the generation of hypotheses linking different push factors to mental distress and school dropout and making discoveries on the effective interventions at mental health wellness centers serving adolescents. The limitations of scoping literature review are that it prioritizes attaining a greater scope of the proposed research other than the depth of a few sources and does not recognize and offer solutions to mitigate the risk of bias. Additionally, follow-up research with a systematic literature review may be required to meet the study's more apparent objectives.

### Sampling

Concerning the proposed review, the sampling procedure is based on the scoping literature evaluation of current wellness programs and identifying a gap in research on school-based wellness centers. Applying purposive sampling requires that the sampled articles focus on Latinx study participants who are studying at the high school level, have experienced push factors, and have sought help from school-based wellness centers. We proposed that the articles that meet the criteria will be selected and analyzed for information about push factors for Latinx students and how they benefit from wellness centers focused



on improving their mental health. A sample size of 15 articles will also be adequate, given that the proposed method focuses on scope. The articles will be sourced from reputable websites, including JSTOR, the National Institute of Health, Google Scholar, and SAGE journals, EBSCOhost, and Psychinfo data base. The articles will be classified depending on the year of publication, the demographic analyzed, and the depth of research to optimize the data collected.

### Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

The proposed study will employ methods of identifying what has been written and determining trends and patterns from the data. We propose conducting electronic research prioritizing articles that focus on the global mental health wellness centers used by Latinx students. Electronic searches will also help collect large amounts of information and are reliable in describing and exploring variables. Key search words will be determined by the study question and objectives and presented to the supervisor and a representative of wellness centers to ensure they are relevant. After this, a pilot test and modifications are expected to arrive at the final articles. Priority will be given to peer-reviewed articles that meet the inclusion criteria, and a purposive selection of literature will be conducted. The leading search terms will be retrieved from the research questions and objectives and will relate to Latinx students' education and school-based mental health intervention. Suggested search terms are push and pull factors, fall out factors, factors that impact high school dropout rates, high school dropout, factors that impact high school graduation rates, graduation rates,

evidence-based intervention used in high schools, evidence-based practices, evidence based interventions, effectiveness of school-based wellness center, wellness centers, Latinx high school students, Latinx students, student mental health, mental health, impact of high school environment on student education, Southern California School District, Southern California Wellness Centers, Southern California evidence-based interventions, minority students, Ecological Systems Theory, Social Learning Theory, acculturation, and other related keywords. These terms will be discussed with a research supervisor and a representative from a school-based wellness center to ensure that they are pertinent to the focus of the study. Some of the terms used in the pilot search include the following: necessary amendments will be made to these terms before finalizing the data collection method.

### Protection of Human Subjects

Data collection and analysis will consider the set research ethics and will not have to adhere to the human rights protocol as there is no direct involvement of human subjects.

### Data Analysis

In the proposal, the data collected in the scoping literature review will be scrutinized for patterns using thematic analysis. Using this method, the researcher will familiarize themselves with the data by reviewing the study and its articles. They will then generate initial codes that will be used to identify themes

and patterns, which will generate themes. These themes will be reviewed for coherence and relevance with the research objectives. According to the proposal, after thematic analysis, a report will be prepared on the issues affecting Latinx students 'mental health and wellness centers' treatment of these issues, and suggestions for subsequent studies will be provided.

### Summary

This study proposal considers works on the study topic using the scoping literature review. It aims to investigate the impact of push factors on Latinx students' mental health, and the effectiveness of evidence-based practices utilized in high schools that address push factors. It primarily follows the scope of literature and employs an electronic search that will encompass mental health push factors and the effectiveness of wellness centers for Latinx students. This chapter reviewed the different aspects of scoping literature review, including the proposed study design, sampling, data collection and instruments, protection of human subjects, and data analysis to be used in the research. The advantage of the proposed study method is the ability to collect comprehensive data based on available literature.

APPENDIX A  
DATA EXTRACTION TOOL

## Data Extraction Tool

Data Charting	
EFFECTIVENESS OF A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S WELLNESS CENTER EVIDENCED-BASED PRACTICES ON PUSH FACTORS IN LATINX STUDENTS	
<b>Data Extraction Tool</b>	
<b>A. Person responsible for the extraction</b>	
<b>B. Study Data</b> Author Publication year Location of study	
<b>C. Study Design</b> Research method used Purpose of study	
<b>D. Population</b> Number of participants Demographic characteristics (age, sex, race/ethnicity, grade level) Academic standing Reason for utilizing wellness center	
<b>E. Evidenced-Based Practices</b> Intervention(s) used	
<b>F. Results</b> Research findings	
<b>G. Conclusions</b> Findings related to scoping literature review question	

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## ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES

This research proposal was a collaboration between Yeraldin Ismerio and Leslie Abarea. All chapters were completed collaboratively, and responsibilities were evenly distributed.