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The relationship between cultural loyalty and attachment, and career aspirations and perceived realistic career

Heather Lynn Hernandez

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL LOYALTY AND

ATTACHMENT, AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND

PERCEIVED REALISTIC CAREER

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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

Heather Lynn Hernández
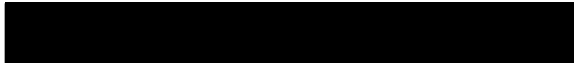
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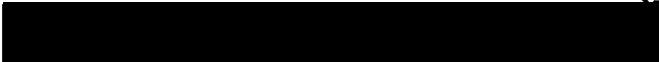M.S.W. Research Coordinator

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship between cultural loyalty and attachment, and career aspirations and their perceived realistic career among college students. Quantitative research methods were used to collect demographic information as well as the cultural values and beliefs, the career aspirations, the participants' perceived realistic career, and their perceived obstacles.

This study contributes to social work micro practice by helping social workers and other professionals become more culturally competent by understanding the impact of culture when working with the Latino college population. This study also contributes to macro social work practice because existing programs can tailor their services to bridge the gap between the cultural conflicts ethnic minority students face when attending college.

It was found that students pursuing different major degrees shared common obstacles and reasons for choosing their career. The age of participants ranged from eighteen to fifty-five, as well as their sex, selected degree major, religion, and years in school. The sample represents fifty-six students from the California State

University of San Bernardino who were enrolled in the Winter quarter of 2011 regardless of any units completed or units in progress.

This study found a negative correlation between students' teaching their children their ethnic cultural language and their perceived realistic career. Also found in this study are recommendations for social work practice, policy and research.

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I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Pa Der Vang for her patience through this new process of writing a thesis. I would also like to acknowledge Debbie Flores, the Director of the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) program, for giving me the opportunity to survey student there, thank you for your help and support.

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DEDICATION

I would like to thank my mom, dad, Jon, Stephen, Juan, and my extended family. Thank you, mom for always believing in me and showing me that I can do anything and for instilling the importance of education and independence. Papá gracias por ser tan estricto conmigo, eso me ayudo a ser una persona respetable.

To my husband, Jose for believing in me, even when I didn't, and encouraging me to continue my education. Your drive to overcome your barriers inspires me to overcome my own. Thanks for helping me figure out what I was doing when I was lost. And thanks, honey, for becoming such a nerd with me.

This is also dedicated to first generation low-income college students like myself, who have a dream to break the cycle of poverty, believe in yourself and it will take you beyond your dreams.

¡Que viva La Raza y Sí, Se Puede!

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter one covers the problem statement including background information and policies. Chapter one also includes the purpose of the study, the specific participants used in the study, as well as the rationale for this study and the methods. Last covered is a discussion of how this study will contribute to social work in micro and macro practice, policy and research.

Problem Statement

The goal of this study is to understand the relationship between Mexican American college students' cultural loyalty and attachment using Keefe and Padilla's (1987) concept of Cultural Awareness and Ethnic Loyalty, and their career aspirations and perceived realistic career.

Historically, Mexican Americans have been among the most disproportionate population to attend institutions of higher education. According to the United States Census Bureau (2000), Latino college enrollment grew from four percent in 1979 to nine percent in 2000. However,

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Latinos still have the highest rate of high school drop outs, doubling that of African Americans, who are the second highest, and quadrupling that of Non-Hispanic Whites (United States Census Bureau, 2000). Consequently, Latinos had the lowest rate of college enrollment in 2000, which also suggests that less Latinos graduate college compared to other ethnicities.

This study is important in the present day because Latinos are underrepresented in colleges and universities. In order to change this trend, policies, program missions, and the roles of social workers and others who work with this population must change. The focus of this study was to find commonalities in Latino college students to see what their strengths and weaknesses are to be able to pinpoint where change must take place. Additionally, this study looks at existing programs that increase the success rate of this population in education at the university level.

Policy Context

Policies indeed affect the success of this population in education. The Educational Opportunity Act of 1964 is the first piece of legislation geared toward assisting underrepresented ethnic minorities in the

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education system. This act was part of President Lyndon
B. Johnson's War on Poverty that began with the Upward
program in 1964, followed by the Higher Education Act in
1965 with the Talent Search program, and then in 1968
with the Special Services for Disadvantaged Students
program, later changed to Student Support Services
(Council For Opportunity In Education, n.d., Where did
TRIO Originate section). Student Support Services is
known as Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) at
California State University, San Bernardino.

California's Proposition 187 in 1994 was another
policy that affected this population by attempting to
keep undocumented people, most of who are of Latino
origin, out of public health care and schools, as well as
other social service programs (American Civil Liberties
Union, 1999, para. 2).

Practice Context

The role of the social worker in this study is to
advocate for ethnic minorities who are underrepresented
in higher education by educating other professionals who
work with this population. This can be accomplished by
showing cultural sensitivity as well as effectively
empower clients from this background. Social workers and

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other professionals can also advocate for programs to fully meet the needs of this population by creating research studies and policies that support Latino students and other ethnic minorities to be successful in college and at the same time, allow ethnic minorities to embrace their culture.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find the correlation between college students' cultural loyalty and cultural ties, and their career aspiration and the career they perceive as real. This study is important because the literature shows that students who have stronger cultural attachment, such as the value and practice of familism, are generally less acculturated and are usually low-income (Keefe & Padilla, 1987), which could negatively influence the career aspiration and perceived realistic career as calculated by annual salary.

The participants used for this study consists of students attending the California State University of San Bernardino in the Winter quarter of 2011. The participants varied between the ages of eighteen and fifty-five. The participants also varied in degree

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majors, the degree they are pursuing, social economic status, marital status, and years of the generation of both college attendance.

Quantitative data was used through the use of a questionnaire (Appendix A) where data was collected directly from the college students. Data was gathered through paper surveys at the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) office, advertised to Student Assistance In Learning students, and at the Santos Manuel Student Union, for the students at large, both located at California State University, San Bernardino.

This study is important in the present day because examining the cultural ties of college students can help create an awareness of how their career aspirations and perception of their realistic career can be negatively influenced. This awareness can help professionals be more culturally sensitive and understand how a less assimilated student in the American culture may struggle more in the process of enrolling for college. This can be done by staff thoroughly covering the requirements and prerequisites for college admission, information about financial aid, and request a program such as the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) or Educational Opportunity

Program (EOP) that can help ease the transition from high school to college. These services would make the educational path more manageable for ethnic minorities and it would benefit the Latino community, as well as other ethnic minorities. Services and programs can be adjusted to meet the needs and values to improve the success rate of ethnic minority college students for the future. These ethnic minority college students will become productive members of society by being successful and influential in their community. Ethnic minorities will most likely serve their underrepresented community once they become professionals, empower younger generations, and also provide greatly needed services to their community by giving back to their community and society as a whole.

Significance of the Project for Social Work

With this study, micro practice social workers will have an increased awareness and understanding of the cultural barriers the Latino population faces to enroll in and attend higher education institutions. With this enhanced understanding of how cultural values can become barriers, social workers can help clients develop healthy

coping mechanisms to interact in both their ethnic community and in the Anglo American society, increasing the enrollment and educational achievement of Mexican Americans in higher education.

This study may indicate that current Latino college students have certain attributes that help them to continue their education, such as parental education attainment, being involved in programs and services, or being of a certain generation in the United States. The study may also show that collectively, Latino college students have the same educational obstacles and familial backgrounds. The role of the micro social work practitioner is to create an awareness of the lack of cultural competence with professionals who work both directly and indirectly with this population.

Understanding the relationship between cultural loyalty and attachment, and career aspirations and perceived realistic career of Latino college students can indicate that only certain Latino students are able to be admitted to a college or university. This can indicate that these students have the knowledge, support, skills, and/or guidance to successfully navigate in the education

system to ultimately reach their goal, graduate from a college or university.

Macro social workers can advocate for and design more effective programs geared toward this population to reach more ethnic minority students. As Keefe and Padilla (1987) say, "by understanding how this group adjusts to mainstream society, it will be possible to institute social policies that may help to alleviate social problems among Mexican Americans today" (p. 196). These programs can help bridge the gap between the cultural conflict ethnic minority student's face when applying for and attending college.

This study can potentially influence research by creating an interest in the topic and by furthering this study. This study attempts to determine whether there are common characteristics like beliefs, values, and the reason behind their chosen career that motivates them to continue their education because it is presumed that these students have met "their basic needs," (Maslow, 1943) such as food, and shelter.

This study will enhance the implementation phase of the generalist practice intervention process as it attempts to show that due to the influence of cultural

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loyalty and attachment in Latino college students, it is necessary that these students have access to support services to enhance their educational achievement. The research hypothesis is that cultural loyalty and attachment (non-Anglo) is negatively related to the students' choice of their desired career and their perceived realistic career.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter includes a review of the literature

describing the key elements that affects this population

in relation to the problem focus, problem statement, and

purpose of the study. The literature review begins with

the exploration of Keefe and Padilla's (1987) Cultural

Awareness and Ethnic Loyalty model, followed by

explaining how Mexican Americans are impacted by their

ethnic culture and by the Anglo American culture while

residing in the United States and how it may relate to

the success rate of this population in higher education.

Cultural Orientation

Keefe and Padilla (1987) categorize the typology of

ethnic differentiation through "Cultural Orientation"

because it differs from acculturation (p. 46). In

Cultural Orientation a person's "Cultural Awareness (CA)"

(p. 46) and their "Ethnic Loyalty (EL)" (p. 46) are taken

into consideration. They use the "neo-pluralism model

that can accommodate concurrent states of change *and*

continuity, integration *and* pluralism, in ethnicity"
(Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 191).

Keefe and Padilla (1987) define Cultural Awareness
as a person's knowledge of the traditional and host
cultures, such as "language, history, culture heroes,"
(p. 46) and folk tales. Although language preference,
which is part of Cultural Awareness, shifts from one
generation to another, Ethnic Loyalty may not be lost
(Keefe & Padilla, 1987).

Ethnic Loyalty is described as preferring one
culture and ethnic group over another (Keefe & Padilla,
1987, p. 46). In Ethnic Loyalty people identify
themselves as belonging in a specific group which they
prefer and tend to associate themselves with(Keefe &
Padilla, 1987); they share pride in their ethnic culture,
eat the same ethnic foods, and they share the "perception
of ethnic discrimination" (Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 9).

Type I

Keefe and Padilla (1987) identify various typologies
of Mexican Americans Ethnic Orientation starting with
"Type I are characterized by their high scores on both
Cultural Awareness and Ethnic Loyalty" (p. 54). People
who fall into this type are "clearly un-acculturated and

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identify as Mexican and with Mexican culture" (Keefe &
Padilla, 1987, p. 55).

Type II

"Type II individuals have high scores on Cultural
Awareness but only average scores on the Ethnic Loyalty"
(Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 54-55). This type is very
"un-acculturated as those in Type I" (Keefe & Padilla,
1987, p. 55); however they do not identify themselves
with their ethnic group as much as Type I (Keefe &
Padilla, 1987, p. 55).

Type III

This type refers to those who score average on both
the Cultural Awareness and Ethnic Loyalty; and can be
"considered 'bicultural' by some because of their ability
to interact with both Mexican and Anglo cultural spheres"
(Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 55). Type III maintains their
ethnic identity, they are aware of their Mexican
traditions, and they are the largest type of group (Keefe
& Padilla, 1987, p. 55).

Type IV

Type IV are individuals "who have moderately low
scores on both Cultural Awareness and Ethnic Loyalty"
(Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 55). These individuals are

slightly "more acculturated than Type III" (Keefe &

Padilla, 1987, p. 55), however they identify themselves a

lot less with those of Mexican descent than those of Type

III, and their Ethnic Loyalty score is almost as low as

Type V (Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 55).

Type V

Type V are those characterized as scoring "very low

on Cultural Awareness and moderately low on Ethnic

Loyalty" (Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 55). These

individuals include people who "are highly Anglicized and

possess very little knowledge of or identity with Mexican

culture" (Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 55). Only about five

percent of the participants in Keefe and Padilla's (1987)

study resulted to be Type V.

Keefe and Padilla (1987) found that native-born

Mexican Americans acculturate selectively, with some

ethnic traits becoming stronger with later generations.

They also found Mexican and Latino Americans practicing

new patterns of culture not found in the Anglo

communities or in recent Latino immigrants (Keefe &

Padilla, 1987, p. 190). The study found that first

generation immigrants tend to be "lower class, ethnically

set apart and socially isolated" (Keefe & Padilla, 1987,

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p. 191) which makes them "uncertain and powerless" (Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 191) in the greater community. Moreover, the study shows the possibility of a first generation person being more acculturated than others who are also first generation, while others from a later generation may be un-acculturated with strong Ethnic Loyalty to the Mexican and Latino culture (Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 192).

Keefe and Padilla's (1987) study shows characteristics of Latinos and organizes them into categories. This study shows that commonalities can be found in the Latino community and objectively used. It also shows a connection between Cultural Orientation and characteristics.

Mexican/Latino Values

According to Griswold del Castillo (1984), values, traditions, and beliefs of the Mexican American family date back to, "the Mexica-Aztec family" (p. 41), before Spanish colonization, where gender roles were determined at birth, with women "regarded as subordinate to men and morally weak" (p. 41). These values may still be held today in some Mexican American households impacting the

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future of young adults and children by limiting their opportunities.

Familism is another value held high in the Mexican/Latino culture; Gallardo, 2004; Garcia-Preto, 1996; Ruiz, 1995; Sue & Sue 2002, state that researchers view this as a normal commitment within the Latino culture of family relationships and obligations, which should come before one's personal goals (as cited in Carter, Yeh, & Mazzula, 2008, p. 7). "Social and cultural literature (Romero, Cuellar, & Roberts, 2000; Saetermore, Beneli, & Busch, 1999; Sanchez & King, 1986) characterize Latinos as interdependent, collectivistic, and family-oriented, whereas White Americans are viewed as independent, individualistic, and self-focused (Markus & Kitayama, 1991)" (Carter et al., 2008, p. 7). Castañeda, James, and Robbins (1974) similarly state "personal identity is so strongly linked with the family, a sense to achieve for the family is early developed in the child" (p. 19-20). Castañeda et al. (1974) also state the Latino culture believes that, "to strive for individual gain is selfish. Individual competition is seen as destructive because it hurts the family, community, and ethnic unity" (p. 20). Devos, Blanco, Muñoz, Dunn, and Ulloa, (2008) agree and

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state, "Mexican American adolescents place a greater value on family support, assistance, and obligations than do European American youth (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999)" (p. 450). Thus, values of Latino students can both positively and negatively affect their school beliefs, values, and performance.

Culture Clash

Ethnic minorities who live in the United States in a community with people from their own culture live double lives because these ethnic community members interact with a set of cultural norms at home and assimilate to Anglo American culture at work, school, and in public (Keefe & Padilla, 1987, p. 158). Similarly, Carranza (1978) states society believes Mexican and Latino American children come from homes with Anglo "'American' values and traditions" (p. 15); Carranza argues that Chicanos "exist between two incompatibly different sets of value" (p. 15). Niemann, Romero, and Arbona (2000), agree and believe patterns of behavior that do not correspond with "traditional cultural gender roles and attitudes may lead to perceptions of conflict between relationship and education goals" (p. 47).

Several Mexican and Latino Americans have found it difficult to live in the in-between and "many have turned toward a reexamination of the values of their parents and grandparents to seek the meaning of their predicament among themselves" (Carranza, 1978, p. 15). This is an issue that many Latino college students face daily.

Conflicts Between School and Culture

"Latino college students learn to balance values of their culture of origin with values of the college environment" (Devos et al., 2008, p. 450), where as in the Anglo American culture, "personal accomplishments and achievements supersede collective interests and cultural heritages....Although many multicultural individuals navigate successfully between the two worlds, there are often compromises" as a result (Devos et al., 2008, p. 450).

It is believed that the conflict of some traditional beliefs, values, and expectations, may play a part in the low enrollment of Mexican Americans in higher education institutions. If this is true, programs and organizations should be modified to empower and meet the needs of this population.

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Higher Education and Social Supports

Both academic and social support programs need to

adapt to specific populations by examining the problems

of the specific populations they serve. Programs should

adjust the services they provide "to the culture and

norms of specific ethnic and racial groups" (Jansson,

2006, p. 251) which they serve to effectively meet their

needs.

Young adults, from any ethnicity help Latino

children in community programs in a number of ways.

According to Cooper, Denner, and Lopez (1999), young

adults are important role models that help Latino

children "feel confident and safe in their neighborhoods;

learn alternatives to violence; [help] [them] [gain]

[positive] educational experiences; and acquire the

bicultural skills needed for success in school" (Cooper

et al., 1999, p. 54). These persons serve as "cultural

brokers....[helping] [the] [children] by passing on their

understanding of how to retain community traditions while

entering and succeeding in schools, colleges, or local

government" (Cooper et al., 1999, p. 54).

A support group can help bridge the gap between the

cultural conflict minority students face when attending

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college. Among this group, Latino college students can teach their acquired skills that help them to continue their education, such as coping mechanisms. Participants in a support group can share their knowledge of how to successfully navigate the education system, such as other useful services or programs available to them.

A support or mutual aid group can become like a family. As discussed earlier, familism is highly valued in the Latino culture:

> Research suggests that familism contributes to a better mental status of Latinos compared with other minority groups (Mindel, 1980; Padilla, Cervantes, Maldonado, & Garcia, 1988; Ramirez & Arce, 1981) by providing a natural support system that promotes healthy adjustment and growth (Fuligni et al., 1999; Hovey, 2000; Marin & Marin, 1991; Vega, Kolody, Valle, & Weir, 1991) and protecting family members against outside physical and emotional stresses. (Rodriguez, Mira, Myers, Morris, & Cardoza, 2003, p. 237)

A buffer is something that protects them, so although familism can play a negative role in a Latino student's life, it also protects them against outside stressors.

Solberg and Villarreal (1997) believe that the "biosocial perspective" (Social Support & Personal Adjustment section, para. 1) can be applied to ethnic minority students, this is when students believe that they have a source of "social support" (Social Support & Personal Adjustment section, para. 1) available, and will do better handling stressful situations, than students who believe they have little or no "social support available" (Social Support & Personal Adjustment section, para. 1). By providing college students the opportunity to interact in a support group to express and work out their issues, these support groups can become a major source of social support and become a buffer just like a family would.

Cohen and McKay (1984) state support groups are successful when group members have similar issues or problems, and are also successful when a group member has a similar experience as the person sharing, and they share how they resolved the issue. A stronger connection between group members can be made this way, increasing efficacy. Attendance and participation will also be increased if group members feel the group and group process is important. Cohen and McKay (1984) also state

that support groups help alleviate stressful situations because group members may concentrate on the positives of the issue or problem, or on the positives of the individual who is enduring the problem or issue, making it easier for the person to deal with the stress by diverting their attention to something else.

Steinberg (2004) states mutual aid groups are strength based; strengths at times can be intertwined in a personality and when they are to the extreme, they become a negative attribute. In mutual aid groups, strengths are focused on, and used to enhance the life of the individual. Steinberg (2004) also states when strengths are the main focus and are developed, "mutual aid practice helps to reinforce those skills that contribute to both personal and interpersonal well-being while offering the possibility of learning new skills as well" (p. 23).

Existing Academic Programs Tailored for
Ethnic Minorities, Low Income, and
First Generation College Groups

California State University, San Bernardino has

forty percent of its students from the Latino ethnic

group (California State University, San Bernardino, 2010,

Student Diversity section), which means it is a Hispanic

Serving Institution (HSI) (United Stated Department of

Education, 2011a). A Hispanic Serving Institution is

funded through Title V, where, "To earn an HSI

designation, the campus had to enroll an undergraduate

population of at least 25% Latina/o students, with at

least 50% of these students qualifying as 'low-income'"

(Murillo et al., 2010, p. 244).

California State University, San Bernardino has

programs such as Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL),

Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), the Psychological

Counseling Center, and Student Survival Guide which

facilitates student's academic success.

Student Assistance In Learning

Student Assistance In Learning targets "low-income,

first generation and disabled students," (Student

Assistance In Learning, 2010, "The SAIL Program," para.

1). Their goal is to "increase the college retention and

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graduation rates of targeted students at the

undergraduate level through academic support and advising

services" (Student Assistance In Learning, 2010, "The

SAIL Program," para. 1). Student Assistance In Learning

is part of the eight Federal TRIO Programs (TRIO) which

is federally funded, designed to increase the college

enrollment and graduation rates for populations who are

traditionally underrepresented (United States Department

of Education, 2011b), Organization and Staff section,

para. 1). As mentioned earlier, persons of Mexican and

Latino descent are underrepresented in the colleges and

universities.

Educational Opportunity Program

Another program at California State University, San

Bernardino is the Educational Opportunity Program; like

Student Assistance In Learning program, the Educational

Opportunity Program serves low-income and first

generation college students. The Educational Opportunity

Program offers support services such as admission to the

university, "academic advisement, career and personal

counseling, tutoring, financial assistance, and graduate

school information" (Educational Opportunity Program,

2010, The Mission of EOP section).

Psychological Counseling Center

California State University, San Bernardino's Psychological Counseling Center offers "professional counseling services to currently enrolled California State University, San Bernardino students" (Psychological Counseling Center, 2011, About Us section, para. 1). They assist students who may be experiencing mental health symptoms such as mood swings, depression, anxiety, or loneliness, difficulty balancing school and social life, or dealing with divorce (Psychological Counseling Center, 2011, Common Concerns and Issues Discussed section). Most students receiving services however, do not have a mental illness.

Student Survival Guide

The Student Survival Guide website is a new website designed to provide California State University, San Bernardino students from all ethnicities and degree majors with information to successfully navigate their way through the California State University, San Bernardino's many systems. The website provides students with information about the different policies, programs, organizations, and services available to California State

University, San Bernardino students (Student Survival Guide, 2010, Home section).

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

Social Cognitive Career Theory

According to Lent, Brown, and Hackett (2000), social cognitive career theory uses Albert Bandura's 1986 social cognitive theory with social cognitive career theory focusing on "self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals" (p. 36) looking at how these factors along with environmental factors such as "gender, ethnicity, social supports, and barriers" (p. 36) influences the choices a person makes in regards to their career. Social cognitive theory, is the belief that "career development is influenced by both objective and perceived environmental factors....[such] [as] financial support... [and] educational experience" (Lent et al., 2000, p. 37). Lent et al. (2000) also discuss the "Direct and Moderating Effect of Environmental Factors" (p. 38) to career development, which is when a person believes they do not have adequate support and the barriers for the career are too many or too large to bare. Due to the environmental factors, they will not turn the career

interest into a goal, and the goal into action (Lent et al., 2000, p. 38).

Acculturation Theory

The process of acculturation is when there is "both direct and mediated exposure to new values and different lifestyles, and it also may be bidirectional as both immigrants and members of the same ethnic group born in the United States intimately interact" (Pérez & Padilla, 2000, p. 391). Pérez and Padilla (2000), also describe acculturation as "a complex set of attitudinal and behavioral changes that individuals undergo when there is contact with members of a host group that is also the dominant social group in a community" (p. 390-391). Acculturation is an issue that many Latinos face in the United States, whether they are a first generation or fourth generation person living in the United States; however those affected the most are generations with greater ties to their country of origin (Pérez & Padilla, 2000).

Social Ecology Approach

The social ecology approach is a view of an organization that is an "open system that is continually interacting with and adapting to its environment"

(Brueggemann, 2006, p. 347). Mexican Americans are continually interacting with their environment, with Mexican and Latino Americans adapting to Anglo American culture. However, the Anglo American culture does not adapt to the Mexican culture, which results in, "a dysfunctional organization system" (Brueggemann, 2006, p. 347). Brueggemann (2006) believes a dysfunctional organization system "may at one time have been appropriate or workable has [now] become outmoded or incongruent with new conditions" (p. 347). The United States is known to be called a melting pot, where immigrants are expected to conform to new traditions, values, and language in order to assimilate to Anglo American culture. The issue is due to the different values, traditions, and behaviors from ethnic minorities' culture in the dominant Anglo American society; it can cause Latino Americans to be unable to appropriately "cope with the tensions or stresses that the environment presents" (Brueggemann, 2006, p. 347).

Melting Pot Theory

The Melting pot theory competes with the diversity view. Bowser, Jones, and Young (1995) state:

There is clearly a major failure to recognize the

significance of the contributions of African

Americans to the protection of civil liberties of

all Americans, of Mexican Americans to healthy

linguistic diversity, and of Native Americans to

respect for the land and environment. (p. 83)

Bowser et al. (1995) also state, that "these

cultures provide models for coping with and reversing the

oppressive excesses of the dominant culture. They

provide alternative modes of structuring reality and

conceptualizing problems such that novel strategies for

bringing about social change [that] can emerge" (p. 83).

Furthermore, the potential contribution is "neither

recognized nor respected" (Bowser et al., 1995, p. 83) by

many Anglo Americans.

Bowser et al.'s (1995) solution is that the "mostly

north European American culture itself must be radically

changed to recognize the major contributions already made

by, and the validity of the critiques still offered by,

America's diverse peoples of color" (p. 84), due to the

fact that people of color are increasing in numbers and

will become the dominant culture. In order for the Anglo

American culture to survive, Anglo Americans must

recognize that their culture is one of many, and using other ethnic cultures can enhance the "survival and prosperity" (Bowser et al., 1995, p. 84) of America.

Ecological/Systems Perspective

According to Lesser and Pope (2007) the ecological approach deals "with issues of power and oppression" (p. 10) such as the dominate group abusing their power, resulting in poverty, unemployment, and "inadequate social supports in education, health care and housing" (p. 10) for ethnic minority groups. These "inequities in the distribution power" (Lesser & Pope, 2007, p. 10) affect vulnerable groups such as the Latino population in that it "threatens their mental, physical, and social well-being" (Lesser & Pope, 2007, p. 10).

In the ecological/systems perspective, many things impact "vulnerable populations" (Jansson, 2008, p. 9) such as "economic, cultural, social, community, and physiological, as well as discrimination or prejudice. Existing policies are part of their ecology: they limit resources, services, and opportunities that they receive," (Jansson, 2008, p. 9). Historically in the United States, "Mexican Americans, blacks, and American Indians" (Griswold del Castillo, 1987, p. 125) are an

oppressed "ethclass", (Griswold del Castillo, 1987, p. 125) which is when ethnicity and socioeconomic status coexist (Griswold del Castillo, 1987, p. 125). It is argued here that most Mexican Americans fall into the vulnerable populations' category, with policies affecting them resulting in receiving limited resources.

Empowerment Theory

According to Jansson (2006), empowerment is when social workers help clients make their own destinies in the form of teaching them skills to overcome their barriers and find resources (p. 42). Using this theory, social workers should assist the Latino American population and other ethnic minorities by referring them to programs that meet their needs on a cultural level to assist them to be successful in school, and teach them appropriate ways to cope with the cultural clash.

Anti-Affirmative Action Theory

Those who oppose affirmative action argue that affirmative action takes away the right of equality. Arguments against affirmative action includes it is not based on merit, and "it stigmatizes and stereotypes its beneficiaries in their own eyes as well as those of others" (Greenberg, 2002 p. 556). It is also argues that

affirmative action "creates a racially polarizing backlash" (Greenberg, 2002, p. 556); beneficiaries of affirmative action "are more likely to drop out of school; and (6) other groups have succeeded without affirmative action" (Greenberg, 2002, p. 556).

Summary

This chapter discussed how cultural loyalty and attachment can play a role in the low enrollment of Latinos in colleges and universities. Also discussed in this chapter were traditional values of the Latino culture, and how the values of the Mexican culture and the Anglo American culture clashes, leaving the Mexican American students to struggle between the two. Last covered are the theories that guide this study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

This chapter covers the purpose of the study, the rationale for choosing the descriptive study design, and how sampling took place. Also covered is the data collection procedure, the instrument used to answer the research question and how data was analyzed.

Study Design

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between cultural loyalty and attachment, and career aspirations and the perceived realistic career. The study looked at cultural values, perceived obstacles, and family background with regard to its influence on the level of career aspiration and perceived realistic career. This study used a quantitative research method design to objectively assess how cultural loyalty and attachment influences Latino college students' career aspirations and perceived realistic career and generalize the study findings to Latino college students as a whole. Quantitative method was used to facilitate the

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participant's responses to the questions on the
questionnaire.

The design used for this study is descriptive due to
the lack of research on Latinos and their career
aspirations and perceived realistic career. The
limitation of this study design is that it is a
quantitative study where participants answer close-ended
questions, and people have different reasons for
responding to certain questions. For example, a question
may be too broad, and open to wide interpretation, and
due to the research method, the researcher is unable to
interview the participants to ask about their rationale
for their responses on the questionnaire. Once data was
collected, the results were entered in to Predictive
Analytic SoftWare (PASW) Statistics for analysis.

The research question asked is: Is there a
relationship between cultural loyalty and attachment, and
career aspirations and their perceived realistic career?
Therefore, the hypothesis is that there is a negative
relationship between cultural loyalty and attachment, and
college students' career aspiration and perceived
realistic career.

Sampling

College students attending California State University, San Bernardino in the Winter quarter of 2011, who are members of Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) program had the opportunity to participate in this study, along with students at the Santos Manuel Student Union. Students from the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) program were selected as part of the sample because ethnic minority, low-income, and first generation college students were the target population for the study, which is part of the eligibility criteria for the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) program. Students at the Santos Manuel Student Union were also selected as part of the sample for this study, in order to have more diverse responses to the questionnaire and a more diverse sample population. Students from different degree majors had an opportunity to participate in the study. This study used a convenience sample where participants took the initiative to respond to either e-mails (Appendix B) advertising the study, through the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) program, or signs advertising incentives outside of the Santos Manuel Student Union stating "Free

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Snacks with Survey" on the table were the researcher was distributing the questionnaires.

Participants who chose to participate in the study varied in age from eighteen and fifty-five, as well as by sex, selected degree major, religion, and years in school. The sample size consisted of fifty-six California State University, San Bernardino students who attended the Winter quarter of 2011, regardless any units completed or units in progress.

Data Collection and Instruments

The instrument used for this study was created, due to the lack of research studies of the influence of cultural values on career aspirations and perceived realistic career among ethnic minorities. This instrument was created by formulating questions related Keefe and Padilla's (1987) concept of Cultural Awareness and Ethnic Loyalty as discussed in the Literature Review.

The independent variable for this study is cultural loyalty and attachment based on Keefe and Padilla's (1987) concept of Cultural Awareness and Ethnic Loyalty which were measured both on a nominal and ordinal level. Cultural loyalty is defined as choosing one ethnicity

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over another. This may be done by how the person identifies themselves, who they associate with, if they show pride in being associated with their cultural/ethnic group, the food they eat, and if they share the belief of being discriminated like other people in their culture (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). Cultural attachment is defined as having strong ties to an ethnic culture such as sharing the value of familism, teaching their children their ethnic cultural language, being aware of their ethnic cultural history, heroes, and traditional gender roles (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). This study includes six questions about cultural loyalty and attachment measured on a nominal and ordinal level: 1) plans to teach cultural language to their children, 2) how often they eat food from their culture, 3) if they feel they have been discriminated due to their ethnicity or gender, 4) what ethnicity they primarily interact with, 5) if they agree with how their culture believes men and women should act (gender roles), and 6) if they believe they act differently when interacting with people in their culture than with the rest of society.

Career aspiration is a dependent variable and is defined as the career in which the student would like to

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work in if there were no obstacles with one question in the questionnaire explicitly asking in an open-ended question: What career would you like to work in if there were no obstacles?

The perceived realistic career is defined as the career they feel they will most likely work in considering the obstacles. This was also a dependent variable where there was also one question in the questionnaire explicitly asking in an open-ended question: What career would you most likely work in, considering the obstacles and barriers?

Both the career aspiration and the perceived realistic career were measured on an interval score because it is measured by its annual salary which was interval. The salaries of both the aspired and the perceived realistic careers of each participant were researched using the salary information from the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010-11 Edition. In the case where the career had many role options the researcher averaged the salary of the roles and combined the average of all the salaries for an overall average salary for the career. The researcher grouped the annual

salary for the careers by five thousand, starting at forty thousand dollars and ending with one hundred thousand dollars and over, with a total of thirteen groups of salaries for careers.

The data collection instrument includes demographic data and was measured nominally. There were four questions about the educational background of participants, which were measured at the ordinal level. There were two lengthy questions about perceived obstacles, including what would be helpful in order to achieve their realistic career, which was measured as ordinal, with a list of choices, where they rate the choice using Likert scales with the answer choices: *Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree,* and *Strongly Disagree.* The other question that measured obstacles asked what would contribute to achieving the career they will most likely work in also measured at the ordinal level, with a list of choices, where they rate the choice using Likert scales with the answer choices: *Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree,* and *Strongly Disagree.* One question asked why they chose the realistic career, measured ordinally, with a list of choices, where they rate the choice using Likert scales with the answer

choices: *Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree,* and

Strongly Disagree. The researcher used the questions:

Does the cultural loyalty and attachment (independent

variable) of the student influence career aspirations and

the perceived realistic career (dependent variables)?

Does the educational attainment of the participant's

parents (independent variable) influence the career

aspiration or the perceived realistic career (dependent

variables)? Lastly, does the grandparent's educational

attainment (independent variable) influence the career

aspiration or perceived realistic career choice

(dependent variable)? The study also examined the common

career obstacles among ethnic minority students, and

common reasons why they choose a particular career.

The strength of this instrument is that it attempts

to get an overall picture of how cultural loyalty and

attachment, influences career aspirations and the

perceived realistic career. This instrument was based on

Keefe and Padilla's (1987) *Chicano Ethnicity,* using the

Cultural Awareness and Ethnic Loyalty concepts. The

limitation of this instrument is that it was not pre-

tested due to time constraints. Another limitation is

that people choose careers for different reasons other

than the projected annual salary and benefits of the career.

<div align="center">Procedures</div>

Data was collected through paper surveys located at California State University, San Bernardino at both the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) office in the University Hall building, and outside the Santos Manuel Student Union.

Student Assistance In Learning

Information about the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) program and the background of the director were researched in order to build rapport. This was followed by setting an appointment with the director to present the purpose and implications of the study. The director agreed, and provided an approval letter (Appendix C) acknowledging that research could be conducted. Before distributing the questionnaire an e-mail was sent to students in the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) program through the listserv. The e-mail included how to access the questionnaire at the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) office and a brief description of the study. The questionnaire took approximately fifteen

minutes to complete, and was available to students for

three weeks; participants were asked to participate only

one time. The first page of packet was the informed

consent page (Appendix D) and at the end of the

questionnaire for the Student Assistance In Learning

(SAIL) students, there were two raffle tickets. In the

e-mail and on the return box, it indicated that students

were to keep the bottom ticket as proof if they win, and

leave the other ticket attached to the questionnaire

where it would be used to enter them into the raffle. An

e-mail was sent through the listserv of the winning

ticket numbers and students were instructed to take their

winning tickets to the Student Assistance In Learning

(SAIL) office and present it to Student Assistance In

Learning (SAIL) staff to claim their five dollar gift

card to either Starbucks or a printing card from the

Learning Center at the California State University, San

Bernardino campus. Following the raffle tickets was the

debriefing statement page (Appendix E) thanking them for

their participation in the study and again providing the

participants with contact information should they have

any questions or concerns about their participation in

the study. Twenty-seven surveys were collected from the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) program.

Santos Manuel Student Union

Those who took the questionnaire at the Santos Manuel Student Union were given a packet with the informed consent and the questionnaire. Upon completion of the questionnaire, participants were given the debriefing statement along with a bottle of juice and fruit snacks, as advertised on a poster at the table where the researcher was distributing questionnaires. Twenty-nine surveys from students located outside the Santos Manuel Student Union were collected.

Protection of Human Subjects

All participants were given the informed consent statement which included potential benefits and risks of participating in the study, how to discontinue from the study without fear of retribution, and the person to contact about the study if they have any questions or concerns. At the bottom of the informed consent statement, there was a place to check to show the participant read and understood the informed consent

statement. The questionnaire did not ask any identifying information.

Student Assistance In Learning Participants

The participants from the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) program were provided with anonymity because there was no face to face interaction with the students. The participants in the study were people who the researcher did not have any previous contact with and did not have any additional information about the participants other than the information provided. The survey was available for three weeks at the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) office where Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL) students had the opportunity to obtain a questionnaire and return it in the designated return box. Once the participants picked up the questionnaire, the first page consisted of the informed consent page with all the information the study participant would need to decide if they would like to participate in the study.

Only the researcher had access to the study results, as the questionnaire return box was taped closed with bright wrapping paper to attract attention and to make it

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difficult to be tampered with. The return box also had a narrow slot where the questionnaire was inserted through. The researcher periodically checked the surveys to see if more surveys were needed, and to pick up completed surveys.

Santos Manuel Student Union Participants

Students who chose to participate in the study were handed a packet that included the informed consent on the first page and the questionnaire following it. Once the participants completed the survey, they returned it to the return box on the table and were given a debriefing statement.

Once data collection was complete, the researcher saved the data in a locked box in her home.

Data Analysis

A bivariate correlation test was used to analyze data collected. The independent variable used for this study is culture. The researcher used bivariate analyses for the students with stronger cultural loyalty and attachment versus those with less; this level of measurement is both nominal and ordinal. Cultural loyalty and attachment is defined as one's identified

ethnic culture, including shared characteristics of that culture that includes a common language, values, beliefs, customs, and in some cases a history of poverty. The independent variable culture will include whether or not they plan, or are currently teaching their children how to speak, read, and/or write their ethnic cultural language; also the frequency of how many times a week they eat food from their ethnic culture; if they primarily interact with people from their ethnic culture or outside their culture; if they feel they have experienced discrimination; and if they feel they act differently when interacting with people from their ethnic culture versus people from Anglo American society.

The dependent variables are career aspiration and perceived realistic career. Career aspirations are defined as the career in which the student would like to work in if there were no obstacles; and perceived realistic career is defined as the career they feel they will most likely work in considering the obstacles.

Summary

Covered in this chapter was the study design, sampling, and data collection. Also included in this

chapter was the procedures and how participants were

solicited, along with the protection of human subjects

which includes how the study participants were provided

anonymity, and lastly covered was how data was analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter covers a statistical description of the sampled participants of the study, including demographic data, and familial background. Also covered are the reasons behind why students surveyed choose the realistic career along with what they feel will make the realistic career more attainable.

Presentation of the Findings

Of the students that participated in the study, eighty-four percent of the participants were female and sixteen percent were male, with seventy-five percent of the sample being twenty-two years of age or under. Seventy-one and a half percent were involved in academic or social programs and clubs on campus. And forty-eight percent of the sample reported their grade point average at a 3.00 or lower.

Ethnicity and Culture

According to the results, sixty-two and a half percent identified themselves as Mexican, Chicano, Mexican-American, Central American, or South American.

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Seven percent were Caucasian, eleven percent were Black/African American, seven percent were Asian and twelve and a half percent were other. In relation to generation in the United States, twelve and a half percent of the sample were immigrants, and fifty percent were first generation, with eleven percent being second generation, and twenty-seven percent were either third generation, other, or not applicable. Sixty-one percent were able to speak, read, and/or write another language.

Familial Educational Background

When asked what was their parents highest education obtained, forty-four percent reported elementary through high school education, twenty-seven percent reported associate or bachelor degree, seven percent responded masters or doctoral degree, and twelve and half percent either did not respond or reported unknown. When asked what is their parents lowest education, sixty-six percent of the participants responded elementary through high school education, seven percent reported associate or bachelor degree, five and a half percent responded masters or doctoral degree, and twenty-one and a half percent either did not respond or reported known.

Achieving the Perceived Realistic Career

Of the fifty-six participants, ninety-four and a half percent both strongly agreed and agree that study skills, test skills, and time management skills would contribute to achieving the career they most likely will work in. Seventy-eight and a half percent responded that emotional support from their family would make their realistic career more attainable, and seventy-three percent believe emotional support from their friends would help. Ninety-one percent of participants believe that academic guidance, such as information about classes, and tests among other things would help them prepare for their career. Financial support for the study participants was also a factor that they believe would make graduating from college more attainable with ninety-three percent agreeing. Seventy percent of the sampled population believes a tutor would facilitate graduating from college, and seventy-five percent believe knowledge about social programs and organizations on campus would be helpful. Also eighty-six percent believe knowledge about academic programs and organizations on campus would assist them to graduate from college.

Reasons Behind Chosen Perceived Realistic Career

Thirty-nine percent of the sample responded that they chose the realistic career because it has a high salary and had many benefits; while forty-five percent chose the career because they like the work schedule. The results also show that seventy-three percent chose the career because they enjoy working with the population. Participants indicated that they did not choose the career because they feel others expect them to work in that career (43%); instead, seventy-seven percent reported that they chose the career because it gives them personal satisfaction, and because the career is challenging (62.5%). Forty-three percent indicated that they chose it because they have experience in the field, and fifty percent said they had already chosen the career. Fifty-two percent said they did not choose the career because the courses are easy, but rather because they are good at the courses (55.4%). The study shows that thirty-four percent of the sample did not choose their realistic career because the career has status in their culture however, sixty-one percent did chose it because the career has power, and fifty—two percent chose it because it has status in society. Sixty-nine and a

half percent chose the realistic career because they have the opportunity to grow in the career, and seventy-three percent indicated that they chose it because the career provides them the opportunity to grow personally and intellectually from it. Seventy-seven percent responded that they chose the career because they would like to help their culture through their career, eighty-four percent indicated that they would like to better society through their work, and eighty-nine percent reported that they want to help others with their career.

Parental Educational Attainment

This research study shows that the parent's highest education completed is positively correlated with the parent's lowest education attained (Pearson $r = .645$, $p = .000 < .01$) (Appendix F). This means that the higher the education of the parent with the highest education, the parent that has the lowest education, still has a high education and vice versa. There was however, no significant correlation between the parent's educational attainment and the career aspiration or perceived realistic career of the participant.

Grandparent's Educational Attainment

The grandparent's educational attainment was not correlated with either the career aspiration or the perceived realistic career. There was although a relationship between the grandparent's highest education completed and the grandparent's lowest education completed, with the grandparent's highest education obtained positively correlated with the grandparent's lowest education obtained (Pearson $r = .776$, $p = .000 < .01$) (Appendix F). This indicates that the higher the education of the grandparent with the highest education, the grandparent that has the lowest education, still has a high education and vice versa.

Career Aspiration and Perceived Realistic Career

The career aspiration (no obstacles) is positively correlated with the perceived realistic career (with obstacles) (Pearson $r = .508$, $p = .000 < .01$) (Appendix F). This means that the higher the chosen career aspiration calculated by annual salary, the higher the perceived realistic career choice (in annual salary). Conversely, the lower the chosen annual salary of the aspired career for the sampled participants, the lower the annual salary they chose for their realistic career.

Cultural Attachment and Perceived Realistic Career

Most importantly, the study found that there is a negative correlation between the sample teaching their children to speak, read, and/or write their ethnic culture's language and their perceived realistic career choice (Pearson $r = .337$, $p = .011 < .05$) (Appendix F). According to the results, this means that the participants that have stronger cultural ties, enough to teach their children their ethnic language, chose realistic careers with lower annual salaries for their perceived realistic career. This also means that the sampled participants who have less cultural ties to their culture, enough to not teach their children to speak, read, and/or write the ethnic language, perceived their realistic career with having a higher annual salary, than those with stronger ethnic cultural ties.

Summary

Covered in this chapter was a description of the sample, statistics describing the important variables, how the data was analyzed, and the results of the analysis.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter briefly discusses the significant

findings of the study, followed by how the research

findings support the research hypothesis. Also covered

is how the results support the existing literature.

Lastly covered are unexpected results, limitations of the

study, suggestions for further research, and implications

for social work practice.

Discussion

Career Aspiration and Perceived Realistic Career

The career aspiration (no obstacles) is positively

correlated with the perceived realistic career (with

obstacles) (p = .000 < .01). This means that the higher

the chosen career aspiration calculated by annual salary,

the higher the perceived realistic career choice (in

annual salary) is. Conversely, the lower the annual

salary for the sampled participants, the lower the annual

salary they chose for their realistic career.

The social cognitive career theory explains that

actual and perceived environmental factors influence the

choices people make with respect to their career choice. Environmental factors include social support, financial support, educational experiences, and obstacles (Lent et al., 2000). This theory explains how taking into consideration these factors, a person may not convert their career interest into a goal, and the goal into an action (Lent et al., 2000, p. 38). The environmental factors influence a person's perception of their capabilities and their belief of what is attainable for them, thus influencing their career aspirations and perceived realistic career. Also because Mexican Americans have been historically oppressed, and thus the majority live in poverty, Lesser and Pope (2007) state that ethnic minority groups as a result have "inadequate social supports in education" (p. 10). Taking that into account and Solberg and Villarreal's (1997) findings that students' perception of their social support impacts their ability to cope in stressful situations. They found that if they believe they have social support then they do better than those who do not have, or have very little social support. The perception of little or no social support is another obstacle influencing the aspired and perceived realistic career.

Cultural Attachment and Perceived Realistic
Career

Most importantly, there is a negative correlation
between the sample teaching their children to speak,
read, and/or write their ethnic culture's language and
their perceived realistic career (p = .011 < .05).
According to the results, this means that the stronger
the participant has to cultural ties and language, the
lower the annual salary is for their perceived realistic
career. This also means the less the sampled
participants value their culture's language, enough to
teach their children, the higher the perceived realistic
career's annual salary is.

This can be explained by Keefe and Padilla's (1987)
concept of Cultural Awareness which includes the
traditional ethnic culture's language. In Keefe and
Padilla's 1987 study, they found that types I-III, those
who are considered less acculturated have high to average
scores of Culture Awareness, and this could include the
value of familism, known in Mexican American families.
Devos et al. (2008) found that Mexican American teenagers
"place a greater value on family support" (p. 45) and
assistance than Anglo American teenagers. And Castañeda

et al. (1974) also found that in the Mexican culture it is believed that, "to strive for individual gain is selfish" (p. 20). These values and beliefs can contribute to Mexican American college students choosing a career with a lower annual income because they value their family more than having a high paying career. The beliefs of the Mexican American culture also influence the realistic career because they do not want to appear selfish by choosing their career and education over emotionally supporting the family. Devos et al. (2008) also state that even though there are many people who are able to balance the two worlds, "there are often compromises" (p. 450) which can include family unity, a higher paying career, grades, or higher education attainment.

Familial Educational Attainment

Both the parents' and grandparents' educational attainment was not correlated with either the career aspiration or the perceived realistic career. This can be due to later generations "reexamining of the values of their parents and grandparents" (Carranza, 1978, p. 15). Keefe and Padilla (1987) also state that generations acculturate selectively, which can be the reason why

familial educational attainment was not correlated with the participant's career aspirations or the perceived realistic career. Similarly, Pérez and Padilla (2000) state that acculturation is "attitudinal and behavioral changes" (p. 390) which explains why it is not correlated.

Unanticipated Results

Familial Educational Attainment. This research study found that both the highest parent and grandparent education attained is correlated with the parent and grandparent's the lowest education attained (p = .000 < .01), which means that the parents and grandparents with the lowest education have a similar education as those of the parent or grandparent with the highest education and vice versa. This can be explained by examining Keefe and Padilla (1987) study that found that immigrants tend to be "lower class, ethnically set apart and socially isolated" (p. 191). This study found that fifty percent of the sample are first generation United States residents or citizens, which makes their parents immigrants. This explains their similar educational background because their interaction among each other is more likely.

Limitations

Limitations for this study include the lengthiness
of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was six pages
long and the researcher found that many participants
complained on some level, either verbally or nonverbally
about the length. The researcher found that some
questions were not asked clearly, such as the table that
asked the participants to write in their parents and
grandparents occupation in the box that corresponded with
their level of education. The researcher also found that
it was difficult to word questions in a nonbiased way. A
the researcher also found that it may have been easier to
provide a list of grouped careers for the participants to
choose from instead of using a fill in the blank method
to answer the question, making it more time consuming for
the researcher because she had to research the salaries
for the chosen careers of the participants.

The responses the participants gave to the career
aspirations and perceived realistic career were vague
which made it difficult for the researcher to find the
annual salary. Aside from being difficult to find, the
researcher had to average the salaries for the careers
given because they were so vague, making it not as

accurate because many careers have different roles and positions within the one career. Also many participants reported the same career for the career aspiration and the perceived realistic career which results in no discrepancy. The researcher could have worded the question differently or included an additional question asking: If you would be unable to attain a job in your aspired career, what would be your second, realistic career choice?

<div align="center">Recommendations for Social Work
Practice, Policy and Research</div>

Recommendations include that social workers and other professionals who work with ethnic minorities have an understanding of the immense impact culture plays for Mexican Americans who are attending higher education and training. Vega and López (2001) believe that if Latinos were encouraged and educated early in school about the importance of higher education, there would be more bilingual/bicultural practitioners. Vega and López (2001) also believe that Latino students should take part in "summer internships" (p. 197) to gain "first hand experiences" (p. 197), and there needs to be an increase of Latinos graduating high school.

This can be achieved by educating the ethnic minority communities about the various programs, and services available to them such as financial aid, the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), the Student Assistance In Learning (SAIL), and other programs. This can be carried out by having workshops in Spanish and English after work hours and public advertisements via the various forms of media also in Spanish and English to educate parents and potential first generation college students about the process and prerequisites necessary to attend.

In order to prioritize education in the ethnic minority population to ultimately increase the number of much needed bicultural/bilingual professionals, encouragement is needed from the federal and state government. This can be done by producing policies with grants and loan forgiveness programs geared toward ethnic minorities who serve and will serve in social service programs and organizations. This will encourage underserved populations, such as ethnic minorities to seek social services, and get the treatment they need by increasing their comfort level.

It is recommended that research studies focus on the barriers ethnic minorities face when applying for and receiving social services and education. The research findings could facilitate the process and increase the consumer rate within these populations by improving programs, and training professionals and staff to be more culturally competent.

Conclusions

This research study reviewed the various environmental factors that influence Mexican American college students and other ethnic minorities. The study found that there was a negative correlation between the participants teaching their children their ethnic culture's language and their perceived realistic career. However, due to the sample population size, this finding cannot be generalized to other ethnic minority college students attending other universities.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire

1. I consider myself as:
☐ White/Caucasian
☐ Mexican
☐ Chicano/a
☐ Mexican-American
☐ American
☐ Central American
☐ South American
☐ Black/African American
☐ Asian
☐ Bi-racial
☐ Other _____

2. How fluent are you in another language?
☐ I can speak, write, and read
☐ I can speak, but either not write or read
☐ I can only speak the other language
☐ I can neither speak, read, or write another language

3. I am:
☐ Male
☐ Female

4. The year I was born is: _____

5. Which statement do you agree with the most?
I will teach my children....
☐ to speak, write, and read my culture's language
☐ to speak, but not write or read my culture's language
☐ to only speak my culture's language
☐ to neither speak, read, or write my culture's language
☐ I can neither speak, read, or write another language

6. I am ____ generation.
☐ An immigrant- you were born in another country
☐ First generation- your parents immigrated into the U.S., but you were born in the U.S.
☐ Second Generation- you and your parents were born in the U.S.
☐ Third Generation- your grandparents, parents, and you were born in the U.S.
☐ Other
☐ Not applicable, everyone I've ever known in family was born in the U.S.

7. Write in the box the occupation as it applies best in relation to education achieved. The **highest** education completed by my:

	Unknown	Elementary	Middle school	High school	Associates degree	BA/ BS	MA /MS	PhD
Example: Parents				Teacher Assistant				
Grandparents								
Parents								

8. Write in the box the occupation as it applies best in relation to education achieved. The **lowest** education completed by my:

	Unknown	Elementary	Middle school	High school	Associates degree	BA/ BS	MA /MS	PhD
Grandparents								.
Parents								

9. The lowest skill job I have had is:
☐ Janitorial
☐ Agriculture
☐ Warehouse
☐ Cashier
☐ Fast food
☐ Sales Associate
☐ Other _____

10. I eat food from my culture ___ in a week.
☐ Very often
☐ Most of the time
☐ Once in a while
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

11. I have felt discriminated against due to my ethnicity, or gender.
☐ Agree
☐ Disagree

12. The people you primarily interact with are:
☐ From your identified culture
☐ Are not from your identified culture

☐ You interact with people who are and are not from your culture

13. I agree with how my culture believes that men and women should act in a certain way.
☐ True
☐ False

14. I feel I act one way when around people in my culture, and another way when interacting with the rest of society.
☐ Like me
☐ Unlike me

15. In elementary, middle and/or high school, I was enrolled in any English as a Second Language classes (ESL, ELD, etc.)
☐ True
☐ False
How many years total? _____

Your College Experience

16. **I was or am** currently in an academic or social club(s) or program(s) at the university level (i.e., EOP.&S, EOP, SAIL, etc.).
☐ Agree
☐ Disagree
Which ones? _____

17. My major is:

_____

18. My GPA is:

_____

19. I am a __ year college student:
☐ Freshman, first year
☐ Second year
☐ Third year
☐ Fourth year
☐ Fifth year
☐ Sixth year or more
☐ Graduate student (Master's or PhD, Professional)

20. The career I would like to work in if there **were no obstacles** is:

_____

21. The factors that I believe would contribute to **not achieving** the **ideal career** I chose above is:

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

Grades: 1 2 3 4 5

Too many years of school: 1 2 3 4 5

Little emotional support: 1 2 3 4 5

Little academic guidance (unsure of prerequisites
i.e. classes, tests, etc. to take for career) : 1 2 3 4 5

Little Financial support: 1 2 3 4 5

Not enough field experience: 1 2 3 4 5

Too competitive to get a job: 1 2 3 4 5

Lack of social support, not a lot 1 2 3 4 5
of people like me in the career:

It is too academically difficult/stressful: 1 2 3 4 5

22. The career I would most likely work in, **considering obstacles and barriers** is:

_____

23. How much do you agree with the statements below:
I am working toward this career (the career you stated you were **most likely to work in**) because:

	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Neutral 3	Disagree 4			Strongly Disagree 5	

There are many job openings: 1   2   3   4   5

It is easy to get a job: 1   2   3   4   5

This career is not very competitive: 1   2   3   4   5

The salary is high and has many benefits: 1   2   3   4   5

I like the schedule: 1   2   3   4   5

I like working with this population: 1   2   3   4   5

I am expected to by others: 1   2   3   4   5

It gives me personal satisfaction: 1   2   3   4   5

I have experience in this field: 1   2   3   4   5

The academic courses are easy: 1   2   3   4   5

I am good at the academic courses for this career: 1   2   3   4   5

I have already chosen this academic path: 1   2   3   4   5

The career is challenging, I like a challenge: 1   2   3   4   5

This career holds power and authority: 1   · 2   3   4   5

This career holds a special status in society: 1   2   3   4   5

This career holds a special status in my culture: 1   2   3   4   5

This career provides opportunities to grow
career wise: 1   2   3   4   5

This career provides opportunities to grow on a
personal/intellectual level: 1   2   3   4   5

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 1 | | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

I want to help a family member or a friend
with this career: 1   2   3   4   5

I want to better society: 1   2   3   4   5

I want to help people of my culture: 1   2   3   4   5

I want to help others: 1   2   3   4   5

24. Which of the following would make graduating from college a more attainable task?
The factors that I believe **would contribute** to **achieving** the career I will **most likely work** in is:

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 1 | | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Study/test skills, time management: 1   2   3   4   5

Grades: 1   2   3   4   5

Emotional support from family: 1   2   3   4   5

Emotional support from friends: 1   2   3   4   5

Academic guidance (information about
classes, tests, ect. to take for career):   1   2   3   4   5

Financial support: 1   2   3   4   5

A tutor: 1   2   3   4   5

Knowledge about **social** programs
and organizations on campus: 1   2   3   4   5

Knowledge about **academic**
programs and organizations on campus: 1   2   3   4   5

Survey developed by Heather Lynn Hernández

APPENDIX B

E-MAIL

SAIL students:

Heather Hernandez, a Social Work graduate student, is conducting research for her master's thesis and has developed a survey that will help her gather important data for this project. Read on to see how you can get involved.

Debbie Flores, Director
SAIL

Earn a chance to win a gift card from Starbucks or a $5 Printing Card by filling out a questionnaire at the SAIL office!

If you are between the ages of 18-55, come take part in a study that examines the relationship between acculturation and career aspirations. The study consists of a questionnaire that should take approximately 15 minutes to complete, and will not ask any identifying information, and will be anonymous. This study poses no immediate or long-range benefits or risks, and your participation is entirely voluntary.

The questionnaire will be located in the SAIL office (UH-386) between Feb.4- Feb. 18 noon. Please participate only one time. Participants will have a chance to win 1 of 4 gift cards to Starbucks, or a $5 printing card!

Here are the steps to follow:
1) Please read and check the Informed Consent form (the first page).

2) The questionnaire is attached to the Informed Consent, followed by a ticket that will be used for the raffle.

3) **Please keep one of the raffle tickets and the Debriefing Statement (the last page),** and leave the other raffle ticket attached to the questionnaire. (You will need the other ticket as proof if you win.)

4) An email will be sent with the winning ticket numbers, just present your winning ticket to SAIL staff and enjoy your gift card.

APPENDIX C

AGENCY APPROVAL LETTER

TO: Rosemary McCaslin
            Social Work Subcommittee, IRB

FROM: Deborah Flores
            Director, SAIL

DATE: January 25, 2011

SUBJECT: Approval for Heather Lynn Hernandez to Conduct Research with SAIL
Students

I grant approval for social work graduate student Heather Lynn Hernandez to
distribute surveys to CSUSB students enrolled in the Student Assistance In Learning
(SAIL) Program as part of a study exploring the relationship between acculturation
and career aspirations.

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT

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INFORMED CONSENT

The study that you are about to participate in will explore the relationship between acculturation and career aspirations among college students at CSUSB. This study is conducted by Heather Lynn Hernández, a social work graduate student from CSUSB, under the supervision of Dr. Pa Der Vang.

This study consists of a questionnaire that should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaire includes questions about demographics, cultural values and beliefs, career aspirations, the educational background of participants, actual and perceived obstacles, and various systems of support.

The questionnaire will not ask any identifying information, and will be anonymous. Should you wish to not answer specific questions in the study, you can skip questions in the study without penalty. If you have any questions or concerns you can contact Dr. Pa Der Vang, at the School of Social Work, California State University, San Bernardino, located at 5500 University Parkway San Bernardino, CA 92407-2397, or call her at (909) 537-5501.

This study poses no immediate or long-term benefits or risks. Your participation is entirely voluntary. This study has been approved by the School of Social Work Sub-committee of the Institutional Review Board at California State University, San Bernardino. By marking the box below I acknowledge I am at least 18 years old and have read and understand the purpose of this study.

☐ I am fully informed about this study   Today's date _____

APPENDIX E

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. The study you participated in examines how acculturation influences career aspirations. This study also looks at cultural values, and family background and its influence career aspirations. If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact Dr. Pa Der Vang in the School of Social Work. To obtain the results of this study you can obtain a copy after September 2011, located in the Pfau Library at 5500 University Ave, San Bernardino, CA 92407-2393.

Best Regards,

Heather Lynn Hernández

APPENDIX F

TABLES

What are your parents highest and lowest education attained?

Correlations

		Parents Highest Edu	Parents Lowest Edu
Parents Highest Edu	Pearson Correlation	1	.645**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	56	56
Parents Lowest Edu	Pearson Correlation	.645**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	56	56

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

What are your grandparents highest and lowest education attained?

Correlations

		Grandparents Highest Edu	Grandparents Lowest Edu
Grandparents Highest Edu	Pearson Correlation	1	.776**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	56	56
Grandparents Lowest Edu	Pearson Correlation	.776**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	56	56

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

What is your aspired career, and what is the career you feel you will most likely work in?

Correlations

		Career No obstacles	Career with Obstacles
Career No obstacles	Pearson Correlation	1	.508**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	56	56
Career with Obstacles	Pearson Correlation	.508**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	56	56

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Would you teach your children how to speak, read, or write your culture's language, and what would be your realistic career of choice?

Correlations

		Teach Culture	Career with Obstacles
Teach Culture	Pearson Correlation	1	.337*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.011
	N	56	56
Career with Obstacles	Pearson Correlation	.337*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	
	N	56	56

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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