

Hispanic Youth's Educational Expectations, Cultural Values, and
Parental Support for Higher Education

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Abstract

Higher education has social and economic benefits, yet Hispanic Americans complete higher education at lower rates than non-Hispanic Whites. Using an expectancy-value theory framework I tested four hypotheses: (1) parental academic encouragement would be related to educational attainment expectations in Hispanic high school students, (2) instrumental support would be necessary for parental encouragement to be linked to educational attainment expectations, (3) students who expected to financially contribute to their family would have lower educational attainment expectations than their peers with less financial contribution expectations, (4) students who felt pressure to remain close to home would be more likely than peers to expect to attend a community college rather than a four-year institution. Hispanic high school students (22 boys, 25 girls) who were of Mexican heritage completed measures of educational attainment expectations, parental encouragement, instrumental support, and Hispanic familism values. A positive correlation was found between general academic encouragement and students' educational attainment expectations ($r(45) = .41, p = .004$), but this relationship was not moderated by instrumental support. Hypothesis 3 was supported with a significant negative correlation between family contribution expectations and the expectation of completing a bachelor's degree $r(45) = -.37, p = .011$, and master's degree $r(45) = -.30, p = .042$. Results did not support Hypothesis 4. Reducing familial pressures to work after high school may foster educational attainment expectations and increase college enrollment in Hispanic youth.

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College education is a path to higher income and increased social mobility. Individuals in the United States with a bachelor's degree earn 65% more than high school graduates and 130% more than those without a high school diploma (Douglas, 2009). On average, Hispanics in the U.S. appear to value formal education: About 95% of Hispanics in the U.S. responded that it was "very important" for their child to obtain a college degree (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004).

However, parental aspirations do not appear to translate into academic attainment. Only 26% of Hispanics ages 18 to 24 were enrolled in college in 2008, compared to 44% of non-Hispanic Whites (Aud et al., 2010). Further complicating the benefits of formal education attainment are the college choices of Hispanics, with only 56% of college matriculants enrolling in a 4-year institution and the rest in trade schools or 2-year community colleges (Pew Hispanic Center, 2013). Furthermore, Hispanic students are less likely than non-Hispanic Whites to enroll in selective institutions or to enroll full time (Pew Hispanic Center, 2013).

The purposes of this study were to evaluate new measures of parental support and cultural values, and to test a set of hypotheses about the educational attainment expectations of Hispanic youth. I hypothesized that: (1) general and college-targeted encouragement would be related to higher educational attainment expectations for Hispanic high school students; (2) instrumental support would be necessary in order for Hispanic parents' encouragement to be linked to high educational attainment expectations in their children; (3) Hispanic students who expect to contribute financially to their families would have lower educational attainment expectations than those who do not, as this expectation poses a significant barrier to attaining a college education; (4) Hispanic students who experience pressure to live at home would be more

likely than others to expect to attend community college rather than a four-year college. These hypotheses were derived from expectancy-value theory and cultural research on Hispanic families.

Expectancy-Value Theory and Educational Attainment Expectations

Expectancy-value theory posits that expectancies (expectations for success) and values (what students deem as important) directly affect students' choice of which academic tasks are pursued, their persistence, and their academic achievement (Wigfield & Cambria, 2010).

The expectations others have of the student and parental socialization affect both the values of the student and their own expectations of educational attainment (Wigfield & Cambria, 2010). Individuals' evaluation of the difficulty of the task and the perceived utility and costs of a goal also influence motivation (Wigfield & Cambria, 2010). In the current study, I apply these theoretical ideas to Hispanic youths' decisions to apply to college, exploring ways in which values and expectations play a role in students' educational attainment expectations. In this paper I begin by first exploring the relation between expectations and educational attainment.

Educational attainment expectations indicate the highest level of education that students expect to attain in their lifetime. These expectations positively predict formal educational attainment across race and gender (Reynold & Burge, 2008). Expectations are measured in order to gauge what the student believes is attainable when he/she considers all factors present in his/her life. Drawing from expectancy-value theory, perceived barriers are expected to decrease educational expectations because barriers make a task more difficult to obtain, thus increasing perceptions of difficulty and cost. In contrast, support may reduce the expectation of barriers and thus increase educational attainment expectations as the perceived difficulty of the task is

lowered. In addition, parental messages about the importance of education could serve to increase students' valuing of education.

Support and Encouragement

Students must have considerable knowledge about how to search for colleges, ways to obtain financial aid, and application procedures in order to successfully navigate the college search and application process. For too many first-generation Hispanic immigrants, even if parents desire that their children succeed academically, family members do not have this type of knowledge, and thus may not be able to provide the instrumental support these students need to successfully pursue higher education. Instrumental support is provided through helpful information or knowledge that leads to academic success and college matriculation, or through material or behavioral support such as offering to pay for an SAT preparatory class. This type of support helps the student make informed choices about which classes to take in order to succeed academically. Examples of instrumental support include helping students with homework, college applications, searching for financial aid, and evaluating the fit of a potential school. This type of support can come from anyone with whom the student is in contact, such as siblings, parents, peers, teachers, school counselors, or other adults. Within the framework of expectancy-value theory, instrumental support helps students reach their goals because such support serves both to remove barriers (i.e., making a task easier) and makes the goal less costly (e.g., providing information about financial aid, needing less time to complete applications due to guidance).

One of the ways that instrumental support is observed in Hispanic students is through chain enrollment. Chain enrollment is characterized by student enrollment in institutions where a primary social contact or family member is or was previously enrolled (Person & Rosenbaum, 2006). This contact becomes a source of help in the enrollment process as well as a source of

information about the institution. This support might come at a cost. Qualitative research has shown that Hispanic students who relied on social contacts such as friends and siblings for information about schools did less research into the fit of the school than students who did not rely on social contacts (Person & Rosenbaum, 2006). In contrast, Hispanic students in high schools with supportive staff and teachers approached school personnel rather than their families in the college decision process (Farmer-Hinton, 2008). These students recognized that the teachers were better sources of information than their parents and friends.

In summary, the presence of instrumental support from teachers and school staff was related to student reliance on these individuals in order to make college enrollment decisions (Farmer-Hinton, 2008). In an absence of such support, students relied on their social contacts and family in an attempt to make the application task easier. However, family members and social contacts may misguide students if they do not have adequate knowledge about what is necessary for success in college search and admissions. For this reason, instrumental support likely plays a critical role in the college matriculation of Hispanic students from disadvantaged backgrounds. These students and their families will have to search for sources of information, and their success or failure in this search will predict these students' enrollment prospects. Lack of knowledge about financial aid or scholarship opportunities may push a student to completely forgo his or her college aspirations in order to avoid the burden of paying for college. However, because of the high educational aspirations Hispanic parents endorse, they will likely encourage their children, relaying the importance they place on education.

General academic encouragement is characterized as home-based actions, statements, and attitudes that support the student academically. General encouragement may take the form of messages (e.g., conversations) that serve to instill in the student the importance of education or

may be general rules at home such as prioritizing homework over household chores. For example, qualitative research with Latina students has shown that Latino parents have conversations with their daughters about the difficulties that life carries for those without formal education (Ceja, 2004). These messages were related to students' academic expectations and valuing of education among low SES Latino students: Parents' discussions about the future and about their sacrifices for their children were positively correlated with students' educational attainment expectations and their valuing of education (Ceballo et al., 2014). Additionally, general academic encouragement (e.g., encouraging the student to do well in school) is nearly as predictive of academic achievement in high school as are actions such as attending parent-teacher meetings and other school functions (LeFevre & Shaw, 2012).

Students whose parents engaged in academic encouragement were more likely to graduate on time (LeFevre & Shaw, 2012). These parental messages were also more predictive of academic motivation than grades (Plunkett et al., 2008). In summary, it appears that Hispanic parents who engage in academic encouragement foster their children's educational success. In this study I measure two types of academic encouragement: College Targeted Encouragement (messages about the importance of college) and General Academic Encouragement (messages about the importance of education). I want to determine whether these are indeed two separate constructs and whether the two have a different relation to youth's educational attainment expectations.

Familism and Expectations Regarding Living at Home

In spite of their efforts to foster their children's educational success, Hispanic parents may have a negative effect on youth's expectations and educational attainment due to cultural familism values. The home life of most Hispanic students is characterized by strong ties to the

family (Calzada, Fernandez, & Cortes, 2010). Although there are positive benefits to strong family ties, familism (valuing of family connections; sense of responsibility to family members) may sometimes be detrimental to students' college enrollment and persistence. One aspect of familism is the belief that personal (i.e., individual) interests are subordinate to family interests (Ovink, & Kalogrides, 2015). Further strengthening this dynamic is the notion of *respeto* (i.e., respect), which is characterized as obedience and deference towards parents and elders in the family (Calzada et al., 2010). These fundamental values of Hispanic families may have strong and far-reaching effects on the decisions Hispanic students make about their futures.

It is clear that Hispanic students make different college choices than non-Hispanic Whites, with only about 56% of Hispanics enrolling in a 4-year university compared to 72% of non-Hispanic Whites (Pew Hispanic Center, 2013). The influence of familism may be particularly salient during the college choice process. Qualitative research with high-achieving Latino college-bound high school juniors and seniors showed that parents sometimes pressured their children to live close to home during college (Perez & McDonough, 2008). In addition, the greater sense of family obligation in Latino students explained a significant portion of the tendency to live at home (Fuligni & Pendersen, 2002). Notably, living at home often requires students to attend a local community college rather than a four-year institution. Alternatively, a student might enroll in a four-year college that is close to home and reject an admissions offer from a more prestigious university that would require the student to live away from home. Therefore, because of familism values, parents' expectations regarding students' place of residence may shape the educational trajectories of Hispanic young adults.

Familism may also affect college enrollment and persistence for Hispanic students if the student is expected to financially support his or her family. Hispanic college students' valuing of

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education and academic motivation were not enough to keep them from dropping out of college when the families of these individuals expected economic assistance (Witkow, Huynh, & Fuligni, 2015). Thus, family obligations such as the need to provide financially for one's family can have detrimental effects on the completion of a college education. This expectation is important to examine because the sense of duty to respect and financially support the family increases as Hispanic individuals enter young adulthood (Fuligni & Pendersen, 2002). Similarly, individuals who more strongly believed in the importance of supporting and respecting the family were more likely to contribute financially to the family (Fuligni & Pendersen, 2002). A conflict of goals may arise if demands of college and of the family contradict each other, as the student may feel pressured to economically assist the family, reducing time dedicated to schoolwork.

It is clear that through indirect or direct interaction, Hispanic parents are uniquely and powerfully able to influence their children's educational outcomes. Supportive families appear to provide benefits to students; however, certain familial expectations can inadvertently negatively impact educational outcomes. Living at home limits the student's college choices, and if the student is not located near strong educational institutions, he or she may be forced to attend poorly performing institutions in order to conform to the expectation to live at home. Hispanics who are the first in their families to go to college and/or the first generation born in the U.S. may have additional obstacles such as lacking knowledge about how U.S. school systems work or the requirements to attend college.

The Current Study

I had two goals for the present study. First, I wanted to validate new measures of parental support and encouragement, instrumental support, economic assistance demands, and

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expectations to live at home for use with Hispanic high school students. Second, I tested four hypotheses. (1) Utilizing the expectancy-value model, I anticipated that general academic encouragement and college-targeted encouragement would be related to higher educational attainment expectations in Hispanic high school students because parental encouragement would encourage youth to value education. (2) Instrumental support would be necessary in order for Hispanic parents' encouragement to be linked to high educational attainment expectations in their children, as without instrumental support, the task of applying to college would seem to be too costly (e.g., college seems too expensive due to lack of information about financial aid; information about how to successfully search for and apply to college is necessary to maintain high expectations). (3) Hispanic students who expected to contribute financially to their families would have lower educational attainment expectations than those who do not, as this expectation would pose a significant barrier to attaining a college education. (4) Hispanic students who experienced pressure to live at home would be more likely than others to expect to attend community college rather than a four-year college.

Method

Participants

Participants were Hispanic students enrolled in ninth and tenth grade at a magnet high school in Texas. Recruitment letters were sent home with all ninth and tenth grade students (regardless of Hispanic or non-Hispanic background), and scripted informational announcements were made in class by teachers. Due to the small number of non-Hispanic students at the school (14), and to simplify data collection, no students were excluded from data collection, but data from non-Hispanic students were not included in analyses.

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A total of 47 Hispanic students (22 boys, 25 girls) participated. The mean age of participants was $M_{age} = 15.2$ ($SD_{age} = 0.80$). Of these students, 38 were second-generation immigrants (individual born in U.S., both parents born outside of U.S.), eight were third-generation immigrants (individual born in U.S. and one or both parents also born in the U.S.), and one was born outside of the U.S. Finally, 16 were in the 9th grade, and 31 were in the 10th grade. The majority of the parents were from Mexico ($n_{father} = 40$, $n_{mother} = 39$). Some were U.S. born ($n_{father} = 4$, $n_{mother} = 7$), and three were from El Salvador ($n_{father} = 2$, $n_{mother} = 1$). Ten fathers had attended or completed elementary school, 11 attended or completed middle school, 19 attended or completed high school, and seven attended or completed a course of study above high school. Mothers had a similar educational profile with four attending or completing elementary school, 14 attending or completing middle school, 20 attending or completing high school, and nine attending or completing a course of study above high school.

Measures

Unless otherwise noted, all measures used 1 to 7 Likert scales (1 = *Strongly Disagree*; 7 = *Strongly Agree*). Negatively-worded items were reverse coded. Unless otherwise described below, aggregate scores were calculated for each measure by averaging item responses. Cronbach's alphas were calculated in order to determine inter-item reliability of each scale. All items from the survey appear in appendix A.

Educational attainment expectations. Students were asked to rate how likely it was that they would complete certain educational levels (i.e., high school diploma/GED, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctorate) on a 1 to 7 scale (1 = *Very Unlikely*, 4 = *Maybe*, 7 = *Very Likely*). These scores were summed to create a single measure of educational attainment expectations.

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College-targeted encouragement. This scale was comprised of 7 items that addressed parents' messages regarding the need for a college education (e.g., "My parents talk to me about what types of jobs I will have if I do or do not go to college."). These messages specifically mentioned college as opposed to being general encouragement for education. This subscale had a low alpha reliability of $\alpha = 0.23$. Alpha reliability tests for only the reverse coded items (4 items; $\alpha = 0.35$) and for positively worded items (2 items; $r = 0.64$) yielded better reliabilities (one item was omitted from positive items to increase the correlation). In the analyses reported below, I used the average of the two positively-worded items because of their greater reliability.

General academic encouragement. This scale consisted of 4 items that measured parental messages in support of education in general (e.g., "My parents talk about the struggles they went through as a result of not having an education."). The alpha reliability of this scale was $\alpha = 0.59$.

Instrumental support. Instrumental support was defined as tangible actions that promote success in high school and eventual college matriculation (e.g., "My parents help me with my school work"). This measure was comprised of 7 items measuring parental instrumental support, 7 items to gauge adult-mentor instrumental support, and 7 items about peer instrumental support (cousin, classmate, older sibling). The alpha reliability of the parental scale was $\alpha = 0.66$, for the mentor scale $\alpha = 0.92$, and for the peer scale $\alpha = 0.90$.

Parental Financial support. A 4-item scale was developed to measure the messages that parents conveyed to their children regarding their ability to pay for college expenses (e.g., "My parents are willing to pay my application fees if they can"). Alpha reliability for this scale was $\alpha = 0.55$.

Family contribution expectations. Students rated their parents' or other family members' expectations for the student to contribute financially to the family during high school. The measure consisted of 2 items (e.g., "My parents encourage me to have a job"). The correlation between these items was $r = 0.61$.

Physical proximity. This scale measured students' perceptions of their parents' expectations for their child to live at or near the family home, during college or after leaving college. The scale was comprised of 3 items (e.g., "My parents do not want me to move too far away for college"). Alpha reliability was $\alpha = 0.94$.

Displays of pride. Students reported parents' displays of pride (i.e., instances when parents were visibly pleased with the academic performance of their child) on 3 items (e.g., "My parents tell other people about my school accomplishments"). Alpha reliability was $\alpha = 0.83$.

Family formation advice. This 3-item scale measured the messages that parents conveyed to their children regarding romantic relationships and the timing for when to start a family (e.g., "My parents advise me against getting married too young."). The alpha reliability for this subscale was low $\alpha = 0.23$ so an item was dropped and the alpha reliability recalculated. The new correlation between the two items was $\alpha = 0.72$.

Friends' college attitudes. This scale consisted of participants' perceptions of peers' attitudes towards higher education (e.g., "My closest friends speak about going to college"). The scale consisted of 5 items. This subscale had an alpha reliability of $\alpha = 0.67$.

Friends' academic risk behaviors. The 4-item friends' behaviors scale measured the behaviors and actions of close friends of the participant that may inhibit academic success (e.g., "I have friends who skip school frequently"). This scale was measured on a 1 to 7 scale and had

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the following anchors (1 = *None*, 2 = *Almost None*, 3 = *Very Few*, 4 = *Some*, 5 = *Very Many*, 6 = *More Than Half*, 7 = *All of Them*). The alpha reliability for this subscale was $\alpha = 0.77$.

Demographic information. Demographic information about the students and each of their parents was collected. Students reported their parents' country of birth, number of years parents had lived in U.S., number of years of parents' U.S. schooling, parents' highest level of education, and parents' spoken English proficiency. Students also reported their own race/ethnicity, country of birth, generational status, birth date and age, age of arrival in U.S., number of years lived outside the U.S., current level of education, and gender.

Procedure

Students completed the survey measures online during a core class period at school. The average length of time required for survey completion was about 30 minutes. Students opened the survey link and read the assent form. Students who did not provide assent were directed away from the survey. Students who provided assent were directed to the survey and completed it. Teachers answered students' questions about wording and other issues. After completing the survey, each student received a \$10 gift card.

Results

As stated in Hypothesis 1, I expected that students' reports of general academic encouragement and college-targeted encouragement from their parents would be related to higher expectations for their eventual educational attainment. To test this hypothesis, I calculated bivariate correlations between the two types of encouragement and students' reports of their likelihood of completing advanced degrees. General academic encouragement was positively correlated with the aggregate score of student educational attainment expectations $r(45) = .41, p$

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= .004. Contrary to expectations, the correlations between college targeted encouragement and the aggregate student educational attainment expectation score was not significant $p > .10$.

According to Hypothesis 2, instrumental support would be necessary in order for Hispanic parents' encouragement to be linked to high educational attainment expectations in their children. To test this hypothesis, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted using educational attainment expectations as the dependent variable. In the first step, I entered general academic encouragement and instrumental support from a mentor. These variables did not account for a significant amount of variance of educational attainment expectations $R^2 = .19$, $F(2, 44) = 5.14$, $p > .05$. The second step added an interaction variable (general academic encouragement x instrumental support from mentor) and was also not significant $R^2 = .19$, $F(3, 43) = 3.36$, $p > .10$. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported.

According to Hypothesis 3, Hispanic students who expect to contribute financially to their families would have lower educational attainment expectations than students who do not expect to contribute financially. To test this hypothesis, I calculated a bivariate correlation between the family contribution expectation score and the aggregate educational attainment expectations score. This correlation was not significant $p > .10$. Additionally, I conducted correlations of family contribution expectation and students' expectations that they would complete specific degrees (i.e., Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD). The correlation between family contribution expectations and the expectation of completing a bachelor's degree was significant, $r(45) = -.37$, $p = .011$, as well as completing a master's degree $r(45) = -.30$, $p = .042$, indicating that students who experienced higher expectations to contribute financially to their families reported lower likelihood of degree attainment. The correlation between family contribution expectation and a PhD degree expectations were not significant $p > .10$.

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According to Hypothesis 4, Hispanic students who experienced pressure to live at home would be more likely than others to expect to attend community college rather than a four-year college. A *t*-test of the mean physical proximity expectations score was conducted between students who expected to attend a community college or trade school ($n = 8$), and students who expected to go to a 4-year institution ($n = 39$). The difference in the physical proximity expectation scores of students who expect to go to a community college ($M_{PhPE} = 4.7$, $SD_{PhPE} = 0.45$) and those who expected to attend a 4-year university in their first year of college ($M_{PhPE} = 4.2$, $SD_{PhPE} = 0.33$) was not significant, $t(45) = 5.9$, $p > .10$.

Discussion

The purposes of this study were to validate a new measure and to explore the effects of instrumental support, college-targeted encouragement, general academic encouragement, and other factors on the educational attainment expectations of Hispanic high school students. This work was conceptualized using an expectancy-value framework.

Adolescents' reports of their parents' general academic encouragement but not college-targeted encouragement was related to students' educational attainment expectations. Contrary to my hypothesis, instrumental support from a mentor did not moderate this relationship. Adolescents' perceptions of expectations that they should contribute financially to their family was not significantly correlated with the aggregate educational attainment expectation score, however it was negatively correlated with the expectation of completing a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. Finally, there was no significant difference in the pressure students felt to live at home for students who expected to attend a community college in contrast with students who expected to attend a 4-year institution during their first year of higher education.

Parental Encouragement

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Within the expectancy-value framework, parental encouragement is a socialization factor that is expected to increase youth's educational attainment expectations. My first hypothesis was partially supported with a significant correlation between general academic encouragement and students' educational attainment expectations. Although the correlation between general academic encouragement and educational attainment expectations is consistent with expectancy-value theory, it is unclear whether parents' encouragement led to students' expectations in the present sample. It is possible that students who have higher educational attainment expectations evoke more encouragement from their parents than students with lower expectations.

Alternatively, encouragement may be more salient to students who have higher attainment expectations, even if they do not receive more encouragement than students with lower educational attainment expectations. Yet another alternative is that there is some other factor (e.g., students' academic achievement) that affects both parents' encouragement and students' educational attainment expectations. For these reasons more research is necessary in order to parse out these pathways.

Due to the complexity of college applications and the potential cost, attempting to apply to college with no instrumental support from parents or school personnel poses a sizable barrier for students. For this reason, instrumental support was hypothesized to moderate the relation between encouragement and educational attainment expectations. In essence, parental encouragement would be associated with higher educational attainment expectations only among adolescents who received sufficient instrumental support that reduced the challenges of applying to college. This hypothesis (hypothesis 2) was not supported: The hierarchical multiple regression analysis using general academic encouragement and instrumental support from a mentor as well as the interaction variable (general academic encouragement X instrumental

support from mentor) was not significant. However, because of our small sample size, the nonsignificant results might be due to low statistical power rather than an indication that the effect does not exist. Research with a larger sample could provide a better test of this hypothesis.

Cultural Pressures Within Hispanic Families

The third hypothesis was aimed at testing whether the expectation that the student provide financial support to his or her family would negatively impact educational attainment expectations. This obstacle would make college a much more difficult goal to meet, especially if families pressured students to forgo an education in favor of work. However, there was no significant correlation between financial contribution expectations and the aggregate education score. A negative correlation did emerge between financial contribution expectations and the expectation to complete a bachelor's degree as well as a master's degree. This negative correlation between financial contribution expectation and bachelor's and master's degree expectation is consistent with findings that valuing of education and academic motivation were not enough to keep students who contributed financially to their families from dropping out of college (Witkow et al., 2015). The present finding is important because it seems that financial contribution expectations are related to lower educational attainment expectations even before these financial expectations come into effect. What is striking about this finding is that students in our sample were in the ninth and tenth grades, relatively early in their high school career. If students' educational attainment expectations are already being negatively impacted by the messages they receive at home, it is possible that over time and without intervention, their motivation and effort in school would also be affected. These pressured students may be the students who graduate high school but do not enroll in college. Or alternatively, they may feel such pressure to support their families that they drop out of high school. More research is needed

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to see if these financial expectation pressures are a primary cause of lower educational attainment expectations or if there are other risk factors to consider.

It is clear from survey data that Hispanic individuals value education (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004). However, parents might not be aware of the negative impact of their expectations that their adolescent and young adult children will contribute financially to their households. Or alternatively, parents might realize that employment puts a burden on their children, but in a low-income household, the extra income is needed. One puzzling aspect of these results was the lack of correlation between the aggregate score of educational attainment expectations and financial contribution expectations. A potential explanation for these findings is that when students reported their expectations of obtaining a PhD, they may have reported their aspirations rather than their expectations. It is possible that at ninth and tenth grade, students may not have a clear picture of what degrees are required for specific fields of study. Whether youth expect to pursue a doctoral degree may be more closely related to career goals and may not be influenced as strongly by cultural factors as the most immediate degree. In other words, students' evaluations of their likelihood to complete master's and PhD may have stemmed from whether they expected these degrees to be necessary in their future careers rather than influenced by parental pressures to contribute to the family.

One additional point of exploration was the cultural imperative to respect and obey, and the parental pressure for their child to live at home. I expected that students who felt pressure to live close to home would be more likely than their peers with less pressure to expect to go to a community college during their first year of college (Hypothesis 4). The difference between the mean scores of pressure to live at home for students who indicated they would attend a community college their first year and students who expected to attend a four-year institution in

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their first year was not significant. However, this result does not necessarily indicate that these two constructs are unrelated because it is possible that due to the screening process of the school, a selection bias was introduced in our sample. In fact, only six students expected to attend community college during their first year. This low number of students created low statistical power to test Hypothesis 4.

Limitations

This study was conducted in a college prep high school. Students and parents are interviewed in the screening process and the school admits students based on these interviews. This process presents a challenge for this study because the selection process likely removes students with the lowest educational attainment expectations. It is also possible that students from families that are not supportive of higher education are also screened out, leaving only parents who are encouraging of higher education. The sample size was also low which limited statistical power. Additionally, the school only had a ninth and tenth grade class.

My study did not include a sample of high school graduates who did not enroll in college as such, it is impossible to determine whether students did not value or engage with the college application process. Indeed, it is entirely possible that some students in our sample may not enroll in college. Interestingly, our college targeted encouragement scale did not have significant correlation with educational attainment expectations. However, it is unclear whether this is a measurement issue rather than a true non-correlation of these constructs.

One interesting aspect of the sample was that all students were either second or third generation, meaning none was born outside of the U.S. Some of the hypotheses were linked to cultural values. However, due to the generational status of the sample, it is unknown to what degree students internalized familism or to what degree the parents expressed traditional

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Hispanic values to their children. On average, youth in the sample tended to slightly disagree with statements regarding financial support expectations, and neither agreed nor disagreed with statements about parental expectations that they live at home. Such traditional Hispanic values might have a greater impact on adolescents' educational attainment expectations in families who have immigrated more recently to the United States.

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HISPANIC YOUTH'S EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS, PARENTAL SUPPORT, AND 26 CULTURAL VALUES

Table 1

Means and Alpha Reliabilities of Subscales

Subscale	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	α
College Targeted Encouragement	2	6.9	0.32	0.64
General Academic Encouragement	4	6.7	0.48	0.59
Instrumental Support Parents	9	5.0	0.80	0.66
Instrumental Support Mentor	7	5.9	1.17	0.92
Instrumental Support Peers	7	5.4	1.25	0.90
Family Contribution Expectation	2	3.4	1.55	0.61
Physical Proximity	3	4.3	1.95	0.94

HISPANIC YOUTH'S EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS, PARENTAL SUPPORT, AND 27 CULTURAL VALUES

Table 2

Bivariate Correlations

Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. College Targeted Encouragement	-							
2. General Academic Encouragement	.22	-						
3. Instrumental Support Parents	.15	.24	-					
4. Instrumental Support Mentor	.11	.23	.15	-				
5. Instrumental Support Peers	.18	.44**	.24	.57***	-			
6. Family Contribution Expectation	-.05	-.11	-.10	-.17	.04	-		
7. Physical Proximity	-.17	-.09	.38**	.09	-.03	.17	-	
8. Educational Attainment Expectations	.27	.41**	.43**	.24	.38**	-.19	-.39**	-

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$. *** $p < .001$.

Appendix A

Items of Subscales

College Targeted Encouragement

1. My parents think that college is the most important thing to do after high school.
2. My parents talk to me about what types of jobs I will have if I do or do not go to college.
3. My parents tell me that I should do well in school so that I can go to college.
4. My parents believe people can have a good job even if they don't go to college.
5. My parents encourage me to get a job right after high school.
6. My parents are disapproving of me going to college.
7. My parents think that getting a job after high school is more important than going to college.

General Academic Encouragement

1. My parents encourage me to study hard.
2. My parents express hope that I will have a good career.
3. My parents talk about the struggles they went through as a result of not having an education.
4. My parents tell me that the sacrifices they have made are so that I can have better opportunities.

Instrumental Support

1. My parents overburden me with household or babysitting responsibilities.
2. My parents prioritize me doing my homework over doing chores.
3. My parents help me with my school work.
4. My parents attend parent-teacher conferences.
5. My parents encourage me to take difficult courses in high school to prepare for college.
6. My parents help me find ways I can finance a college education.
7. My parents will help me with my college applications.

Instrumental Support Mentor

1. I have an adult mentor who is not one of my parents who encourages me to apply to college.
2. I have an adult mentor who is not one of my parents who gives me information that will help me get to college.
3. I have an adult mentor who is not one of my parents who helps me find ways I can pay for a college education.
4. I have an adult mentor who is not one of my parents who will help me with my college applications.
5. I have an adult mentor who is not one of my parents who has a good idea of what should go in a college application essay.
6. I have an adult mentor who is not one of my parents who encourages me to take difficult courses in high school to prepare for college.

HISPANIC YOUTH'S EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS, PARENTAL SUPPORT, AND 29 CULTURAL VALUES

7. I have an adult mentor who is not one of my parents who knows which colleges might be a good fit for me.

Instrumental Support Peer

1. I have a peer who encourages me to apply to college.
2. I have a peer who gives me information that will help me get to college.
3. I have a peer who knows of possible ways I can pay for my college education.
4. I have a peer who helps me or will help me apply for college.
5. I have a peer who has a good idea of what should go in a college application essay.
6. I have a peer who encourages me to take difficult courses in high school to prepare for college.
7. I have a peer who knows which colleges might be a good fit for me.

Financial Support

1. My parents are doubtful I can get enough financial aid to go to college.
2. My parents do not believe they will be able to afford college. If I chose to attend, I will have to figure out how to pay for it.
3. My parents promise me whatever financial support they can offer so that I can go to college.
4. My parents are willing to pay my applications fees to colleges if they can.

Family Contribution Expectation

1. My parents encourage me to have a job.
2. My parents expect me to contribute financially to the family.

Physical Proximity

1. My parents want me to stay close to home after graduating from high school.
2. My parents are afraid of me leaving home to go to college.
3. My parents do not want me to move too far away for college.

Displays of Pride

1. My parents show pride if I get good grades.
2. My parents are happy when I do well at school.
3. My parents tell other people about my school accomplishments.

Family Formation Advice

1. My parents advise me against getting married too young.
2. My parents advise me against having children too young.
3. My parents tell me that starting a family is the most important thing in life.

Friend Academic Risk Behaviors

1. I have friends who are in a serious romantic relationship.
2. I have friends who are pregnant.
3. I have friends who skip school frequently.
4. I have friends who dropped out of high school.

Friends' College Attitude

HISPANIC YOUTH'S EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS, PARENTAL SUPPORT, AND 30 CULTURAL VALUES

1. My closest friends speak about going to college.
2. My closest friends speak about college applications.
3. My closest friends speak about getting a job immediately after high school.
4. My closest friends speak about getting married soon.
5. My closest friends speak about having children.