

EDITORIAL:
**The Impact of Socio-Economic, Cultural, Political, and International Factors
on Latinos/Latinas in United States**

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Special Issue Editor

This special issue has the potential to make substantive contributions to the existing literature on Latinos. The issue presents the assets, challenges, and opportunities Latinos face in this country. It also highlights the impact that the quality of the socio-political-economic Latin America-United States relations has on this population. It contributes to the discourse on Latinos in areas of interest to social workers and other human services providers and offers an understanding of the Latino experience in this country.

We are mindful that the use of the terms Spanish, Latinos, Hispanics, or country of origin may express different personal, political, or governmental views. Therefore, the choice was left to the contributors to select the terminology used to represent the population they addressed. As an immigrant from Argentina, I was first classified as a Hispanic. Then the 2000 census gave me the choice to check the Spanish/Hispanic/Latino box, however, when I travel to Central and South American countries, I am an Argentinean. It is no wonder that “who am I” has been the subject of attention by Latino authors for many years.

Latinos are the fastest growing population in the United States due to immigration and high birth rates, two factors that are dramatically changing the diversity composition in this country. An important aspect of this population is that Latinos have lived on parts of this land since colonial times while others are recent immigrants. The challenges, needs, and the means by which they identify with Latin America vary greatly, indeed, intra-group differences are many. As a result, the authors have avoided generalizations by focusing on particular groups and the specific generations the immigrants represent.

In this special issue, we want to emphasize the fact that large numbers of Latinos are impacted by events in Latin America, as well as by the U.S. government’s position on immigration and foreign policies toward Latin America. An example of the serious nature of the disagreements between the Latin American countries and the United States was reflected in the discouraging outcome of the 2012 Summit of the Americas (a gathering of the heads of state of the countries of the Americas) when the United States opposed the acceptance of Cuba to the next Summit meeting. Another example is the neutral position taken by the United States on the long-standing conflict between Argentina and England regarding the sovereignty of Las Islas Malvinas (Falkland Islands). The lack of U.S. solidarity with Latin American countries is a critical issue, particularly when there is an emerging move among Latin American countries to seek trade agreements and other

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collaborative enterprises with nontraditional international partners, particularly those in the Middle East, East and South Asia.

It is beyond the scope of this issue to thoroughly address the debate over immigration from Latin America, or attempt to answer the perennial questions of “Do undocumented workers take jobs from residents?” “Do they lower wages?” “Why don’t they stay home?” Yet the issues are woven in several of the articles. And indeed, these writings try to give a human face to Latinos and their efforts to be part of this country. To add a personal touch to this editorial, I would like to share one of my experiences as an immigrant. Years ago, a colleague and I were conducting a training session on diversity for human services providers. As I was presenting on the struggles of Latino immigrants trying to survive on this land, one of the participants bluntly asked me, “If you do not like it here, why don’t you go back to your country?” The remark has kept me wondering to this day, who is serving our most vulnerable populations?

As the reader will notice, finding adequate employment to support a family, obtaining educational and social services, maintaining a sense of well-being, and living a healthy lifestyle all depend on gaining access to the larger society and being surrounded by a nurturing environment of acceptance and connectedness within the larger community. Humans acting as cultural liaisons can provide ample transitional benefits to immigrants. It is through human connections that Latino students experience mentoring and tutoring, which helps them succeed in the American school system, that parents learn how to support their children entering college as first generation students, that graduating Latino social workers find support in locating suitable employment, that workers unite to find a common empowering voice, that minors find a voice in the child welfare system, that policymakers understand the real impact of emerging immigrant legislation, and that vibrant communities are built and sustained for the benefit and well-being of their members. Our connections with others define our lives and help bring direction and focus when things are not clear. Helping others succeed in life is deeply rooted in the social work profession and is practiced on a daily basis. Unlocking the door to cultural acceptance and holding it open for the next generation is one of the ways that social workers can promote the well-being of Latinos in the United States. This issue draws from practitioners and educators well versed on a wide range of current Latino topics to enhance our understanding about this complex population group. I anticipate it will motivate others to continue the critical discussion about the challenges faced by Latinos in the United States and the impact events occurring in Latin America have on them. I hope that the seventeen articles included in this issue add to the knowledge base on the Latino population and encourage our readers to further explore the assets, challenges and opportunities of this population. I would also like to extend sincere thanks to the authors for selecting *Advances* to share their knowledge and scholarly work, our devoted reviewers, and Dr. Bill Barton for his ongoing assistance with this project.

The following summaries for this introduction are organized by subject matter.

Latin American Activism

While organized labor is under attack in the United States, it is refreshing to read about a Brazilian approach to labor education based on the tenets advanced by Paulo

Freire. "Workers, Education, and Social Change in Brazil" by William Mello examines the influence of educational programs organized by social movements and labor organizations in Brazil. The article looks at new ways to conscientize workers based on Freire's pedagogical approach. Programs like Projeto Integrar, organized by the National Confederation of Metalworkers, seek to expand the political and social consciousness of workers to help them understand their roles as actors in a democracy. Furthermore, the project provides education to strengthen future generations of working class activists for the purpose of sociopolitical transformation that supports working class political influence in society and increases labor's role in deciding public policy issues. The conclusion highlights the pivotal role of unions in advancing the cause of workers in specific trades and their organized efforts to support the plight of other popular movements. This reading also reminds us how easy it is to lose ground on labor achievements given a growing international neoliberal agenda.

In "Globalization, Inequality, and Transnational Activism: A Case Study on Chile," Moctezuma Garcia examines the influence that globalization has had on reinforcing inequality and transnational activism. It also brings to the forefront the dark history of that country during the government of Pinochet. The author suggests that Chile be considered a model for activists in understanding how to coordinate initiatives that hold local governments accountable. This historical perspective on Chile highlights how economic, political, and social events influenced the development of a nation. A section on transnational activism provides a useful model for social workers who want to mobilize efforts, locally as well as abroad, to advocate for highly vulnerable populations.

The Effects of Acculturation and Cultural Integration on Well-being

In "Colombians in the United States: A Study of Their Well-Being," Cándida Madrigal examines the effects of four factors: acculturation, ethnic identity, self-esteem, and resilience among immigrants in the United States, specifically Colombians, to understand which factors contribute to overall well-being. In controlled studies of three waves of Colombian immigrants, Madrigal explores the reasons for leaving Colombia, to better understand the relationship between the overall climate of the receiving country and the immigrant's sense of well-being. The results of the study indicated that a strong ethnic identity negatively predicted well-being for all participants in the sample. Consequently, as the extent of ethnic identity increased, well-being decreased. In contrast, Madrigal's study revealed that high self-esteem, obtained by feeling integrated into the receiving culture, correlated with and predicted higher levels of well-being. Madrigal concludes that while Latinos share many characteristics, there are great variations in responses according to the country of birth and reasons behind immigration. Therefore, it is necessary to examine, treat, and study Latino cultures individually and not as a collective group.

The process of acculturation may cause conflict within individuals and families who experience competing pressures in adopting new cultural norms and maintaining cultural traditions. The connection between life satisfaction and successful integration into a new culture, which includes employment, stability of familial relationships, and community roles are explored in "Acculturation and Life Satisfaction Among Immigrant Mexican

Adults.” Flavio F. Marsiglia, Jaime M. Booth, Adrienne Baldwin, and Stephanie Ayers address the impact of acculturation and *familismo* on reported life satisfaction and resilience among Mexican American adults living in the Southwest, many of whom are immigrants. Marsiglia et al. sampled Latino/a parents of seventh grade students enrolled in American educational institutions to help identify predictors of general life satisfaction, resilience, familism, and acculturation. Their findings indicate that individuals with a bilingual orientation report significantly higher levels of life satisfaction and resilience than their strictly Spanish-speaking counterparts. Therefore, creating spaces that facilitate multicultural identities for Mexican immigrants, in both social work practice as well as the larger society, may be crucial to promoting a quality mental health system for populations that face stressors in the process of acculturation.

Understanding Health Issues Affecting Latino Populations and Quality of Life

In “Addressing Older Latinos’ Spiritual Needs in Hospital Settings: Identifying Predictors of Satisfaction,” David R. Hodge, Robert J. Wolosin, and Robin P. Bonifas sought to identify the factors likely to determine older Latinos’ satisfaction with the process that health care workers employ when addressing their spiritual needs during hospitalization. Hodge et al. point out the need for health care providers to feel comfortable discussing the spiritual needs of the Latino patients, if that is of importance to them. The authors contend that spirituality needs to be a consideration in all the processes of the hospitalization experience. Social workers are considered instrumental in addressing patients’ spirituality while going through treatment and at time of discharge. The authors propose the inclusion of content on spirituality, including spiritual assessment, in the training of social workers and other human services providers.

In “Quality of Life of Latina Breast Cancer Survivors: From Silence to Empowerment,” Gloria P. Martinez-Ramos, Mary Jo Garcia Biggs, and Yvonne Lozano interviewed long-term Latina breast cancer survivors to understand the effects of the cancer experience on the women, their families, and their communities. The authors skillfully give a voice to the survivors concerning their experiences, challenges, fears, and courage through an empowering dialogue between interviewer and interviewee. The authors asked the tough and sensitive questions of living as a cancer survivor as well as the “positive” effects of such a diagnosis. Fears and concerns about femininity, roles, and relationships, as well as a lack of support from the health care system are some of the challenges expressed by the women. Martinez-Ramos et al. found that Latinas who found appropriate support among their communities often became stronger as a result and saw themselves more capable of helping others in similar circumstances. This manuscript provides rich content for social workers concerning their interventions with cancer survivors and it highlights the importance of advocating for culturally sensitive health care options and post operative support. The authors provide recommendations for practice at the individual, family, and community levels. They call for creativity when developing resources for the Latina breast cancer survivors and their families.

Educational Attainment Opportunities

In “Leadership Development for Latino Community Emancipation: An Integrative Approach in Social Work Education,” authors Antonia Elizabeth Cordero and Lirio K. Negroni outline the importance of leadership development within the social work community, and in Latino communities in particular. The authors assert that strong leadership is needed in and among the Latino communities as a response to a history of encountered invisibility, oppression and discrimination in the United States; and their struggle to achieve fair treatment and emancipation. They highlight the Latino Project at the New England School of Social Work as a model to demonstrate how higher education promotes leadership and acts as a springboard toward the acquisition of effective leadership skills. Cordero and Negroni note that sustained institutional commitments in the form of support and resources; the creation of leadership opportunities that include mentoring and modeling; and leadership efforts for community emancipation must coincide to create a collective, culturally-attuned, and transformative leadership process that will prepare individuals and groups to lead collectively with others whose cultures and practices differ from their own.

In search of “what works,” Sarah P. Maxwell considers what parental or family-related factors contribute to Latino youth enrolling in four-year post-secondary institutions, where future earnings tend to be higher than two-year colleges with fewer opportunities. In “Parental and Familial Factors Among Latino/a Youths’ Successful Matriculation into Post-Secondary Education,” Maxwell uses Critical Race Theory to examine the strong influence that Latino families have in affecting the choices made by degree-seeking Latinos. Although discrimination is certainly a factor in the ongoing gap between what Latinos can achieve educationally and what they do achieve, it is not the leading impediment to attaining an education. Maxwell found that beliefs and the subsequent actions that affirm the importance of education play a much larger role in determining students’ educational abilities. Family dining, parental educational attainment, parental participation and involvement in academic preparation combined can improve a Latino youth’s potential success in attaining higher education. Among other findings, the article underscores the importance of understanding the relationship between the realities of daily living and the limited availability of parents to have quality meeting times with teachers. The author also highlights the importance of schools showing flexibility to accommodate the families’ realities. Understanding the complexities of bringing innovation to the public school system, the author calls for gradual innovations at the local level.

Even when Latino students successfully attain and complete degree programs in the United States, their options for employment can be limited by their lack of employment resources and access to the professional networks crucial to finding quality employment opportunities. Nelly Rojas Schwan, Lirio K. Negroni, and Annette Santiago-Kozmon, in “Culturally-Attuned Mentoring for Graduating Latina/o Social Workers to Foster Career Advancement,” present an innovative mentoring program for Latina/o social work professionals conceptualized and led by the Latina/o Network of the Connecticut chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Schwan et al., in studying the benefits of mentoring Latino college students, found that culturally-attuned mentoring, attained by

connecting students with mentors who share similar cultural backgrounds, works by taking advantage of common cultural values to build relationships that foster trust and acceptance. Culturally-attuned mentoring helps students become bicultural, that is, to maintain their Latino culture and function successfully within the educational institutional environment, a process that allows them to develop resources to improve their chances of employment.

In “Reducing Barriers to Career Entry for Latinos: An Examination of Pathways into Social Work,” Anthony De Jesús describes program models that seek to address obstacles to Latinos’ successful entry into social work careers. The study analyzes the program components of three career pathway initiatives focused on supporting Latinos in enrolling and completing two- and four-year undergraduate and graduate degrees in social work. Areas of need identified by the programs for Latino adults include tuition support, academic support, and other support services to students. Key program components offered by these models include academic advising, language proficiency assistance, positive student-faculty relations, and mentoring and tutoring geared toward addressing the specific academic needs of Latino students. The author concludes that career pathways create potential for Latinos who are already employed in social work fields, but who have not completed their undergraduate or graduate social work degrees. He points out the dual opportunity of helping Latinos complete their degrees to better serve both the Latino and the general communities.

In “The Role of Acculturation in the Civic Engagement of Latino Immigrants,” Cristina Michele Tucker and Anna Maria Santiago conducted focus groups and utilized data from the Latino National Survey (2006) to examine how variations in levels of multidimensional acculturation, demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status, and characteristics of the immigrant experience might influence the civic engagement of Latino immigrants in American society. Specifically, Tucker and Santiago found that citizenship, English language proficiency, length of residence in the United States, and higher socioeconomic status enhanced civic engagement, while brown skin color, migration for economic reasons, and Mexican ancestry decreased participation. Understanding the impact that various factors have on an immigrant’s integration into the political landscape may improve initiatives that seek to enhance Latino cultural experiences and enrich the quality of life in Latino communities.

Impacts of Immigration Legislation

Cecilia Ayón and David Becerra consider the impact that all forms of discrimination have on Mexican American families living in Arizona. In “Mexican Immigrant Families Under Siege: The Impact of Anti-immigrant Policies, Discrimination, and the Economic Crisis,” the authors assert that in the wake of recently passed legislation targeting undocumented immigrants in Arizona, institutional and horizontal discrimination, as well as micro-aggressions, place Latino immigrants (both documented and undocumented) at greater risk for lower educational attainment, higher rates of unemployment, family disintegration, reduced access to healthcare, lowered social participation, and higher rates of antisocial behavior, stress, and depression.

Sylvia Romero and Melissa Romero Williams examine recent immigration legislation in order to highlight the detrimental effects that laws designed to enforce national immigration policy can have on immigrant families living in the United States. In “The Impact of Immigration Legislation on Latino Families: Implications for Social Work,” Romero and Romero Williams address the effects of racial profiling and the targeting of undocumented immigrants in Latin American communities. The authors emphasize the ways in which Latin American children who are born in the United States suffer as a result of the detention and deportation of their parents. The authors conclude with a discussion of the components of the Dream Act, prosecutorial discretion, immigrants as job creators and tax contributors, and the implications for social work practice, education, research, and for policy.

Navigating Economic and Employment Challenges

Resilience is measured in one’s ability to navigate not only the normative social structures, but also to invent new methods of survival apart from established social constructs. In “Social Networks That Promote Well-Being Among Latino Migrant Day Laborers,” Nalini Junko Negi, Lynn Michalopoulos, Javier Boyas, and Adrianna Overdorff explore the social service and public health needs of a high risk sub-population of immigrants comprised mainly of single, young, Latino transmigrant men who travel back and forth across the Mexican/American border in search of informal economic opportunities as day laborers. These Latino day laborers (LDLs) are generally employed in construction or demolition work and are often at risk for exploitation and worker’s rights abuses, including wage theft and dangerous working conditions. Their vulnerability is heightened due to their undocumented immigration status, and as such, they are considered easily deportable and beyond the protection of the law. The authors found that the LDLs in this study used their social networks, particularly those developed with their peers at the day labor corner, as well as with families, employers, and church members to improve their well-being, which is seriously compromised due to their precarious conditions, lack of service use options, and fear of the police. The authors highlight the need for integrating the voices of LDLs when planning for social services and advocating for the human rights of this vulnerable population.

Many recent Latino immigrants have found employment in North Carolina’s agricultural and construction-related job sector. The increase in labor-driven transnational migration is often attributed to the economic restructuring of the region. Lisa de Saxe Zerden, Arianna Taboada, and Quentin Joshua Hinson explore the inherent implications of racially segregated labor in “Carolina del Norte and the New South: Social Work Practice with New Latino Immigrant Communities.” The authors found that despite the active recruitment of Latino/Latina workers by select industries, the local reception of immigrants has been fraught with anxiety, fear, acculturative stress, and larger sociopolitical challenges. Specifically, the authors highlight key social demographics of Latino populations, as well as theoretical concepts and methodological issues related to the complex needs of this diverse population group. Zerden et al. offer an overview of social workers engaging with immigrant communities and argue that the profession brings strengths and unique knowledge, value, and skills to address the needs of Latinos

in the South. At the same time, the authors highlight the need to develop multi-level interventions that indicate a thorough understanding of the local and global issues affecting Latino immigrant groups.

Puerto Rican Perspectives

The graying of the population is a phenomenon that, although foreseen by scientists and policy makers for several decades, reveals that the degree of preparedness for this population shift varies from country to country. In “Family Assistance for Older Adults in Puerto Rico,” Paul-Jesús Fericelli discusses a progressive government legislation that aims at safeguarding the wellbeing of the elderly with the support of relatives and significant others and applying fiscal responsibility at a time of dwindling resources. The author examines *The Act for the Improvement of the Family Assistance and for the Support of the Elderly, Act No. 193 of 2002*, based on the values of fairness, familism, fraternity, and accountability, indeed, four fundamental values of the Latino culture. The Act also prescribes the processes involved in case the caregivers do not fulfill their responsibilities.

This journal issue concludes with an article in Spanish, “Voces de los Menores Inmigrantes en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto de Puerto Rico.” In this article Evelyza Crespo-Rivera gives voice to immigrant minors who are under the custody of the government of the Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico. Through the review of agency records and personal interviews with the minors, the author constructs the immigrant experience and compares their treatment to that of the statutes that establish the protection, security, quality of life, and nondiscrimination of minors. Crespo-Rivera concludes that the minors themselves are an important source of information for practitioners interested in grasping the realities of the lives of displaced minors, which in her study includes a perceived lack of support from the receiving country, as well as human services organizations, and a unanimous outcry for the system to respond to their needs. Crespo-Rivera found an undeniable need for closer supervision of the foster homes, more dialogue with the minors during home visits, and more culturally-sensitive training for foster families. She also recommended that in the future, immigrants who were under the custody of the state as a minor be part of advisory committees, interdisciplinary groups, and help integrate evaluation teams of child welfare organizations.

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Workers, Education, and Social Change in Brazil

William J. Mello

Indeed the interests of the oppressors lie in changing the consciousness of the oppressed, not the situation which oppresses them, for the more the oppressed can be led to adapt to the situation the more easily they can be dominated.

--Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Abstract: *This article examines how Brazilian labor organizations developed educational programs that simultaneously confronted the issues of large scale illiteracy, particularly among young workers, while at the same time seized the opportunity to educate new generations of social movement and labor activists. Specifically, it explores the educational program Projeto Integrar, organized by the National Confederation of Metalworkers (CNM/CUT), and its importance for the broader process of political transformation presently underway in Brazil.*

Keywords: *Social movements, unions, education, Latin America*

Over the past two decades, Latin America and Brazil in particular have undergone deep sociopolitical transformations driven by a process of substantial economic growth and the consolidation of democratic governance. While most of the globe has suffered a long term economic crises since 2008 (Mello, 2008; Queiro-Tajalli, 2010); in Brazil, the consequences of the crisis have been slight compared to the effects experienced in the United States and Europe. For example, in Brazil, large-scale employment and state redistributive measures have helped significantly reduce historic, large-scale poverty and income inequality over the past few years. The current success of many Latin American countries is due in large part to the emergence and continuous re-election of left-led governments. In Brazil, this process is illustrated by the emergence of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) /Workers Party, first with the election of president Luis Inácio Lula da Silva for two terms starting in 2003, and currently under the presidency of Dilma Rouseff, the country's first woman president.

The popular support enjoyed by the Workers Party reflects the expansive influence of social and labor movements, such as the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra (MST) /Landless Peasant Movement (Sem Terra Magazine, 2007), as well as a myriad of labor unions and left-led political parties. Over time, the convergence of social forces helped develop the conditions for deep-rooted social change. While many acknowledge the importance of strong social and labor movements in transforming contemporary Latin America, one aspect of change rarely examined is the influence of educational programs organized by social movements and labor organizations. These programs seek to expand the political and social consciousness of workers and provide education for future generations of working class activists.

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In 1996, the *Confederação Nacional de Metalúrgicos (CNM/CUT)* / Brazilian National Confederation of Metalworkers affiliated with the Central Workers Council / *Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT)*, initiated *Programa Integrar* (Lopes, 2006), a radical educational program that proposed to advance working class political influence in society. *Integrar* contested prevailing notions of how and why workers were educated in Brazil. In a broad sense, the program was a response to elite ideological domination within the context of an increasingly privatized educational structure. At the same time, *Integrar* sought to expand labor's participation in deciding the future of education in Brazilian society.

Integrar is a counter-hegemonic movement and therefore part of a larger struggle for the social and political consciousness of the Brazilian working class. The union's educational program helps increase labor's role in deciding public policy issues. Many of Brazil's social movements have developed educational programs that not only provide primary and secondary education, but, in the process, form future social activists whose work moves beyond the scope of the organized labor movement. The Brazilian metalworker's experience in education provides an important resource for understanding the role labor unions play in building vibrant and influential social movements in Latin America.

This article is a case study that draws on the authors' multiple trips to Brazil; observing adult education classes and visiting with program organizers, participants, and political and community activists. The research also explores literacy data from the Ministry of Education of the Brazilian Government and the Central Workers Council, as well as pedagogical reviews of *Integrar* by Brazilian academics in the field of education.

Literacy and Social Change

Addressing large-scale illiteracy in Brazil is a monumental undertaking. It is a pervasive social problem that reflects years of elite domination and a fragmented public educational system that fails to provide equal access to schools and universities. Even taking into consideration the current government's attention to the problem, Brazilian authorities recognize the insidious existence of large-scale illiteracy. According to government study reports the illiteracy rate in 2003 was 11.6%, which is a 32% reduction, from the 1992 illiteracy rate of 17.2%. Even so, the current rate represents an expressive sector of the population, approximately 14.6 million Brazilians. Moreover, illiteracy among the Brazilian population is clearly delineated by region, class, race, and gender. For example, in 2003, the illiteracy rate in the northeastern region of the country was 3.4% higher than the industrialized region of the southeast (Secretaria de Educação Continuada, Alfabetização e Diversidade (SECAD), Ministério de Educação Programa Brasil Alfabetizado, 2005). Current census results illustrate that coinciding with the country's economic growth, Brazil continues to experience a decline in illiteracy rates, particularly among youth and adults under 60 years of age. According to the 2010 general census, there was a significant decline in illiteracy among the population 15 years or older from 13.63% in 2000 to 9.6% in 2010 (*Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, IBGE, 2010*).

The primary focus of the educational program, *Integrar* concerns the unemployed adult population and is a response to the country's expansive illiteracy rates and the imposition of global neoliberalism on the economy. A recent government survey indicated that the illiteracy rate among the population between 50 and 64 years was almost 7 times greater than among young people (age 15-24), and that when race was considered, illiteracy was almost 2.5% greater among blacks than whites, indicating that two thirds of the illiterate population was black (Secretaria de Educação Continuada, Alfabetização e Diversidade (SECAD), Ministério de Educação Programa Brasil Alfabetizado, 2005).

Integrar was organized as a response to long periods of economic recession, high levels of unemployment, and historically elevated illiteracy rates among the working class population. These conditions placed severe constraints on the battle for union organization and working class political power. Global neoliberal transformations of the Brazilian economy set in place at the onset of the 1990s introduced rapid technological changes in the workplace, along with large-scale poverty. This process led to the marginalization of significant sectors of the working class from political and socioeconomic processes. Marginalization, in this context, is understood as the social exclusion of considerable sectors of the working class and their subsequent alienation. In this process, workers are not only constrained politically; but as a result, the development of working class political consciousness is curtailed as well. Marlene Goldenstein (2002) argues that: "The flexible and precarious nature of work destroys social rights and does not create alternatives... there is a shift in how poverty is conceived from the public and political sphere to the non-political, where poverty is viewed as a fact to be resolved through purely technical measures or through private philanthropy" (p.18).

For the metalworker's union, the education and literacy of workers could not simply replicate existing norms and parameters that prepare workers for the global workplace; to do so would legitimize the process of marginalization. Education and the program's pedagogical methods were viewed as a singular process that raised the social and political consciousness of workers, while simultaneously preparing them to advance their demands in the sphere of politics.

An important aspect of the program argued that the struggle against marginalization and the demand for social inclusion were integral aspects of a process essential for expanding working class power. In this sense, education was not viewed as charitable work for the underprivileged. For the metal workers union, education was the backdrop for the deep ideological conflict emerging in contemporary society between market and non-market views of socioeconomic development. Freire argues,

Admitting the existence of men 'outside of' or 'marginal to' structural reality, we may legitimately ask: who is the author of this movement from the center of the structure to its margin? Do so-called marginal men, among them the illiterates, make the decision to move out of the periphery of society? ...Alienated men, they cannot overcome their dependency by 'incorporation' into the very structure responsible for their dependency. There is no other road to humanization – theirs

as well as everyone else's – other than the authentic transformation of the dehumanizing structure. (1970, p. 48)

In this context, marginalization was not just an economic casualty of global economic restructuring; it was the result of social and political alienation inherent to capitalist development. Incorporating the victims of socioeconomic and political marginalization into the political process seemed critical because the logic of neoliberal globalization led disenfranchised sectors of the working-class to adopt the logic of capital. As a result, workers failed to recognize those responsible for large-scale poverty and subsequently placed the burden on those who were in fact its victims. In this process, workers internalized their long-term unemployment as a personal failure rather than viewing it as a systemic effect of elite domination.

Similarly, social inclusion was not simply the reintroduction of marginalized sectors of society into the very structure which led to their marginalization. The re-entry of workers into the productive process was an important moment in the political process where alternative socioeconomic models of organization expanded the power of those currently relegated to the fringes of the prevailing social structure. Consequently, this process strengthened popular organizations, among which unions figured prominently. As a result, education and political activism developed concomitantly and interfaced in multiple spheres of social engagement.

Social Change and Working Class Education

In order to better understand the comprehensive underpinnings of *Integrar*, both politically and methodologically, it is important, even if only briefly, to revisit the basic pedagogical concepts developed by Paulo Freire (1970). In a broad sense, Freire's pedagogical concerns were a response to elite domination. He saw the transformative role of education as a process for building critical consciousness among politically disenfranchised sectors of the population. He drew extensively on the notion of education as a dialectical relationship where the interrelations between subjective and objective consciousness are central conditions for social change. For Freire, education was a political-pedagogical process where individual and collective critical awareness were essential for social transformations, and where non-elites increasingly expanded their political power (Scocuglia, 2003). Critical consciousness, in this way, is not just knowledge, but more importantly, the way in which knowledge is achieved and the subsequent action it elicits. Freire (1970) argues, to achieve critical consciousness of the facts, that it is necessary to be the "owner of one's own labor," that labor "constitutes part of the human person," and that "a human being can neither be sold nor can he sell himself" is to go a step beyond the deception of palliative solutions. It is to engage in authentic transformation of reality in order, by humanizing that reality, to humanize men (p.185).

An essential aspect of Freire's political-pedagogical project focused on the role of the learner and a classroom that acted as an extension of the broader socio-political process underway. In this process, learning is not devoid of what is occurring in society, rather it requires a deep understanding of the context in which both learner and educator live and

work. He argued that education begins by initiating a dialogue between learners and educators where they talk to each other rather than at each other. As a result of this dialogue, social location, conflict, problems, and the life experiences of learners and educators are all important aspects to learning.

Dialogue becomes an intricate part of learning; it is a measure of critical consciousness. The process of social transformation occurs when learners increasingly gain greater understanding of their role in the world around them through the intersection of the subjective and objective conditions of their situation in society (Freire, 1985). Education is a continuous process of building consciousness that links knowledge to the broader struggle for political freedom. Freire (1985) noted that,

For man this process of orientation in the world can be understood neither as a purely subjective event, nor as an objective or mechanistic one, but only as an event in which subjectivity and objectivity are united. [sic] Orientation in the world so understood, places the purposes of action at the level of critical perception of reality. (p.44)

In his view, pedagogy takes on broad implications and stands as a political alternative that contests elite domination, socioeconomic hierarchies, and the perceived invincibility of global neo-liberal forces predominant in present-day society.

With the mounting pressures of global neo-liberalism shaping all aspects of working class life, developing pedagogical approaches that contest growing economic inequality and corporate control of everyday life, and help expand the political power of social movements is an increasingly important task for organized labor. The development of class-based alternatives to the prevailing logic of capital helps workers break away from conformity and domesticity, and in the process, develop an alternative to the prevailing socioeconomic process.

By the mid-1980s, rapid neo-liberal, socioeconomic, and political transformations in Brazil, juxtaposed against the backdrop of historically high levels of income inequality and an enduring return to democracy, brought to the forefront the demands for working class power in very direct ways. Building labor's political power implied blocking the predatory process of global neo-liberal reforms that were redefining the basic structure of society.

For the union, the education of the working-class in its multiple formats was a strategic issue present in the most crucial of labor's political battles and vital for the future of the Brazilian labor movement. Education was a process through which workers expanded their role as citizens and activists, organized, mobilized, and subsequently strengthened their capacity to influence the political decision-making process. The program expanded organized labor's constituency to broad sectors of the working-class (not just union members), developing class consciousness and the critical mass necessary to advance labors' political and economic demands.

Integrar Program

Educate for Labor Militancy

The inception of *Integrar* reflected a broader notion of class and labor militancy adopted by significant sectors of the labor movement in the struggle against the military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985. The program was conceived to widen the scale and scope of traditional labor education and apprenticeship programs that had been in place for some time, moving the targeted audience from the limited membership role of the unions to the notion of workers as a class within society. Fernando Lopes (2006), Adjunct General Secretary of the International Federation of Metalworkers explained:

The experiences of the union movement are not new. In the seventies many training schools were open...These schools were aimed at training militants so that they could be better prepared to carry on organizational work in the plants. There was little public involvement in these activities and with the expansion of the workers movement these activities were relegated to a secondary level. Whatever their ideological position, unions offered skill training to their members in the same way they offered barber shops and dental clinics. (p.1)

In this sense *Integrar* breaks with traditional models of union education and the structural-ideological constraints that limit working class organization. The program assumes a fundamental importance in a country where illiteracy and social exclusion are major constraints to socioeconomic development.

The program rapidly grew both structurally and politically. Four years after its inception, in 1996, *Integrar* expanded from a primary education and literacy program to a comprehensive educational and training institute; training workers, union activists, social movements, cooperatives, and popular organizations. Basic instruction was just one of the many activities developed by the Metal Workers Confederation. The institute provided courses for organizing cooperatives, administration, economics, politics, and society; and linked the daily lives of workers to the larger struggle for socioeconomic justice and equality.

Integrar was financed through a combination of public funds provided by the Ministry of Education, and state and local governments. Unions, in particular are eligible to receive federal funds from the Ministry of Labor through a program called FAT (Fundo de Amparo ao Trabalhador- Workers Support Fund), specifically developed to support labor's educational activities.

The Pedagogy of Class

The organizers of *Integrar* argue that the battle for class hegemony occurs in three essential spheres of society: on the shop floor, in the larger political organization of society, and in the struggle to shape public policy. In this way the program's political objectives are the basis for the pedagogical organization of the project. *Integrar* is comprised of three basic educational programs: *Integrar* for Employed Workers (*Programa Integrar para Trabalhadores (as) Empregados*), *Integrar* for Unemployed

Workers (*Programa Integrar para Trabalhadores (as) Desempregados*), and *Integrar* for Union Leadership Training (*Programa Integrar Formação de Dirigentes*). The course disciplines are not organized as distinct subjects examined individually; instead students complete modules that draw intermittently on the various disciplines.

Each of the programs has program-specific political-educational objectives that shape the curriculum content and practicum. For example, the objectives of *Integrar* for Employed Workers focus on building workers' knowledge of the production process, developing the collective action of workers, and expanding worker power at the point of production. The political-pedagogical objectives of *Integrar* for Unemployed Workers focus on creating alternative forms of generating income, economic solidarity, and expanding the influence of the union among broad sectors of the unemployed, both young and old. Finally, the pedagogical objectives of *Integrar* for Union Leadership Training, centers its attention on reinforcing working class organization on the shop floor, enhancing the political-ideological capacity of workers, and shaping public policy by strengthening labor's strategic alliances with broader sectors of society (*Formação na Ótica dos Trabalhadores*).

According to the programs organizers approximately 300,000 workers have participated in one or more of the many courses organized by *Integrar*. Most of the courses are held in union halls, union vocational training schools, and community centers. The program's primary education course is one year in duration, divided into segments of 25 hours per week, for 100 hours per month, for a total of 800 hours. The secondary education program is two years in duration, similarly with segments of 25 hours per week, for a total of 1600 hours. Considering the extreme poverty faced by many of the programs' participant-learners, everyone receives textbooks and other educational material at no charge, as well as daily bus passes to ensure their presence in the classroom.

The concept of an integrated education is not just a method through which knowledge is delivered, but a process of enhancing a learner's critical view of society. The curriculum draws on the major questions that define working class life such as unemployment, cost of living, political rights, and organization, as well as the workers' particular life experiences. In this process, students are active participants in building a body of knowledge and not just passive recipients of information. Learners quickly realize a clear and useful purpose to the study of math, science, economics, social studies, and history, and the relation between their education and their daily struggles.

Students are provided pedagogical materials such as textbooks that address the methodological and political concerns of the program, so that all modules have a defined yet continuous flow of content. Some of the textbooks used in the modules are: *The Economy and Social Exclusion*, *Transformations of the World of Work and Modern Civilization*, *Social Relations and Work in Brazil*, and *Work, Race and Inequality*.

Pedagogy and Structure

The program's basic activity provides primary, secondary, and professional education for workers, young and old, independent of union affiliation or employment status. A

fundamental aspect of the program re-conceptualizes the curriculum content of primary and secondary education, restructuring the way in which workers learn. The core curriculum questions what knowledge is and how critical thinking is developed, reinforcing the correlation between learning and broader social, economic, and political transformations under way in Brazil. The primary objective of the program is not simply the transference of information, but the development of a participatory citizenry. *Integrar* provides the necessary wherewithal through which workers expand their power in society and reinforce the structures of participatory democracy, both locally and nationally.

The basic principles of *Integrar* are useful in understanding the program's fundamental political objectives and mission:

Political Objectives:

1. It is the obligation of the state to guarantee a free and quality public education.
2. Public resources must be invested in activities that support working-class interests.
3. Unemployment is the result of the current model of political-economic development and not an individual problem or a lack of qualification.

Mission:

1. Coordinate the articulation between education and action to strengthen the notion of citizenship and the labor movement.
2. Articulate the process of professional and basic education.
3. Elevate the value of workers' acquired knowledge. (Maia, 1999)

Teaching Social Change

The program's organizers argue that education is a process of political literacy where both educator and student must remove themselves from their traditional roles, to free the process of education from its domesticating tendencies. Freire points out: "Education for domestication is an act of transferring 'knowledge,' whereas education for freedom is an act of knowledge and a process of transforming action that should be exercised on reality" (1970, p. 102). The fundamental objective of education is the transformation of people from the objects of history to the subjects of history. This radical transformative process does not exist in a world different from the one in which we live, nor is there a neutral approach to the object of study. The process of education does not occur devoid of societal influences and constraints, nor do students and educators exist in isolation from the prevailing socioeconomic structure (Freire, 1985).

Action is an important aspect of the learning process; that is, real learning is demonstrated by the participant's capacity to translate their intellectual understanding into concrete action. A particularly important aspect of the program's methodological structure is that the communication and debate of ideas at the center of the learning process is not limited to speech and writing. Knowledge can be ascertained through

various mediums: art, music, dance and cinema; even physical education is considered a form of communication. For example, the instruction of communication skills is introduced in various disciplines and is not just the responsibility of the language instructor (Mascellani, 1999).

Rather than delivering strictly delimited areas of knowledge, such as math, history, etc. like that in traditional schools, subjects are infused into pedagogical units where the learning process develops by integrating multiple areas of knowledge into a single module. Learning occurs in phases developed concomitantly over the course of the modules' presentation. By adopting this methodological practice, the program's participants develop an understanding that there is a crossover of subject matter and that the acquisition of knowledge occurs in many forms and moments, using multiple mediums, and the results of which are measured in both intellectual and practical ways.

Evaluation as a Component of Learning

Another critical aspect of the program's educational structure is the use of pedagogical evaluations as permanent aspects of the learning process. Continuous evaluations are an important part of building a body of knowledge for both students and educators. Evaluations allow all those involved in the process to continuously measure the effectiveness of the program, recognize problems, and make changes to modules already in progress. Consequently, much like the program's methodological structure, systemic and continuous evaluations are an intricate aspect of the learning process that allows educators and students alike to reach their defined goals.

Integrar's evaluation process is based on the comparative examination of learning through the lens of the program's objectives. It is a critical and self-critical process between students and educators measuring individual and collective participation in the program (Mascellani, 1999). In the evaluation process students and educator critically examine course content and delivery as well as a self critical analysis of the participants. In this process student success is measured by reaching the objectives set out in the initial class. Individual intellectual developments, as well as general capacities of students collectively are the parameters used to determine success.

Labor's Politics and Public Policy

The political resolutions approved at the metalworkers' convention in the early 1990s argued that the fundamental conflict in Brazilian society was the contradiction between two competing political projects: on one side, the political agenda of "capital and large corporations," and in the opposite camp, working class political interests allied with small- and mid-sized entrepreneurs. *Integrar* coordinator Marco Aurelio Spall Maia (1999) pointed out,

[...their analysis acknowledges] a dispute for the hegemony of society and as a result of this dispute the need for unions to expand working class political interests. To achieve these goals the union's activity should focus on two major courses of action, both of which are distinct and complimentary components of the larger struggle to transform society. First, expand the unions' effective

involvement in the general political struggles of public policy issues, such as agrarian reform, employment, industrial policies, economic reform, social security, and education, healthcare, housing, professional training among others should be placed at the forefront of the unions concerns. It was within this logic that *Integrar* began. (p. 31)

The strategic objectives of *Integrar* seek to reinforce the political interests of workers and reflect a broader transformation in the day-to-day work developed by unions. State and local metalworker's unions have expanded their participation to address a broad array of political battles throughout the country. As a result of the unions support for popular social movements, the practice of mutual solidarity among different sectors of the working class has become increasingly visible. For example, in some regions, local metalworker's unions help sustain popular movements such as peasant land occupations and community housing cooperatives. The daily activities of the unions are combined with shop floor activism, and struggles of other sectors of the working class are viewed as part of a larger process of building an alternative working class political project.

On one hand, for the National Confederation of Metal Workers (CNM/CUT), education is a means of building the social consciousness necessary for organization and mobilization. All aspects of learning are an intricate part of an alternative political project that contests the neoliberal political alternatives being imposed on the working class. On the other hand, education, both for unions, as well as for workers in general, is a comprehensive part of labor's struggle for greater political power. For the union, the defense of working class interests in defining the structure of public education is an immediate, as well as a long-term strategic goal. Maia contended,

Both educational programs for unemployed workers and the unions' leadership training programs are indicators that we have surpassed traditional notions of working-class education...education is a continuous process that draws simultaneously on basic knowledge as well as the day-to-day experience of the union as a process that helps define the unions strategic planning and political practices... [in contrast] to the asymmetrical practice of union education with no self-critical analysis, no continuity of content or evaluation of the process. (p. 41)

In this way, the process of building working class political power is achieved by consolidating symmetrical relationships between education, union organization, and political action; they are all components of a singular process with multiple focal points.

In spite of *Integrar's* expansive undertakings, motivating local and state unions and the unemployed to engage in the strategic educational program has not always been met with success. The daily pressures placed upon unions to respond to the advances of neoliberal political strategies, limited or declining resources and changes in the union leadership have all constrained the program's ability to expand beyond the geo-political constituency of the union and its immediate allies. Moreover, the expansion of the program, after implementation, often requires the re-election of favorable local and state governments. Changes in public administration can lead to discontinued efforts, since many traditional political forces do not view the program's objectives favorably.

Integrar, as an alternative for working-class education, is not viewed as a substitute to the public education system. The program is an alternative model to the current market driven neo-liberal educational model that is rapidly being introduced. It is a means through which organized labor can intervene in defining the public policy for education while simultaneously advancing broader class political interests.

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Globalization, Inequality, and Transnational Activism: A Case Study on Chile

Moctezuma Garcia

Abstract: *Globalization has transformed how states are governed through a neoliberal economic approach that reinforces an unregulated capitalist market. An emphasis on Chile is important because it was the first state in Latin America to apply neoliberalism and has been hailed as a prime example for other developing states to integrate similar strategies to strengthen the local economy. However, inequality continues to persist despite economic gains. A combination of historical struggles affecting victims of the Pinochet era and present struggles with poverty, have resulted in a constant conflict between the power elite and the rest of society. Social movements in Chile have played a pivotal role in raising international awareness and pressuring the local government to protect the rights of highly vulnerable populations. A focus on transnational activism provides an effective medium for local and international advocates to work together toward holding Chile accountable for addressing social disparities.*

Keywords: *Globalization, inequality, human rights, transnational activism, Latin America, social movements*

[G]lobalisation is a multi-dimensional process characterized by:

- *the acceptance of a set of economic rules for the entire world designed to maximise profits and productivity by universalizing markets and production, and to obtain the support of the state with a view to making the national economy more productive and competitive;*
- *technological innovation and organisational change centred on flexibilisation and adaptability;*
- *the expansion of a specific form of social organisation based on information as the main source of productivity and power;*
- *the reduction of the welfare state, privatisation of social services, flexibilisation of labour relations and weaker trade unions;*
- *de facto transfer to trans-national organisations of the control of national economic policy instruments, such as monetary policy, interest rates and fiscal policy;*
- *the dissemination of common cultural values, but also the re-emergence of nationalism, cultural conflict and social movements.*
(Urzúa, 2000, pp. 421-422)

Globalization in the 1990s reinforced a neoliberal economic model that fostered an unregulated capitalist system (Kotz, 2002) that transformed how states are governed.

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States are no longer able to function in isolation, which requires one to take into consideration the influence that internal and external factors have on implementing economic strategies at the state level. “States find themselves trying to respond to pressures from local societies and global markets simultaneously without the breathing room previously offered by controls on national trade, finance, and production” (Ó Rian, 2000, p. 188). Held and McGrew (2007) indicate that “...national governments across the globe have been forced to adopt increasingly similar (neoliberal) economic strategies which promote financial discipline, deregulation and prudent economic management” (p.55). The national state still has the capacity to influence local markets’ involvement with the global economy, but this depends on how government resources are disseminated (e.g., tax incentives, policies) among local entrepreneurs (Ó Rian, 2000).

Globalization further determines how high-income states financially support initiatives to address social disparities in low- and middle-income states, a process that allows the donor states to reinforce their ideology on the recipient states. “Global institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are blatantly pursuing the interests of western governments and impose structural adjustments on poor nations with devastating consequences” (Ife, 2007). The U. S. government, for example, has invested billions of dollars of foreign aid through the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and significant strides have been accomplished in addressing HIV/AIDS globally. But the program has been scrutinized due to contractual agreements for partner states to reinforce abstinence-based interventions for young people and the eradication of prostitution. The Brazilian National AIDS Commission rejected \$40 million from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) due to the PEPFAR stipulation that excluded sex workers from accessing HIV prevention services (Middleberg, 2006). Brazil, however, is an exception and has taken drastic measures to ensure access to HIV prevention and treatment services for its citizens, which has revolutionized global initiatives addressing HIV/AIDS in low- and middle-income states. An emphasis on foreign aid demonstrates how a hierarchy of power is reinforced and limits the power of recipient states, which may also increase the vulnerability of historically oppressed and highly marginalized populations that are dependent on the local power elite to accept the terms of foreign aid or demand revisions to address issues affecting highly vulnerable populations. Globalization contextualizes the role of the social worker and determines how ideology influences the development of local and international policies that may narrow a professional’s ability to address social disparities.

This manuscript focuses on the influence globalization has on reinforcing inequality and how transnational activism can be used as a model for activists to demand accountability from a local government. Chile is used as a focal point, but inequality in Latin America is also discussed to conceptualize how power and status are reinforced between, as well as within, states. The historical perspective on Chile highlights how economic, political, and social events have influenced the development of a nation. A section on transnational activism provides a useful model for social workers to mobilize efforts locally, as well as abroad, to advocate for highly vulnerable populations. Implications for social welfare will also be discussed.

Inequality in Latin America

The power elite is composed of men whose positions enable them to transcend the ordinary environments of ordinary men and women; they are in positions to make decisions having major consequences (Mills, 1956, pp. 3-4).

Mills (1956) believed that power is not solitary, but it is composed of an intricate hierarchy put in place to dominate society. Power results in a limited number of power elite members imposing their beliefs and values (ideology) onto the larger society. The power elite are composed of a small percentage of society that controls and determines how, and within what limits, resources (e.g., money, property, education, healthcare) will be disseminated in society. Inequality is based on the uneven distribution of resources throughout society (Hoffman & Centeno, 2003). Several measures have been used to determine levels of human development and inequality. The Human Development Index (HDI) measures the national level of human development based on health, education, and income (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2011). However, in 2010 the Inequality-adjusted HDI (IHDI) was introduced to take into account differences in human development within a state due to inequality (UNDP, 2011). The HDI and IHDI range from 0 (lowest) to 1 (highest) for determining the level of human development. The GINI index is a measure used to determine levels of inequality based on the distribution of income or consumption within a state, 0 indicates perfect equality and 100 indicates perfect inequality (The World Bank Group, 2012a). Measures to collect data on these indices are limited and restrict greater analyses of inequality, which further impedes our understanding of the phenomenon in Latin America and the Caribbean (Mahoney, 2003). Despite limitations, researchers have been able to utilize measures to determine the influence of the global economic market and levels of inequality between, as well as within, states.

Latin America has a high level of inequality with the top 10% controlling between 40 to 47% of the total income (de Ferranti, Perry, & Ferreira, 2004). Brazil was the only state in Latin America that ranked in the top 10 states with the most billionaires, of which 1% of that population is worth \$300 billion (CNBC, 2012). The richest man in the world is Carlos Slim Helu, a citizen of Mexico with a net worth of \$69 billion (Forbes, 2012). Sebastián Piñera is an established billionaire who was elected president of Chile in 2010 (Meyer, 2012). The United States had 3 of the top 10 richest men in the world (Forbes, 2012). The top 1% of total income controls 43% of the wealth in the nation; and the next 4% control an additional 29% of the wealth in the United States (Dunn, 2012). Held and McGrew (2007) indicate that "...globalization enhances the development prospects of states in the South and contributes to making the world a less unequal place" (p. 80). Overall, inequality between states has declined from 1978 through 1998 (Firebaugh & Goesling, 2004). However, the UNDP (2011) demonstrates that greater access to wealth does not lead to a reduction of inequality within a state as demonstrated in the United States (.91 HDI, .85 IHDI, 40.8 GINI), Mexico (.77 HDI, .59 IHDI, 51.7 GINI), and Brazil (.72, HDI, .52 IHDI, 53.9 GINI).

Multiple factors (e.g., employment, education, housing) affect inequality, but it is important to acknowledge the historical context that has influenced the development of a

nation. Political, economic, and social structures reinforce inequality in Latin America (de Ferranti et al., 2004). States have played a regressive role in providing public goods (e.g., education, health, water, sanitation) for poverty stricken populations (de Ferranti et al., 2004). The power elite in Latin America have the essential resources to protect themselves and influence the state to establish policies that protect their interests (de Ferranti et al., 2004). Historically, social structures were created and maintained to reinforce the interests of the dominant group (e.g., colonizers, power elite), which has resulted in “truncated systems” that exclude the most vulnerable (de Ferranti et al., 2004). “Wealthy groups again have greater options for either exerting influence on public service provisioning for themselves or opting out for private provision” (de Ferranti et al., 2004, p. 123). Scholars (de Ferranti et al., 2004) emphasize that in order for change to occur in Latin America, it must be made from within as well as outside of social structures.

Chile provides a unique perspective because it was the first state in Latin America to apply the neoliberal model in the 1980s to improve its local economic market, which continues to be sustained. Chile is regarded as an upper-middle-income developing state and it has been a strong ally of the United States in advancing democracy, human rights, and trade (Meyer, 2012). Chile’s poverty rate has drastically declined since 1990, and no other state in Latin America has been able to approach Chile’s progress. Despite Chile’s decline in poverty, it still has to overcome obstacles associated with inequality. Chile has become the leader of human development (.81 HDI and .65 IHDI) in Latin America, but ranks number six for the greatest inequality (52.1 GINI) in Latin America (UNDP, 2011). Chile’s share of the top 20% in total income is 57.7%, and its share of the bottom 20% of total income is 4.3% (The World Bank Group, 2012b). The distribution of wealth within a state provides critical insight on how power is established and reinforced throughout the years among a select privileged group of an elite upper class.

A Brief Historical Perspective on Chile

Chile initially established a stable democratic political regime from 1932 to 1970 (Meyer, 2012). Economic development after World War II set the stage for the foundation of the global market. The United States had gained control of power in the world and the Soviet Union threatened American capitalism with communism (Hite & Roberts, 2007). The United States wanted to secure their status and modernization theory provided an explanation as to why some countries are poor and underdeveloped. “[...]According to this group of ‘modernization theorists,’ poorer nations are poor because they lack big capital, technology, and modern social organization and values” (Hite & Roberts, 2007, p. 8). The Soviet Union also had a strong interest in reinforcing socialism in Latin America, and Chile was no exception. Chile encountered significant economic struggles that caused a considerable political shift from a democratic to a socialist state in 1970.

By the early 1970s, Latin American economies were in trouble. Chile elected the Marxist president Salvador Allende. Allende’s solution was not less government intervention, but more. Businesses were nationalized or expropriated. Price

controls were imposed. Civil unrest grew as the economy spun out of control.
(Yergin & Cran, 2003)

Allende's efforts during his presidential term (1970-1973) to nationalize the state's control of resources backfired and instead united capitalists, landowners, and the middle class to strengthen a political alliance against laborers, peasants, and leftist organizations (Silva, 1993). Disparities increased in Chile and social protests demanded change. This resulted in a military coup and dictatorship by General Augusto Pinochet in 1973 (Garretón, 2005; Yergin & Cran, 2003).

Pinochet secured his newfound role of the state by conducting a massacre of Allende supporters and prohibiting political protests (Yergin & Cran, 2003). The military regime seized acquired wealth (e.g., money, property) from middle to upper class families so they would not threaten Pinochet's newly established role, which caused them to transition into poverty (Paley, 2001). Prominent Chilean activists fled the country, and grassroots organizations went underground to avoid tyranny from the military (Paley, 2001). "Indeed, Pinochet's autocratic system of one-man rule had concentrated power at the top to such a degree that it seemed as if the state had developed virtually complete autonomy from all social groups" (Silva, 1993, p. 526).

Inflation continued to escalate, as Harberger states in an interview (Yergin & Cran, 2003): "After a year, year and a half of military government, you still had 20 percent per-month built-in inflation that wouldn't go away until something structurally changed." Significant changes needed to be made and reduction of the state led Chile toward a "[d]ecentralization and privatization with a geopolitical view of power" (Garretón, 2005, p. 364). A small group of elite Chilean scholars, referred to as the "Chicago Boys" who studied free market economic theories abroad at the University of Chicago, influenced Pinochet to take drastic measures through "shock treatment" and apply neoliberalism to stabilize the economy (Yergin & Cran, 2003).

USAID had established financial support for students from the Catholic University of Chile to study at the University of Chicago and for professors from the University of Chicago to teach economics at the Catholic University of Chile (Borzutzky, 2005). Professor Milton Friedman from the University of Chicago mentored the Chicago Boys and he played an influential role in the development and implementation of the neoliberal economic plan for Chile (Silva, 1991). The Chicago Boys emphasized that "...government decisions were to be inspired by 'technical and scientific' principles and not by political ideological postulates as in the past" (P. Silva, 1991, p. 393). Chile's economic crisis allowed the Chicago Boys to implement a radical alternative, but Pinochet also perceived it as an opportunity to save the country from Marxism (Borzutzky, 2005). The local economic market was completely revamped, which resulted in significant reductions in government budgets and privatization of state-owned businesses (Yergin & Cran, 2003).

The transition toward an authoritarian regime, implementation of neoliberalism, and globalization of the economy created a new environment for the power elite to maneuver and protect their capital. The neoliberal economic market placed an emphasis on the free market, which gave rise to a new power elite referred to as "*technocrats*" who were

highly educated and occupied influential roles in the public and private sectors (Silva, 1991). Pinochet relied on *technocrats* to secure Chile's economy, but his dependence on others weakened his control of the state. The newly established power elite prospered and became an influential source toward developing state policy under authoritarian rule (E. Silva, 1993). As the power elite became established, the weaker upper-middle class either fled the country or the military sequestered their resources.

Chile encountered an economic boom between 1976 and 1981, but it caused poor people to endure greater inequality (Yergin & Cran, 2003). Pinochet imposed a new constitution in 1980 to extend his dictatorship for an additional eight years (Yergin & Cran, 2003). However, a bank crisis from 1981 to 1984 caused widespread protests, which resulted in the organization of civilians to become more critical of the existing regime (Meyer, 2012). The newly established *technocrats* seized the opportunity and withdrew their support of Pinochet. The Pinochet regime encountered pressures internally (social movements) as well as externally (United States and United Kingdom) to legalize a re-election in 1989, which resulted in Pinochet's defeat and Chile's return to a democratic state (Yergin & Cran, 2003).

Patricio Aylwin was elected president in 1990 and played an instrumental role in transitioning Chile's return to a democratic state. The significant transition in the economy for Chile during this period was that the state did not allow a completely free market. Garretón (2005) indicates that Chile applied a "[m]arket-oriented model with corrections to the role of the state and policies against poverty" (p.363). The free market allowed Chile's economy to prosper, but inequality rose as well. A combination of liberal trade (import and export) policies and state interventions allowed Chile to overcome international economic struggles and stay ahead of the competition. "Although Chilean exports surged in the 1980s as the peso devalued, they also surged in the early to mid-1990s as international prices for nontraditional crops declined markedly and the peso appreciated" (Kurtz, 2001, p. 7). Chile implemented the necessary infrastructures to address local market failures and support local businesses to capitalize on the global market, but a greater emphasis was placed on dynamic sectors such as forestry and fishing (Kurtz, 2001). At the same time, the state provided limited support to the fruit industry, which was distinguished by severe class biases and oligopolies (Kurtz, 2001).

The post 1989 period focused on establishing a democratic state and reducing inequality. The neoliberal economic model increased wealth for Chile, but without state intervention, the rich got richer and the poor got poorer. President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle's (1994-2000) political campaign emphasized rule by the people and not the military, but in 1980 Pinochet enforced a law that ensured life long positions (10 out of 48 seats) in the Senate for military officials (Freedom House, 2007). President Frei Ruiz-Tagle's attempts to take power away from the military limited his capacity to implement drastic measures to address social disparities. President Ricardo Lagos Escobar (2000-2006) focused his initiatives on eliminating poverty, but political corruption charges (peddling, insider trading, and kickbacks) were made public (Freedom House, 2007). Increased rates of unemployment and inflation during Lagos Escobar's presidential term also added to the growing disparities among poverty stricken populations. Chileans grew restless due to limited access to resources and growing levels of inequality. While

successors of Pinochet encountered the difficult task of maintaining an economic model that would work to stabilize the local economy, it widened economic disparities between the rich and poor in the absence of state intervention. Unfortunately, the top military commanders also proved to influence political initiatives despite Pinochet's defeat in 1989.

In 2006, Chile made history and elected its first female president, Michelle Bachelet (Freedom House, 2007). Inequality persisted and became the force for Chileans to demand government support despite Chile's drastic poverty reduction by 2006. Bachelet was committed to addressing inequality and issues affecting women such as access to healthcare and discrimination against women (Freedom House, 2007). However, Chile's capital surplus in copper increased by 83% from 2005 to 2006. Economic gains remained among the wealthy, which spurred social movements demanding distribution of the copper surplus for social programs by students, copper miners, health care workers, and teachers (Freedom House, 2007). In spite of Bachelet's work on inequality, students mobilized in 2006 and pressured the state to increase funding for education (Freedom House, 2007). Chileans also advocated for an increase in salaries and access to their share of the copper boom (Freedom House, 2007). Bachelet demonstrated her commitment to addressing inequality and invested billions towards health, housing, and education for low-income families (Freedom House, 2007).

Despite Bachelet's initiatives to address social disparities, persistent inequality and dissatisfaction with the existing government resulted in a shift of political parties in the 2010 elections from the center-left to the current center-right (Meyer, 2012). However, Chileans continued to protest over gas prices, environmental issues, education, and labor rights (Meyer, 2012). "Some analysts believe Chileans have resorted to street protests as a result of their increasing dissatisfaction with the country's political class, which they view as unresponsive to citizen demands and unwilling to address the country's high level of inequality" (Meyer, 2012, p. 7).

The Pinochet era overall exposed Chilean society to a tumultuous environment that provided a limited sense of safety and security, unless one was directly associated with the military regime. Reestablishment of a democratic government increased vigilance among the public to become more critical of the political system, especially among political leaders responsible for governing the state. Society played a pivotal role in holding the power elite accountable for their actions as well as designating limitations on harnessing wealth and/or resources. Inequality became more prevalent and the public raised awareness through social protests as a vehicle to advocate for the needs of highly disenfranchised populations. Social protests also allowed the local public to raise international awareness on social issues impacting a state locally and provide a global forum to scrutinize initiatives taken by the power elite. Global consumers were able to support causes abroad through financial support of local grassroots organizations or by pressuring their local government to respond to social disparities in another state (e.g., Chile), which is the premise of transnational activism.

Transnational Activism

Globalization has not only affected the economy, it has also influenced how people interact. Technology (e.g., Internet, faxes, international flights) has made the world highly accessible, which has revolutionized social activism. The Pinochet era, for example, caused exiled Chileans to mobilize abroad and they played a significant role in raising international awareness of human rights violations due to the Pinochet regime. Foreign human rights organizations gained a greater understanding of the atrocities committed by the Pinochet regime, which garnered international support (e.g., foreign aid, publicity) for local organizations that advocated for social justice and pressured their local government to address claims of human rights violations.

Social activism has transcended borders and it is no longer isolated to a state. Keck and Sikkink (1998) refer to this intricate network between domestic and international actors as “transnational advocacy networks.” Tarrow (2005) emphasizes the importance of distinguishing globalization from internationalism. Globalization is grounded in “...a source of interest, ideology, and grievances” (Tarrow, 2005, p. 19). “Internationalism is the institutional and informal framework within which transnational activism – some of it aimed at globalization but much of it independent of that process – takes shape” (Tarrow, 2005, p. 19). Therefore, transnational activists utilize internationalism as a framework to strategize and mobilize toward a designated mission.

Transnational activism has a greater influence on getting the state to address issues due to its endogenous (rooted cosmopolitans) and exogenous (transnational activists) influences. Rooted cosmopolitans are deeply entrenched in a state and play a critical role domestically in activism at the community level (Tarrow, 2005). Transnational activists are a subgroup of rooted cosmopolitans with a deep understanding of issues at the state level who become key actors in raising awareness and support at the international level (Tarrow, 2005). The link between transnational activists (e.g., Chilean exiles) and rooted cosmopolitans (e.g., Chilean activists during the Pinochet era) determines how influential the transnational network will be on pressuring the government to address social disparities.

Transnational networks usually arise due to a lack of response by the state on issues being raised by local activists. Keck and Sikkink (1998) identified the following tactics to pressure a state to respond: 1) *information politics* – generates information quickly to impact the political climate and persuade people to act, 2) *symbolic politics* – relates the lived experience of the people encountering human rights violations for people abroad to join the alliance, 3) *leverage politics* – encourages powerful actors in influential positions to withhold resources for the state to respond to the claims of human rights violations, and 4) *accountability politics* – powerful actors are held accountable for prior commitments and/or policies addressing human rights. Successful transnational networks have committed actors who are influential as grassroots activists and transnational activists. They raise global awareness of the plight of vulnerable populations at the local level and utilize foreign resources (e.g., foreign aid, policy, international trade, media) to pressure a state or local government to address human rights violations.

Chile, as a case study, highlights how transnational networks are able to persuade, socialize, and pressure the local government to address human rights violations. Amnesty International (2008b) conducted a research mission in 1973 to investigate human rights allegations (i.e., information politics) and collect testimonials of victims (i.e., symbolic politics). Families of victims sought legal support from Spain and the United Kingdom due to failed attempts within Chile to prosecute perpetrators of human rights violations (Pion-Berlin, 2004), which is an example of leverage politics. "In 1978 the military had decreed for itself a sweeping amnesty which let all state security officials off the hook for human rights crimes committed between September 1973 and March 1978" (Pion-Berlin, 2004, p. 483). Amnesty International (2008a) was the first international NGO to pressure the British government to extradite Pinochet during his stay in the United Kingdom in September 2008. Extraditing Pinochet was a paramount moment because international experts (e.g., legal advocates, human rights activists, scholars) were able to successfully raise global awareness and prosecute offenders of crimes against humanity (Pion-Berlin, 2004). External pressures from Spain and the United Kingdom resulted in accountability politics, which influenced Judge Guzman to introduce a "new doctrine" in Chile's judicial proceeding that overturned amnesty of military officials (Pion-Berlin, 2004). Chile's Supreme Court honored the "new doctrine" and was successful in prosecuting multiple military officials guilty of human rights crimes (Pion-Berlin, 2004). Overall, human rights violations committed by the Pinochet regime have caused Chile to create an Institute of Human Rights and designate an under-secretariat for human rights to address complaints from the public as well as organizations (Meyer, 2012). Amnesty International continues to monitor human rights violations in Chile, and attention has currently been focused on prisoners and indigenous people.

Conclusion

The international field of social welfare requires professionals to take an interdisciplinary approach toward advocating for the protection of highly vulnerable populations. Inequality between states has decreased through globalization, but it is imperative that professionals deepen their understanding of how inequality is reinforced within a state and the affect it has on addressing the needs of highly vulnerable populations. The literature has emphasized the implications of neoliberal ideology being reinforced through globalization, which sustains a hegemonic structure that hinders the distribution of wealth and access to resources. However, every state varies on how a nation is governed and what type of ideology reinforces cultural beliefs and values. Acknowledgement of historical events provides critical insight into how social structures reinforce power and status within a state, as well as political influence between the host and foreign state.

The field of social work takes a multi-perspective approach toward addressing social problems at the micro-meso-macro levels (The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 1994). Social workers are well poised to address global disparities because the profession reinforces a holistic approach in ensuring social justice, human rights, and sustainable development for highly vulnerable populations. As stated by the National Association of Social Workers (2012): "The primary mission of the

social work profession is to enhance human wellbeing and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty.”

The greatest obstacle to overcome in establishing a transnational network is for there to be a consensus of a shared vision and values among activists. Developing a shared vision with an overarching goal and designated objectives is pivotal for the transnational network to be successful in addressing issues and optimizing resources toward accomplishing outcomes. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) provides a common understanding of shared values for key players at every level. The code of ethics for social work also reinforces the UDHR. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2012) provides 388 translations of the UDHR and identifies voluntary commitments and pledges made by a state to address human rights. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is an agreement made by states throughout the world to address: 1. Poverty and Hunger; 2. Education; 3. Gender Equality; 4. Child Health; 5. Maternal Health; 6. HIV/AIDS; 7. Environmental Sustainability; and 8. Global Partnerships (United Nations, 2010). The UDHR, along with the MDGs, provide critical tools for activists to collaborate with intergovernmental organizations, international organizations, and local organizations to hold a state accountable for human rights violations and measure progress toward addressing social disparities.

Once a transnational network agrees on a shared mission of designated goals and objectives, it is also important to take into consideration the influence that power, status, and entitlement have within the network as well as external factors between the host and visiting state. Ife (2007) has raised awareness on the implications of globalization and how power has influenced the social work profession in reinforcing a western ideological approach in addressing social disparities abroad. An emphasis is placed on a dominant colonial discourse and the implications it has in shaping the social work profession toward addressing the needs of historically oppressed and highly marginalized populations (Ife, 2007). Professionals addressing social disparities in foreign states must take into account how personal factors (e.g., citizenship, employment status, educational status, biological sex, ethnicity, economic status) influence interactions with the local community as well as the power elite. Foreign professionals should empower rooted cosmopolitans (local activists) to take the lead in addressing local social issues as well as to recognize experiential knowledge as a valuable source for addressing the needs of highly vulnerable populations. A focus on sustainable development strengthens a collaborative approach among activists and prevents the rooted cosmopolitans (local activists) from depending on transnational activists (foreigners) to address the needs of the local community.

An emphasis has been placed on addressing social disparities abroad, but professionals are able to apply the same principles locally to hold a government accountable for reinforcing inequality and social disparities among historically oppressed populations such as Latinos. The UDHR applies to issues within the United States and American ideology continues to influence the development of low- and middle-income states through international aid and policy. Transnational activism utilizes power and status between states to pressure a local government in addressing human rights

violations among highly vulnerable populations. Therefore, professionals addressing social disparities play a critical role in monitoring existing systems to ensure that the needs of highly vulnerable populations are addressed appropriately. Inequality will remain rampant, unless professionals advocate for change from within as well as from outside existing social structures, domestically and internationally.

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Colombians in the United States: A Study of Their Well-Being

Cándida Madrigal

Abstract: *This study examined the extent to which four factors—acculturation, ethnic identity, self-esteem, and resilience—can explain the well-being of Colombian immigrants in the United States across three waves of immigration (wave 1, from 1945–1964; wave 2, from 1965–1989; and wave 3, from 1990–2008). The results indicate that of the four factors, self-esteem most correlated with and was a predictor of well-being. Participants exhibited high levels of well-being as their level of self-esteem increased. Ethnic identity negatively predicted well-being, especially for men who entered during wave 3; as the extent of their ethnic identity increased, their well-being decreased. Correspondingly, Colombians who entered as political refugees reported a lower level of well-being. This research was groundbreaking in assessing factors contributing to the well-being of Colombian immigrants and assisting in the search for appropriate scales to study this population. Although its results have to be considered with caution, the study opens doors to future research, policies, and programs regarding the mental health assessment and treatment of Colombians in the United States.*

Keywords: *Colombians, immigrants, well-being, ethnic identity, self-esteem*

People leave their country of origin for numerous reasons such as political refuge, economic advancement, religion, adventure, educational opportunities, or just to take an extended vacation (Segal, 2002; Segal, Elliott, & Mayadas, 2010). The reason for migration affects the immigrant's intent to stay permanently in another place, and may have both positive and negative consequences to the person's well-being, as the resettlement experience affects psychosocial adjustment. Many factors influence immigrant health and psychological well-being, including some specific demographic and migration characteristics, coping resources, and perceptions of life circumstances (Christopher & Aroian, 1998). Moving to a new country may contribute to improvement in the quality of life, which in turn can influence a person's psychosocial adjustment, or it can have adverse consequences, creating new unresolved psychosocial consequences for the well-being of an immigrant.

The United States of America is comprised of diverse and heterogeneous ethnic and racial groups, including those called minorities and the dominant European American majority group (Zhou & Bankston, 1998). Multiculturalists view immigrants as actively participating in the shaping of their lives and consider them integral segments of American society. The well-being of immigrants has been widely documented on the basis of existing theory and research. Early research sought to better understand the relationship between conditions in society, in the family, and how healthy individuals adjust to their environments. Several models have been developed, recommended, and tested to further understand psychological and health-related outcomes for diverse immigrant groups (Abouguendia, 2001; Campbell, 1981; Christopher & Aroian, 1998; Dupuy, 1977; Kuo-Jackson, 2000; Mahoney, 2004; Phinney, 2003).

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Colombians have been arriving in the United States since the 1930s. Initially they came to advance their education or economic situations, and in some cases, to search for adventure. Since the late 1990s, they have arrived primarily to escape violent internal armed conflict. The political and economic turbulence in Colombia has involved an internal/external political crisis with an alarming connection among drug traffickers, the guerilla groups, and the paramilitary groups, who work together in attempting to control either the land or the drug trade (Collier & Gamarra, 2001; Reimers, 2005; Sanchez, 2003; Shifter, 1999; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2012). The increasing violence, threats of extortion, kidnapping, murder, and an “undeclared civil war” have caused a large number of Colombians to leave their country in hopes of finding a safer home.

Although Colombians represent one of the largest groups of immigrants from South America in the United States, much of the research available is based on groups with ethnic labels such as “Hispanics” or “Latinos.” Most of these studies are conducted with Cuban, Cuban American, Puerto Rican, mixed Mexican, or Mexican American populations; Central/South American populations combined; or under an “Other Hispanic” category (InfoPlease, 2011; Longres & Patterson, 2000; Rumbaut, 1996). Other studies have been conducted with unspecified groups of Spanish-speaking or Spanish-surnamed populations. This research approach is misleading because there are very important ethnic and cultural differences among groups, whether Latin American or Caribbean (Longres & Patterson, 2000; Rumbaut, 1996).

This article discusses acculturation, ethnic identity, resilience, and self-esteem as a framework to study the well-being of Colombian immigrants residing in the United States. It provides a background history of their reasons for leaving their country and their immigration patterns. It explains the results of the study, the limitations, as well as implications for social work practice, policy, education, and research.

Importance of the Study

It is of prime importance to study the well-being of Latinos in the United States because their presence is significant. As of July 1, 2011, 52 million people in the United States were Latinos, representing 16.7% of the total population and making them the largest ethnic or racial minority in the country. By the year 2050, it is estimated that there will be 132.8 million Latinos in the United States, comprising 30% of the total population (InfoPlease, 2011). The connection between Latino/Hispanics and the United States extends to all areas, political, social, cultural, and economic.

It is also important to study the nationality groups individually since their immigrant trajectory may be different. This study focuses on Colombian immigrants. The greatest number of immigrants who have entered the United States from South America are Colombians, accounting for 23.3 % of the overall South American-born population in the country (Acosta & De la Cruz, 2011). However, there are limited available historical references concerning Colombian immigrants to the United States. More specifically, there is little information regarding their immigrant experience and the factors that affect their well-being in the host country. In 1999 Guarnizo, Sanchez, and Roach stated that,

"While Colombians constitute an important wave of immigrants; nonetheless they are an understudied ethnic group" (p. 5), and today, in 2013, they continue to be understudied.

Colombians play a very important role because they continue to arrive to the United States and are integral to this country. Therefore, it is appropriate to explore the immigration waves of Colombians to the United States and understand the factors that contribute to their well-being. Furthermore, because social services and financial resources for immigrants have been limited, it is imperative that the social programs developed to assist immigrants in the United States, specifically Colombians, be based on a concrete understanding of the factors that contribute to their overall well-being in the United States.

Literature Review

Immigration Patterns as Waves

Records show that Colombians began arriving in the United States in the 1930s when there were 1,233 Colombians residing in the country; by the 1940s this number had reached 3,858 (United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, [USINS], 1970). Although there is a consensus in the available literature about the immigration patterns of Colombians to the United States unfolding in three waves, there is a discrepancy regarding the exact periods and limited information about the reasons that led to these patterns. Collier and Gamarra (2001) list the time periods as 1950 to the end of the 1970s, late 1970s to the mid 1990s, and the mid 1990s to the present.

However, Sanchez (2003) suggests the three periods of immigration to the United States were from 1945–1965; 1966–1990; and 1991–2000. He links the time frames to the internal conditions in Colombia, the United States' immigration policies, and the overall receiving context. Nevertheless, there are indications that wave 3 extended to the year 2008, given the sociopolitical situation both in Colombia and the United States. For a detailed description of the characteristics of the migration of Colombians to the United States by wave, from 1945 to 2008, see table 1. The years between 2008 and 2013 have been impacted by different social and political situations both in the United States and Colombia, including newly elected Presidents, and the efforts of President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón (elected in 2010) to reach peace agreements with the diverse armed groups in Colombia. Specific information regarding the characteristics of this new wave of Colombian immigration to the USA, although of great interest, is beyond the scope of this paper.

Table 1 *Characteristics of Colombian Migration to the United States by Waves*

WAVE	Reasons for Leaving Colombia. Pushed Factors: Conditions in Colombia	Reasons for Migrating to USA. Pulled Factors: Cultural attraction, United States' immigration policies and the overall receiving context
Wave 1 1945–1965	<p>-Political turmoil in the country.</p> <p>-1949. Assassination of Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, a young political leader from the Liberal Party.</p> <p>-Period known as <i>La Violencia</i>, (The Violence), a civil war between the two political parties in the country that killed more than 200,000 Colombians¹ and destroyed most of the agriculture in the country.²</p> <p>-Thousands of Colombians lost their land and were forced to move to major cities.³</p> <p>-Searching for a solution to this internal crisis, the elite political parties agreed on a pact that created an “exclusionary political system,”⁴ which, in addition to the political violence in the country, the absence of economic opportunities, and the cultural magnetism to the United States, including financial prospects, precipitated the exit of Colombians from their country.</p> <p>-By the 1950s, there were 18,048 Colombian nationals in the United States, and by 1960 there were 72,028 permanent Colombian residents.⁵</p>	<p>-Cultural magnetism to the United States, including financial prospects.</p> <p>- The primary factors that have attracted Colombians to the United States throughout their migratory patterns include “the promise of jobs, peace, and stability. . .these immigrants have sought to escape the political violence, while searching for economic opportunities” (Collier & Gamarra, 2001, p. 4).</p> <p>- While the unstable economic and political situation in the home country were the primary push factors, Collier and Gamarra (2001) contend that during this period individuals from the middle, upper-middle, and upper classes—primarily from the large cities of Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali—not only came in search of better economic prospects, but also to look for adventure. They state that “Colombians are risk-takers, have a sense of adventure and a history of migrating” (Collier & Gamarra, 2001, p. 3).</p>
Wave 2 1966–1990	<p>-The situation in Colombia got worse, both economically as well as politically</p> <p>-By 1964, and through the 1970s, a large percentage of the country’s revenue was controlled by a small number of families and the inequality and inability to earn income diminished the capacity to buy goods.⁶</p> <p>-Levels of internal political violence in the countryside had increased.</p> <p>-The weak political and economic conditions of the country were additionally complicated by the reality that Colombia was rising as a major manufacturer, trafficker, and provider of marijuana and cocaine⁷ as well as heroin to many parts of the world.</p> <p>-During this period, Colombia surfaced as the most important actor in the dispensation and circulation of cocaine’s succession of global commodity.⁸</p> <p>-Migration of Colombians to the United States rose significantly during this period.</p> <p>-By the end of the 1980s, there were 122,849 Colombians residing in the United States.⁹</p>	<p>-Amendments to the immigration laws in the United States.</p> <p>-The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Act’s 1965 amendments, which allowed every country a quota of 20,000 new immigrants per year (Collier & Gamarra, 2001, Hing, 2004) and also had a provision for family reunification (Hing, 2004) that made it possible for many relatives to immigrate, thereby, creating a great influx of Colombians and other Latin Americans during the late 1960s and 1980s (Sanchez, 2003).</p> <p>Many Colombians who came to the United States during these years were affected by the stereotyping and stigmatizing of the drug epidemic. Colombians were often referred to as drug traffickers (Collier & Gamarra, 2001; Jones-Correa, 1998; Sanchez, 2003; Tazi, 2004). This was a particular language used to support the ideas held about Colombians that created biased judgments towards all Colombians since they were perceived according to this image of drug traffickers.</p>

Table 1 (cont.)

WAVE	Reasons for Leaving Colombia. Pushed Factors: Conditions in Colombia	Reasons for Migrating to USA. Pulled Factors: Cultural attraction, United States' immigration policies and the overall receiving context
Wave 3 1991- 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The decade of the 1990s was marked not only by the emerging internal/external political crises in Colombia, but also by a disturbing connection among drug traffickers and the guerrilla groups, especially the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC) (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia). This group sought total power of the drug trade.¹⁰ -In August 1989, the undeclared civil war became bloodier when the drug lords gunned down Luis Carlos Galán, the leading Liberal contender for the 1990 presidential election. - The economic and political turmoil in the country, the escalating violence, and the personal safety threats of extortion, kidnapping and murder predisposed many individuals and families to leave, including numerous wealthy and professional Colombians.¹¹ -December 1993, Palo Escobar, Colombian's feared drug lord, was killed by Colombian military forces backed by the USA. - 2002: Álvaro Uribe Vélez was elected 58th President of Colombia. - 2006, Álvaro Uribe wins re-election for second term as president. -Many credit President Uribe for his role in fighting the guerrilla groups. - In 2008, there were reports that the violence in the country was decreasing. -Although terrorist groups, including the FARC and other criminal organizations, continued to kidnap civilians and political people who they hold for ransom or use as bargaining when negotiating with the government, the FARC had lost several of its top leaders. -The killing and capture by Colombian security of several senior guerrilla commanders and the rescue on July 2, 2008, of Colombian's ex-presidential candidate, Ingrid Betancourt who had been in captivity for more than 6 years, 3 government contractors from the United States, and 11 Colombian policemen and soldiers, reportedly allowed President Uribe's government to reestablish some sense of security and safety in the country, especially in the larger cities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The situation in Colombia during these years produced considerable apprehension for the U.S. government and its military. -As a result, Colombia and the U.S. administration established "Plan Colombia" to support the Colombian government in eradicating the drugs, combating the rebel groups and strengthening the military, with millions of dollars (Collier & Gamarra, 2001, Reimers, 2005; Sanchez, 2003; Shifter, 1999). - By the 1990s, many middle, upper-middle, and upper-class individuals and trained professionals entered the United States on tourist visas but stayed without legal documents after their visas expired (Collier & Gamarra, 2001; Reimers, 2005). -2003. The Department of State refused to grant TPS to Colombians, stating that the home conditions had improved and that a significant number of Colombians had already been granted asylum (Reimers, 2005). -If undocumented, Colombians who entered during this wave have found themselves experiencing concerns and frustrations at their inability to obtain legal status, regardless of their educational and socioeconomic background. They find it difficult to understand the U.S. system and accept that they cannot obtain licenses and permits to work in their line of business or profession. For example, they are not used to "competing for jobs based upon their qualifications; instead, they are used to gaining employment through close networks of family and friends" (Collier & Gamarra, 2001, p. 9). -2008 was an election year in the United States, therefore the "Department of Homeland Security's widening immigrant round-up," and President Bush's anti-immigration laws and regime were left to be dealt with by the next administration (Barry, 2008, p. 1).

Table 1 (cont.)

WAVE	Reasons for Leaving Colombia. Pushed Factors: Conditions in Colombia	Reasons for Migrating to USA. Pulled Factors: Cultural attraction, United States' immigration policies and the overall receiving context
Wave 3 (cont.)	-Many Colombian activists worldwide called for peaceful demonstration against the guerrilla groups, the kidnappings, the violence in the country, and in favor of the release of the many other (approximately 700) Colombians who remained captive. -Thus, the incidence of kidnapping reportedly decreased considerably and the dream for peace in Colombia seemed closer to being a reality facilitating the return of many Colombians.	-Given the severe consequences faced by undocumented immigrants as a result of "tighter immigration controls and security issues raised after September 11, 2001" (Bérubé, 2005, p. 1), the uncertainty of the immigration laws in the United States and the hope that the home situation would improve in Colombia, it can be said that 2008 signified the end of wave 3 of Colombian immigration to the United States.
¹ (Collier & Gamarra, 2001; Dix, 1987; Osterling, 1989; Reimers, 2005; Sanchez, 2003); ² (Reimers, 2005); ³ (Collier & Gamarra, 2001; Dix, 1987; Osterling, 1989; Reimers, 2005; Sanchez, 2003); ⁴ (Sanchez, 2003, p. 58); ⁵ (United States Immigration and Naturalization Services [USINS], 1970); ⁶ (Dix, 1987; Osterling, 1989; Sanchez, 2003); ⁷ (Osterling, 1989; Sanchez, 2003); ⁸ (Wilson & Zambrano, 1994); ⁹ (USINS, 1995); ¹⁰ (Collier & Gamarra, 2001, Reimers, 2005; Sanchez, 2003; Shifter, 1999); ¹¹ (Collier & Gamarra, 2001; Reimers, 2005).		

Colombians in the United States: Present Situation

Statistics from the U.S. Census indicate that there were 471,000 documented Colombian-born immigrants residing in the country in the year 2000 (Guzmán, 2001), however, in 2003 it was estimated that there were approximately 2 million Colombians in the USA (Bérubé, 2005). Per the Migration Policy Institute tabulations from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2011 American Community Survey, there are 658,667 Colombian born residents in the United States (American FactFinder, 2011). Many contend that this is not an accurate count since it does not capture the undocumented who, because of fear of deportation, avoid the census count. Consequently, the exact number of Colombians in the United States is difficult to determine, especially through the U.S. Census (Collier & Gamarra, 2001; Reimers, 2005; Sanchez, 2003).

The primary states where Colombians live are Florida, New York, and New Jersey. Table 2 shows the states with the largest Colombian population, per the Migration Policy Institute tabulations from the US Census Bureau's 2011 American Community Survey (American FactFinder, 2011). Despite these statistics, available empirical data regarding the reception of Colombians in the United States continue to be limited.

Table 2 *States with the Largest Colombian Population in the United States: 2011*

State	Colombian Population 2011
Florida	228,619
New York	97,623
New Jersey	80,659
California	35,976
Texas	35,013
Georgia	20,591
Massachusetts	18,417
Connecticut	12,811
Pennsylvania	12,224
Illinois	15,260
North Carolina	11,283
Virginia	11,205
Louisiana & other states	127,773
Total	658,667

Data obtained with authorization from Migration Policy Institute, 2011.

There are primarily two studies that address the migration of Colombians to the United States. While Sanchez's (2003) time periods of the waves are historically linked to the domestic circumstances that surrounded their migration, his study focused mostly on the "New York context of reception" (p. 54). Collier and Gamarra (2001), on the other hand, focused on some elements of the immigration of Colombians in South Florida. Their findings were published as a white paper titled "Colombian Diaspora in South Florida" (p. 1).

Sanchez (2003) interviewed numerous community leaders and attended meetings to gather the information he presented in his dissertation. Collier and Gamarra (2001) conducted a research study, together with a team of eight students. Although they did not clearly specify the method they used to collect their data, their report concentrated primarily on the immigration experience of Colombians who arrived during wave 3. In their study, wave 3 Colombian immigrants reported that the reasons for leaving Colombia included an intricate mix of economic and political factors, but the political factors were dominant. Many economically and politically influential people in Colombia expressed their concern that the exit of these immigrants was causing a brain drain in Colombia and advocated for Colombians to stay in the country. Overall, wave 3 immigrants from the

upper classes “tend to feel that they have dropped one or more social classes since their arrival in the United States” (Collier & Gamarra, 2001, p. 9). Other studies (Duque-Páramo, 2004; Gonzalez-Eastep, 2007) explored specific issues with Colombians in particular regions in the United States, but they did not address the immigrants’ experiences.

Previous Studies on the Well-Being of Immigrants

The well-being of immigrants has been widely documented on the basis of existing theory and research. Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, and Vedder (2001) suggest an “international model for understanding psychological outcomes for immigration [and assert that the] combination of a strong ethnic identity and a strong national identity promotes the best adaptation” (p. 1). They state that the relationship between the characteristics and attitudes of immigrants, in addition to the response of the host society, are the best determinants of psychological well-being. This relationship is also affected by the status of the particular immigrant group the person belongs to (Phinney et al. 2001).

The psychosocial well-being of immigrants has also been studied by using a framework of acculturation, ethnic identity, and racial identity (Kuo-Jackson, 2000). That author asserts that individuals from a minority culture must deal with four psychosocial issues: (a) conflict between cultures, (b) racism and discrimination, (c) protection of their cultural and ethnic traditions, and (d) facing/confronting their minority status (Kuo-Jackson, 2000).

Other studies have looked at the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being with diverse communities. Abouguendia (2001) studied the acculturative stressors, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being among immigrants and second-generation individuals in the North American population. Psychological well-being has also been considered in the realm of specific demographic characteristics and life satisfaction (Christopher & Aroian, 1998). It has also been documented that ethnic identity positively correlates with well-being, self-esteem, and resilience. Zhou and Bankston (1998) found that high levels of ethnic identity and attachment were linked to behaviors that allow for stronger academic performance and greater motivation. Also, in a meta-analysis conducted by Sam (2000), a moderate but consistent relationship was found between ethnic identity and self-esteem.

Given the review of the theories and empirical studies with regard to the well-being of immigrants, and specifically Colombians in the United States, the importance of understanding immigrant adjustment to the receiving country from different theoretical perspectives has been documented. However, no research was found that studies the psychosocial well-being of immigrants from the acculturation, ethnic identity, resilience, and self-esteem perspective as proposed in this study (figure 1).

Conceptual Framework Guiding the Present Study

In this study it was hypothesized that (a) there is a positive relationship between the well-being of the participants and their level of acculturation, self-esteem, resilience, and ethnic identity for all subjects in the sample, (b) there are different predictors of well-being for Colombians in the study sample, and (c) there are different predictors of well-being for participants in each of the waves. (See Figure 1)

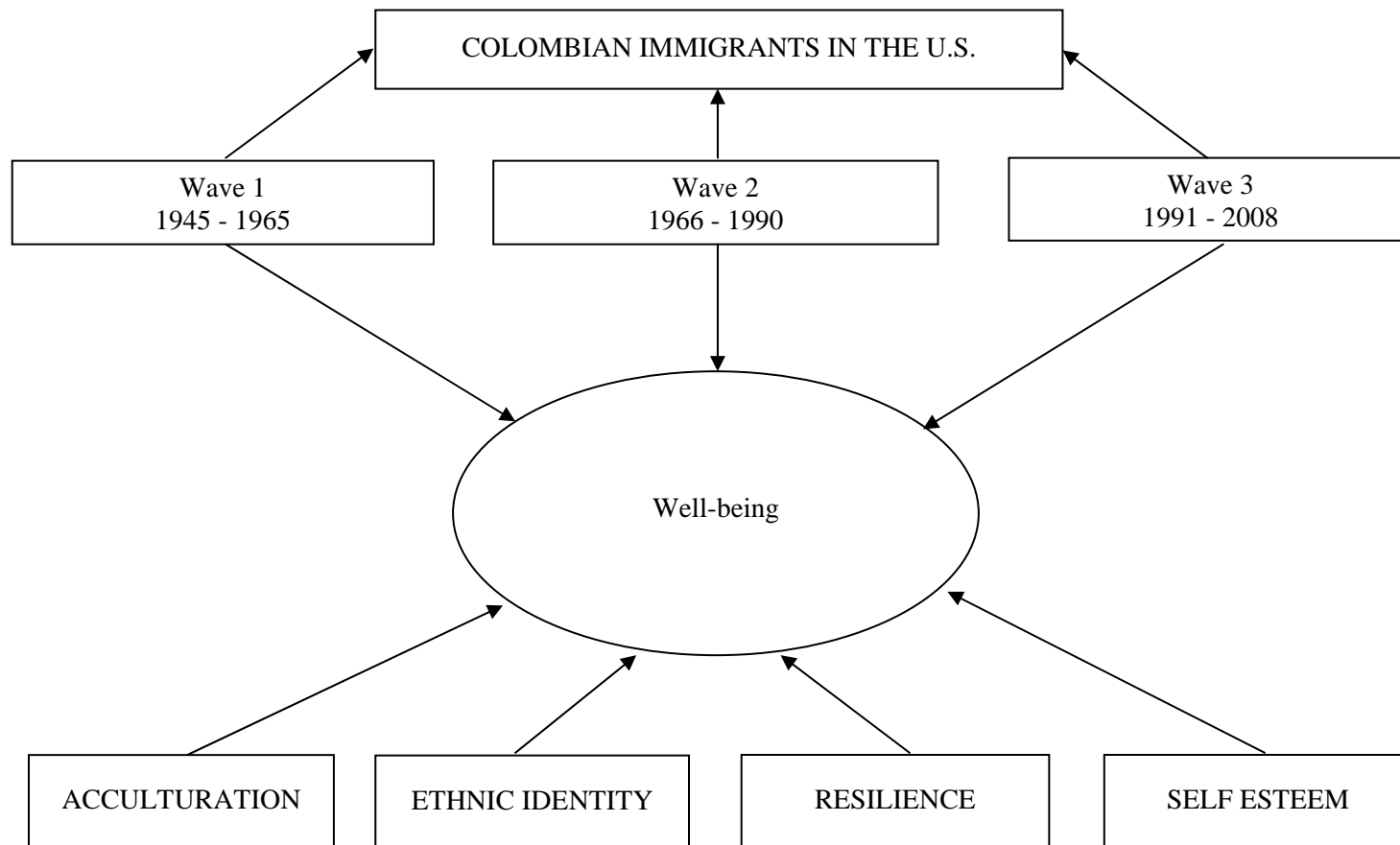
Well-being, the dependent variable on which the influence of the other four factors was sought, is described as the position of being joyful, in good physical shape, or wealthy (Morris, 1981). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 1948, p. 100). Psychological well-being includes emotional feelings of pleasure related to the current life experience of the individual (Campbell, 1981; Dupuy, 1977). Furthermore, psychosocial well-being addresses the relationship between conditions in society (i.e., social factors, demographic factors, SES), how healthy individuals can adjust to their environment, and the psychological state of the individual.

Acculturation is defined as the changes that groups and individuals experience when they come into contact with two or more cultures. Acculturation includes the psychological, social, and cultural aspects of the adaptation process and outcome (Williams & Berry, 1991). Although changes occur in the dominant culture and the minority group, it is usually the non-dominant or minority group that experiences the most change. The minority group often voluntarily accepts or is forced to accept the language, religion, laws, and educational institutions of the host culture. Acculturation reflects the degree of agreement with the norms, values, attitudes, beliefs, and preferences of a particular group to the host society and culture (Berry, 1990; Berry, 1992; Marino, Stuart, & Minas, 2000).

Ethnic identity is defined as the degree to which the individual understands his or her culture and is self-assured of the choices made about upholding or not upholding the country of origin’s customs and values (Phinney, 1998). According to Phinney, each person’s attitude toward their own cultural group is essential to their psychological well-being; therefore, ethnic identity becomes a basic part of acculturation. Ethnic identity is not a static construct and varies over an individual’s life span. Phinney proposes that ethnic identity develops over time as a result of the individual’s exploration and decision-making process regarding what part they want culture to play in their lives.

Resilience has been defined as the capacity to withstand life stressors, thrive, and make meaning from challenges (Greene, 2012). Cultural resilience refers to the capacity of specific human cultures to endure stressors such as contact with other cultures and disasters, and the ability to uphold critical cultural knowledge all the way through generations, regardless of challenges and complexities. Resilience is also a personal characteristic of an individual who is able to make the required psychosocial adjustments when faced with adversity (Richmind & Bearslee, 1988; Wagnild & Young, 1990).

Figure 1 Framework of well-being of Colombian immigrants in the United States.



Resilience is an inferred process because it implies that the individual is presently doing fine and that there have been exceptional circumstances that threaten positive outcomes (Masten & Reed, 2002).

Self-esteem is defined as the ability to form an identity and attach a value to it (McKay & Fanning, 2000). Self-esteem has also been defined as that aspect of self-concept that evaluates the self. Hewitt (2002) posits that self-esteem has been entrenched in the psychological ideas of acceptance of the child early in life, receiving positive evaluation from people significant to the person, being compared with others in a favorable way, being compared with the ideal self, and having the ability to take successful action. He argues that self-esteem is a socially constructed emotion that could be called mood, and as such, can be an indicator of well-being.

Method

Research Design

This study used an exploratory survey design to examine the extent to which acculturation, ethnic identity, self-esteem, and resilience explain the well-being of Colombian immigrants in the United States across the three waves of immigration (wave 1, from 1945–1964; wave 2, from 1965–1989; and wave 3, from 1990–2008). It was hypothesized that (a) there is a positive relationship between the well-being of the participants and their level of acculturation, self-esteem, resilience, and ethnic identity for all subjects in the sample, (b) there are different predictors of well-being for Colombians in the study sample, and (c) there are different predictors of well-being for participants in each one of the immigration waves.

Because the study of Colombians in the United States is a relatively new area, especially investigating their psychosocial well-being, this exploratory study yielded new insights into the well-being of Colombians in this country. However, because of the specific research design of this study, its results cannot be statistically generalized to the population from which the data were drawn.

Sample and Sampling Technique

For the purpose of this study, respondents born in Colombia who were 18 years old, or older, at the time of participation, who immigrated to the United States between the years 1945 and 2002, and who were 5 years old, or older, at the time of arrival were eligible to participate. It was stipulated that participants had to have arrived in the country after age 5, since, according to Park (1999), individuals who immigrated to the receiving country before the age of 5 were considered to be part of the second generation of immigrants because of the similarity to the number of years of education and socialization of the people who were actually born in the receiving country. It was also considered that those individuals migrated at a time when they had not been fully acculturated into their heritage (Sam, 2000).

To facilitate the collection of the data, research assistants were sought out from California, Pennsylvania, Florida and Texas. These research assistants were chosen for

their connection to the Colombian community in their respective areas and their desire to assist in collecting the data for this study. Research Assistants were given an oral orientation over the phone and guidelines in writing. The researcher prepared all documents, which were placed in brown envelopes that could be sealed. Each research assistant received the envelopes via mail. Due to the fact that they were not conducting structured interviews, but were only giving the envelopes out to the respondents and picking them up, inter-rater reliability was not considered necessary. A non-probability, snowball sampling technique was used in this study.

Variables and Measurements

Five scales were used in this investigation to establish instruments appropriate to study Colombians in the United States. A challenge in cross-cultural research is obtaining reliable and valid instruments that are not culturally biased. Despite an extensive literature review, as reported earlier, no validated measures were found that tested all of the specific variables used in this study with Colombians; therefore, well-being, the dependent variable (DV), was tested using the General Well-Being Schedule (GWB), (Taylor, et al., 2003) a schedule used to measure the well-being of a number of different populations. The independent variables and the respective measures were Acculturation (Modified Marino Acculturation Scale for Colombians [Marino et al., 2000]), Ethnic Identity (Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure [MEIM], Phinney, 1992), Resilience (Resilience Scale [Wagnild & Young, 1987, 1990]), and Self-Esteem (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale [Rosenberg, 1965]).

Statistical Analysis

The data were entered and analyzed using the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics (e.g., *M*, *SD*, frequencies) were computed and a Pearson product moment correlational matrix was generated for all variables, for all three waves, to determine if level of acculturation, ethnic identity, resilience, self-esteem, and well-being are correlated; and if so, the strength of this correlation and which characteristics are significantly correlated. Also, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine what amount of variation in well-being is accounted for by the degrees of acculturation, ethnic identity, resilience, and self-esteem, whether this differs by wave, and if any of these variables are significant predictors of well-being for the studied population.

Study Findings

Demographic Characteristics

Two hundred and forty-eight questionnaires as designed for this study were returned to this researcher, that is, 24.8 % of the approximate total number of questionnaires distributed. The geographical distribution of the sample is as follows: 97 (39.1%) of the respondents resided in Florida, 72 (29%) in California, 40 (16.1%) in Pennsylvania and 39 (15.7%) in Texas. The final sample consisted of 30 (12.1%) participants from wave 1, 133 (53.6%) from wave 2, and 85 (34.3%) from wave 3. Their ages ranged from 19 to 79

years old. The median age for the participants in the study was 48 years. The range of the participants' ages at the time of entering the United States was from 5.5 to 67 years; the median age being 25, and the mode 18 years. However, due to missing data and participants not responding to some questions because they felt it did not apply to them, many questionnaires could not be used for statistical analysis.

Statistical Findings

A Pearson's correlation co-efficient was calculated for the relationship between all subjects in the sample, the well-being of the participants, and their level of acculturation, self-esteem, resilience, and ethnic identity. Two positive and significant relationships were found for resilience ($r(106) = 0.194, p < 0.05$) and self-esteem ($r(106)=0.397, p < 0.01$), indicating that resilience and self-esteem are correlated with well-being for all participants in the sample (see table 3).

Table 3 *Correlation Between Well-Being and All Independent Variables: All Participants (N = 108)*

		Well-Being	Resilience	Self-Esteem	Ethnic Identity	Acculturation
Well-Being	Pearson Correlation	1.000	0.194*	0.397**	-0.076	-0.162
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.044	0.000	0.434	0.094
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	0.194*	1.000	0.219*	0.155	-0.325**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.044	0.000	0.023	0.109	0.001
Self-Esteem	Pearson Correlation	0.397**	0.219*	1.000	0.269**	-0.106
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.023	0.000	0.005	0.276
Ethnic Identity	Pearson Correlation	-0.076	0.155	0.269**	1.000	-0.188
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.434	0.109	0.005	0.000	0.051
Acculturation	Pearson Correlation	-0.162	-0.325**	-0.106	-0.188	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.094	0.001	0.276	0.051	0.000

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

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

To determine if any of the independent variables were significant predictors of well-being for Colombians in the study sample, a multiple linear regression was performed (see table 4) controlling for all independent variables (resilience, ethnic identity, self-esteem, and acculturation). Regression results ($R^2=0.225, R^2_{adj}=0.195, F[4,104]=7.493, p < 0.05$) showed that some of the independent variables in the model are significant predictors. Per the results, it can be concluded that all four independent variables account for 22.5% of the variance in well-being. The results indicated not only that self-esteem significantly predicts well-being for all Colombians in the study, but also that there is a significant but negative relationship between ethnic identity and well-being. Participants' well-being increased by 1.461 units for each unit increase of self-esteem. Furthermore,

the results indicated that Colombians' well-being decreases by -.484 for each unit increase of ethnic identity.

Table 4 *Multiple Linear Regression—Well-Being (DV) and Acculturation, Self-Esteem, Resilience, Ethnic Identity (IV): All Participants (N = 108)*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	49.635	20.354	---	2.439	0.016
Acculturation	-0.115	0.083	-0.129	-1.394	0.166
Self-Esteem	1.461	0.315	0.424	4.632	0.000
Resilience	0.058	0.057	0.095	1.012	0.314
Ethnic Identity	-0.484	0.193	-0.229	-2.507	0.014

To determine if there is a significant predictor of well-being for those individuals by wave, a multiple linear regression was performed, controlling for other independent variables (resilience, self-esteem, ethnic identity, and acculturation). Regression results ($R^2=0.388$, $R^2_{adj}=0.304$, $F [4, 29]=4.596$, $p <0.05$), indicated that for wave 3, the overall model significantly predicts well-being (see table 5). This model accounts for 38.8 % of the variance in well-being. The results revealed that self-esteem significantly predicts well-being for all Colombians who entered the United States during wave 3. Additionally, there is a significant but negative relationship between ethnic identity and well-being. Per the results, it can be concluded that participants' well-being increased by 1.580 units for each unit increase of self-esteem when all other IVs are held constant. Furthermore, the results indicated that the well-being of Colombians in wave three decreases by -0.907 units for each unit increase of ethnic identity when all other IVs are held constant.

Table 5 *Multiple Linear Regression—Well-Being- (DV) and Acculturation, Self-Esteem, Resilience, Ethnic Identity (IV): Wave 3(N = 34)*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	45.455	44.757	---	1.016	0.318
Resilience	0.125	0.097	0.246	1.282	0.210
Self-Esteem	1.580	0.771	0.394	2.048	0.050
Ethnic Identity	-0.907	0.315	-0.486	-2.883	0.007
Acculturation	-0.072	0.161	-0.080	-0.448	0.658

To determine if there are any differences by gender, a multiple linear regression was performed (see table 6) to determine whether any of the four independent variables (resilience, ethnic identity, self-esteem, and acculturation) was a significant predictor of well-being for Colombians, divided by gender. The results ($R^2=0.377$, $R^2_{adj}=0.316$, $F [4, 41] = 6.1936$, $p < 0.05$) indicated that the overall model significantly predicts well-being for male participants in the study. This model accounts for 37.7.0% of the variance in well-being. Per the results, not only does self-esteem significantly predict well-being for all Colombian men in the sample, but also there is a significant but negative relationship between ethnic identity and well-being for male participants. It can be concluded that male participants' well-being increased by 1.687 units for each unit increase of self-esteem when all other IVs were held constant. Furthermore, the results indicated that the well-being of the Colombian men decreases by -0.975 units for each unit increase of ethnic identity when all other IVs are held constant.

Table 6 *Multiple Linear Regression*—Well-Being (DV) and Acculturation, Self-Esteem, Resilience, Ethnic Identity (IV): Men (N = 48)*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	69.207	30.444	---	2.273	0.028
Resilience	0.073	0.068	0.147	1.079	0.287
Self-Esteem	1.687	0.476	0.489	3.546	0.001
Ethnic Identity	-0.975	0.291	-0.465	-3.348	0.002
Acculturation	-0.175	0.121	-0.199	-1.446	0.156

This study also looked at the well-being of Colombians who entered the United States as political refugees to determine if the way Colombians entered the country was a predictor of well-being for all participants in the study, and divided by wave. A multiple linear regression was performed. When designating “political refugee” as the referent group, and all others as the base group, regression results ($R^2=0.319$, $R^2_{adj}=0.283$, $F [5, 95] = 8.898$, $p < 0.05$) indicated that the overall model significantly predicts well-being and accounts for 31.9% of the variance in well-being (see table 7). The results denoted that there is a negative relationship between well-being and having entered as a political refugee, -17.140 units lower than Colombians with other entry statuses.

To determine if there was a significant relationship between well-being and entering as a political refugee by wave, a multiple linear regression was performed controlling for all independent variables. Colombians who entered as political refugees between the years 1966 and 1990 reported a lower level of well-being. Regression results ($R^2=0.343$, $R^2_{adj} 0.279$, $F [5, 51] = 5.330$, $p < 0.05$) indicated that there is a negative relationship between well-being and having entered as a political refugee during wave 2 (see table 8).

Table 7 *Multiple Linear Regression—Well-Being (DV) and Acculturation, Self-Esteem, Resilience, Ethnic Identity, Entry Status—Political Refugee (IV): All Participants (N = 101)*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	45.146	19.776	---	2.283	0.025
Acculturation	-0.129	0.081	-0.145	-1.591	0.115
Ethnic Identity	-0.452	0.196	-0.208	-2.302	0.024
Self-Esteem	1.679	0.310	0.492	5.418	0.000
Resilience	0.052	0.055	0.086	0.938	0.351
Dummy entry status-PR	-17.140	5.353	-0.275	-3.202	0.002

Table 8 *Multiple Linear Regression—Well-Being (DV) and Acculturation, Self-esteem, Resilience, Ethnic Identity, Entry Status- Political Refugee (IV): Wave 2 (N = 57)*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	47.969	23.952	---	2.003	0.051
Acculturation	-0.167	0.101	-0.199	-1.664	0.102
Ethnic Identity	-0.064	0.266	-0.029	-0.242	0.810
Self-Esteem	1.427	0.382	0.455	3.736	0.000
Resilience	0.033	0.071	0.055	0.463	0.645
Entry status-Political Refugee	-23.483	6.787	-0.402	-3.460	0.001

The overall model accounts for 34.3% of the variance in well-being. It can be concluded that Colombians who entered the United States as political refugees during wave 2 report a decrease in well-being, -23.483 units lower than Colombians who entered with other statuses.

Discussion

As stated earlier, this study examined the extent to which acculturation, ethnic identity, self-esteem, and resilience explain the well-being of Colombian immigrants in the United States across the three waves of immigration, that is, wave 1, years 1945–1964; wave 2, years 1965–1989; and wave 3, years 1990–2008.

The participants in this study represented a diverse sample of Colombian immigrants in the United States, as evidenced by the demographic characteristics previously presented. The findings show that self-esteem correlated with and was a predictor of well-being. Participants in the sample, both as a group and divided by waves, exhibited high levels of well-being as their level of self-esteem increased. Additionally, significant variance was found in the well-being of Colombians in the study. In previous studies done with Latinos (Gonzalez-Eastep, 2007), self-esteem has had a strong correlation with family functioning (Green & Way, 2005), ethnic-racial identity (Phinney, 1992), and having good family support and high family functioning (Gonzalez-Eastep 2007); but given the strong association, researchers have wondered if the reported high levels of self-esteem have been a barrier against the effects of other variables, in this case, acculturation, ethnic identity, and resilience.

The results of the present study indicate that ethnic identity negatively predicts well-being for all participants in the sample, and for Colombian men who entered the United States during wave 3 specifically; consequently, to the extent that their ethnic identity increased, their well-being decreased. Thus, male participants from wave 3 seem to have a strong identity with the Colombian culture or ethnic group, but this identity seems to create a decrease of well-being.

Studies have found that ethnic identity decreased between first- and second-generation immigrants (Buriel, 1987), and that an increase in acculturation to the host culture leads to a decrease of identity with one's own culture. Only first-generation Colombians participated in this study, and their degree of acculturation was not significant. It can be concluded that the men in this study, as first-generation immigrants, did not show a significant degree of acculturation to the mainstream society due to a strong attachment to their ethnic group, which in turn negatively affected their well-being. Although a strong ethnic identity can be a safeguard for experiences of racial discrimination (Cross, 1995), it can also be an impediment to well-being.

The finding that ethnic identity has a significant but negative effect on well-being was not expected, but can be explained by exploring feelings of discrimination, marginalization, or exclusion from mainstream society, dissatisfaction outside the country of origin, and cultural uncertainty. As Colombian men feel they belong to their nationality, their ethnic identity is delineated by their subjective personal knowledge about their country, and the pride Colombians feel for being members of that ethnic group. A strong ethnic identity of men in the sample does not seem to be a safeguard for their overall well-being; therefore, it affects them negatively.

In the present study, the well-being of Colombians who entered the United States as political refugees was lower than Colombians with other entry statuses. Given the continued violence in Colombia, these findings are not surprising. This specific study did not ask any other questions regarding the exposure to trauma; therefore there is no other reference to the degree of suffering or the respondents' attempts to seek mental health services. After further analysis, men who entered during wave 2 as political refugees reported a lower level of well-being. Although Colombians have lived amid violence for more than 40 years, the literature points out that it was in the late 1980s (last part of wave

2) and the 1990s (wave 3) that most Colombians sought to leave the country because of the violence.

Limitations

This study used a snowball sampling technique; therefore the results may be biased towards one group of respondents with similar characteristics. The questionnaire presented limitations due to its length and did not have an option of “not applicable” which could have helped reduce the large number of missing data. The scales used were developed in the English language and were validated with other ethnic groups. Additionally, the use of triangulation, including one-on-one interviews, would have yielded more in-depth responses and provided richer information about the immigrant trajectory.

Conclusion

Given the many challenges immigrants face before and after immigration, social workers need to be prepared to serve this population at the individual and macro levels, particularly given the existing stereotypes and polarized views about immigrants and the impact they have on the country.

As the social work profession is challenged to gain a further understanding of diversity, social workers need to be culturally sensitive and competent to work effectively with clients and people from all different backgrounds. Latinos, as a group, share many characteristics, however upon closer examination, those born in South American exhibit great variations according to the country of birth (Migration Policy Institute, 2006). Therefore, it is necessary to examine, treat, and study Latino groups individually, as proposed in the literature (Kouyoumdjian, Zamboanga, & Hansen, 2003; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996), and not solely as a collective ethnic group.

A significant contribution of this investigation was the inclusion of variables not previously explored with Colombians in the United States. Additionally, this research was innovative in assessing the factors contributing to the well-being of Colombian immigrants and in the search for scales that are appropriate to study this population. Although the results have to be considered with caution, the study opens doors to future research and the provision of human services for Colombians in the United States.

The findings of this study suggest that in working with Colombians, it is important to keep in mind that their well-being is impacted by their self-esteem and their ethnic identity, especially for Colombian men.

With this in mind, social work educators have the professional responsibility to train social workers to understand an immigrant’s pre-departure experiences and the relationship between an immigrant’s adjustment and his or her subsequent well-being. Specific to Colombian immigrants, it is important that social workers understand, plan, and implement appropriate services for these clients. For example, many Colombian immigrants suffered the consequences of the undeclared civil war in their country; therefore, they may experience PTSD or other mental illnesses that require special mental

health programs. Clearly, there is also a need for social workers to be familiar with immigration laws and policies to be able to advocate for immigrants and to assist in policy development and implementation that will address the specific needs of Colombians and other immigrants.

Future research is needed to measure the generational status of Colombians and assess their psychosocial well-being. It would be of great interest to further study the plight of the Colombian political refugees in the United States and what kind of services are available for this population.

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Acculturation and Life Satisfaction Among Immigrant Mexican Adults

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Abstract: *The numbers of Mexican Americans living in the United States, many of whom are first generation immigrants, are increasing. The process of immigration and acculturation can be accompanied by stress, as an individual attempts to reconcile two potentially competing sets of norms and values and to navigate a new social terrain. However, the outcomes of studies investigating the relationship between levels of acculturation and well-being are mixed. To further investigate the dynamic of acculturation, this article will address the impact of acculturation and familismo, on reported life satisfaction and resilience among Mexican American adults living in the Southwest (N=307), the majority (89%) of which are immigrants. The findings indicate that bilingual individuals report significantly higher levels of life satisfaction and resilience than their Spanish-speaking counterparts do. Speaking primarily English only predicted higher levels of resilience but not life satisfaction. Implications for social work practice with Mexican American immigrants are discussed.*

Keywords: *Acculturation, Mexican-American, life satisfaction, resilience*

Latinos now make up a large majority of the minority groups in the United States and their numbers are growing, with Mexican Americans representing 10% of the total population in the United States (U. S. Census Bureau, 2012). While the U. S. population increased by only 9% between 2000 and 2009, the Latino population experienced a 37% increase (Saenz, 2010). This growing number of Latinos, specifically Mexican Americans, presents an opportunity for advancing our knowledge about the distinct challenges that migration and acculturation may have on the mental health of Latinos, and accordingly, what policy and service delivery changes are needed to address those needs (Castro, Marsiglia, Kulis, & Kellison, 2010; Lara, Gamboa, Kahramanian, Morales, & Hayes Bautista, 2005).

When cultures interact because of migration, individuals are forced to negotiate their identity and reconcile their culture of origin with the dominant culture in the receiving country (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). The process of acculturation can cause conflict within individuals and families because they feel the competing pressures of adopting new cultural norms and maintaining the ways of life of their country of origin (Nguyen & Peterson, 1993). Extensive research has been done examining the relationship between acculturation and poor mental health; however, findings are mixed and very few

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studies include measures of well-being or positive mental health (Konerua, Weisman de Mamania, Betancourt, & Flynn, 2007). Understanding the impact of a culture of origin and host culture on well-being enables social workers to promote positive mental health in both micro and macro practice settings. To that end, this article addresses the impact of acculturation and *familismo*, a traditional Mexican cultural norm, on reported general life satisfaction and resilience among a sample of recent Mexican immigrants living in the southwestern United States.

Life Satisfaction

Healthy People 2020 identified life satisfaction, defined as a distinct construct representing a cognitive and global evaluation of the quality of one's life, as an indicator of well-being (Pavot & Diener, 2008; U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). The construct of life satisfaction addresses an individual's ability to 1) have a life that meets their needs (Karan, Lambour, & Greenspan, 1990), and 2) be "happy" (Andrews & McKennell, 1980). Life satisfaction is associated with stable marriages, self-efficacy, goal orientation, work ethic, and positive intra- and interpersonal outcomes (Diener, Napa-Scollon, Oishi, Dzokoto, & Suh., 2000; Gilman, Huebner, & Laughlin, 2000; Myers & Diener, 1995). Although life satisfaction is a distinct dimension of mental health, it strongly and negatively correlates with depression (Headey, Kelley, & Wearing, 1993). Life satisfaction is a psychological strength that has a buffering effect against stressful life events (Suldo & Huebner, 2004). This buffering effect points to the potential of life satisfaction as a viable outcome in its own right, but also a protective factor against the development of more serious mental health challenges.

Resilience

In addition to life satisfaction, resilience is a key component of the positive psychology movement, which claims that the best way to address mental health issues is to promote strengths that may act as buffers against pathology (Suldo & Hueber, 2004; Greene, Galambos, & Lee, 2004). Resilience is the ability to bounce back in the face of stressful life events (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Resilient children and adolescents develop abilities to respond with resourcefulness and tenacity when confronted with unwanted challenges (Fraser, Richman, & Galinsky, 1999). A resilient individual has a strong commitment to self, is willing to take action to deal with problems, has a positive attitude toward his or her environment, has a strong sense of purpose, and has developed a strong internal locus of control that enables him or her to view obstacles as challenges that can be overcome (Hérbert, 1996).

Both risk and resilience are discussed within the ecological systems framework. Fraser et al. (1999) has advanced a model of resilience that includes interactions between all levels of the ecological system: micro, mezzo, and macro. In this framework, resilience is a dynamic response to a multiplex of biological, psychological, social, and other environmental risks (Fraser et al., 1999; Jenson & Fraser, 2006). Resilience is expressed through an individual's ability to adapt to risks that occur on all levels of the system by leveraging resources that may be present in different arenas (Jenson & Fraser,

2006). For all people and for Latinos in particular, a cohesive and supportive family environment plays an important role in the development of resilience (Hérbert, 1996).

Resilience acts as a buffer for negative mental health outcomes in three ways: 1) minimizing harm, 2) protection, and 3) promotion (Davydov, Stewart, Ritchie, & Chaudieu, 2010). Resilience not only enables individuals to recover more quickly when they encounter stressful situations (e.g., minimizing harm), but can also have a protective effect, enabling individuals who have experienced adversity as children to have better relationships in adulthood (Collishaw et al., 2007). Resilience decreases the number of events experienced as stressful, therefore increasing overall well-being (Ong, Bergeman, Bisconti, & Wallace, 2006).

Based on the ecological model, researchers are now beginning to view resilience as the result of the interactive process between risk, protection, and promotion (Jenson & Fraser, 2006). The transition from a focus on deficits and defects to protective factors represents a move toward a strengths-based approach to problem solving (Guo & Tsui, 2010; Masten, 2001). Although resilience is an individual response, it is conditional on both individual and environmental factors (Fraser et al., 1999). The ecological model provides the most thorough representation of resilience because it considers the influence of context, including neighborhood, school, peers, and family influences on resilience.

Acculturation and Mental Health

Acculturation is broadly defined as the process of adaptation that results when two cultural groups interact, and/or the extent to which an individual assumes the norms and values of the host culture (Lueck, & Wilson, 2011; Miranda, Estrada & Firpo-Jimenez, 2000). Acculturation is a vitally important process to consider when discussing both life satisfaction and resilience among Latinos in the United States. Historically, it has been hypothesized that the process of acculturation is stressful and may negatively impact mental health because it forces an individual to negotiate two potentially conflicting identities (Stonequist, 1935) and integrate into a society that can be hostile to minorities (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). The more an individual's beliefs about their cultural group are clearly and confidently defined, the more likely they are to have clear and confident definitions of the personal self and self-esteem markers of psychological well-being (Usborne, 2010). Living between cultures may be more stressful than total assimilation or no acculturation at all. However, an individual's level of cognitive flexibility, which enables them to switch their cultural orientation depending on the context, is more protective against negative mental health outcomes than high levels of acculturation or assimilation (Lechuga, 2008).

The complexity of the relationship between acculturation or assimilation and mental health is seen in the disparate results of scientific studies, with some findings suggesting that high levels of acculturation are associated with a decrease in negative mental health outcomes, while others have shown the opposite (Abrams, Allen, & Gray, 1993; Miranda & Umhoefer, 1998; Shen & Takeuchi, 2001). In a study comparing the mental health of recent Mexican American immigrants and Mexican Americans who were born either in the United States or who had lived in the United States for more than 13 years, recent

immigrants were found to have more positive outcomes (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). However, this study did not include measures of acculturation. Ortiz and Arce (1984) interviewed 1,300 Mexican families about their mental health and found that the less acculturated individuals reported higher levels of life satisfaction. Similarly, in another study of both immigrant and native-born older Mexican Americans, a positive relationship was found between depression and acculturation; however, acculturation did not significantly predict life satisfaction (Cuellar, Bastida, & Braccio, 2004).

Conversely, in two studies, low levels of acculturation among Mexican American women were associated with higher levels of depressive symptomatology (Salgado de Snyder, 1987) and feelings of hopelessness (Melville, 1978). Recently, Torres (2010) found that a variety of factors associated with being an immigrant in the United States increased the likelihood of reporting depression. These mixed findings suggest that both high levels of acculturation and low levels of acculturation do not necessarily mitigate distress among Mexican Americans and further leads us to question if multiculturalism, or retaining aspects of one's culture of origin while adapting norms and values of the host culture, may positively influence resilience and life satisfaction.

Familism

Although studies have traditionally treated acculturation as a single item, underlying cultural norms may also be possible risk or protective factors (Rodriguez, Mira, Paez, & Myers, 2007). For instance, having a bicultural orientation is more protective when individuals are grounded in social networks within both cultures (LaFramboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). *Familism*, a traditional Latino norm, may provide a more complex picture of acculturation and account for one aspect of Latinos' culture of origin that promotes "groundedness" and positive mental health. The idea of *familism* refers to cultural norms of loyalty, solidarity, and reciprocity with both the nuclear and extended family (Martín & Martín, 1991). Among Latinos, values and norms like *familism* are taught in the family and serve as a source of resilience, giving youth the context in which to practice adaptive behaviors (Masten, 2001). The social support and sense of belonging that result from being part of a close family are protective factors against negative mental health outcomes (Castillo, Conoley, & Brossart, 2004). In a study with second-generation Mexican American youth, adherence to traditional norms and values seemed to influence the youth's identity, supporting resilience in the face of stress (Holleran & Waller, 2003). Similar findings were reported in a quantitative study that found that maintaining ties to the traditional Latino culture was protective against distress (Torres, 2010).

Multicultural Model

While classic studies characterized acculturation as a unidirectional linear process in which an individual adapts to norms of the dominant culture (Gordon, 1964), recently, scholars have recognized the processes' bidirectional nature, in which individuals are able to retain aspects of their culture of origin while adapting aspects of the host culture (Berry, 2005). This model recognizes that individuals can simultaneously maintain the identity, norms, and values of their culture of origin while also learning successfully to

interact with the host culture (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). This model further demonstrates that these individuals can maintain separate identities in private and public spaces without causing psychological tension, which may serve as a protective factor (Kelly, 1971). The multicultural model more accurately reflects the dynamic nature of culture and the potential protective effect of maintaining aspects of an individual's culture of origin when compared to models of assimilation; therefore, the multicultural model was used to guide the hypotheses being tested in this research.

Berry (1997) elaborates on this multicultural conception of acculturation by outlining four different reactions to the interactions of culture; 1) integrative, in which individuals maintain norms, beliefs, or customs from their culture of origin, while also incorporating aspects of the host culture; 2) assimilation, in which individuals lose their culture of origin and are completely integrated into the host culture; 3) separation, in which an individual completely rejects the host culture maintaining their culture of origin's attitude, norms, and beliefs; and 4) marginalization, in which an individual is rejected or is rejecting both their culture of origin and the host culture. In a study examining the impact of these four reactions on psychological well-being, integration was associated with positive outcomes while marginalization was associated with negative outcomes (Berry, 2005).

Because the findings on the effects of high levels of acculturation or assimilation on mental health are mixed, and few studies have examined how the process impacts positive aspects of mental health, this study will examine the impact of linguistic acculturation and the endorsement of traditional Latino values, specifically *familismo*, on life satisfaction and resilience. Based on the multicultural model, it was hypothesized that:

- 1) Among Latinos, an integrative or multicultural orientation will be associated more with increased life satisfaction and resilience than both assimilated and separated individuals.
- 2) Latinos with higher levels of *familism* will have increased levels of life satisfaction and resilience.

Methods

Sample

The data in this study came from a four-year-long randomized control trial that tested *Families Preparing the New Generation (FPNG)*, a parenting intervention developed to accompany *Keepin' it REAL*. Taught in school classrooms by teachers, *Keepin' it REAL* is a culturally-based, evidence-based substance use prevention program for youth designed to: (a) increase drug resistance skills; (b) promote anti-substance use norms and attitudes; and (c) develop effective decision making and communication skills for resisting drugs and alcohol (Marsiglia & Hecht, 2005). *Keepin' it REAL* is now recognized as a National Model Program by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (Schinke, Brounstein, & Gardner, 2002).

All independent variables were measured in the pre-test needs assessment at wave one; while dependent variables, life satisfaction and resilience, were measured at wave three, one year after the treatment group completed the program. Wave three data was utilized because the main variables of interest, life satisfaction and resilience, were not measured at wave two. Pre-test questionnaires were administered in two cohorts: cohort 1, surveyed in the fall of 2009, and cohort 2 completed the survey in the fall of 2010. All surveys read at a 5th grade level, were available in English or Spanish, and were translated following the procedures described by Rogler (1989). In order to engage parents in the study, parental consents explaining the study and asking parents if they wished to participate were sent home with the students. All children in the 7th grade and parents that agreed to participate in *FPNG* were included in the sample. Parents could choose one of three options: 1) to consent both parent and youth; 2) to consent youth only; 3) to consent neither parent nor youth. Parental consents were provided in both English and Spanish. Although data was collected from all youth, regardless of their parent's decision to participate in the study, only parent data was used in this analysis due to our focus on the well-being of adults.

Parents who expressed an interest in participating in the study attended a meeting at the school to complete a packet of questionnaires. Trained research staff followed detailed administration instructions that emphasized the confidentiality of responses. Questionnaires were administered in small groups and took from 60-90 minutes to complete. Surveys were completed in the language of preference of the participant with 93% of parents choosing to complete the questionnaires in Spanish.

In the study, 1,131 seventh-grade students in nine schools (regardless of their race or ethnicity) and their parents were invited to participate in the study; 681 parents completed and returned consents (consent rate of 79%), 468 parents completed surveys at wave one, and 369 of those returned to complete the survey at wave three. Participants were included in the analysis if they identified as Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, or another Hispanic or Latino group and who completed a survey at wave three, resulting in a total sample size of 307. The majority (89%) reported being born in a country other than the United States. The sample had a mean age of 38.67, a mean education of more than six years of school, but no high school diploma, 60.91% of the sample was married, and 86% was female (See Table 1).

Measurement

General life satisfaction was measured at wave one and wave three using 10-items in which respondents answered questions about their level of satisfaction with a variety of aspects, ranging from spiritual life to trust in important persons. Possible responses ranged from (1) Not at all, to (5) Extremely (for scale items see Table 2). Because these items appeared to be disparate, a factor analysis was conducted using a PAF rotation. When the analysis was conducted, one factor emerged with an Eigenvalue of 6.47. All items of the scale were retained with factor loadings well above the minimum cut point of .40 (see Table 2). A scale was constructed by summing all items with a final range of possible scores from 10 to 50 and having an $\alpha = .93$.

Resilience. Although resilience has been operationalized traditionally as the characteristics of an individual that moderates the relationship between stressors and negative outcomes, resilience is ultimately an individual's ability to "successfully cope with changes or misfortune" (Ahern, Kiehl, Lou Sole, & Byers, 2006, p. 104). The ability to "bounce back" is a quality inherent in the definition of resilience. This conceptualization of resilience was drawn from Tugade and Fredrickson's (2004) definition, which includes an individual's perceived ability to overcome various challenges including anxiety and disappointments. Based on this definition, the three items in the life satisfaction scale that asked the respondents about their ability to *overcome* challenging life circumstances or emotions were isolated and analyzed in order to examine an individual's level of resilience. A factor analysis was conducted using a PAF rotation and a new item was created. When the exploratory factor analysis was conducted, one factor was retained with an Eigenvalue of 2.40 and factor loadings ranging from .87 to .91 (see Table 1). Given the results of the factor analysis, a new variable, resilience, was created by summing the three items, with responses ranging from 3 to 15 with an $\alpha = .87$.

Acculturation. Despite the conceptual limitations, linguistic-based measures have been useful in identifying English language proficiency as a predictive factor for low acculturative stress, especially for Latino immigrants (Lueck & Wilson, 2011). Language is a significant aspect of acculturation because language fluency is pertinent in cross-cultural communication. Previous research has indicated that language usage (measured by asking participants, "In your home, do you speak...?" and "With your friends, do you speak...?"), explains the variance in levels of acculturation and is therefore an acceptable brief measure (Unger, Ritt-Olson, Wagner, Baezconde-Garbanati, & Soto, 2007). Acculturation was measured using a 3-item scale ($\alpha = .90$) and by asking participants, "Today, 1) you speak, 2) you read, and 3) the language of the television and radio shows you watch or listen to are:" with the following possible responses (1) only in a language other than English, such as Spanish, (2) another language more than English, (3) both languages equally, (4) English more than other languages, and (5) only English. To create the scale, these items were summed, resulting in a range of scores from 3 to 15. Cut off points were then created, with less than six indicating a primarily Spanish-speaking individual (e. g. low acculturation), between seven and nine was considered bilingual (e. g. bicultural), and 10 or greater indicating a primarily English speaking individual (e. g. high acculturation).

Familism, an 8-item scale, was measured by asking participants, how strongly they agreed with statements including 1) "You should know your family history so you can pass it along to your children" and 2) "Traditional celebrations such as baptisms, weddings or graduations add meaning to life," with possible responses ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. When a factor analysis was completed, one factor emerged with an Eigenvalue of 3.82. All factors were retained with factor loadings higher than .40 (See Table 1 for scale items and factor loadings). All eight items were summed, creating a new variable that ranged from 8 to 40, with an $\alpha = .87$.

Analysis

After factor analyses were conducted and scales were summed, an OLS regression was performed predicting life satisfaction and resilience at wave three using acculturation and *familism*, controlling for wave one responses in education, marital status, gender, age and treatment condition. Because the effect of treatment condition was not significant, it was not included in the models for the sake of parsimony.

Table 1 *Factor Loadings of 10-item Life Satisfaction Scale and 8-item Familism Scale (N = 295)*

	Life Satisfaction	Resilience	Familism
A good spiritual life	.69		
A positive sense of self (self-esteem)	.84		
Leadership abilities and the ability to inspire others	.81		
The ability to overcome life's problems	.87	.89	
A sense of trust with persons important to you	.84		
The ability to overcome disappointments	.86	.92	
Social confidence with others	.81		
The ability to overcome (conquer) anxiety	.81	.88	
Clear life goals and a direction in life	.82		
The ability to get enough sleep on a daily basis	.65		
You should know your family history so you can pass it along to your children			.68
The good life is lived by staying home and taking care of the family			.61
Children should be taught to be loyal to their family			.70
Traditional celebrations such as baptisms, weddings or graduations add meaning to life			.68
We should preserve our customs and traditions as they contain the wisdom of generations of our forefathers			.75
Adult children should visit their parents often as an expression of love and respect			.72
The good life is lived by spending time and bonding with family without worrying or being concerned about the passage of time (without watching the clock)			.67
It is very important to always to remain close to family even when there is a fight between members of the family			.70

Results

The mean life satisfaction score at wave three was 40 with a standard deviation of 6.58, and total resilience score had a mean of 11.89 with a standard deviation of 2.28. Sixty-four percent of the sample reported being primarily Spanish speaking, 25.08% reported being bilingual, and 11.07% reported speaking primarily English. The mean score on the *familism* scale was 33.87 with a standard deviation of 4.49. For descriptive statistics of all control variables, age, education, marital status and gender, see Table 2.

An OLS regression analysis was then estimated, predicting life satisfaction at wave three, controlling for life satisfaction at wave one, age, gender, education and marital status ($F(8,264) = 9.84, p > .000; R^2 = .23$) (see Table 3). We observed a significant increase of $\beta = 2.04$ ($p > .05$) in general life satisfaction for individuals who were bilingual/ bicultural compared to those who were primarily Spanish speaking/low acculturated. For individuals that primarily spoke English, no significant difference was found. A positive relationship was also found between *familism* and general life satisfaction ($\beta = .19, p > .05$). For every one additional point on the *familism* scale, we expected a .19 increase in general life satisfaction. While this effect size is rather small, it indicates that a connection to tradition may promote general life satisfaction.

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations for the Analytic Sample

	Mean	SD	%
Life satisfaction W1	36.65	7.04	
Life satisfaction W3	40.00	6.58	
Resilience W1	10.79	2.61	
Resilience W3	11.89	2.28	
Familism	33.87	4.49	
Age	38.67	6.90	
Education ^a	3.29	1.58	
Acculturation			
Primarily Spanish			63.84
Bilingual			25.08
Primarily English			11.07
Gender			
Female			86.81
Male			13.19
Marital status			
Married			60.91
Single			39.09

^a Education: 3 indicates more than 6 years of education but no high school diploma

When the same model was estimated predicting resilience, controlling for resilience at wave one, a very similar pattern was observed ($F(8,264)= 7.44, p>. 000; R^2 = .18$) (see Table 3). For bilingual speakers, a significant increase was predictive of high resilience, with this group scoring on average .84 ($p > .001$) points higher than their primarily Spanish-speaking counterparts, controlling for wave one, age, gender, education, and marital status. Unlike the previous model, those who primarily spoke English were also predicted to have significantly better scores on the resilience scale ($\beta= .95, p > .05$) than primarily Spanish speakers. A positive relationship was also found between higher scores on the *familism* scale and resilience ($\beta= .07, p > .001$). While the effect size is again not large, a positive relationship beyond levels of acculturation indicates a protective effect of staying connected to a traditional orientation toward family.

Table 3 *Regression Predicting Life Satisfaction and Resilience among Latinos Living in the US (N=273)*

	Life satisfaction W3		Resilience W3	
	$\beta(SE)$	Sig	$\beta(SE)$	Sig
Life satisfaction W1	.34(.06)	***		
Resilience W1			.25(.05)	***
Spanish speaking				
Bilingual	2.04(. 91)	*	.84(.33)	**
English speaking	2.01(1. 29)		.95(.46)	*
<i>Familism</i>	.19(. 09)	*	.07(.03)	**
Female (1)	1.23(1. 08)		.40(.39)	
Education	.03(. 25)		.03(.09)	
Married (1)	1.51(. 75)	*	.48(.27)	+
Age	.01(. 05)		.01(.02)	
_con	18.18(3. 69)	***	5.32(1.31)	***
R ²	0.23	***	0.18	***

*** p<.000, **p< .01, * p<.05, +p<.10

Discussion

Among Latino adults living in the Southwest, the findings lend support to the hypothesis that individuals who have been able to integrate aspects of both the host culture and the culture of origin, or those that are bicultural, have better mental health outcomes than those who are still culturally separate (Berry, 2005). Immigrants who exhibited an integrative reaction had higher ratings of life satisfaction than those individuals that chose to remain culturally separate from the American culture (primarily Spanish speaking). It is important to note that immigrants who had fully assimilated (primarily English speaking) did not show high ratings of life satisfaction. These findings may indicate that retaining aspects of one's culture of origin and embracing elements of the host culture, may promote the best mental health outcomes among Latino immigrants.

Having the skills to navigate the host culture while remaining grounded in the culture of origin promoted life satisfaction. This was not the case for resilience. Both individuals that reported being culturally integrated (bilingual) and assimilated (primarily English speaking) reported higher rates of resilience than their separated or primarily Spanish-speaking counterparts. The results also lend support to the hypothesis that identification with traditional norms about family would result in higher levels of life satisfaction and resilience, again illustrating the potentially protective effect of remaining connected to traditional norms and values while acquiring skills like language proficiency, which allows an individual to be more successful in navigating American culture.

Limitations

These results have some geographical, sampling, and other limitations that should be noted. First, although acculturative stress was the assumed pathway between acculturation and life satisfaction, a measure of stress was not included in the survey; therefore, this relationship could not be tested directly. Another limitation is that not all individuals surveyed at pre-test completed a post-test survey, which potentially biased the results. The vast majority of the parents were monolingual in Spanish, or bilingual with a preference to communicate in Spanish. Because this program was developed in a southwestern metropolitan area, it is uncertain how the program would generalize to other Mexican American communities outside the southwestern metropolitan area, particularly where Mexican American parents may be in the minority. In addition, because this particular southwestern area has a distinctive socio-political environment, the program may also be uniquely characteristic of that specific environment. Third, parents self-selected whether they wanted to participate and wanted their child to participate, possibly creating a selection bias. Difference in self-selection by treatment condition could be due to level of interest of parents willing to participate in a youth-only intervention compared to participating in a parent-based intervention or receiving nothing. It should be noted that once baseline data were collected, an unconditional model in Mplus was conducted to examine the interclass correlation (ICC) between schools. The unconditional model indicated non-significant ICCs between schools.

Implications for Social Work Practice

The findings have implications for both *macro and micro* social work practice with Latinos, specifically first-generation Mexican migrants. The large and growing number of Mexican immigrants living in the United States, both legally and in the shadows, makes understanding the circumstances that promote optimal physical and mental health among this population, and working to eradicate social and economic barriers to mental health care, crucial concerns in the field of social work. Although the process of immigration and acculturation presents a host of unique risk factors, this study has identified a bicultural orientation and an endorsement of traditional family norms as protective. These findings run counter to the typical American norm that encourages complete assimilation into the dominant American culture. Instead, the findings suggest that policies that aim to separate individuals from their country of origin and fully integrate them into American society (i.e. English only policies) might have a negative impact on well-being.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that failing to adopt essential skills necessary for integration such as English language proficiency is also related to lower levels of life satisfaction. In fact, individuals who primarily spoke English were found to be more resilient than those who primarily spoke Spanish. These findings might reflect discriminatory systems, but they indicate a need to acquire new skills to successfully navigate American culture (Torres, 2010). However, these skills do not need to be obtained at the expense of an individual's culture of origin. In addition to ending discriminatory policies that create barriers for immigrants, policies need to be created on the national, state, local, and agency level that allow individuals to co-exist in micro and mezzo systems that reflect their culture of origin and the larger systems of work and school, places typically dominated by American norms and values.

When applying traditional psychotherapeutic models with Latinos in direct practice, social workers need to consider the impact of acculturation to ensure that they arrive at an accurate diagnosis and provide effective treatment. This may require culturally adapting existing intervention strategies so they not only better fit the population being served, but also build and strengthen protective cultural norms and values. It is also essential for social workers to identify and address policies that perpetuate social and economic barriers to mental health care. Ultimately, creating spaces that facilitate multicultural identities for Mexican immigrants, in both social work practice as well as the larger society, may be crucial to promoting quality mental health systems for populations that face stressors in the process of acculturation.

This study suggests several possible avenues for future research. Both the acculturation and resilience measures used in this research only scratch the surface of this complex process; therefore, further studies need to focus on what promotes and hinders resilience among new immigrants as they move through the process of acculturation. Additionally, future research should explore how the larger social context may be interacting with culture to hinder or promote well-being. Specifically, more needs to be understood about the immigrants' experiences with discrimination and structural barriers to upward mobility, which may impact the adaptation of a bicultural orientation. Research on the socio, economic, and psychological immigration processes are crucial to providing culturally competent social work services to Latinos in the United States.

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Addressing Older Latinos' Spiritual Needs in Hospital Settings: Identifying Predictors of Satisfaction

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Abstract: *Many older Latinos use spirituality to navigate the challenges associated with hospitalization. Although spiritual assessments are typically recommended in such settings, little, if any, research has sought to identify the factors that predict satisfaction with addressing clients' spiritual needs. Using a national sample of recently hospitalized older Latinos (N = 227), this secondary analysis identified predictors of older Latinos' satisfaction with how well their spiritual needs were addressed during their hospitalization. Among the eight predictors examined, room quality, nursing staff, and physicians were positively associated with satisfaction, while the discharge process was negatively associated with satisfaction. By understanding the factors that predict satisfaction, practitioners are better positioned to provide culturally relevant and effective services to older Latinos.*

Keywords: *Latinos, Hispanics, older adults, spirituality, health care settings*

The population of older adults in the United States is diversifying and increasing rapidly. By 2050, the number of seniors is expected to double, and Latinos are projected to comprise approximately 20% of all people over age 60 (Administration on Aging, 2008a). In less than a decade, by 2019, Latinos are anticipated to be the largest cultural group represented among older adults (Administration on Aging, 2008b).

These demographic changes have important implications for social workers in health care settings. Many Latino elders will experience hospitalization and the attendant stress associated with admission to the healthcare system (Berkman, Silverstone, Simmons, Volland & Howe, 2000). Spirituality, which is commonly understood as an individual's relationship with God (Wuthnow, 2007), is frequently used to navigate such situations (Soenke, Landau, & Greenberg, 2013).

Furthermore, spirituality is often considered a basic Latino value (Koss-Chioino, 2013). To be clear, Latinos affirm a wide variety of spiritual beliefs and practices, which can vary by gender, culture of origin, and geographic location (Canda & Furman, 2010). Thus, while the vast majority of Latinos are Catholic or evangelical Protestants (e.g., Pentecostal Christians), how these traditions are expressed can vary. This variation occurs at the micro level, between individual Latinos, as well as at the macro level, between Latinos collectively and European Americans. Indeed, based upon a nationally representative study, Pew Hispanic Center researchers concluded that Latinos practice a distinctive form of Christianity (Suro et al., 2007). Latin culture shapes how Christian

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beliefs are interpreted and practiced (Koss-Chioino, 2013). The compartmentalization of spirituality, commonly found in European American culture, is largely absent. Rather, Latino spirituality is characterized by a spiritually-animated worldview that affirms the existence of a vibrant, present, non-material reality. This spiritually-informed worldview serves as a “moral compass” for navigating life (Suro et al., 2007).

Latino elders may rely upon this compass to guide them through the hospitalization experience, and social workers will need to be well prepared to effectively support them in this process. This paper presents the results of a study identifying factors associated with older Latinos' satisfaction with the attention given to their spiritual needs during hospitalization and provides social workers with foundational knowledge for delivering culturally relevant care. Before detailing study procedures and findings, an overview of spirituality in the context of healthcare, social work, and client or patient satisfaction is provided to orient the reader.

Background

Hospitalization frequently evokes spiritual needs, especially among devout populations such as older Latinos (Nelson-Becker, Nakashima, & Canda, 2007). Spiritual needs are manifested in many different forms (Bussing, Balzar, & Heusser, 2010; Cavendish et al., 2006; Hodge, Horvath, Larkin, & Curl, 2012), but can be categorized under two basic rubrics: 1) assets that can be used to cope with or ameliorate challenges, and 2) barriers that can impede service provision (Hodge, 2005). The characteristics of each of these categories are summarized below, and examples are provided of specific needs in each category.

As an asset for coping, spirituality often plays an instrumental role in helping people deal with challenges (Pargament, 2007; Saleebey, 2009). A substantial and growing body of research indicates that spirituality is a significant source of strength that facilitates health, wellness, and resiliency in the face of adversity (Hook et al., 2010; Koenig, King, & Carson, 2012; Koenig, McCullough, & Larson, 2001; Pargament, 2007). For example, older Mexican Americans frequently turn to God to find the positive aspects of suffering, such as a sense of meaning or purpose in the experience (Krause & Bastida, 2011).

To fully operationalize these spiritual assets in hospital settings, clients may have needs that must be addressed by healthcare personnel, and social workers are likely to be effectively positioned to begin a discussion of such needs. For example, previous qualitative research with non-Latino samples suggests that spiritual needs that facilitate coping are often manifested in two dimensions, vertical (i.e., needs related to connection with God), and horizontal (i.e., needs related to connecting with other human beings) (Conner & Eller, 2004; Hermann, 2001). Regarding the former dimension, patients often report a need for prayer, meditation, Bible reading, listening to devotional music, and other activities perceived to facilitate a connection with God. Regarding the latter dimension, patients frequently report a need for interpersonal interactions, including interactions with hospital staff that are characterized by warmth, courteousness, caring, and reassurance. (Nixon & Narayanasamy, 2010; Tanyi, Recine, Werner, & Sperstad, 2006). This literature also suggests that hospital staff's efforts to provide patients a quiet

room (conducive for prayer, connecting with God, etc.), attend to special requests (e.g., procure access to a Bible), facilitate visits by significant others, and demonstrate courtesy may help address patients' spiritual needs.

In terms of barriers to service provision, as implied above, spirituality often provides people with a worldview that informs them of who they are and how they should live (Koenig, 1998; Richards & Bergin, 2000; Van Hook, Hugen, & Aguilar, 2001). From a social work strengths perspective, diverse beliefs should not be viewed as a hindrance to care. Alternatively, it is important to recognize that service provision can conflict with clients' spiritual value systems.

For example, some Latinos may believe that aspects of *curanderismo*¹ are at odds with certain western medical proscriptions such as precautions to avoid valued herbal remedies when taking western medications (Tafur, Crowe, & Torres, 2009). Such conflicts can accentuate the stress associated with hospitalization and impede the healing process, requiring social workers to broker win-win solutions that respect Latino clients' spiritual values, while simultaneously maximizing adherence to essential aspects of care.

Prior qualitative research with non-Latino samples has illustrated a related set of spiritual needs (Davidson, Boyer, Casey, Matzel, & Walden, 2008). Patients report a need to be active participants in treatment (Hodge & Horvath, 2011; Meert, Thurston, & Briller, 2005), and to have some degree of involvement and control during hospitalization (Hermann, 2001), which helps ensure that service provision is congruent with their spiritual beliefs and values. This literature also implies that hospital staff's efforts to keep patients informed and engaged, in tandem with staff's competency and responsiveness to requests may help address patients' spiritual needs.

The critical role that spiritual needs can play in service provision is implicitly recognized by the Joint Commission, the largest and most influential health care accrediting body in the United States. The Joint Commission revised its accreditation requirements at the turn of the century to necessitate spiritual assessments in hospitals and other settings (Hodge, 2006; Koenig, 2007). While each health care organization develops its own specific set of assessment procedures, the same overarching purpose exists across organizations: to identify patients' spiritual needs and determine the steps necessary to address the issues that emerge (Joint Commission, 2005). Put simply, the reason for conducting a spiritual assessment is to address clients' spiritual needs.

As might be expected, addressing patients' spiritual needs has been linked with patient satisfaction in studies using a cross-sectional research design. Patient satisfaction is an important construct because it is typically used to evaluate the quality of services provided in health care settings (Gribble & Haupt, 2005; Press, 2002). Addressing patients' spiritual needs is associated with perceptions of global satisfaction with service provision. For instance, among a sample of patients receiving treatment from an outpatient cancer center in New York City ($N = 369$; mean age = 58 yrs, 65% female; 67% white), those who reported their spiritual needs were not being adequately addressed

¹ Traditional healing methods common among many Latino cultural groups to address physical and spiritual maladies.

also reported significantly lower levels of satisfaction with the medical care they received (Astrow, Wexler, Texeira, He, & Sulmasy, 2007). Similarly, among hospital inpatients in Chicago ($N = 3,141$; mean age = 56 yrs, 61% female; 73% black), those who reported discussing their spiritual concerns with a care provider reported higher levels of satisfaction with the care they received (Williams, Meltzer, Arora, Chung, & Curlin, 2011). As such, addressing clients' spiritual needs appears to be an important component of overall satisfaction.

Despite the often crucial role that spiritual needs play in service provision, little empirical work has sought to examine predictors of clients' satisfaction with attention to their spirituality during hospitalization. As referred to above, some research has mapped the parameters of older adults' spiritual needs in healthcare settings (Cavendish et al., 2006; Hermann, 2001; Hodge et al., 2012; Murray, Kendall, Boyd, Worth, & Benton, 2004; Tanyi et al., 2006). While research suggests that a range of spiritual needs may present, the factors associated with clients' satisfaction with spiritual care have yet to be identified.

This lack of knowledge represents an important gap in the literature, especially for older Latinos for whom spiritual needs may be particularly salient. Articulating factors that predict satisfaction can enable social workers and other healthcare professionals to effectively address clients' spiritual needs. Indeed, highlighting such variables can help practitioners tailor services toward this end. Accordingly, this study seeks to identify factors that predict older Latinos' satisfaction with how well their spiritual needs are addressed in hospital settings. The methods used to identify these predictors are delineated below.

Method

To identify predictors of satisfaction regarding older Latinos' spiritual needs, a secondary data analysis of hospital inpatient satisfaction data was conducted. The data was obtained from Press Ganey Associates, Inc., a healthcare consulting firm that specializes in patient satisfaction measurement and management. As referred to above, hospitals routinely assess patient satisfaction as a means to evaluate the quality of their services (Chandra et al., 2011). This task is frequently contracted out to other organizations, of which Press Ganey is the largest (Press Ganey Associates, 2011). De-identified data was provided for the present study, which was conducted with the approval of a university Institutional Review Board.

Participants

The sample consisted of 227 Latinos ages 65 and older who were consecutively discharged over a 12-month period from hospitals across the nation. Some 56.8% ($n = 129$) of the sample was female. Just over three quarters (76.7%, $n = 174$) of respondents were between 65 and 79 years old, while the remaining individuals were 80 and older. Regarding ethnicity, 36.1% ($n = 82$) were Mexican American, 23.3% ($n = 53$) were Puerto Rican, and the rest were "other Hispanic/Latino." Almost one third (32.2%; $n =$

73) of respondents were from New England, 25.6% ($n = 58$) were from the Midwest, and the remaining were from the South and Western regions of the nation.

Survey Instrument

To assess patients' perceptions, Press Ganey administers surveys to former inpatients soon after completion of the discharge process. Surveys are typically mailed out within five business days of receipt of the discharge data from client hospitals. Spanish language surveys are sent to patients whose language preference is noted in the demographic information provided by hospitals. The self-administered survey methodology tends to produce relatively accurate information about sensitive issues such as spirituality and the provision of medical care (Press, 2002).

The survey instrument included the demographic items reported above, several indicators of satisfaction, and the outcome variable: clients' assessment of how well their spiritual needs were addressed. The study included eight predictors that cover major areas of service provision during hospitalization. These eight areas also capture key dimensions of satisfaction delineated by the National Library of Health Care Indicators (Kaldenberg, 2001).

More specifically, respondents were asked to rate the quality of services they received in terms of the admission process, room quality, food service, nursing staff, the administration of tests and treatments, accommodation of visitors and family, physicians, and the discharge process. Prior qualitative research suggests that all of these areas could potentially be related to clients' spiritual needs (Cavendish et al., 2006; Hermann, 2001; Hodge et al., 2012; Koenig, 2012). Examples might include a quiet room in which to pray or meditate, food that conforms to religious proscriptions, and courteous interactions with hospital staff.

Each area was assessed with a multi-item scale; the shortest scale contained two items and the longest contained six items. For each item, respondents were presented with a 5-point, Likert-type response key that ranged from "very poor" (1) to "very good" (5). Table 1 lists the number of items in each scale, sample items, and each scale's Cronbach alpha. The reliability coefficients are consistent with alphas obtained in prior research (Kaldenberg, 2001), with values from .88 to .96, and suggest the scales performed well with this population (Spicer, 2005).

The outcome variable was assessed by asking respondents to indicate the "degree to which hospital staff addressed your spiritual needs" on the same 5-point, Likert-type response key described above. This item is similar to one used in prior quantitative work on spiritual needs in healthcare settings (Astrow et al., 2007).

Table 1 *Predictors, sample items, and reliability coefficients*

Measure (Sample item)	#	α
Admission process (Courtesy of the person who admitted you)	2	.90
Quality of room (Noise level in and around your room)	5	.89
Food service (Courtesy of the person who served your food)	3	.88
Nursing staff (Nurses' attitude toward your requests)	6	.96
Administration of tests and treatment (Explanation about what would happen during tests or treatments)	4	.92
Visitors and family (Accommodation and comfort for visitors)	2	.88
Physicians (How well physician kept you informed)	5	.96
Discharge process (Speed of the discharge process after you were told you could go home)	3	.88

Data Analysis

Data were first screened for missing responses. Across the sample, 4.55% of values were missing. No data were missing from the outcome variable or the demographic variables. One of the items in the three-item admissions process scale was missing data from 17.2% ($n = 39$) of cases. An additional eight items across four scales were missing data from 5.3% ($n = 12$) to 9.7% ($n = 22$) of cases. Missing data were imputed using the Expectation-Maximization algorithm procedure to enable statistical analysis of all cases (Schafer & Graham, 2002).

Initially, bivariate relationships were examined between the satisfaction variables and the spiritual needs variable to determine general associations among the data. Statistical procedures included independent samples t -tests, one-way analysis of variance, and Pearson's correlation. Subsequently, hierarchical ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analyses were conducted to identify predictors of satisfaction associated with the degree to which staff addressed older Latino's spiritual needs. In block 1, demographic variables were included to examine the relationship between these variables and the outcome variable at the multivariate level. In block 2, the eight satisfaction variables were added to

identify significant predictors after controlling for the effects of the demographic variables. Variance inflation factors were well below 10, indicating little evidence of multicollinearity (Field, 2009).

Results

Bivariate Analyses

T-tests and one-way analysis of variance procedures were used to examine the relationships between the demographic variables and the spiritual needs variable. Gender, age, and Latino sub-group were not associated with clients' perceptions of how well their spiritual needs were met during their hospital stay. Conversely, geographic region was associated with satisfaction ($p = .005$), with Tukey's post hoc test indicating that older Latinos in the South and Western regions reported significant lower levels of satisfaction compared to respondents in the Midwest.

Pearson's correlation coefficients were computed to examine the relationships between the satisfaction variables and the spiritual needs variable. All eight predictors were associated with the outcome variable as expected. In other words, higher values on each of the predictors was associated with higher perceptions of satisfaction with the degree to which hospital staff addressed respondents' spiritual needs. Across the eight measures, the coefficients ranged from .52 (admissions process) to .70 (room quality); these values are commonly understood to indicate relatively strong associations (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

Multivariate Analyses

To identify predictors of satisfaction after controlling for the effects of the demographic variables, a series of OLS regression analyses was conducted. As can be seen in Table 2, the first block consisted of the demographic variables. These variables accounted for approximately 4% of the variance in client satisfaction with how their spiritual needs were addressed. Consistent with the bivariate results, only one of the demographic variables was significant. Older Latinos in the Midwest reported higher levels of satisfaction with how staff addressed their spiritual needs when compared to the reference group, older Latinos in the South and West regions of the nation.

In block 2, the eight satisfaction variables were entered into the model as potential predictors. Results regarding the pattern of relationships among the demographic variables remained the same. As was the case with block 1, older Latinos in the Midwest region reported higher levels of satisfaction regarding their spiritual needs relative to the reference group. The inclusion of the predictors significantly increased the variance explained by the model, which accounted for approximately 57% of the variance in clients' satisfaction with how their spiritual needs were addressed.

Table 2 *Hierarchical regression analyses predicting satisfaction addressing spiritual needs*

	Block 1	Block 2
<i>Demographics</i>		
Female ¹	-.200 (.119)	-.120 (.080)
Age 80+ yrs ²	-.153 (.139)	-.030 (.095)
Puerto Rican ³	.008 (.160)	.141 (.109)
Mexican American ³	.022 (.157)	.028 (.109)
New England ⁴	.303 (.161)	.126 (.110)
Midwest ⁴	.487 (.155)**	.358 (.107)**
<i>Predictor of satisfaction addressing spiritual needs</i>		
Admission process		.010 (.075)
Quality of room		.462 (.106)***
Food service		.134 (.077)
Nursing staff		1.831 (.429)***
Administration of tests		.066 (.121)
Visitors and family		-.168 (.089)
Physicians		.238 (.102)*
Discharge process		-.197 (.087)*
Adjusted R square	.037*	.566***

Unstandardized regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.
Reference groups: ¹ male, ² age 65-79 years, ³ other Latinos, ⁴ South and West regions.
*p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

In terms of individual predictors, satisfaction with room quality, nursing staff, physicians, and the discharge process were significantly related to satisfaction with addressing spiritual needs after controlling for the effects of the demographic variables. The positive coefficients for room quality, nursing staff, and physicians indicate that higher levels of satisfaction with services in these areas predict higher levels of satisfaction with staff's efforts to address older Latinos' spiritual needs. Conversely, the negative coefficient for the discharge process indicates that higher levels of satisfaction with the discharge process predict lower levels of satisfaction with staff's efforts to address respondents' spiritual needs, holding all other values constant.

Discussion

Hospital admission often engenders spiritual needs among older adults (Nelson-Becker et al., 2007). In recognition of this reality, the Joint Commission requires an assessment of clients' spiritual needs to support the delivery of culturally-grounded care and services (Hodge, 2006; Koenig, 2007). Although addressing clients' spirituality is an important component of service provision (Astrow et al., 2007; Williams et al., 2011), surprisingly little is known about the implementation of this process (Koenig, 2007). For instance, to the best of our knowledge, little, if any, research has investigated factors that predict clients' satisfaction with the attention granted to their spiritual needs during hospitalization.

Given the growth of the older Latino population, the current study sought to address this gap in the literature by identifying factors that predict satisfaction with spiritual care in hospital settings. Before summarizing the results, it should be noted that the study employed a cross-sectional design. Thus, due to the correlational nature of the study, caution is warranted in interpreting the findings and their application. With this caveat in mind, the study identified a number of variables that were associated with satisfaction regarding efforts to address older Latinos' spiritual needs.

More specifically, key predictors identified include room quality and the quality of interactions with the nursing staff and physicians. In addition, the discharge process was negatively associated with satisfaction. The final model, which included the impact of all predictors, accounted for approximately 57% of the variance in older Latinos' satisfaction regarding the attention given their spiritual needs.

These results are consistent with prior qualitative research on spiritual needs (Cavendish et al., 2006; Hermann, 2001; Hodge et al., 2012). For example, past research with African Americans has highlighted the important role that God and nurses are perceived to play in spiritual care (Conner & Eller, 2004; Tanyi et al., 2006). A room's noise level, its cleanliness, and temperature can have a direct bearing on clients' spiritual needs by, for example, inhibiting prayer and meditation and other practices that foster connection with God. Key members of the healthcare team such as nurses and doctors are also perceived to play a central role in addressing spiritual needs. They help respond to and fulfill requests, provide hope and interpersonal connection, and display warmth and empathy. Some older adults express a spiritual need to be kept informed about the state of their illness/progress, which was also a dimension tapped by the nurse and physician scales used in this study.

In addition to confirming prior research, the present study breaks new ground in at least three ways. First, it uses quantitative methods to document the relationship between the predictors and clients' spiritual needs previously suggested by qualitative work. Second, it extends the findings to older Latinos, whose spirituality tends to differ from the spirituality often expressed by European Americans (Suro et al., 2007). In turn, the specific knowledge obtained about this growing population can be used to promote greater cultural competency in service provision. Third, while much prior research on spiritual needs is based upon respondents at a single healthcare organization, the present study incorporated respondents from hospitals across the nation. This geographic

diversity helps mitigate any extant regional biases and implies that the results are not an artifact of local dynamics.

Implications

These results have key implications for social work practice, education, and research. In the area of practice, the findings highlight the importance of personal interactions between healthcare providers and older Latinos. Hospital staff—nurses, physicians, social workers, and others—represent the vehicle through which spiritual needs can be addressed. To promote quality of care and patient satisfaction, staff must spend time actively engaging clients about issues related to their spirituality. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that not all healthcare providers will feel comfortable discussing spiritual issues. An essential role for social workers in healthcare settings is to support multidisciplinary colleagues in gaining proficiency for conversing with clients about their spiritual needs.

Such training needs are especially salient given that, in spite of the Joint Commission's spiritual assessment requirements, research suggests that clients' spiritual needs are often overlooked in health care settings (Astrow et al., 2007; Balboni et al., 2007; Williams et al., 2011). For some older Latinos, this may not be problematic if they are uninterested in discussing their spiritual needs or if spiritual needs are not a salient personal issue. For others, however, the failure to identify and address spiritual needs can impede wellness (Cavendish et al., 2006; Davidson et al., 2008). Consequently, it is critical that older Latinos be afforded the opportunity to relate any extant spiritual needs or concerns. In turn, these concerns should be treated with dignity and respect by tailoring services appropriately; social workers can guide their multidisciplinary colleagues in the delivery of services that reflect and respect clients' spiritual values.

This same open posture towards clients' spiritual needs also applies to the discharge process. Interestingly, higher reported satisfaction with the discharge process was negatively associated with satisfaction addressing spiritual needs. Although more research is needed to confirm and further illuminate this relationship, the discharge process itself may elicit spiritual needs, especially in an era of financial constraints and attendant short hospitalizations. For example, older Latinos may not have worked through all the spiritual issues sparked by their admission to the healthcare system (Koenig, 2012). Thus, while satisfied with the speed of the discharge process, older Latinos may feel that the swiftness of their exit inhibits consideration of their spiritual needs. In these situations, social workers can enhance patient satisfaction and service quality by discussing strategies for post-discharge spiritual care by, for example, encouraging clients to connect with a cultural healer or religious leader if doing so is important to them.

Social workers can also play an important role facilitating connections and referrals. As implied earlier, older Latinos can express their spirituality in a variety of ways (Canda & Furman, 2010). Expressions of spiritual need are likely to be similarly diverse (Koss-Chioino, 2013). Maintaining a network of diverse contacts within the practitioner's

hospital, healthcare community, and the broader local community can help address diverse spiritual needs.

The findings also underscore the need for further education and training on spiritual assessment. Most social workers, including most gerontological social workers, report receiving little training in the process of identifying and addressing clients' spiritual needs (Murdock, 2005; Sheridan, 2009). The paucity of training is problematic. Practitioners who have not been trained in the assessment process may feel ill-equipped to administer spiritual assessments in a professional and ethical manner that respects clients' spiritual autonomy (Canda & Furman, 2010). In order to support multidisciplinary colleagues in addressing clients' spiritual needs, social workers will need to be firmly grounded in understanding and discussing such needs themselves.

Educational programs might acquaint future practitioners with various spiritual assessment tools (Canda & Furman, 2010; Hodge, 2003; Koenig, 2007; Pargament & Krumrei, 2009), along with their respective strengths and limitations (Hodge, 2005). Practitioners might also benefit from reading assessment approaches that operationalize the Joint Commission's assessment requirements (Hodge, 2006). Similarly, evidenced-based guidelines for the use of spiritual interventions may also be helpful to some practitioners (Hodge, 2011a; Hodge, 2011b).

Curricula might also include strengths-based content on the spiritual traditions commonly affirmed by Latinos such as Catholicism, evangelical Protestantism, and Pentecostalism (Suro et al., 2007). While it is important not to assume clients hold all tenets of a particular spiritual tradition, it is helpful to have some knowledge of beliefs and practices that are commonly held among Latinos. Such knowledge legitimates the topic of spirituality in healthcare settings, implicitly communicates respect for clients' traditions, and provides areas that can be tentatively explored with clients. Similarly, programs will want to include content that enables social work students to differentiate between incorporating clients' spiritual values into practice, which is within their scope of practice, and incorporating spiritual guidance into practice, which falls under the rubric of clergy (Hodge & Bonifas, 2010).

Educators may benefit from visiting the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Religion and Spirituality Clearinghouse website. The CSWE Clearinghouse features a number of peer-reviewed teaching modules and syllabi designed to promote ethical and effective practice with diverse expressions of spirituality. For example, among the resources included in the Religion and Spirituality Educational Resources section of the website is a syllabus on "Evidenced-based assessment and intervention."

The results also highlight the need for additional research. To better understand the discrete spiritual needs of older Latinos, in-depth interviews with patients might be conducted to delineate the nature and types of spiritual needs commonly manifested by Latinos from various spiritual traditions and cultures of origin. Research is also needed on the prevalence of spiritual assessments, the protocols used to operationalize assessments, the types of spiritually-oriented services available to patients, the training provided to staff, and other factors associated with ensuring patients' spiritual needs are adequately addressed.

Given the paucity of research on predictors of satisfaction with attention to spiritual needs during hospitalization, the present study should be replicated with different samples of older Latinos, as well as general samples of Latinos. Research should also be conducted in other healthcare settings. Spiritual needs emerge in nursing homes and long-term care facilities and other settings served by social workers. Predictors of satisfaction regarding clients' spiritual needs may be different in diverse settings, indicating the need for additional research to identify areas of similarity and difference.

Research should also be conducted with African Americans, American Indians, and other racial/ethnic groups. Much like Latinos, these populations typically affirm distinct spiritual narratives (Richards & Bergin, 2000; Van Hook et al., 2001). Accordingly, it is important that research be conducted that utilizes samples comprised solely or primarily of members of these groups. By identifying predictors of satisfaction, services can be tailored to enhance their cultural relevance and effectiveness.

Limitations

As noted at the start of the discussion section, the cross-sectional design precludes any assessment of causality. In keeping with the correlated nature of the data, other models may also be plausible. Satisfaction with efforts to address patients' spiritual needs may be more accurately predicted by respondents' physical health status, religious affiliation, self-ascribed importance attributed to spirituality, or some other variable or combination of variables not included in the present study.

Although the study incorporated respondents from diverse regions of the nation, the findings should not be generalized to all hospitalized older Latinos in the United States; hence, the need for replication with other samples of older Latinos. It should also be noted that social desirability bias can affect survey responses (Williams et al., 2011). Finally, single-item measures such as the outcome variable employed in this study are characterized by limited reliability and validity. Concurrently, it should also be mentioned that such measures have been shown to function reasonably well in previous research despite their psychometric limitations (Bond, Dickinson, Matthews, Jagger & Brayne, 2006; Menec, Shooshtari & Lambert, 2007; Zimmerman et al., 2006), suggesting some degree of confidence in the findings is warranted.

Conclusion

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to identify predictors of older Latinos' satisfaction with how well their spiritual needs were addressed during hospitalization. In light of the rapidly growing population of older Latinos (Administration on Aging, 2008b) and the critical role that spirituality plays among this population (Suro et al., 2007), this study makes an important contribution to the literature. The findings suggest that room quality, nursing staff, physicians, and the discharge process play an important role—either positively or negatively—in satisfactorily addressing older Latinos' spiritual needs. By understanding the role such predictors play in clients' experiences, social work practitioners and their

multidisciplinary colleagues are better equipped to provide culturally relevant and effective services to older Latinos.

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Quality of Life of Latina Breast Cancer Survivors: From Silence to Empowerment

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Abstract: *Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among Latinas living in the United States. This article reports the findings of a qualitative study aimed at understanding the experiences of 25 Latinas, between the ages of 28 and 83, who are long-term (at least five years post diagnosis) breast cancer survivors. The findings revealed three key issues and concerns: (a) fear of being stigmatized and being treated differently if they talked about their breast cancer experience; (b) overcoming the perceived negative effects that breast cancer has on their femininity; and (c) the effects of breast cancer recovery and survivorship on social relationships of family and community. Family support and peer advocacy helped survivors in several areas: (a) to cope with the fear of recurrence; (b) to combat the fear of social stigma; (c) to become stronger as they dealt with the permanent life changes as a Latina breast cancer survivor; (d) to support them in the struggle for the provision of culturally sensitive health care; and (e) to provide social support in the form of advocacy for other Latina breast cancer survivors.*

Keywords: *Latina, breast cancer, survivorship, social support, health*

While breast cancer affects many individuals, particularly women, studies on breast cancer survivorship focus on describing how women experience many processes and problems after their breast cancer treatment has ended. For example, women experience the fear of recurrence and permanent changes to their bodies, their social roles, their intimate relationships, and their families (Ashing-Giwa, Rosales, Lai, & Wietzel, 2013; Ashing-Giwa et al., 2004; Ferrell & Dow, 1996; Fobair et al., 2006). Breast cancer survivors report that although family, friends, and health care professionals perceive their experience to be over, they experience new challenges as a result of complex changes such as living with the fear of recurrence, uncertainty, social stigma, disruption of intimacy, changes in self-perceptions, altered bodily appearance, and function (Ashing-Giwa et al., 2004; Carver, Smith, Vida, & Antoni, 2006; Cimprich, Ronis, & Martinez-Ramos, 2002; Fobair et al, 2006; Sammarco & Konecny 2010).

Women's individual experiences of health and illness potentially transform them, bringing new meanings about themselves, their bodies, their health, and their future. Living through and surviving breast cancer can be a catalyst for social change; provide a greater appreciation of time, life, and social relationships; and can lead to a healthier lifestyle and behavior (Vickberg, 2001; Zebrack, 2000). For some women, the process of

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surviving breast cancer includes a search for meaning in their lives, the construction of a new sense of self and role responsibilities, and self-transformation (Breadan, 1997; Carpenter, Brockopp, & Andrykowski, 1999; Ferrell, Grant, Funk, Otis-Green, & Garcia, 1998). Some breast cancer survivors describe their struggle for self-transformation happening as a result of connecting with their family and friends. Carpenter et al. (1999) reported that perceptions of personal awareness, mortality, coming of age, and life reassessment were described as positive changes, because they led women to become more aware of themselves. As a result, they reported changing various aspects of their social relationships and their work to help them feel stronger, more courageous, and more satisfied with themselves as breast cancer survivors. In some cases, Pelusi (1997) noted that breast cancer survivors managed the stigma they experienced by “mediat[ing] the expectations of others” (p. 1348). In other words, they had to control how others were affected by their breast cancer, particularly their husbands’ responses to their mastectomy scar, and the side effects of chemotherapy. However, for some women, the breast cancer diagnosis was not a stressful event. In cases where women did not feel an intense awareness about their breast cancer experience, they reported very little or no changes with their self-perception after breast cancer. These women were less apt to engage in a process of self-examination and introspection, and did not report increased self-awareness. Carpenter et al. (1999) identified key psychological and social factors that contributed to the inability of breast cancer survivors to experience self-transformation, which included lack of courage or strength related to mental and physical stamina; lack of information and support from health care providers; not having social support from family and friends; lack of income; and age. In addition, she noted that breast cancer survivors reported psychosocial problems such as coping with the death of one or more family members, the imprisonment of a child, loss of a job, divorce, or relocation. These obstacles interfered with the ability to devote the time and energy necessary to examining the self and moving toward making desired changes for self-transformation and self-empowerment.

Researchers have found that breast cancer survivors report a variety of family-related concerns. For example, women tend to report concerns about not being able to see their children grow up, the emotional impact that their breast cancer has on their children, feeling isolated, problems with fertility, and intimate sexual relations (Cimprich, Ronis, Martinez-Ramos, 2002; Dunn & Steginga, 2000; Fobair et al., 2006). Resources such as peer social support do have a positive impact because people can access the information to learn how to cope with the changes and uncertainty after breast cancer and how to communicate with health care providers (Sammarco, 2001; Zebrack, 2000).

Studies on Latina breast cancer survivors have reported that Latina breast cancer survivors experience different outcomes compared to non-Hispanic White women. In a study conducted by Carver et al. (2006) on long-term breast cancer survivors, Latinas reported more negative feelings about having been diagnosed with breast cancer, more social avoidance, more distress about their families’ futures, and more distress about the possibility of recurrence compared to white non-Hispanic women. In another study by Lopez-Class et al. (2011), Latina breast cancer survivors reported secrecy and shame about their breast cancer diagnosis, feelings of isolation, the need for family and social

support, challenges with developing social relationships, challenges with navigating the U.S. medical care system, and language barriers when interacting with health care professionals. Similarly, Ashing-Giwa et al. (2004) found that Latinas reported greater concerns relating to fear of death, pain and suffering, body image and sexual relations, and financial burdens when compared to other racial and ethnic groups who were breast cancer survivors. Uncertainty is an important factor shaping a persons' ability to make sense of the meaning of illness-related events such as their disease process, treatment, or hospitalization (Mishel, 1988). When an individual lacks information or experiences the unexpected or unfamiliar, they may experience uncertainty; and for breast cancer survivors, uncertainty can cause stress (Mast, 1998). Sammarco and Konecny (2008) researched the relationship between quality of life and uncertainty and found that Latinas with less formal education (less than a college education) reported greater uncertainty. In a follow-up study, Sammarco and Konecny (2010), seeking to understand quality of life, social support, and uncertainty, found that Latinas had higher levels of spousal support and slightly greater family social support than their counterparts; but they also reported lower quality of life and higher levels of uncertainty related to breast cancer. Furthermore, Latinas who perceived receiving less social support, or who lacked access to resources such as information in Spanish or support groups in Spanish, reported greater uncertainty and lower quality of life compared to Latinas who reported feeling supported.

Understanding how social well-being and quality of life is impacted by breast cancer survivors aids professionals in understanding how social roles and social relationships affect women's adjustment to breast cancer. Ferrell, Grant, Funk, Otis-Green, and Garcia (1997) define social well-being as "a way to view not only the cancer or its symptoms, but also the person surrounding the tumor; it is the means by which we recognized people with care, their roles, and relationships" (p. 400). More research is needed that focuses on how social and cultural values shape Latina breast cancer survivors' social well-being and quality of life. This study examines the perceptions of Latina long-term breast cancer survivors (five years or more since diagnosis) and aims to understand their breast cancer survivorship experiences. Lastly, this study generates findings useful for the provision of culturally sensitive health care and support services to benefit breast cancer survivors and their families.

Literature Review

Latina Breast Cancer Survivors in the United States

In 2010, the U.S. Census estimated 50.5 million Latinos were living in the United States, comprising approximately 16% of the U.S. population (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2011), and the Latino population continues to grow in the United States. Although the incidence of breast cancer is lower for Latinas compared to Whites (non-Latinas), Latinas diagnosed with early stage breast cancer are 20% more likely to die from breast cancer than White non-Hispanic women (American Cancer Society, 2010).

Extensive research in health care shows that Latinas experience many barriers to health care treatment and diagnosis such as poverty, lack of health insurance, lack of a regular source of health care, lack of breast cancer prevention information in Spanish,

racial discrimination, and misconceptions about the disease (Ramirez et al., 2005; Schiller, Lucas, Ward, & Peregoy, 2012; Soni, 2007). Studies on the use of screening mammography for early prevention and detection show that older women who speak primarily Spanish are less likely to adhere to mammography screening guidelines compared with non-Hispanic White women (Borrayo et al., 2009).

Some studies have noted that being undocumented, low-income, low in English proficiency, and uninsured negatively impact Latinas' abilities to access quality health care (Documet, Green, Adams, & Weil, 2008; Vega, Rodriguez, & Gruskin, 2009). Researchers Campesino, Ruiz, Uriri Glover, and Koithan (2009) found that Mexican American breast cancer survivors reported that immigrant women tend to lack insurance, which resulted in limited access to treatment and neglect by medical staff. These problems are often reproduced in health care settings structurally because of the lack of culturally and linguistically sensitive health care. For example, physicians tend to rely on untrained individuals and family members or friends to translate and help discuss breast cancer treatment options for patients with limited English-proficiency. This practice contributes to disparities in the delivery of breast cancer care (Ashing-Giwa et al. 2006; Campesino et al., 2009; Rose et al., 2012), and may put many women at risk of being diagnosed with advanced stage tumors requiring mastectomy and chemotherapy (American Cancer Society, 2010; Li, Malone, & Daling, 2003; Singh, Miller, Hankey, & Edwards, 2003). For example, a study that examined ethnic differences between Hispanic women and non-Hispanic women with equal access to health care found that differences existed in the size, stage, and grade of breast cancer. Hispanic women were more likely to be diagnosed at a younger age; at a later stage of disease; present with larger, higher grade tumors; and with less treatable estrogen and progesterone negative tumors than non-Hispanic women (Watlington, Byers, Mouchawar, Sauaia, & Ellis, 2007).

Juarez, Ferrell, and Borneman (1998) found that Latino/a cancer patients experiences are embedded in culturally-based values of family life and religious beliefs that are interrelated and culturally bound. They concluded that, "Culture influenced all domains; physical, psychological, social and spiritual of quality of life...and no issue is exclusively a physical, psychological, social or a spiritual one" (p. 318). The study also identified that the most difficult changes to psychological well-being included anxiety, uncertainty, a lack of acceptance of the illness by family members, loss of independence, changes in family roles, and the financial impact of illness on the family. Napoles-Springer, Ortiz, O'Brien, Diaz-Mendez, and Perez-Stable (2007) found that one third of Latina breast cancer survivors never utilized support groups; mainly because they had no knowledge of existing support groups and instead received support primarily from their family. However, when family members encouraged them to attend a support group, they were seven times more likely to attend a support group than women who received very little or no encouragement. Galvan, Buki, and Garces (2009) found that Latinas reported the following as important: needing support from family (primarily spousal support), professionals (doctors and nurses), peers, and spiritual sources. In this study, participants who participated in social support groups valued exchanging their personal experiences about cancer with other women, reported feeling emotionally supported, and had an optimistic outlook compared to those who did not.

Conducting interviews with Latina breast cancer survivors about the long-term impact their breast cancer experience has had on their lives is important to capture their interpretations of those experiences with being a Latina breast cancer survivor. It is recommended by the National Cancer Policy Board that:

The psychosocial needs of women with breast cancer must be understood in the context of other issues that affect women's coping, quality of life, and well-being, such as socioeconomic factors and cultural factors, the quality of social support, access to health care, and the presence of other chronic illness or life crises. (National Cancer Policy Board, 2004, p. 23)

In this study, qualitative methodology lends well to understanding women's perceptions and responses about the significance of breast cancer in their lives and the cultural values and beliefs that impose unique meanings. Ethnicity and gender socially and culturally shape Latinas' experiences with breast cancer. Qualitative in-depth studies of Latina breast cancer survivors provide a unique opportunity to understand how Latinas link their past experiences of breast cancer with their present concerns and future possibilities. The documentation of their experiences is important in understanding the implementation of cultural and linguistic sensitivity in breast cancer services and advocacy.

Methodology

Grounded theory, as a research method in qualitative research, was utilized to develop a well-integrated set of concepts leading to a thorough theoretical explanation of social phenomena under study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Feminist qualitative research asserts that women's life experiences are embedded in the particular historical forms of social relations that shape their experience. When women's perspectives are at the center of inquiry, we learn how social structures influence women's experiences with breast cancer (Kasper, 1994; Langellier & Sullivan, 1998). These principles informed the researchers to conduct a qualitative study of 25 Latina long-term breast cancer survivors (beyond five years of diagnosis) living in California who were interviewed in Spanish or English depending on the preference of the participant. The interviewer and one of the researchers developed a survey instrument containing basic demographic questions and various quality of life questions related to breast cancer, which were approved by the University Institutional Review Board. Over an 18-month period, respondents were recruited through advertisement flyers (in Spanish and English), from contacts at community organizations, and from breast cancer support groups in California. The recruitment flyer, which described the purpose of the research and included information and contact details of the researcher, was posted at health care organizations. Respondents contacted the researcher over the phone, and when they agreed to participate in the study, the researcher mailed the informants a packet consisting of a letter introducing the study, a copy of the English and Spanish (LTBCS) version of the questionnaire, a copy of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, an English and Spanish consent form, and the researcher's Certificate of Completion of the National Institute of Health Human Subjects Protections Education. Respondents contacted the interviewer after they had received the packet and read the materials. The respondent determined the location of the interview, either at the researcher's office or a location

convenient to the respondent, as well as provided a date and time to meet for the interview. Respondents were informed of confidentiality and anonymity, and, with their permission, interviews were tape-recorded. Most of the interviews were conducted in English, one third were in Spanish, with the majority occurring in the home of the respondent. Interviews ranged between 60-90 minutes. During the initial part of the interview, respondents were asked if they experienced any social, psychological and/or physical side effects as a result of having breast cancer. Most women began telling their story from the point when they were first diagnosed. Then they discussed the type of treatment that they received. They were specifically asked, "After having had breast cancer, how would you describe your quality of life socially?" Initially, respondents reported that they were doing fine, but when asked if breast cancer had affected their relationships, the women began to discuss how breast cancer had changed them. The second part of the interview entailed questions that asked survivors to identify what, if any, were the positive effects of being diagnosed with breast cancer, as well as key demographic background information.

After the interviews were completed, they were transcribed by the researcher and a research assistant who are bilingual Spanish and English speakers. Interviews conducted in Spanish were translated into English, and then coded. Each interview was read twice before it was coded. The initial coding process involved coding for topical categories relating to the social aspects of quality of life. The initial codes served to summarize and sort out many issues relating to coping with diagnosis; surgery, including breast reconstruction; treatment relating to chemotherapy and radiation; and the long-term physical and social side effects. The coded "conglomerates" of data were sorted into categories of recurring patterns and issues: health status, relationships, body image, family, friends, and communication. Then, utilizing Kathy Charmaz's (1983) focused coding method, the researchers analyzed each new category systematically, utilizing line-by-line in-vivo coding, sorting out a series of repetition in statements, patterns, or inconsistencies relating to an issue in the topical categories, which provided more detailed codes relating to talking and expressing their fears, their feelings about their bodies, femininity, sexuality, and the need for social support. This method of analysis does have limitations because the process involves discarding a lot of the data during the coding process and presenting only parts, or slices of the narrative. However, this qualitative analysis allows for a nuanced understanding of the meaning-making process in coping with the long-term effects of a breast cancer.

Sample Demographics

Latinas' average age of diagnosis was 47 years old, with mean age of 57 at the time of the interview. Most of the Latinas were first-generation bilingual, in Spanish and English, but one third of the women were Spanish monolingual. Sixty percent of the Latinas interviewed were college-educated, with 40% reporting incomes higher than \$60,000; 44% of the sample reported earning less than \$30,000. Most Latinas (80%) identified themselves as being of Mexican origin and other Latinas (20%) identified themselves as being from Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, and Argentina. Sixty percent of the women interviewed were not born in the United States, but were raised in the United

States. The other 40% were born in the United States. Most Latinas stated that they received a mastectomy, but more than a third of the women had breast reconstruction (See Table 1).

Table 1 *Demographics of Sample (n=25)*

	n	%
<i>Have Health Insurance</i>	24	96
<i>Type of Treatment</i>		
Mastectomy	21	84
Lumpectomy	6	24
Chemotherapy	15	60
Radiation	4	16
Hormone Therapy	8	32
<i>Breast Reconstruction (yes)</i>	10	40
<i>Nativity</i>		
Born in the United States	9	36
Not Born in the United States	16	64
<i>Education</i>		
High School Graduate or Less	10	40
Some College or College Graduate	15	60
<i>Employed (yes)</i>	15	60
<i>Household Income</i>		
Less than \$15,000	3	12
\$15,000 but less than \$30,000	8	32
\$30,000 but less than \$60,000	4	16
\$60,000 or more	10	40
Note: Mean Age = 57 (34-84 years old); Mean Age at Diagnosis = 47 (27-75 years old); Mean Years Post Diagnosis = 10 years		

There are limits to this sample because referrals were made nonrandom, primarily from a snowball sample. Recruitment patterns may reflect similar social ties, and respondents were similar to each other in their age, education, class, and ethnicity. Neither the women's narratives nor the researchers' observations and interpretations can be generalized to represent the experiences of all Latina breast cancer survivors.

Results

Most of the respondents in the study reported that being diagnosed with breast cancer was a major life event that brought about new meaning in their life and their health. Key concepts identified by the respondents were the difficulty of being able to talk about the loss, fear of recurrence as a recursive mindset, stigma, and uncertainty about their futures. They also reported that, although they received social support, they needed more assistance with being able to cope with the fear of recurrence. Another key concept that emerged was that breast cancer made them more aware of their health, their roles in their families, their body images, and their femininity. They reported needing more support coping with the impact that breast cancer had on their body and their social relationships, particularly, their intimate relationships. Some of the women reported that sharing ideas and opinions with others who had similar or comparable experiences helped them understand their own illness. Lastly, the respondents reported that surviving breast cancer was a process of having to face new challenges, yet when they were supported by a friend, a family member, or someone who shared a similar experience, they were able to adapt. In some cases, women discussed feeling “empowered,” mainly because they became more empathetic toward other women like themselves who had been diagnosed with breast cancer.

The Long-term Impact of Having a Breast Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment

Subjects reported that they found it difficult to discuss with others how their diagnosis impacted them. Many of them reported a fear of recurrence, a fear of stigma, and a fear of being treated differently. Most of the women stated that they had to socially negotiate their self-disclosure about the emotional impact that breast cancer had for them.

My friends, my family, and my husband are very supportive. I still measure how much I let them know, because you don't want to upset them.

Y te puedo decir que nunca se acaba porque siempre tienes el miedo que regresa [cancer] verdad? Pero yo seguí luchando porque yo soy una mujer que siempre me dediqué a mis hijos y a mi esposo. [I can tell you that it never ends; because I can tell you that you always have fear that it (cancer) will return, right? But, I continue to fight because I am a woman who has always been dedicated to my children and my husband].

El cáncer te cambia toda tu vida. Cuando a mi me preguntan “Y a ti como te ha ido?” Pues tú tienes que ser positiva si tú quieres seguir aquí. Eso es lo que yo siempre les digo. Pero tampoco les digo que es la maravilla y que vas a regresar a tu vida. Yo no mas digo “tienes que ser positivia si quieres estar aqui.” Pero la verdad es que para mi ha sido una hebra que nunca he podido acabar de jalar... para mí ha sido traumática. Sigo con el temor de cancer. [Cancer changes all of your life. When they ask me, “How did it go for you?” Well you have to stay positive if you want to survive. That is what I always tell them. But, at the same time, I don't tell them everything is marvelous and that you are going to return to your previous life. But the truth is, for me, it has been like an unwinding thread

that I have never been able to stop pulling. I pull, and pull and pull...It has been a traumatic experience for me. I continue to fear cancer].

You feel. Wow, I made it to five years, but all you feel so fearful. You know, I am numb from going from the perception of myself as a healthy person to now, I am dealing with cancer, and there is a stigma to it. There is a lot of different things, even the way people look at you at work. I get asked more often, when I am going to retire.

Often respondents stated that they were very cautious how they speak about having breast cancer to their spouses or family members and about their fear of recurrence because they did not want to “burden” them with negative emotions or “worry” them. They did not want to bring other people “down,” upset them, or be treated differently because they had breast cancer. Most women stated that they often concealed and did not share or express their emotions about breast cancer out of fear that people would perceive them negatively. A majority of the respondents stated that they had never been approached by anyone to discuss the impact that breast cancer had on them initially and the continued suffering from the long-term effects of their breast cancer treatment and surgery.

Perceptions of the Impact That Breast Cancer Has on Femininity

The women who had a mastectomy or a permanent procedure on their bodies reported no longer “feeling the same” after breast cancer. Many of the women reported that the changes to their body affected their femininity and sexuality. Latina women who had mastectomies reported that breast cancer treatment and surgery had a negative effect on their body image, which also had a negative effect on their social relationships.

Si, la recuperación si fue duro pero lo más difícil fue la aceptación de que cuando vi que yo no tenía el pecho porque yo he sido una mujer que siempre me gusta arreglarme, lucirme y una de las cosas que más me gustaba usar eran mis vestidos, a sentirme atractiva y para mi fue muy difícil cada vez que yo salía y miraba una mujer así como yo me vestía. [Yes, the recovery was hard, but what was more difficult was the process of accepting that I did not have a breast because I was the type of woman who liked to get dressed up, to show off (my beauty), and one of the things that I liked most was to wear my dresses to feel attractive. So, for me, it was very difficult every time I would go out and see a woman dressed the way I used to dress].

I think I had two very nice looking breasts. I am sorry that is not the case now. I do a lot of ballroom dancing, and some of the Latin dancing dresses that are cut low in the front, you know that it looks nice, but I will never be able to wear a dress like that. So, there is a degree of grieving that went along with losing my breasts. I am saddened that my body has had to look different and I feel it is part of the sacrifice that one makes to get well. The grief period, the thought of losing your breast or the possibility of losing the breast is very traumatic to all women.

Mira cuando me hicieron la lumpectomia, para mi era desagradable verme. Porque... veía deforme mi seno. ¿Si? En primera significó una herida en mi cuerpo. Una deformación en mi cuerpo. [sighs] En segunda imaginate si me hubieran quitado el seno. Hubiera sido una mutilación. Para mi eso es, una mutilación. Si una mutilación ya que es una parte que falta de tu cuerpo que todas las demás mujeres tienen. Look, when I had the lumpectomy, for me, it was unpleasant to see myself because I saw my breast deformed. Yes, [at] first, it meant a scar [would be] on my body... a deformation on my body... a mutilation. It would have been a mutilation. Imagine if they had removed my breast. For me, what it's a mutilation -a mutilation to your body! A part of your body, that all women have, is missing].

The women reported that they did not discuss their sadness, loss, and anxiety about their body image with others because they feared being stigmatized and they were reluctant to discuss how breast cancer impacted their body. Some women said that they did not want to be perceived as being vain or “too much into her body image.” They were concerned that if they spoke about their experience, they would also be inviting insensitive comments from others, particularly family, friends, co-workers, and health care providers.

Some people made some insensitive comments; they were often women. One teacher, when she learned that I had reconstructive surgery said, “how fortunate you are; how lucky you are; you know, you got to pick your size.” And I said, “You know what? I much rather have the ones God gave me, thank you very much,” and I walked out of the room. And another one, I tried to explain to her that I was grieving and that I was sad about the loss of my breast, and she said, “I didn't think you were into your body that way.” And I said, “Well, it wasn't the defining factor of my being, but it's still a loss of your body.” It's just not the same. Let alone people just do not understand it when you have reconstructive surgery. You lose. All the nerve endings are shot, so that sense of touch is gone. It is a whole other ball game. That is a big loss. Or, I thought that is a big loss.

Need for Social Support and Information

Latinas found themselves having to negotiate a new social landscape and often stated that they sought out the support of close friends and family, followed by clergy (or their religious group), and social support groups. Most Latinas stated that the health care system fell short of providing and assisting them in understanding the impact that breast cancer has in their lives and their well-being.

My sisters were very supportive and people at my church prayed for me. I remember calling around to see if there was a church base support group, and there wasn't one. And I had a visit from the priest; he basically told me, “life's rough get over it.”

Siento que allí [grupo de apollo] aprendes. O sea, aprendes porque una dice una cosa y a lo mejor a la misma vez te esta pasando a ti. Y a lo mejor la misma duda que tu tienes la otra persona la... la hizo y ya sabe la respuesta. O sabe

expresar ese sentimiento y uno no lo sabe expresar o no lo dice. Entonces allí aprendes bastante. Aprendes que tu no eres la única que sufres. Sino que, hay otras mujeres que son completamente distintas a ti que vienen de otra familia. Que es la misma cultura y que lo sienten [igualmente]. Y no te sientes tan culpable tampoco. ¿No? Entonces aprendes bastante. [I feel that at the support group, you learn. I learn because one person may say one thing that you are experiencing. The same doubt that you have, another person may have or have experienced it, and they have the answer. They know how to express their feelings [when] one does not know how to express those feelings. So, you learn a lot. There are some women who have very unique experiences from different family backgrounds. They come from the same cultural background and can feel similarly. You do not feel guilty. Right? Thus, you learn a lot].

In this sample, a majority of the women stated that information and communication about life after breast cancer should be improved for bilingual and Spanish-speaking Latinas. When asked how a doctor or health care provider can be sensitive to Latinas needs, one survivor stated:

If you don't have dialogue with your doctor, then he is not sensitive to all of your needs that you might have, and you are unable to tell him what is actually transpiring in your body and your mind.

Most women, particularly women who spoke limited English, stated that their communication with their doctor was poor, and they lacked information on how to adapt to the long-term side effects of breast cancer.

Yo le preguntaba al doctor, y el me preguntaba, y el me ignoro, me ignoro. El no me dio la informacion. [I would ask the doctor, and he would question me, and he would ignore me. He ignored me. He did not give me information].

The women in the sample stated that bilingual social support groups were needed to assist long after their breast cancer surgery and treatment were completed, to assist in coping with the challenges they faced as breast cancer survivors. When asked how social support groups helped after their treatment was over, they reported that they attended support groups to talk about how breast cancer affected their status as women, and they identified the need to build a community of support. Women utilized various forms of social support, including their families, church members and clergy, trained therapists or counselors, and support groups to help them cope.

I dealt with some things I haven't dealt with from my past, like my folks, my place in the family, my value as a woman, and my culture. My sisters and I told my folks that it is not ok that the men in our family seemed to be much more valued than the women in the family. I am better affirming my own value and my own worth in different arenas. I am better able to just stand up for myself. I think my husband had the perspective "once we get through it, she can go on and be the same person that she was." You know, my attitude toward house cleaning changed, my attitude towards the way I spend my energy has changed, and my ability to say "no" got stronger. I remember telling a friend that [when they]

took my breast, my heart opened; because everybody was looking at my breast, nobody could look at my heart.

I have shown my body (to), I don't know to how many women. I wouldn't like another woman to go through that because it was horrendous; because even though I have a wonderful family and friends, but it is like they just hear the word "cancer" and it's like a death sentence.

Talking to others and sharing their experiences helped women understand how to cope with the long-term social and physical effects of breast cancer. The respondents stated that, as they became more engaged when listening to other women's experiences, they were able to talk more about the impact of breast cancer in their own lives, seek out more information about breast cancer, and were likely to see their future as surviving breast cancer instead of a death sentence.

Perceptions of the Impact That Breast Cancer Has on Intimate Relationships

When asked about the long-term effects on their quality of life, they connected it to body image and femininity, but found it difficult to talk about. Most stated that they thought about the impact that breast cancer surgery and treatment would have on their sexual intimacy. The women reported that they rarely spoke about how breast cancer compromised their sexual intimacy. The issue of sexuality and intimacy became apparent when they engaged in intimate social relationships. Their main concern was the fear of being rejected or being stigmatized by their partner's or by their spouse's perception of them as being disfigured or deformed. In a few cases, women said that they did not engage with another person intimately because they felt ashamed of how they looked.

I have not liked having relationships with another person. Even when I have had suitors, well, I feel, I feel bad, do you understand me? Because a man, when he sees one like this they say, "No, you are no longer complete." They make you [feel] ugly and it hurts oneself. You are no longer complete.

My fiancée, he started coming less around and calling me less and I knew that this was going to be the end. I remember one day confronting him, and I said, 'I know what is happening, and I think I know why, but I just want you to tell me. Tell me in my face that you don't want me because I am missing a breast.' And, he didn't have the guts to say that. I said, "I just want you to tell me." He finally admitted, "Yes, I am having a terrible time, and maybe, if they [had] cut off your foot instead of your breast, maybe that may [would] have been different."

Although many women were supported by their spouses, Latinas reported that breast cancer surgery and treatment has had long-term effects on their ability to experience intimacy.

I have been able to talk to him and say, "I don't have my breasts now, so I feel half of my joy is gone, but why don't we make up this way? More stimulation in other areas." Sometimes, he says, "I am not very creative, but you tell me what to do." Which is good. You know, a lot of women, they cannot even speak of it, or mention anything.

Perceptions of Self Transformation and Empowerment

In this study, Latinas reported that breast cancer made them become more introspective about their futures. They stated that being diagnosed with breast cancer made them think about their lives, their health, and well-being. The process coincided with rethinking and becoming more conscious about their roles in their families as mothers, wives, sisters, and grandmothers. Some women said that breast cancer made them think about their gender and cultural roles in their communities as well.

When you get the diagnosis of cancer, you realize that your time is limited. I started focusing more on the quality of my life. I changed my diet, and it's changed the way I value relationships.

Many women reported that talking to and connecting with other women, especially Latinas who could relate to them culturally and who had breast cancer helped them to adapt to the challenges and changes of breast cancer. However, most women reported that they were aware that breast cancer support, which addresses the unique needs of Latina breast cancer survivors, was lacking in the health care system. Most Latinas perceived a lack of outreach and sensitivity by the health care system and felt that women who feel unsupported may feel helpless or alone. Over half of the Latina women became involved in breast cancer prevention advocacy efforts and engaged in public speaking by sharing their personal stories with other Latina breast cancer survivors. Many of the women said that they became involved in raising awareness and breast cancer education and prevention to help break down the stigma of shame and silence and to promote the message that being diagnosed with breast cancer doesn't mean that a woman has to die from breast cancer. As one Latina stated, "I am a survivor. I tell everybody. I tell them [other breast cancer survivors] so that they'll know that there is a second chance." Being diagnosed with breast cancer was perceived as a turning point in the women's lives. In discovering their authenticity, the women reported focusing on their present living conditions, changing their values and beliefs, and achieving more self-confidence and self-empowerment.

People have told me, and I think it's somewhat like a light was turned on inside me and I'm radiating. Well, you know, I just consider myself as a survivor. What changed is how I live my life, you know. I always thought I was a good person. I learned to live more one day at a time. I learned to live to make the best of my days. You don't do things that are foolish or needless anymore.

Discussion and Conclusion

The long term effects of breast cancer made it difficult, and in some cases impossible, to return "back to normal" and feel fully embodied. This study describes key social and cultural issues that Latina breast cancer survivors experience. After their surgery and treatments, these Latinas faced many challenges, including communicating their needs and concerns, especially the fear of recurrence of their breast cancer, and the long-term effects and changes to their body, femininity, sexuality, and personal empowerment. Furthermore, Latinas reported that their quality of life, after being diagnosed with breast cancer, depended on their relationship with their family and friends

and access to resources including social support. However, it was difficult for them to talk about their concerns because they did not want to burden their families. Family values and roles, the expectations as a mother and wife, and ideas about femininity shaped their breast cancer survivorship experiences. In some cases, breast cancer permanently changed their bodies and their social identities, including how they related to their families and friends. The findings in this study add to understanding the relationship between family relationships and social relationships, including gender roles and expectations that have not been addressed by previous research. In this study, Latinas reported that being a breast cancer survivor included coping with the challenge of having to negotiate their social roles and social identities.

Prior research has found that *familism*, or having a strong identification and attachment with one's family, is a key factor for providing social support, but also can hinder a woman's ability to share her experience (Lopez-Class et al., 2011). A key theme that emerged in this study is that Latina breast cancer survivors live with fear and the stigma of discussing their breast cancer with others because they are afraid of being treated differently. Many of the women stated that they did not share the emotional impact that breast cancer had on them because they did not want to "burden" their families or friends, or simply because they thought others would not be able to provide the emotional support that they were seeking. This finding is consistent with the findings of Lopez-Class et al. (2011) also found that Latinas reported feeling supported by their families, but did not share their emotional responses with them; or they had difficulty communicating with their spouses and their health care professionals about their illness experiences. Yet, most Latinas in this study reported seeking social support from family, friends, and clergy before participating in formally-organized support groups or working with a therapist. Furthermore, they reported that although nurses and doctors were supportive, communication, information, and educational services about breast cancer and survivorship were inadequate and needed to be improved for bilingual and Spanish-speaking Latinas. Studies on Latina breast cancer survivors have noted that they have different needs, and the lack of access to social support results in Latinas' having a decreased awareness of information and less access to information needed to reduce isolation and promote healthy breast cancer adjustment (Buki et al., 2008; Campesino et al., 2009; Galvan et al., 2009; Zambrana & Thornton Dill, 2006).

The process of becoming empowered did emerge as a result of reflective thinking and self-transformation. Many respondents reported that becoming an advocate helped them gain a sense of empowerment in facing their personal challenges as breast cancer survivors. Ten of the women reported that they became involved in providing social support and advocacy to help other Latinas understand that breast cancer is not a death sentence and that there is life after breast cancer. According to Gutierrez (1994), empowerment is a process of increasing self-efficacy; developing a critical consciousness; skill building that allows the individual to develop resources to be more powerful on an individual, interpersonal, or political level; and involvement with similar others. This empowerment process is a "continual process of growth and change which can occur throughout the lifecycle" (p. 205). Gutierrez (1994) argues that, if social workers are to create structures and programs to mediate the effects of stress and

encourage empowerment, they should consider the empowerment process perspective; particularly, she notes, when working with marginalized groups who are likely to experience stress due to societal injustice and inadequate access to resources (Gutierrez, 1994). Personal empowerment is difficult to measure, but researchers have found it to be effective in promoting lay health education programs that go beyond providing access to health care to provide culturally appropriate health education programs to underserved communities (Booker, Robinson, Kay, Najera, & Stewart, 1997).

This research has generated useful information about the social and cultural context and nuances of breast cancer survivorship among Latinas. There are not enough studies that have examined Latinas' perceptions on how breast cancer affects their social relationships. In this study, Latinas reported that being diagnosed with breast cancer made them rethink their social roles. Moreover, having access to social support helped them talk about their experiences and become advocates for other breast cancer survivors. Studies have shown that social support such as the provision of information and peer group support can help cancer survivors change their perceptions of the threat of cancer and reduce stress (Zebrack, 2000).

Social support can help women and their families find meaning, minimize fears when facing breast cancer, mobilize resources to aid them in adapting to the changes, and feel more "in control" and empowered (Hilton, 1988; Lee, 1997). Klawiter (2008) noted that breast cancer survivors experienced positive changes by becoming pro-active in their well-being and health care. The perception of social support improved their quality of life (Sammarco, 2001), while social support, in the form of financial assistance, counseling, and support services, facilitated effective coping skills, enhanced socioeconomic resources, and motivated breast cancer survivors to engage in adaptive behaviors (Galvan et al., 2009).

Several caveats should be considered in evaluating our results, including the sampling approach, the clinical diagnosis, and the participants. The sample was primarily from California and recruited from various community health care organizations, and many do not reflect the experiences of women who have not connected to or utilized community-based health care facilities. In addition, this sample does not reflect a nationally-represented sample of diverse Latinas living in the United States; thus the results of this study cannot be generalized to all Latinas. The experiences of the women in this sample reflect women who had some access to health care since health care facilities were the locations utilized to recruit participants. Despite these limitations, our study builds upon and adds to the existing literature about Latina breast cancer survivorship. This qualitative study shows how social and cultural values shape the experiences of breast cancer survivors and how breast cancer survivors redefine and are resilient in the face of societal constraints and barriers. Latina breast cancer survivors prefer care-giving, social support, and educational interventions by Latinas who can relate to their survivorship experience. It is in this way that Latina breast cancer survivors can begin the process of recovery and healing and become empowered through building community.

Interventions should be designed to address cultural needs specific to Latina women. While this study utilized a small sample, it offers a glimpse into breast cancer survivorship experiences and how they are shaped by a variety of factors including the importance of family, immigration, language, outreach and education, and social support. Overall, a heightened awareness of cultural differences in program and policy development is critical in the development of interventions to include Spanish and English inter-cultural communication social support programs. Doing so will allow women to speak freely about how breast cancer affects their bodies, femininity, social relationships, and sexuality without anxiety or shame. Another option includes utilizing Latina breast cancer survivors in staffing and program development, as they seem to be more compassionate toward women and their families when discussing breast cancer.

At the familial level, social role conflict can be addressed by educating spouses and family members about the long-term effects of breast cancer to facilitate their learning about how they can communicate and provide social support. For Latinas, the process needs to include an open dialogue about their social and cultural roles in the family, their femininity, and sexuality. Interventions that address sexual intimacy may best be implemented with individual and couples counseling, and with support groups led by therapists sensitive to ethnicity, diverse cultures, and gender (Buki et al., 2008; Documet et al. 2008).

At the community level, interventions are necessary to educate the Latino community about cancer survivorship. More specifically, interventions should address how to access health care and develop grassroots community initiatives that promote cancer awareness and social support. The effectiveness of different forms of social support should be explored such as religious support, recreation and leisure support, self-help, and cultural empowerment support. Additional research will provide a better understanding of how culturally and linguistically sensitive services are beneficial resources that promote empowerment for Latina breast cancer survivors. Agencies, policy makers, organizations, and individuals must be creative in the development of resources when considering Latinas, their perceptions, health care, health providers, and in developing and designing research. Identifying cultural differences and discussing those differences openly, while holding the dominant health care systems accountable, is crucial to educating those systems. Equally critical is the need to examine the multiple systems of oppression that affect Latinas and integrate supportive interventions to overcome those barriers.

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Leadership Development for Latino Community Emancipation: An Integrative Approach in Social Work Education

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Abstract: *A primary goal of the social work profession is social justice advocacy for disenfranchised and oppressed communities such as the Latino community. In the context of this paper, leadership development for community emancipation relates to efforts that foster indigenous community leadership designed to procure political rights or equality for their disenfranchised or devalued populations. The paper reviews the literature on Latino/a leadership perspectives, leadership development trends, and best practices that serve as a compatible integrative Latino/a approach. The approach proposes that the process of Latino/a leadership development should be collective, culturally attuned, transformative, and community emancipatory. The authors present a model for students, alumni, and faculty that incorporates the approach through the use of three components: (1) Sustained institutional commitment, support, and resources; (2) Creation of leadership opportunities, mentoring, and modeling; and (3) Leadership efforts that foster community emancipation. The approach has been successfully employed for over 30 years in a Latino Project at a New England School of Social Work. Discussion of the model's components, a case scenario, considerations for replication of the approach, and future research will be offered.*

Keywords: *Latinos/as, leadership development, community emancipation, social work education*

Leadership development is an important function for many fields and professional disciplines. Effective leaders are much needed and valued. The literature on leadership is broad and diverse, ranging from characteristics and types of leaders, skills, theories, and approaches to leadership development. Traditionally, leadership studies have been conducted in the private sector; however, because of surmounting social problems and the paucity of economic resources, studies have expanded to include leadership in public and community settings (McGonagil & Reinelt, 2011). Consensus among leadership scholars about the primary characteristics of effective leadership include: someone who can influence, facilitate cooperation, inspire through their vision, demonstrate engagement, and interact and negotiate with others; in addition to possessing the ability to unite, encourage, and energize individual followers, groups, organizations, or communities.

There are two distinct aims in the field of leadership development: leadership as a vehicle to achieve organizational management objectives, or a collaborative process between leaders and communities to achieve a change in targeted social problems

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(McGonagill & Pruyn, 2010). The goal of leadership as a collaborative process for social change is consonant with the mission and values of the social work profession and education. Both the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) have identified leadership development as essential for the profession to meet its mission, goals, and commitment to equality and social justice. NASW's commitment to leadership development is reflected in the 10 social work imperatives adopted for the 2010-2020 decade (NASW, 2010). In 2008, CSWE created a Leadership Institute to promote future leaders in social work education, higher education, and the social work profession. Also, every year during CSWE's Annual Program Meeting, two major events are celebrated: the Leadership Scholars in Social Work Education Program to train and mentor future leaders, and the Leadership Networking Reception to support, encourage, and recognize new leadership in the social work profession (CSWE, 2012). Social work education identifies leadership competence as: (1) team building, (2) conflict resolution, (3) assessing personnel and maximizing productivity by recognizing system influences on individual and organizational functioning, (4) building professional relationships, (5) advocacy, and (6) managing group processes (Sheafor, 2006).

A primary goal of the profession is social justice advocacy for disenfranchised and oppressed communities. While there is inherent strength and resiliency within these communities, there remains a need to promote social justice to ensure their collective well-being, political and social emancipation (Carvalho & Kayama, 2011; Farooqui, 2012; Freire, 1974; Giroux, 1992; Omotoso, 2010). In this context, community emancipation is viewed as any effort to procure political rights or equality for disenfranchised groups. Farooqui (2012) proposes education as the key to community emancipation. According to Omotoso (2010), "...any form of education that does not give birth to emancipation is unjust. The implication is justice should be a summation of education and emancipation" (p. 228).

This article focuses on leadership as a response to the Latino community's history of encountered invisibility, oppression, and discrimination in the United States; and their struggle to achieve fair treatment and emancipation. The term "Latino/a" is used to refer to the diversity of over 19 countries or nationalities that make up the Latino population. Latinos are usually statistically overrepresented in experiencing many socioeconomic challenges. Despite efforts to improve these inequities, socioeconomic conditions of many Latino communities continue to worsen. As a result, there is a mounting call for more Latinos/as who can take on leadership positions in education, program development, community organizing, community development, research, and policy that will initiate the changes needed to enhance the quality of life for Latino communities while validating and affirming their cultural identity, values, and strengths.

The following paper presents an integrative leadership development approach that has been employed for over 30 years in a Latino Project at a New England School of Social Work. Prior to a discussion of the leadership development approach, a demographic profile of the Latino/a population is presented, followed by a literature review on educational Latino/a leadership perspectives, general leadership development trends, and best practices that serve as a compatible integrative Latino/a approach.

Demographic Profile Latinos/as

Latinos/as are ethnically diverse and represent 16.7% of the population of the continental United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011a). They represent the nation's largest minority group. Their size is expected to triple and account for most of the nation's population growth from 2005 through 2050 (Pew Research Center, 2008). Latinos/as are younger than any other group in the continental United States – 1 out of 3 is under the age of 24 (Pew Research Center, 2008). The majority of continental U.S. Latinos/as speaks Spanish at home: 56% speak only Spanish, 26% speak Spanish and English equally, and only 18% speak English (US Census Bureau 2011b). While Latino/a poverty rates are higher (U.S. Census, 2001b), educational attainment and average earnings are lower than other groups (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011c). Latino workforce participation is larger than other groups (U.S. Department of Labor, 2011). As a commonwealth of the United States, the island of Puerto Rico contains an additional 3.7 million U.S. Latino/a citizens who are not counted in the census of continental Latino/a residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011d). The above profile characterizes Latinos/as as the largest, youngest, and fastest growing U.S. population. Despite having the highest work force participation, they have the lowest college attainment and average earning rates. As a population they are ethnically diverse, primarily Spanish or bilingual speakers. Thus, the above profile suggests that the ground is fertile for more Latinos/as to emerge as leaders who can address the socioeconomic needs of their communities.

Literature Review

Latinos/as Educational Leadership Perspectives

An increased commitment to Latino/a leadership development is prevalent among numerous organizations and groups in the United States. The majority of these development opportunities have an educational leadership focus. It is widely recognized that increasing the number of Latinos who successfully pursue associates, bachelors, graduate, and professional degrees is one of the most important and complex challenges for American colleges and universities (Chapa & De la Rosa, 2006; Davis, 1997; Leon & Nevarez, 2007; McWhirter, Torres, Salgado & Valdez, 2007; Miller & Garcia, 2004; Perna, 2006).

The persistence of Latino educational underachievement and underrepresentation in higher education has been reported in studies since the 1980s (Pachon & Moore, 1981, Post, 1990; Chapa & De la Rosa, 2006; Cooper & Liou, 2007; Deil-Amen & Turly, 2007; Golderick-Rab, Carter, & Wagner, 2007; Louie, 2007; McWhirter et al., 2007; Oliva, 2008; Perna, 2006; Teranishi & Briscoe, 2006). According to Oliva (2008), some scholars who study limited college access and success for Latino students, focus their research on individual-level factors such as students' academic preparation, motivation, college-choice process, and presumed student or family deficiencies. Nonetheless, there are studies that show a correlation between Latino student college access and performance and the broader external social issues affecting them, including immigration status (Cabrera & Nasa, 2000; Erisman & Looney, 2007; Nunez & Carroll, 1998; Oliva, 2008; Perna, 2006; Saenz, Hurado, Barrera, Wolf, & Yeung, 2007). Oliva (2008)

recommends that there should be a shift away from the examination of Latino/a student and family deficiencies as related to college outcomes, and toward a holistic and systematic examination of their needs using a culturally appropriate lens.

Bordas (2001) adds the notion that effective leadership with Latinos/as is a collective, people-oriented view that grows out of Latino/a history and core values, and is responsive to the challenges Latino communities face today. Some of the core values that shape the collective Latino/a identity are: *Familismo*, *Personalismo*, *Respeto*, and *Confianza* (Bordas, 2001; Cordero & Negroni, 2009; Mogro-Wilson, 2011; Negroni-Rodriguez & Morales, 2001). Latino communities measure leadership actions through the lens of these core values (Ballesteros, 2007; Davis, 1997; Rodriguez & Villarreal, 2001). *Familismo* is a commitment to upholding family values and supporting the integrity of the family unit. The family unit often extends beyond that of the nuclear family. *Personalismo* is an intrinsic value in establishing cooperative and personal relationships. *Respeto* is displaying social esteem and respect for an individual. Elders and children, in particular, are highly regarded and socially esteemed. *Confianza* is the process of establishing social intimacy and trust (Cordero, 2008). As Bordas (2001) states when describing effective cultural value-oriented Latino/a leadership:

Trusted Latino leaders are regarded as part of 'the family'...Unlike cultures that emphasize individualism, Latinos emphasize 'we', belonging and to group benefit...One of the roles Latino leaders play is being a trustee of their community's future and the guardian of the children (p. 119).

Personalismo does not mean that the individual takes precedent over the family, the group or community. Latino [leaders] are expected to respect and value the individual [student] in a collected context of the family or community. This establishes *confianza* (trust) and makes strong personal relationships. Centering on personal relationships means [the leaders is] spending more time building rapport...It also means lifting the veil of professionalism and allowing people to get to know the leader as a real-life person (p. 124).

Ballesteros (2007) prescribes that, among mainstream societies that diminish the value of differences, Latinos/as are compelled to preserve their rich cultural heritage; and, accordingly, leaders in educational institutions need to affirm Latino/a students' cultural pride on campus, and support course work on multiethnic/multiracial content, while promoting cultural exchanges with Spanish-speaking countries. Kane's (1998) and Perna's (2006) research findings support the need to evaluate and attend to student issues in a culturally appropriate manner rather than by using a standard approach. "Identifying what works for Latino/a students in higher education is an important step to reach our national goals of degree completion, a highly competitive workforce, and civic leadership" (Excelencia in Education, 2012, p. 6). Participation in university-sponsored Latino/a student organizations provides a vehicle for students to have their first exposure to the work of community leaders (Davis, 1997). In sum, scholars propose that more focus should be on the strengths of students, their families, and their communities in a culturally appropriate and effective manner (Ballesteros, 2007; Bordas, 2001; Davis,

1997; Molloy & Elis, 2006; Negroni-Rodriguez, Dicks, & Morales, 2006; Oliva, 2008; Ramirez, 2006).

With greater acceptance of new qualitative methodologies, and a stronger presence of minority scholars studying college access and success for underrepresented students, other questions are being asked and more culturally responsive findings are being produced regarding what works, and what does not, with Latino/a students to facilitate their development as leaders (Collins, Weinbaum, Ramon, & Vaughan, 2009; Miller & Garcia, 2004; Oliva, 2008, Ramirez, 2006). In addition, due to the socioeconomic needs of surrounding Latino communities, there is an increased demand for social work leaders who can collaborate with these and other Latino communities throughout the nation.

Trends in Leadership Development

Leadership has disparate definitions based on its particular meaning to individuals, organizations, or communities. Bennis in his early work, *Leadership Theory and Administrative Behavior: The Problem of Authority* (1959), observed that “probably more has been written and less known about leadership than about any other topic in the behavioral sciences” (Hubbard, 2005, p. 4). A review of the literature indicates that the consensus among scholars in the field is more likely to focus on qualities, functions, and best practices in leadership development.

Since Burns’ (1978) seminal book on leadership, scholars in the field have defined and ascribed the goals of leadership in many ways (Ballesteros, 2007; Bass, 1990; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Foster 2005; Henderickson, 1989; McGonagill & Reinelt, 2011; Northouse, 2009; Ramirez, 2006; Rodriguez & Villarreal, 2001; W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004). In a study of leadership development trends in the United States, McGonagill and Reinelt (2011) encapsulate the following leadership qualities, functions, and development trends:

- Effective leaders can influence and manage followers or facilitate a collaborative process of mutual interests with a group or community. Leadership abilities are shaped by personal qualities and include the process of personal growth. This growth enhances their understanding of the world’s complexities and deepens their ability to come up with creative actions and options (Joiner & Josephs, 2007).
- Ethics are recognized as an important element of leadership development because it takes into account social responsibility (Collins, 2001; Greenleaf, 1977; Kellerman, 2004; Senge, Smith, Kruschwitz, Laur, & Schley, 2008).
- Leadership functions are viewed within the context of activities versus roles. Successful leadership outcomes result from leaders’ participatory activity with others and their capacity to cultivate or identify leadership qualities in others; rather than their vested authority and delegation to others.
- Leadership development has a dual emphasis on the individual and the system. There is equal importance in the development of individual leadership and the

creation of an organizational culture where, in the absence of official leaders, basic leadership tasks are enacted and carried out (Hubbard, 2005).

- Contemporary expansion of leadership development includes promotion of leadership networks that forge collaborative alliances among leadership groups to address complex multi-socioeconomic problems (Gauthier, 2006; Jordan, 2006; McKensie et al., 2008; Senge et al., 2008).
- Eastern and indigenous traditional leadership perspectives have been included in order to address social justice inequities and access to underrepresented groups (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 2007; Bordas, 2001; Center for Ethical Leadership, 2009; Griffin & Ouellett, 2007; Ramirez, 2006).

Best Practices in Leadership

In the review of the literature, four areas emerge that the authors consider essential practices in Latino/a leadership development.

Collective leadership. McGonagill and Reinelt (2011) maintain that while much of the research on leadership qualities and development have been historically studied in private sector settings, recent work has begun to study leaders in public and community settings. They found that innovative leadership development programs in public and community settings produce individual leaders within the shared context of organizations, communities, or fields for a variety of reasons:

- Developing leadership one person at a time often requires more than what a single leader can achieve and it is also too slow for achieving the scope and scale of leadership needed to transform communities and influence policy (Enright, 2006).
- Developing teams of leaders, representative of the cultural context of their communities, can help them to support each other and validate their cultural realities in ways not supported by mainstream organizations (Enright, 2006).
- Communities full of leaders enable more shared leadership as people assume civic leadership roles as their interests, needs, and circumstances change (Ahsan, 2007).

Leadership is a communal relationship, one that occurs within a community of believers, representing a combination of ideas that are shared and transferred between leaders and followers (Foster, 2005). Foundations are increasingly investing in collective and network leadership efforts that address specific community organizational needs or social problems (Hubbard, 2005; Jordan, 2006; Northwest Area Foundation, 2006; Plastrik & Taylor 2010; The California Endowment, 2006; W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2006). In short, effective leadership perspectives develop collective and collaborative relationships of leaders, within and outside of the community, that promote an exchange of ideas to create a shared communal vision.

Culturally-attuned Leadership. With the wave of interest in organizational culture during the 1980s, there came a new leadership perspective that merged leadership with

organizational culture (Schein, 1985). As early as 1989, Henrickson believed that while recognizing the importance of the leadership process, transformational leadership was still failing to effectively integrate the importance of the leader-follower relationship. He believed disconnecting leadership from management and somehow integrating it with culture could provide important and fresh perspectives on the concept of leadership; asserting that it is not possible to effectively understand the nature of leadership without applying a cultural model (Henrickson, 1989) or a culturally syntonic approach (Manoleas & Carrillo, 1991).

Current scholars believe that diverse, culturally-inclusive learning circles are a microcosm for working across differences and learning first-hand how to prepare individuals and groups to lead collectively with others whose cultures and practices differ from their own (Foster, 2005; Meehan & Reinelt, 2006; Reinelt, Yamashiro-Omi, & Meehan, 2010). The Leadership Learning Community (2010) views leadership as a shared, relational process that is fundamental to many cultures even though the dominant American model of leadership is deeply rooted in individualism. Some scholars argue that if we add diverse perspectives and equity-based leadership approaches to status-quo leadership practices, educational leaders may be able to transform leadership practices and improve educational outcomes for larger numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse learners at every educational level (McKensie et al., 2008; Tooms & Boske, 2010). To summarize, leadership development perspectives need to be culturally-attuned to the populations or communities they address.

Transformative leadership. Foster (2005) attributes the perspective of transformational leadership to Burns (1978) and describes it as the ability of individuals to envision new social conditions and to communicate these visions to followers, requiring leaders to engage with followers from higher levels of morality. Burns (2003) views leadership on a moral and value-driven basis, not as simply a managerial tool. He claims that, “the transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower” (Burns, 1978, p. 4). The outcome of this leadership style is a mutual relationship that changes followers into leaders, and leaders into moral agents. The notion of moral leadership is a means for leaders to take responsibility for their leadership and seek to meet the needs of the followers (Foster, 2005). Transformative leadership “raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both the leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both” (Burns, 1978, p. 20).

Bass and Riggio (2006) broaden the definition to include: “...leaders (that) help followers to grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs, empowering them and aligning the objectives and goals of the followers, leader (s), and the larger organization.” (p. 3). In their discussion about educational reform, Rodrigues and Villareal (2001) propose that transformative leaders will be confronted with the task of facilitating the thinking of diverse stakeholders whose culture, values, and beliefs have not been acknowledged or appreciated; and that the leaders will need to foster a climate of interdependence, relevance, and shared accountability. Therefore, leadership perspectives need to promote the development of equitable relationships between leaders

and followers that transform their efforts to serve in the best interests of devalued and underrepresented communities.

Emancipatory leadership. Transformative practices, which change social structures and forms of community, require that leadership be critical of current social arrangements, and that this critique be aimed at more emancipatory types of relationships (McKensie et al., 2008). Foster (2005) ascribes the outcome of emancipatory relationships as “the gradual development of freedoms, from economic problems, racial oppression, ethnic domination, the oppression of women and so on, each of which has its own heroes and heroines: [Eleanor] Roosevelt, [Winston] Churchill, [Mahatma] Ghandi, [Martin Luther] King, [Susan B] Anthony are just some examples” (p. 33). Emancipatory leadership, however, demands more than the qualities of enlightened individuals. The idea that leadership emancipation occurs within a community suggests that leadership ultimately resides in the community itself (Foster, 2005).

Some scholars in the field of educational leadership development believe in a dynamic leadership process that focuses on how individuals and groups are connecting, organizing, thinking systemically, bridging, and learning to mobilize action on the scale needed to address socioeconomic inequities and injustices (Foster, 2005; Gauthier, 2006; Jordan, 2006; McKensie et al., 2008). Consequently, emancipatory leadership perspectives need to foster indigenous community leadership designed to gain political rights or equality for their respective disenfranchised groups. Davis (1997) contends that the process of leadership by nature is self-perpetuating; and part of the leader’s work is involvement in the community that develops and mentors new leaders in skills development, participation in community activities, and an ongoing commitment to community improvement.

In summary, leadership development is no longer a process of whom to recruit for leadership programs, but, a field that enables learning to identify and support leadership efforts that are collective, culturally-attuned, transformative, and emancipatory. A crucial element of this leadership development process is the location of a community or region where there is a need for social change. Latino/a college attainment and improved socioeconomic conditions for Latino communities are examples of a location and need. In other words, an effective leadership development process is comprised of the identification of individual, organizational or networks of leaders vested in a collaborative emancipatory relationship with specific communities or regions to tackle their need (social problems) (Brabeck, Walsh, & Latta, 2003; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006; Leadership Learning Community, 2010; W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004). The above best practices are integrated in the leadership development model that is presented in the following section.

The Leadership Development Model

The model presented in this paper has been implemented by the faculty members of the Puerto Rican and Latino Studies Project (PRLSP) at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work. A description of both the school and the Project precedes the presentation of the model. In addition, a case scenario depicting the development of a

Project Latina leader, and examples of Project community emancipation outcomes are offered.

The School of Social Work

The University of Connecticut which hosts the School of Social Work is a land grant state institution. The School of Social Work has an enrollment of more than 400 students and offers both masters and doctoral degrees in social work. By the academic year 2012-2013, the school had a dean and two associate deans, 27 full-time faculty members, and 38 full- and part-time staff employees. Nine faculty members were representatives of different ethnic groups: two African-Americans, one Jamaican, three Puerto Ricans, one Bolivian, one Peruvian, and one African-American/Puerto Rican. Seven members of the professional staff were either Black or Latinos/as. During that 2011-12 year, the total incoming student population was 179, and the ethnic student enrollment was 14 Latinos/as, 49 African-Americans, and 4 Asians.

The Latino Project

In the early 80s, a group of Latino/a faculty and alumni, concerned with the lack of Latino/a representation in social work, developed the Project. Since its inception, the Project's mission has been to: 1) prepare social workers to competently serve the Latino community by advocating and promoting change and 2) advance knowledge about the strengths, challenges, and resources of Latino/a populations and communities. The Project, initially funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), provided financial support for 10 student scholarships, 2 faculty positions, and clerical support. After the NIMH funding ended, the University institutionalized the Project by funding the two faculty positions and increasing financial aid support for Latino/a students in the graduate social work program. In addition to the traditional academic responsibilities, the Project's faculty is involved in Latino/a leadership development as part of its commitment to the profession's mission and New England communities.

Most of the school's Latino/a students have been born and/or raised in the United States. The rest have emigrated from Latin American countries or migrated from Puerto Rico to pursue graduate education. In the last 10 years, an estimated 300 Latino/a students graduated, creating a difference in the Latino/a workforce of Master Social Workers. In addition, within the School of Social Work's doctoral program, currently celebrating its 10th anniversary, there has been one Latina Ph.D. graduate and four doctoral Latino/a students in different stages of their doctoral studies. Over 30 years, as a result of the Project's efforts, many graduates, particularly Latino/a graduates, have gone on to serve in leadership roles promoting collective collaboration with Latino communities and organizations. Project Latino/a graduates, acting in the capacity of practitioners, administrators, policy makers, researchers, educators, deans, judges, commissioners, CBO executives, and elected public officers, including the city's mayor, have had leadership impact in institutions, organizations, and agencies serving Latino communities, thus contributing to community emancipation. The Project recognizes the importance of quantifying the contributions of its Latino/a alumni and is currently in the

process of tracking this data for future publication. The Project is one of the few projects of its nature in schools of social work in the United States.

The Leadership Development Model

Social work education prepares professionals to pursue social justice for underrepresented populations, foster socioeconomic equity, and political empowerment for devalued communities. As is born out in the literature, fostering emancipatory leadership does not occur in a vacuum. The authors propose that for the process of collective, culturally-attuned, transformative, and emancipatory leadership development to occur in a higher educational institution, a model with the following components should be present: (1) Sustained institutional commitment, support, and resources; (2) Creation of leadership opportunities, mentoring, and modeling; and (3) Leadership efforts for community emancipation. It is through the interaction of these three components that a collective, culturally-attuned, and transformative leadership process emerges, and, in turn, community emancipation takes place.

Institutional commitment, support, and resources. The higher education institution must be committed to leadership development. This commitment should be reflected by the presence of a supportive infrastructure, policies, and regulations that promote leadership development opportunities for students and faculty, and involvement in community partnerships that promote community emancipation. For example, it is only through the school's sustained commitment that the Project faculty continues to grow in its leadership development objectives, particularly in times of economic adversity. The Project has increased from two to five faculty members, four full-time tenured Latina members, and a recently hired full-time tenure-track member. Through the years, the School's cultural commitment and support has been a key to the Project's success in student and faculty recruitment, retention, and faculty tenure attainment.

In addition, as the Project has expanded, the school's administration has supplied an equipped office, a web page, and staff support to help with annual and special program events. Also, the school provides funding for the Project to annually host various student and community events that foster leadership encounters and networks. This support is essential for leadership development opportunities to be created and leadership efforts to be implemented in the community to advance their emancipation. This academic year, the Project hosted six events for Hispanic Heritage month and plans for an over 30 year Project anniversary celebration, which will include acknowledgement of the Project's founder and past Latino/a school alumni.

Creating leadership opportunities, mentoring, and modeling. As noted, the school's community is composed of students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Leadership development efforts at the school involve all of these sub-groups and reflect the school's commitment to leadership as a competence and tool for community emancipation. These efforts promote needed personal growth, an increased sense of social responsibility, along with participatory activities. The Project has created an infrastructure for leadership development that has contributed to the growth of a leadership culture; ultimately creating the Project's *Latino Community Milieu*. Leadership development occurs within

the context of faculty mentoring and modeling leadership skills and roles to new faculty. Faculty also co-participates in different community efforts. These leadership opportunities are collective, culturally-attuned, and transformative. At the end of this section, a case scenario is presented as an example of how leadership opportunities are provided within the Project's community milieu.

Faculty remains alert to recognize leadership potential in students. Opportunities for these discoveries occur in the classroom, through advisement, and by observing student participation in different school organizations and events. Once leadership potential is assessed, mentoring relationships allow for a process of validation, orientation, and encouragement to take place. Mentoring is a process by which more experienced and knowledgeable individuals (mentors) act as guides, role models, teachers and supporters of less experienced individuals (mentees) (Luna & Prieto, 2012). Mentoring can help mentees develop a stronger sense of competence and identity, and can help them to cope with different stressors associated with their roles and responsibilities in life (Bordes & Arredondo, 2005). A factor that facilitates the development of these relationships is the notion that mentors and mentees have many characteristics in common. For example, having the same ethnicity can provide role modeling, cultural affirmation, pride (Rivera-Goba & Nieto, 2007), and the meta-message that advancement as a Latino/a is possible (Rojas-Schwan, Negroni, & Santiago, 2012, p. 6). This is the case within the school's Project.

The work done by the Latin American Student Organization (L.A.S.O.) is an example of how leadership opportunities, mentoring, and modeling take place. A Project faculty member serves as the advisor, in collaboration with the Director of Student Services, to coach and mentor L.A.S.O. students who take on leadership positions in the organization. Usually two students perform as co-chairs and in that leadership role they learn to 1) assess and represent Latino/a students' concerns, 2) coordinate student events of particular need and interest to the Latino community, 3) recruit and engage students, alumni, faculty and community residents in the L.A.S.O. activities, and 4) collaborate with the Project on events and activities of mutual interest. Throughout the year, students observe Project faculty engaged in similar leadership roles, which supports Davis' (1997) claim that Latino student organizations serve as a central role in the emergence of Latino/a leadership as a vehicle through which young people can begin the leadership process.

Another example of leadership opportunities are the field placement internships offered through the Project. This year the Director of the Project is a field instructor for two Latina MSW students, a community organization, and an administration major. Their field assignments and activities help promote the Project's engagement and collaboration with Latino community constituencies within the school and outside community. Some examples include, working on a grant to support community-based research activities; coordinating the school's Hispanic Heritage Month activities; and providing education through a community radio program. In these activities, student interns have the opportunity to be mentored and observe faculty modeling leadership skills to effect change within the local community.

A third example pertains to research scholarships that are given to two students enrolled in a Travel and Study course to Puerto Rico. The course encourages students to examine social work practice that employs a human rights and social justice lens. Students submit a proposal for a research project about health disparities in Puerto Rico. The two scholarship recipients present the findings to the university community and community-based organizations in the area. A previous community research project, supervised by a Project faculty and a practitioner, led to the creation of a video about the social and health inequities created as a result of the bombing in Vieques. The video is available online as an educational tool to raise awareness of human rights violations, health disparities, and the need to advocate for social justice on behalf of Puerto Ricans living in Vieques. As a result, students developed leadership skills necessary to collaborate and support the Vieques community emancipation process.

As with the previous example, Project faculty facilitate leadership opportunities and mentoring of leaders in different developmental stages of students' professional development, even after graduation. As Latino/a social work alumni, Project faculty continue to enhance leadership skills by helping them to become role models to those who are in earlier stages of their professional development. One example is the state's chapter of the NASW Latino/a Network Mentoring program. A network of Latino/a chapter NASW members, supported by Project faculty, coordinates and recruits seasoned Latino/a professionals, many who are Project alumni, to mentor Latino/a graduates transitioning from school to professional social work employment.

The following case scenario describes the development of a Latina leader. It shows how the Project's community milieu led this individual to become an agent of change and emancipation within the Latino community. Olga was a bright first generation Puerto Rican student and the first person in her family to pursue graduate education. Prior to her arrival to the school, she had not visualized her potential as a leader, nor did she have leadership role models in her family. But, the seeds of her leadership potential were planted at the undergraduate level, where she was supported and culturally validated by her educational institution. A Latino colleague, who was an MSW alumnus and member of the Project, referred Olga to one of the Project's Latina faculty; who in turn, oriented and guided her during the application process. Upon her acceptance to the MSW program, the Director of Student Services and the Project faculty reached out to Olga to welcome her and connect her with other students. Olga began the MSW program in a *culturally holding environment*, where her cultural identity and values were affirmed and appreciated.

Motivated and inspired by the leadership of the Project Latina faculty, Olga hoped to "*be a leader like them to help in my community.*" Mentored by the Director of Student Services and the Project faculty, Olga agreed to become L.A.S.O. co-chair. As co-chair, she also joined a community-university partnership effort, led by a Project faculty member, to plan a statewide youth conference; learning from her collaborations with other senior community social workers involved in this community-university partnership endeavor. As a result, her contributions to these activities were credited towards her field internship requirements.

Olga joined the state's NASW chapter Latino/a Network Mentoring program to prepare for transition to her social work career. After three years in her first position in a youth services agency, she became supervisor and developed several grant-funded programs. As an alumnus, she remained involved in the Project by supporting social action efforts and providing voluntary professional presentations. She asserts that the modeling and mentoring of other Latina faculty motivated her to pursue a doctoral education. Project faculty mentored her through her years as a doctoral student. As part of her dissertation, she founded a grassroots movement in a local community to support policies that benefit immigrant families. Her research also explored the connection between acculturation and family relationships.

As a seasoned and nationally recognized Latina social worker and educator, her contributions have advanced different community advocacy actions and increased awareness of the importance of cultural sensitivity and competence. She has recently accepted a new position in Washington, D.C. to conduct national community research examining the challenges faced by Latino/a immigrants. She is currently a consultant to the United States Department of Human Services and maintains involvement with the Project.

During her leadership journey, Olga went through both personal and professional transformation, and the reaffirmation of her cultural identity and pride. She engaged in leadership efforts that were collective, culturally-attuned, transformative, and emancipatory. As a testament to the Project's community milieu, she continues to receive mentoring, attributing inspiration from the Project faculty and other Latino/a alumni. As her professional journey continues, she considers her belief and dedication to social justice a result of her experience with the collaborative gains made by the Project and the Latino community.

Leadership for community emancipation: partnership efforts. Project faculty maintain community participation through allying with and supporting Project alumni; and partnering with social service and governmental agencies, professionals and community activists in advocacy efforts that foster community emancipation. The following are examples of Project partnership efforts:

Escúchenos conference. The annual Escúchenos conference was conducted for eight consecutive years, originally organized by a group of child welfare and child advocacy community organizations, and led by Project faculty. The Escúchenos Conference was created to address the needs of Latino/a youth in the care of the state's Department of Children and Families (DCF). Escúchenos in English means: *Listen to us*. The conference had a non-traditional and unique format: youth presented their major foster placement concerns, while the adult professional audience, made up of DCF administrators, service providers and foster care policy-makers, listened to the issues and needs raised by the youth. The major goals of the conference included advocacy on behalf of Latino/a youth (their individual needs); affirmation of their cultural identity; and attention to the homogeneous DCF cultural climate through activities that celebrate the Latino/a culture such as the inclusion of Latino food and music, dialogues and presentations on culture, cultural identity, and affirmations about the strengths of the Latino culture. As a result of

the conference proceedings, the recommendations were distributed to DCF, community agencies, and advocacy groups that could develop cultural activities and access to culturally sensitive services for Latino/a youth. In sum, the expressed need of the youth for a greater connection to their culture led DCF to implement the following culturally-sensitive actions:

Quinceañera program. This program enables DCF Latina youth to participate in the long-honored Latino coming-of-age tradition for teenage girls, which includes a mentoring component and incentives for the Latina adolescent to succeed academically. The Quinceañera Program is intended to emphasize and develop cultural awareness, improve the girls' self-confidence and self-esteem, and encourage them to pursue higher education. The actual ceremony, clothes, and preparations for this event are paid for by DCF.

Ethnic hair and skin care policy. Latino/a youth are now able to receive culturally appropriate hair treatments or skin care maintenance. Products that may not be affordable or accessible to them or their foster care families are provided by DCF.

College tours. The Department's Bureau of Adolescent and Transitional Services have instituted the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) tours. These tours are designed to introduce Latino/a youth to colleges whose student population is at least 25% Latino/a (DCF, 2008). In effect, the Project's involvement in this community partnership gave an emancipatory leadership voice to foster children who ordinarily feel invisible and unheard.

Latino Voters' Campaign. Another example is the Project's two year involvement in the 2008 state-wide Latino Voters' Campaign initiative. In 2007, Project faculty, students, and alumni became involved in a State-sponsored summit to generate voter education and registration targeted to the Latino community. Over the next year, Project members, along with other grassroots committees operating in other states, took part in numerous grassroots efforts to register Puerto Ricans and other Latinos/as to vote.

In 2008, various voting campaign efforts hosted by L.A.S.O., the Project, and a school's Institute for Political Social Work were presented to the school's community and the university community in general to increase Latino/a political participation. This recruitment effort, led by a Latina student leader, galvanized the campaign's volunteer youths to register new voters on college campuses and in state-wide community summer events. In addition, on Election Day, the youth participated in door-to-door efforts to get individuals to vote and worked as volunteers at state-wide election polls. As a result of the campaign, the goal of registering 10,000 voters was doubled and 21,570 new Latino/a voters were registered. In short, Project partnerships foster and support indigenous community leadership, collaborate with key stake holders, and enlist and support grassroots community efforts that have a significant political impact.

Community Advocacy Groups. A third example has been the creation of community advocacy groups. One example is a grassroots community effort, initiated by a partnership of Project faculty, professionals, and community members, to address the needs, aspirations, and contributions of the Latina and Latino Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,

Transgender, Queer, and Intersexed (LGBTQI) population. This organization is meeting an important need in the Latino community as it strives to promote equality for Latinas/os and embraces social justice. This is the only organization in the state that is focused on achieving rights and opportunities for the Latino LGBTQI population. Examples of their accomplishments have been: participating in legislative hearings with government officials and press conferences on state issues affecting LGBTQI population; sponsoring fundraising events to advocate for and support LGBTQI community concerns; and sponsoring Latino cultural events that represent the strengths, realities, and talents of the LGBTQI community.

The above Project-community partnerships involve groups of leaders, many of which are current students and established Project Latino/a alumni leaders, leaders within the profession, political and geographical community leaders, and Project faculty. From these partnerships, new and established Latino/a leaders are now sitting on Advisory Boards, Commissions, and professional organizations at the local and national level; and contributing to an enhanced Latino community that serves the well-being of its members and other surrounding disenfranchised communities; hence, supporting Davis' (1997) claim that many of the most prominent Latino/a leaders credit their success to college or high school involvement in campaigns, protests, and service efforts to improve conditions for Latinos/as.

Leadership Development for Community Emancipation: Replication Considerations

In the context of this article, leadership development is defined as a collective collaborative, culturally-attuned, and transformative process between leaders and communities to achieve a change in targeted social problems. The authors propose the following institutional, faculty, and community emancipatory considerations when replicating the proposed educational leadership development approach for disenfranchised students and communities.

Institutional Considerations

1) Institutions must have a commitment to addressing the needs of disenfranchised and oppressed communities; 2) Institutions should be committed to developing *culturally effective* ways of recruiting and retaining Latino/a students; 3) Institutions must be committed to Latino/a leadership development. Such commitment can be demonstrated by the presence of a supportive infrastructure, e.g. the hiring of junior and senior Latino/a faculty and staff; office space, and administrative and support services; and 4) Institutions must support the development of a *Latino* community milieu through which leadership opportunities, mentoring, modeling, and emancipatory community partnerships occur.

Faculty Considerations

1) Faculty should pay attention to the leadership potential of its students of color, facilitate and advocate for leadership development opportunities; 2) Faculty need to model leadership skills and support the importance of leadership development for the

social work profession; faculty should remember that they are teaching by example. In this sense, the service component of a faculty member's workload acquires special meaning and value. 3) Faculty should consider that mentoring is an important component of the work done in academia and they should be willing to "build their own capacities as mentors and to advocate for institutional practices that support mentoring practice." (Gutierrez, 2012). In particular, faculty need to be committed to mentoring devalued student populations to become emerging leaders. This requires a time investment with consistent and continuous effort since it relies on relationship building, often a cultural imperative with devalued student populations. Among Latinos/as, such mentoring relationships need to be culturally-attuned to values such as *personalismo*, *familismo*, and Latino cultural traditions; and 4) Involvement in community emancipatory efforts for historically oppressed communities should be an individual and collective faculty commitment.

Community Emancipation Considerations

1) Collective and collaborative relationships of leaders should be developed within and outside of the disenfranchised community. These relationships should promote an exchange of ideas to create a shared communal vision; 2) The leadership activities should be culturally-attuned to the populations or communities they address, while also affirming their cultural identities; 3) Relationships between leaders and followers should be equitable, transforming their efforts to serve in the best interests of devalued and underrepresented communities; and 4) Indigenous community leadership should be fostered, and efforts to gain political and social equality for their respective communities should be supported.

Future Research Considerations

The Project's model has not been systematically evaluated. However, if it is to be replicated, the authors suggest that an evaluation component be added to test its validity and generalizability. In addition, the evaluation could examine the relationship between Project Latino/a alumni and their success as social work leaders. A comparative study of the similarities and differences between Project leaders and Latino/a leaders from mainstream social work programs is another necessary examination. Additional research could explore how ethnic group, acculturation, and gender differences among Latino/a leaders influence their work with the community.

In conclusion, the paper provides an integrative view of leadership development as a collective, culturally-attuned, transformative, and emancipatory process that can have a two-fold outcome: successful educational Latino/a leadership development, and emancipation for Latino communities. The approach can be employed for other disenfranchised populations, as long as schools of social work create appropriate infrastructure and secure faculty commitments that create community milieus such as the one created by the School of Social Work's Project. Leadership development efforts should begin with students, by providing leadership opportunities, mentoring, and faculty modeling. The authors also assert that for the leadership approach to be complete, emancipatory partnerships in and with the disenfranchised community are necessary. As

so aptly stated by Freire (1970) “The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption” (p. 54).

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Parental and Familial Factors Among Latino Youths' Successful Matriculation into Postsecondary Education

Sarah P. Maxwell

Abstract: Extant research focuses on the “educational attainment gap,” documenting the lack of parity among Latino youth and other high school graduates in college matriculation. This study reversed that question, and asked instead, what factors, and specifically what parental or family-related factors, contribute to Latino youth enrolling in four-year post-secondary institutions where future earnings tend to be higher than two-year colleges. Data from the Texas Higher Education Opportunity Project (THEOP, 2004) were analyzed to identify parental contributors to successful matriculation into post-secondary education. Findings indicate that parents attending college was one of the most important indicators of Latino enrollment in either a two- or four-year college or university. Also significant, and potentially critical in social welfare policy, was rewarding students for grades. Parents helping with and checking homework were not helpful in youths' progression to postsecondary education.

Keywords: Latinos, higher education, parental involvement, homework, grades, policy

Scholarly work repetitively paints a picture of an educational attainment gap between Latino youth and their non-Latino counterparts.¹ Latinos are less likely to attend college than non-Latino whites or African Americans (Brindis, Driscoll, Biggs, & Valderrama 2002). Latino youth are also more likely to enroll in two-year, rather than four-year colleges. Yet, Latino youth and their parents overwhelmingly believe that going to college, whether a two-year or four-year institution, is important after high school (Lopez, 2009). Disparities in family income such as first-generation college experiences, poor preparation for college, and difficulties financing college are all well-documented challenges confronting Latino youth (Hurtado, Sáenz, Santos, & Cabrera, 2008). The result is a clear underrepresentation of Latino youth in accredited institutions of higher education (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2003). This trend becomes more apparent at four-year institutions, which realize lower matriculation rates among Latinos than two-year colleges (Fry, 2011). Fry (2011) notes that “Although the college enrollment rate of young Hispanics is at a record (32%), black (38%), Asian (62%) and white (43%) young adults continue to be more likely than young Hispanics to be enrolled in college” (p. 3). Even with a recent boom in Latino enrollment in post-secondary education, Latinos continue to be the population least educated by the United States, as only 13 percent of Latino adults complete a bachelor's degree (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011). In comparison, 53% percent of Asians, 39% of whites, and 19% of African Americans complete a bachelor's degree (Fry, 2011).

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Fortunately, a new wave of Latino youth is entering college. Enrollments in two-year colleges are increasing among Latinos (as well as other groups) as a result of the lower costs associated with community colleges versus four-year institutions. Just as women's earnings are generally below men's in the aggregate, minorities too must outperform whites in the world of education to level the playing field. *US News and World Report* states: "Latinos and African-Americans with master's degrees earn nearly the same in their lifetimes—roughly \$2.5 million—as white workers who have bachelor's degrees" (Burnsed, 2011, p.1). Therefore, earning at least a bachelor's degree becomes critical for women and minorities. Latinas seem dually at risk without a four-year college degree. Thus, the educational gap continues, but so do the outcomes of public policy. In other words, education is a necessity, but not a sufficient means to ameliorating the earnings disparities for Latinos.

Rather than continuing the discourse about the educational and earnings gaps for Latinos, this study employed a "what works" approach. Indeed, one of the few studies examining Latinos' successes noted that, "less is known about what distinguishes individual Latinos who enroll in college from those who do not. As a result, there is limited information on 'what works for the Latino population'" (Zarte & Gallimore, 2005, p. 384). Scholars contend that student-related activities are successful in leading Latino and minority youth to post-secondary education, such as mentoring, cultural competence in schools, and improved student engagement activities (Maxwell & Connell, 2013). Defining the positive variables in the educational pipeline is critical. This study, therefore, applied Critical Race Theory (CRT) to known factors that influence college enrollment: family dining, parental involvement, parental education, and rewarding grades.

Literature Review

Education Matters, but Culture, Education, and Expectations are Intricately Linked

CRT as a framework depicts the cumulative effect of educational experiences on student matriculation outcomes into postsecondary education. CRT is applied to known factors that influence college enrollment for youth generally: family dining, parental involvement, parental education, and parental reward for grades. For social workers, advocacy and implementation of cultural competence are key, but overcoming multiple challenges involves schools, families, and students themselves.

The lack of understanding around education, culture, and pathways to success may not rest in one macro-focused answer such as discrimination, however, education, culture, and expectations are intricately linked. Thus, CRT is employed as an overarching analytical framework, which allows for a more nuanced approach to questioning why parental and familial differences might be present among varying groups.

CRT, as a theoretical framework in this study, did not imply outright discrimination, but rather a more nuanced application taken from Delgado and Stefancic (2012), which suggested that racism is defined as the "ordinary daily life of people of color, and the way society goes about daily life" (p. 7). Racism, or purposeful discrimination, as an

advocacy approach was not the intended outcome of this paper. Rather, the theory highlighted the notion that Latinos face daily differences in school that help define the educational gap to improve “what works.”

Some factors available included those that might distinguish among groups. For example, some scholars commented that immigration status, and therefore discrimination, was not the true perpetrator in the educational gap, noting that those from Asian countries with the same immigration status as those from Latin American countries tended to equal or surpass native-born Americans in college enrollment (Baum & Flores, 2011; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2009). But Delgado and Stefancic (2012) offered an interesting scenario: suppose the term “Asian” was used to describe both a recent Hmong immigrant from a rural background, or a Chinese student who has lived in the United States her entire life with highly-educated parents. Baum and Flores (2011) explained that more research was needed to assess differences among immigrant groups, as well as effective policies to improve secondary education for immigrants or generations of families. Factors such as time in the United States, parental education, and immigration status served as appropriate indicators of such differences under the framework of CRT. The data set in this study allowed for examination of parental education, but not immigration status. Yet, as Tienda and Mitchell (2006) pointed out, the vast majority of Hispanics in the United States (about 70%) are born abroad or are born to immigrant parents.

Without a doubt, cultural and familial factors were important in the research findings regarding Latinos in postsecondary education, but educating parents or offering support to families has historically been ignored as a policy response. CRT takes the stance that the daily lives of Latinos are lived in a discriminatory world. A modified CRT approach takes into account not only the daily lives of other cultures in a mostly white world, but also the inherent struggles any group might face when entering a culture with a different language. Consequently, both immigrant and native-born Hispanics found the college experience elusive in relation to native-born whites. Tienda (2009) stated:

One manifestation of low parental education is the delayed school enrollment of Hispanic preschool-age children. Although the share of Hispanic 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in a preschool program rose slightly between 1980 and 2000, from 28 to 36 percent, the Hispanic-White differential rose, placing larger numbers of Hispanic children at a relative disadvantage during the crucial early years (p. 18).

In a social work context, secondary educators may face burdens that could be addressed by working with families in the home or through after school programs. Educators also faced challenges in finding “what works,” as they too succumbed to myths about immigrant, and specifically, Latino families. Although studies consistently showed that Latino parents held high expectations of their children, teachers and administrators often believed the opposite; that Latino parents were ambivalent about educational attainment. Indeed, one study found that the simple failure of schools to send newsletters, lunch menus, and other correspondence in Spanish was one of the primary reasons Latino parents were not involved in their children’s education (Smith, Stern, & Shatrova, 2008).

Research also contended that familial factors included a lack of parental involvement in children's education. Parental involvement was defined in a variety of ways, including the lack of formal education among Latino parents; the lack of participation in children's education (National Women's Law Center, 2009); the frequency of parent-teacher contacts; the quality of parent-teacher interactions (Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Frenrich, 1999); and attendance at parent-teacher conferences and back-to-school nights, as expressed by teachers and administrators in another study (Zarate, 2007).

Schneider, Martinez, and Owens (2006) reported that Hispanic students, more so than either African American or white students, tended to have poor relations with their middle school teachers. Additionally, the unfortunate combination of lower literacy from inadequate primary schooling, concentrated populations in urban middle schools, and lack of a quality rapport with their teachers only reduced the Hispanic student's motivation levels, which created a cycle of potential life points where poor performance might result. Tienda (2009) summarized: "several risk factors that undermine college success, including low parental education, limited financial resources and insufficient access to information about college. Each has direct implications for the likelihood of completing the baccalaureate degree" (p. 21).

These simple, yet recurring "daily life" aspects as connoted in CRT, can easily be addressed through policy. Culturally, one study pointed to the reluctance of Latino families to question authority or advocate for their children within the school system (Smith et al., 2008). A picture begins to form that paints expectations, two-way communication, and myths about Latino family involvement that is solidified in daily life for Latinos in a sometimes rigid American educational system.

Educational and Social Welfare Policy

Public policy is now recognizing the cultural-educational link. Education as a means to upward mobility is a concept that has recently weaved its way into the U.S. immigration policy fabric. President Obama proposed a number of programs for Latinos in 2011 aimed at improving educational attainment (Koebler, 2011). Among the programs are funding increases for Head Start, as well as the training of Latino teachers, who are believed to be more effective with Latino students (Koebler, 2011).

Education matters. Although federal, state, and university policies are changing to accommodate Latinos, regardless of their immigration status, the familial factors that define the educational gap have not been widely researched or reported. Additionally, policies regarding college admissions, scholarships, and other enrollment benefits vary from state to state. Findings related to low educational attainment have spawned a considerable amount of research on student engagement, with limited focus on family life. Parental and familial factors have also been ignored in public policy. Of course, the underlying reasons for any lack of involvement by Latino parents run deeper than what can be captured in many studies, including this one. Parental factors as public policy problems are potentially exasperated when the total number and proportion of Latinos in the United States are considered. The U. S. Census reports that by 2036, one third of all U. S. school-aged children will be Hispanic (U. S. Census Bureau, 2008).

Zarate and Burciaga (2010) explain that although an increase in Latino college enrollment is taking place, that increase is explained primarily by significant growth in community college enrollment. They suggest that enrollment into four-year degree programs may be more beneficial. "The low college enrollment and skewed distribution of enrollment into community college is the consequence of disparate educational experiences between white and Latino students" (Zarate & Burciaga, 2010, p. 25). Another recent study points to a significantly lower rate of life time earnings for Latinos, predominately at lower educational levels (Carnevale, Rose, & Cheah, 2010). In this study, all racial and ethnic groups with either some college or an associate's degree earned significantly less than those with a bachelor's. At the bachelor's level, however, Latinos grossed lifetime earnings at approximately the same rate as African Americans, but below both whites and Asians (Carnevale et al., 2010). Education is simply essential for earning more, but even with the additional education, social barriers to lifetime earnings remain a factor in the lives of Latinos.

Policy recommendations, as a result of these barriers, include strategies to help ameliorate the perceived problems. These include mentoring, improving teacher quality, or occasionally expanding parental involvement in schools. However, many of these concepts have yet to be fully tested. Do strategies such as helping with homework, punishing or rewarding grades, or spending more time with one's children improve outcomes for Latino youth? Many studies demonstrating the positive benefits of improved parental involvement failed to address the issue by race or ethnicity. This study examined the diverse factors in the literature, and specifically analyzed positive indicators of Latino youths' matriculation from high school to postsecondary enrollment at the bachelor's level.

Parental and Familial Factors in College Matriculation

Family Dining

CRT supports the assumption that broader societal and economic forces are at play in education. Perna (2006) and Rowan-Kenyon, Bell, and Perna (2008) offer a comprehensive contextual model for assessing pathways to college enrollment. These include: "students and their families; K-12 schools; higher education institutions; and broader societal, economic, and policy contexts" (Rowan-Kenyon et al., 2008, p. 566). CRT supports this model by assuming that broader societal and economic forces are at play. Family dining literature suggests that the relationship within families is an important determinant in postsecondary matriculation. Given the nature of CRT, family dining is a potential protective factor against daily life in schools and the potentially negative societal factors that limit success for racial or ethnic groups struggling to fit into the school milieu.

Multiple studies over the years have pointed to the importance of family dining in educational attainment. Regular family dining was one indicator of the amount of time families spend together in general. One of the most authoritative studies on family dinners, *The Importance of Family Dinners* at the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2003, 2011) found that students who share family dinners with their

parents are more likely to earn higher grades. According to the study, the benefits extend far beyond grades, showing reductions in stress and boredom, and thus, reductions in alcohol and substance abuse (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2003, 2011).

Other studies demonstrated clear inverse relationships between family meals and a variety of negative outcomes, not at one point in time, but sometimes years later (Eisenberg, Olson, Neumark-Sztainer, Story, & Bearinger, 2004). The problems often associated with preventing college matriculation such as low grades, substance abuse, depressive symptoms, and suicide attempts were shown to be mitigated with more frequent family dinners during the week.

To date, the research examining race and ethnicity, which might disaggregate the family dinner data, is virtually nonexistent. A few studies distinguished gender differences, with females generally experiencing positive benefits further in time (Eisenberg et al., 2004). Yet, differences among race or ethnicity were assumed to be constant. On the strength of existing research, these hypotheses are offered:

- H1a: The more frequently Latinos eat dinner with their family, the more likely they will be to enroll in college at any level.
- H1b: The more frequently Latinos eat dinner with their family, the more likely they will be to pursue bachelor's degrees.

Parental Involvement in Academic Preparation

Extant research on parental involvement in a student's success crossed two areas of interest that suggest Latinos, and other immigrant groups, deserve a separate analysis. First, parental involvement in homework as an indicator of successful college matriculation was found to be positive and significant in studies of college-bound high school students (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Smith et al., 2008). Second, Latinos warrant a separate analysis as a result of the role CRT plays in the lives of students and parents. Latino parents were susceptible to misunderstanding their role in their children's education as a result of school communication policies and procedures, as well as language fluency. Checking homework, helping with homework, and meeting with teachers were not clearly defined involvement activities for parents in most instances. Language barriers also played a role. Zarate (2007) stated, "For many [Latino] parents, language [is] an insurmountable barrier to participation in their children's academic tasks. Moreover, as their children [in the study] progressed through school, the content and course material became increasingly difficult to understand" (p. 9).

Parental involvement usually encompassed two factors: life participation and academic involvement (Zarate, 2007). Life participation was defined as monitoring peer groups, school attendance, exercising discipline, and observing the school environment (Zarate, 2007). Academic participation was separate and distinct and included attending parent-teacher conferences, helping with homework, and keeping track of report cards, among other variables (Zarate, 2007). In this study, the focus was academic, employing analyses that reflected levels of parental involvement with teachers and homework.

Involvement was operationalized as helping with homework, checking homework, and meeting with teachers.

Parental Involvement and College Matriculation

Generally speaking, lower parental involvement in schooling led to lower achievement for students, while higher parental involvement resulted in improved achievement (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Smith et al., 2008). Such involvement began early, and research demonstrated that parental expectations and literacy development as early as kindergarten could influence academic outcomes much later in school (Froiland, Peterson, & Davison, 2013). Across the board, researchers generally agreed that parental involvement resulted in improved expectations for attending college, as well as actual matriculation (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Perna & Titus, 2005).

Perna and Titus (2005) succinctly summarized the need for continued research, noting that, “the college enrollment process varies across racial/ethnic groups,” but the research remains limited regarding the amount and nature of parental involvement in determining successful outcomes for students from varying racial and ethnic groups (p. 486). Perna and Titus (2005) found that parental involvement, defined as discussing academics with their children and volunteering at the school, was positively associated with college enrollment; interaction with the school over behavioral problems had the opposite effect. Altshul (2011) supported these notions, “Findings show that the positive effects of parental involvement among Mexican American parents occur through involvement in the home, whereas parental involvement in school organizations is not associated with youths' achievement” (p. 159). Frequent meetings were presumed to be a result of behavioral problems for purposes of this study, resulting in a decreased likelihood that the student whose parents frequently meet with teachers would go to a two- or four-year college.

Latinos and Parental Involvement

CRT suggests that the daily lives of Latinos are operationalized similarly to any other student applying for college, but the outcomes should not be expected to be the same. Indeed, the educational gap literature paints a picture of uninvolved parents in the Latino community; while a more nuanced approach suggests that parents are intimidated and reluctant to get involved as a result of language barriers and other school-home communication barriers. Latino parents reported feeling like they could not communicate with school officials if they were not communicating effectively in English (Zoppi, 2006). Latino parents faced additional burdens to involvement such as transportation, child care, and a general lack of communication from schools, which did not offer encouragement or support (Smith et al., 2008).

Views from the students themselves painted an even more complicated picture. According to the Pew Hispanic Center (Lopez, 2009), a survey of Latino students revealed the students themselves blamed poor parenting, rather than poor teaching, for the educational attainment gap. Such survey questions did not take into account larger questions such as students' responsibility or their ability to recognize poor teaching. In the Pew survey, 47% of respondents said, “parents of Hispanic students not playing an

active role in helping their children succeed is a major reason [for students not performing well]" (Lopez, 2009, p. 5). Yet, the question could have been interpreted differently, as "Almost two-thirds (65%) of Latino youth strongly agree that their parents play or played an active role in their education" (Lopez, 2009, p. 4). Thus, it appears that some parents may be active in their children's education, yet there lies a disconnect among the 18% who also stated that their parents were not necessarily helping them to succeed. It is conceivable that parental assistance does not automatically translate into positive educational outcomes for youth, Latino or otherwise (Barge & Loges, 2003). Yet, simultaneously, students appeared to want or need that involvement.

Another recent study by the Higher Education Research Institute painted a picture of Latino students believing their parents are not as involved as the respondent would like, especially in college decision making and post-college matriculation decisions such as choice of classes (Hurtado et al., 2008). Forty-three percent of Latino freshmen reported that their parents were involved "too little" in selecting college courses, compared to 18% of whites (Hurtado et al., 2008, p. 2).

Parental involvement is difficult to quantify and disaggregate. Reading to one's children might be as important as helping with homework, but few studies ever compare the various meanings applied to parental involvement. Extant research, for example, pointed to a widening gender gap occurring within the Latino student community as a result of parents reading more frequently to their female children (Freeman, 2004). Thus, even the phrase "parental involvement" has a variety of childhood, teenage, and post-college enrollment meanings. Parental involvement might apply to reading to children, helping with homework, assisting with college preparation, and participating in postsecondary enrollment, among many other factors. Altshul (2011), in a study specific to Mexican American youths' academic achievement, found a negative relationship between parents helping with homework and children's success. The author stated, "Parents helping with homework and whether the child was male were both negatively related to test scores (Altshul, 2011, p. 165). Checking homework could work differently than helping with homework, as checking simply implies accountability or commitment to educational requirements from the school.

Separating concepts within the parental involvement literature may ameliorate the puzzle, as Latino teens expressed differences in expectations and definitions of parental involvement in different surveys. Moreover, the history of lower levels of college attainment by Latinos in the United States puts parents in a double bind: Latinos are more likely than whites to be parenting a first-generation college student, and thus have no personal experience to rely on when being asked for advice about selecting courses, developing strong study habits, and addressing personal concerns about issues such as roommates, relationships with professors, or joining clubs. Their children express desire for their help, and they want their children to succeed, but they may feel that no (uninformed) advice is better than their best guesses. Given the operational definition offered by Zarate (2007) and others, separating academic involvement from life involvement, the following academic hypotheses are offered:

- H2a: The more frequently parents check homework, the more likely Latino youth will be to enroll in college at any level.
- H2b: The more frequently parents check homework, the more likely Latino youth will be to enroll in bachelor's degree programs.
- H3a: The more frequently parents meet with teachers, the less likely Latino youth will be to enroll in college at any level.
- H3b: The more frequently parents meet with teachers, the less likely Latino youth will be to enroll in bachelor's degrees.
- H4a: The more frequently parents help their children with homework, the less likely Latino youth will be to enroll in college at any level.
- H4b: The more frequently parents help their children with homework, the less likely Latino youth will be to enroll in bachelor's degree programs.

Rewarding Grades

Given the need to disaggregate and operationalize parental involvement in more concrete terms, researchers are specifically reviewing how parents help or interfere with their children's ability to earn good grades. Clearly, a solid grade point average is a precursor to college enrollment and a strong stride in the educational pipeline.

Earning solid grades requires a level of commitment and motivation. Can external financial rewards motivate teens, resulting in the improved likelihood of attending college? The answer appears promising. Levitt, List, Neckermann, and Sado (2011) found that differing levels of financial rewards (larger rewards like \$20, as opposed to \$10, were more effective, particularly for male teens), as well as timing, (delayed rewards are virtually never effective) both made a difference in student success on standardized tests. Fryer (2011) examined financial incentives in three cities, and found that financial rewards were "not a panacea," but the author did find some potentially modest effects. Interestingly, financial rewards in both studies were distributed through the study, and not by parents. There is reason to suspect that financial incentives alone may not lead to college enrollment, but that rewards by parents may be more meaningful:

- H5a: Latinos whose parents reward good grades will be more likely to enroll in college at any level.
- H5b: Latinos whose parents reward good grades will be more likely to enroll in bachelor's degree programs.

Socioeconomic Status, Parental College Attainment, and Student Outcomes

Numerous studies link SES with college enrollment, typically using variables such as parental income or parental education (Zarte & Gallimore, 2005). In surveys of Latino youth, financial stress and pressure to work were consistently cited as major factors in dropping out of school. Castellanos and Jones (2003) explained that many Latino parents were unable to assist their children with finances in college, especially in comparison to white families. The lack of financial assistance caused added strain on Latino students.

Repeatedly, low SES was associated with being raised in a single-parent family, being held back one grade, having siblings who dropped out of high school, changing schools more than twice, and having a C average (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000). Importantly, Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) found that parental involvement mitigated the effect of SES in many instances, effectively narrowing the gap between lower and upper SES students. However, lower SES students, in general, lagged behind upper SES students by almost 25% with respect to high school graduation, and over 50% for those who applied to college (Cabrera, La Nasa, & Burkum, 2001). Importantly, SES is improving for every immigrant generation that succeeds the first. In other words, second- and third-generation immigrants of any race or ethnic group surpass their parents on many SES indicators, especially wages (Haskins, 2007). Differences in SES are not clearly linked to race or ethnicity, but are significantly more complex. For example, wage increases across generations are associated with the economic situation of the country of origin. So, immigrants from less developed countries face hardships that those from developed countries never experience. The result is slower improvements in wage earnings across generations. However, Mexican immigrants, in comparison to non-immigrants, are closer to narrow the wage gap than their parents. In 2007, a 15% wage gap existed for second generation Mexican immigrants compared to a 32% gap between their parents and non-immigrants in the United States (Haskins, 2007).

Parents who go to college are simply more likely to have children who go to college (Choy, 2001). The educational pipeline consists of a few key steps, starting with the decision to go to college and ending with the ACT/SAT and college application process. In each stage in the pipeline, from making the initial decision to preparing academically, parents' college attainment levels are indicative of potential success. Choy (2001) states "Graduates whose parents did not go to college were much less likely than their peers with more educated parents to complete each step" (p. 9). Lower parental college attainment is related to multiple SES factors such as the greater likelihood of being a female, a single parent, and earning a lower income (Engle, 2007). Across the board, studies indicated that first generation college students who are lower income, female, and have parents with less than a high school education were considerably less likely to enroll in postsecondary education themselves (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006). Parental education was not only a key contributor to student educational outcomes, but was perhaps the most important variable in the educational pipeline.

- H6a: Latinos whose mother or father attended college will be more likely to enroll in college at any level.
- H6b: Latinos whose mother or father attended college will be more likely to enroll in bachelor's degree programs.

Methods

Instrumentation and Survey Objectives

This study uses data from Wave 2 of the Texas Higher Education Opportunity Project (THEOP). Wave 1 of THEOP included surveys of over 13,000 high school seniors in a random sample of Texas public schools. In 2003, 5,836 of those seniors were re-interviewed following their senior year of high school. The second wave captured information about postsecondary education and provided information about parental involvement, family time, such as eating dinners as a family and many other variables consistent with the educational gap literature.

The survey itself was given to public high school seniors who were not attending charter schools and were not in special education. The current study followed the stated survey objectives by separately considering whites, Latinos, African Americans, and Asians. It also separately analyzed those who attended postsecondary education after high school and those who did not attend college after high school (THEOP, 2004). Respondents self-identified their membership in the four ethnic groups, and as male or female.

Measures

The frequency of family dining was measured by asking "During your senior year [in high school] did you and your parents/guardians eat dinner together as a family?" (1) Rarely or never, (2) sometimes, or (3) often or always.

The frequency of homework-checking by parents was measured by asking, "During your senior year did your parents or other adults check on your homework?" (1) Rarely or never, (2) sometimes, (3) often or always.

The frequency with which parents met with their children's teachers was measured by asking, "During your senior year, did your parents or other adults meet your teachers?" (1) Rarely or never, (2) sometimes, (3) often or always.

The frequency with which parents helped with their children's homework was measured by asking, "During your senior year, did your parents or other adults help you with your homework?" (1) Rarely or never, (2) sometimes, (3) often or always.

Parents' college attendance was measured by asking "Has your mother/father ever attended college?" (These were two separate items.) (1) Yes, (2) no.

Parents' practice of rewarding good grades was measured by asking "During your senior year did your parents or other adults reward you for good grades?" (1) Rarely or never, (2) sometimes, (3) often or always.

Students' attendance of college was measured by asking "Since September of 2002 have you attended a vocational/technical school or taken university courses for credit?" (1) Yes, (2) no. At your current institution, what type of degree, certificate, or license are you pursuing?" (0) None, (2) Associates degree, (3) Bachelors degree, (4) a license, (5) a

certificate, (7) other. Responses to this second item were recoded in the present analyses to (0) non-bachelors degree, (1) bachelors degree.

Analysis

Logit regression, estimating the likelihood of Latino respondents attending college, was conducted. The independent variables were regressed simultaneously on: attending college at all, and attending college in pursuit of a bachelor's degree. A concern was that the variables may be correlated at a level which could create a multicollinearity problem. To examine this issue, a correlation analysis was run on the independent and dependent variables used in the study. For the correlation analysis, results were reported using the "bachelor's degree," but similar results using "any college" as the dependent variable was also found. The correlation analysis was reported in Table 1.

A number of the independent variables were correlated. Not surprisingly, the highest correlation between two independent variables was between "parents check homework" and "parents help with homework" ($\rho=0.42$). To account for any possible multicollinearity that this might induce, a new variable was created, "homework," which was a linear combination of the two. The other independent variables, while correlated, did not rise to the level that warrants concern regarding multicollinearity.

Results

The first hypotheses predicted that: in families that eat together regularly, Latinos were more likely to enroll in college. This hypothesis was not supported in either the "any college" ($B = .10, p = .12$) or "bachelor's degree" ($B = .05, p = .07$) condition. (See Table 2).

H2a-4b involved parental involvement in Latinos' high school education, predicting that more involvement is generally associated with less likelihood of college attendance. The test of the second and fourth hypotheses relied on the new variable, "homework," which was the combination of the two homework variables. The separate homework hypotheses, checking homework and helping with homework, were not supported. This finding could be related to a correlation between the two variables, both capturing the same underlying construct. Using the combined homework variable, that parents' regular involvement in homework should predict college attendance, was strongly significant and negative in both the "any college" condition ($B = -.12, p < .001$), or in the "bachelor's degree" condition ($B = -.13, p < .001$). Checking and helping with homework are, therefore, taken as one construct, and they pointed to a negative association between parental involvement in homework and college matriculation.

The fifth hypothesis predicted that Latinos whose parents rewarded good grades were more likely to attend college. For this hypothesis the coefficient on "any college" ($B = .07, p = .15$) was positive, but insignificant. However, it was significant and positive when measuring the outcome as "bachelor's degree" ($B = .15, p = .03$).

Table 1 *Correlation Analysis*

	Bachelor degree	Family dines together	Parents check homework	Parents meet teachers	Parents help with homework	Mother attended college	Father attended college
Family dines together	0.01						
Parents check homework	-0.06*	0.23***					
Parents meet teachers	-0.02	0.11***	0.24***				
Parents help with homework	-0.03	0.17***	0.42***	0.29***			
Mother attended college	0.13***	-0.04*	0.01	-0.02	0.05*		
Father attended college	0.17***	-0.01	0.00	-0.02	0.02	0.49***	
Parents reward good grades	0.03	0.20***	0.32***	0.15***	0.25***	0.03	0.01

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Table 2 *Logit Analysis of Effects of Family Circumstances on Latinos' Odds of Attending College or a Bachelor's Degree Program (N=1,607)*

Family Circumstance	Any College		Bachelor Degree Program	
	Odds	Std. Error	Odds	Std. Error
Family dines together	0.10	0.07	0.05	0.07
Parents check homework	-0.12***	0.04	-0.13***	0.04
Parents meet teachers	-0.07	0.07	-0.01	0.07
Mother attended college	0.39***	0.15	0.36***	0.15
Father attended college	0.54***	0.09	0.70***	0.15
Parents reward good grades	0.07	0.07	0.15**	0.07
Constant	-0.05	0.22	-0.69***	0.22
<i>Pseudo R-Square</i>	0.03		0.03	
<i>Chi-Square</i>	59.01***		49.20***	

p<.01 *p<.001

Finally, the sixth hypothesis predicted that parents' college attendance increased the likelihood of Latinos attending college. The results were strongly consistent with this hypothesis. Using "any college" as the outcome variable, the coefficients for both parents having a college degree were strongly positive (Mother, $B = .39$, $p < .001$; Father, $B = .54$, $p < .001$). The results when measuring the outcome as "bachelor's degree" also strongly supported the hypothesis, Mother ($B = .36$, $p = .01$) and for Father ($B = .70$, $p < .001$).

Limitations

The limitations of this study fall under three main categories: disaggregating race and ethnicity, quantifying the parent-teacher relationship, and the lack of SES-related parental variables in the dataset. First, race is socially constructed according to CRT, and this component of the framework highlights one of the main limitations of the current study. Given the existing data set, it is virtually impossible to distinguish among different groups of Latinos. The experiences of those from different countries and ethnic backgrounds would present a more meaningful analysis. By grouping all Latinos in the study, along with the fact that the data are limited to the State of Texas, the analytical framework itself becomes limited; that is to say, a nuanced approach is not offered, and therefore presents the social construction of Latinos as one monolithic group.

Another limitation of the current study is the lack of clarity in the survey regarding parental interaction with teachers. Unfortunately, the data do not offer details on the quality or types of interactions that occur when parents meet with teachers.

The current study is also limited in SES analyses, as parental income is not a variable in the dataset. However, parental education is analyzed.

Implications for Social Workers, Parents, and Educators

Parents attending college and parents rewarding for good grades are both positive factors in Latino youths' matriculation into postsecondary education. When parents helped with homework or met with teachers, the odds of college attendance diminished. The message to parents is that modeling education oneself and positively rewarding for their children's accomplishments is important. The message is not that parents should avoid teachers and not check homework. The results most likely indicate that those parents who felt the need to meet frequently with teachers, or were overly involved in homework, may have been doing so to ameliorate poor academic performance. However, those attempts by parents are potentially less useful than rewarding their children given the findings in this study.

The measures of parental involvement in this study (help with or checking homework, and meeting with teachers) were, in all cases, negatively related to college attendance. Barge and Loges (2003) found complex differences in understanding the role and benefit of "parental involvement" in children's schooling between parents, middle school students, and teachers. Students clearly distinguished different kinds of "help with homework" and rewards for good performance; therefore it could be that the present study's measures of the role of parents in homework was too blunt an instrument to capture the different ways children interpret parents' attempts to help. Barge and Loges (2003) reported that teachers and students distinguished between parent/teacher meetings that were generally helpful and those that were not. For instance, students reported embarrassment if parents appeared at school in situations where the students were being punished, and teachers reported that parents who only appeared at school when their children were in trouble were not generally helpful. Parental involvement may, therefore, include very simple accommodations by educators, such as: weekly communication regarding assignments, grades, and school functions written in English and Spanish. Simply receiving the information more frequently allows parents to ask, as well as, reward positive performance. For parents who cannot afford to reward, programs that do reward grades are being implemented through grants and school initiatives.

Rewarding for grades is a relatively new programmatic innovation that is taking root across the country. A few federal and foundation-funded grants are including grade rewards in the program implementation process. As a matter of policy, blindly rewarding for grades may not produce the intended results. Further examination by policymakers should entail consideration of the source. Are financial incentives as meaningful coming from a federal program or one's own parents? Such questions require further examination, but this study suggests that parental involvement in rewards is meaningful. In addition to grade rewards, the National Conference of State Legislatures now recommends financial rewards for Latinos' successful graduation from high school (Camacho Liu, 2011).

Policymakers, public managers, and social workers should also be aware of such recommendations, as implementation of public policies requires consideration across race or ethnicity. This study is limited in its ability to assess school-factors in the CRT framework. Would parents be more involved if schools were more accommodating? Or, are Latino parents working long hours and are simply prevented from becoming overly involved in schools during limited school hours? Indeed, one study of a promising program that involved Latino parent involvement proved puzzling to the program operators. Parents who said they would attend an evening session at the school failed to show. Social workers quickly learned that the local factory had let the workers out late that evening. "The situation highlighted the tenuous working conditions that Latino parents in the country face" (Belliveau, 2011, p. 89). In another study, the overwhelming majority of Latino fathers reported that their job was the single biggest obstacle to parenting (Shears, Furman, & Negi, 2002). Public and school-based policies that consider cultural aspects of families offer promise. For example, the National Conference of State Legislatures recommends that schools in the United States accommodate Latino families by offering classes in the evening, on weekends, or online to help working teens who may be expected to help the family (Camacho Liu, 2011). Zarate (2007) recommends public policies allowing flexible work time for parents of school age children. The College Board also recommends rewarding high schools that send more Latinos to college (Nevarez & Rico, 2007).

What works? Cultural sensitivity is clearly important, but structural changes to a generally inflexible educational system as demographics shift in the United States is a topic that warrants some thought as well. Indeed, many families, Latino or otherwise, across the United States face employment pressures that interfere with parental involvement. Rather than continuing to rely on parents to augment their children's education, some schools are already lengthening the school day, providing free tutoring after school, and allowing children to complete their homework at school. Some inner-city schools are now open on the weekends. Washington, DC, for example, opened the first public boarding school in the country (<http://www.seedschooldc.org>). The move away from parental involvement to an educational system ready to serve more than the educational needs of students is a quickly growing phenomenon. The SEED school, as one example of a lottery-based system, is associated with increased earnings and reduced chances of being involved in a crime for students after one year of attendance (Curto & Fryer, forthcoming). Students in SEED must also apply to at least five colleges as a condition of graduation (Curto & Fryer, forthcoming).

Policymakers and social workers might also consider the most important variable in this study and in so many others: parental education. Working with youth to promote college may translate into working with families to improve overall educational attainment. Programs that work with both youth and their parents are commended as promising programs. Southern Methodist University, for example, offers a Master's in Bilingual Education that has graduated over 300 Latino students who now work with over 60,000 youth and their parents. The factors that help students find their way through the educational pipeline are inherently present in the middle and upper classes of society. In the last decade, federal initiatives to create Individualized Development Accounts

(IDAs) or savings accounts for education or entrepreneurship are on the rise. Encouraging and supporting educational attainment cannot be understated. Programs such as, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) or Puente Project are recognized in educational circles as best practices (Nevarez & Rico, 2007). Such programs, designed specifically for youth whose parents did not attend college, offer day-to-day instruction regarding college matriculation. These programs attempt to combat negative influences experienced by students in a CRT framework. These programs, and many others like them, can be adopted in more formal settings in schools to promote college matriculation.

Realistically, large-scale changes in public policy are always difficult. But given the findings from this research, smaller, close-to-home approaches are viable. Providing allowances for grade rewards through existing federal and private programs could conceivably improve both parental involvement, as well as continued success in school. Gradual changes by schools, government, and families have potential to increase success for young students in the college matriculation process. Finding “what works,” rather than repeatedly focusing on “the educational gap” can become the new policy focus for Latinos in the United States.

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ⁱ The THEOP data used the terms "Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano." I am using the term Latino to represent the cultural reference to Spanish-speaking populations or their descendants.

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Culturally-Attuned Mentoring for Graduating Latina/o Social Workers to Foster Career Advancement

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Abstract: *The underrepresentation of Latinas/os in the social work profession, especially in higher levels of administration, has been amply documented. Successful Latina/o professionals can address the need for Latina/o leadership in the field by mentoring new graduates and supporting their development and career planning as they enter the professional world. This article presents an innovative mentoring program for Latina/o social work professionals conceptualized and led by the Latina/o Network of the Latina/o Network of the Connecticut chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). The program matches a Latina/o master's in social work graduating student with a senior Latina/o social work professional. The model of the mentoring program incorporates a coordinator, a liaison to each mentor-mentee dyad, a mentor-mentee developmental relationship, and group gatherings. A key aspect of the model is the attention to and inclusion of Latino cultural values of familismo, personalismo, confianza, and colectivismo, to foster the development of a sense of community. Empirical and anecdotal data illustrate the outcomes of the program. The implementation of the program, the lessons learned, and its applicability to other professionals and cultural groups are discussed.*

Keywords: *Mentoring, Latina/o professionals, Latino culture, career advancement, developmental relationships*

The 2010 Census counted 50.5 million Latinas/os in the United States, making up 16.3% of the total population (Enis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2010). The nation's Latina/o population, which was 35.3 million in 2000, grew 43% over the decade, and accounted for most of the nation's growth, (56%) from 2000 to 2010 (Passel, Cohn, & Lopez, 2011). It is projected that Latinas/os will total 29% of the U.S. population in 2050 due to immigration, migration, and high birth rates (Passel & Cohn, 2008). According to the Pew Hispanic Center (Passel & Cohn, 2008) Latinas/os will account for 60% of the population growth between 2005 and 2050.

The Pew Hispanic Research Center reports that 37% of Latinos currently living in the United States are foreign born (Patten, 2012). Like other immigrant groups, Latinas/os come to the United States seeking economic advancement and social mobility, and education is a recognized avenue to accomplish these aspirations. Like other immigrants, many Latinas/os want their children to have the opportunities they did not have such as

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pursuing higher education. Also many Latina/o immigrants started their college education in Latin America and dream of completing their degrees in the states.

Historically, Latina/o students have been underrepresented and underserved in higher education (Fry, 2002; Schmidt, 2003). As of 2010, The Pew Hispanic Center reported significant growth in educational achievement among young Latinas/os, with 73% of 18-24 year olds completing high school and 44% attending college (Fry, 2011). However, most of the increase in college attendance has been at community colleges. Of those completing high school and attending college, only 54% of Latinas/os were enrolled in four-year colleges, compared with 73% of Whites, 78% of Asians, and 63% of Blacks (Fry, 2011).

The low enrollment of Latinas/os in four-year compared to two-year colleges indicates difficulties progressing to higher education. The 2010 American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau documented the significant decrease in the percentage of higher levels of educational attainment with 62.2 % Latinas/os earning a high school degree, 35.7% with an associate's degree or higher, 13% obtaining a college degree, and only 4.1% completing a graduate or professional degree (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010).

The Latina/o college population includes a large number of first generation and immigrant adults most of whom are the first in their families to obtain a degree. While families in general are supportive of a family member pursuing education, they are not prepared to offer the support and guidance students need. In addition, families frequently do not anticipate the time demands of academic pursuits and may experience stress as a result (Cevallos, 2004).

It has been recognized that mentoring can be a source of support and guidance for students. According to Zalaquett , Gallardo, and Castellanos (2004), Latina/o students need role models to help them understand their educational opportunities and show them how to navigate the college system. Many schools offer programs focused on supporting students while in college. When graduates join the professional world they may find mentoring in the workplace, but there seems to be a scarcity of mentoring resources for new professionals as they prepare to enter the work force and transition from students to professionals, an important developmental process that requires career planning. They face challenges negotiating the higher education system, and continue to face challenges when they move into the professional world (Sólorzano, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005).

As a minority group, Latinas/os encounter institutional and cultural racism (Hernandez, Carranza, & Almeida, 2010), therefore it is very important to have role models and supporters who reflect the population, across political, economic, and social institutions. Social service organizations providing services to and employing people of color need people of color in supervisory, managerial, and leadership roles, including boards of directors, to achieve cultural competence. Latinas/os, the population with one of the highest percentages of poverty (Lopez & Cohn, 2011), are high consumers of social work services, and social work institutions are pressed to increase their Latina/o bilingual staff at all levels of organization. However, the number of Latinas/os in supervisory positions or at higher levels of administration is very low (The Federal Hispanic Workgroup, 2008); an indication that the pace of professional advancement for

this minority group is slow. As newcomers to the professional world, new Latina/o social workers need to develop networks of professional connections, be clear about their career goals, be realistic about the options available, and develop strategies for their own development. More privileged groups benefit from generations of networking, which constitutes social capital not available to Latinos. The lack of professional networks and limited focus on professional development can lead to poor choices, poor negotiation of employment conditions, dissatisfaction in employment, and changes in position arising from dissatisfaction with the job. Young professionals of color, Latina/os specifically, benefit from developing a strategy for advancement in order for their choices to become rungs in their career ladder.

This article presents an innovative mentoring program for Latina/o social work professionals. Conceptualized and led by the Latino Network of the Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), this program matches a graduating Latina/o master level social work student with a senior Latina/o social work professional. The Mentoring Program emerged as an avenue to support graduating Latinas/os entering the professional workforce or transitioning to more advanced positions.

Literature Review

Mentoring

Mentoring is defined as the relationship between an experienced professional and a novice, one that includes advising, guidance, and coaching focused on the personal and professional growth of the individual (Adams, 1998; Bogat, Liang, & Rigol-Dahn, 2008; Zalaquett & Lopez, 2006). It is based on the premise that a mentor and mentee engage in a series of interpersonal exchanges that are beneficial for both. Mentorship relationships may be formal or informal in nature. Formal mentoring is usually planned and established by a third party and has set goals, timelines, training, and structured activities. It is not surprising that at times a formal mentoring relationship evolves and becomes informal as mentors and mentees decide to cultivate and continue their relationship after the formal commitment ends and without the guidelines of the formal program (Zalaquett & Lopez, 2006).

Career mentoring is specific to a mentor working with a mentee for the purposes of professional development and career growth. The qualities expected in a mentor include commitment to the role, acceptance of the mentee, ability to provide support, effective interpersonal skills, ability to communicate hope and optimism, and commitment to continuous learning (Zalaquett & Lopez, 2006). The mentor has to be committed and must possess awareness of the responsibilities and skills embedded in the mentoring role.

Two types of mentoring, instrumental and psychological, occur simultaneously in an integrated manner (Laden, 2000; Luna & Prieto, 2012). Instrumental mentoring refers to processes such as teaching, advising, coaching, advocating, and connecting with resources; while psychological mentoring includes emotional support and validation (Laden, 2000). Both types of mentoring help mentees enhance their self-esteem and sense

of competence and efficacy (Laden, 2000). Studies document that integrated mentoring expands a mentees' network, sense of self-empowerment, and overall academic and career preparation (Luna & Prieto, 2012). Crisp and Cruz (2012) distinguish four types of support: emotional, educational and career related, knowledge of academics, and role modeling.

Mentoring as a Developmental Relationship

The literature examines mentoring as a developmental relationship (Brown, Daly, & Leong, 2009; Allen & Finkelstein, 2003). Developmental relationships can contribute to individual growth and career advancement (Allen & Finkelstein, 2003) and have been shown to have an association with career success (Gonzalez-Figueroa & Young, 2005). A developmental focus, tailored to the developmental needs of the mentee, is essential to maximize the benefits of mentoring for both mentors and mentees (Brown et al., 2009). Mentoring of a new professional, thus, includes assisting in defining the professional self, exploring career options and opportunities, focusing on career development, setting realistic goals, and planning a path to achieve them.

Developmental relationships are mutual and reciprocal (Gutierrez, 2012; Pomeroy & Steiker, 2011). While the relationship provides a professional developmental pathway for the mentee, it is also an opportunity for the mentor to grow and develop into more advanced roles and to make leadership contributions. Mentoring provides opportunities for professional enrichment which returns to the community as social capital. The mentors' work is sociopolitical in its nature as they assure, through the mentoring, that more Latinas/os and other underrepresented groups will gain visibility and access to power. Through networking and collaboration, Latina/os can get organized to become visible and influential, so they might represent their communities and advocate for their interests.

Social Work and Mentoring

Social work knowledge and skills are important for mentoring (Pomeroy & Steiker, 2011). International experts have addressed the existing connections between social work and mentoring. Pehkonen, Arola, Zviyagina, and Grouev (2010) described mentoring as a process that can help senior social workers transfer their knowledge to new social workers, and in this way contribute to their professional growth and the strengthening of their professional identity. The authors stated that mentoring in the workplace allows new social workers to explore expectations, potentials, and qualifications, and decide whether those are aligned or in conflict with the agency's environment. According to the authors, "mentoring provides a forum for discussing the occupational welfare experienced in social work and the challenges emerging in it" (p. 24), and helps social workers cope effectively with occupational issues. They also stated that mentoring, at its optimal, can provide strength to an individual's professional identity, which includes the ability to be pliable in the workplace.

Gutierrez (2012) asserted that mentoring is a significant, but often overlooked, component of social work students' education, and frequently takes place "outside of

formal courses and programs” (p. 1). The author stated that when students have positive mentors, they are more likely to do well in school, be more productive, have stronger professional skills, be more confident, and develop a larger professional network. She claimed that “mentoring students on any level can be a way to expand our knowledge of and to learn about different life experiences” (p. 2), and that faculty who mentor students benefit personally and professionally. In the case of field instructors, mentoring is one of the activities through which they provide expertise and facilitate students’ learning of needed practice skills (Ortiz-Hendricks, Finch, & Franks, 2005). However, this student-field instructor mentoring relationship often ends as the student prepares to join the workforce.

Culturally-attuned Mentoring

It has been documented that demographic similarities between mentor and mentee contribute to the success of the relationship (Brown et al., 2009). Same-race relationships provide significantly more psychosocial support than cross-race relationships (Davis, 2006). For instance, having a Latino/a mentor can provide role modeling, cultural validation and pride (Rivera-Goba & Nieto, 2007), and the meta-message that advancement as a Latina/o is possible.

Cultural differences can be a barrier to effective mentoring of racial and ethnic minority professionals. When a mentor and a mentee are from different cultural backgrounds, differences in attitudes and values may arise that can cause cultural miscommunications and conflict (Brown et al., 2009). Experienced professionals who have successfully navigated the challenges involved in career advancement are especially suited to offer culturally-attuned mentorship and support mentees’ professional development. In the workplace, professionals of color may experience prejudice and racism ranging from overt racism to micro-aggressions, the often subtle comments reflective of prejudice, which are perceived as undermining by the receiver (Sue, 2010; Sue et al., 2007). The mentoring relationship becomes a safe environment when issues of racism, oppression, and micro-aggressions can be explored to validate the experience and identify strategies to respond in constructive ways.

Offering cultural affirmation is one of the most important goals of an ethnically-matched mentoring relationship. Specifically, for Latina/o social workers new to the professional world, there are two distinct levels of bi-cultural exchanges: the socialization into the professional world and the ability to function in the predominantly White culture. Senior social workers of the same background who have successfully accomplished these developmental tasks can serve as role models and resources to new professionals (Thomas, 2006). It is important for Latino professionals new to the organizational culture to be mentored by other Latinos. Once they are confident negotiating the institutional culture, they can benefit from cross-cultural mentoring from higher level administrators. Kay and Wallace (2009) indicated that women and minority racial and ethnic groups may find themselves on the periphery of organizations and would benefit from cross-gender and cross-racial mentoring. This perspective is definitely applicable to Latina/o social workers, who often practice in organizations where high level administrators and board members are predominantly from the majority culture. However, it is important that they

first gain comfort with the institutional culture to maximize the benefit of cross-cultural mentoring.

Mentoring programs for Latina/os increasingly incorporate a culturally-attuned focus. In order to be culturally-attuned, the program must pay special attention to the Latino cultural values of *familismo*, *personalismo*, *confianza* and *colectivismo*. *Familismo* is a “cultural value that stresses attachments, reciprocity, and loyalty...” (Andres-Hyman, Añez, Paris, & Davidson, 2006, p. 696). The same authors referred to *personalismo* as a preference for relating on a personal rather than formal or institutional level. Because of *familismo* and *personalismo* values, Latinas/os in mentoring programs may value relationships based on genuine caring; may expect others in relationships to be open to sharing about themselves; and may prefer or expect close relationships. Development of *confianza*, an earned feeling of trust and familiarity and a feeling that the other person is worthy of their confidence is essential as mentors and mentees regard the other as a quasi-extended family member (Falicov, 2001). *Colectivismo* emphasizes activity for the benefit of the community rather than individual interests and needs (Zuñiga, 2001).

The State NASW Latina/o Network Mentoring Program

NASW Latina/o Network

The Latina/o Network of the Connecticut Chapter of the NASW started in 1997 with the mission to provide a professional network; to connect, support and recognize Latina/o social workers; to highlight the importance of culture in professional practice; and to advocate for the Latina/o population and social workers. Among the different efforts developed by the Network to address these goals has been the inclusion of mentoring opportunities for Latina/o social workers entering the career world. Given the demographic data on Latinas/os, population projections, and the data on educational attainment, the Network realized the importance of developing interventions to reverse the trend of losing Latina/o individuals along the pathway of education. Throughout the years, members of the Latina/o Network, a completely volunteer group, with the support of the Chapter’s executive director, have been committed to this cause.

The Mentoring Program

The Network’s interest in developing a mentoring program came from a desire to aid Latina/o students in the pursuit of higher education. In 2007 the Network reached out to local high schools, colleges, and universities to inquire about existing and needed support for Latina/o students. This effort identified a gap in support at the graduate level. Once a student graduated from their master’s program, no support services were in place to aid in career advancement. This was reaffirmed in 2008 at a Connecticut NASW statewide conference when attendees to a workshop completed a survey regarding types of support social workers needed. Mentoring after graduation came up as a stated need.

The Mentoring Program functioned with senior social work volunteers who committed one year at a time to serve as mentors of graduating Latina/o MSW students. In 2009 the Latina/o Network launched the Mentoring Program with two mentor-mentee

dyads. The program began with limited structure and no group activities, and the follow-up with mentors and mentees was done by the Network's chair utilizing formal letters and telephone contacts. In 2010 the program became more structured, with a designated coordinator, formal guidelines for matching, clearer expectations, and an evaluation component. The number of participating mentor-mentee dyads increased to four in 2010, seven in 2011, eight in 2012, and seven in 2013.

The purpose of the Mentoring Program was to provide support and guidance to recent Latina/o social work graduates to aid their transition to the professional world. The mentor was expected to: (1) help the mentee plan his/her future career goals and professional steps; (2) provide the mentee with knowledge of the professional world; (3) help the mentee explore ways he or she could be more successful; (4) facilitate the development of new professional networks for the mentee; (5) help the mentee transition into more advanced career levels as an MSW graduate; and (6) support the mentee in the exploration and negotiation of cross-cultural exchanges. The mentee was expected to: (1) use the mentoring relationship to focus on her/his professional development; (2) be receptive to what the mentor can offer; (3) be straightforward and honest and in consistent communication with the mentor; and (4) be open to change as part of her/his developmental process.

In addition to the expectations listed above, both mentors and mentees committed to (1) attend an Orientation Meeting; (2) determine ways in which they will keep in touch; (3) keep monthly contacts with each other; (4) coordinate at least two face-to-face activities; (5) participate in mentor-mentee gatherings coordinated by the Latina/o Network; (6) engage in a respectful, caring, and responsible relationship; (7) ask for assistance if they need help in their interactions; (8) inform the coordinator if for any reason they need to withdraw from the program; and (9) participate in the evaluation of the Mentoring Program.

The recruitment of mentors and mentees was done by the Network's members. The mentoring program was publicized in the state chapter's newsletter and through other events of the organization. Members of the Network reached out to the state's schools of social work and collaborated with the directors of student services to identify graduating Latina/o students. Those students were invited to an informational meeting and if interested, were given an application to become a mentee. Mentors were recruited through outreach at conferences, professional meetings and one-to-one contacts with successful professionals. The requirements for mentors included being a Latina/o with a minimum of five years of post-MSW experience and having the commitment to mentor. Those interested completed an application form that was used to match mentors and mentees according to interests, expectations, geographic location, strengths of mentors and expressed needs of the mentees.

The Mentor-Mentee-Liaison Model

The mentoring model developed by the Latina/o Network included a coordinator, a liaison to each mentor-mentee dyad, a mentor-mentee developmental relationship, and group gatherings. A key aspect of the model was the attention to and inclusion of Latino

cultural values. The Mentoring Program was coordinated by a member of the Latina/o Network. Members of the Network served as liaisons to the mentor-mentee dyads. The responsibilities of the *liaison* were to: (1) act as a “bridge” between mentor and mentee; (2) be accessible when needed; and (3) have bi-monthly contact with the dyad to review progress and answer questions. Liaisons were an important component of the mentoring process because they helped facilitate the development of the mentoring relationship.

Developmental mentoring. There is a professional development process once social work students complete their master’s degrees. The process involves preparing for licensing and then becoming a licensed practitioner. Some new professionals will move into supervisory positions and field instruction positions while others will use their practice experience to prepare to pursue doctoral education and teaching in community colleges and universities as adjunct instructors. Mentoring allows the mentee to prepare for that developmental process, as mentors have already passed through the developmental process or are in more advanced roles. Mentors help mentees become aware of professional options, discover their strengths and areas of further development, and strengthen their self-confidence in their ability to advance. The developmental pathway creates leaders within the profession.

Group gatherings. In addition to the one-to-one mentor-mentee communications and interactions, there were four all mentor-mentee-liaison group activities during the year and a special Latina/o Social Workers’ Recognition Event, to which the mentoring program participants were invited as guests of honor. These activities were intended to prepare mentors and mentees for the mentoring experience and to facilitate relationship-building and enhancement. They were planned to reflect the Latino cultural values of the group. For instance, in all events Latino food was included and group activities incorporated Latino music, decorations, etc. The group icebreakers encouraged personal sharing and were often connected to cultural identity and experiences of acculturation.

In the *first gathering (Orientation Meeting)*, mentoring expectations were discussed and mentors and mentees were informed of who they were matched with. There was a training that included group activities to build relationships and to share prior experiences with mentors and mentoring, and an orientation about mentoring. The Network invited Latina/o social workers and allies to a special *Latina/o Social Workers’ Recognition event*, which is usually celebrated in March, social work month. The purpose of the event was to recognize the contributions of Latina/o social workers from different fields of practice. The event was also an opportunity for the mentor-mentee dyads to socialize together and strengthen their relationships. This celebration enhanced professional and cultural identity pride and provided opportunities for networking.

The second gathering took place during the summer. This meeting served to celebrate mentees’ graduation and transitioning to different jobs or career positions. Participants brought their parents, children and other relatives. The overall experience of connecting within the context of their families was a meaningful aspect of the Latino culture and strengthened the mentor-mentee-liaison connection.

The third gathering took place at the beginning of the fall. Mentors and mentees were invited to reflect on their developmental relationship. The group activities during this

meeting were geared toward celebrating both mentors' and mentees' professional and personal accomplishments.

The final meeting, held in December, gave participants the opportunity to share their experiences and accomplishments and for the staff to highlight participants' contributions to the program.

Three Years of Programming

The mentees who have participated in this Mentoring Program have been immigrants/migrants or second generation Latinas/os and the first person in their family to complete a college education. Most of the mentors have had similar backgrounds. They may also have shared a common language. Their identification with traditional cultural values and beliefs, their experiences with immigration/migration, and their cultural identity and level of acculturation served as the context for their mentoring relationship to develop and grow.

When Latina/o mentees who are first generation college students start their higher education, they make two cultural transitions: to the majority culture and to the academic culture. Likewise, when they enter a new job as an MSW they encounter an organizational culture that may not operate based on their cultural values. They need to become bicultural, both to be able to maintain their Latino culture and function within the institutional environment. Talking with the mentor who has gone through these challenges helps the mentee realize "*I am not the only one*" and to respond to differences without thinking there is something wrong with him or herself.

Specific Outcomes

Both empirical and anecdotal data have been compiled in order to evaluate the Mentoring Program. Every year during the last meeting of the Program, participants completed a confidential questionnaire that combined open-ended, Likert-scale questions. The questionnaire explored respondents' thoughts regarding a mentee's career development and transition, the quality of the personal experience, and the success of the mentoring program.

More specifically, mentors and mentees were asked to indicate how much the mentoring program helped mentees (1) with career goals and professional steps; (2) to explore ways they could be more successful; (3) to transition from their role as student to that of a working professional; and (4) to develop networks. They indicated how much of the following were provided to the mentee: (1) knowledge of how the professional world operates; (2) knowledge of jobs, agencies, and populations that were good for them; and (3) guidance and support as they entered or re-entered the workforce. Additional Likert-scale questions inquired about (1) how clear was the purpose of the mentoring program; (2) how much of an issue was *time* in establishing a mentor/mentee relationship; and (3) how much did *time* interfere with mentees ability to participate fully in the mentoring program.

Mentees also indicated how much they agreed or disagreed with the following: (1) It was important for me to meet a successful professional I could learn from; (2) Mentoring

has helped me feel more confident as a Latina/o social worker; and (3) Mentoring has helped me value more my qualifications as a Latina/o social worker.

Mentors were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with these statements: (1) It was important for me to mentor a young Latina/o professional; (2) Mentoring has given me satisfaction and a sense of giving back; (3) Mentoring has helped me value much more my qualifications as a Latina/o social worker.

The open-ended questions required mentors and mentees to describe their experience; identify activities they did together; describe their level of comfort with the mentor/mentee relationship and what was lacking in the relationship; describe what the mentoring accomplished; and identify the gains and benefits along with areas for improvement.

Questionnaire Findings

A total of 20 respondents (9 mentees and 11 mentors) completed the questionnaire in the last three years (2009-2011). Although the number of respondents is small, the findings provided a preliminary impression of the usefulness of the program and the areas to be improved.

The findings suggested progress toward achieving the goals of the program. The overall experience was described as positive, enjoyable, encouraging and educational. The mentoring occurred through e-mails, phone calls and face-to-face contacts. In most instances mentors and mentees felt comfortable with their match and the relationship. Mentees reported increased self-confidence, self-awareness and appreciation of the networking opportunities. Areas identified for strengthening were same gender matching, frequency of face-to-face contact, and scheduling of time together. Table 1 presents the frequencies and percentages in the *very much* and *somewhat* categories for each of the following Likert-scale questions.

Table 1 *Mentors' and Mentees' Responses to the Outcome Questions*

QUESTIONS How much does the mentoring...	Mentees N = 9		Mentors* N = 11	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Help mentee with career goals	9	100%	7 (n = 9)	78%
Provide mentee knowledge prof. world	9	100%	9 (n = 10)	90%
Help mentee explore ways to success	6	67%	7 (n = 10)	70%
Provide knowledge of jobs, agencies	6	67%	8 (n = 11)	73%
Help transition from student to professional	7	78%	8 (n = 10)	80%
Help mentee develop networks	5	56%	6 (n = 10)	60%
Provide mentee guidance	8	89%	8 (n = 11)	73%

*The total number of respondents varied per question in the mentors' column and percentages were calculated based on that number.

All mentees felt that the program helped them with career goals and knowledge of the professional world. Slightly more than half of the mentees indicated the program helped them to develop networks. This item had the lowest score for mentors and mentees and may reflect that for many of the dyads, communication was via e-mail and phone, which provided less opportunity for the social interaction involved in networking.

Table 2 displays the frequencies and percentages in the *very much* and *somewhat* categories for each of the Likert-scale questions about participation in the Mentoring Program.

Table 2 *Mentors' and Mentees' Responses Regarding Participation in the Program*

QUESTIONS Indicate whether ...	Mentees N = 9		Mentors* N = 11	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
The purpose of the program was clear	9	100%	11 (n = 11)	100%
Time was an issue for relationship to develop	6	67%	9 (n = 11)	82%
Time interfered with participation in the program	7	78%	5 (n = 10)	50%

*The total number of respondents varied per question in the mentors' column and percentages were calculated based on that number.

The purpose of the program was clear to all participants. However, time was an issue that affected the development of the relationship and participation in the program. For the majority of the mentors, time was an issue for developing the relationship; and for the mentees, time was an issue for participating in the program. Table 3 presents the results of the combined *strongly agree* and *agree* responses about mentees' professional gains.

Table 3 *Mentees' Responses on Professional Gains*

QUESTIONS How much do you agree or disagree with ...	Mentees N = 9	
	<i>f</i>	%
It was important to meet a successful professional I could learn from	9	100%
Mentoring helped me feel more confident as a Latina/o social worker	6	67%
Mentoring helped me value my qualifications as a Latina/o social worker	6	67%

Mentees were in full agreement that it was important for them to meet a successful professional from whom they could learn. Even though the majority (67%) felt that it had helped them feel more confident and valued, the impact of these aspects on professional self-esteem was not as strong as the authors had anticipated. Table 4 presents the results of the combined *strongly agree* and *agree* responses about mentors' professional gains.

Table 4 *Mentors' Responses on Professional Gains*

QUESTIONS How much do you agree or disagree with...	Mentors N = 11	
	<i>f</i>	%
It was important for me to mentor a Latina/o professional	10	91%
Mentoring gave me satisfaction and a sense of giving back	9	82%
Helped me value my qualifications as a Latina/o social worker	9	82%

The mentors' response indicated a high level of satisfaction with the experience, with the satisfaction of giving back, and an increased professional self-esteem. The sharing of mentoring experiences that occurred in the first meeting triggered recognition and memories of their own mentors, and having the opportunity to mentor another Latina/o to give back to the next generation, met the mentors' developmental need of contributing and nurturing others.

The findings of this evaluation have provided valuable feedback that has been used to modify and enhance the quality of the program. Given the small size of the sample, the variation in the data collection process and the early developmental stage of the program, these findings must be taken cautiously and cannot be used to make generalizations.

Discussion Groups' Comments

At the fall and December meetings mentors and mentees were encouraged to share their experiences of the program. Their comments are presented next and have been organized around the following themes:

Ethnic/cultural connections. While there was great diversity in their country of origin, the dyads felt connected as Latina/os and shared a sense of responsibility for their ethnic community. Mentors felt they were helping launch the new generation of Latina/o professionals who will continue their work, "*passing on the baton.*" One mentor expressed that he felt that mentoring had a ripple effect and made the analogy to a pebble thrown in the water.

The mentees felt they had somebody who understood their experience and represented a resource they did not have in their families. A mentor expressed: "*I was a single mother going to school so I know what ...my mentee experiences. I have sons, and mentoring a female has made the connection very strong...it is like mothering a professional.*" The mentees repeatedly commented that they were the first in their families to go to college and graduate school. A mentee shared how deflated she felt after a negative job interview and how the mentor was there to "*hold*" her, help her reflect on what went wrong, learn from the experience, and prepare for the next interview.

In line with cultural values of *familismo* and *personalismo* the mentoring relationship often went beyond the strictly professional focus and took an interest in the mentee and in the mentee's family. A mentee commented that early in the mentoring year she had been

hospitalized for a heart problem and her mentor called her everyday “*just to tell you that I am thinking of you and hoping for your recovery.*” The mentee added, “*...that meant the world to me and I think it contributed to my recovery.*” A mentor of two consecutive years indicated that she had developed very close relationships with her mentees and she knew they would always have a special relationship. There was agreement when a mentee indicated that her experience with her mentor was “*like having a second parent.*”

The value given by mentors and mentees to the group gatherings highlighted the importance of *colectivismo* which supported the creation of a community among all program participants. Including family members in social activities reflected the consideration of *familismo* and strengthened the mentor-mentee connection. Having everyone share their experiences with mentoring, their professional histories, how they have arrived to their present positions, and something personal in the Orientation Meeting reflected *personalismo* and served to build *confianza*. The sharing of food in the activities contributed to informal exchanges and community building.

Having a liaison. The liaison functioned as a back-up and monitored the relationship. Participants’ comments indicated that once the relationship developed, the liaison was no longer needed. However, for some mentees, having the liaison meant that “*there was another person who cared... and it made me feel more valued.*” Having one person specifically assigned to one dyad, as opposed to having a coordinator assigned to all dyads, had some benefits. It ensured more personal, frequent and intimate connections within the mentor-mentee dyad and thus more possibilities for the mentoring to succeed.

Professional growth. The mentoring offered a range of support, from addressing immediate needs and skill development to engaging in long-range planning. Mentees felt understood, supported and encouraged to advance. They reported growth in their job application, interviewing, and negotiation skills. A mentee expressed that when she felt she had reached her goal, the mentor challenged her and said, “*No... there is a ladder you can climb.*” The mentee realized that she needed to change jobs to pursue employment that could provide opportunities to reach this new goal and was encouraged to take the next step of licensing. Another mentee credited her mentor with helping her find strength to develop her skills: “*I had never spoken in public and with the encouragement of my mentor, I spoke in a panel, and discovered such strength in myself; I received terrific feedback and now I know that I can do this and more.*”

For the Latina/o Network members developing the Program there has also been satisfaction and growth. Every mentoring activity led to the development of human capital among the Latina/o professionals through training, education, knowledge and skills; (Turner De Tornes et al., 2013) and to the appreciation of the mentors and mentees. The mentors have been generous to give of themselves to nurture new professionals; and the mentees have been willing to trust and explore their fears and insecurities. It is reassuring to know that there are more social workers prepared and committed to serve the community, and that the two groups combined are contributing “*nuestro granito de arena*” (our grain of sand) to make it happen.

The spirit of the Mentoring Program is reflected in the following quote by a mentee: “*I would like to express my appreciation of the program and my mentor...[who] has been*

amazing and continues to mentor me. I am truly thankful and blessed that I have had the opportunity to meet such an amazing individual and am certain she will continue to touch the lives of those whom she meets and mentors.”

Applicability of the Mentoring Program

This Mentoring Program represents a contribution to the field of mentoring because of its focus on Latinas/os and the career of social work. The program validates the importance of mentoring programs attuned to the cultural experiences and values of Latina/os. While there is scarcity in the literature about mentoring programs for graduate level students transitioning to the professional world, the authors propose that this program can be used with graduate students in other disciplines and other cultural backgrounds. Experiences in other disciplines confirm the value of mentoring to support graduate professionals for successful career development (Rivera-Goba & Nieto, 2007; Williams-Nickelson, 2009). Specific recommendations for mentoring programs for professionals include consideration of demographics, i.e. gender, racial, and ethnic background in matching dyads; and inclusion of activities reflective of the culture when developing programs for specific cultural groups. Programs should also consider the importance of a liaison to sustain the mentors and mentees' energy and commitment to the relationship.

This mentoring program can be replicated with the sponsorship of an agency or a professional organization. It requires committed staff or volunteers who have allocated time to coordinate the program. There is need to develop a connection with the schools of social work and the professionals of the ethnic community identified for the mentoring program. Planning and implementation of the program needs to incorporate the cultural values of the particular ethnic group. The costs are minimal but essential to develop materials for recruitment and supplies for group gatherings. Possible challenges include time demands and a need for continuous recruitment of mentors and liaisons. However, hearing about the gains for mentors and mentees and experiencing the success of the program is rewarding and generates the energy for all involved. So far, the program has offered mentoring to 20 graduating MSW students and has involved 11 mentors. It is becoming known in the community, thus increasing awareness of the benefits of mentoring and networking among young Latina/o professionals.

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Reducing Barriers to Career Entry for Latinos: An Examination of Pathways into Social Work

Anthony De Jesús

Abstract: Demand for bilingual/bicultural social work practitioners presents a mutually beneficial opportunity for the social work profession and Latinos who are increasingly in positions to be employed as social workers (Acevedo, González, Santiago, & Vargas-Ramos, 2007; Ortíz-Hendricks, 2007). Uneven academic preparation, limited access to information about college, high tuition/opportunity costs and family obligations are among the barriers to higher education for Latinos (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Ortíz et al., 2007). Using comparative methods, this article describes career pathway program models that address obstacles to successful entry into social work careers. These models also demonstrate the potential to reduce barriers to degree completion and career entry for Latinos. Salient program components include reduced tuition and tuition assistance, transportation assistance, child care, support in strengthening oral and written English skills, and access to networks of employers (Takahashi & Melendez, 2004). Implications for social work and social work education are also discussed.

Keywords: Latinos, college completion, social work education

The expected employment growth in the social work sector suggests opportunities for Latino adults who are interested in completing degree programs in social work and are already employed in support roles in the field. The demand for bilingual/bicultural social work practitioners presents a mutually beneficial opportunity for the profession and Latino communities, whose members are both in need of social work services and, increasingly, in positions to be employed as social workers (Acevedo, González, Santiago, & Vargas-Ramos, 2007; Ortíz-Hendricks, 2007). Anticipated growth in the social work/mental health sector underscores the demand for bilingual Latinos to enter the field as practitioners and, in turn, address the needs of their communities (Acevedo et al., 2007; Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010; Ortíz-Hendricks, 2007). Further, because migration histories, language, and culture are prominent variables in the academic success of Latinos, models advanced by social work educators who are experienced with this population provide useful examples, which may be adapted and/or replicated to increase the number of Latino social work practitioners (Gardella et al., 2005; Negroni-Rodriguez, Dicks, & Morales, 2006). Based on document review and interviews with directors of career pathway models for Latino adults, this analysis describes program components of three models designed to address barriers to the completion of post-secondary credentials and to facilitate entry into the field. These barriers include costs (both monetary and opportunity costs), insufficient academic preparation, limited access

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to information about higher education, and discriminatory context (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Negroni-Rodríguez et al., 2006).

According to Jenkins (2006), the concept of a career pathway reflects “a series of connected education and training programs and support services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector, and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment in that sector” (p. 6). Latinos are more likely to experience interruptions in the pursuit of higher education, especially those who begin at two-year colleges and experience difficulty transferring to four-year institutions (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Swail, Cabrera, & Lee, 2004; Swail, Cabrera, Lee, & Williams, 2005). Many Latino adults with some college credits but no degree stand to benefit from career pathways designed to address barriers to college completion. Indeed, U. S. Census data presented in Tables 1 and 2 reveal that a national pool of Latino adults employed in social work and related fields would ostensibly benefit from programs designed to upgrade their skills and credentials. The broadening of pathways that tap into this pool will both facilitate the human capital development of Latino communities, and enable the social work profession to increase its capacity to serve Latino communities.

This study analyzes the program components of three career pathway initiatives targeted at supporting Latinos in enrolling and completing two- and four-year undergraduate and graduate degrees in social work. The study is guided by the following question: “Which program components assist Latinos in reducing barriers to completion of social work credentials?”

Social Work Employment and Latinos

The expected growth of social work employment in the coming years confirms the need to reduce the barriers for Latinos entering and advancing along career ladders in the field. Employment within the social work/human services sector is expected to increase by 25% during the 2010–2020 decade. Growing elderly populations will need social services, which will lead to new positions in medical and public health social work, case management, long-term care, and gerontological social work services. In addition, positions focused on mental health and substance abuse are also projected to grow by 31%; and medical and public health social work and social work assistant positions are expected to grow by about 22%, a growth rate much greater than the average (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). The growth of the Latino population throughout the country also presents further opportunities for Latinos trained in social work to be employed in areas where large populations of Latinos comprise the client base (Chapa & Acosta, 2010; Hernandez & Fitch, 2004; Ortíz et al., 2007).

A review of the occupational distribution of Latinos reporting employment in the social work sector is useful for obtaining a better understanding of the need for programs such as those described in this analysis. According to U. S. Census data reviewed below, Latinos are underrepresented, relative to the average for non-Latinos, in professional and paraprofessional social work occupations (social work and social work assistant categories).

According to 2006-2008 data from the American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012), only 7.14% of all Latinos reported employment as professional social workers possessing a master's degrees and 9.24% with a bachelor's degrees (see Table 1). While a bachelor's degree is a minimum requirement for most social work positions, a number of individuals reporting employment in social work positions on the census also report educational attainment of less than a Bachelor's degree. Of all Latinos reporting employment in a professional social work role, 43.6% have yet to complete bachelor's degrees; with 13.55% possessing only high school diplomas, 16.46% having attended some college, but with no degree, and 13.65% hold an associate's degree. Of the 811,553 adults (25 years and older) employed in social work positions in the United States, only 10%, or 81,817 were Latino. This data is the best available estimate of the number of Latino social workers working at the Baccalaureate and Master's level. Individuals who report working as professional social workers who possess less than a Bachelor's degree are included in this analysis. This highlights the demand for upgrading credentials for Latinos already employed in field.

Table 1 *U.S. Social Workers Educational Attainment*

	HS Diploma	Some College	Associates	Bachelors	Masters	Total
Non-Latino	45,335 (86.45%)	72,869 (83.54%)	41,436 (86.35%)	308,235 (90.76%)	240,422 (92.86%)	729,736
Latino	7,105 (13.55%)	14,356 (16.46%)	6,550 (13.65%)	31,378 (9.24%)	18,484 (7.14%)	81,817
Total	52,440	87,225	47,986	339,613	258,906	811,553

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2006-2008 three-year sample)

Further underscoring these disparities is the distribution of Latinos who reported employment in social work assistant roles which include, human service worker, case management aide, social work assistant, community outreach worker, community support worker, mental health aide, clinical social work aide, addictions counselor assistant, life skills counselor, family service assistant, social services aide, youth worker, psychological aide, client advocate, *or* gerontology aide.

As Table 2 indicates 380,940 adults were employed in social work assistant positions in the United States: with Latinos representing 12% (42,123) of this category. The over representation of Latinos in the "some college, but no degree" category is a particularly relevant data point for this analysis, one that shows that 44% of Latinos employed in social work assistant positions do not possess a bachelor degree.

The educational attainment of social work assistants closely mirrors that of the social work professional category. Fourteen percent of all Latinos employed as social and human services assistants possessed some college, but no degree, while 15.39% possessed associate's degrees and 14.31% had high school diplomas. The similarities in lack of educational attainment suggest formidable barriers to career advancement for Latinos within the field of social work, but they also suggest that a robust market exists for pathway models that address barriers to enrollment and completion of social work degrees.

Table 2 *U.S. Social and Human Service Assistants' Educational Attainment*

	HS Diploma	Some Colleg	Associates	Bachelors	Masters	Total
Non-Latino	46,490 (85.69%)	63,184 (85.65%)	27,234 (84.61%)	108,235 (89.35%)	41,472 (92.95%)	299,123
Latino	7,763 (14.31%)	10,588 (14.35%)	4,952 (15.39%)	12,902 (10.65%)	3,144 (7.05%)	81,817
Total	54,253	73,772	32,186	121,177	44,616	308,940

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2006-2008 three-year sample)

Barriers to Attainment

The occupational status of Latino adults in social work is not surprising when understood in the context of the literature on Latino higher educational attainment in the United States. Uneven academic preparation, limited access to information about college and graduate education, the rising cost of tuition, the opportunity costs of pursuing a degree, financial challenges, and family obligations are among the most formidable barriers to higher education experienced by Latino students. In addition, many Latinos confront discriminatory and generally adverse educational environments, which discourage their degree completion (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005). Gardella and colleagues (2005) point out that Latino students “struggle to meet the expectations of families, employers, and academic programs that were designed for students with few external responsibilities” (p. 41). At the Master’s of Social Work (MSW) level Negroni-Rodríguez and colleagues (2006) observed that Latino students were frequently adult learners with many life stressors and limited financial resources. They were more likely to extend their graduate study beyond the two-year norm and need support in finding course and field education arrangements that accommodated their employment and family responsibilities (p. 204).

The challenges described above are reflected in social work education nationally as indicated in a report by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Task Force on Latino/a Social Work Education (Ortíz et al., 2007). One hundred twenty-five accredited undergraduate and graduate social work programs (n = 506) were surveyed in order to assess the “state” of Latinos in social work education. The study analyzed Latino student recruitment, retention, and graduation data from 25 % of the nationally-accredited social work programs at the baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral levels and found Latinos to be consistently underrepresented relative to the national population (Ortíz et al., 2007). The most frequently ranked obstacles to Latino student recruitment and retention included: insufficient financial aid and the high cost of tuition; insufficient representation of Latino faculty and staff, either in the social work program or within the institution; lack of a large pool of Latino applicants; and no focused recruitment efforts toward Latino students. The most frequent reasons for not having a greater percentage of Latinos accepted into MSW programs included poor writing skills and low GPAs among Latino applicants (Ortíz et al., 2007).

The CSWE Latino Task Force Report findings are consistent with predominant Latino attitudes toward higher education which are characterized by the belief that higher education is academically and financially inaccessible. For example, a recent Pew Hispanic Center (López, 2009) analysis “Latinos in Education: Explaining the Attainment Gap,” found that although nearly 90% of Latino young adults (16-25 year olds) believe a college education is important for success in life, only 48% say that they plan to get a college degree. Of the respondents who cut their pursuit of higher education short, 74% stated their departures were due to the need to economically support their families, while half cited poor English skills (p. 6).

Higher education researchers found that Latino student attainment gaps were also related to students’ experiences within adverse environments and stereotyping within institutions of higher education (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005). They also found that a positive campus culture was a large determining factor in Latino degree attainment (López-Mulnix & Mulnix, 2006). In a longitudinal study of Latino students’ perceptions of their undergraduate experiences Hurtado and Ponjuan (2005) found that students from Spanish-language dominant households were more likely to perceive hostile campus climates than those from English language-dominant households. Hurtado and Ponjuan (2005) also found that Latino students’ backgrounds were less important to retention than their sense of belonging on campus, which was facilitated by a “positive quality of interaction with diverse peers,” resulting in a higher sense of belonging in college, and an “increase in confidence and skills that reflect a pluralistic orientation” (p. 248). Facilitating this sense of belonging and the development of the “capacity to manage differences and function in a diverse workplace” (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005, p. 248) are among the goals of the programs described in this study.

While tuition and opportunity costs heavily influence Latinos’ decisions to pursue and complete a professional degree, Hurtado and Ponjuan (2005) argue that many Latino students also assess campus climate as a barrier—assuming that institutions of higher education are unwelcoming environments for Latino adult learners. Yosso, Smith, Ceja, and Solórzano (2009) broadly define *campus racial climate* as “the overall racial environment of the university that could potentially foster outstanding academic outcomes and graduation rates for all students but too often contributes to poor academic performance and high dropout rates for Students of Color” (p. 664). The perception among many Latinos that institutions of higher education are unwelcoming can only be overcome with programming that deliberately addresses these traditional barriers to Latino student engagement.

Given the underrepresentation of Latinos in social work positions nationally, and our knowledge of the challenges confronting Latinos as they endeavor to complete degrees in social work, this research seeks to describe and analyze best practices among three different pathway models designed to address these barriers (costs, academic preparation, information and adverse environments). Pathway models seek to address and reduce these barriers for Latinos who have not completed a bachelor or master degree and who may benefit from programs that lead to entrance into social work careers.

Method

In seeking to understand more fully the characteristics of pathway models that address the needs of Latinos seeking social work credentials, this inquiry is guided by the question: “Which program components assist Latinos in reducing barriers to completion of social work degrees?” In order to answer this question, data used for this study was collected as part of the Pathways to Economic Opportunity Project for Low Wage Puerto Ricans sponsored by the Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños (Centro) at Hunter College. A purposive sample (Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 1990) consists of three pathway programs identified from an internet search of social work/human services programs serving Latino participants and/or with programmatic missions that explicitly seek to address the barriers confronted by Latino adults in completing social work degrees. The research was supported by a larger research initiative that examined industry and community-based workforce development strategies to assist low-wage Puerto Ricans (De Jesús, 2011; Visser & Meléndez, 2011). As a result, program selection was limited to those located in communities in the northeast United States where Puerto Ricans are the largest Latino subgroup. While these programs primarily serve Puerto Ricans, they also serve other Latinos residing in these communities and may be appropriate to adapt for use with other Latino communities. Although the findings of this study are not generalizable because of the small sample and descriptive method, this analysis provides useful insight for social work educators interested in reducing barriers for Latinos regarding which program components and organizational structures may represent promising practices. Moreover, as there are very few programs specifically targeting and/or serving Latinos, these programs illustrate the need for social work educators to develop innovative strategies for recruitment of Latino students through partnerships with community-based organizations and two-year/community college(s) in order to strengthen pathways for Latinos into the field.

The three programs analyzed differ by type of institutional host/sponsor and by the level of credentials offered. One program, the *Health Careers Core Curriculum (HC4)* is a union-based partnership with several campuses of the City University of New York; another, *Harcum at Congreso*, is a partnership between a private two-year college and a community-based non-profit organization offering an associate’s degree in Human Services; and the third, the *¡Adelante! Bilingual Career Development Certificate* at the University of Saint Joseph, offers a career development certificate leading to undergraduate degree completion and is based at a small Catholic women’s university. These varying program and organizational structures provide a range of approaches targeted at addressing barriers to degree completion for Latinos. Table 3 provides basic information on each model.

This study employed a comparative case study (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2003) of the three pathway models and utilized multiple sources of data including interviews with program directors, published articles, annual reports, recruitment materials, brochures, and program websites. Upon obtaining the human subjects’ approval, three semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with program directors, in person or via telephone, during March and April of 2010. Interviews ranged in duration from 60 to 90 minutes. Using an interview protocol adapted from Takahashi

and Melendez (2004), the interviews focused on program characteristics, history, institutional motivation and context, recruitment and retention, support services, and program impact.

Table 3 *Social Work Pathway Models*

Program	Health Careers Core Curriculum, HC4	<i>¡Adelante!</i> Bilingual Career Development Certificate	<i>Harcum at Congreso</i>
Institution	1199 SEIU Training and Employment Fund	University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT	Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Philadelphia, PA
Program Type	Pre-College, Associates, Bachelors, Graduate	Undergraduate certificate, Bachelor's Degree (BSW)	Associates' Degree
Number of Participants	800+	10-12	100

Using academic databases and an Internet search, a number of peer-reviewed journal articles, documents (brochures, etc.), and websites related to each program were collected and/or accessed and utilized for data analysis. In addition, program directors provided additional written reports and program description/data. Once collected, data were analyzed using the constant comparative method, with which the researcher simultaneously codes and analyzes data in order to explore relationships, refine concepts, identify properties and integrate them into a coherent narrative (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Taylor & Bogdan 1984). This approach provides for a richer description of the program components that were identified to assist Latinos in overcoming barriers to entering social work pathways (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 173).

Results

1199 SEIU League Training and Upgrading Fund Health Careers Core Curriculum (HC4) Program

1199 SEIU (Service Employees International Union) is the New York City and Long Island chapter of this national union of health care workers, which has approximately 200,000 members. Approximately 14,000 union members enroll in the Union's Training and Upgrading Fund programs annually. Of these, approximately 92% are people of color, and 12% of these are Latinos. The part-time *HC4* program allows union members who are first-time or returning college students to take up to 34 credits of required college courses through the City University of New York (CUNY) and then apply those credits to healthcare-related associate's or bachelor's degree programs. Through a tuition voucher program, participants can take up to six credits per semester before incurring out-of-pocket costs.

Participants attend a required program orientation and the Training and Employment Funds' College Bound workshop, and must pass the reading and writing portions of the CUNY-ACT skills assessment. Courses are offered on CUNY campuses, at local union sites, and online. Participants are enrolled in a cohort and are supported by case managers

and counselors who assist with course selection, provide counseling on campus and at the fund's sites, and refer students to support services as needed. Support services include tutoring and workshops that enhance study skills, time management, and computer and Internet research to assist with college-level work. Participants have seven-day access to program advisors.

Within the CUNY system, *HC4* works primarily with the College of Staten Island (CSI), New York City Technical College in Brooklyn, and Lehman College in the Bronx. Each of these campuses provides academic programs in human services and/or social work, with New York City Technical College offering both an Associate's Degree in Applied Sciences in Human Services and a Bachelor's of Science in Human Services. The College of Staten Island offers a Bachelor's of Arts in Social Work (BASW) and Lehman College offers a CSWE accredited BSW and MSW program. At the undergraduate level, each of these programs focuses on generalist practices. Prospective participants in *HC4* are recruited from the union membership via flyers, brochures, and advertisements in the union magazine, which is sent to members' homes. Members fill out response cards to request more information. Each year, according to the program manager, the response cards yield several hundred applicants to the program. A considerable challenge for some applicants is difficulty in passing their CUNY entrance exams, which will gain them admission into the partner CUNY campuses (College of Staten Island, Lehman College, and New York City College of Technology). These members are referred to college preparatory programs, also sponsored by the union, and may reapply to *HC4* upon obtaining a passing score on the entrance exam.

Harcum at Congreso, Philadelphia, PA

In partnership with the Institute for Leadership, Education, Advancement and Development (I-LEAD) and Congreso de Latinos Unidos of Philadelphia, Harcum College, the oldest two-year degree granting institution in Pennsylvania, offers North Philadelphia residents associate's degree programs in Human Services, Law and Justice, Leadership, and Early Childhood Education. The program draws on the strengths of each partner and, in its first year, enrolled approximately 100 community residents (over 90% of the students were Latino). Congreso's 2009 annual report observed that the program was established to "address[es] many variables that weigh into creating self-sufficiency, provides entrance into higher wage employment, and increases college access by bringing college to the community" (Congreso de Latinos Unidos, 2009). According to Atlas and Mireya Leon (2010), the partners identified finances, transportation, and a discomfort with being outside of their community as the three main barriers to higher education for Latinos. As a result, key features of the program included locating the associate's degree program in the community at Congreso's facilities, which effectively addressed transportation concerns; provided subsidized tuition; and provided support services to participants. Each partner was well suited to contribute specific components of the program, as Atlas and Mireya Leon (2010) observed:

Congreso provides the long-standing history and community trust needed to attract (recruit) students, social support, facilities, and financial aid assistance; I-LEAD provides leadership curricula, professional training, and academic

assistance; and Harcum provides the accreditation, professors, curriculum, and financial aid leverage (pg. 3).

In addition, Harcum at Congreso instructors are hired based on their experience working effectively with this population and receive additional professional development from I-LEAD on how to specifically address the needs of Latino and African American students from urban communities.

While Harcum at Congreso is only in its second year, it has a documented 80% retention rate (Atlas & Mireya Leon, 2010) and plans to expand from its current enrollment of 100 students to over 300 (Congreso de Latinos Unidos, 2009). The Human Service Curriculum is a modified version of the curriculum offered at Harcum College's main campus, which is being designed relevant to the needs of Harcum at Congreso's students. Classes are held in the heart of the Kensington community of North Philadelphia at Congreso's Education and Training center, a newly renovated facility with state-of-the-art classrooms, computer laboratories, and smart boards. Dinner is also provided for students each evening. Students are able to access a range of social services to address challenges that may interfere with their educational goals. These include case management, job readiness training, rental assistance, financial literacy programs, and tutoring. Harcum at Congreso was established in 2009 and was conceived by Congreso's former President and the Executive Director of I-LEAD, which achieved success in the development of smaller partnerships between non-profit organizations and Harcum College to serve the educational needs of employees. Harcum at Congreso began with a small cohort of Congreso employees who sought to provide themselves with opportunities to upgrade their skills and credentials at the work site. These original four employees graduated with associate degrees and have received salary increases or promotions since graduation. According to the program director, some of these program graduates had "attended larger educational institutions and felt intimidated by the competition of the other students, lost faith in themselves, and dropped out. Students here find this a more empowering model because we've brought college to them and provided them with the supports to succeed" (L. Heredia, personal communication, September 15, 2010). Although initially targeting employees, Harcum at Congreso is now using its formal partnerships and informal networks to recruit prospective students. Program staff are strengthening and developing partnerships with local high schools and other community-based organizations to recruit participants. Harcum at Congreso also emphasizes this small cohort model, as well as hiring adjunct faculty experienced in working successfully with Latino and low-income populations. In addition to these faculty resources, Harcum at Congreso students can access a range of support services provided by the agency itself, including rental assistance, financial literacy programs, case management, and job readiness training. As the program director observed, the program was specifically designed to provide students with a range of support services and to address "any and all social barriers that our students would face that would hinder their academic success" (L. Heredia, personal communication, September 15, 2010).

While not a program accredited by the CSWE, the Human Service program at Harcum at Congreso represents an important model for social work educators to consider because of its innovative partnership model and comprehensive support services.

University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT: ¡Adelante! Bilingual Career Development Certificate

The *¡Adelante!* Bilingual Career Development Certificate program at the University of Saint Joseph (USJ), in West Hartford, CT, was designed to allow bilingual working adults with some college credits to obtain an undergraduate career development certificate with the goal of completing their BSW degree. Participants are admitted into the University's undergraduate Weekend Program for Adult Learners and complete four specialized courses for the certificate: *Prior Learning and Adult Education*, *Business and Professional Communication*, *Latino/a Storytelling*, and *Community Interpreting and Cultures*. *¡Adelante!* (English translation is *forward*.) is housed within the college's Department of Social Work and Latino Community Practice and serves 12 students through: 1) affordable tuition for part-time returning students; 2) flexible schedules that accommodate working adults; 3) bilingual faculty advisors and faculty mentors; 4) individualized tutoring and academic support; 5) classes conducted in Spanish and English; 6) culturally relevant curricula; and 7) inclusion of families and communities in the college experience. In addition, the program offers students a one-credit course, the *Latino Community Writing Circle*, which provides ongoing support to students in developing writing skills with an emphasis on social work writing (case notes, biopsychosocial assessments, etc.).

¡Adelante!, in its third year, serves 12 Latino students, the majority of whom are from the Greater Hartford area. According to the program director, of the 11 students in the first cohort, 100% successfully completed the Certificate and matriculated into bachelor's degree programs. After receiving a \$50,000 grant from *¡Excelencia!* in Education and recruiting two Latina professors, *¡Adelante!* has developed a promising and innovative infrastructure to strengthen the human capital of Latino adults in social work. Students earn the certificate upon completion of the four-course sequence. Each credit satisfies general education distribution requirements and is transferable to a four-year bachelor's degree program. In addition to continuing within USJ's Weekend Program for Adult Learners, *¡Adelante!* has also negotiated matriculation agreements with other local community colleges and institutions like Tunxis Community College and Capitol Community College.

¡Adelante! utilized focus groups with prospective students and employers to develop its recruitment strategies. These included formal and informal approaches aimed both at recruiting "one student at a time," and strategically strengthening relationships with larger institutional employers with access to resources for tuition reimbursement. Emphasizing the importance of relationship building and trust in recruitment, the *¡Adelante!* program director observed:

We have been going to state workforce development programs that, at least at one time, had some money, and might in the future. In Connecticut, a priority area for incumbent worker funding is health, so this is a perfect opportunity for us. So, for example, a year ago would have been the case, that Hartford Hospital had a group of employees interested in *¡Adelante!* They might have received

\$25,000 from the state that they could use toward tuition support for those employees (L. G. Gardella, personal communication 4/22/10).

Recognizing the prohibitive cost of private higher education, *¡Adelante!* has sought to strengthen relationships with institutional partners who can provide resources for upgrading their workers' skills and credentials. These included large private agencies, state agencies, and health care institutions with which USJ has long-term ties. *¡Adelante!* continues to develop and strengthen relationships with large employers in health and human services and work with agencies who can apply for incumbent worker funding.

The University of Saint Joseph offers students the most support in this area by making career development an explicit part of the program's name. The program director described how the program is specifically designed to advance student workers on a career trajectory in social work:

It's the *¡Adelante!* Certificate in Career Development for Bilingual Professionals, so it's very explicitly about career development, and that is how you attract adults to college. Not by saying, "you'll love it," and "it'll improve the opportunities for your children." All that's true, but what really attracts people tends to be career opportunities and advancement, and we mean it. So this program is very specifically looking at bilingual career development. Students begin by making an educational and professional plan, and then we help them to realize that plan. They improve their English and Spanish communication skills, which will help them advance in college, as well as in the workplace (L. G. Gardella, personal communication 4/22/10).

¡Adelante! provides Latino adult workers with a pathway to enter or re-enter college through admission in USJ's Weekend Program for Adult Learners where they may elect to major in social work or other professional fields. The unique nature of the social work and Latino Community Practice department, which also houses a post baccalaureate certificate in Latino Community Practice (LCP), provides an extended pathway through the bachelor's degree for *¡Adelante!* students who are interested in social work careers.

Discussion

The pathway programs analyzed identify several key areas of need for Latino adults including tuition support, academic support, and support services to students. Affordable tuition and prepaid tuition vouchers; culturally relevant curricula, flexible schedules, credit transfers, supervised internships; and counseling, tutoring, and mentoring from bilingual faculty are among the services identified by Negroni-Rodriguez and colleagues (2006) as critical for Latino student success in social work education.

Key program components offered by these models include academic advising, mentoring, and tutoring geared toward addressing academic and other needs of Latino students. For example, *HC4* provides its participants with academic counselors at each of the campus sites to whom they have access seven days a week. These participants also have access to tutors who assist them in preparing for the CUNY Proficiency Exam (CPE) that they must pass in order to transition to a four-year program of study.

Participants in USJ's *¡Adelante!* program are each assigned a Latina faculty mentor who provides additional academic support and an opportunity to develop a close relationship with a faculty member. In addition, three of the four courses students take in the program are taught by bilingual faculty. The small size of the cohort also fosters mutual support and community building among students facilitated by faculty. Harcum at Congreso students may receive a range of support services provided by Congreso's social service department including rental assistance, financial literacy programs, case management, and job readiness training. As the programs within the private institutions are smaller, they may have additional capacity to personalize advising and mentoring, as well as incorporate families in supporting and celebrating student accomplishments. This is most evident within *Adelante's* year-end recognition where family members are invited to a special graduation ceremony and are acknowledged for the support they have provided their relative.

The pathway programs described herein represent novel and innovative institutional responses to supporting the career development of Latino adults. Furthermore, the programs provide the field with the human capital necessary to meet the demand for bilingual, bicultural social workers. While more comprehensive evaluation is needed to ascertain the full impact of these programs, many opportunities and challenges are evident from the data available. As a descriptive case study of three programs, these findings are not generalizable. In addition, these programs are geographically located in the Northeast United States in Latino communities with large concentrations of Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. As such, the programs may not address needs specific to other Latino subgroups such as Cubans and Central, and South Americans. Despite these limitations, the programs described represent innovative approaches to addressing barriers to career entry for Latino adults, which may be adapted for use with other populations and have considerable implications for social work education. In addition, these programs may provide a blueprint for a redesign of social work education that reduces barriers for Latinos to access undergraduate and graduate social work programs, persist, and complete the MSW.

Alternatively, social work educators who are eager to address the needs of Latinos may generate unrealistic expectations of what can be accomplished by addressing the most obvious barriers to completion of degrees. In their enthusiasm to remove barriers to degree completion, administrators must be aware that not *all* Latino workers eligible for programs will succeed due to insufficient academic preparation and competing demands. Admission criteria should carefully evaluate the student's ability to persist to graduation with available resources in order not to set them up for failure.

An important issue for further analysis is the lack of clarity regarding how participants may upgrade and transfer credits and credentials from one institution to another. While matriculation agreements exist within the CUNY system and *¡Adelante!*, at the University of Saint Joseph, these agreements have yet to be solidified at Harcum at Congreso. In addition, there is a need for resolving issues of transferability of credits from associate's degree programs accredited by the Council on Standards for Human Service Education and Bachelor's Degree programs in Social Work accredited by the CSWE (Topuzova, 2006). Resolution of these issues would assist in establishing a more

streamlined educational pathway for all, which would clearly benefit Latinos enrolled in these programs. Many challenges remain in creating seamless pathways into social work for Latinos, however demand for bilingual and culturally competent practitioners calls for innovation.

Conclusion

Nationally, Latino adults suffer from inadequate opportunities, as a result of lower educational attainment, and they confront multiple barriers in their pursuit of skills and credentials (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Takahashi & Meléndez, 2004). At the same time, census data described here reveals a pool of Latinos who are already employed in the social work sector, but who have not completed undergraduate and graduate degrees in social work. The programs examined in this analysis demonstrate that career pathways for Latinos into social work demonstrate great potential to reduce barriers to degree completion and career entry. Social work credentials provide Latinos a dual opportunity to enter a profession where they may earn a livable, middle-class wage with access to benefits that will enable them to strengthen their communities as they provide essential social and mental health services to Latino populations. This dual opportunity is also highly attractive to the reciprocal desires of many Latino adults to “give back” to one’s community. Social work pathways for Latinos benefit the profession, the individual practitioner, and the communities to which they will eventually provide services (Chapa & Acosta, 2010; Hernández & Fitch, 2004; Negroni-Rodriguez et al., 2006; Ortíz et al., 2007; Ortíz-Hendricks, 2007). Social work educators are well positioned to develop partnerships that integrate these components as a strategy to increase the number of Latinos obtaining professional social work credentials.

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The Role of Acculturation in the Civic Engagement of Latino Immigrants

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Abstract: *Despite continued growth and dispersion of the Latino immigrant population in the United States, the lingering effects of a sluggish national economy and growing anti-immigrant sentiments have contributed to ongoing marginalization and exclusion, further hindering their participation in American civic life. Despite these challenges, Latino immigrants have remained engaged, yet the factors and processes that facilitate participation in American society remain poorly understood. Data from the Latino National Survey and focus groups with Latino immigrants were used to examine how variations in levels of acculturation, demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status (SES), and characteristics of the immigrant experience influence the civic engagement of Latino immigrants in American society. We found that citizenship, length of residence in the United States, and higher SES enhanced civic engagement, while brown skin color, migration for economic reasons, and Mexican ancestry decreased participation. The level of acculturation significantly moderated the effects of these contextual factors.*

Key words: *Civic engagement, acculturation, Latinos, incorporation, immigration*

Over the past four decades, the Latino immigrant population in the United States has increased rapidly and has dispersed to a broader range of geographic locations throughout the country (DeSipio, 2011; Fischer & Tienda, 2006; Fraga et al., 2010; Passel, 2005, 2009; Pew, 2007; Smith, 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010a). Latinos, both immigrants and those born in the United States, are estimated to total 25% of the U.S. population by the year 2050, and have already become the statistical majority population in several states (Fraga et al., 2010; Passel, 2005, 2009; Pew, 2007; U.S. Census Bureau, 2009a, 2009b, 2010a; Wampler, Chávez, & Pedraza, 2009). At the same time, however, Latino immigrants continue to be marginalized within American society and underserved by U.S. social service delivery systems (Deaux, 2011; Delano, 2011; Moore & Pinderhughes, 1993; Telles & Ortiz, 2008). Of equal concern, Latino immigrants historically have been excluded from multiple segments of American society, including middle class suburbs, skilled and white-collar employment sectors, predominantly white schools, and numerous social and community groups (Berry, 2002; DeSipio, 2011; Fischer & Mattson, 2009; Fischer & Tienda, 2006; Golash-Boza, 2006; Muñoz, 2008; O'Brien, 2008; Piedra & Engstrom, 2009; Piore, 1979; Sander & Putnam, 2010; Telles & Ortiz, 2008). Moreover, Latino immigrants have been the targets of harmful stereotypes, discrimination, unwarranted police intervention, and racial profiling (Correia, 2010; Fraga et al., 2010; Massey, Durand, & Malone, 2002; Muñoz, 2008; O'Brien, 2008; Portés, & Rumbaut, 2006).

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Furthermore, there has been a palpable anti-immigrant sentiment surrounding the current wave of Latino immigrants in the United States that heavily overshadows the difficulties experienced by earlier waves of twentieth century European immigrants (DeSipio, 2011; Fraga et al., 2010; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1999). Recent Latino immigrants have been blamed for an array of contemporary social and economic problems in American society (Correia, 2010; Fraga et al., 2010; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1999; Wilson, 1999). This anger, emanating from the prolonged economic recession, loss of employment, diminishing state and national coffers, and the reduction of many public services, has grown among the American public (Bacon, 2008; Correia, 2010). However, it may be misplaced, as areas with growing immigrant populations have experienced economic booms, resurgence, and in many cases, increased employment and improved public schools (Fraga et al., 2010). Nonetheless, the popular media has fueled this public outcry, heightening the atmosphere of hostility and the targeting of undocumented immigrants (Bacon, 2008; Correia, 2010; Espenshade & Hempstead, 1996; Espinosa, 2007; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1999). This contemporary environment of dislike and poor treatment, within which many Latino immigrants reside, makes their incorporation into American society difficult and their reticence to become involved in civic affairs understandable (Correia, 2010; Santa Ana, 1999; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

In line with renewed nativism, a growing segment of the American public has focused their efforts on vilifying undocumented immigrants, their family members, and those who help them (Anonymous, 2009; Bacon, 2008; Carlsen, 2009; Perea, 1997). This new nativist movement has spawned anti-immigrant legislation that aims to prosecute undocumented immigrants and sanction mass deportation. One such example was California's Proposition 187, which denied public schooling, health care, and social services to undocumented immigrants and required public employees to report them to immigration authorities. Proposition 187 passed in 1994 by a 3 to 2 margin, but was subsequently overturned by the Supreme Court (Espenshade & Hempstead, 1996; Fraga et al., 2010). More recently, the state of Arizona passed legislation (SB 1070) requiring police officers to detain anyone suspected to be undocumented, and making it illegal to not carry immigration papers. Many, but not all of the contested provisions in this law were halted by a federal judge and overturned by the Supreme Court. In 2011, the states of Alabama, Indiana, and Georgia passed (anti-immigration) legislation modeled after Arizona's SB 1070. Additionally, in 2006, the U.S. Congress considered HR4437, which would have mandated prosecution of all undocumented immigrants, as well as schools, health centers, community organizations, and churches that assisted in their 'illegal' stay in the United States. The passage of such anti-immigration legislation has led, in some cases, to an increase in the collective civic engagement of Latinos, inciting them to march and protest (Anonymous, 2009; Fraga et al., 2010). On the individual level, however, these events have caused them to retreat for fear of punitive actions by authorities (Anonymous, 2009; Bacon, 2008; Carlsen, 2009; DeSipio, 2011). In the midst of these challenges, Latino immigrants have continued to participate in the civic affairs of receiving communities in the United States. Yet, the factors and processes that contribute to this participation by Latino immigrants remain poorly understood. We seek to address this gap in the current study.

As a representative democracy, the United States selects the polity to represent them and their interests at all levels of government. The polity is elected by democratic vote, presumably based on the issues that are to become policy, and with the expectation that it represents all segments of the American public (Diamond, 1990, 1994; Van Horn, Baumer, & Gormley, 2001). Democracy is a deliberation, a negotiation of what is best for all stakeholders (de Souza Briggs, 2008; Diamond, 1990, 1994). Underlying this process is the assumption that all stakeholders should be represented in the deliberation. One critical means by which members of society participate in this deliberation is via civic engagement.

Civic engagement can be understood as individual and community-level involvement in social and political activities that attach people to society and influence multiple levels of policy (Putnam, 2000). According to Putnam (1995), civic engagement is the “people’s connection to the life of their community” (p. 2), and is considered the active voice of participation in a representative government, in addition to being a route to understanding American democracy (Borden & Serido, 2009; McBride, Sherraden, & Pritzker, 2006; Putnam, 2000). Civic engagement is fundamental to the development of public goods, as well as to matching tangible outcomes to the will of the people (Son & Lin, 2007; Tuennerman-Kaplan, 2001; Verba et al., 1995). Civic engagement integrates multiple components of communities in which individuals and groups become involved in order to adequately connect with decision makers (Diamond, 1994; García, 2003). Some of these components might be community groups, schools, trade and labor unions, sports teams, religious organizations, workplace organizations, philanthropic organizations, civic groups, government agencies, businesses, recreational organizations, and social service organizations (Putnam, 1995; Son & Lin, 2007; Verba et al., 1995). The outcome of greater civic engagement is increased connection to public officials and thus more representative public policy and public goods (Diamond, 1994; Putnam, 2000; Son & Lin, 2007).

However, some individuals and groups in American society are excluded from the democratic process. When particular groups are excluded from the decision-making process and have limited representation, decisions may be biased toward the majority and lead to unjust policy for the unrepresented minority (Bacon, 2008; Diamond, 1990; Putnam, 1995; Verba et al., 1995). In the case of Latino immigrants, exclusion from the decision-making process is linked to issues of acculturation, discrimination, citizenship, anti-immigrant sentiment, and public policy (Correia, 2011; Fraga et al., 2010; García, 2003; Hero, García, García, & Pachon, 2000; Levin, 2013; Michelson, 2003; Perea, 1997; Sander & Putnam, 2010).

Given that 44% of the Latinos residing in the United States are foreign born (U.S. Census, 2010a), it is necessary to understand the political and cultural contexts that shape patterns of incorporation into American society and civic life (Deaux, 2011; DeSipio, 2011; Fraga et al., 2010; Stoll & Wong, 2007). For example, Latinos emigrating from countries with repressive regimes would have limited knowledge of and exposure to representative democracies (DeSipio, 2011; Massey et al., 2002; Uslaner, 2008; Uslaner & Conley, 2003; Vedder, Berry, Sabatier, & Sam, 2009). Further, they may not realize that they have a voice in policy making nor have experience with electing representatives

to advocate for their needs (Correia, 2010; DeSipio, 2011). To facilitate greater representation, it is paramount that Latino immigrants be encouraged, both directly and indirectly, to become engaged in their local, state, and national communities (DeSipio, 2006, 2011; García, 2003; Massey et al., 2002; Muñoz, 2008; Putnam, 2005; Saito, 2009; Son & Lin, 2007). However, immigrant feelings toward the U. S. government can be mixed, arising from difficulties with immigration, adversarial relationships between the United States and their countries of origin, and experiences of unfair treatment in American society (Bacon, 2008; Correia, 2010; DeSipio, 2011; Fraga et al., 2010; Muñoz, 2008). Thus, incorporation into American society is an important factor in immigrant involvement in civic life and the representation of their interests in American policy (Deaux, 2011; Massey et al., 2002; Papademetriou & Terrazas, 2009; Sánchez Molina, 2008).

In this study, we seek to identify possible causal pathways associated with patterns of incorporation and civic engagement of Latino immigrants within American society. Specifically, we employ acculturation and civic engagement theories to examine how variations in immigrant demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status, and characteristics of the immigrant experience influence civic engagement. Further, we examine the role of acculturation as a potential moderator of such engagement. To address these questions, we utilize data about Latino participation in civic affairs derived from the *Latino National Survey* augmented with qualitative data obtained from focus groups conducted in a major Mid-western metropolitan area.

Civic Engagement of Latino Immigrants in the United States

A crucial feature of the civic engagement of Latino immigrants is the long history of Latino activism in the United States (Orosco, 2008). Throughout the twentieth century, Latino activists such as César Chávez have been credited for inspiring Latinos to fight for equal representation and just policy (Espinosa, 2007; National Park Service, 2009; Orosco, 2008). By uniting diverse constituencies on common interests, Chávez and other Latino activists successfully organized large and powerful protests that impacted policy on a large scale (Anonymous, 2009; Espinosa, 2007; Orosco, 2008).

In the Spring of 2006, in unified opposition to the repressive anti-immigration House Bill HR4437, 102 marches were organized across the country using Chávez's model of organizing, fasting, marching, and non-violence to exert pressure on the polity to enact immigration reform (Espinosa, 2007; Silber Mohamed, 2013). Diverse groups, ranging from first-generation immigrants from Latin America and Asia to native-born American citizens, came together to fight for a just and humane immigration policy (Espinosa, 2007; Fraga et al., 2010; Pantoja, Menjívar, & Magaña, 2008; Silber Mohamed, 2013). The marches had the intended effect of informing the public and the legislators about the harmful consequences of HR4437 (Espinosa, 2007; Fraga et al., 2010; Silber Mohamed, 2013). All undocumented immigrants would have been prosecuted, as well as the schools, health centers, community organizations, and churches that did not turn them in to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Espinosa, 2007; Padilla, Shapiro, Fernández-Castro, & Faulkner, 2008). Not only did the 2006 marches positively affect policy change by influencing legislators to reject the bill, they also awakened a passionate group of

people with deep activist roots. The new slogan derived from the marches, "Today we act, tomorrow we vote," seemed to be a foreshadowing of the civic power of the Latino immigrant population. (Espinosa, 2007). Since the 2006 marches, the Latino immigrant community has experienced unprecedented increases in the number of registered voters and interest in political campaigns (DeSipio, 2011; Fraga et al., 2010). In the four years from 2004 to 2008, the immigrant vote increased by more than 1.3 million (DeSipio, 2011). Moreover, since the marches, Latinos have increasingly chosen to self-identify as American, and in so doing, have gained momentum in the fight for equal rights as Americans (Silber Mohamed, 2013).

Nonetheless, continued racial and ethnic segregation of the Latino community hampers the civic engagement of Latino immigrants (Keidan, 2008; Massey, 2007; Massey & Denton, 1993; Moore & Pinderhughes, 1993; Pratt & Hanson, 1994; Putnam, Frederick, & Snellman, 2012; Sánchez-Jankowski, 2008; Sánchez Molina, 2008; Santiago & Galster, 1995; Wilson, 1978, 1993). There is substantial evidence that race matters, and that racial discrimination impedes integration into American society (Félix, 2008; Fraga et al., 2010; Hernández-León, 2008; Okigbo, Reiersen, & Stowman, 2009; Portés, 1997; Rivas-Drake & Mooney, 2009; Toussaint-Comeau, 2006; Waldinger, Lim, & Cort, 2007). Even when newcomers with visible physical differences from those of the dominant population of white Americans adopt behaviors of mainstream society, they may still experience social rejection in stores, restaurants, schools, housing, and employment, thereby increasing their chances of joining a racialized 'underclass' (e.g. Brown, 2007; Golash-Boza, 2006; Michelson, 2003; O'Brien, 2008; Parrado & Morgan, 2008; Piedra & Engstrom, 2009; Portés & Rumbaut, 2001, 2006; Portés & Zhou, 1993; Rumbaut & Portés, 2001; Wilson, 1993). This segmented 'underclass' group consists of other racial minorities who have not fully integrated into mainstream society and often struggle with social and economic injustice (Wilson, 1993). When social interactions only transpire within these racialized minority groups, decision makers in the larger society do not hear their voices (Félix, 2008; Hernández-León, 2008; Okigbo et al., 2009; Portés, 1997; Rivas-Drake & Mooney, 2009; Toussaint-Comeau, 2006; Waldinger et al., 2007). Therefore, their interests are not adequately reflected in the decisions made and in the public goods created.

Several recent studies have found that the newest waves of immigrants to the United States have had remarkably different experiences with acculturation than did previous waves of immigrants of European ancestry (Barvosa, 2006; Fraga et al., 2010; Monzó & Rueda, 2006; Smith, 2008). Golash-Boza (2006) found that discrimination based on race and skin color was associated with diminished assimilation of the Latino community in the United States. More contemporary models of acculturation, such as Berry's (2002), describe a multidimensional process whereby immigrants maintain varying degrees of their original culture, adopt various aspects of the new culture, and influence the larger American society with aspects of their cultural heritage such as traditions, celebrations, foods, dress, music, and the arts (Barvosa, 2006; Ben-Shalom & Horenczyk, 2003; Berry, 2002; Fraga et al., 2010; Monzó & Rueda, 2006; Smith, 2008). This model offers a strengths-based approach to acculturation by emphasizing the contributions each culture makes to American society, as well as how individual adoption of certain aspects of

American culture facilitates access to goods and services within American society. As stressed by Fraga and colleagues (2010), Latino immigrants do adapt to mainstream American culture, adopting certain behaviors and practices expected in the workplace, in school environments, and the political landscape, in order to get ahead. Implicit in this adaptation/acclimation process is the knowledge that in order to get ahead in American society, one must often interact with, work with, and be represented by the majority (Fraga et al., 2010).

A weakness of previous studies of civic engagement has been the minor role afforded ethnicity and race (Correia, 2010; Fraga et al., 2010). There have been many more civic engagement studies about the white majority than racial minorities (Fraga et al., 2010; Portney & Berry, 1997). In part, this may be because civic engagement, as defined by Putnam (1995, 2000, 2005), is encapsulated in a language of the majority, and as such, is most easily understood and measured by the white majority citizenry. However, as Fraga and colleagues (2006) have argued, it is especially important to consider all aspects of American identity in the study of civic engagement, including the understanding of race and ethnicity. Immigrant involvement in politics and in their communities is at times hindered, and at times propelled by their experiences with racial discrimination, their immigrant status, and their international politics (Bacon, 2008; García, 2003; Fraga et al., 2006; Levin, 2013; Prigoff, 2000; Telles & Ortiz, 2008). Therefore, future conceptualization and research on civic engagement needs to be altered in order to be applicable to a racialized and increasingly immigrant society (Fraga et al., 2010).

In sum, the civic engagement of the residents of the United States is what connects the populous to those who represent them in this representative democracy. Involvement at the local, state, and national levels brings the needs, concerns, and ideas of those represented to the decision makers. If decision makers do not hear or listen to all constituencies, they cannot appropriately represent them. Policy, at any level, that does not take into account the needs of all the stakeholders is intrinsically unjust (Diamond, 1990, 1994; Son & Lin, 2007; Tuennerman-Kaplan, 2001; Verba et al., 1995). When those impacted by unjust policy are excluded from decisions on new policy, then a vicious cycle of unjust policy ensues (Aguirre & Turner, 1995; Bacon, 2008; Massey et al., 2002; Telles & Ortiz, 2008).

Data and Methods

The primary data used in this study were obtained from the *Latino National Survey (LNS) 2006*, which examined the political views, experiences with discrimination, and levels of civic engagement of Latinos in the United States (see Fraga et al., 2008, 2010 for a detailed discussion of the research and sampling designs utilized in the *LNS*). A spatially-stratified random sampling technique was used to capture a representative sample of Latinos residing in one of 15 states or the District of Columbia. The sample was further selected based on the size of the Latino population as well as the rate of Latino population growth. According to Fraga and colleagues (2008), approximately 88% of the U.S. Hispanic population lived within the selected areas. The *LNS* samples were weighted by nation, state, and metropolitan area, and thus, can be used as stand-alone representations of their respective Latino populations (Fraga et al., 2008).

In order to identify potential themes and questions, as well as to ensure that misconceptions and stereotypes about Latinos and their experiences in American society were not perpetuated in the national study, the first 15 focus groups were conducted in diverse communities throughout the United States (Fraga et al., 2010). Following the focus groups, Fraga and colleagues (2008) surveyed 8,634 Latino residents using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). Fraga and colleagues (2010) acknowledge the potential limitations of telephone interviews for hard to reach participants and migrant workers who may not have had landlines at the time of the survey. Further, Dutwin, Keeter, and Kennedy (2010) note that Latinos without landlines tended to be younger, unmarried, and had higher levels of acculturation, suggesting that results from the *LNS* may not fully represent these subgroups of Latino immigrants. In this study, we restrict our secondary analyses of the 2006 *LNS* data to include only those who had immigrated to the United States and resided in one of the sampling areas. We excluded those Latino respondents who were of second or subsequent generations. Our definition of immigrant also incorporates those who were born in Puerto Rico, but were residing in the United States. This resulted in a final analysis sample of 6,239 individuals. Latino immigrants in the *LNS* were primarily young, female, and married. Nearly three quarters were Catholic. Slightly over half of the respondents indicated that they were brown skinned (51%), while the remainder identified themselves as white or light skinned. Approximately half had earned less than a high school level of education. Although 7 out of 10 were employed, annual household incomes were very low, with 40% earning less than \$25,000 and 77% earning less than \$35,000. Only 40% of the respondents owned homes in the United States. Nearly two thirds of the respondents were immigrants from Mexico; the remaining individuals were from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and other Central and South American countries. Six out of 10 immigrants came to the United States for economic reasons. The majority of respondents (60%) had lived in the United States for more than 10 years; that same fraction expressed plans to stay permanently in the United States. Although a third were actually U.S. citizens, more than half (53%) considered themselves to be at least somewhat American. Although over a third of the sample felt they were good English speakers (38%), 45% had limited English proficiency, and 17% spoke no English at all (see Tucker, 2010 for a detailed description of sample characteristics).

In addition, we conducted a series of four 90-minute focus group interviews in Spanish with a small purposive sample of Latino immigrants (N=42) residing in a major Midwestern metropolitan area. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the majority (64%) lived in a larger neighborhood inhabited primarily by immigrants of Mexican descent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010b). As a result, focus group participants were only those who self-identified as immigrants of Mexican descent. Approximately 80% were under the age of 40. The majority were women (93%). Two thirds had less than a high school level of education. Eight out of 10 participants had children enrolled in community schools. Although only 17% of the focus group participants worked outside the home, their spouses were employed at a much higher rate. Nearly half of the participants had lived in the United States for more than 10 years. Four out of 10 (43%) were homeowners. Over half (52%) of the participants were active in their communities (see Tucker, 2010 for further discussion of the qualitative research design).

Findings

Figure 1 depicts the empirical model utilized in this study, and a detailed summary of our measures is provided in Table 1. Our outcome measure, civic engagement, reflects the respondent's active engagement in community affairs, political and electoral participation, and school involvement. Three sets of contextual factors, respondent demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status, and characteristics of the immigration experience, are hypothesized to directly impact civic engagement. Moreover, we assess both the direct effects of acculturation on civic engagement, as well as a moderator of our contextual factors. We hypothesize that the level of acculturation could attenuate the negative effects that some of the contextual variables such as low levels of schooling have on civic engagement. Additionally, we hypothesize that the level of acculturation could increase the effects of independent variables that have positive associations with civic engagement, such as full-time employment.

Figure 1 Empirical Model for Immigrant Civic Engagement

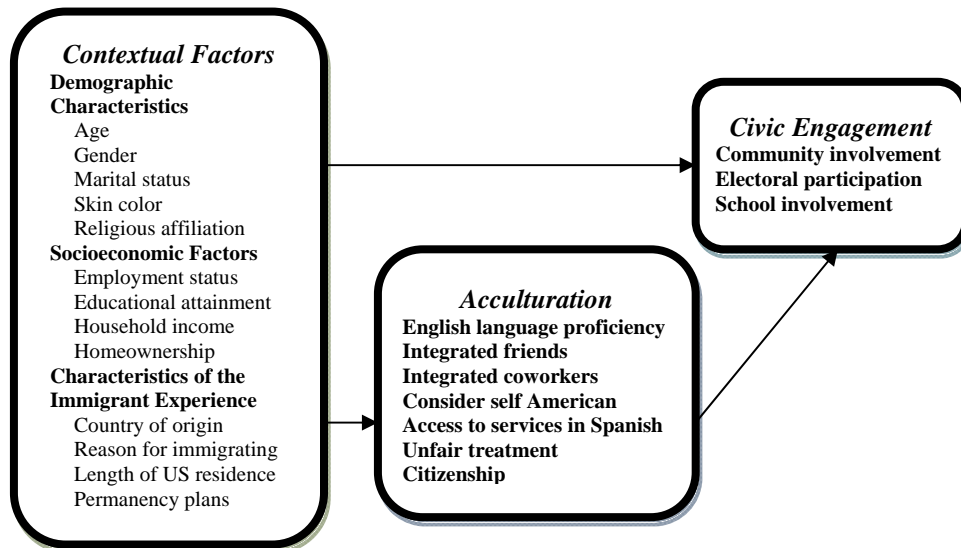


Table 1 *Conceptual and Operational Definitions of Variables*

Variables	Conceptual and Operational Definitions
<i>Outcome</i> Civic engagement	Individual and community level of involvement in social and political activities that attach people to society. Measured using respondent self-reports of participation or membership at time of survey in community groups or organizations; extent of electoral participation (registering to vote, voting in the last election, interest in politics); connection to U.S. government by way of military service; involvement in work communities by way of union membership; and involvement in local parent networks through school involvement. An index of civic engagement was created based on a sum of the responses to the above questions. Index scores ranged from 0, reflecting no engagement, to 5, indicating a high level of engagement.
<i>Moderating Factor</i> Acculturation	Level of individual integration into the dominant American society and access to its social institutions. Measured using respondent self-reports of English language proficiency, integrated friendship networks, integrated coworker networks, consideration of oneself as American, becoming a naturalized citizen, and experiences of unfair treatment in the United States. For each of these dimensions the variable was coded as 1=yes, 0=otherwise. In addition, access to bilingual services was measured using an index based on self-reported access to social/health care services, public school services, and law enforcement/legal services in Spanish. Index scores ranged from 0, reflecting no access, to 3, indicating access to the full range of services. Unfair treatment was a dichotomous variable (1=yes; 0=otherwise) indicating if the respondent had ever been unfairly treated in encounters with the police, in employment, in finding a place to live, in being paid or not paid for a job completed, or in restaurants or stores.
<i>Contextual Factors</i>	
<i>Demographic characteristics</i> Skin color	Identification of one of the physical differences between immigrants and the dominant members of society. Measured using respondent self-report to describe respondent's skin tone or complexion shade on a five-point scale ranging from very light to dark. Recoded as a dummy variable for brown skinned from the original values of 3, 4, and 5, and white skinned with original values of 1 and 2.
<i>Socioeconomic factors</i> Household income	Refers to total income of all employed in household at time of survey. Income was recoded into five dummy variables: very low income (below \$15,000, used as the reference category); low income (\$15,000 to \$24,999); low-moderate income (\$25,000 to \$34,999); moderate income (\$35,000 to \$44,999); and higher

	income (above \$45,000). Missing income data were imputed using mean substitution.
Employment status	Proxy for labor market involvement that included all levels of work, from not currently employed, to working occasionally, to part-time and full-time employment. This variable was recoded into a series of dummy variables representing full time employment, including working more than one job; part time employment, including occasional labor; and not part of labor force, including all those who were not employed outside of the home.
Educational attainment	Refers to respondent's highest level of formal education completed at the time of the <i>LNS</i> survey. The original response set included no formal education, eighth grade or below, some high school, GED, high school graduate, some college, 4-year college degree, and graduate or professional degree. The response set was recoded into four dummy variables: less than eighth grade (set as the reference category), some high school, high school diploma or GED, and greater than a high school diploma.
Homeownership status	Homeownership status in the United States. Measured by asking if the respondents 1=owned; or 0=rented their place of residence at the time of the <i>LNS</i> survey.
<i>Characteristics of immigrant experience</i>	
Country of origin	Used to proxy form of government in the country of origin. Because of sample size restrictions, recoded to Mexico=1; 0=otherwise.
Length of residence in the U.S.	Length of residence in the United States. Measured by asking respondents how long they had resided in United States at time of survey.
Reason for immigrating	Distinguishes between willing migration (e.g., immigrating for economic reasons), passive migration (e.g., being brought as a child), or trauma-induced migration (e.g., escaping political turmoil). Measured using respondent self-report of reason for immigrating to the United States recoded as a dummy variable indicating 1=migration for better life/work/economic improvement; 0=otherwise.
Permanency plan	Extent to which an immigrant plans on remaining in the host country. Measured using respondent self-report of intent to remain in the United States with 1=planning on staying permanently; 0=otherwise.
Demographic control variables	Respondent self-reported gender, age, marital status (1=married/partnered; 0=other), and religious affiliation (1=Catholic; 0=other) at time of survey.

Civic Engagement of Latino Immigrants

To measure the level of civic engagement of Latino immigrants, we created an index composed of indicators for community involvement, electoral participation, and school involvement. Subsequently, these index scores were categorized into low, moderate, and high levels of engagement for ease of interpretation (see Table 2.). Data analyses revealed overall low levels of civic engagement among Latino immigrants. Approximately 43% of the sample reported no civic engagement at all, 22% reported very low engagement, 29% were moderately engaged, and only 6% were highly engaged. Nonetheless, Latino immigrants showed considerably higher levels of participation in schools and politics. Specifically, respondents were most actively involved by registering to vote (77%), if they were eligible to vote, followed by attending PTA meetings at their children's schools (76%), if they had school-aged children. Additionally, 61% of eligible voters voted in the 2004 presidential election, and 42% of parents with school-aged children volunteered at their children's schools. Approximately one in six respondents had an immediate family member join the U.S. military and one in eight participated in community groups. However, fewer than 10% were members of a labor union in the United States.

Table 2 *Civic Engagement in a National Sample of Latino Immigrants (N=6,239)**

Characteristic	N	% of total
<i>Level of Civic Engagement</i>		
None	2,705	43.3
Low	1,387	22.2
Moderate	1,794	28.8
High	354	5.7
<i>Forms of Civic Engagement</i>		
Participate in Community Groups	791	12.7
Union Membership	431	6.9
Family Member in the U.S. Military	978	15.7
Attend PTA Meetings (Full sample)	1,362	21.9
Attend PTA meetings (Sample with Children in School) ^a	1,362	75.7
Volunteer at School (Full sample)	764	12.2
Volunteer at School (Sample with Children in School) ^a	764	42.5
Registered to Vote (Full sample)	1,541	24.7
Registered to Vote (Sample of Eligible Voters) ^b	1,541	77.3
Voted in 2004 Presidential Election	1,221	19.6
Voted in 2004 (Sample of Eligible Voters) ^b	1,221	61.2

Notes * Sample was weighted to derive national estimates using LNS sampling weights

^a The denominator is the 1,799 respondents with children in school.

^b The denominator is the 1,994 respondents who are naturalized citizens or U.S. citizens born in Puerto Rico.

Level of Acculturation

We estimated the acculturation of Latino immigrants using indicators of English language proficiency, integrated friends, integrated coworkers, consideration of oneself as American, access to services in Spanish, experience with unfair treatment, and citizenship (see Table 3). Approximately one third of Latino immigrants identified themselves as proficient in English. Over half of the sample reported having integrated friendship and coworker networks. Although one half of the immigrants in the *LNS* study considered themselves to be American, only a third were actually U.S. citizens. More than three quarters reported moderate to high access to bilingual social services, legal, and school services. One in three had experienced unfair treatment while residing in the United States. Thus, this sample of Latino immigrants would be portrayed as experiencing limited acculturation as measured by English language proficiency and citizenship, but relatively high levels of acculturation in terms of social and workplace integration, access to services in Spanish, as well as relatively low levels of unfair treatment.

Table 3 *Levels of Acculturation in a National Sample of Latino Immigrants**

Acculturation Indicators	N	% of total
English Language Proficiency		
Speaks No English	1,075	17.2
Speaks a Little English	2,809	45.0
Speaks English Well	709	11.4
Speaks English Very Well	1,646	26.4
Integrated Friends	3,479	55.8
Integrated Coworkers	3,410	54.6
Considers Self American	3,323	53.3
Access to Services in Spanish		
None	396	6.3
Low	839	13.4
Moderate	1334	21.4
High	3487	55.9
Not Applicable/No Need for Spanish Services	184	2.9
Experienced Unfair Treatment in United States	2,121	34.0
Citizen (naturalized or born in Puerto Rico)	1,994	32.0

N = 6,239

* Sample was weighted to derive national estimates using LNS sampling weights

In analyses not shown here, differences in means tests (t-tests and analyses of variance) were conducted to examine variations in the level of civic engagement by levels of acculturation and these contextual factors. These tests revealed significant differences ($p=.000$) in civic engagement for all of the variables in the empirical model. Consistent with other studies on White populations (e.g., Lewis, MacGregor, & Putnam,

2013), we found that Latino respondents who were female, married, older, or involved in religious groups reported higher levels of civic engagement. Likewise, civic engagement increased among Latino immigrants with increasing socioeconomic status. Further, Latino immigrants who were brought to the United States as children, those who intended to stay in the United States permanently, or those who had resided in the United States for longer periods of time had higher levels of civic engagement.

In contrast, skin color, country of origin, and reason for immigration were associated with lower levels of civic engagement of Latino immigrants. Consistent with the literature on the racialized underclass, brown-skinned immigrants reported lower civic engagement than lighter-skinned immigrants. Compared to Latinos from other countries, immigrants from Mexico had the lowest civic engagement scores, lending support to the argument that proximity to the country of origin reduces incorporation.

Finally, acculturation was positively associated with civic engagement. Higher levels of civic engagement were associated with English language proficiency, integrated friendship, coworker networks, U.S. citizenship, and self-identification as American. Moreover, greater access to health, social, educational, and legal services in Spanish increased civic engagement as well. Ironically, Latino immigrants who experienced unfair treatment in the United States were more civically engaged than those who had no such experience. We suspect that experiences of unfair treatment may spur involvement in the fight for social and economic justice.

We estimated hierarchical linear regression models in order to analyze the extent to which acculturation moderated the observed effects of immigrant demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status, and characteristics of the immigrant experience on civic engagement. Thus, we were able to compare differences in the levels of civic engagement that were explained by contextual factors alone (Model 1), as well as after controlling for level of acculturation (Model 2). Results from these analyses are summarized in Table 4.

Model 1 accounted for 42% of the variance in the civic engagement scores of Latino immigrants. With the exception of religious affiliation and employment status, all of the contextual factors were significant predictors of civic engagement. After controlling for the effects of the other contextual factors, the strongest predictors of increased civic engagement of Latino immigrants were length of residence in the United States, socioeconomic status, and plan to remain permanently in the United States. Compared to recent immigrants, those who had resided in the United States for longer periods of time were between 3.9 and 25.6 times more likely to be involved in civic affairs. Relative to Latino immigrants in the lowest income category, those with higher incomes were between 2 and 11 times more likely to be involved in civic affairs. Relative to those who believed that their immigration to the United States was temporary, the odds of being involved in civic affairs were 4.7 times higher for those who planned to remain permanently. In contrast to the bivariate results, the most significant predictors of lower levels of civic engagement were being an immigrant from a country other than Mexico (9.6 times lower odds), immigrating to the United States for non-economic reasons (5.6 times lower odds), or being brown skinned (2.7 times lower odds).

Table 4 *Predictors of Civic Engagement of Latino Immigrants*

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SEB	t	B	SEB	t
Demographic Characteristics						
Age at time of survey (omitted=under 30)						
30-39	.197	.035	5.63***	.315	.030	10.41***
40-49	.154	.038	4.02***	.322	.033	9.68***
50 and over	.172	.045	3.79***	.241	.039	6.10***
Gender (omitted=male)	.154	.026	5.87***	.185	.023	8.21***
Skin color (omitted=White)	-.066	.025	-2.67**	-.050	.021	-2.39*
Marital status (omitted=not married)	.111	.027	4.16***	.170	.023	7.49***
Religious affiliation (omitted=not Catholic)	-.010	.028	-.37	.015	.024	.63
Socioeconomic Factors						
Employment status (omitted=not employed)	-.003	.029	-.09	.016	.025	.65
Educational attainment (omitted=< high school)						
Some high school	.077	.036	2.14 *	.002	.031	.05
High school diploma or GED	.274	.034	8.11***	.118	.029	4.03***
Above high school	.544	.036	14.97***	.228	.033	6.97***
Household income (omitted=< \$15,000)						
\$15,000 - \$24,999	-.026	.034	2.14 *	-.052	.029	-1.81
\$25,000 - \$34,999	.138	.044	3.14 **	.081	.037	2.17*
\$35,000 - \$44,999	.229	.052	4.41***	.093	.044	2.10*
\$45,000 or more	.510	.048	10.58***	.272	.042	6.53***
Homeownership (omitted=renter)	.222	.028	7.81***	.126	.024	5.17***
Characteristics of the Immigrant Experience						
Country of origin (omitted=other than Mexico)	-.275	.029	-9.60***	-.096	.025	-3.90***
Reason for immigrating (omitted=non-economic)	-.154	.027	-5.62***	-.036	.024	-1.51
Length of residence in the US (in years) (omitted=5 or fewer)						
6 – 10 years in United States	.151	.039	3.85***	.039	.034	1.17
11-20 years in United States	.507	.041	12.49***	.151	.036	4.20***
More than 20 years in United States	1.197	.047	25.63***	.442	.043	10.23***
Plans to stay in United States (omitted=return home)	.124	.027	4.69***	.044	.023	1.92
Acculturation						
English Proficiency (omitted=not proficient)				.096	.013	7.19***
Integrated Friends (omitted=not integrated)				.068	.023	2.94**
Integrated Coworkers (omitted=not integrated)				.063	.023	2.74**
Consideration of Oneself as American (omitted=not American)				.108	.022	4.83***
US Citizen (omitted=not citizen)				1.241	.028	44.13***
Unfair Treatment (omitted=no unfair treatment)				.118	.022	5.29***
Access to Spanish Services (omitted=no access)						
Low access				.004	.044	.09
Moderate access				.096	.041	2.36*
High access				.133	.037	3.62***

Notes: N = 6,238 ***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05

Model 1: Adjusted R² = .420, F = 206.35***. Model 1 constant: B = .163, SEB = .063, t = 2.59*

Model 2: Adjusted R² = .583, F = 257.53***. Model 3 constant: B = -.399, SEB = .067, t = -5.99***

In Model 2, we introduced our acculturation measures as moderators for the aforementioned contextual factors. As shown in Table 4, the inclusion of acculturation in the empirical model increased the amount of explained variance in the civic engagement scores of Latino immigrants to 58%. All of the acculturation indicators were statistically significant predictors of increased civic engagement. Holding U.S. citizenship increased the odds of participating in civic affairs by 44%. Being English proficient, self-identification as American, and having integrated friendship and work networks increased the odds of participating in civic affairs by factors of 7.2, 4.8, and 2.9, respectively.

Further, acculturation was found to moderate the effects of immigrant demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status, and characteristics of the immigrant experience on the levels of civic engagement of Latino immigrants. We found that the positive effects associated with respondent age, gender, and marital status were further accentuated after controlling for level of acculturation. Conversely, we found that although skin color and socioeconomic status variables remained statistically significant predictors of civic engagement, the effect of these variables was attenuated once we controlled for differences in levels of acculturation. Finally, the significant effects on civic engagement of planning to remain permanently in the United States and reasons for immigrating disappeared once we accounted for variations in levels of Latino immigrant acculturation.

The Contexts Associated with the Civic Engagement of Latino Immigrants

Qualitative data were collected to provide a deeper understanding of the contexts in which Latino immigrants are engaged in American society and the processes underlying said engagement. Our focus group discussion guide was developed based on four themes that emerged directly from our analyses of the *LNS* data: (1) the contexts within which the participants originally immigrated and in which they resided at the time of the study; (2) their patterns and level of civic engagement; (3) their experiences with local, state, and federal governments in the United States; and (4) their acculturation into American society. Qualitative thematic analyses were completed to better understand the factors that the focus group participants reported as influencing their levels of acculturation and civic engagement (Bazeley, 2007; Braun & Clark, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Gibbs, 2002; Klassen et al., 2012). Within each topical area, several subthemes emerged, thereby providing greater focus to the thematic coding and greater understanding of the particular situations in which the individual participants found themselves. Through the key subthemes, the focus group participants were able to illuminate the local context of anti-immigrant sentiment in which they operated daily.

Situational contexts shaping patterns of civic engagement. Data derived from our focus groups with Latino immigrants were able to provide critical information about the situational contexts shaping patterns of engagement in the metropolitan area. Further, they illuminated the role of acculturation on shaping these patterns. Table 5 provides a summary of the major themes and subthemes discussed in these focus groups.

Table 5 *Key Themes and Subthemes Discussed in Focus Groups**

Key Themes and Subthemes	Frequencies
Barriers to Engagement	
Lack of Citizenship - Need for Immigration Reform	24
Lack of Driver's Licenses - Need for Legislative Reform	17
Experienced Harassment by Immigration and/or Police	11
Fear of Officials/Deportation Worries	16
Importance of Civic Engagement	18
Civic Engagement through Neighborhood Pride	12
School Involvement	14
Acculturation	
Not North American/Not Part of American Society	25
Concerns about English Language Skills	10
Importance of Level of Education	4

* A total of 42 immigrants participated in the four focus groups

The metropolitan area where the focus groups were conducted has a history of Latino immigration dating back to the early 1900s. Nonetheless, Latinos represented less than 5% of the area's population throughout most of the twentieth century (US Census, 2000). In the past decade, the area has witnessed considerable growth in the number and diversification of the Latino immigrant population (Durand, Telles, & Flashman, 2006). Between 2000 and 2006, the Latino population increased by 20%.

Most Latino immigrants have settled in a working class neighborhood located on the southwest side of town. By 2010, the Latino population had grown to 69.6%, while the percentage of Mexican descendants increased even more so to 82.9% of all Latino residents (American Fact Finder, 2010). These population changes increased the potential for interethnic conflict.

Economic growth within this Latino community has not been well documented. Notwithstanding, our field observations, as well as those made by our focus group participants, suggest significant growth in the number of Latino-owned small businesses during the past decade. These include numerous retail establishments, restaurants, and grocery stores.

However, as public sentiments toward undocumented immigrants have become increasingly harsh across the nation, the metropolitan area has witnessed a similar rise in anti-immigrant attitudes and behaviors. Since 2010, the local Spanish language newspaper has reported increased raids by immigration authorities within the Latino community. Furthermore, conversations with our focus group participants touched on these experiences as well. It is within this context of economic and population growth in the midst of growing anti-immigrant rhetoric and atmosphere that our focus groups were held. The findings from these groups suggest the need for further research on the manner

in which Latino immigrants become engaged within the community, regardless of their legal status.

Slightly more than half of the focus group participants (52%) reported being involved in community affairs. One tangible way in which participants became engaged in their communities has been through community building efforts in their neighborhoods. Nearly one half of our focus group participants owned their homes and reported making major improvements both to their homes and the surrounding neighborhoods by cleaning up areas previously abandoned or riddled with graffiti. Further, they helped develop commercial activities in an area that once was desolate and offered few retail options. Now there are many restaurants, stores, gardens, and well-maintained houses.

Nearly one third of the participants were engaged in their community through involvement in local schools. One woman ran for office at her children's school and became the PTA president. This level of civic engagement connected her to local issues and gave the Latino community a voice in district policy.

The focus group interviews shed light on the barriers to civic engagement faced by immigrants residing in the United States. Focus group participants identified the lack of U.S. citizenship as the largest barrier to civic engagement within the Latino community. As one participant who had been in the United States for 10 years eloquently stated, "Without papers, [we have] neither voice nor vote." Further, the desire for immigration reform and equalization of status in the United States was raised 24 times by group participants. One woman who attained her GED has become outspoken about the need to participate in politics to give the Latino community a voice. She observed, "Right now we don't have a voice because we don't have a vote. Right now we are nobody. We need to change that, we don't have an identity in this country."

In addition to voting rights, study participants underscored the deleterious effect of a current immigration policy that fosters an environment of harassment, fear of deportation, a mistrust of government officials, and their subsequent avoidance of public forums, government offices, representatives, and in many cases any activities outside of work and school. As one participant described, "I don't go out. I would love to participate, but I am afraid of the police and of immigration [ICE] because of the license. Now, I don't go out." This issue of obtaining a valid driver's license, one of the key legal documents that conveys identity as well as enables mobility in the United States, came up 17 times in the four groups.

Three of the four groups noted the increased presence of immigration officers in their neighborhoods and at their workplaces. Eleven participants spoke of harassment by the police and immigration officers. A woman who came from a small town in southern Mexico, and who has been here for 16 years, recounted a story of a police officer pulling her over just to have the immigration officer quickly drive in and demand her papers. Participants expressed fear of immigration officials and of being deported 16 times. Similarly, a young woman who has been here for 6 years revealed that her husband had been deported and she was left behind with her children trying to figure out what to do. In addition, focus group participants identified an array of indirect barriers to civic engagement associated with the lack of legal resident status or citizenship in the United

States. Although these two issues are not mutually exclusive, they seem to be discussed as if they represented the same phenomenon. A 27-year-old woman who has lived in the area for 5 years and who owns her own home told the group that she had not been involved in community issues because of fear. However, she noted, "We must all participate in the community and in the marches [for immigration reform] with or without papers [legal immigration papers] to make change."

Eight participants associated their limited involvement in community issues with a lack of confidence in their English language skills. These participants reported often remaining silent, even when they were being mistreated. One woman with less than a high school level of education and limited English language proficiency said, "they treat us like less [of a person] in the stores because of our accent and because we don't speak English." Several group members described being yelled at, humiliated, scorned, or simply ignored due to their poor English language skills. A 37-year-old woman, who owned her own home and had become involved in several community groups, said that she decided on her own that she would overcome this obstacle and began to take English language classes.

While not conscious of its influence, and minimally addressed directly in the groups, level of education appeared to be a facilitator of civic engagement. Participants with higher levels of schooling (high school and beyond) tried to teach other participants how to get involved. As one woman with a high school diploma asserted, "We do have a voice. We can move many. We just have to participate." Additionally, four other participants encouraged their fellow group members to get to know their rights as immigrants and told them not to be afraid to get involved.

In sum, many of the Latino immigrants who participated in the focus group discussions had engaged in the local community. They took classes to learn English. They also purchased homes and improved their neighborhoods. Their children were enrolled in local schools. These participants held jobs and paid taxes. However, they expressed difficulty engaging in American society because of the discrimination they encountered across many contexts. They expressed heightened concern about what they consider to be failed immigration policy, increased police harassment, local immigration raids, and the deportation of family members. They expressed interest in participating more in civic affairs, but found it very difficult to become involved within a society in which they feared officials and often lived without proper identification.

Discussion

Findings based on the *LNS* data indicate that acculturation exerts both a direct effect, as well as a moderating effect on civic engagement. Data from both the national sample and the smaller purposive sample of immigrants suggest areas for improvement to enhance Latino immigrant involvement in local, state, and national civic and societal affairs. Given the strong positive effect of acculturation on civic engagement, some of this improvement could be made in the area of incorporating newcomers into American society in a culturally sensitive manner. Using Berry's (2002) multidimensional acculturation model, Latino immigrants could be encouraged to celebrate their cultural

heritage, to strengthen their cultural identity, share their culture with American society, as well as adopt positive characteristics and practices of the American culture. This incorporation has the potential to not only increase current levels of engagement, but also to ameliorate some of the barriers to engagement that cannot be changed intrinsically (e.g., country of origin, skin color) (Fraga et al., 2010). Although focus group participants did not identify these factors as implicitly keeping them from becoming engaged in civic life, they did relate how feeling unwelcome led them to avoid involvement in a society that did not elicit their participation, and in some cases shunned them. The study identified barriers to engagement that could be tackled directly with proactive social policy. These include programs to improve English language skills, education levels, income levels, employment levels, and citizenship. These socioeconomic factors proved to be very important in whether Latino immigrants engaged civically. Such diversity-oriented social policy has the added potential of influencing the broader American anti-immigrant sentiment as well. As individuals and groups with the propensity to blame immigrants and attempt exclusionary practice see immigrant-inclusive policy at all levels, they will have less powerful fuel for their fire.

In order to facilitate the maximum participation of Latino immigrants in American society, the right to vote and the right to legislative representation must be expanded. Without these rights, immigrants face undeniable barriers to their engagement, while still being affected by policy decisions made at all levels of society. Citizenship was found to be the strongest predictor of engagement; therefore, future efforts to increase access to naturalization and broaden eligibility requirements would influence all levels of civic engagement.

While naturalization is part of the ongoing debate over immigration reform, an avenue towards legal residency for the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States at this time has been fiercely contested (Johnson, 2013). However, the contention arises most fervently when discussing citizenship/naturalization, and thus the right to vote for these millions. President Obama, in a speech on January 29, 2013, said, "We need Congress to act on a comprehensive approach that finally deals with the 11 million undocumented immigrants who are in the country right now. That's what we need" (Johnson, 2013). President Obama, in the same speech, alluded to proposals for updating the guest worker programs, legal residence, and expanded educational opportunities for these 11 million immigrants (Johnson, 2013).

The National Immigrant Law Center, and Services Immigrant Rights and Education Network support such naturalization efforts. Specifically, they argue that Latino immigrants would benefit from state and federal prioritization of naturalization services (CIPC, 2007). This is a policy consideration that could be coordinated with broader immigration reform or addressed separately. This prioritization could take the shape of creating programs to disseminate information regarding naturalization eligibility and application processes throughout immigrant communities. Additionally, efforts should target decreasing the cost of applying, reducing the obstacles in seeking naturalization, and increasing the opportunities for English language learning and American civics lessons (CIPC, 2007).

Naturalization services could also take the form of multidimensional acculturation programming in immigrant communities. This study suggests that policies aimed at acculturating Latino immigrants, by not only strengthening their own cultural identity, but also by integrating their neighborhoods, schools, community groups and work places, has the potential to increase their civic engagement. There is a precedent in the profession of social work for naturalization services and immigration programming with the twentieth century settlement houses that held many community groups and forums for immigrants (Chung Yan & Lauer, 2008; Karger & Stoesz, 2005). These efforts also provided English language classes and venues for ethnic celebrations. Such programs could provide the link between the need to acculturate and the desire to become civically engaged, as expressed by the Latino immigrants we interviewed (Chung Yan & Lauer, 2008).

In keeping with the model presented by César Chávez, community marches could be the most powerful venue for community activists to elicit participation within the Latino immigrant community (Espinosa, 2007; Orosco, 2008). Civil demonstration is a forum understood and accepted in the Latino immigrant community. The movement has grown since the resurgence of the marches in May 2006, following the passage of California's Proposition 187, which denied access to social, health, and educational services for undocumented immigrants (Espinosa, 2007). The focus group participants who were afraid to interact with the government had negative experiences that they associated with discrimination based on their physical appearance and their Spanish accent. However, some of the most vocal individuals in the groups had experienced discrimination and racial profiling, but had been educated about their rights in the United States. They began to teach the others to stand up for their rights and seek appropriate representation through their state representative and the local office in their neighborhood. These few individuals with the power to inspire the group towards activism corroborated the statistical findings that showed some increased engagement of those who had experienced racial discrimination. Community leaders could use similar marches and rallies to organize Latino immigrants to participate in local, state, and national issues. They could use the energy and eager participation that emerge from such marches to organize the community to identify, understand, and advocate for new legislation to address their needs, inclusive of, but not limited to immigration reform.

Consistent with the literature, English language proficiency was associated with higher levels of civic engagement in this study. Moreover, because the study showed English speakers to be more civically engaged than non-English speakers, teaching English language skills to immigrants could facilitate their involvement within their communities. English language ability, or lack thereof, has dominated the rhetoric surrounding immigration, citizenship, and assimilation for decades (Abraído-Lanza, Armbrister, Flórez, & Aguirre, 2006; Ben-Shalom & Horenczyk, 2003; Lieberman, 1980; Massey et al., 2002; Michelson, 2003). However, the learning of English has been used as a divisive tool and suggested as a mandate in order to attain certain rights and benefits in American society, such as citizenship (Golash-Boza, 2006; Massey et al., 2002; Rumbaut & Portes, 2001). In several cases, focus group participants who knew their state representative had greater English language skills and higher levels of education attained

in the United States. This study suggests that if English language proficiency was facilitated and encouraged, it could facilitate civic engagement as well.

Conclusion

The results of this study contribute to our knowledge of civic engagement by examining a minority group seldom studied – Latino immigrants -- as well as by investigating how their acculturation into mainstream American society influences their engagement. When considering the many barriers to engagement facing the Latino immigrant population in the United States, it is easy to understand the low levels of civic engagement present in the study findings. Latino immigrants who are the most civically engaged share the following characteristics: U.S. citizenship, female gender, married or cohabitating, older than 30, at least a high school level of education, income over \$35,000 per year, homeownership, white skin color, proficiency in the English language, self-identified as American, came to the United States for noneconomic reasons, not from Mexico, and integrated friendships and coworkers. However, these characteristics are less important for engagement when the participants are integrated into American society. Furthermore, this study uncovered a complex relationship between Latino immigrants' demographic characteristics, their experiences with discriminatory practices and policies, and civic engagement. According to the focus group participants, this complex relationship takes roots in the anti-immigrant sentiment in which they reside and work, as well as in discriminatory policies that make them fearful of participation in their community. Finally, local, state, and federal policies have the potential to incorporate Latino immigrants more successfully into American society and thus increase their civic engagement by facilitating their naturalization, English language acquisition, higher education, higher wages, and integrated neighborhoods and work places.

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Mexican Immigrant Families Under Siege: The Impact of Anti-Immigrant Policies, Discrimination, and the Economic Crisis

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Abstract: *Latino immigrants have historically faced many challenges living in the United States. The economic crisis combined with new anti-immigration policies and harsh enforcement strategies may exacerbate the stress and anxiety Latino immigrant families already endure as a result of discrimination and financial hardships. The purpose of this study was to understand the current challenges Latino immigrant families encounter within an anti-immigrant socio-political environment. Fifty-two first generation immigrants participated in focus group sessions, which lasted between 90 and 120 minutes. The findings revealed that the economic crisis, anti-immigration policies, and enforcement strategies have had deleterious effects on Latino immigrant families' well-being. Participants stated that their limited English proficiency and racial profiling were the basis for the discriminatory practices they endured. Discrimination was experienced through instances of micro-aggression, as well as horizontal discrimination and institutional discrimination. Implications for social policy, social work practice, and research are discussed.*

Keywords: *Latino families, immigration policy, discrimination, economic crisis*

Over the past several decades, numerous factors have influenced the rise of anti-immigrant sentiment and an increase in anti-immigrant policies in the United States. During the last century, wars have led to anti-immigrant policies and discrimination of Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and most recently Arabs and Muslims in the United States. Economic issues also contribute to anti-immigrant policies and discrimination. Although immigrants have historically filled the demand for labor in the U.S., during times of economic hardship and high unemployment, immigrants are often used as scapegoats and blamed for taking jobs away from "real" Americans. The economic recessions of 1990-1991, 2001, and 2007-2009 have contributed to the current anti-immigrant sentiment and the increase in anti-immigrant policies against Latino immigrants in the United States (Becerra, 2012). Such policies directly impact Latinos who represent 16% (or 50.5 million) of the U.S. population (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011), of whom it is estimated 18 million are immigrants (Grieco, 2010). This study sought to understand the challenges of Latino immigrant families within an anti-immigrant sociopolitical environment.

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Socio-Political Context in Arizona Impacting Latino Families

A plethora of anti-immigrant legislations have passed at both the state and federal levels and have impacted the well-being of Latino immigrants and their families. Arizona has been at the forefront in anti-immigrant legislation. Although the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 specifically prohibited undocumented immigrants access to public services (PRWORA; U.S. Public Law 104-193), the state of Arizona passed Proposition 200 in 2004 which requires proof of immigration status/ID when applying for public benefits (i.e., Medicaid/ACCCS, housing assistance, and TANF). State employees are also mandated to report anyone who is suspected to be undocumented to immigration officials, with failure to report leading to misdemeanor charges (Furman, Langer, Sanchez, & Negi, 2007).

Arizona has also passed several bills that impact the education of Latino and immigrant students throughout the state. Despite previous studies that indicated the benefits of bilingual education (Combs, Evans, Fletcher, Parra, & Jiménez, 2005; Mora, 2000), Proposition 203 was passed in 2000. Proposition 203 eliminated bi-lingual education and segregated children who were English Language Learners. Proposition 300 passed in 2006, requires university students who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents to pay out-of-state-tuition and eliminates their eligibility for financial aid. House Bill 2281 passed in 2011, which banned Mexican-American studies in Arizona.

The Legal Arizona Workers Act (AKA Employers Sanctions policy) was passed in 2008. In accordance with this act, the state of Arizona requires the use of e-verify to validate immigration statuses of all newly hired employees, and the state has the power to revoke or suspend business licenses if a company knowingly hires an undocumented worker. Although this policy is meant to sanction businesses that hire undocumented immigrants, few have been sanctioned, and instead the immigrant workers have been subjected to worse treatment. Evidence suggests that employers are using this policy to conduct exploitive practices, such as withholding payment or reducing pay rates significantly, while still requiring individuals to work the same number of hours, if not more (Ayón, Gurrola, Moya-Salas, Androff, & Krysik, 2012). Since there are limited job prospects, such individuals have to endure these exploitive practices in order to support their families.

Arizona Senate Bill 1070 (SB1070) passed in 2010, requires individuals to carry documentation at all times and defines failure to do so as a crime. State and local police officers are also permitted to check the immigration status of individuals they suspect are undocumented (Pew Hispanic Center, 2010). In 2012, three of the major provisions of SB1070 were struck down, but the U.S. Supreme court upheld the “show me your papers requirement.” That is, police officers may question people’s immigration status if reasonable suspicion is present (Liptak, 2012). Meanwhile, since 2006 the Maricopa County Sheriff’s department has carried out “Crime Suppression Activities” or community/workplace raids in order to identify and detain undocumented immigrants.

Latino Family Well-being and Immigration

Family Disintegration

It is estimated that 6-in-10 Latinos worry that they (themselves), a family member, or close friend will be deported (Pew Hispanic Center, 2010). There are an estimated 5.5 million children with undocumented parents, approximately three quarters of whom are U.S. citizens (Chaudry et al., 2010). Deportations of parents presents a serious risk to children's immediate safety, economic security, and well-being, as children are separated from their parents during critical stages of development (Chaudry et al., 2010). As a result of parent-child separation, children experience changes in eating and sleeping patterns, excessive crying and clinging to parents, and aggressive and withdrawn behaviors (Chaudry et al., 2010).

Barriers to Health Care

Immigrants experience many challenges in accessing health care and thus are less likely to utilize medical/social services than native-born individuals (Kullgren, 2003; Vega, Kolody, Aguilar-Gaxiola, & Catalano, 1999). Access to care is severely limited by Latinos lack of health insurance. Latinos have the lowest level of health insurance coverage in the United States. More specifically, 57% of foreign-born Mexicans lack health insurance (Saenz, 2010). Many Latino immigrant families are unable to afford health insurance (Cristancho, Garces, Peters, & Mueller, 2008), are ineligible for employer-sponsored insurance (Pitkin Derose, Bahney, & Lurie, 2009), or do not understand different aspects of insurance policies (Cristancho et al., 2008).

Individuals who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) encounter another set of challenges in accessing care (Cristancho et al., 2008; Pitkin Derose et al., 2009). Language access is part of organizational cultural competency (Hilfinger Messias, McDowell, & Estrada, 2009). Access to bilingual providers, trained interpreters, translated written materials, and cultural and linguistic competency trainings for all staff are necessary to provide culturally competent services (Hilfinger Messias et al., 2009). Evidence suggests interpreters are often unavailable or poorly trained (Cristancho et al., 2008) and confronted with ethical dilemmas during practice (Cristancho et al., 2008; Hilfinger Messias, et al., 2009). LEP impacts the quality of care, increases the risk of misdiagnosis (Hilfinger Messias et al., 2009; Ku & Flores, 2005; Ku & Matani, 2001; Pitkin Derose et al., 2009; Viladrich, 2006), and may exclude them from or delay receiving services (Suleiman, 2003).

Discrimination

The experience of discrimination among Latinos has been exacerbated with the passage of anti-immigrant legislation. A 2009 study revealed that Americans perceived Latinos as the ethnic group that is most often subjected to discrimination (Pew Hispanic Center, 2010). Perceptions of discrimination vary among Latinos with 70% of foreign-born Latinos and 49% of native born Latinos viewing discrimination against Latinos as a major problem (Lopez, Taylor, & Morin, 2010). Concomitantly, Latinos are subjected to racial profiling as assumptions and judgments are made about their documentation status

based on their appearance and English proficiency. Discrimination occurs at multiple levels. The implementation of policies or practices can marginalize or prevent whole communities from participating in society (Mullaly, 2002). Micro-aggressions are “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities...that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults” (Sue et al., 2008, p. 330).

Nier, Gaertner, Nier, and Dovidio (2012) drew from antidiscrimination law and social psychological research in their analysis of SB1070 and the fair enforcement of its statutes. They found that the ambiguity innate to what constitutes “reasonable suspicion” of unlawful presence in the United States, “paired with a lack of comprehensive training and ineffective testing procedures for detecting discrimination will likely result in many Latinos being illegally targeted on the basis of their race” (p. 1). Furthermore, in their investigation of the Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO), the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Department found that Latinos were subject to racial profiling and discriminatory practices (Perez, 2011). The report states that the MCSO’s deputies, supervisory staff, and command staff engaged in racial profiling of Latinos including unlawful stops, detentions, and arrests of Latinos; and unlawful retaliation against individuals who complain about or criticize MCSO’s policies or practices. In addition, “crime suppression activities” or raids were often initiated in communities based on bias-infected indicators, such as individuals with “dark skin” or “individuals were speaking Spanish” (Perez, 2011).

Discrimination has deleterious effects on the well-being of Latino immigrant families. Perceived and actual discrimination prevents Latino immigrants and LEP individuals from accessing care and impacts their quality of care (Keller, Silberberg, Hartmann, & Michener, 2010). In addition, substantial evidence links discrimination to indicators of poor physical and mental health among immigrants and children of immigrants (Ayón, Marsiglia, & Parsai, 2010; Ding & Hargraves, 2009; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007; Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson, 2008). For example, chronic vigilance for discrimination may result in chronic stress and this can be detrimental to one’s health (Brosschot, Gerin, & Thayer, 2006; Williams & Mohammed, 2009). Sawyer, Major, Casad, Townsend, and Berry Mendes (2012) found that Latinas who anticipated prejudice experienced cardiovascular stress and increased psychological distress.

Among Latino youth discrimination has been found to impact their educational process and has also been linked to anti-social behavior. Foreign-born and native-born Latino youth reported discrimination in their school context from teachers, white children, and horizontal discrimination or within group discrimination (Córdova & Cervantes, 2010). Instances of discrimination included lower expectations by teachers, assuming gang membership or problematizing of Latino/LEP youth, and name calling. Adolescence is a challenging time for any youth and when compounded by perceived/actual discrimination, youths’ health is placed at risk. After controlling for factors associated with antisocial behaviors, perceived discrimination remained a robust predictor of antisocial behavior among Latino youths with the odds of antisocial behavior nine times higher when youths reported discrimination (Rivera et al., 2011).

This study examined the challenges Latino immigrant families encounter within an anti-immigrant social-political environment.

Methods

Focus Groups

Focus groups were used to obtain information on Mexican parents' perceptions on factors impacting families' well-being. Focus groups are often used with ethnic and low-income communities because they are communitarian in style, stimulate dialogue among participants, and often feel safer than one-on-one interviews (Gentlemen & Winkleby, 2000; Linhorst, 2002). Seven focus groups were held at a community-based agency where participants received services. The focus groups were facilitated by the lead author, and trained research assistants attended the sessions as note takers and observers. The focus groups' sessions ranged in duration from 1.5 to 2.0 hours. Focus group data was collected between April and October 2010.

Sampling Procedures and Recruitment

The participants were recruited from a Family Literacy Program in Arizona. Following human subjects approval, the first author informed potential participants about the research project including the purpose of the study, confidentiality, potential risks and benefits, and eligibility criteria (i.e., first generation Latino parents with young children). The participants received \$25 remuneration to partially compensate for their time.

Participants

Fifty-two, first-generation immigrants/migrants participated in the focus group sessions. The sample consisted predominantly of mothers ($n = 45$, 86.5%) and one focus group that included only fathers ($n = 7$, 13.5%). The participants' mean age was 36 years ($SD=8.058$) and each had an average of 3 children ($SD=1.223$). The majority of the participants were married ($n = 36$, 69.2%) or living together ($n = 8$, 15.4%) and the remaining were single ($n = 5$, 9.6%) or reported their status as 'other' ($n = 2$, 3.8%). Over half of the participants had annual incomes below \$19,999 ($n=28$ or 54%). Most of the participants were Mexican ($n = 50$, 96.2%), one participant was born in the United States and raised in Mexico, and another participant was from South America. Participants had resided in the U.S. an average of 11 years ($SD = 5.690$).

Interview Guide

A semi-structured interview guide was used to facilitate the focus group dialogue. Several topics were discussed including familial and community strengths, family needs and challenges, support networks, and services needed to promote family well-being. For the purpose of this study, we focused on participants' stories on the needs and challenges experienced by families. Participants were asked for examples and probing questions were used as needed. A short demographic survey was also completed. Data was collected in Spanish and translated for the purpose of this study.

Data Analysis

The procedures outlined by Straus and Corbin (1990) were used to analyze the focus group data. The transcripts were (re)read, labeled, and categorized using open and axial coding. Open coding involved identifying and labeling each distinct incident or idea; categorizing the data by grouping concepts that represented similar phenomena; labeling or naming the categories; and developing properties and dimensions of the identified categories. In axial coding, connections between the categories and subcategories are made. Axial coding contextualizes the properties of the phenomenon by identifying the causal conditions by which the phenomenon is manifested and examining the consequences of the phenomena. Throughout the analysis, a constant comparative approach was used within and between focus group transcripts (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Several steps were taken to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. The analysis was completed by the lead author and one trained research assistant, who discussed major themes and interpretations. The researchers referred back to transcripts whenever inconsistencies in the analysis emerged and discussed our understanding of participants' comments. In addition, two additional focus groups were held to complete member checks with a randomly selected subgroup of participants ($n = 15$). During the member checks, findings from the preliminary analysis were presented to the participants for their feedback on whether the findings were consistent with their experiences (Armour, Rivaux, & Bell, 2009). Participants' feedback was incorporated into the final analysis. Finally, in order to support the credibility of the findings, quotes were used extensively (Charmaz, 2005).

Findings

Participants were asked to comment on the major challenges confronting Latino immigrant families. The three overarching challenges shared by participants were discrimination, uncertainty, and a lack of jobs. At the root of the challenges faced by Latino immigrant families were recent anti-immigrant legislation (i.e., SB1070) and the economic crisis that is confounded further by their status as immigrants. Participants' experiences of discrimination, uncertainty, and a lack of jobs impacted their lives in multiple ways. They described high levels of stress/depression and fear among all family members, family instability, and barriers to accessing care/assistance.

Economy – No Jobs

Pues yo creo que ahorita con la crisis económica casi no hay trabajo. Casi no hay trabajo y cuando hay no te lo dan por problemas de papeles o lo pagan muy barato. [Well, I think that right now, with the economic crisis there is very little work. There is very little work, and if there is work, they won't give it to you because you don't have papers, or if they do, they pay you really low].

Participants' comments reflect statistics indicating that Latinos experience a higher unemployment rate compared to the general population, 11% vs. 8.2% respectively

(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). In addition, it is believed that foreign-born Latinos may be the segment most adversely impacted by the recession (Tan, 2010).

La gente se estresa porque no hay trabajo. [People are stressed because there is no work].. También por falta de trabajo muchas familias se están desuniendo porque los señores se están yendo a otros estados o está quedando uno solo de mujer...o matrimonios se está deshaciendo. [And, also, because of the lack of work, there are a lot of families that are becoming less united because the men are going to other states or there are a lot of single moms left...or marriages are splitting up.]

Individuals who are employed are often enduring abusive working conditions where they are asked/forced to work more and are not compensated. This finding has been reflected in other studies following the implementation of the Employers Sanction policy (Ayón et al., 2012).

Discrimination

Hacen falta leyes que pidan respeto para los Latinos porque hay mucha gente grosera...pues sería la discriminación. [There is a need for laws that ask for more respect towards Latinos because there are a lot of people who are rude...well, it is discrimination.]

Participants reported experiencing discrimination at an institutional and individual level. Incidents of discrimination included discrimination based on limited English proficiency (LEP), horizontal discrimination, micro-aggressions, and racial profiling.

Institutional level discrimination. Immigration policies are becoming progressively harsher restricting the day-to-day functioning of Latino families who are confronted by discriminatory practices through their interactions with various institutions. At an institutional level, participants reported being discriminated against by police, educators, and social services providers whose behaviors often reflect racial profiling.

Participante 1: Los policías casi la mayoría también son racistas. Si ven a una persona en cualquier carro no más que le vean cara de Mexicano, de ilegal, lo paran por cualquier cosa y piden documentos que a veces yo creo que no tienen que pedir. Eso, eso le da inseguridad a uno y ellos saben el temor que le está dando a uno por eso también digo el racismo de parte de los policías ellos saben con que atemorizar a uno y lo hacen. El Sheriff te para hasta por un foco fundido, por un vidrio quebrado o por cualquier cosa. Y eso ya es un delito grande para ellos y un problemón más grande para uno que se tiene que regresar. [Most of the police are also racists. If they see someone in a car that kind of looks Mexican, an illegal, they stop you for whatever reason and they ask for your documents. That sometimes, I think they don't need to ask for, and that's what causes insecurity. And they know the fear they are causing, so that's why I say that exists racism from police, they know how to scare you, and they do what they do. The sheriff will stop you even for a broken light, for a broken

window or anything else. And that is a big crime for them now, but an even bigger problem for those that have to go back [home country].

Participant 2: Ese es el pretexto de ellos para pararte y poderte pedir, que te identifiques y para empezar un, para poder reportar a la gente y pedirte documentos. Si no lo tienes te piden el otro o bajo cualquier pretexto con tal de esposarte. [That is the excuse they use to stop you and ask you to identify yourself and so they can start, so they can report you and ask you for your documents. If you don't have it they ask you for another one and under whatever pretext as long as they take you in.]

Participant 1: Por eso te digo mientras para ellos es, es algo fácil mientras para uno es un problemón que se le viene encima. ¿Y ahora que voy hacer, y ahora que voy hacer? [That's what I'm saying, for them it's easy meanwhile for us it's a huge problem. And what am I going to do? What am I going to do?]

These quotes illustrate racial profiling where participants feel assumptions are made based on their appearance. The use of racial profiling to implement SB1070 is one of the major arguments held against this policy. Racial profiling is already evident as found by the U.S. Department of Justice investigation of the MCSO (Perez, 2011). Furthermore, individuals who experience such treatment often do not know who to turn to for assistance.

Participants described the impact of discrimination by police officers and educators toward their children. Before, children aspired to be police officers and teachers, because these individuals represented people who would assist them in a time of need. However, now, children fear these individuals.

Participante 1: Si tu miras unos años atrás la policía eran los héroes de los niños todos los niños querían ser policía. Ahora...miran a un policía y tienen aquel miedo porque dicen te va a llevar la policía...están perdiendo la confianza en la policía...[If you look a few years back the police were the heroes, all children wanted to be policemen. Now... they look at a policeman and they have that fear that the police will take you away... they're losing faith in the police.]

Participante 2: Y los maestros tienen mucho que ver porque...por ejemplo mis sobrinitas en la escuela...la maestra le dijo, 'a todos los Mexicanos los van a sacar de este país,' entonces ellos son niños y empiezan agarran ideas...ellos no saben ni que ni nada y digo yo entonces que tipo de maestros son ellos de educar.....[And the teachers have a lot to do with that... for example, my nieces in their school,...a teacher said, "they are going to kick all Mexicans out of the country." They are children and they start to get ideas...They don't know what is right or wrong, and I think, what kind of teachers are they to educate...]

Participante 3: Ya las personas que confiaban las criaturas que son los maestros...y los policías...ahora lo niños tienen miedo. [And now the people that children used to trust, like teachers... and the police... now they are scared of them.]

In addition to fearing individuals who used to represent help (i.e. police officers and educators), children are exposed to hostile environments where they are bullied in school and tormented by teachers.

Es que los maestros como dijo ella también están exponiendo sus ideas que tienen. Mi hija va a la high school y cuando firmaron la ley dijo que una maestra hispana dijo ‘pues yo estoy en acuerdo con esta ley porque ninguna persona indocumentada paga impuestos.’ Le digo a mi hija, le digo pues si con el trabajo de tu papa que pagamos casa, víveres, comemos más o menos, a veces compramos ropa nueva. Le digo y cuando va a ser sus impuestos él todavía tiene que pagar aparte de lo que le están quitando. Como no vamos a pagar impuestos. Tienen una idea muy errónea. Mhm, muy mal le digo de la realidad que nosotros estamos viviendo. [Teachers at school, like she said, are also voicing their ideas. My daughter goes to high school and when they passed the law, she said one of her Hispanic teachers said, ‘well I’m in favor of the law because not one undocumented immigrant pays taxes.’ I told my daughter, I told her that, with her dad’s job, we pay taxes, rent, groceries we eat decently, sometimes we buy new clothes. I added, and when he goes and does his taxes he has to pay extra from what they are already taking away. How would we not pay taxes? They have the wrong idea. Mhm, quite different, I tell her, from the reality we are living.]

Another participant shared,

Participante 1: ...cada quien vive la discriminación [...everybody lives in discrimination.]

Participante 2: De los mismos compañeros...escuchan lo que oyen en casa van y lo dicen en la escuela con los niños que no son de su misma raza, los que no hablan completamente bien el Inglés, que no sea su color, por muchas razones. La discriminación vive y ahora que tienen la idea de separar Hispanos con Americanos. [From the same classmates... they hear what they say at home and they go and say it at school with the children that aren’t from their same race, the ones that don’t speak English fluently, that aren’t their same color, for a lot of reasons. There is a lot of discrimination and now that they have the idea to separate Hispanics and Americans.]

Participante 1. Eso les va afectar muchísimo, muchísimo, muchísimo a ellos. [That is going to affect them so very, very, very much.]

As described by participants, schools are becoming hostile sites where teachers make inappropriate comments and children are bullied. This is no longer an environment conducive to learning for Latino children.

Language was reflected in most of the stories shared by participants. Participants were aware that their inability to speak English prevented them from actively participating in U.S. society as shared by one parent who said that it impacts her ability to participate in her child’s education.

Sabe también a veces si uno no habla Inglés se detiene mucho de participar en las cosas de las escuelas de los niños....Va a reuniones [con los maestros] y muchas veces no hay traducciones...y uno muchas veces prefiere no ir a juntas ni nada de eso porque no entiende....Entonces... no participa uno en las escuelas ni en los eventos de los niños en las escuelas. [You know, also sometimes, if one doesn't speak English, you hesitate to participate in things involving the children's school... You go to meetings [with the teachers] and a lot of the times there aren't any translators... and a lot of the time, one prefers to not go to the meetings at all because one doesn't understand... So... you don't participate in school things or the children's school events.]

Although most participants were enrolled in a literacy program and were in the process of learning English, their limited English skills were not enough. Participants reported that they were confronted with service providers, such as the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), who refused to speak in Spanish even when they were able to speak Spanish. Language barriers impact their ability to access services, health care being one of them.

Participant A: Em pues hay personas por ejemplo a mí me ha tocado...ver en AHCCCS que [entre los trabajadores] la mayoría habla Inglés, Inglés y algunos trabajadores habla español. Y a veces llega gente hablando español y dicen [los trabajadores] que no saben [hablar español]. Entonces he visto mucha gente así que trata de no ayudar a la gente o hacerlas menos. [Um, well, there are people that I have seen for example...in AHCCCS that [among the employees] the majority of them speak English, and some employees speak Spanish. Sometimes people come in talking Spanish and they say [the employees] that they don't know [how to speak Spanish]. So I have seen a lot of people that try to not help or make them feel less [because they can't speak English].

Participant C: Y en cualquier lado, en todos los lados es así. [And everywhere, it's like that everywhere.]

Participant B: Y aunque hablen Español no quieren hablar español [con uno] y uno se siente todo cohibido. [And even if they speak Spanish, they don't want to speak Spanish [to you], and you feel inhibited.]

[Participant A: Um well there are people that I have seen for example...in AHCCCS that [among the employees] the majority of them speak English and some employees speak Spanish. Sometimes people come in talking Spanish and they say [the employees] that they don't know [how to speak Spanish]. So I have seen a lot of people that try to not help or make them feel less [because they can't speak English].

Participant C: And everywhere, it's like that everywhere.

Participant B: And even if they speak Spanish they don't want to speak Spanish [to you] and you feel inhibited.]

In many examples shared by participants, it was front line workers who function as gate keepers to health care services who refused to speak in Spanish or to get an interpreter to assist. The following participant stated that she continuously had to advocate for herself because although she is a U.S. citizen she was often refused services or treated poorly because she did not speak English well.

A mí me pasa muchísimo simplemente por no hablar Inglés siempre pido traductor, pero siempre me están discriminando. Yo he reportado muchos doctores. Cuando estaba embarazada me pasó...que no me querían atender y simplemente el doctor me decía es que traes plan de emergencia, AHCCCS de emergencia....Yo soy ciudadana Americana...digo yo no debería de tener que hacer eso....Yo siempre les alego. Cuando yo fui a reportar ese doctor le dije a mi no me importa que yo sea indocumentada a mi me dan el servicio porque me lo tiene que dar. Le dije aunque esta tarjeta sea de emergencia...ese no es problema de él. Él tiene que dar su servicio porque a él le van a pagar aunque sea AHCCCS de emergencia....Osea muchísima discriminación. [It happens to me a lot simply for not speaking English. I always ask for a translator, but they always discriminate against me. I have reported many doctors. It happened to me when I was pregnant... They didn't want to see me, and the doctor would simply say 'you only have an emergency plan, AHCCCS for emergencies...' I'm an American citizen... I mean, I shouldn't have to go through that... I always argue with them. When I went to report that doctor, I told them that I don't care [even if] I was undocumented, you give me the services, because you have to give it to me. I told them that even if this card is just for emergencies...that is not his problem. He has to provide me with his service because they are going to pay him, even if it is AHCCCS for emergencies... So, there is so much discrimination.]

Fortunately, this participant was able to advocate for herself and knew she had rights. This is not always the case. As stipulated by the Emergency Medical Treatment Act of 1986, hospitals that accept Medicare payments are required to treat persons seeking emergency care and cover the costs if patients are unable to pay or have no insurance (Dolgin & Dieterich, 2010). Hospitals have found caring for undocumented immigrants economically disadvantageous, and as a result, have turned to contracting with private agencies that will deport such patients (Dolgin & Dieterich, 2010; Sullivan & Zayas, in press). For example, it is estimated that St. Joseph's Hospital in Phoenix Arizona repatriates 96 immigrants each year (Sontag, 2008).

Individual level discrimination. Participants also reported discrimination at an individual level; that is, in their interactions with community members, including Latinos who were residents/citizens (horizontal discrimination) and other ethnic/racial groups. Participants' narratives revealed experiences of micro-aggressions in the use of verbal or behavioral racial slights and insults (Sue et al., 2008).

Discrimination based on LEP was carried into participants' descriptions of discrimination at an individual level. Instances of horizontal discrimination were often

shared during the focus groups. The division among Latinos, based on citizenship and immigration status, was often challenging for participants.

Discriminación hacia la misma gente y luego lo peor de todo es que la gente Latina es la peor. Los que tienen papeles son los peores, no digo que todos pero si mucha gente son bien racistas. Si se ha fijado ahora en las marchas de todo eso los que apoyan la ley esa son más Latinos, más Chicanos, apoyando la ley más que gabachos, que afro-americanos. Son más Latinos que dicen 'Váyanse.' ...Incluso no son que hayan nacido aquí, que se hicieron después residentes o que después se hicieron ciudadanos son los que andan más, haciendo discriminación. [Discrimination against the same people, and what's worse is that the Latino people are the worst. The people that have their papers are the worst. I'm not saying all of them, but a lot of people are very racist. If you saw in the recent protests about all of this, the ones that support the law are more Latinos, more Chicanos, supporting the law than whites, or African-Americans. There are more Latinos saying, 'Leave.' ...In fact, it's not the ones that were born here, [its] the ones that later became residents, or later became citizens, are the ones doing more discrimination {discriminating}.]

In the following quote, a participant shares another example of horizontal discrimination, and her quote illustrates that the passage of anti-immigrant policies have also reduced the tolerance for difference among communities in general. The standards that the participant is being held to (i.e., to speak English without an accent) also reflect instances of micro-aggressions.

Y yo he notado mucha diferencia porque he tenido mis propias experiencias porque trabajo de cajera ahí en la tienda 99. Y antes de que entrara esta ley...la gente era más amable...Y ahora que entro esa ley, yo he notado que la gente no quiere hablar Español. La gente Latina yo la saludo en Español...y no me contestan en Español. Sé que me entienden porque me responden lo que les estoy preguntando pero me responded en Inglés y ya no quieren hablar Español. Es rara la gente que llega y me habla Español, todos mucho Inglés Inglés Inglés Inglés. Y los gabachos o morenos también desde que entro esa ley si quieres platicar con ellos, decirles algo, saludarlos o si me preguntan algo y yo no sé responderles bien en Inglés y a la primera palabra que me equivoqué me dicen 'Do you speak English?' Ya me discriminan y ya que ven que más o menos hablas te hacen mala cara...o dicen que quieren hablar con otro. Y antes yo notaba que era diferente ellos también trataban a la vez de comunicarse con uno mismo y ahora ya a la primera le tuerce la cara a uno. [I have noticed a lot of difference because I have my own experiences, because I work as a cashier at the 99 cent store. Before this law was passed... people were a lot nicer... and now that the law passed, I have noticed that people don't want to speak Spanish anymore. I greet Latinos in Spanish... and they don't answer in Spanish. I know they understand me, because they reply to what I'm asking, but they answer in English, and they don't want to talk in Spanish. It is rare that people who come will speak to me in Spanish. Everybody is English, English, English, English, and white or brown, ever since that law was passed. When you want to talk to

them, or tell them something, or greet them, or if they ask me something, and I don't know how to respond correctly in English, and the first time I make a mistake they ask, 'Do you speak English?' And they discriminate against me, and if they see that you kind of speak English, they give you a dirty look...or they say they want to talk to someone else. And before, I would notice that it was different, they would also try to communicate with you, and now at the first mistake, they give you a smug face.]

Participants noted that such policies impacted how Latinos were treated. Participants often felt humiliated and reported a lack of respect for Latinos. Individuals were treated as second-class citizens or lesser beings, a form of micro-aggressions (Sue et al, 2008).

Como ahora por lo de esta ley que si el mismo gobierno está haciendo que la gente nos falte el respeto, nos tratan peor que animales. Yo digo que valoran más a un perro que a uno. Porque si ven a uno perro ahí tirado lo levantan y lo llevan a curar y a uno no. [Now because of this law, the government itself is making people disrespect us. They treat us worse than animals. I say, they value a dog more than one of us. Because if they see a dog lying there, they pick it up and take it to be healed, and they don't do that for us.]

Uncertainty

Participants live in a constant state of uncertainty. What will happen with the immigration legislation? What will happen with the economy? What will happen to our children if we cannot access health care for them? What will happen to our children if we do not return home one day? These are common questions participants raised throughout the focus groups. The degree of uncertainty in their lives seemed to be the most stressful aspect of their situations.

Participante 1: Yo pienso que ahorita a nosotros todos los Hispanos...tenemos un futuro incierto. Porque nadie sabemos...yo tengo tiempo que tengo como dos semanas que estoy así, no sé, no sé qué va a pasar, no sé que voy hacer. Pero sí me pongo a pensar y si me voy? Y si no? Y digo si me quedo y de verdad me pasa algo? Te pones a pensar que tenemos un futuro incierto porque nadie, ni el que se va no tiene la culpa ni el que se queda tampoco. [I think that right now, all Hispanics... we have an uncertain future. Because none of us know. I have [for] some time, like two weeks [been] thinking like, that I don't know what's going to happen, I don't know what I'm going to do. But I start thinking, if I leave? If I don't? What if I stay, and something does happen? You start thinking, we have an uncertain future because it's no ones, not the one that leaves or the ones that stay's, fault.]

Participante 2: es un sentimiento, el sentimiento que lo que tú sientes te hace reaccionar. El miedo...[it's a feeling, the feeling that you get that makes you react. The fear...]

The uncertainty of their futures created much stress in their lives and participants often stated that they just needed some tranquility. – *necesitamos tranquilidad*. To

illustrate the degree of uncertainty experienced by Latino individuals who may be undocumented, or have undocumented family members, consider the chronology of SB1070. We ask the reader to imagine how one feels when one (or one's family member) is waiting to hear back about the results regarding a potentially life-threatening disease. Now consider experiencing those feelings for a time period exceeding two years. From January 2010 to June 2012, Latino families have been awaiting the final ruling on SB1070.

Impact on Families

Stress and depression. The economic crisis and anti-immigrant legislation impacts families' health. Participants stated that they were depressed, as a result of the recent anti-immigrant legislation. It manifested through their inability to sleep and eat, and carry on with daily activities.

Participant X: Yo pienso que nos está dando hasta depresión, nos estamos enfermado. Depresión por esta ley... [I think we are even falling into depression, that we are getting sick...depression because of this law...]

Participant AR: uh sí. [oh yes.]

Participant A: Yo me he sentido mal, hay veces que a mí no me dan ganas de nada. [I have been feeling bad. There are times when I don't feel like doing anything at all.]

Participant AN: Ni de bañarse. [Not even of showering.]

Participant XX: no tiene uno fuerzas. [You don't have the strength.]

Participant A: Hay mucha gente que se ha deprimido yo me incluyo porque si, a veces que estoy bien y otros días que estoy con una tristeza y más que si a diario estas escuchando las noticias, en las noticias que cada día más gente se va.... [There are a lot of people who have fallen into depression, including me, because yes, sometimes, I'm okay, and other days, I have a sadness, and even more so if you are listening to the news daily. On the news every day, more and more people leave...]

Participants stated that the economic conditions they have endured also heightened the level of stress experienced in their households. Parents have had to work hard to not lash out at their children or significant others.

Family instability. As stated earlier, many fathers left their families in search of work, and, as a result, families were disintegrating. At the same time, participants reported that parents who did have jobs, often had to work all day leaving their children alone. Participants went on to say that even when children were left alone, the family was still barely making ends meet.

Participante 1: ¿Sabe lo que ahorita está pasando mucho? Que como muchas personas no tienen trabajo, están preocupadas y se descuidan de los niños porque uno como adulto dice, que voy hacer mañana? ¿Que voy hacer o voy a

salir, voy a buscar trabajo? Los niños se quedan solos hay veces que en la casa y luego... [Do you know what's happening a lot now? Well, a lot of people don't have jobs. They are worried and they neglect their children, because one, as an adult, says, what am I going to do tomorrow? What am I going to do, or am I going to go out and look for a job? The children stay alone sometimes at home and then...]

Participante 2: La frustración, la frustración. [The frustration, the frustration.]

Participante 1 continua: Empiezan ellos[los hijos] a sentir, dicen que caso tiene seguir en la escuela o que caso tiene esto o que caso tiene lo otro. Y ahí es donde empiezan ya los jovencitos a salirse de la escuela, juntarse con malas compañías y esa es una de las cosas que ahorita. O la soledad de ellos, o que los adultos nos metemos en tantas cosas que... [They [the children] begin to feel, to say, what's the point of staying in school, or what's the point of this, or what's the point of that. And it starts, that is, when the kids begin to drop out of school, hanging out with a bad crowd, and that is one of the things happening now. Or their loneliness, or that we, adults, are so busy with things that...]

Participante 2: O por lo mismo, por el trabajo no estar en la casa uno. [Or for the same reason, because of their jobs they aren't home.]

Participante 3: Por tener trabajo y por no tenerlo. [Because of work and because of not having work.]

Participante 2: Y por no tenerlo. [And for not having it.]

Participante 1: Porque cuando tienen trabajo muchas veces tienen que trabajar todo el día y no tienen tiempo para los hijos. [Because when you have a job, sometimes you are working all day and you don't have time for your children.]

Fear. Fear impacted the whole family. Participants feared that if SB1070 was implemented as proposed, they would be at risk of multiple forms of abuse. One concern that has been prominent in the critique of SB1070 is that women in domestic violence situations who are undocumented will not seek help from police, placing them and their children at greater risk (Spence, 2010).

No deje que no vamos a llamar a la policía - vamos hacer abusados totalmente, van a entrar a las casas, nos va a asaltar. Van a ver...todas clases de abuso porque ya saben ellos tanto como morenos y blancos y de todas las razas ya saben que no vamos a poder hablarles a la policía. O sea vamos a ser víctimas ... [We aren't going to call the police... We are going to be completely abused. They are going to go into our homes. They are going to assault us. There are going to be...all kinds of abuse, because they know, no matter what, brown, white, or whatever race, we won't be able to call the police. So we are going to be the victims...]

Children of all ages were aware that there were unsafe places for their families and they feared leaving their homes and what their futures would bring. Consider the following quote:

“...íbamos cada rato a Wal-Mart. Y ya después, ‘mija vamos a Wal-Mart?’ ‘No mama ya no vamos a ir,’ dice ‘ahí está el sheriff.’ Tres años y es no mas lo que escucha en las noticias y nosotros que platicamos...”[We used to go to Wal-Mart all the time. Then afterwards, ‘want to go to Wal-mart?’ ‘No mom, we aren’t going anymore’ she says ‘the sheriff is there.’ She is three years old and she knows just by hearing the news and us talk...]

Another participant stated, *Mi niña me pregunta también, tiene ocho años, me dijo un día, ‘¿mami cuando yo crezca y si ese señor sigue ahí también me puede hacer lo mismo?’ Porque yo le dije tu estas chiquita a ti no te puede hacer, ... ‘¿pero cuando yo crezca también me va a pasar?’ ósea ellos están atemorizados.* [My daughter also asked me —she’s eight years old—one day she asked me, ‘mommy when I grow up and that man is still there, can he also do that to me?’ Because I told her that since she’s little, nothing can happen to her ‘but when I grow up it will happen?’ So they are terrified.]

Barriers to care. As a result of discrimination and economic conditions, families experienced many barriers to health care. Families experienced high levels of stress, fear, and depression. At the same time, they were unable to access care due to their documentation status or LEP status. This was a major concern as often, children who are U.S. citizens are denied services. The following quote illustrates the inconsistency in the implementation of proposition 200.

Participante 2: porque me quitaron el AHCCCS. Yo no soy de aquí pero mi hija es de aquí y no puedo aplicar para AHCCCS por no tener ID. [Because they took my AHCCCS away, I’m not from here, but my daughter is, and I can’t apply for AHCCCS, because I don’t have an ID.]

Participante 5: ¿quién te dijo eso? [Who told you that?]

Participante 2: si esa ley esta desde el año pasado o antepasado [Yes, that law is from last year, or the year before...]

Participante 5: déjame te digo que estas en un error porque yo no aplicaba para AHCCCS por los ingresos de mi esposo ahora [que se quedo mi esposo sin trabajo] tuvimos que aplicar. Y fuimos aprobados y para nada me pidieron identificación y... [Let me tell you that you are mistaken, because I didn’t qualify for AHCCCS because of my husband’s income, and now, my husband was laid off, and we had to apply. We were approved, and they didn’t ask me for identification, and...]

Participante 2: a muchos según los mismos trabajadores si veían que no tenías ID del estado de Arizona, ellos mismos te mandan a migración. Eso salía hasta en las noticias y puede ser que no sea cierto pero si crea miedo porque mucha gente ya no aplicó. [To a lot of people, if the employees saw that you didn’t have ID from the state of Arizona, they themselves would send you to immigration. That even came out on the news, and it might not be true, but it does create fear in a lot of people, because a lot of them haven’t applied.]

Discussion and Implications

The economic crisis has impacted most people living in the United States, but studies have shown that Latinos have been more negatively impacted by the crisis than other groups (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012; DeNavas-Walt & Smith, 2011). Many politicians have portrayed undocumented immigrants as a drain on federal and state resources, and, as a result, an increased number of anti-immigration bills have been passed. SB1070 has cost Arizona hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenue (Lacayo, 2011; National Association of Elected and Appointed Officials, n.d.) and exacerbated the problems many Latino immigrants face such as discrimination, poverty, and access to quality health care, education, and employment.

The findings of this study highlight the challenges that immigrant Latino families in Arizona face as a result of the current economic and political conditions. The participants expressed the confusion, sadness, frustration, and fear that they feel and how their children share these feelings as well. Understanding how the current economic and political environment impacts Latino immigrants has important implications for policy makers and social service providers. Policy makers need to consider not just the economic consequences of a policy, but the social consequences as well. The participants indicated that they feared immigration enforcement as a result of new immigration policies. Studies have found that fear of deportation for an individual or his/her loved ones can lead to mental health issues, particularly stress and anxiety (Cavazos-Rehg, Zayas, & Spitznagel, 2007; Potochnick & Perreira, 2010). The stress, anxiety, and depression that can result from constant fear of deportation only exacerbate the stress associated with adapting to a new country and culture (Finch & Vega, 2003).

The recent anti-immigrant policies and increased enforcement of immigration policies, as well as negative depictions of Latino immigrants in the U.S. media, have led to greater feelings of discrimination among Latino immigrants (Becerra et al., 2010). Participants indicated they had encountered increased discrimination since the passage of new immigration policies, including horizontal discrimination from documented Latinos, instances of micro-aggressions, and institutional discrimination. These findings are significant as discrimination is associated with negative health and social implications. For example, Ayón and colleagues (2010) found that Latino youths who had higher levels of perceived discrimination reported higher levels of internalized emotional issues, such as anxious and withdrawn depressive symptoms. In addition, perceived and actual discrimination can have a negative impact on Latino immigrant families because their hope for a better life may be replaced by a sense of isolation and marginalization (Finch, Kolody, & Vega, 2000; Hancock, 2005).

The marginalization of immigrant communities should also be a major concern for policy makers and social service workers. If a community is marginalized and people are excluded from meaningful participation in society, then not only will health and safety issues persist, but residents will never be able to achieve self-actualization. Participants described how the anti-immigrant policies and enforcement of such policies have instilled fear and affected their daily lives. One participant described how her three-year-old daughter was afraid to go to Wal-Mart for fear of being apprehended by the sheriff. If

families fear being apprehended and avoid conducting normal daily activities such as going to the store or interacting with others, then this will increase the social isolation of Latino immigrant families (Capps, Castaneda, Chaudry, & Santos 2007).

The strategies used to enforce immigration policies also played a role in increasing social isolation, as immigrant families feared being apprehended by police officers or being reported by social service providers – individuals who are meant to provide help and support. Police officers and service providers were no longer trusted, yet serve as gate keepers to needed services. Such efforts to enforce immigration policies have been found to deter political, social, and cultural integration of Latino immigrant communities (Romero, 2008). Instead of fostering a sense of safety, the increased presence of police and immigration authorities and patrols in Latino immigrant neighborhoods may have created a sense of fear and anxiety of constantly being pursued, as well as an increased mistrust of police (Menjivar & Bejarano, 2004). Furthermore, participants in this current study expressed concern that anti-immigrant policies and enforcement were actually creating a dangerous situation for immigrants, especially immigrant women. If Latino immigrants are fearful of apprehension and deportation, they may be hesitant to call police to report crimes, placing Latino immigrants at greater risk of being victims of crimes.

The findings of this study highlight the negative health and social implications that the economic crisis and immigration policies and enforcement have had on Latino immigrant families. Undocumented immigrant communities were already isolated from the majority population, and, despite the Supreme Court ruling striking down much of SB1070, anti-immigrant policies and enforcement strategies continue to affect immigrant families and entire communities. For example, although President Obama initiated the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, which allows undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as children to apply for a two-year temporary work permit, Jan Brewer, the Governor of Arizona, signed an executive order which prohibits individuals who received work permits through Deferred Action from receiving state benefits, in-state tuition, or even drivers' licenses. These inconsistent and often contradictory policies leave families in a state of fear and confusion, which may cause undocumented immigrant parents of U.S. citizen children to avoid applying for services their children are eligible to receive, for fear of being apprehended by immigration authorities.

Policy makers must understand that there are consequences that negatively impact people beyond the intended economic gains of targeting undocumented immigrants. In addition, social service agencies and practitioners must be informed and prepared to work with Latino immigrant families under these current conditions. If people perceive that they are targets of discrimination and fear deportation, then even individuals in need of services may avoid seeking care from community and social service agencies. Avoiding care, even in times of need, may create further health disparities between Latinos and Whites in the United States and lead to increased economic costs (Berk & Schur, 2001).

Social service agencies may not be prepared to work with Latino immigrant communities because they lack bilingual/bicultural practitioners and staff. For example, Martinez-Brawley and Zorita (2011) argue that, in addition to language barriers, social

work curricula do not adequately prepare future social workers to work with immigrant populations. Education for helping professions must do more to reflect the changing demographics of the United States and prepare practitioners to work with immigrant populations. Community-based organizations must recruit, hire, and train bilingual/bicultural practitioners and staff to work with Latino immigrant communities. It is also important that community-based organizations incorporate cultural and community strengths into social service delivery and community development efforts. Community-based organizations should partner with public health officials, and state and county social service agencies to conduct outreach and education efforts regarding immigrant rights, as well as help address the fear and anxiety that Latino immigrant families face in this current economic and political climate.

Future research is needed to further understand the impact of anti-immigrant policies and sentiment on Latino and immigrant families, including the various forms of discrimination and oppressive circumstances experienced by immigrant families as a result of such policies. In particular, close attention is needed to examine the long term impact of discrimination on Latino and immigrant children. In addition, research is needed to understand how helping professions are addressing the needs of this community and navigating oppressive legislation.

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The Impact of Immigration Legislation on Latino Families: Implications for Social Work

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Abstract: *Under the Obama administration, approximately 1.2 million undocumented immigrants have been deported, (around 400,000 in 2011), placing children (who are often American citizens) at risk of unnecessary mental anguish as well as financial hardship. With republican and democratic leadership tied up in ideological debates addressing the issue of comprehensive immigration reform, many states are left in a dire position and we as a nation end up with draconian anti-immigrant legislation that places more Latino immigrant families at risk. Enforcement-only initiatives leave children and families of immigrants in our country vulnerable. Comprehensive immigration reform is necessary. This article discusses the prevalence of such policy initiatives and their implications for social work education, practice, research, and policy.*

Keywords: *Immigration legislation, Latino children and families, immigrants*

Throughout the history of the United States, there have been at various points in time, different immigrant, ethnic, and racial groups who have suffered the negative impact of political, legal, economic, and social ramifications resulting from increases and changes in the demographic patterns of the immigrant population (Atkinson as cited in Casas & Cabrera, 2011). Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, John Ashcroft (United States Attorney General) declared that immigration rules would be the primary weapon against terrorism, and targeted Arab, Muslim, and South Asian men who were living in the United States (Critelli, 2008). “The economic and psychological effects of September 11 have been compounded by the additional toll the response to the attacks has taken on civil liberties and human rights” (Critelli, 2008, p. 146). Hate crimes and anti-immigrant legislation have festered nationally. Although, undocumented immigrants come from many countries and include diverse racial and ethnic populations, Latinos have primarily been targeted nationally in the enforcement of anti-immigrant legislation (Casas & Cabrera, 2011). This has had an adverse effect on Latino families. Comprehensive immigration reform is needed. This article will address the impact of immigration legislation on Latino families and the role that social work practice, education, policy, and research have in affecting social justice and reform.

From 1990 to 2007, the largest growth of children (between the ages of 0 to 17) born in the United States were children of immigrants, and nationally 56% were Latinos (Fortuny, 2010). Fortuny (2010) reported that beyond that, the breakdown of children of immigrants continues where 22% were from Asia; 11% from Canada, Europe, and Australia; 10% were from the Pacific and East Asia; 8% were from South Asia and the Middle East; 8% from the West Indies and Africa, and 4% were from Southeast Asia. Fix and Passel (2003) reported that 1 in 5 school-aged children (k-12) are children of

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immigrants (10.5 million); three quarters of whom are born in the United States, while one quarter were foreign-born. Dolan (2009) concurred that one fifth of school-aged children were Latinos, 91% of which were U.S. citizens.

Knight (2012) reported that according to the Office of Refugee Resettlement 8,244 unaccompanied children (undocumented) entered the United States last year. According to Capps, Castañeda, Chaudry, and Santos (2007) “in 2005 there were 9.3 million unauthorized working-age adults (18-64) and 4.9 million children (ages 0-17) living with these unauthorized adults” (p. 91). Wessler (2011) reported that there were 11 million undocumented immigrants; 5.5 million children of undocumented immigrants of which 4.5 million were U.S. citizens. Bess (2011) concurred that approximately 5.5 million children lived with at least one undocumented parent. For every two deportations, one child was left behind, placing the children emotionally, economically, and socially at risk (Capps et al., 2007).

Since the April 2010 passage of SB 1070, Arizona has been at the forefront of the anti-immigrant movement. With the growing number of anti-immigrant laws, the writers of legislation are placing the mental and emotional health and well-being of Latino children (whose parents are undocumented) and their families at risk. The Jim Crow type legislation legalizes racial profiling, discrimination, and the unnecessary harassment of Latinos (immigrants and United States citizens), as well as the exploits of undocumented workers. According to Cleary (2000) “racial profiling occurs when a law enforcement officer uses race or ethnicity as one of several factors to stop, question, arrest, and/or search someone” (p. 6). Six states, Arizona, Utah, Indiana, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina, have enacted such laws. Six states are considering copycat bills or have locally enacted anti-immigrant enforcement policies in various counties (Illinois, Wisconsin, Mississippi, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania) and 18 states attempted but failed to pass copycat bills in 2011 (Southern Poverty Law Center [SPLC], 2011b). The National Council of La Raza (NCLR: 2011a; 2011b) has been following the national copycat landscape. Alabama’s HB 56 is one of the harshest immigration laws and it has been in effect since June 2012. Alabama’s HB 56 has terrorized (Latino) families and children who are now afraid to go to school, since schools are required to check on the immigration status of the students (SPLC, 2011a). Parents are denied the right to attend their children’s school functions without a State of Alabama ID. Among other things, if a person does not have a State of Alabama ID card, that person is denied a water service connection, regardless of their ability to pay the fee. In addition, immigration documents must always be carried by all immigrants. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, a victim of domestic violence was threatened with deportation if she pursued seeking a court order of protection by a judge elected to serve the community. It is important to note that victims of abuse qualify for U-visas, and victims of trafficking qualify for T-visas according to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Immigration and human and civil rights advocates consider HB 56 the most draconian anti-immigrant law (Lewis, 2011).

Secure Communities

Congress intended for the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) “Secure Communities” program to be used as a tool to assist local police to “identify aliens convicted of a crime, sentenced to imprisonment, and who may be deportable” (Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights [ICIRR], 2011, p. 4). The overall goal of this program was to deport criminals who were undocumented. Yet, the program has swept up immigrants (fathers, mothers, and students) with no criminal convictions, and who have not posed harm to the community, resulting in separated families. Congress has referred to this as “Collateral Damage.” “More than three-quarters (77%) of all immigrants arrested by ICE in Illinois under ‘Secure Communities’ through July 2010 have no criminal convictions” (ICIRR, 2011, p. 1). As of November 2011, 969 counties in 37 states signed onto ‘Secure Communities’ (Illinois signed on November 2009) and further participation is expected nationwide by 2013. Local law enforcement agencies in many states and cities can enforce immigration laws for any minor state law infraction. This has had a negative impact on the families, and in particular the children who have increased stress levels due to the fear of deportation and separation from their undocumented parents.

According to the ICIRR (2011), “Secure Communities” encourages racial profiling. For example, many local police set up checkpoints and other operations to target Latinos and other immigrants for minor traffic infractions like windshield obstructions. Federal law requires that detainees be held for only 48 hours, yet often they are held in jails for two weeks until ICE arrives, which costs taxpayers money. “Secure Communities” also undermines the normal trust between immigrant communities and the police. There is a lack of transparency as ICE has not published any figures on the numbers of identified immigrants, arrests, and deportations (after litigation) since September 2010, and since July 2010 for county-level. Counties are not allowed to opt out.

“Secure Communities” was enacted to keep communities safe by primarily deporting undocumented “criminals,” yet it has increased racial profiling and has targeted parents, and students for minor vehicle infractions. Once the local police departments have initiated participation with “Secure Communities” they are not allowed to opt out even though some Sheriffs have spoken out against this program. There is also a lack of transparency (since the year 2010) even when data has been requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

The following will address how “Secure Communities” along with workplace raids has impacted detentions and deportations, detention centers, and foster care placement.

Detentions and Deportations

Between 2002 and 2006 the number of workplace raids that led to the arrest of undocumented immigrants increased sevenfold from 500 to 3600 (Capps et al., 2007). Deportations hit a record high (nearly 400,000) in 2011 under the Obama administration (SPLC, 2011b). Jorge Ramos (Al Punto con Jorge Ramos, 9/2/2012) reported that approximately 1.2 million undocumented immigrants have been deported in the four years of the Obama administration. The detentions and deportations of mothers and

fathers have emotionally and economically placed their children at risk by dividing the family (Critelli, 2008). Many children who are American citizens have returned (with their undocumented parents) to countries that are foreign to them.

Detention Centers

Bernstein (2011) reported that companies are making a massive profit with detention centers, jails, and prisons used for immigration detention globally, particularly in the United States, Britain, and Australia. Bernstein (2011) and FRONTLINE (2011) also noted that widespread abuse, neglect, and death have occurred in the detention settings, and human rights groups have advocated that detention has not worked as a deterrent, nor has it accelerated the deportation process. Currently, Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) targeted Crete, Illinois to build a new immigrant detention facility after the State Senate voted (53-1) to ban the building of private prisons in Illinois (ICIRR, 2012). According to the ICIRR (2012), in order to circumvent state law, ICE and the federal government are negotiating with the City of Crete rather than the State of Illinois.

Foster Care Placement

Chaudry and colleagues (2010) reported that ICE issued guidelines that “FOTs should not take into custody children under age 18 who are citizens or permanent residents but instead should refer them, in order, to child welfare authorities, local law enforcement agencies, or a third party designated by the parent” (p. 20). According to Wessler (2011), in some cases ICE contacts the Child Protection Services (CPS) following the arrest of an undocumented immigrant, and in other cases the parents are just detained.

Wessler (2011) identified at least 22 states where victims of domestic violence are arrested, detained, and separated from their children, and consequently have no idea where their children are. The undocumented victims of domestic violence will be at risk of further abuse and possible death, out of fear of deportation and separation from their children. These are human rights and social justice issues.

Wessler (2011) reported that 46,000 of those deported between January and June of 2011 were parents of children who are American citizens. Typically, when a child has been in foster care for 15 of any 22 months, “federal law requires CPS to petition the court to terminate parental rights (Wessler, 2011, p. 7). There are 5,100 children of deported or detained parents currently in foster care (Democracy Now Organization, 2011; Wessler, 2011). According to Wessler (2011), if nothing changes, and no action is taken, this number will increase to 15,000 in 5 years.

Most child welfare departments do not have systemic policies aimed at uniting the deported or detained families. Thus, the children are separated for extended periods and sometimes permanently. The implications for the emotional well-being of both the children and the parents are devastating, since the immigration detention severs communication between the families (Wessler, 2011). The American Humane

Association (AHA: 2010) noted that children (including the children of immigrant families) who are placed in the child welfare system often lack a strong relationship with their caregiver, which is their most critical protective factor. Bowlby's attachment theory is highly relevant when addressing the impact that separating children from their undocumented parents has on the emotional well-being of the Latino children.

Attachment Theory

Children are one of our most vulnerable populations and they need our protection and guidance. Children are developmentally dependent on their parents and rely on their parents for all of their basic needs (care and nurturing, protection, emotional, and financial well-being) (Romero, 2006, 2009). According to Bowlby (1980), a child's loss or separation from a mother figure/caregiver can evoke psychopathology. There also appears to be a link between childhood separation and loss and adult psychopathology. Thus given Bowlby's research on attachment theory, the anti-immigrant legislation and laws are placing Latino children (and the children of other immigrants) at risk of increased psychological duress due to the separation from their parents caused by detentions, deportations (removals), and the children's placement into foster care. Psychologists are concerned that depression and other mental health issues can affect children who are separated from their undocumented parents (Capps et al., 2007). According to studies, immigrants may not experience more psychological distress or mental illness than nonimmigrants (Alegria, Canino, Stinson, & Grant as cited in the American Psychological Association [APA], 2012). "When immigrants do experience mental health difficulties, for many it is related to the immigration experience" (APA, 2012, p. 8). Leaving their country of origin and their extended families behind to live in another country where language, customs, and life as they knew it, are new, is a huge culture shock for many. For the undocumented immigrants it is compounded given the current immigration legislations because the children and parents face the fear of separation from one another due to the undocumented status of the parents and/or children, and this can cause toxic stress. The toxic stress affects both the undocumented immigrants and their children, many of whom are American citizens by birth and are due the same protections and rights as any child born in this country based on the United States constitution. The children are integrated in the community, schools, and every facet of life in the United States, and this is the only place they know as home. "Exposure to violence and other sources of toxic stress is considered a serious public health issue around the world because of its impact on individuals, families, communities, and societies" (AHA, 2010, p. 9). A strong relationship with the caregiver is a critical factor that is necessary for children to fare well.

The following section will address education, the Dream Act, the use of prosecutorial discretion, the contributions of immigrants as job creators and tax contributors, and conclude with considering the implications for social work practice, education, policy, and research.

Education

Education is one of the basic human rights. Dolan (2009) reported that 20.5% of all school-aged children are Latino, and 91% are citizens of the United States. Latino children account for 24% of the population under the age of five, yet they are grossly underrepresented in early childhood programs (Dolan, 2009; Perez, 2000). Latino and Black children are more likely to attend schools with a higher concentration of poverty. Furthermore, Dolan reported that Latinos are most likely to attend community colleges; less likely than all racial groups to obtain financial assistance to obtain a bachelor's degree; and less likely to have expectations of receiving a bachelor's degree.

According to Faulkner and Berger Cardoso (2010) immigrant children had poorer outcomes in adulthood when compared to non-immigrant peers. Furthermore, children who immigrated to the United States prior to the age of 12 (generation 1.5), fared lower in economic advantage and job prestige when compared to 2nd generation individuals (Faulkner & Berger Cardoso, 2010). There is a positive correlation between higher GPAs and higher job prestige. Educational attainment is lower for immigrant children than non-immigrant peers. Latino children have the lowest educational attainment rates in the country and the highest drop-out rates, exceeding both white and black students (Lopez, 2005; Olivos & Mendoza, 2010). Chaudry and Fortuny (2010) reported that immigrant families had lower wages and income.

Despite the Supreme Court's Plyler v. Doe decision that held the entitlement of undocumented children to receive a primary and secondary state-funded education and educational equality, the undocumented children are caught in the midst of the "immigration crisis" (Lopez, 2005; Olivos & Mendoza, 2010). Alabama's anti-immigrant legislation is reported to deter the enrollment of children of immigrants by verifying the immigration status of the children and their parents (SPLC, 2011a). The State Superintendent of Education in Alabama issued a memo regarding a revision to the attendance manual following the Alabama immigration law, pertaining to all initial enrollments as of September 1, 2011 (Morton, 2011). All students who are registering in Alabama elementary and secondary school for the first time as of September 1, 2011 are required to submit an original or certified birth certificate, or supplemental documents, otherwise they will be reported to the State Department of Education (Morton, 2011). This will deter enrollment of children of undocumented migrant workers who also have the arduous task of maintaining regular school enrollment since they typically travel seasonally from state to state to harvest crops. Olivos and Mendoza (2010) also noted the importance that school educators/personnel play in allowing Latino parents access to educational meetings.

Access to higher education is very challenging for undocumented students due to: denial of admission, lack of access to student loan, and being charged out of state fees (when they have resided in the state) (Lopez, 2005). According to Professor Victor Romero (as cited by Lopez):

[W]ithout a guarantee that an undocumented person can achieve lawful immigration status following graduation from college, such a person will always live under the double threat of being ineligible to lawfully hold a job and possible

removal from the United States. And since immigration regulation is a federal power, state legislatures could not tie academic achievement or state residency to immigration status. The power to change one's immigration status rests solely on Congress's shoulders. (p. 1404)

The Dream Act

The DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act) (H.R. 6497) was first introduced in 2001; it passed the House by a vote of 216 to 198 on December 8, 2010, but was defeated in the Senate. The DREAM Act would have benefited not only the young people in "immigration limbo" who grew up in this country and graduated from high school, but it could have reduced the "federal deficit by \$2.2 billion over 10 years" (National Immigration Law Center, 2010, p. 1). In addition, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the DREAM Act would have decreased the federal budget by \$1.4 billion in 10 years due to increased tax revenues (The White House, 2011).

Qualifications for the DREAM Act included the following: undocumented students of good moral character who arrived to the U.S. prior to age 15 (at least five years prior to the enactment of the bill) and who are under the age of 30, would be eligible for conditional nonimmigrant status, after they were accepted to college, graduated from high school, or obtained a GED in the United States. Students who posed a security risk, committed crimes, or were ineligible, inadmissible, or removable based on certain other grounds, would not be eligible. Conditional nonimmigrant status gives individuals the eligibility to drive, work, go to school, obtain student loans, and be eligible for the federal work study program. The process involves 10 years of conditional nonimmigrant status demonstrating good moral character, not committing crimes, avoiding violation of travel restrictions, and paying back-taxes, followed by three years with a permanent resident status, and lastly becoming eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship.

The Illinois DREAM Act, SB 2185 (Illinois General Assembly, 2012; Immigrant Youth Justice League, 2011) gives hope to Illinois undocumented students who meet the criteria for inclusion to attend college and benefit from a privately-funded scholarship program. They can invest and save money for their education by using the Illinois Prepaid Tuition Plan.

Prosecutorial Discretion

On June 15, 2012 President Obama announced an immigration policy regarding the use of prosecutorial discretion by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in regards to the handling of cases of undocumented individuals who were brought to this country as children. Under this policy, undocumented individuals who meet the criteria will be allowed to remain in the United States for two years. In a memorandum issued by Janet Napolitano (2012), Secretary of Homeland Security, the following criteria must be met prior to considering prosecutorial discretion for the individual:

- came to the United States under the age of sixteen;

- has continuously resided in the United States for at least five years preceding the date of this memorandum and is present in the United States on the date of this memorandum;
- is currently in school, has graduated from high school, has obtained a general education development certificate, or is an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States;
- has not been convicted of a felony offense, a significant misdemeanor or offense, multiple misdemeanor offenses, or otherwise poses a threat to national security or public safety; and
- is not above the age of thirty (Reno, 2012, p. 1).

This policy has been in effect since August 15, 2012 and has attracted a large number of qualified individuals.

Immigrants are Job Creators and Tax Contributors

According to the White House (2011) nearly 30% of immigrants are more likely than non-immigrants to start a business, and they compose 16.7% of (all) new business owners in this country generating \$67 billion of the United State's \$577 billion business income.

Immigrants started 25 percent of the highest-growth companies between 1990 and 2005, and these companies directly employ an estimated 220,000 people inside the United States. These immigrant-founded companies include Intel, Google, Yahoo, and eBay, which have all helped drive American leadership in the computer and internet revolutions and have stimulated business and job creation throughout our economy. These immigrants give the U.S. workforce an important economic advantage. Research shows that immigrants are more likely than U.S. born workers to start new businesses and are among the most prolific inventors in the American economy, generating ideas that lead to new products and more jobs in many sectors including pharmaceuticals and information technology. (White House, 2011, p. 11)

Paral (2006) reported that in Illinois, 38% of college graduates are foreign born. Immigrants in the United States currently represent 47% of the engineers (with doctorate or bachelor's degrees), and 24% of the scientists (White House, 2011). The new immigrant populations tend to be younger than native-born citizens, which helps counter the fiscal effects of the aging population in this country (Paral, 2006; White House, 2011). In Illinois, "The addition of immigrants permits the state to maintain workforce growth" (Paral, 2006, p. 2). The IRS estimates that "undocumented immigrants paid almost \$50 billion in federal taxes between 1996-2003. These taxes include payroll and social security (about \$8.5 billion per year), property (directly or as part of rental payments), and sales taxes" (White House, 2011, p. 13). Additionally, more than 114,000 immigrants are active-duty service members and represent nearly 8% of the U.S. Military (White House). As of January 2009, the White House reported that 20,000 immigrants who serve in the military have been naturalized.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Social workers must confront conditions (social, political, and economic) that challenge the human rights of immigrants from a social justice perspective (Critelli, 2008; Ortiz, Garcia, & Hernandez, 2012). Social workers and counselors serve in crucial roles such as: providing therapy and information and referral services, community activists, and change agents that drive social policy. Without comprehensive immigration reform, many children of undocumented immigrants live in fear that their parents and possibly they themselves may be deported. The children may benefit from social work and counseling services to help them process their fear of separation and loss of their parent(s) due to immigration status. Counseling services can also be offered to children who have been placed in foster care. Wessler (2011) conservatively estimates that 5,100 children of undocumented immigrants are placed in foster homes and make up 1.25% of children placed in foster care. Cultural sensitivity with this vulnerable population is a growing area of need. Referral services to appropriate agencies on an as-needed basis is crucial. The children may also benefit from free/reduced lunch and Kid Care since many live below the levels of poverty. Berk, Schur, Chavez, and Frankel (2000) reported that few undocumented immigrants access health care, with the exception of childbirth services.

Increasing school counseling programs is of utmost importance for the social-emotional well-being of children. Given the compulsory attendance law, school social workers and counselors are in a crucial position to offer support to all school-aged children, including the undocumented. School social workers can serve as a resource for the students and their families, given the recent memorandum on the revisions of the Alabama School Attendance Manual in relation to documentation needed for the enrollment of incoming students issued by the State Superintendent of Alabama. Some school social workers may presume that they do not have the skills or language to assist in this "immigration" situation; when in fact, school social workers are more than qualified to address this loss issue.

On November 26, 2011 (according to a San Antonio News Station) a young undocumented immigrant in McAllen, Texas committed suicide and left a note to his devastated family noting that he had no will to live because he was undocumented and not able to attend college. Many young students are devastated by the plight of their undocumented immigrant status because it causes not only emotional but financial turmoil, since they are not able to get a driver's license, get a job, attend college and pursue the "American dream." Many children were brought into this country when they were young and have only known this country to be their home. For the majority, their dominant language is English and they have lived and attended schools in this country. Social workers should advocate for comprehensive immigration reform.

Using a social justice theoretical framework, social workers have the skills to work with organizations and the media to bring to light the plight of immigrant families. Social workers are trained in community organization and should use this skill to advocate for immigrants. Child welfare agencies and caseworkers are challenged to provide services to diverse populations using cultural sensitivity. Social work practice should be child

focused, strengths based, culturally competent, community based, individualized to meet the unique needs of the family, and offer family centered services (AHA, 2010).

Implications for Social Work Education

Given the growing number of deportations faced by immigrants in this country the impact this has on Latino school-aged children and their families is enormous (SPLC, 2011a). Social work education needs to continue to address global issues (transnational issues and immigration) in the social work curriculum. Social work macro practice (Netting, Kettner, McMurtry, & Thomas, 2012) also needs to address the issues of the impact of immigration. Ortiz, Garcia, and Hernandez (2012) recommend that a “working with Latinos and immigrants” curriculum be developed by CSWE, BPD, NADD, and GADE (p. 201). Community organization courses need to address how to work with and empower the immigrant population (NCLR, 2011b). Advocacy groups have been on the forefront of emphasizing social events that impact vulnerable groups. Social workers can play a crucial role in community activism and organization and develop culturally sensitive curricula to work with immigrants.

Given the growing number of Latinos in this country, schools of social work must recruit and retain Latino students and faculty (Ortiz et al., 2012). Cultural and linguistic competence is necessary when working with racial and ethnic populations, is essential for their emotional well-being, and helps to reduce health disparities among these groups (Sanchez, Chapa, Ybarra, & Martinez, 2012). Social work students need to be able to address and work with populations who are undocumented, given the growing number of undocumented persons and the increase in anti-immigrant legislation. Many state legislatures implement language that warns against those who provide services to the undocumented. Therefore, it is imperative that our national and state associations take a public stand against xenophobic anti-immigrant legislation, because it violates human and civil rights, and social and economic justice.

Implications for Policy

Human well-being can be achieved by creating policies and services that impact quality of life. Social workers are change agents who can provide leadership for such policies (Council of Social Work Education, 2008). State and national social work organizations can take the lead to support comprehensive immigration reform. Globalization also plays a role in transnational migration that cannot be overlooked. Comprehensive immigration reform must be addressed by the federal government, because without bipartisan leadership, many states can end up like Arizona, Alabama, Georgia, Utah, Indiana, and South Carolina, which have mirrored legislation that violates the civil and human rights of immigrant families and their children who are often citizens of the United States.

Immigration policy must minimize the pronounced waiting list for those who have applied for residency (Flynn & Dalmia, 2008). Furthermore, immigration policy and reform should ensure immigrants the right to due process similar to that used for the criminal justice system. Currently, undocumented immigrants do not have the right to due

process, which includes: Miranda warnings, lawyer access, right to a bail hearing, speedy trial, trial by jury, as well as restrictions against illegally-obtained evidence.

Many immigrants are held in detention camps for what appears to be an unlimited amount of time and are treated as criminals. In Illinois, approximately 77% of the immigrants being held are facing charges related to immigration and documentation issues rather than crimes that are violent in nature. This detention and deportation of undocumented immigrants is aimed at deterring their employment, yet it takes a terrible toll on the children and their families; many of which live below the poverty line.

“SB 1070-style laws impose unfounded mandates on police, jails, and courts; drive away workers, taxpayers, and consumers upon whom the state economy depends; and invite costly lawsuits and tourist boycotts” (Immigration Policy Center, 2011, p. 1). Few states can afford these economic consequences. Fitz and Kelley (2010) reported that four months after Arizona passed S. B. 1070, Arizona’s Hotel and Lodging Association reported a loss of 15 million dollars in lodging revenues, but Fitz and Kelley estimated that 45 million dollars would have been a more accurate figure. Many farmers throughout the United States reported a loss of crops, as well as income due to the anti-immigrant legislation that drove their workers, many of which were undocumented, away. Many farmers reported that Americans would not take these hard labor jobs in the fields.

Churches and other faith-based organizations have been safe havens for the immigrant community and play a critical role in the distribution of services to support communities; social workers collaboration with these groups is beneficial. Some schools have played a positive role to support students who have faced deportation. Schools can make the enrollment process more user-friendly and not a deterrent for parents who may need an interpreter to register their children, or may not understand the educational system. School office staff may benefit from cultural sensitivity training, and social workers have the expertise to provide this training. In addition, schools should provide the necessary academic and emotional support to all enrolled students. An increase in early childhood education programs will provide children of immigrants who may speak another language at home the opportunity to learn English as they build their basic skills. School social workers and counselors play a crucial role in these settings, and, in addition, can offer counseling services for the children who have experienced a separation from their parents. Immigrant community organizations and leaders have provided a network to address concerns that impact the community and should have plans that are ready to implement in cases of need (Capps et al., 2007).

Implications for Social Work Research

The importance and need for further research and action on the impact of immigration on children, families, communities, and our nation is urgent and of utmost relevance to the body of research in the social work profession. State by state, the growing number of anti-immigrant legislation continues to fester and sever family ties, an important foundational element of our society. The well-being of vulnerable populations is at stake.

Social workers have the expertise and the experience to contribute to research on the need for comprehensive immigration reform and the impact of immigration legislation on Latino families. Research is crucial to understand the implications that toxic and constant stress and trauma have on children of immigrants and Latino families. The growing number of children who are placed in foster care because their parents are detained or deported demands further study. Research is also needed on the undocumented victims of domestic violence. Further research is necessary on the impact that legal channels of immigration would have on the economy of the United States. Immigration reform is necessary and merits research. Paral (2006) reported that "...immigration policy is economic development policy" (p. 12).

Discussion

Many believe that immigration is primarily a Latino issue, when in reality immigrants come from diverse countries. The Latino population is one of the largest minority groups in this country and Latino families have been targeted by draconian anti-immigration legislations. Enforcement-only policies are devastating for immigrant families, their children, and our nation as a whole.

While the issue of undocumented immigration applies to a larger group, recent anti-immigrant legislation (state and local) has primarily targeted the Latino immigrants. In Arizona, SB 1070 led the way to racial profiling targeting the Latino population, many of whom are U.S. citizens. Latino families have endured the impact of massive detentions. Many Latinos in detention centers suffer abuse, neglect, and death. Five thousand one hundred children who are currently in foster care are there because their parents were placed in detention centers or deported and their parental rights were terminated (Democracy Now Organization; Wessler, 2011). The highest numbers of deportations in this country have been under the Obama administration and they carry a heavy toll on the Latino children and their families. Enforcement-only initiatives do not work.

According to the Immigration Policy Center (2011) the estimated cost for enforcing SB 1070-style immigration enforcement is astronomical. Ogden (2006) an Arizona sheriff, reported on the projected high costs of law enforcement (officers, time, costs); jail operations (per diem rates, additional jail beds); the building of additional jails (plan, staff, finance); and criminal agencies (county attorneys and support staff, court rooms, support offices) as they relate to Arizona SB 1070-style legislation. In addition to the issues brought up by Ogden (2006) and the Immigration Policy Center (2001) there is a loss to the economy (decrease in economic output, consumer purchasing power with the loss of workers, tax payers, and consumers, and tax revenue) as well as legal costs related to SB 1070-style legislation and "Secure Communities." Due to SB 1070, Arizona endured astounding economic impacts related to drops in tourism and boycotts.

It is imperative that lawmakers understand the economic contributions of Latinos in this country. Latino students will be the backbone of the U.S. economy (Dolan, 2009). All Latino students should be afforded their basic human right to an education. Many Latino families live in impoverished neighborhoods and their children attend schools with higher poverty levels. Education should be equitable for all children regardless of

where they live. Education is crucial for reaching the American dream and the DREAM Act will provide students the opportunity to succeed. The DREAM Act could positively impact the economy by reducing the federal deficit (National Immigration Law Center, 2010) and decreasing the federal budget (White House, 2011). Prosecutorial discretion should be adhered to when the criteria is met by the undocumented individuals (Napolitano, 2012). With the aging of the baby boomer generation, immigrants who are typically young and can contribute to the labor pool will help offset the impact that the loss of employees has on society. "Immigrants are entrepreneurial and create jobs in the United States" (White House, 2011, p. 11).

From a social justice perspective, social workers must be at the forefront of advocacy for oppressed groups (including undocumented immigrants). There are many theoretical frameworks that can be used to address these issues. The social-emotional well-being of children who are separated from their parents can be understood using Bowlby's attachment theory. The social justice theoretical framework is of utmost relevance when dealing with this population. Social workers have the skills and expertise to provide leadership to those who enact policies. Social justice and systemic oppression can be addressed through social work practice, education, research, and policy.

Conclusion

Various racial, ethnic, and immigrant groups have endured systemic oppression throughout the history of this country. Latino families compose the largest immigrant group (Wessler, 2011) and they suffer the negative impact of these political, legal, economic, and social ramifications due to the anti-immigrant legislations. Comprehensive immigration reform is necessary at the federal level otherwise states will continue to enact legislation that violates the undocumented immigrants civil and human rights. The social, political, legal, and economic impact on these oppressed groups is enormous. In the Latino community racial profiling affects not only the undocumented, but also the U.S. citizens alike. The anti-immigrant legislations have an adverse effect on the social-emotional well-being of Latino children and their families (citizens and undocumented) who are separated due to detentions and massive deportations. When registration and school policies become exclusionary, they adversely affect the education of Latino children and young adults who are striving for a better future through academic excellence. The economic impacts of anti-immigrant legislation are complex: 1) they will increase economic hardships for many undocumented Latino families who are already living below the level of poverty due to their undocumented status, 2) there is an economic impact on our nation's economy, since undocumented immigrants pay federal, property, and sales taxes, as well as payroll, and social security, and 3) they place more financial burdens on states to enforce these legislation (the rising costs of detention centers, jails, and manpower, not to mention losses due to boycotts and their effect on tourism).

Social work is a profession that has fought against tenacious systems of oppression and must continue to advocate for social and economic justice, equality, and fairness for all (including the undocumented immigrants and their families). Jane Addams stated, "The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of

us and incorporated into our common life.” The impact of immigration legislation on Latino families can be addressed through social work education, practice, research, and policy.

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Social Networks That Promote Well-Being Among Latino Migrant Day Laborers

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Abstract: *Latino migrant day laborers are a transnational population that often travels back and forth between borders in search of economic opportunities. These Latino day laborers (LDLs) are often at risk for exploitation and workers' rights abuses. Despite LDLs' heightened social vulnerability and risks, this population often does not access formal social or public health services due to their undocumented legal status, lack of health insurance and distrust of governmental social services. In light of LDLs' lack of access to formal services, social networks may enhance and protect their well-being and health through the exchange of emotional and social support, as well as the provision of concrete and practical services. Utilizing Berkman, Glass, Brissette, and Seeman's (2000) conceptual framework on social networks and health, this ethnographic study investigates the role of social networks in facilitating the well-being of LDLs (N=150). Implications for social services for this transnational population are also discussed.*

Keywords: *Day laborers, Latino migrants, social services, transnational migrants*

Globalization has led to a paradigmatic shift whereby many migrants live and work on both sides of the border in a transnational space that heightens their political and economic vulnerability (Sassen, 2002). In the United States, meeting the social service and public health needs of the approximately 11.2 million undocumented immigrants, with the largest group coming from Mexico (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011), has been challenging. While some data suggests that most immigrants are healthier when compared to U.S. born populations (Warner et al., 2006), emergent studies indicate a high risk sub-population comprised of mainly single, young, Latino transmigrant men. These men often work in the informal economy as day laborers and travel back and forth between borders in search of economic opportunities. These Latino day laborers (LDLs) are employed in construction or demolition work and are at risk for exploitation and workers' rights abuses, such as wage theft and dangerous working conditions (Quesada, 2008; Negi, 2011). Their vulnerability is heightened due to their undocumented immigration status. As a result, this population is considered to be easily deportable and sometimes beyond the protection of the law (Taran, 2001). Preliminary studies suggest that this population experiences a myriad of psychosocial vulnerabilities such as social isolation, family disruption, poverty, undocumented immigration status, and criminal victimization (Cepeda et al., 2012; Organista, 2007). The transient nature of this

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population and an unstable residential base to provide comfort and social support can further exacerbate the risk factors that this population experiences (Valdez, Cepeda, Negi, & Kaplan, 2010). Despite such heightened social vulnerability and risks, LDLs experience many barriers to care and often do not access formal social or public health services (Hargrove, 2006). Specifically, their undocumented legal status, lack of health insurance, and distrust of governmental social services are significant barriers to obtaining those services (Berk & Schur, 2001). This is especially compelling as difficult life circumstances, which include discrimination and stress, can place this group at risk for mental health problems, which may be compounded by a lack of access to formal treatment (Moradi & Risco, 2006). In light of the lack of access to formal services to address psychosocial needs, social networks may enhance and protect LDLs' well-being and health through the exchange of emotional and social support, as well as through the provision of concrete and practical services. Previous literature on African-Americans and Caribbean Blacks has indicated that social networks can play a protective role by reducing some of the negative consequences associated with a lack of professional social services (Woodward et al., 2008). Similarly, research on Latino immigrants indicates that social networks are positively associated with individual health and community growth (Garcia, 2005). However, little is known whether such a positive relationship exists among transnational migrant populations such as LDLs.

This qualitative study utilizes Berkman, Glass, Brissette, and Seeman's (2000) conceptual framework on social networks and health to investigate the role of social networks in facilitating the well-being of LDLs. In particular, this study elucidates participant-identified networks of support as well as provides rich contextual detail regarding how these networks may be leveraged to promote the welfare of this marginalized population.

Literature Review

Day labor work typically involves open-ended verbal contracts that are often negotiated on public street corners where day laborers congregate to look for work (Valenzuela, 2003). LDLs' public visibility, coupled with a lack of knowledge about this population often cause misconceptions from community members and law enforcement. LDLs are often seen as troublemakers, criminals, and loiterers (Quesada, 2008; Turnovsky, 2006), and as a result, their life struggles, including their mental health and social service needs, remain largely unknown to local officials or service providers in the United States (Turnovsky, 2004). A growing body of research indicates that rural Latino farmworkers, a demographically similar population to LDLs, experience social isolation and poverty, impacting well-being and creating increased risks for depression, anxiety, and substance abuse (Hovey & Magana, 2000; Denner, Organista, Dupree, & Thrush, 2005). Studies further indicate that various protective factors, including social support may facilitate the well-being of Latino farmworkers (Hovey & Magana, 2000, 2002). The sparse literature on LDLs indicates that this population of urban-based immigrant workers experiences psychosocial problems similar to rural Latino farmworkers (Organista, 2007). However, the problems of day laborers may be compounded by the dangerous and unique conditions associated with their work as well as the broader urban

environment in which they work and live. In light of such sociopolitical and psychosocial vulnerability, as well as lack of access to medical coverage, LDLs' social networks may act as a buffer to protect their well-being. This study uses a strengths focus to illuminate participant-identified social networks that enable well-being among LDLs.

Social Networks and Health: Conceptual Framework

Berkman et al.'s (2000) conceptual model of social networks asserts that broad social structural conditions (such as discrimination, poverty and undocumented immigration status) influence the development and nature of social networks, which in turn leads to individual pathways that combine to impact health. This framework suggests that social networks influence behavior through four health related pathways: social support, social influence, social engagement, and access to resources and material goods (Berkman et al., 2000). These networks are embedded within larger social and cultural contexts, which, in turn, have both a direct and indirect effect on the formation of a network (Berkman & Glass, 2000). These social networks are comprised of both strong and weak ties (Granovetter, 1973; 1981). Strong ties consist of small, tight, and mostly homogenous networks that, while instrumental in providing social support, often do not connect LDLs to a wider range of people and resources outside the main network (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Weak ties, in contrast, are heterogeneous and provide wider access to diverse resources, and thereby act as bridges to new sources of opportunities (Granovetter, 1981; Smith, 2000). Thus, the development of weak ties can be more critical in connecting marginalized populations, such as LDLs, with higher status contacts (Lin, Ensel, & Vaughn, 1981).

Within the context of LDLs' lives, an understanding of these pathways may be particularly salient due to the under-utilization of formal social and public health services of this group. Such information can lead to the elucidation of potential modifiable protective factors with implications for the development of strategies to close the gap in service access and delivery among this population. To this end, this study utilizes Berkman et al.'s (2000) social networks and health conceptual framework to qualitatively examine the role and impact of social networks on the well-being of LDLs. In particular, this study explores the unique work and life context of LDLs in shaping the types of social networks they develop and how these networks impact the well-being of this population.

Methods

Sample and Procedure

This ethnographic study used participant observation, informal interviews, and two focus groups to explore the social networks of LDLs in a large city in the Southwest of the United States. Data used in this study is part of a larger mixed-methods study on factors associated with the psychological distress of day laborers with methods reported in detail elsewhere (Negi, 2011, 2013). Based upon extensive field work, the three largest and busiest day labor sites in a large city in the Southwest were selected. Over a two-year period, and on a weekly basis, multiple researchers observed and recorded verbatim

accounts, interactions, and informal interviews at the selected day labor corners to study the lived experiences of LDLs. Extensive field notes were recorded following each field visit to document the daily activities of the day labor corner including negotiation of work and payment, pick-ups by employers, and LDL interactions with each other and others. The informal interviews consisted of discussions regarding the participants' work, family and country of origin, and life stressors. Informal interviews included over 150 participants.

Two focus groups were also conducted at a nearby Mexican restaurant, often frequented by LDLs. The *taquería* was relatively private and allowed participants to exit quickly if a potential employer was approaching. A moderator guide, developed by the Principal Investigator (PI), employed open-ended questions to explore how participants manage and define well-being within their work and life contexts. The focus group was facilitated by the PI and a research assistant who took extensive notes on the process. Eleven respondents, between the ages of 30 and 60, were asked to discuss the meaning of well-being (*bienestar*) within the context of day labor work and the challenges experienced that may impact the mental health of this group. The participants were also asked to provide general strategies that they or others they know have used to deal with any work or life challenges.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was utilized to examine ethnographic and focus group data. This technique allows researchers to find common themes across participants without losing individual meanings and experiences (Creswell, 2007). The PI and a research assistant conducted a line-by-line analysis, read the transcripts of the data separately, and recorded any thoughts. Next, the PI and research assistant worked separately to group phrases that addressed the same topic area and created categories from these groups. Themes were taken from each of these categories and those that were not initially identified by both researchers were discussed thoroughly until agreement was reached on whether to include or omit a theme in the analysis. Initially, four themes reflecting the social networks of participants emerged during the coding process. Specifically, the initial emergent themes were: *networks on day labor corners*, *peer networks*, *family networks*, and *networks with employers (patrones)*. The themes *peer networks* and *family networks* were collapsed into one, based upon extensive discussion that concluded that these networks were conceptually too similar to stand on their own. Furthermore, two themes (heightened vulnerability and barriers to accessing existing public services) were elucidated to establish the context whereupon the above mentioned social networks developed. Upon reaching consensus, each researcher independently coded the data. The researchers then met to discuss their thematic coding and to reach further consensus on coding. A third party auditor who was familiar with the data was invited to contribute in the four instances that consensus was not reached, and a consensual decision was made based upon this input. The use of multiple researchers minimized researcher subjectivity and maximized the internal validity of the data (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). The results are presented by first contextualizing the vulnerability of LDLs and their perceived barriers to formal social services and authorities. Next, the informal networks

used by LDLs to facilitate well-being are identified as those within the day labor corner, peer and family, employers, and church members. The following results are presented through the triangulation of the ethnographic field notes recorded at the day labor corners. They include observations and informal interviews as well as quotes from the focus groups.

Results

Contextualizing Vulnerability and Service Utilization Among LDLs

Heightened vulnerability. Findings indicate that LDLs experienced a variety of psychosocial stressors such as criminal victimization, workers' rights abuses, and poverty due to their undocumented immigrant status and employment in the informal economy. Specifically, the informal verbal employment contracts with *patrones* (employers), their cash earnings, and distrust and fear of police or other authorities heightened their vulnerability to workers' rights abuses and other types of crime. Field notes from an informal interview with a 19-year-old Mexican migrant day laborer document the perilous conditions that LDLs must navigate due to their cash earnings:

He has been assaulted six or seven times while he has been living here... He says that he has been assaulted by Chicano (Mexican American, born in the US) gangs because they know that they (the workers) carry cash on them. I noticed that one of his eyes looked red – so I asked him what happened there – and he told me that he had just had been mugged the day before yesterday. He told me that he has never reported these muggings to the police.

In addition to violent victimization, a majority of the LDLs also reported experiencing wage theft or unpaid wages for work rendered by employers. This wage theft had a significant impact on the economic well-being of LDLs, as indicated in the following field note:

The worker told us that he had “lost” about \$300 last month and at that point had decided to not do anything about it. But now he is having a hard time paying his rent and wants that money to be recovered.

Without a formal work contract combined with their fear of deportation by police, many LDLs expressed feeling helpless and without much recourse. Consequently, wage theft had a negative psychological impact. One LDL, whose former employer owed him \$600 in wages, stated:

I feel fearful when I look for work now since they did not pay me the last time. What is the point of working if I am not going to get paid for all my efforts?

Barriers to accessing existing public services. As indicated above, the LDLs in this study indicated that they did not report crime as they were afraid of the police and feared that the police would not take their concerns seriously because they (LDLs) were *sin papeles*, or undocumented. In addition, many workers expressed that their sole purpose for being in the United States was to earn money to support their family in their country of origin. To this end, they did not want to risk exposure and deportation and jeopardize

the flow of financial support. Participants also indicated that they knew that the city (where this study was conducted) was a “sanctuary city” (a city where the police do not enforce immigration laws or ask people about their immigration status); however, they still felt distrustful of police. This was especially true as the LDLs in this study reported adversarial experiences with the police. For example, many participants reported feeling harassed by police officers that asked them to leave the public street corners where they congregated to look for work. One worker stated, “They say that we are loiterers but we are here only (to support)... our family.”

Robbery and wage theft also served to exacerbate the poverty that most LDLs experienced. While most participants reported living in houses or apartments with multiple roommates, a minority of participants reported being homeless. These homeless LDLs indicated they had accessed shelter services provided by the city. However, they reported that the homeless shelters lacked bilingual services, and, as a result many did not feel comfortable continuing to use shelter services. One homeless immigrant participant stated that he chose to live on the streets with other Latino workers, rather than at a homeless shelter, as he felt more camaraderie and comfort on the streets with fellow workers than at the city-run shelter. Furthermore, while a majority of participants reported experiencing wage theft, many did not access advocacy organizations that were available to assist with wage recovery. The LDLs in this study that did not access advocacy organizations indicated that they had accepted the fact that they needed to *afrentar la realidad*, or “face the reality” of their difficult life and work conditions.

A majority of the participants indicated that they preferred soliciting work on public street corners despite the several city-run worker centers opened to discourage public solicitation of work. These worker centers aimed to reduce the tension between the city’s need for labor and community opposition to street corners where day laborers congregated to look for work. When asked why they did not attend the worker centers, LDLs stated several reasons, including: location, lack of transportation (the centers were often located in areas that were either too far or not on the bus route where many of the workers lived), and the perceived unfair nature of the current “lottery” system of allocating employment opportunities to workers (which means that workers arriving at different times of the day had the same chance of procuring a job as those who arrived early). Finally, the LDLs in this study felt that not many employers knew about or used the worker centers to look for potential employees and that they were better off on street corners. Workers also stated that they had some hesitation attending worker centers because they did not want to be confused with panhandlers or perceived ex-convicts who they perceived were also looking for employment at the worker centers. They further indicated a preference for the flexibility and informality of the day labor corner versus the worker center and its associated rules. One participant voiced the workers’ dislike of the institutional feel of the centers: “Everyone is sitting in a line. They look like sardines!”

The Role of Social Networks

The LDLs in this study indicated that they used their social networks to facilitate their well-being in light of their distrust of the police and lack of service use. In

particular, networks developed at the day labor corner, with peers and family, with employers, and at church were considered to be the most salient to their well-being.

Building camaraderie at the day labor corner. Many social networks were developed at the corner while LDLs waited for work. In fact, some participants indicated that they would even come to the day labor corner on their day off to escape feeling lonely and to be with their peers. Field notes describe the day labor corner as a dynamic space where workers shared experiences and camaraderie:

The corner all of a sudden felt electrified by energy, as they haggled and negotiated for both work and the number of workers. The *camioneta* (pickup truck) took off with the two men, and the remaining men walked back to us—with chagrined smiles on their faces. Men who had not been interacting with each other were now sharing their feelings of frustration with others.

Participants indicated that the day labor corner was a space where workers would organize themselves against employers who were known to exploit workers. Specifically, participant observation indicated that LDLs would often warn other workers about exploitative employers or those who were known not to pay workers by yelling “*no paga, no paga!*” (doesn’t pay, doesn’t pay!) when the employer stopped his car at the day labor corner to look for employees. In this way, the day laborers organized themselves to prevent newer immigrant workers, as well as others, from being victimized by wage theft from known unscrupulous employers.

Peer and family networks. Peers and family were reported to provide practical and financial support through shared links to employment and local resources, including help paying rent and utilities. Most LDLs reported that they immigrated to the United States alone to support family members in their country of origin and spoke of the importance of tapping into peer networks to find roommates to ease the financial burden of rent and utilities. When new in a city, peer networks were also identified as essential in locating day labor corners to look for work, finding neighborhoods to live in and identifying resources such as restaurants and shops that cater to Latinos. Furthermore, peers also assisted in easing communication with family members. One LDL reported that he knew a truck driver who, when driving to Mexico, would transport his video letters to his wife and daughters, and return their video reply to him. Similarly, other workers reported that peers who traveled back to their country of origin helped by transporting letters, remittances, and general information.

Overall, many participants indicated that relationships with peers were significant. As one worker stated, “those that know more people...do better.” However, there was also recognition that some peer networks could lead them to negative life choices or *vicios* (vices) such as, heavy drinking, substance use, fights, and solicitation of sex work, especially for younger day laborers. One focus group participant stated, “Younger people have fewer responsibilities for their families.” While another added, “There is no one or nothing that controls them, but as they get older they realize the reality of things (increased responsibility towards family members).”

For participants that had family in the United States, many indicated that they specifically immigrated to a particular place because they had a family member there. In a way, similar to peer networks, family members provided practical informal support such as help in becoming familiar with the area, and finding housing and work.

Building mutuality of trust with *patrones*. A mutual relationship of trust with employers (*patrones*) was viewed as paramount to ensure consistent work. Participants' indicated that their decision to migrate regionally was often influenced not only by the availability of work, but also trust in their employer. Field notes indicate one worker's description of the importance of mutual trust in his decision to migrate for employment, and how other social networks were deployed when work conditions were no longer optimal:

His brother met a *patrón* [in Los Angeles] who was very nice and he started working for him pretty regularly. After the job was over the brother's *patrón* said that he had other jobs available, not in Los Angeles, but in Fort Worth, TX. His brother was hesitant because it is a big risk to trust someone so much and move this way. But the *patrón* said that he could stay with him and that he would send him an airline ticket and all. So he told his brother to take the risk. His brother went to Fort Worth and he liked it a lot. He then asked him to come over as well as another brother from Mexico. They all worked there [in Fort Worth] fine but then the *patrón* died. Once the partner took over – things were not the same. The new *patrón* was not as nice and made their lives difficult. His brother then decided to leave since he heard that a city in the South West had some jobs...they all moved there and have been there for 2 years now.

Several participants discussed the importance of building relationships with the *patrones* as a way of ensuring consistent work. Specifically, participants discussed how being perceived as a good worker by a *patrón* was important as it would guarantee longer contracts of employment and lead to being sought out for future employment opportunities. In these instances, the *patrón* would call the LDL directly on his mobile phone to negotiate the terms of work; thereby, bypassing the competition present at the day labor corner. This was seen as very important as day labor work is highly inconsistent and often solicited on a daily basis.

Support through church. Participants who attended church often reported having more social ties and social support than those who did not. In particular, participants stated that church members tend to be united in their support for one another by offering help in times of emotional or financial need. Participants also identified the positive impact of increased church attendance on social networks, which improved one's chances of obtaining employment opportunities through personal referrals. During a focus group, one participant stated, "The most religious have the most amount of work" while another participant concurred, "...they (church members) help each other out." Religion was important because it offered spiritual comfort and provided the opportunity to develop increased social networks that could provide social and emotional support, hence serving as a source of social capital.

Discussion

This study advances the literature on Latino migrant day laborers by exploring the potentially protective role of social networks in maintaining the well-being of this marginalized and transmigrant population in the United States. This study also extends the use of Berkman et al.'s (2000) conceptual model on social networks and health by applying this theoretical framework to LDLs. This is especially relevant as LDLs have low levels of service utilization and this study's identification of salient social networks and their influence on the health of LDLs has implications for the development of strengths-focused programming with this under-served population. To this end, we first discuss how LDLs' structural conditions influenced the development of their social networks and how these networks impacted the health related behavior of this population. Next, we discuss how LDLs' social networks can be leveraged as sources of existing strengths to promote the well-being of this population, which has implications for practice and policy development. We conclude with an acknowledgement of study limitations as well as recommendations for future research.

Findings indicate that the structural conditions that LDLs face, including their undocumented immigration status, poverty, and employment in the informal market as day laborers had a distinct impact on the types of social networks they developed in the United States. These social conditions placed LDLs at a heightened vulnerability as many distrusted the police and other authorities and organizations to maintain their well-being. Like other migrant groups, LDLs reported that they were not likely to seek services due to persistent fears of being reported to immigration officials (Hagan, Rodriguez, Capps, & Kabiri, 2003). This fear of exposure existed despite the fact that the city where this study was conducted is a "sanctuary city." This indicates that punitive anti-immigrant policy initiatives, as well as rhetoric, have had a direct negative impact on the service utilization of LDLs. In cases where workers sought services, lack of cultural responsiveness created an additional barrier to continued use of services.

In alignment with Berkman et al.'s (2000) conceptual model on social networks and health, LDLs' social networks influenced their health related behavior through four pathways: social support, social influence, social engagement, and access to resources and material goods. In accordance with Granovetter's (1981) conceptualization of social networks, LDLs mainly discussed the "strong ties" that they established with each other that provided them social support, influence and engagement. The development of such homogenous and tight networks was largely due to LDLs' experiences of discrimination which led them to feel fearful or distrustful of establishing links outside of their group. In addition, LDLs' relayed the establishment of "weak ties" with employers or *patrones* and indicated that these networks were vital in connecting day laborers to work opportunities. (Granovetter, 1973; 1981). Specifically, LDLs' persistent feelings of insecurity, based on their undocumented immigration status and their increased risk for crime victimization, influenced this population's sense of camaraderie and social support at the day labor corners. The day labor corners became a space of social engagement where LDLs could escape loneliness, develop social bonds with other men experiencing similar work and life conditions, and unite to protect themselves from workers' rights abuses. The day labor corner became a site where LDLs organized themselves to exert social influence

and thereby protect themselves from unscrupulous potential employers. This building of solidarity-based social action is especially compelling in light of LDLs distrust of the police and other formal authorities.

Fostering and forging social relationships with other workers at the day labor corner or at church allowed LDLs increased opportunities and access to various types of resources not possessed by them individually. Similarly, building lasting relationships with *patrones* was viewed as critical as it provided LDLs with potential work stability—highly prized due to the inconsistent nature of day labor work. Without access to formal safety nets, LDLs' social networks became critical in facilitating their economic, social and psychological well-being.

Social Service Implications

While findings indicate that LDLs often develop extensive social networks to ameliorate the difficult conditions of their lives, the service utilization gap experienced by this population must be closed to ensure their well-being and health. In particular, the current study's findings indicate that scarcity of Spanish speaking and culturally responsive programs are significant barriers to service use. Educational training programs as well as policies need to continue to respond to this increasing need for services in Spanish. In addition, to maximize service-utilization, it is highly recommended that LDLs be consulted in the development of any services or programming aimed to meet their needs. Such consultation with LDLs and respect for their life expertise may allow for rich data that may lead to the development of highly effective social service programming. The use of the existing strengths of this population in the development of social service programming is also highly recommended. Findings indicate that day labor corners served as a psychosocial space where social networks were developed for the LDLs. Similarly, Turnovsky's (2004) ethnographic study of day laborers in the East Coast revealed that despite significant hardships, day labor sites provided a space for LDLs to develop a sense of camaraderie and community. Social service providers can utilize this information to conduct outreach and provide on-site services at day labor corners. For example, the health care industry has begun to provide mobile medical and dental healthcare. Providing mobile services in a context where many feel safe (the day labor corner) could potentially increase access to services for this population that they would not otherwise receive.

Limitations

Although our study is one of few investigations that seek to understand social networks and well-being among LDLs, a number of limitations should be acknowledged. The limited sample size and use of a purposive theoretical sampling technique limits the representativeness and generalizability of the findings. However, this sampling method was considered appropriate since the aim of the current study was to offer a preliminary understanding of social networks that impact well-being. Additionally, the use of purposive theoretical sampling facilitated the selection of day labor corners and allowed for participant recruitment, as LDLs are a hard population to reach. Furthermore, the study represents a distinctive and understudied population—urban Latino day laborers—

and the sample size is considered to be appropriate for qualitative analysis (Creswell, 2007). Additionally, this study could have been impacted by several threats to its internal validity. LDLs are a vulnerable population and participants may have been reluctant to discuss their psychological well-being with a researcher. This study employed several precautions to minimize the effects of social desirability. For example, significant time was spent building trust and rapport with this population so that they would feel more comfortable discussing difficult or taboo issues with interviewers. Valdez and Kaplan's (1999) methodological procedures to establish entry into "hidden" communities proved to be especially useful in building trust with this community. To further minimize social desirability, all interviews were conducted in spots distant from the earshot of other workers to ensure the confidentiality of participants' responses. Additionally, all interviews were conducted in Spanish, the LDLs' native language.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

Despite such limitations, we believe that our study sheds light on the experience of a rising sub-population of migrants in the United States which is part of a larger global phenomenon. This research can inform variable selection for future quantitative research on the social networks of LDLs. Furthermore, longitudinal studies with social network analysis are recommended to examine the substance use and other health behaviors of this under-served population. The significant marginalization of day laborers and their exposure to various psychosocial and political risk factors for well-being underscore the importance of increasing knowledge of this population to inform social service interventions and policies. However, it also reveals a highly resilient population that has developed complex social networks to buffer their well-being in the absence of favorable social structural factors.

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Carolina del Norte and the New South: Social Work Practice With New Latino Immigrant Communities

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Abstract: *Over the past decade, the Latino population in North Carolina has increased 111%. More than half of North Carolina Latinos are foreign-born and most face issues related to immigration, acculturation, and often, discrimination. This article provides a brief overview of the historical context in which social workers engaged with immigrant communities and argues that the profession brings strengths and unique skills to address North Carolina's Latino immigrant population, historically, and within the current context. Key social demographics of Latino populations, sociopolitical realities, and theoretical and methodological issues related to the complex needs of this diverse population group are addressed. Two examples of Latino vulnerability in North Carolina, HIV/AIDS and discriminatory local immigration enforcement practices, are discussed to further highlight the unique strengths and challenges social workers in North Carolina and the New South face when working with Latino immigrants.*

Keywords: *Latino immigrants, immigration policy, acculturation, Latino HIV/AIDS risks*

The Latino population is the country's largest growing minority group and is projected to comprise 45% of the U.S. population by 2030 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Currently, Latinos/Latinas represent more than 50.5 million individuals, or 16.3% of the total population and accounted for 56% of the U.S. population growth between 2000 and 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). During that decade, seven southeast states had Latino populations that more than doubled, including North Carolina (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011). The Latinization of the "New South" as described by Furuseth and Smith (2006) has contributed to

...transformative forces reshaping the character and dynamics of the region in our area. The immigration of both native and foreign born [Latinos] and their role in the emerging Nuevo South cannot be understood fully without interacting it with changes that are transforming the region's economy and culture through...restructuring and globalization. (p. 15)

It is important to recognize that hundreds of thousands of Latinos have moved to North Carolina and other southern U.S. states as a result of increasing labor demands, growth in the southern regions, and a cheaper cost of living (Gill, 2012). Due in part to these as well as other factors, North Carolina experienced a rapid demographic shift from 1990 to 2000, with the fastest growing Latino population in the nation (Martinez & Bazan, 2004). Over the past decade, the Latino population in the state has continued to grow, increasing from 378,963 in 2000 to 800,120 in 2010—a dramatic increase of 111%

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(Pew Hispanic Center, 2011). With more than 800,000 Latinos living in North Carolina, this group accounts for approximately 8% of the state's current population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). More than half of North Carolina Latinos are foreign-born (Zota, 2008), and 35% report limited or no English proficiency (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009). Most face issues related to immigration and acculturation as well as discrimination in their new communities, and, one third are estimated to be undocumented (Popke, 2011), adding an additional element of social vulnerability.

Many recent Latino immigrants have found employment in North Carolina's agricultural sector, primarily as laborers on turkey and hog farms, or with landscaping and horticulture businesses; in the construction and construction-related trades, such as painting and carpet installation; in housekeeping services, and other service-sector jobs (Gill, 2012; Popke, 2011). The increase in labor-driven transnational migration is often attributed to the economic restructuring of the region that is tied to neoliberal policies (as exemplified by the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] of 1994), coupled with the state's history of weak unions and racially segregated labor (Popke, 2011). Despite the active recruitment of Latino/Latina workers by select industries, the local reception of the influx of Latinos has been fraught with anxiety, fear, and larger sociopolitical challenges. These responses differ in degree and severity, often in relation to patterns of migration and reception. The changing landscape of rural communities in North Carolina has been dramatic. Major urban centers in Durham, Mecklenburg, and Wake counties received large numbers of Latino immigrants between the years 2000-2010 (Nguyen & Gill, 2010). However, rural counties within the state, such as Cabarrus and Duplin, experienced rapid demographic shifts, with the percentage of Latino residents increasing by 1000% while other racial/ethnic groups remained the same or decreased (Nguyen & Gill, 2010; Popke, 2011). Social backlash became prominent as Latino migrants intersected the lives of native-born Carolinians. Given the complex economic and labor-related drivers of demographic changes, Latinos' labor has been welcomed, yet the presence of a permanent Latino community has not received the same reception (Gill, 2012; Johnson-Webb, 2003). In both rural and urban settings, as the landscape of the state has begun to include brown faces, tiendas, taco trucks, and Spanish-language signs and advertising, the conservative public reaction to the demographic shift has grown louder. Paralleling this conservative backlash, academic and activist work focused on diversity has grown stronger (Cravey & Valdivia, 2011; Cuadros, 2011; Deguzman, 2011; Palis, Reilly, & Valdivia, 2011). This is a trend that is echoed throughout historical accounts of communities receiving newcomers (Abel, 2004; Chavez, 2004; Molina, 2006a, 2006b; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006).

Among states with a growing Latino/Latina population, North Carolina has a somewhat unique history. Although the state had been receiving Mexican workers in small numbers since the 1940s (i.e., when the Bracero Program imported temporary Mexican agricultural workers to the United States) North Carolina did not begin to actively address the social, economic, and health disparities of Latinos until the 1990s when a permanent Latino community was established (Martinez & Bazan, 2004). The response of social services has been slow and hindered by many logistical and political challenges. One such challenge is the lack of professionals trained to address the unique

needs of this population. However, given the social work profession's roots in social justice work, multisystemic orientation (i.e., micro, mezzo and macro) and person-in-environment perspective, social workers are particularly well positioned to address the Latino community's needs through direct service, community practice, and political advocacy (Garcia, 2009).

This article offers an overview of social workers engaging with immigrant communities and argues that the profession brings strengths and unique skills to address North Carolina's Latino immigrant population, historically, and within the current context. However, equally important are the limitations within social work education to educate professionals on the nuances of migration and acculturation theory and its application in practice. Therefore, this article highlights key social demographics of Latino populations, as well as theoretical and methodological issues related to the complex needs of this diverse population group. A review of these concepts will help prepare social work practitioners for a more comprehensive and culturally informed understanding of Latino immigrant communities, and, in turn, promote development of culturally relevant interventions that consider sociopolitical realities. Two examples of Latino vulnerability in North Carolina—HIV/AIDS and discriminatory local immigration enforcement practices—are discussed to further highlight the unique strengths and challenges social workers in North Carolina and the New South face when working with Latino immigrants.

Latino Social, Health, and Economic Vulnerabilities

North Carolina's Latino immigrants face complex and often multiple layers of social, health, and economic challenges, depending on various facets of human and social capital, including level of education, English language proficiency, documentation status, social support, level of acculturation, and ethnic identity (Delgado, 2012). In particular, immigrant Latinos in North Carolina face major challenges to maintaining their health because of structural barriers such as lack of access to care, lack of linguistically and culturally appropriate services, inadequate transportation, lack of employer-based insurance, and prominent racial/ethnic discrimination (Siman, 2009). Latinos represent the racial/ethnic group most likely to lack insurance in North Carolina, with an estimated 65% of adults and 30% of children uninsured. Additionally, 29% of Latino adults in North Carolina report that they were unable to see a physician when needed in the past 12 months due to cost (North Carolina Office of Minority Health & Health Disparities and the State Center for Health Statistics, 2010). Perhaps most dramatically, Latinas in North Carolina have some of the highest rate of teen pregnancy in the country (Martinez & Bazan, 2004).

Data from multiple sources indicate that nationally, Latinos suffer disproportionately from poverty and lack of access to health care (Delgado, 2007), and that undocumented immigrants are even more vulnerable given their exclusion in federal health coverage, including the recent passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010 (Galarneau, 2011). Under the ACA, undocumented immigrants are ineligible for Medicaid and will not be allowed to purchase private insurance through new insurance exchanges (Galarneau, 2011).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), almost a quarter of U.S. Latinos live below the federal poverty line, and 40% of the population is younger than 21 years of age, with limited formal education (Warner et al., 2006). These social factors intertwine with and influence health and well-being, warranting social workers to examine not just individuals in their environment, but also, what kind of fit one's environment has on individuals. This is known as the person-environment fit model and it has been used to explain some of the diversity in adjustment among Latinos and their movement patterns (Roosa et al., 2009). How well immigrants fit in their communities looks drastically different depending on the resources, support, neighborhood composition, and desires of individuals (Garcia, 2009). Critical consideration is needed of an array of factors influencing Latino well-being which includes socioeconomic status; cultural attributes; neighborhood composition; social reception; language proficiency; legal status; access to health insurance; and access to appropriate preventative care, treatment, and service provision (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2012; Friedman, Curtis, Neaigus, Jose, & Des Jarlis, 1999; Vega & Amaro, 2002).

Within-group variation in health outcomes is often obscured because data on the U.S. Latino population is aggregated, perpetuating the false assumption that Latinos are a homogenous group. Many of the above characteristics do not account for the heterogeneity among this diverse group. Specifically, in North Carolina, two thirds of the Latino population identifies Mexico as their country-of-origin, followed in order by El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Costa Rica. These numbers include immigrants, naturalized citizens, and U.S. born citizens (Gill, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Further, most data on Latinos as a group fails to consider acculturation factors such as nativity, length of time in the United States, language spoken, developmental stage at age of migration, and other migration and immigration patterns that differ drastically within Latino ethnic groups (Zerden, Lopez, & Lundgren, 2010).

The particular needs of Latinos and immigrant communities have prompted social workers to think critically about the ways in which research and intervention efforts capture the immigration, migration, and adaptation processes. The policies and politics tied to the Latino immigrant experience play a central role in the quality of services available in receiving communities. Culturally-informed practitioners have a professional and ethical obligation to understand the cultural, gender, social, health, and economic nuances Latino immigrant communities experience in light of their unique immigration circumstances and the ever-changing landscape of immigration policy (Chang-Muy & Congress, 2009; DeRose, Escarce, & Lurie, 2007).

Overview of Social Work's Role in Working with Immigrants

From the inception of social work, the profession has played a role in adapting to immigration and migration (Chang-Muy & Congress, 2009). While a full history is beyond the purview of this article, the extent of racism and exclusion within early social work institutions such as settlement houses and charity organizations should not be negated. This declaration by a settlement house director, "You can Americanize the man from southeastern and southern Europe, but you can't Americanize a Mexican" (as cited in Iglehart & Becerra, 1995/2000, p. 5) exemplifies a dominant and professionally

acceptable perspective at the turn of the nineteenth century. Despite a longstanding commitment to immigrant populations, the professionalization of social work and the creation of formal social service organizations rarely met the specific needs of immigrants (Iglehart & Becerra, 1995/2000; Katz, 1996). Services were thought to be “culturally neutral” but often reflected the values and beliefs of dominant White culture (Bent-Goodley, 2005; Katz, 1996), and thus, excluded ethnic and linguistic minority groups from mainstream formal services. Therefore, ethnic service agencies took responsibility for providing the organizational structure and services to ethnic and linguistic minority groups (Iglehart & Becerra, 1995/2000).

More recently, the social work profession has shown a renewed commitment to working with immigrant populations with respect and dignity. Most notably, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics frames standards for professional practice with immigrants in its sections on culturally competent practice (NASW, 2008). NASW recently added immigration status as applying to a category of people for whom social workers should oppose discrimination (NASW, 2012). Similarly, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards speak to the importance of preparing culturally competent students for practice in global societies (Chang-Muy & Congress, 2009; CSWE, 2012). These changes have been reflected at a curricular level as social work educators have endeavored to better prepare students to work with an increasing number of clients who are immigrants settling into new communities (Furman, Negi, & Loya, 2010; Negi & Furman, 2010). Recently, many schools of social work have developed concentrations and certificate programs related to immigration and transmigration. These programs are designed to better prepare future social workers for the critical analysis required to effectively work with diverse groups of immigrants and the myriad of social, economic, political, legal and psychological issues associated with immigration (Nash, Wong, & Trilin, 2006).

Several of the theoretical perspectives foundational to social work are also beneficial to assessing immigrants, their families, and community systems: empowerment theory (Gutiérrez & Lewis, 1999; Weil, Reisch, & Ohmer, 2012), strengths-based perspective (Saleebey, 2002), bioecological systems perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and the risk and resiliency perspective (Fraser, 2004). To adequately account for the nuances that shape individual and community risk and resilience across social work settings, social work students and practitioners need to understand immigrant issues through the lenses of human rights and social justice, which are core principles of the profession (Congress, 2006; NASW, 2012; Weil et al., 2012). For those interested in working with Latino immigrant communities, this perspective includes understanding human rights issues in Latin America, as well as the concepts and theories relevant to serving a diverse population.

Although the literature on migration as a human right is well developed (Simmons, 1996; Tazreiter, 2006; Touzenis & Cholewinski, 2009) and used in social work education, acculturation has been a debated concept in social and health sciences. The difficulty in teaching social workers about acculturation primarily stems from the fact that acculturation theory has been ambiguously defined and inconsistently used in social science research (Hunt, Schneider, & Comer, 2004), despite being an important concept

for social workers to understand in order to discern the structural forces that impact movement, migration, cultural values and health-seeking behaviors.

Acculturation Theory

The concept of acculturation has had a long history within social and behavioral sciences, especially among anthropologists and sociologists first documenting their encounters with indigenous populations (Cabassa, 2003; Hunt et al., 2004). Early conceptualizations viewed acculturation as a unidirectional process in which a cultural group moved from a tradition-oriented phase, through a transitional phase, to a final, acculturated endpoint (Cabassa, 2003; Chun, Organista, & Marín, 2002; Hunt et al., 2004; Redfield, Linton, & Herskovitz, 1936). A more contemporary perspective rejects this linear view of culture and opts for a multidimensional approach throughout the life course (Cabassa, 2003; Chun et al., 2002) that represents a dynamic, context-dependent construct wherein individuals move along a continuum (Yamada, Valle, Barrio, & Jeste, 2006).

Acculturation as a continuum is a particularly important concept for Latino groups who represent diverse migration patterns and points of entry (Thomson & Hoffman-Goetz, 2009). Whether the acculturation process occurs on a voluntary basis or is forced (e.g., refugees or laborers immigrating out of necessity), such a process contributes to acculturative stress, that is, the collective confusion and anxiety, loss of identity, and feelings of alienation against the larger society (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2011). However, using acculturation as a concept in assessing the social, health, and political outcomes of Latinos is a complex matter given the lack of standardized definition and measure, as well as the limitation that few assessments include specific health indicators (Wallace, Pomery, Latimer, Martinez, & Salovey, 2012).

Measuring acculturation for Latinos and limitations. Although an array of acculturation measures have been designed to quantify the behaviors, values, and attitudes of the Latino population, a major criticism within acculturation literature is the “lack of clear definitions and insufficient conceptualization of acculturation, its central concepts remain implicit, poorly stated, simple, ambiguous, and inconsistent” (Hunt et al., 2004, p. 975; Wallace et al., 2012). Many studies have used acculturation theory to examine the relationship between acculturation and health outcomes among immigrant groups (Abraido-Lanza, Armbrister, Florez, & Aguirre, 2006; Delgado, 2007; Zerden et al., 2010) without a more comprehensive analysis of the multiple systems at play (Hunt et al., 2004) or cultural attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs that influence healthcare utilization (Wallace et al., 2012). The majority of acculturation scales have been tested with nonprobability samples of predominantly Mexican American subgroups of Latinos who are often first-generation immigrants living in California or Texas (Yamada et al., 2006).

One of the biggest limitations of acculturation theory in health outcome research has been identified as the overreliance on individual and culture-driven models to understand health disparities. Zambrana and Carter-Pokras, (2010) state that this limitation “ignores the effect of residence in low-resource communities, low SEP (socioeconomic position), the social construction of marked cultural identities, and institutional patterns of unequal

treatment, all of which contribute to health disparities” (p. 21). Expanding social and public health research to include social determinants of health, as well as institutional and structural barriers to care will improve the understanding of health disparities by acknowledging that these facets often impact the ways in which individuals experience acculturation, migration and movement in the first place.

Case Examples: Health and Political Implications of HIV/AIDS and Local Immigration Enforcement

To build on the articulation of demographic shifts of Latinos in the South as well as the ways in which theoretical constructs inform measurement and enumerate social, economic, and political conditions, the following section presents two case examples of vulnerabilities experienced by Latinas/Latinos in the southern United States. These case examples center on issues around (a) HIV/AIDS and (b) local immigration enforcement; our discussion focuses on how social work professionals are particularly equipped with the knowledge and skills to deal with these situations experienced by Latinos in North Carolina and other southern states.

HIV/AIDS

Although HIV/AIDS knows no geographic, economic, or racial/ethnic boundaries, minorities disproportionately bear the burden of disease. This disparity has remained true for HIV/AIDS rates in the South where half of new HIV diagnoses among Latinos occurred (CDC, 2012). From 2006 to 2009, 6 of the 10 states with the highest rates of HIV infection among Latinos were in the South (CDC, 2012). Nationally, Latinos accounted for 13.4% of the population yet 18% of new HIV diagnoses from 2005 to 2008 were among Latinos (CDC, 2012). The increasing population growth of Latinos in the South over the past decade and disparities in health outcomes warrant greater focus on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care needs of Latino communities.

As demographic and geographic shifts continue to shape the landscape of HIV/AIDS among Latinos in the United States, the person-in-environment perspective intrinsic to social work recognizes the multisystemic factors that perpetuate HIV/AIDS risks and the protective factors for which culturally appropriate interventions can be harnessed for Latinos in North Carolina specifically, and the Southeast generally. There is significant evidence that shows how social marginalization and isolation experienced by Latino immigrants can result in high-risk behavior associated with sexual practices and intravenous drug use (Castillo-Mancilla et al., 2012; Ojeda et al. 2012; Painter, 2008). Research has shown that health interventions that are adapted to a specific ethnic group’s cultural and social context are more likely to increase effectiveness (Bernal, Bonilla, & Bellido, 1995). Social workers are well positioned to consider multiple factors of discrimination that subgroups might experience, and, within this context, provide services and lead advocacy efforts. The profession’s emphasis on cultural competency requires social workers to critically understand a context unique to Latinos versus other racial/ethnic subgroups. Culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate services are needed for counseling and testing services, educational materials, and prevention efforts. Simply asking specific questions regarding a client or community’s legal, cultural, and

linguistic context can dramatically improve the prevention or treatment approach and mitigate the potentially harmful effect of providing services based on assumptions or generalizations about an ethnic group (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). A strong understanding of acculturation can facilitate the provision of culturally and linguistically competent care.

Further, partnerships with community-based organizations serving the Latino community in the South are necessary to promote trusted and safe environments in which Latinos can seek social, psychological, and health support outside of the formal social service sector. The use of *promotoras*, or lay health workers, has a long history in both Latin American and U.S. Latino communities of effectively bridging the gap between the community and health services. *Promotoras* are noted not only for increasing knowledge and promoting community-level change, but can actually facilitate individual behavior change, use of preventive service, and access to health care services at a relatively low cost (Cohen, Meister, & deZapien, 2004; Ingram, Gallegos, & Elenes, 2005; Love, Gardner, & Legier, 1997; Nemcek, & Sabatier, 2003; Ramos, May, & Ramos, 2001; Ro, Treadwell, & Northridge, 2003).

Promotoras have been an effective community-centered intervention to reach vulnerable Latino groups affected by HIV/AIDS (Vega & Cherkas, 2012). Identifying *promotoras* in North Carolina and other southern states is not only a valuable way for social workers to build community capacity through empowerment of community leaders but also to identify community needs and receive feedback about the cultural relevancy and feasibility of interventions within Latino communities (Vega & Cherkas, 2012; Witmer, Seifer, Finocchio, Leslie, & O'Neil, 1995). Furthermore, and particularly important in the case of HIV among North Carolina Latino immigrants, *promotoras* can help promote critical points of access for prevention, treatment and social support (Aguilar-Gaxiola et al., 2002; Nemcek & Sabatier, 2003).

Local Immigration Enforcement – 287(g)

Historically, public policies targeting immigrants have had a significant impact on Latino communities; such policies continue to be fraught with controversy (Abel, 2004; Hernández, 2008; Molina, 2006a, 2006b). With recent increases in the Latino immigrant population, North Carolina has been called “an important barometer of contemporary immigration debates for the nation and especially for the Southeast, which has become a new frontier for Latin American migration to the U.S.” (Gill, 2012, p. 6). North Carolina has joined several other states and local municipalities in adopting local- and state-level strategies, arguably to address the lack of comprehensive immigration reform at the national level (Idilbi, 2008).

Although neighboring southern states, including Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina passed stringent immigration laws similar to Arizona’s SB1070, several North Carolina counties and the City of Durham opted to participate in the 287(g) program sponsored by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), a division of the Department of Homeland Security (Gill, 2012). The 287(g) program gives local law enforcement the authority to assess for immigration status and start deportation

proceedings for undocumented suspects who are detained, but have not yet been convicted of any crime (Gill, 2012). Although originally developed to promote safe and secure communities, the implementation of 287(g) in North Carolina has repeatedly been recognized as a primarily anti-immigration initiative that heavily intersects with racial/ethnic discrimination and racial/ethnic profiling under the guise of reducing crime (Gill, Nguyen, Parken, & Weissman, 2009; Idilbi, 2008; Nguyen & Gill, 2010; Weissman, 2009).

Despite a dearth of literature available on the impact of 287(g) in North Carolina specifically related to social work practice, evidence gathered by economists, lawyers, and policy makers has suggested that 287(g) is detrimental to Latino immigrants' experience with harassment and isolation, trust in public safety, and ability to contribute to local economies, which have been strengthened by Latino small businesses and tax revenues (Gill et al., 2009; Idilbi, 2008; Nguyen & Gill, 2010; Weissman, 2009). Further, policies like 287(g) are suspected to severely threaten the physical and mental health of immigrants targeted by the practices generated by such policies (Hacker, Chu, Arsenault, & Marlin, 2012; McLeigh, 2010). When communities have enacted local enforcement of federal immigration policy, both documented and undocumented immigrants living in those communities have reported negative health effects such as heightened stress levels, fear of deportation, and emotional distress (Hacker et al., 2012). These increased stressors lead to negative effects in wellbeing at the individual, family, and community levels. Social work, as a field with a social justice perspective, should play a particularly critical role in both direct service and advocacy in response to 287(g).

However, the symptoms mentioned above also result in limited help-seeking for health and social services, which are the primary points of contact where social workers and other helping professions are most likely to have direct contact with the Latino population. Anecdotal evidence from the experiences of one of the authors, a bilingual clinical social worker in North Carolina's Triangle area from 2006 until 2010, during the enactment of 287(g) and the 2006 Technical Corrections Act (which required a valid Social Security number to qualify for a North Carolina driver's license), corroborate that the policies severely limited the organization's capacity to serve its target population. The social worker reported that once 287(g) was enacted, the agency's Latino clients reported increased fear and anxiety about leaving their homes and being targeted at license checkpoints. In addition, highly publicized cases that shed light on the racial profiling and victimization of Latino immigrants exacerbated clients' fears and increased their isolation by discouraging them from seeking social supports. Clinical manifestations of anxiety and depression were compounded by acculturation stress and became more difficult to treat with access to treatment in jeopardy.

Conclusions: The Role of Social Workers in the New South

The recent demographic shifts, burgeoning Latino communities, and accompanying vulnerabilities in North Carolina suggest that through direct service, community practice, and political advocacy, social workers have essential skills and professional responsibilities to address the needs of Latinos in the South. Examples of the intensifying HIV/AIDS epidemic and discriminatory immigration policies prone to the South are but

two examples of the needs Latino immigrants and migrants will continue to face in the New South. Although geographic factors, including rural isolation, cultural conservatism, and increased poverty are more pervasive in the South, the necessity for social workers to address the particular nuances of new Latino immigrant communities has never been greater for the nation as a whole. However, identifying the skills and approaches that social workers bring and need to strengthen is critical.

The theoretical orientation of social work education and the profession's understanding of multisystemic social problems allow social workers to think critically about these issues, including HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, and the impact of unjust and discriminatory immigration policies. In addition to providing culturally appropriate, trauma-informed direct services to address deleterious mental health effects of such policies, social workers can advocate for policy change at the local, state and federal levels. In addition, social workers are especially well equipped to involve Latinos in such advocacy efforts, thereby empowering Latinos to step out of the shadows and increase their sense of agency (Belkin-Martinez, 2010). These social work foundational skills must be examined within the historical context of the field and coupled with efforts in related fields such as sociology, public policy, public health, and law.

Historical perspectives from the field of social work trace a long history of work with immigrant populations, although noticeably void of some of the ethical principles of cultural competency and anti-discrimination that are now in place. Social work educators must work to actively infuse the curriculum with content that addresses these principles and frames practice with immigrant communities in a social justice and human rights context. Careful consideration of local and global policies and practices that operate in conjunction with one another to prevent or facilitate the human dignity of migrant populations is critically important, as is the understanding of nuances of language, culture, and acculturation. Careful consideration of systems in the country-of-origin, transit, and destination are other ways in which social workers serving Latino immigrant populations must engage with these concepts as they are defined across the Americas, paying close attention to the ways in which the New South's challenges can be attributed to a truly global issue.

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Family Assistance for Older Adults in Puerto Rico

Paul-Jesús Fericelli

Abstract: *Global aging is a growing issue in most countries, including Puerto Rico. The well being of the older adult population depends mainly on a collaborative government initiative that uses both public assistance and the engagement of family members. Puerto Rican policymakers are searching for alternatives to care for the expanding elderly population as well as to protect the country's economy, avoid the financial cliff, and reduce the high cost of public assistance. The purpose of this article is to analyze The Act for the Improvement of the Family Assistance and for the Support of the Elderly, Act No. 193 of 2002, under the criteria-based model (Gallagher & Haskins, 1984) with a value-critical appraisal (Chambers & Wedel, 2009). I suggest Act No. 193 of 2002 as a model for policymakers who are seeking ways to improve assistance for older adults, by promoting the following values: fairness, familism, fraternity, and accountability.*

Keywords: *Family assistance, policy analysis, Latino older adults, global aging*

Many older adults depend on the support of public assistance and extended family members to meet their needs. According to Bearon (2003), and Shirley & Summer (2000), more than 57.6% of the Puerto Rican population, age 80 years or older, requires assistance with their activities of daily living (ADL) such as food preparation, transportation, doctor appointments, socialization with others, exercise, bathing, eating, and dressing. For example, the National Fire Data Center (2008) indicated that the risk of dying in a fire is 2.6 times greater for adults over 65 years of age than for the general population. Public assistance programs fill a void and ensure that older adults do not fall below the threshold of poverty; however, this population frequently asks for other types of support that public assistance cannot supply. Examples of this type of support are: companionship with community members and their extended family, transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping, church activities, quality of life decisions that require consultation with family members, and designating parties for power of attorney. (Coates, 1994; Dobelstein, 2003; Hartman, 2011).

The number of people 65 years of age or older increased to approximately 420 million worldwide in 2000 (Kinsella & Velkoff, 2001), and for many countries managed care for older adults is a growing policy concern. For American, European, and Asian societies, the elderly population is growing at higher rates than developing countries, such as those in Latin America (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2010; Jackson, Howe, & Nakashima, 2010a). Policymakers seek information from policy analysts to create innovative ways to address the needs of older adults, globally, and to lower the high costs of public assistance, resulting from the instability of financial markets, and losses in tax-based revenues at the federal, state and municipal levels throughout the world. Economic instability puts public benefits earmarked for older adults like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid at greater risk (Lav, 2005; Rodriguez, 1999). This means that older adults would depend more on their direct relatives for care

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and assistance. As life expectancy in the population of adults age 60 years and older increases, the need for public policy also changes (Bearon, 2003; Shirley & Summer, 2000).

Older Adults' Reality with Social Security, Public Assistance, and Poverty: United States and Puerto Rico

The United States provides Social Security benefits to assist older adults, and in 2005 research showed that almost 13 million U. S. senior citizens were lifted from the ranks of poverty because of Social Security (Sherman & Shapiro, 2005). Additionally, by 2010, this number increased to 36 million (Van de Water & Sherman, 2010). Other studies showed that about 9% of the population of the United States, age 65 years or older, is still living in poverty (DeNavas, Proctor, & Smith, 2010). Furthermore, for each 10% cut in public assistance, approximately 3% of America's older adult households slip into poverty (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2010).

When considering income levels alone, at least 40% of people, age 65 years and older living in Puerto Rico are on the poverty borderline. (Ortiz, Abreu, Torres, & Vera, 2010b; Puerto Rico Community Survey, 2009). Puerto Rican older adults utilize Social Security, Medicare and public assistance as their main sources of income (Ortiz et al., 2010b). The United States Census Bureau (2009) has forecasted that Puerto Rican older adults will top 1 million in 10 years. The projection suggests that an additional one million Puerto Ricans will depend on public assistance, however, such support is questionable given cuts in federally funded programs.

Direct Relatives as Caregivers

It is projected that direct relative caregivers will pay more than they can afford for the care and living costs of older adults because of the economic downturn (Dobelstein, 2003; Shrieves, 2009). According to Shrieves (2009), around 78 million baby boomers were moving in with direct relatives because they lacked the financial resources to support themselves. Research has identified that around 52 million relatives, including adult children, spouses and relatives of aging adults have become caregivers in United States (Bearon, 2003). Additionally, caregivers are more likely to be adult children rather than spouses (Family Caregivers Alliance, 2005). Other studies indicated that the likelihood of receiving care from a spouse is higher as the age of an older adult increases.

Research found that ethnicity plays a role with respect to caregivers in the United States. Stewart, Russonello, and Belden (2005) used a sample of 1,247 caregivers who provided services to seniors over 80 years of age, and found that 21% of caregivers were white and African-American, 18% Asian American, and 16% Hispanic American. In another study, adult children whose progenitors were Hispanic were most likely to provide care to their older adults in their homes, while African American older adults were more likely to have non-family members providing care (Shirley & Summer, 2000). Care from significant others saved the U. S. government about \$350 billion in services for older adults in 2006 (American Association of Retired Persons, [AARP] 2007). These

results highlight the extremely important role of the caregivers in the lives of older adults and their positive contributions to the economy.

Puerto Rican Context

Although Puerto Rico has been a U.S. territory since 1898, the country's status since 1952 has been one of a commonwealth association with the United States (U.S. Department of the Interior, nd). Puerto Ricans became U.S. citizens in 1917, and have all of the same benefits, services, and privileges as any other U.S. citizen except that they cannot vote for the President, unless they live on the mainland (Deane, 2013; Levinson, 1998).

The Puerto Rican population is fairly homogeneous, yet it is made up of three cultures: the native Taíno (*in Spanish*), the Spanish, and the African (Levinson, 1998). This fusion of cultures has promoted essential cultural traits including spirituality, fraternity, familism, to mention but a few. Around 85% of Puerto Ricans are Roman Catholics (Culture Grams, 2009), and religion promotes community engagement with friends, neighbors, and family. Puerto Ricans are fraternal, which is evidenced by the way relatives and neighbors support each other; and they are resilient and pull together in times of need to support elders within the family structure. Puerto Rican caregivers are sons, daughters, and women from the community (Delgado & Tennstedt, 1997), who comparatively spend more time taking care of their elders than the mainland caregivers do (Sberna Hinojosa & Rittman, 2007). In Puerto Rico, many neighbors are also considered members of the extended family. Certainly, faith-based organizations, social service associations, government agencies, and public service agencies promote a culture of caring and accountability in the care of the elderly in Puerto Rico.

In the global arena, not all countries are prepared for global aging. The well being of the older adult population more often than not depends on public assistance. Consequently, policymakers are searching for alternatives to save their country's economy, avoid downturns, and reduce the high cost of public assistance, globally. This article presents the case of Puerto Rico. It analyzes the Act for the Improvement of the Family Assistance and for the Support of the Elderly, Act No. 193 of 2002, under the criteria-based model (Gallagher & Haskins, 1984) using a value-critical appraisal (Chambers & Wedel, 2009). The author suggests Act No. 193 of 2002 as a model for policymakers who are seeking ways to improve assistance for older adults, promoting the following values in the population of their country: fairness, familism, fraternity, and accountability.

Policy Selection: Act No. 193 Of 2002

The Government of Puerto Rico, in preparing for global aging, strives to attend to the population of older adults. For example, the creation of the position of the Advocate for Older Adults (Position of the Advocate for the Elderly Act No. 203 of 2004) and the Act for the Improvement of the Family Assistance and for the Support of the Elderly, Act No. 193 of 2002 are both efforts to deal with the issue. However, the economic downturn led to the passage of Act No. 7 of 2009 (*Special Act Declaring a State of Fiscal Emergency*

and Establishing Comprehensive Fiscal Stabilization Plan to Save the Credit of Puerto Rico), which terminated employment for over 30,000 workers in public agencies, and affected programs within the Puerto Rico Department of Family and the Advocates for the Women, Patient, Veterans, Disabled, and OPPEA (Oficina del Procurador(a) de las Personas de Edad Avanzada). Despite all of these changes, the Program for the Support of People of Advanced Age (PROSPERA, *in Spanish*) was unaffected by Act No. 7 (Caro, 2009).

The Act for the Improvement of the Family Assistance and for the Support of the Elderly, Act No. 193 of 2002 created PROSPERA; one of the programs managed by the Administration for Child Support Enforcement and one of the five initiatives directed by the Puerto Rico Department of Family. Act No. 193 of 2002 is a public policy that addresses the duty of direct relative caregivers who provide assistance to their older adults, with consideration to their available resources. This policy borrowed Canadian regulations regarding financial assistance for older adults living in Canada (Ramos, 2008).

Proposed Models for Analyzing Act No. 193 Of 2002

The criteria-based model, which was proposed by James Gallagher and Ron Haskins (1984), served as a policy framework to develop a policy model to analyze Act No. 193 of 2002. This framework includes the following steps: (1) defining the problem with respect to available policy alternatives, (2) establishing universal and selective criteria for ordering the alternatives, (3) gathering data, (4) weighing the costs and benefits of each alternative against each criteria, and (5) recommending the alternative that maximizes the criteria. Gallagher & Haskins (1984) defined alternatives as policies available to address the social problem and to promote the desired criteria in the population. In addition, the value-critical appraisal, which was suggested by Chambers and Wedel (2009) helped to analyze the adequacy and cost-effectiveness of the education, mediation, and adversary processes proposed by Act No. 193 of 2002.

The criteria-based model incorporates three values: universal, selective, and efficiency. The universal criterion refers to the values promoted by the policy to address a social problem. The selective criterion refers to the values position promoted by the policy related to a particular aspect of a social problem. The efficiency criterion provides a summary to assess the value position of the policy. Dobelstein (2003) suggests that paradigms based on the criteria-based model match with policies addressing issues in the population of older adults.

Application of Policy Analysis Models for Act No. 193 Of 2002

Definition of the Problem with Respect to Available Policy Alternatives

Social indicators. Around 500,000 individuals over 60 years of age represent the population of older adults in Puerto Rico (Ortiz et al., 2010b). The percentage of Puerto Rican older adults has increased rapidly as a result of increases in life expectancy (on average 78 years of age) due to advances in medicine and improvements in diet and

lifestyle (Ortiz et al., 2010b), as well as other demographic trends faced by the younger generation. A closer look shows that in Puerto Rico, almost 1,000 young people were murdered during 2010 (Figueroa & Hernández, 2011), and more than 100 died in the first month of 2011 (Colón, 2011), and, many young- and middle-age Puerto Ricans relocated to the United States for better employment opportunities (El Nasser, 2012), which contributed to a decrease in birth rates.

Puerto Rico has a higher proportion of older adults in comparison with all of the U. S. territories (Administration on Aging, 2010; United Nations, 2009). By 2015, the population of older adults will be greater than that of children aged 15 years or under (Ortiz et al., 2010a; Tendencias Project, 2006). Sadly, a recent survey notes that 16.5% of Puerto Rican older adults have been victims of maltreatment or abuse, 40 % are living below poverty standards, and 50.3% are disabled living in their homes (Puerto Rico Community Survey, 2009). If these trends continue, they will clearly affect the cultural assets of the families and neighborhoods.

Social problem. As previously discussed, Puerto Ricans are family oriented and try to support each other in difficult times; however some direct relatives are unwilling and/or unable to support their older adults. Given societal shifts, the Puerto Rican government took a more active role to protect the elderly and developed the Civil Code of Puerto Rico, Article 143 (1930) and the Act No. 193 of 2002 to address the care of its older citizens. In sum, Article 143 defined the responsibility of relatives in sharing the duty of maintaining the welfare of the family, while Act No. 193 of 2002 particularly focuses on the duty that direct relatives have in taking care of their older adults.

Establishing Universal and Selective Criteria for Ordering the Alternatives

The policymakers used accountability, fairness, fraternity, and familism values as criteria for ordering alternatives. First the criterion of accountability is the value that both policies promote with direct relatives who are particularly unwilling to provide assistance to their older adults. Second, fairness is the value projecting what is right on the distribution of duties for taking care of older adults. Third, fraternity, a strong value among Puerto Ricans, represents brotherhood/sisterhood and upholds the concept of responsibility towards relatives and significant others. Last, familism holds the family members responsible for providing economic and emotional support to the elderly (Fried & Mebrotra, 1998). These four values were chosen to implement state public policy to improve support to the elderly.

Gathering Data

Civil Code Art. 143. This Code instructs the direct relatives to address the needs of the older relatives, by defining the relatives who are responsible for providing alimony (e.g. spouses and adult children). According to this policy, alimony includes those items needed to maintain the well-being of the older adult such as food, clothing, and medical assistance, in accordance with the socioeconomic status of the family. In addition, family members can ask the government for alimony, if it is necessary for the welfare of a particular family member. This Code does not provide guidelines for how alimony would be claimed. The policy proposed the adversary process for dealing with this social

problem, and grants power to the civil court for implementing alimony. Occurrences of the use of this policy are infrequent; however, Act No. 193 of 2002 recognizes the existence of civil suits under the Civil Code of P.R. Art. 143 of 1930.

Act No. 193 of 2002. This Act presents three phases. The first is an administrative process known as mediation. Although any relative who wants to provide care to the older adult is welcomed, a mediator arranges an appointment with direct relatives to clarify roles. The second phase is known as the adversary process, which is implemented if the direct relatives cannot come to an agreement on who will care for the older adult. In the third phase, PROSPERA was created to implement an education program to promote the responsibility of direct relatives for the welfare of their older adults and to provide services to people age 60 years and older (Act No. 193, 2002). Older adults receive economic and non-economic assistance as Act No. 193 of 2002 defines alimony. Non-economic assistance refers to any other type of support to promote an older adult's welfare. Examples of non-economic assistance are transportation, companionship, visitation, and attention.

Mediation process. Mediation is an alternative dispute resolution approach to resolve conflicts between older adults and direct relatives. Participants receive help from a certified mediator to discuss their differences about an issue. The mediator does not decide what is right or wrong, but instead serves as a neutral moderator who takes into account the choices presented by participants. Mediation is an informal and confidential process (Coulson, 1996) that has helped resolve family disputes (Roberts, 2008).

Recognizing the power that mediation provides to reconcile disagreements, Puerto Rico practices mediation in courts and other public agencies. For example, in 2006, the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico resolved 97% of 3,314 disputes through mediation, where PROSPERA, working under Act 193, resolved 80% (827 cases of 1,026 cases) of family disputes through mediation (Ramos, 2008), which resulted in alimony agreements for older adults.

Adversary process. Government, as an institution, regulates human behavior by determining what is right or wrong by exercising social power on human societies via the courts (Villalobos, 2005). For the most part, the government gives the court the power to distribute justice, and state agencies the responsibility to bring those not following the law before the court (Rivera, 2006). The adversary process brings before the court adult children, or direct relatives and a judge uses his/her recourse to make adult children comply with Act No. 193 of 2002. For example, if adult children do not follow court orders, they can go to jail for at least six months. In addition, they can be fined at least \$500 U.S. dollars. On the other hand, the PROSPERA program administrators can fine direct relatives up to \$5000 U.S. dollars. This Act also has an advocate position where a lawyer can represent the older adult before the court. Ramos (2008) reported that PROSPERA had 1,026 cases; 16% (171 cases) that were referred to the advocate for assistance, but only 3% (28 cases) were presented before the court. And of those 28 cases, gerontologist and social workers recommended the mediation process to achieve alimony agreements for each (Ramos, 2008).

Education process. Psycho-educational programs promote change in human functioning and coping skills (Dubanoski & Tanabe, 1980; Gerris, Van As, Wels, & Janssens, 1998; Lawrence, 1998). Act 193 of 2002 utilizes the psycho-educational concept to promote values such as familism, accountability, fairness, and fraternity, and to carry out its mandate of encouraging relatives to accept responsibility for their older family members. The educational process also includes the provision of public information by the agencies and organizations composing the aging network. For example, PROSPERA trains judges to be effective and efficient when working with older adults. In addition, social workers play a professional role by educating direct relatives on the values promoted by Act No. 193 of 2002.

Act No. 193 of 2002 also includes a requirement to bring before the courts those direct relatives who were unwilling to deliver assistance to their older adults. This Act has an advocate position where a lawyer can represent the older adult before the court. Ramos (2008) reported that PROSPERA had 1,026 cases; 16% (171 cases) that were referred to the advocate for assistance, but only 3% (28 cases) were presented before the court. And of those 28 cases, gerontologist and social workers recommended the mediation process to achieve alimony agreements for each (Ramos, 2008).

Weighing the Costs and Benefits of Each Alternative Against Each Criteria

Although the implementation of the Civil Code of P.R. Art. 143 of 1930 presents no cost to the Executive Branch of Puerto Rico, it does involve a cost to the Judicial Branch (e.g. the salary of judges). Older adults are expected to pay for their defense before the court. Even though this policy promotes all criteria, the question remains whether older adults can afford a civil suit, particularly when in Puerto Rico, 40% of the older adult population lives below poverty standards. Therefore, the benefit of implementing this alternative is questionable.

The implementation of Act No. 193 of 2002 through PROSPERA creates costs to the Executive Branch of Puerto Rico. Art. 10 (Act No. 193, 2002) makes available an advocate who provides legal services free of cost to older adults. However, PROSPERA contracts for professional services from mediators to help offset the costs to the Executive Branch.

The education phase varies in costs. Art. 8.1g (Act No. 193, 2002) includes the use of the media, which involves payments for advertisements on the radio, Internet, and television. Education also covers orientations, conferences, and presentations in different communities and public or private agencies. The cost of advertising on television and radio tends to be higher than promotional tours in public or private agencies and communities.

Selection: The Alternative that Maximizes the Criteria

The Act No. 193 of 2002 addresses the social problem despite the costs of PROSPERA. Indeed, the Civil Code of P.R. Art. 143 of 1930 cannot be a policy alternative given that the majority of the population of older adults cannot afford legal services. Research suggested that older adults prefer the mediation process instead of the

adversary one (Ramos, 2008). Mediation allows direct relatives to create a plan to share duties to increase the quality of life of their older adults. To enhance the clarity of the plan, Act. No. 193 of 2002 provides a definition of alimony which is preferable to older adults.

Value-Critical Appraisal for the Act No. 193 Of 2002

Equality and Adequacy

Act No. 193 of 2002 promotes equality through the creation of PROSPERA. The equality value in this policy represents a leveling approach for sharing duties between relatives and older adults, the government, and human service agencies. The education, the mediation, and the adversary processes address the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. The processes mentioned above may have unintended consequences. For example, it has been observed that direct relatives may also bring unresolved past family conflicts to the mediation process, which may provide an opportunity to air, and in some cases, resolve old emotional wounds.

Social workers may play an important role by preparing direct relatives for the mediation process. This is also known as therapeutic mediation. In doing so, social workers serve as facilitators in the implementation of equality between direct relatives and older adults.

Cost Effective

Art. 19 (Act No. 193, 2002) assigns PROSPERA \$500,000 U.S. dollars from the fiscal budget of Puerto Rico. In addition, Art. 6 created a special fund for the program, which receives deposits from services, gifts, incentives, income, fines, charges, interest, penalties, costs, expenses, and fees. PROSPERA uses all of these funds to run the program and to pay professional service contracts. The administrator, who acts as chief of the Administration for Child Support Enforcement, provides the fiduciary oversight of these funds and determines how they are going to be distributed.

The cost-effective factor is a concern promoting equality under the Act No. 193 of 2002. Due to the demographic increase of older adults on the island, the currently assigned budget to run PROSPERA is insufficient to provide adequate services. Hence, the need for the special fund to supply the education program of PROSPERA and to provide better services for older adults. PROSPERA can also ask for assistance with creating practicum centers for bachelor and graduate social work students and certified mediators in training. These centers promote a community partnership approach between public agencies and the academic community. PROSPERA can also solicit non-profit organizations for volunteers to work with the older adult population.

Conclusion

Puerto Rico, as with other countries in the world, is experiencing significant increases in the number of people living longer due to a combination of factors.

Undoubtedly, longevity has created challenges in the care of older adults, particularly the very old, for family members, practitioners, and policymakers.

This article offers an analysis of Act No. 193 of 2002 as a guide to partially address the challenges of promoting the responsible care of older adults by their direct relatives through a leveling approach with the involvement of the extended family, generous neighbors, and friends. In addition, the policy improves family assistance by bringing an innovative definition of alimony, and it introduces the concept of non-economic payments such as transportation, companionship, visitation, and attention. The application of the Act No.193 facilitates processes to safeguard the welfare of older adults by creating a partnership between families and public assistance. It should be said that PROSPERA needs to create job positions for social workers who can benefit by becoming certified as mediators for older Puerto Rican adults. In addition, social workers may contribute to program evaluation.

There is little question that Act. No. 193 is based on the four fundamental Latino values of: fairness, familism, fraternity, and accountability as discussed in the body of this manuscript. The older adult population will continue to grow in the near future, and it will be pertinent to continue searching ways to integrate existing resources at the grassroots and government levels, which promotes the well-being of older adults and lowers the costs of public assistance.

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Voces de los Menores Inmigrantes en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto de Puerto Rico

Evelyza Crespo-Rivera

Resumen. *El objetivo central de esta investigación es comprender las experiencias de los menores inmigrantes bajo la custodia del Estado. Además, busca describir la política pública y las prácticas diseñadas por el Estado para responder a las necesidades de los menores inmigrantes desde la realidad jurídica social de Puerto Rico. El estudio es cualitativo y el enfoque que se utilizó es la técnica de la triangulación de datos para poder construir las situaciones por las cuales los participantes atravesaron y al mismo tiempo, comparar sus percepciones con los escritos de las agencias sociales y las políticas estatales que abogan a favor de la protección, la seguridad, la calidad de vida y la no discriminación. La investigación permite concluir que son los menores de la población inmigrante quienes pueden relatar sus vivencias y construir un marco de referencia para mejorar la intervención y la aplicación de las políticas existentes. El estudio recomienda que se incluyan a aquellos que fueron inmigrantes bajo la custodia del estado en comitivas de distintos grupos de interés que abogan por el bienestar de tal población.*

Palabras clave: *Menores inmigrantes, servicios de protección, cuidado sustituto, derechos humanos*

Los menores inmigrantes y sus familias representan una de las poblaciones de mayor crecimiento en los Estados Unidos. Durante los años 1990, más de 15 millones de inmigrantes entraron a los Estados Unidos en comparación con 10 millones en la década de los 1980 y 7 millones en los 1970 (Capps & Fortuny, 2006). Actualmente, la cantidad de menores inmigrantes participantes en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto es desconocida. La información estadística no se recoge de manera uniforme ni en los estados de la nación norteamericana ni en informes estadísticos a nivel nacional. La Ley de Puerto Rico Núm. 338 del 31 de diciembre de 1998, conocida como la *Carta de Derechos de los Niños*, reconoce la responsabilidad del gobierno del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico de propiciar el máximo desarrollo social y emocional de los niños puertorriqueños.

El Estado, a través de las leyes y políticas públicas de las agencias de bienestar infantil, establece como política pública que los menores en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto reciban servicios de calidad, protegiendo su seguridad, permanencia y bienestar. En Puerto Rico, el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto está bajo la responsabilidad de la unidad de Administración de Familias y Niños del Departamento de la Familia. La Administración de Familias y Niños fue creada en virtud del Plan de Reorganización Número 1, del 28 de julio de 1995, el cual reorganizó y denominó el Departamento de Servicios Sociales como Departamento de la Familia. Dentro de esta agencia, la

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Administración de Familias y Niños, a través de la Administración Auxiliar de Cuidado Sustituto y Adopción, es la agencia responsable de implantar la política pública establecida en la Ley de Puerto Rico Número 177 del 1ro de agosto de 2003, *Ley para el Bienestar y la Protección Integral de la Niñez*, así como se encarga de desarrollar los programas, servicios y recursos para la atención de los/as menores removidos de sus hogares de origen. Posteriormente, se aprobó en Puerto Rico la Ley 246 del 16 de diciembre de 2011 *Ley para la Seguridad, Bienestar y Protección de Menores*, para derogar la ley anterior. Con esta ley, se presentó un cambio de política pública del Estado referente a los esfuerzos razonables:

Será política pública que en los casos donde surja un conflicto de intereses entre el custodio del menor y el mejor bienestar del menor, debe priorizarse el bienestar del menor. Esto aplicará en todos los procesos Administrativos y Judiciales que se lleven a cabo como consecuencia de esta Ley (Ley 246 del 16 de diciembre de 2011, párrafo 7).

Se espera que el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto proporcione un hogar mejor al natural para el crecimiento integral del menor. De acuerdo a datos del *National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System*, del año fiscal 2011, los hispanos representan en 22.1% de los menores en el cuidado sustituto a nivel nacional. Según el Sistema de Información y Seguimiento del Departamento de la Familia (2012), en Puerto Rico, para el 2009, había 6,950 menores en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto, de los cuales 1,943 residían con familiares.

Al considerar la información acerca de los menores inmigrantes y las políticas que regulan los protocolos de los casos en Puerto Rico, el propósito de esta investigación fue analizar desde un enfoque cualitativo, la condición de invisibilidad y vulnerabilidad de los menores inmigrantes en custodia del Estado. Como así también, describir las políticas públicas y las prácticas del Estado para responder a las necesidades de la comunidad inmigrante desde la realidad jurídica social de Puerto Rico.

Este estudio pretende contribuir al entendimiento de las experiencias de la niñez inmigrante en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto y cómo se relaciona con la política pública vigente y las prácticas del Estado que responden a las necesidades de dicha comunidad en Puerto Rico. Tal como se señaló anteriormente, la niñez inmigrante y sus familias representan una de las poblaciones de más rápido crecimiento en los Estados Unidos, por lo que no es de extrañar similitudes proporcionales en la Isla, no solo por la relación que mantenemos con los Estados Unidos, sino por la posición geográfica de Puerto Rico en el Caribe.

El Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF) trabaja con los gobiernos, las comunidades locales y otros organismos de más de 160 países, territorios y regiones para promover los derechos de la niñez y suministrar atención a la nutrición, educación y salubridad. Este Fondo es el único organismo de las Naciones Unidas dedicado exclusivamente a la niñez que defiende sus intereses y promueve la plena aplicación de la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño (UNICEF, 2006).

La Declaración de los Derechos del Niño (1959) dispone que "el niño, por su falta de madurez física y mental, necesita protección y cuidados especiales, incluso la debida protección legal, tanto antes como después del nacimiento" (Preámbulo, párrafo 3). Se trabaja con los principios sociales y jurídicos relativos a la protección y el bienestar de los niños, con particular referencia a la adopción y la ubicación en hogares de crianza en el plano nacional e internacional. La necesidad de proporcionar a los menores una protección especial fue enunciada inicialmente en la Declaración de Ginebra de 1924 sobre los Derechos del Niño y en la Declaración de los Derechos del Niño, adoptada por la Asamblea General el 20 de noviembre de 1959. Además, se reafirmó en el Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos (en particular, en los artículos 23 y 24), en el Pacto Internacional de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales (con énfasis específicamente, en el artículo 10) y en los estatutos e instrumentos pertinentes de los organismos especializados y de las organizaciones internacionales que se interesan en el bienestar del niño.

En Puerto Rico, la Constitución del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico en su Carta de Derechos (1952) expresa que la dignidad del ser humano es inviolable: "Todos los hombres son iguales ante la Ley. No podrá establecerse discrimen alguno por motivo de raza, color, sexo, nacimiento, origen o condición social, ni ideas políticas o religiosas" (Artículo II, párrafo 1). Por lo tanto, dentro de este contexto los menores inmigrantes, sin importar su procedencia, tienen derecho de trato justo hacia la satisfacción de sus necesidades básicas. Además, la Ley 338 del 31 de diciembre de 1998 expresa que:

El Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico, con plena conciencia de que es su responsabilidad lograr el máximo desarrollo y bienestar de todos los niños del país, declara que todo niño en Puerto Rico, desde su nacimiento hasta los veintiún (21) años de edad, y sin menoscabo de las leyes vigentes, tendrán derechos dirigidos a que se le garantice la vigencia efectiva de los derechos consignados en la Constitución del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico y en las leyes y reglamentos que le sean aplicables (Artículo II, párrafo 1).

Objetivos de Investigación

Para la consecución del propósito de investigación planteado, se delinearon los siguientes objetivos:

- Describir las necesidades de la niñez inmigrante en Puerto Rico que se ubica en hogares sustitutos.
- Describir las percepciones de los menores inmigrantes en relación a los servicios de protección que les provee el Estado.
- Sugerir diseños de política inclusiva apoyando el mejoramiento de los servicios a la niñez, la juventud y sus familias.

En términos generales, esta investigación pretendió mediante sus hallazgos dar respuesta a las siguientes interrogantes: ¿Cómo las personas participantes describen su experiencia migratoria como menores de edad en custodia del estado? ¿Cómo las

personas participantes describen su experiencia en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto? ¿Cómo definen los derechos humanos? Finalmente, ¿cuál es la percepción de la población menor inmigrante en cuanto a los servicios provistos y coordinados por el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto para el logro de sus planes de permanencia?

Marco Conceptual

El marco conceptual bajo el cual se planteó esta investigación es la perspectiva construccionista. El tema de la inmigración representa una categoría de acuerdo al contexto y a quién se define. Para entender el concepto de inmigración, es necesario considerar los elementos Estado, nacionalidad y ciudadanía. El *Estado* es central porque representa el ente llamado a garantizar que todas las personas en su jurisdicción o territorio tengan completo goce de sus derechos humanos. El concepto de *ciudadanía* se convierte en eje central de la discusión en las democracias modernas dadas las contradicciones en el principio de igualdad y la particularidad de la diferencia de las mujeres y otros grupos excluidos. La *nacionalidad* es fundamental en este contexto porque ahí es donde se dan las brechas de lo que pertenece y es relativo a un país (Acevedo, Agostini, & Murúa, 2003).

Además, el contexto social juega un rol bien importante en torno al trabajo de las leyes protectoras de los más desventajados. La represión, tanto en países en vías de desarrollo como en los más ricos y poderosos, demuestra que, en lo cotidiano, se dan situaciones contrarias a lo legal y a lo moral. Se destacan tres tipos de ciudadanía entre los inmigrantes: (a) los que obtienen la ciudadanía formalmente, (b) los que reciben algún beneficio, pero no tienen una ciudadanía formal y (c) los llamados ilegales o indocumentados. Acevedo et al. (2003), enlazando el tema de ciudadanía e inmigración, señalan que la situación de los inmigrantes manifiesta las injusticias sociales presentes en nuestra democracia, porque tienen que soportar discriminación y la negación de sus derechos como ciudadanos. Es por ello que resulta relevante examinar las percepciones de los inmigrantes respecto a lo que ellos representan para el Estado.

La necesidad de comprender el sentido de la acción social en el contexto del mundo de la vida desde la perspectiva de los actores, requiere el enfoque de paradigmas cualitativos. Particularmente, desde este enfoque Kisnerman (2005) y Gergen (2009) convergen en referir la importancia al contexto y al protagonismo de la interpretación de los actores. Específicamente, Gergen (2009) señala que lo más importante, desde el construccionismo es la deconstrucción, la participación de los sujetos y las posibilidades de la reconstrucción de nuevas realidades con la intención de abogar hacia una transformación cultural. Es ahí donde la ciencia logra su cometido, por lo tanto, es esencial en este estudio examinar la realidad desde la interpretación de los menores inmigrantes.

Por otro lado, Berger y Luckman (2005) argumentan que la sociología del conocimiento debe ocuparse de lo que la gente conoce como realidad en su vida cotidiana, una realidad que es a su vez opresiva y presenta retos de sobrevivencia ante un contexto no planificado. Cuando las personas no son consideradas ni tratadas de manera equivalente da lugar a vivir bajo coerción y dominación. La desigualdad es el resultado

de las prácticas y actitudes hacia las diferencias, sean de raza, orientación sexual, género, edad, necesidades especiales, condición económica, u origen étnico. Considerando los teóricos antes esbozados, se establece como necesario darle voz a la población y considerarla en el diseño de los servicios.

En Puerto Rico hay mucho desconocimiento sobre la existencia de la inmigración y no se han generado investigaciones relativas a la situación de los menores inmigrantes. Es por ello que se debe hacer referencia a estudios previos en contextos similares. Quiñonez-Mayo y Dempsey (2005) enfatizaron el reto que enfrentan los manejadores de casos, cuando asisten a familias latinas, para mantener la integración familiar y fomentar la adaptación cultural de los menores.

Mientras que Capps, Rosenblum, Rodríguez, y Chisthi (2011) investigaron sobre las redadas del *Immigration and Custom Enforcement* en el lugar de trabajo de las personas inmigrantes y el impacto dramático que tienen en las comunidades, Earner (2007) trabajó con dos grupos focales en New York investigando las experiencias de los padres y madres inmigrantes con el proceso de investigación en protección a menores. Por otro lado, Dettlaff y Fong (2011) argumentaron sobre la necesidad de evaluar los programas en cuanto a la competencia cultural. De ello se desprende que resulta fundamental la competencia cultural para los profesionales que ofrecen servicios y asistencia a inmigrantes. A partir de la literatura, queda evidenciado que los profesionales y las agencias del Estado deben estar preparados para responder, de manera competente, respetuosa, y efectiva, a personas de todas las culturas, clases, razas, trasfondos, etnias, orientación sexual, creencias y religiones de manera que se reconozca la dignidad del ser humano.

Método

La investigación cualitativa permite un acercamiento a los fenómenos de manera particular, dando énfasis prioritario a los detalles y a la individualidad. La investigación cualitativa es el cuerpo de conocimientos que conforman los distintos diseños y estrategias de investigación que producen datos o información de manera textual, visual o narrativa, los cuales se analizan a través de medios no matemáticos (Lucca & Berríos, 2009). Kisnerman (2005) habla de la investigación como un modo de emancipación, construcción de sujetos vinculando sus representaciones y centrado en los procesos sociales. A partir de estos supuestos, la información relevante y hasta repetitiva de los menores, obtenida en esta investigación, nos ayuda a analizar este fenómeno desde distintos puntos de vista.

En esta investigación, se utilizó el estudio de caso múltiple para entender las experiencias de los menores inmigrantes. Se presentaron las experiencias de los participantes para examinar cómo sus vivencias contrastan con los datos descriptivos de los expedientes oficiales de la agencia principal proveedora de servicios. Esta investigación es de carácter descriptivo y se caracteriza por las diversas maneras de acercarse al tema de estudio mediante el análisis de documentos y de políticas públicas existentes, entrevistas a los participantes de servicios impactados por tales políticas y notas de campo. Se utilizó varias estrategias de recopilación de información con el fin de triangular la misma.

Instrumentos

La investigación constó de tres instrumentos para la recopilación de datos. El primero de ellos fue la hoja para guiar la lectura de los expedientes de archivo. El instrumento de lectura de expedientes contiene una lista de indicadores observables en las distintas secciones de los expedientes sociales de la Administración de Familias y Niños. Las evidencias documentales tenían áreas relacionadas a: (a) cumplimiento de términos de acción prestables por los protocolos de la Agencia, (b) interpretaciones hechas a la población de los distintos acontecimientos dentro de su caso, (c) la participación familiar, (d) servicios provistos, (e) evidencia de las notificaciones consulares, (f) planes de servicios y planes de permanencia, y (g) contacto con familiares tanto en su país de origen como en Puerto Rico.

El segundo instrumento fue la guía para el análisis de los documentos relacionados a la ley estatal de protección a menores, las cartas normativas y el manual vigente de servicios a menores en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto. La guía de análisis de política se basó en los argumentos planteados por Bardach (2005), que propone evaluar la calidad de las políticas públicas de acuerdo a los siguientes criterios: análisis, recopilación de evidencia, construcción de alternativas, selección de criterios, proyección de resultados, compensación de pérdidas, y decisión y divulgación de resultados.

El tercer instrumento para la recopilación de datos fue la guía de preguntas para las entrevistas, que incluyó: (a) la experiencia de emigrar a Puerto Rico de los entrevistados o de sus padres o madres, (b) la relación cultural y su experiencia en el país receptor, (c) el proceso de remoción o rescate, las relaciones familiares pasadas y vigentes, incluyendo la relación con sus hermanos y hermanas, (d) la provisión de servicios relacionados a su condición de menor inmigrante, (e) la relación con su(s) manejadora(s) de casos (se refiere al puesto oficial del trabajador social y técnico de servicios encargados de los menores en la agencia), (f) su experiencia general en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto, (g) sus recomendaciones para mejorar el servicio a otros menores y (h) sus planes futuros.

Participantes

En esta investigación la unidad de estudio estaba constituida por la juventud inmigrante de primera y segunda generación activa en el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto en Puerto Rico. Se seleccionó un total de nueve jóvenes, de los cuales se analizaron sus expedientes, pero solo se entrevistaron a ocho de ellos. Todos los menores cumplían con los criterios de inclusión: (a) tenían entre 14 a 18 años, (b) estaban bajo la custodia activa del estado a través del Departamento de la Familia, (c) hablaban español, (d) permitieron que se grabara la entrevista, (e) su participación fue voluntaria, y (f) estaban bajo la custodia del estado por más de seis meses. Dos de los participantes se encontraban confinados al momento de la entrevista. La población inmigrante es una de difícil reclutamiento por los temores inherentes a su condición de legalidad migratoria. Se hizo claro que la información recopilada no sería utilizada por las agencias relacionadas con inmigración. No obstante, tomó tiempo ganar la confianza de los posibles participantes para acceder a las entrevistas.

Procedimiento

Este estudio contó con la autorización del Comité Institucional para la Protección de los Seres Humanos en la Investigación de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras y del Departamento de la Familia de Puerto Rico. Los posibles participantes fueron identificados por la persona designada en la Administración Auxiliar de Cuidado Sustituto y Adopción y éstos a su vez, se comunicaron con los manejadores de casos. Se procedió a entregar al funcionario designado a nuestra investigación la promoción necesaria para el reclutamiento de los posibles participantes y los manejadores de casos.

Los participantes recibieron información escrita sobre el estudio. Las entrevistas se realizaron de acuerdo a la situación del menor (residencia de los participantes, escuela, centro correccional o universidad) y tuvieron una duración aproximada de entre 30 a 45 minutos. Todas las entrevistas fueron grabadas en cinta magnetofónica y luego transcritas.

Análisis de la Información

En esta investigación se trabajó con el modelo planteado por Wolcott (2009) que consiste de tres componentes principales: descripción, análisis e interpretación. La descripción, sostiene el autor, se refiere al proceso mediante el cual ilustramos los relatos de lo ocurrido u observado. El análisis se refiere a las interrelaciones, que como investigadores, establecemos entre diferentes elementos de una situación bajo estudio. Finalmente, la interpretación responde a las inferencias que derivamos acerca del significado de los datos en el contexto.

La triangulación de datos fortalece el estudio utilizando las diferentes fuentes de recopilación de información. Por lo tanto la información proveniente de las entrevistas, el análisis de expedientes sociales y la observación ofrecen la información necesaria para la interpretación.

Se desarrollaron categorías iniciales, basadas en la literatura, para codificar la información obtenida de los documentos y de las entrevistas. Durante el proceso de análisis, también fue necesario incorporar nuevas categorías para la codificación. El análisis de los códigos mediante categorías se elaboró utilizando el programa Nvivo8.

Resultados y Discusión

El marco del construccionismo social sirvió para explicar los resultados del estudio, y a partir de ello, construir conocimiento específico en torno a las políticas públicas que abarcan la situación de los menores inmigrantes en Puerto Rico. En esta sección se presentan y analizan los hallazgos desde la perspectiva del análisis cualitativo. La organización de los resultados presentados se enmarcó en tres de las categorías principales de análisis: (a) *vivencias como menores inmigrantes*, (b) *servicios provistos y coordinados por el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto* y (c) *construcciones por parte de las personas participantes sobre sus derechos* (véase Tabla 1). La discusión de estas categorías surgió de las verbalizaciones de los participantes así como de la información contenida en los expedientes sociales correspondientes y del contenido de la política

pública. Para garantizar el anonimato de los participantes se utilizaron seudónimos y se eliminaron las conexiones con los lugares específicos de origen y otra información sensitiva de las verbalizaciones.

Primera categoría de Análisis: Vivencias de los Menores Inmigrantes.

Un hallazgo importante de la categoría *vivencias de los menores inmigrantes* fue que el historial de los participantes en la agencia correspondiente, no contenía evidencia de los documentos migratorios o no estaban actualizados para hacer gestiones (ej. Visa o permiso de estudio y trabajo).

En términos del análisis de las entrevistas a los menores, indicó que debido a razones económicas, políticas, religiosas y sociales, muchas personas abandonan sus países de origen para mejorar sus condiciones de vida y la de sus familiares. Siete de los ocho menores hicieron el viaje con sus familias, cinco eran infantes o preescolares al momento de la travesía y no recordaban con claridad el momento ni las circunstancias del viaje. Una de las participantes relató el viaje con cierta superficialidad. En el caso de Linda, las circunstancias del viaje no estaban claras y se percibieron indicios de tráfico humano que no pudieron ser validados desde esta investigación.

En cuanto al análisis de las políticas públicas, en la normativa del Departamento de la Familia (Normativa: Orden administrativa para disponer el procedimiento a seguir cuando personal del Departamento de la Familia interviene con menores o familias extranjeras, DF-05-001) se dispone que en el caso de menores inmigrantes las agencias correspondientes deben establecer normas y procesos, deben facilitar la coordinación entre las agencias, y el Departamento de la Familia debe ser responsable de que lo dispuesto se cumpla. A partir del análisis de las entrevistas y los expedientes, se pudo contrastar que la información obtenida no fue congruente con lo dispuesto en la política pública. Los expedientes no contenían la evidencia suficiente para validar que los menores pasaron por los procesos adecuados para la documentación legal.

Segunda Categoría de Análisis: Servicios Provistos y Coordinados por el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto.

En esta categoría surgieron datos relacionados con la experiencia educativa de los menores en Puerto Rico, sus experiencias con la receptividad comunitaria, y la aceptación de sus costumbres como la alimentación, prácticas religiosas e idioma. Es importante recordar que la cultura es una serie de creencias, actitudes, y estándares de comportamiento transmitidos de una generación a la otra (Siegel, 2010). Por otro lado, la cultura étnica es la que da sentido de pertenencia, es excluyente de un grupo a otro y no es estática (Fontes, 2005), dadas las influencias contantes que tienen los grupos de enfrentar los nuevos retos tecnológicos, económicos y sociales que enfrenta una generación versus otra.

Tabla 1 *Resumen de Hallazgos de las Categorías Principales*

Categoría	Entrevista	Expedientes	Política
Vivencias de los menores inmigrantes	Al momento del viaje la mayoría eran infantes o pre-escolares y no tenían claro las circunstancias y eventos del viaje migratorio.	No contienen documentos (ej. Visa o permiso de estudio y trabajo) migratorios o no estaban actualizados para poder hacer gestiones para estudio y trabajo.	DF-05-001 Carta Normativa: “Notificación consular cuando se interviene con menores o familias extranjeras” dispone la política pública sobre la protección de los menores basada en su desarrollo integral; adoptar las medidas y mecanismos protectores necesarios; establecer las normas que regirán los procesos administrativos y judiciales; facilitar la coordinación multisectorial y entre las agencias; facultar al Departamento de la Familia a implantar esta Ley; tipificar delitos e imponer penalidades. (página 1)
Servicios provistos y coordinados por el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto	Los participantes son desertores escolares, otros están en el sistema público de enseñanza, aunque en varios casos, la edad no corresponde al grado (rezago académico). Rescate del significado de la escuela y comunidad y actividad religiosa	Reportan los diferentes grados académicos alcanzados. No se desprende evidencia documental relacionada a la evaluación psicológica o dental requerida a la población.	ADFAN-PS-CSA-2006-009 Carta Normativa:” Evaluación y Prestación de Servicios de Salud Física y Mental” dispone que las necesidades de salud física de los menores en cuidado sustituto deben ser evaluadas anualmente, a menos que las condiciones de los menores requieran evaluaciones más frecuentes. Los servicios médicos a ofrecerse deben ser adecuados y los necesarios de acuerdo a la situación y edad del menor. Esto incluye, pero no se limita a, evaluación y cuidado preventivo, salud oral, laboratorios y tratamiento para condiciones médicas. En el caso de menores en cuidado sustituto el/la funcionario/a que tenga a su cargo la atención del caso se asegurará de evaluar al menor al momento de su colocación inicial y en las reubicaciones subsiguientes. Los menores que reciben servicios de protección social en el hogar, serán evaluados cuando el área de salud física o mental se considere afectada por la situación de maltrato o negligencia, especialmente en menores víctimas de abuso físico y sexual. Los menores que requieran servicios en el área de salud mental deben ser evaluados y recibir servicios de acuerdo a su necesidad y condición. Siempre que existan indicadores de problemas de salud mental deben realizarse evaluaciones lo más pronto posible. Menores bajo la custodia del Estado, deben recibir una evaluación al momento de ingresar a cuidado sustituto.” (página 1)

Tabla 1 (cont.)

Categoría	Entrevista	Expedientes	Política
Construcciones por parte de los participantes sobre sus derechos	No tiene claro cuáles son sus derechos. Dificultades de adaptaciones en términos del proceso en el cual son custodios bajo el Departamento de la Familia u hogares sustitutos. No perciben a los manejadores de caso como defensores de sus derechos, sino a otras personas significativas en su vida. Derechos humanos etéreos.	En uno de los casos hubo coordinación con las Agencias de Inmigración y Aduana Federal para el proceso de extradición a la República Dominicana. Este trámite era desde la óptica legal y no desde la provisión de servicios para la reunificación familiar. En el resto de casos estudiados no se evidenciaron trámites para garantizar derechos de legalidad migratoria y otros derechos ciudadanos.	<p>Ley para la Seguridad, Bienestar y Protección de Menores, Art. 2 Ley 246 del 2011</p> <p>“Los menores tienen derecho a la vida, a una buena calidad de vida y a un ambiente sano, en condiciones de dignidad y goce de todos sus derechos en forma prevalente. La calidad de vida es esencial para su desarrollo integral, acorde con la dignidad de ser humano. Este derecho supone la generación de condiciones que les aseguren desde la concepción, el cuidado, la protección, la alimentación nutritiva y equilibrada, el acceso a los servicios de salud, la educación, el vestuario adecuado, la recreación y la vivienda segura dotada de servicios públicos esenciales en un ambiente sano.”</p> <p>Ley para la Seguridad, Bienestar y Protección de Menores, Artículo 3 de la Ley 226 (inciso jj):</p> <p>“Protección integral - el reconocimiento como sujetos de derechos, la garantía y cumplimiento de los menores, la eliminación de la amenaza para la seguridad de su restablecimiento inmediato en desarrollo del principio del mejor bienestar del menor. La protección integral se materializa en el conjunto de políticas, planes, programas y acciones que se ejecuten con la correspondiente asignación de recursos financieros, físicos y humanos.”</p>

La información recopilada en relación a la experiencia educativa en Puerto Rico parte de las entrevistas con los menores y la información en los expedientes sociales. Esta categoría indicó que dos de las personas participantes no estaban en la escuela, dos habían terminado estudios técnicos (enfermería y artes culinarias), cuatro estaban en la escuela secundaria y uno tomaba clases en el programa de educación especial. Ninguno de ellos había terminado su escuela de manera regular, es decir que en todos los casos se encontró un desbalance entre la edad cronológica y el nivel escolar alcanzado. Esta información se recogió esencialmente de los entrevistados ya que los expedientes solamente contenían los grados alcanzados y las anotaciones no estaban escritas de manera secuencial.

Dada la diversidad étnica, social y religiosa presente en el sistema de la educación pública de Puerto Rico, es difícil para los académicos poder ajustar sus modalidades pedagógicas a los distintos estilos de aprendizaje y necesidades de los alumnos.

Todos los participantes habían utilizado el sistema de educación pública de Puerto Rico, excepto Linda, quien estudiaba en un colegio privado al momento de la remoción. Luego de ese cambio, ella ingresó en el sistema público de enseñanza del Departamento de Educación y se encuentra actualmente en undécimo grado. En el caso de Caleb, la escuela es muy significativa, ya que él la identifica como su espacio donde tiene que defender a sus hermanos y a si mismo de las burlas de sus compañeros por razón de su origen étnico. Su dialecto y el de sus hermanos es “papiamento”. Caleb relata sus experiencias en la escuela de la siguiente manera:

“Eso sí. Ahí se reían de mí. Yo peleaba ...yo iba pa’ la escuela a pelear na’ más”,... “no, en verdad, yo iba ahí... a la escuela to’ los días y yo estaba ansioso porque llegara las seis de la mañana y las tres de la tarde... pa’ pelear... con mis otros hermanos... [Se ríe]. Y si me-- se metían con uno, los otros le brincaban encima. Eran como que un tres pa’ uno...”

La investigación sugiere que la niñez y la juventud en hogares de crianza no están teniendo éxito en la escuela. Claramente es necesario un esfuerzo concertado para poder obtener mejores resultados. Cónsono con este hallazgo, el Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos Federal (2010) informó que en 52 estados y jurisdicciones que participaron en los procesos de evaluación y monitoria federal entre los años 2007 al 2010, se evidenció que las necesidades educativas no fueron satisfechas de manera adecuada. Específicamente en las transferencias de expedientes, comunicación y retrasos en las matrículas escolares. Nuestra investigación es una evidencia más de esta realidad en la cual los participantes tienen rezago académico, son desertores o están en una gran desventaja en sus escenarios escolares. Ninguna agencia cuenta con los recursos, ni la experiencia para proporcionar los servicios necesarios para atender las necesidades de esta población de alto riesgo. La agencia de protección, las escuelas, las familias y la propia juventud deben trabajar juntos de manera estratégica en nuevas formas de abordaje y con gran energía para acelerar, ampliar y unificar esfuerzos para lograr mejores resultados (Zeitlin, Weinberg, & Shea, 2006).

Por otra parte, al analizar la política pública, se encontró que, según establecido por las normas del Departamento de la Familia (ADFAN-PS-CSA-2006-009), las

estipulaciones se concentran en atender las necesidades de salud física, psicológica y mental de los menores. La política establece que los menores deben evaluarse anualmente, a menos que presenten una condición que requiera evaluaciones frecuentes. Es alarmante que en los expedientes examinados no se encontrara evidencia si los menores habían recibido estas evaluaciones, aun cuando deben documentarse todas las gestiones realizadas por el manejador de casos.

Del análisis de las entrevistas, surgió información relacionada al desarrollo de identidad cultural en la categoría *servicios provistos y coordinados por el Sistema de Cuidado Sustituto*. Los menores enfrentaron dificultades de adaptación en la comunidad, relacionadas mayormente con la situación de estar bajo la custodia del gobierno. A pesar de la remoción, ellos estaban en comunidades donde su identidad cultural era reconocida. En el caso de Linda, ella vivía en una comunidad donde la iglesia y los negocios eran frecuentados por personas de su mismo origen étnico (China). En el caso de los participantes provenientes de la República Dominicana, ellos vivían en comunidades donde se sentían protegidos por sus compatriotas.

En el tema de experiencias culturales se exploraron las vivencias en cuanto al tema de religión, alimentación e idioma. La cultura étnica incluye el lenguaje, la visión de mundo, vestimenta, alimentos, estilos de comunicación, nociones de bienestar, estilos de crianza y auto-concepto (Abney, 2002). Linda, la menor oriunda de China, hablando de su dieta actual en el hogar sustituto expresó lo siguiente:

“Pues, sí, me respeta [...] nosotros comemos más saludable, sin mucho... poco sal, poco aceite; pues... ellos comen mucho.”

En cuanto al tema de religión, dos de los menores señalaron participar de alguna actividad religiosa de manera constante y un menor que se encontraba confinado al momento de la entrevista participa de manera casual. Aquellos que participan de algún tipo de actividad religiosa indican que ésta no tiene relación con la religión practicada por sus padres, madres o personas responsables de ellos antes de la remoción.

Ambos menores expresaron que la experiencia de participar de comunidades de fe les ayudaba en su proceso de vida. Ellos hicieron referencias a algunos rituales específicos en sus familias de origen, pero no pueden explicarlas de manera concreta y no las relacionan con sus creencias actuales. Caleb, hablando de las prácticas religiosas de su madre dice:

“No, mi ma’i creía en San... San Miguel. Que ella lo ponía ahí, prendía un tabaco y se lo echaba ahí encima ahí... Cosas ahí que... que ella entendía.” “No, ella iba pa’ la iglesia. Ella iba pa’... una... católica yo creo, no sé; no me acuerdo bien. Pero iba pa’ una iglesia.”

Linda relata las prácticas religiosas de sus padres:

“Budismo, algo así, siempre to’s los chinos son eso [...] Ajá, incienso, pa’l día y lo pones entonces ahí, y hacer un buen comida a... a... a agradarle gracias al cielo, y después celebramos y comemos. Algo así” Aja, pero yo pertenece

muchos religiones. Yo soy evangélica, pero yo, yo no rechazo a los demás, porque yo-- yo estudiaba en-- en colegio de católica."

Otro elemento significativo es que aquellos que expresaron estar practicando alguna religión se identificaron como protestantes o evangélicos, siendo la fe católica dominante en Puerto Rico.

En resumen, en cuanto a sus experiencias como menores inmigrantes se puede afirmar que los entrevistados no participaron de la decisión de emigrar, sus familias viajaron para mejorar sus condiciones de vida, y en la mayoría de los casos vinieron con sus madres y otros familiares. Además, en su proceso de integración cultural todos se han rezagado en su proceso educativo. Sin embargo, la escuela resultó ser un espacio importante para varios participantes y representa un área en la cual reciben apoyo emocional y educativo. En cuanto a la religión, tres participantes la mencionan como algo significativo en sus vidas, aun cuando no pueden describir con claridad las creencias o prácticas de sus familias de origen. Es decir, sus prácticas religiosas actuales responden a su decisión y no a la crianza original.

Tercera Categoría de Análisis: Construcciones por Parte de los Participantes Sobre sus Derechos.

En términos generales, los resultados de esta categoría indican que los participantes emigraron, en su mayoría, con sus familias de origen que buscaban mejorar sus condiciones de vida, tanto sociales como económicas. Bajo este rubro se procuró conocer las percepciones de los entrevistados de sus derechos, cómo los definían, y quienes representaban mejor sus intereses como menores de edad.

Todas las personas entrevistadas viajaron con sus familiares, excepto en uno de los casos, el cual no formó parte de la decisión de emigrar. Los participantes manifestaron enfrentar dificultades de adaptación al país receptor, en este caso Puerto Rico, por varias razones. El factor más importante o consistente a través de los relatos fue que ellos provenían de familias en las cuales ellos o algunos de sus familiares cercanos habían atravesado por problemas de maltrato, uso de drogas, encarcelamiento, condiciones mentales, entre otras dificultades. Pasar por tales circunstancias los llevó a estar sujetos a intervenciones del Estado, ya fuera por el sistema de protección a menores o de justicia en el caso de los dos menores transgresores de la ley. Hubo consistencia en las razones para el movimiento migratorio, sin embargo, las percepciones sobre la integración al país receptor fueron diversas; especialmente por las diferencias culturales entre los entrevistados.

La noción de derechos por parte de los participantes resultó ambigua y se alineó a conceptos como acceso a un lugar donde vivir, la escuela y los alimentos. Es importante conocer y entender cómo las distintas culturas abordan un mismo tema, ya que las interpretaciones de los participantes varían según sus culturas de origen. En el caso de Linda, donde expresa que su cultura no valora a las mujeres, se refiere a Puerto Rico con esperanza de progresar y considera su condición de custodia como una transición en su vida. Distinto es el caso de Harold, quien mostró una opinión muy negativa del proceso de remoción y habló despectivamente de la agencia, ya que él lleva muchos años en el

sistema. María fue la única participante que reconoció a su familia de crianza como un sistema de apoyo con el que podrá contar en el futuro. Esta joven estudió un curso técnico en enfermería y es su familia de crianza que la ayudaron en el cuidado de su bebé. El resto de los participantes identifican a sus maestras como personas claves que los han representado en distintos momentos de necesidad. Ninguno de ellos identificó a sus manejadores de casos como sus defensores de derechos.

En cuanto a la política pública en Puerto Rico, el artículo 3 de la Ley 226 del 2012 (inciso jj) establece que la protección integral a menores como:

(...) el reconocimiento como sujetos de derechos, la garantía y cumplimiento de los menores, la eliminación de la amenaza para la seguridad de su restablecimiento inmediato en desarrollo del principio del mejor bienestar del menor. La protección integral se materializa en el conjunto de políticas, planes, programas y acciones que se ejecuten con la correspondiente asignación de recursos financieros, físicos y humanos.

Los contextos económicos y sociopolíticos más amplios en los cuales la gente opera, también dan forma a los derechos humanos en la práctica. Los participantes de esta investigación mostraron un vago concepto acerca de sus derechos. Mencionaron, principalmente, que los derechos eran como algo etéreo, no los relacionaron con el sentido práctico de su realidad cotidiana.

Todos los seres humanos tienen derecho a una vida digna y a que se promuevan aquellas gestiones que sean necesarias para un mejor bienestar. Aun cuando esta población tiene dificultades para acceder a servicios (tales como ayuda para alimentos y servicios de salud) limitados por su estatus migratorio, ellos tienen el derecho de ser tratados en igualdad de condiciones para alcanzar una calidad de vida digna. El Estado tiene la obligación de protegerlos, identificar a familiares en sus países de origen para su regreso a sus ciudades natales o como última alternativa hacer todas las gestiones pertinentes para que cuando cumplan su mayoría de edad tengan toda su documentación vigente.

Conclusiones

Analizar las verbalizaciones de los menores posibilitó contestar las preguntas de investigación propuestas con el fin de entender las construcciones que ellos tienen acerca del proceso de inmigración, experiencias en: Puerto Rico como país receptor, experiencias con los servicios provistos y coordinados por el Estado y sus experiencias relacionadas a esta circunstancia. La información presentada en las diversas categorías de análisis no es mutuamente excluyente, sino que se pueden observar interconexiones para acercarnos a la realidad de los participantes. Los menores son frecuentemente separados de sus padres, madres y hermanos por periodos extensos de tiempo antes de una reunificación familiar en el país receptor (Fontes, 2005).

Aunque las verbalizaciones de los participantes son la parte principal del estudio, la revisión de documentos reforzó la investigación en torno al impacto en la política pública existente. En ese sentido, cuando la política no surge teniendo en cuenta las personas

afectadas y sus características, puede no cumplir con las necesidades y expectativas de esos grupos sociales. En términos de la población estudiada, son los propios menores de la población inmigrante que pueden relatar sus vivencias y construir un marco de referencia para mejorar la aplicación de las políticas existentes. Vidich y Lyman (1994) explican que la investigación cualitativa es de gran aportación para entender la cotidianidad de las personas y a partir de ello, generar nuevas contribuciones a las disciplinas.

La migración de personas a través de la historia indica que se ha creado una diáspora global. La tecnología ha facilitado las conexiones entre los países y fortalecido lazos de solidaridad, sin embargo, aún se evidencia discriminación frente a las poblaciones étnicas minoritarias. Los contextos internacionales tienen que tomar en cuenta la complejidad de las nuevas narrativas desde la perspectiva de los derechos humanos. La población estudiada tiene mucho que decirnos en cuanto a sus necesidades específicas, a la falta de apoyo del país receptor y de las instituciones de servicios humanos y además, nos presentan recomendaciones para que el sistema responda a su realidad. Es importante que aquellos inmigrantes que en su niñez estuvieron bajo la custodia del estado participen en Juntas Asesoras, Comités Consultivos, grupos multidisciplinarios, grupos de autoevaluación de la agencia de servicios, entre otros.

A partir de los hallazgos de esta investigación surgen como recomendaciones principales para la práctica: concentrarnos en la supervisión de los hogares de crianza, dialogar con los menores cuando visitemos dichos espacios para conocer sus necesidades y percepciones y sugerir ajustes necesarios a los hogares de crianza en términos de adiestramiento y sensibilidad cultural. De todas las observaciones y preocupaciones expresadas desde sus experiencias diversas, cada entrevistado repitió la necesidad de este seguimiento. Los profesionales de trabajo social pueden recopilar los relatos de los participantes y entrelazarlos para hacer una historia que facilite el trabajo en conjunto (Hall, 1997).

Las conclusiones y recomendaciones de esta investigación pueden servir de base y promoción para la continuidad del arduo esfuerzo en el trabajo con los menores en cuidado sustituto. Es importante reconocer la tarea que tienen que hacer los manejadores de casos en una agencia de limitados recursos y la necesidad existente de identificar el capital humano y económico apropiado para delinear un plan estatal responsable en todos los ámbitos del servicio a menores en Puerto Rico.

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