

BEHAVIORAL ASPECTS OF LATINO FAMILIALISM: A THREE STUDY ANALYSIS

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The existing research on Latino familialism draws a distinction between the attitudes associated with familialism and familialism-based action. Because attitudes tend to be more stable when considering variables such as immigration generation status, etc., social science researchers tend to employ measures based on attitudinal aspects of familialism, rather than action or behavior. Because of this preference, there is a lack of studies that examine familialism-based action and behaviors. This dissertation consists of three unique studies that examine actions and behaviors associated with familialism, while taking into account the methodological concerns expressed by previous researchers. The first study uses nationally representative U.S. data to compare the differences in the frequency of contact with various family members, among black non-Hispanics, Hispanics, and white non-Hispanics. The central finding of this study is that Hispanics maintain more frequent contact with family than white non-Hispanics, but there is no difference between Hispanics and black non-Hispanics, with the exception of contact with fathers. The second study, which employs qualitative data collected from a metropolitan area in the southwest U.S., examines the locus of educational aspirations and expectations among a sample of Hispanics and white non-Hispanics. Among other things, this study finds that Hispanic females were more likely than other participants to make statements that suggest the aspirations or expectations of significant others were a strong influence in the decision to attend college. This study further argues that this tendency is related to the acquiescent nature of traditional Hispanic gender norms associated with the familial concept of *marianismo*. Using nationally representative U.S. data, the final study finds that, other things being equal, Hispanic college students are more likely than non-Hispanic students to

attend a college or university that is within fifty miles of their permanent residence. The study further finds that this tendency mediates the gap between Hispanic students and white non-Hispanic students, in terms of the selectivity level of institutions attended.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Between the rapid growth of the U.S. Latino population, the widespread attention given to the polarizing topic of undocumented immigration from Latin America, and the wide range of socioeconomic inequalities experienced by U.S. Latinos, social scientists have found ample reason to turn their attention to the study of Latinos. Like those social scientists who have paved the way for my research, I have found the inequalities experienced by U.S. Latinos to make for compelling and important topics of empirical inquiry. As such, my dissertation research has focused on U.S. Latinos, resulting in three empirical studies on Latinos that stand on their own merits as unique and original contributions to the existing body of sociological research on Latinos. In this chapter, I introduce the three studies that comprise this dissertation, discuss the common themes that these three studies share, and briefly discuss how the dissertation is organized.

The Three Studies

Study 1: Race/Ethnicity and Family Contact: Toward a Behavioral Measure of Familialism

The first study in this dissertation uses data from the 2002 General Social Survey to develop a behavioral measure of familialism, based on frequency of contact with nuclear and extended family members. The study examines the frequency of contact that U.S. black non-Hispanics, Hispanics, and white non-Hispanics maintain with mothers, fathers, siblings, adult children, aunts or uncles, nephews or nieces, and cousins. These individual familial categories are also used to create indices of contact with nuclear family and contact with extended family. This study finds that, overall Hispanics maintain more frequent contact with nuclear and

extended family than do white non-Hispanics, but not black non-Hispanics. Other findings are discussed, as are implications and suggestions for future research.

Study 2: Machismo, Marianismo and College Aspirations/Expectations

The second study in this dissertation employs qualitative methods to compare how Hispanic and white non-Hispanic, first generation college students construct their views of their educational aspirations or expectations, and the educational aspirations or expectations of significant others. Through exploratory analysis of transcripts from 42 semi-structured interviews (21 Hispanic and 21 white non-Hispanic), the study finds noteworthy differences between Hispanic females and all other participants in terms of the locus of educational aspirations/expectations. More specifically, the Hispanic females in the study were more likely to be influenced by the educational aspirations or expectations of significant others, than were any other ethnicity/sex category in the sample. In this study, I go on to argue that the acquiescent nature of *marianismo* provides an explanation for the observed difference.

Study 3: Latino Familialism and College Choice

The third study in this dissertation uses data from the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study to determine whether familialism influences college selection among Hispanic college students. This is operationalized by determining whether, controlling for relevant variables, Hispanics are less likely to attend a college or university that is fifty miles or further from home, than are their non-Hispanic peers. The study also examines the degree to which the preference for attending close to home explains differences in the selectivity level of institutions that Hispanic students attend, as compared to Asian, black non-Hispanic, or white

non-Hispanic students. The study finds that, other things being equal: Hispanics are less likely than non-Hispanics to attend college far from home; black non-Hispanic and Hispanic students tend to attend less selective institutions than white non-Hispanics students; Asian students attend more selective institutions than all other groups; and the tendency to attending close to home partially mediates the differences in selectivity for Hispanics, but not for Asians or black non-Hispanics.

The Common Thread of Latino Familialism

In addition to the focus on U.S. Latinos, the three studies that comprise this dissertation share one key characteristic: An emphasis on examining behavioral aspects of Latino familialism. There is a wide body of literature on Latinos, family, and familialism (e.g., Desmond & Turley, 2009; Esparza & Sanchez, 2008; Griswold del Castillo, 1984; Keefe, 1979; Landale & Oropesa, 2007; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987; Vega, 1990; Williams, 1990). Furthermore, existing research on Latinos suggests that they possess a comparatively strong level of familialism, which has been defined as a sense of loyalty, identification, solidarity, and attachment to both nuclear and extended family (Keefe, 1979; Marin, 1993; Torres V. , 2004; Vega, 1990). Also related to Latino familialism, are the concepts of *machismo* and *marianismo*, which refer to the traditional Mexican gender roles that are viewed as being in the interest of defending the honor and integrity of the family (Castillo & Cano, 2007; Castillo, Perez, Castillo, & Ghosheh, 2010; Stevens, 1973). Though there is a tendency to view both *machismo* and *marianismo* as involving oversimplified traditional gender stereotypes – the hyper-masculine male and the submissive female – each concept contains a complex array of values and norms (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008;

Castillo & Cano, 2007; Castillo, Perez, Castillo, & Ghosheh, 2010; Torres, Solberg, & Carlstrom, 2002).

A survey of the research on familism shows that there are two distinct ways in which it is measured: Through attitudinal measures, such as surveys regarding familial values and beliefs; and through attempts to measure the degree to which behaviors or actions demonstrate evidence of familism (Marin, 1993; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987). Though examples exist of both approaches, there is a clear preference in the existing social science literature for attitudinal measures of familism, with this preference attributed to the view that attitudinal measures are more stable than behavioral measures when considering of the effects of variables such as language, generation, or acculturation level (Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987). The argument regarding the reliability of attitudinal measures, as compared to behavioral measures of familism is a valid one. Nonetheless, where the concerns regarding the reliability of behavioral measures of familism should serve as a valuable word of methodological caution to familism researchers, they have become an unnecessary deterrent to behavior oriented research on familism. The three studies in this dissertation aim to provide examples of research that examines behavioral manifestations of familism, while taking into account the issues of reliability that have been noted by previous researchers.

Overall, it is important to remember that familism, like most forms of culture, is more than simply attitudes or social practices. Moreover, like other forms of culture, familism can include values, methods for attaining goals, ways of viewing one's position within a social framework, social obligations, views pertaining to the role and position of various members of kinship networks, distinct forms of cultural capital, patterns of social networks and social capital,

and a wide range of other aspects of social life (Swidler, 1986; Vaisey, 2010). As such, it is important not to take a reductionist approach toward the study of familialism. In other words, every finding from studies of familialism – the present work included – should be viewed as but one dimension of familialism, among a wide array of social concepts, connections, and actions.

The Structure of this Dissertation

This dissertation has been prepared to fulfill the requirements of a research track dissertation with the University of North Texas, Department of Sociology. The research track is designed to prepare doctoral candidates for academic careers with research universities, and thus places an emphasis on developing publishable research manuscripts, and includes publication-based requirements upon the successful defense of the dissertation. To fulfill the publication-based requirements, one paper must be accepted for publication (Study 1 has been published in the May, 2012 edition of the *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* and meets this requirement), one paper must be submitted to a journal (Study 2 has been submitted to *Sociological Forum*), and one paper must be deemed near-ready to be submitted to a journal (Study 3 meets this requirement). As such, the three studies that comprise this dissertation are research manuscripts, written to optimize their odds of being accepted for publication. Based on this format, the contents of the three studies are self-contained, and do not build upon each other or refer to one another (with the exception of in-text citations of the published version of Study 1). With this in mind, this introduction chapter and the concluding chapter serve as the only points of connection tying together these three studies.

CHAPTER 2

RACE/ETHNICITY AND FAMILY CONTACT:

TOWARD A BEHAVIORAL MEASURE OF FAMILIALISM¹

Introduction

The concept of familialism plays an important role in social scientific research on Hispanic-Americans (Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987; Vega, 1990). A body of literature has examined a number of aspects of Latino familialism, such as its role in identity development of first-year college students (Torres V. , 2004), psychological care (Inclan & Hernandez, 1992), juvenile delinquency (Pabon, 1998), acculturation in the United States (Negy & Woods, 1992), and alcohol use among adolescent males (Gil, Wagner, & Vega, 2000). Bengtson's (2001) research contends that, in general (i.e., not differentiating based on race or ethnicity), multigenerational kinship networks are becoming increasingly important in the 21st century for a number of reasons including longer life-expectancy, and increased importance of grandparents and other extended family members in fulfilling functional roles in the family. Altogether, this research suggests that familialism has important implications to the well-being of Latinos, and seeking to understand familialism is a valuable endeavor for social scientists and policy-makers alike.

The research on familialism draws a distinction between attitudinal and behavioral measures of familialism (Marin, 1993; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987), though most social science research on familialism explores only attitudinal measures

¹ Comeau, J. A. (2012). Race/ethnicity and family contact: Toward a behavioral measure of familialism. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 34(2), 251-268. Reproduced with permission from Sage Publications Inc.

(Esparza & Sanchez, 2008; Gaines et al., 1997; Lugo Steidel & Contreras, 2003; Rodriguez, Mira, Paez, & Myers, 2007; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987; Villarreal, Blozis, & Widaman, 2005). This preference for attitudinal measures of familialism is attributed to the view that attitudinal measures are more stable than behavioral measures when considering of the effects of language, generation, acculturation level, etc. (Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987; Villarreal, Blozis, & Widaman, 2005). While this view is not without validity, there is still much that can be learned about familialism by studying its behavioral dimensions. There is, however, a lack of research aimed at examining behavioral aspects of familialism. This study intends to examine one such behavioral dimension – frequency of family contact – in an effort to determine if Hispanic Americans interact with family members more frequently than do black non-Hispanics or white non-Hispanics. Not only will this study provide additional insight into how familialism manifests itself in behavioral terms, but I am also hopeful that it will serve to encourage further examination of behavioral measures of familialism.

The literature on Latinos suggests that familialism, which can be defined as a sense of loyalty, identification, solidarity, and attachment to both nuclear and extended family, is a core component of Hispanic culture (Keefe, 1979; Marin, 1993; Torres V. , 2004; Vega, 1990). Furthermore, research suggests that Latinos tend to score higher in measures of familialism than white non-Hispanics (Keefe, 1979). There are, however, studies that have observed high levels of familialism among other racial and ethnic groups, suggesting that it is not a uniquely Latino cultural characteristic (Hays & Mindel, 1973; Schwartz, 2007; Youn, Knight, Jeong, & Benton, 1999). In their study of 395 black and white parents from a Midwestern city, Hays and Mindel found that the black respondents interacted with twice as many family members at least once a week (4.08) than did the white respondents (2.00). The observed differences were statistically

significant regarding interaction with siblings, secondary family members (aunts, uncles, and grandparents), and cousins, but not significant regarding interaction with parents. It is worth noting that, although the difference between black and white respondents in terms of interaction with parents was not statistically significant, black respondents did report less frequent interactions (.68) than did white respondents (.96). Overall, however, this study suggests that, like Latinos, black non-Hispanics are characterized by comparatively high levels of behavioral familialism.

In her influential research pertaining to familialism and Mexican-Americans, Keefe (1979) contends that, while research argues that urbanization and other influences lead to decreased levels of familialism, Mexican-American families have maintained strong familial ties. Moreover, she identifies four key characteristics of Mexican-American familialism. The first of these is that “the extended kin group normally consists of a wide circle of relatives including not only ego's parents, siblings, spouse, and children but also grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings' spouses, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren” (p. 351). Secondly, this extended family generally lives in close proximity to each other. The third characteristic is that this extended family serves as the primary social unit for members, and the fourth characteristic is that the “extended kin group operates as a reciprocal aid system. Family members are relied on for temporary help and in times of crisis, furnishing both emotional and instrumental support” (p. 352).

Keefe (1979) further argues that the effects of Latino familialism tend to become stronger after the first generation in the U.S., because Mexican immigrants to the United States tend to arrive with fewer direct family members, and grow their families over time through marriage, raising children, and the families into which their children marry. As such, subsequent

generations tend to have a larger family network in the United States, with which they can interact. She further argues that the strong connection to extended family is not likely “tied to poverty and the search for resources outside the nuclear family” (p. 361). In other words, she argues that Latinos do not seek connections in extended family to fulfill resource needs that, due to poverty, the immediate family is unable to meet. As part of her study, Keefe compared the number of visits to a related household, per week, among a sample of Mexican Americans and Anglo Americans from three southern California communities. Her analysis found that, on average, Mexican Americans visited more related households per week than did Anglos.

Although Keefe’s research provides support for the view that Latinos have more frequent interactions with extended family when compared to white non-Hispanics, there are opportunities to address gaps in her analysis. First, her study only included Mexican Americans and Anglo Americans and, as seen in the Hays and Mindel study, there is reason to believe that black non-Hispanics also maintain a comparatively high frequency of contact with extended family members. It would be valuable to compare all three of these major racial and ethnic groups, to gain a more complete picture of their comparative levels of family interaction. Second, her analysis does not control for potentially relevant variables, such as sex, age, education, income, or marital status. Additionally, because Keefe’s study examines the number of visits to related households per week, we are unable to determine whether the higher frequency of contact is attributable to simply having more family members residing in the same community area and therefore having more family with which to interact, or whether individual members of certain groups are actually more “familial” in their attitudes and behaviors. Finally, Keefe’s analysis does not differentiate between any particular familial category, such as cousin, sibling, aunt, uncle, or adult children. Examining differences in frequency of contact with

individual familial categories has the potential to provide deeper insight into behavioral familialism.

Purpose of the Current Study

The purpose of the current study was to compare the frequency of contact with nuclear family and extended family members among a sample of Latino, black non-Hispanic, and white non-Hispanic respondents. Based on the previous literature on family contact, it was predicted that Latinos would be found to maintain more frequent contact with nuclear and extended family than do white non-Hispanics, but not black non-Hispanics, even when controlling for sex, age, education, income, and marital status. Furthermore, each individual familial category (i.e., mother, father, cousins, etc.) was examined independently to gain further insight into patterns of family contact.

Method

Sample

The hypotheses were tested using data from the 2002 General Social Survey (GSS), which included a nationally representative sample of 2765 U.S. adult respondents. The 2002 GSS data were selected because they are from the most recent year to include the necessary survey questions pertaining to frequency of family contact. These data were weighted using WTSSALL², and filtered so that the final sample included only Hispanic, black non-Hispanic, and white non-Hispanic respondents, ages 18 and older, with valid responses to relevant survey

² Because the GSS selects one adult per household, unweighted data can be generalized to households, but not individuals. The WTSSALL weight variable takes this sampling method into consideration, and allows for findings to be generalized to individual adults.

items. The final weighted samples for the models ranged in size from a low of 268 (the model for analysis of interaction with adult children) to a high of 771 (the model for analysis of index of interaction with extended family members).

Measures

The dependent variables used to test the hypotheses included two indices that were constructed in order to operationalize the concept of nuclear and extended family contact, and variables pertaining to contact with individual familial categories, such as mother, father, cousin, etc. The index of contact with nuclear family included the variables “How often does respondent visit the sister or brother with whom s/he previously indicated the highest frequency of contact” (sibvisit), “How often does respondent visit the adult son or daughter with whom s/he previously indicated the highest frequency of contact” (kidvisit), “How often does respondent visit father” (pavisit1), and “How often does respondent visit mother” (mavisit1). Responses were coded with higher values for more frequent contact, with possible values ranging from 1.0 to 6.0. The responses to nuclear familial categories were coded as follows: “S/he lives in the same household as I do” and “Daily” = 6; “At least several times a week” = 5; “At least once a week” = 4; “At least once a month” = 3; “Several times a year” = 2; and “Less often” and “Never” = 1. In cases where the respondent had no living relative of this type or did not know this relative, the response was coded as ‘system missing.’ Finally, the valid responses were averaged to create the index. In cases where one or more familial categories had no valid responses, the average was computed without the missing/non-valid responses (e.g., in a situation where a respondent has no living relative in one or more of the categories, those categories were not included in the

computing of the index). It was determined that using averages instead of a summated scale was preferable, as it allowed for fewer cases to be omitted from the analysis.

The index of contact with extended family included the variables “How often does respondent contact cousin” (cousins), “How often does respondent contact uncles or aunts” (uncle/aunts), and “How often does respondent contact nieces and nephews” (nieces/nephews). Responses were coded with higher values for more frequent contact, and averaged to create an index of contact with extended family, with possible values ranging from 1.0 to 3.0. The responses to extended familial categories were coded as follows: “More than twice in last 4 weeks” = 3; “Once or twice in last 4 weeks” = 2; and “Not at all in last 4 weeks” = 1. The valid responses to these items were averaged to create the index of contact with extended family, following the same method used in creating the index of contact with nuclear family. Additionally, each item used in creating these indices was used as a dependent variable in the tests of each familial category (i.e., father, mother, cousin, etc).

It is important to note that the items associated with nuclear family specifically used the term “visit,” while items associated with extended family used the term “contact” in the questions. As such, for nuclear family “family contact” is more specifically “in person” contact, while for extended family this contact can include phone or other forms of contact, as well as visits. Furthermore, the items pertaining to nuclear familial categories that can include multiple individuals (i.e., siblings, and adult children, as opposed to mother/father) ask respondents to answer based on the member of that category with whom they maintain the most contact (i.e., the sibling with whom they have the most frequent contact). This is important, in that it decreases the likelihood that higher frequency of contact with nuclear family is simply a function of having larger families. In other words, we are looking at how frequently a respondent interacts with their

“closest” sibling, rather than total interactions with all siblings. Because the survey items for extended family categories were written based on contact with any member of that category (i.e., contact with any cousin), the analyses of contact with extended family are likely to be influenced by the size of one’s extended family.

The independent variables used in the analysis included two race/ethnicity dummy variables for white non-Hispanic and black non-Hispanic, with Hispanic as the reference category. Gender was also treated as a dummy variable with female coded as ‘1’ and male as the reference category. Marital status was re-coded into a dummy variable with ‘Married,’ ‘Widowed,’ ‘Divorced,’ and ‘Separated’ coded as 1, and ‘Never Married’ treated as the reference category. In an attempt to control for individuals who do not live near family members, two dummy variables were created based on whether the respondent currently resides in the same city and/or state as when they were age 16, with those who reside in the same city as when they were age 16 considered the reference category. The first of these dummy variables assigned a value of ‘1’ if the respondent resides in a different city but the same state as when s/he was age 16. The second of these dummy variables assigned a value of ‘1’ if the respondent resides in a different state than when s/he was age 16. These geographic mobility variables also served as a de facto control for immigration generation status. In other words, because the sample is drawn from the U.S. population, anyone who indicates that they live in the same city or state as when they were age 16, must have lived in the U.S. at age 16. The end result is that this variable controls for individuals who migrated to the U.S. as adults (after age 16). This control is important when we consider Keefe’s (1979) argument that recent immigrants from Mexico to the U.S. tend to arrive with fewer direct family members than those who have been in the U.S. for a longer period of time. Education was measured based on highest year of school completed, age

was measured in years with responses ranging from 18 to 89 or more, and income was measured using the GSS income brackets found within the variable 'rincom98'(respondent's income).

Data Analysis

Means, standard deviations, and percentages were used to describe the sample for each analysis. To test the hypotheses regarding the effects of race and ethnicity on frequency of family contact, ordinary least-squares (OLS) regression analysis was conducted³. Specifically, each of the nine measures (two indices and seven individual familial categories) of frequency of family contact was regressed on the two dummy variables representing race and ethnicity, and a set of control variables.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2.1 shows the descriptive statistics of the samples used in the analyses of frequency of contact with family members. In general, the samples for the indices of contact with nuclear and extended family were similar across all categories, with the exception of the mean scores of the dependent variable indices (which is in large part due to the different range of possible

³ Tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) were used to test for multi-collinearity. All tolerance and VIF levels were found to be within an acceptable range. The lowest tolerance levels and highest VIF levels were observed among the variables for white non-Hispanic (tolerance = .360; VIF = 2.777) and black non-Hispanic (tolerance = .378; VIF = 2.643), in the analysis of contact with adult children. All other tolerance levels were above .5, and all other VIF levels were below 2. The data were analyzed for outliers by comparing Mahalanobis distance to the appropriate chi square score (27.877; $p = .001$, $DF = 9$). This analysis netted 6 outliers, which were omitted from the final analysis. Regression analyses were run with these outliers included to compare with the final analyses. Although the results of these regression analyses had some minor differences, there were no significant differences among the race/ethnicity dummy variables.

Table 2.1: Descriptive Statistics for Tests of Contact with Family Members, U.S. Adults, 2002

Variables	Nuclear Family Index		Father		Mother		Sibling		Adult Child		Extended Family Index		Aunt or Uncle		Nephew or Niece		Cousin	
	Mean (S.D.)	%	Mean (S.D.)	%	Mean (S.D.)	%	Mean (S.D.)	%	Mean (S.D.)	%	Mean (S.D.)	%	Mean (S.D.)	%	Mean (S.D.)	%	Mean (S.D.)	%
Contact with...	3.468 (1.347)		3.191 (1.750)		3.714 (1.694)		3.092 (1.619)		4.353 (1.644)		1.843 (0.651)		1.730 (0.801)		2.063 (0.849)		1.748 (0.819)	
Hispanic (reference category)†		11.0		14.3		12.5		11.3		7.1		10.9		11.2		10.8		10.8
White Non-Hispanic†		77.6		75.2		75.6		77.1		81.5		78.0		77.9		77.8		78.0
Black Non-Hispanic†		11.4		10.4		11.9		11.6		11.5		11.1		10.9		11.4		11.2
Different City from Age 16		26.7		26.0		26.6		27.7		28.8		26.5		26.7		27.4		26.3
Different State from Age 16		29.7		28.2		27.1		29.0		34.8		29.9		29.5		31.1		30.1
Male†		52.9		54.9		52.8		53.0		46.5		53.2		52.4		53.5		53.2
Female†		47.1		45.1		47.2		47.0		53.5		46.8		47.6		46.5		46.9
Age	40.4 (13.412)		34.7 (10.483)		36.6 (11.401)		40.4 (12.936)		53.0 (9.403)		40.5 (13.425)		39.1 (12.915)		42.1 (13.063)		40.3 (13.389)	
Ever Been Married		70.8		62.9		65.1		71.3		97.1		70.7		69.2		77.1		70.0
Education (Years Completed)	13.8 (2.684)		13.8 (2.638)		13.7 (2.588)		13.8 (2.704)		13.7 (2.814)		13.8 (2.685)		13.8 (2.646)		13.7 (2.656)		13.8 (2.678)	
Income	13.8 (5.809)		13.4 (5.754)		13.5 (5.828)		13.9 (5.850)		14.8 (5.764)		13.8 (5.821)		13.9 (5.862)		14.1 (5.801)		13.8 (5.870)	
N	766		471		592		658		268		771		705		658		754	

Source: The 2002 General Social Survey.

† The sum of percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding

response values in each index). When all controls and filters for missing values were applied, the sample size for the analysis of nuclear family contact was 766, while the sample size for the analysis of extended family contact was 771. The mean score for the index of nuclear family contact was 3.468, which equates to having contact more frequently than once a month, but less frequently than once per week, while the mean score for the index of extended family contact was 1.843, which is just shy of the score for 'once or twice in the last four weeks' (2.0), but well above the score associated with 'not at all in the last four weeks' (1.0). For both the analysis of nuclear family contact and the analysis of extended family contact, about 78% of the sample was white non-Hispanic, while about 11% was black non-Hispanic, and about 11% was Hispanic. In both analyses approximately 27% of the sample lived in a different city than when they were age 16, while about 30% lived in a different state than when they were age 16. Both samples were comprised of approximately 53% males and 47% females, with mean age of about 40 years. About 71% of both samples had ever been married, both samples were characterized by mean educational attainment just under 14 years of schooling, and both samples had a mean income score of approximately 14 on the GSS measure of income (\$22,500 to 24,999).

The descriptive statistics for the samples used in the analyses of individual familial categories were characterized by greater dissimilarity than was observed among the samples used in the analyses of the two indices. Many of the dissimilarities were in keeping with what one would expect from the sample, based on the nature of the familial relationship being analyzed. For example, the sample for the analysis of frequency of contact with adult children had a much older mean age (53 years) than any other category, while the ages among the samples for the analysis of frequency of contact with fathers (35 years), and mothers (37 years) were the youngest mean ages of any categories. These differences are intuitive, as a sample of those with

adult children is likely to be older than a sample of the adult population as a whole, and a sample of those with parents who are still living is likely to be younger than a sample of the adult population as a whole. Furthermore, the difference in mean age between the samples for contact with fathers and mothers is likely related to the typically longer life-expectancies among U.S. women. Also likely related to longer life expectancies among U.S. women, were noticeable differences between the percentages of females (53.5 %) and males (46.5 %) in the analysis of contact with adult children, and the samples from all other analyses (percent of females in other samples ranged from 45.1 % to 47.6 %, while males ranged from 52.4 % to 54.9 %). The frequency of contact also varied across familial categories. Among nuclear familial categories, respondents tend to maintain the most frequent contact with their adult children, while among extended familial categories respondents tend to maintain the most frequent contact with nieces/nephews. Also of note is that there appeared to be a higher frequency of contact with mothers than with fathers.

Frequency of Contact with Nuclear Family

Table 2.2 shows the results of the regression analyses for the indices of contact with nuclear and extended family, as well as the results of the analyses of contact with individual familial categories. The model for the index of frequency of contact with nuclear family was found to be a good fit ($R^2 = .265$; $p < .001$). In the equation, the difference in frequency of contact with nuclear family between white non-Hispanics and Hispanics was significant at the .05 level (one-tailed test)⁴; however there was no statistically significant difference between

⁴ Because the hypothesis regarding white non-Hispanics involves an expected direction (i.e., white non-Hispanics are predicted to have less frequent contact with family than are Hispanics),

black non-Hispanics and Hispanics. The variables for residing in a different city from age 16, and residing in a different state from age 16, were statistically significant beyond the .001 level. Aside from the dummy variables for race/ethnicity and geographic mobility, “ever married” ($p < .001$), which had a negative effect on frequency of contact with nuclear family, was the only other statistically significant variable in the model. These findings support my hypothesis in that, while Hispanics maintain a higher frequency of contact with nuclear family than white non-Hispanics, there is no observed difference between Hispanics and black non-Hispanics.

Among the analyses of individual nuclear family categories all models were statistically significant, with the model for contact with adult children the weakest model ($R^2 = .096$; $p < .01$), and contact with mothers the strongest model ($R^2 .300$; $p < .001$). The dummy variable for white non-Hispanics was only significant in the models for fathers and adult children ($p < .05$, one-tailed test), suggesting that white non-Hispanics tend to have less frequent contact than Hispanics with fathers and adult children, but not mothers or siblings. The dummy variable for black non-Hispanics suggests a significantly lower frequency of contact with fathers ($p < .01$), but not with any other nuclear family category. Residing in a different state from age 16 was significant at the .001 level for all familial categories, while residing in the same state but a different city from age 16 had a significant negative effect ($p < .001$) for mothers and fathers, but no significance for adult children or siblings⁵. Sex was significant at the .01 level for adult

a one-tailed test was used to interpret the findings involving the dummy variable representing white non-Hispanics. All other variables were interpreted using a two-tailed test.

⁵ In the regression model for contact with siblings, the p value for the dummy variable regarding residing in the same state but a different city from age 16 was .098 using a two-tailed test. Because the logical prediction regarding this variable involves an expected direction (i.e., a predicted negative effect on contact), one might interpret this using a one-tailed test, resulting in a p value that is below .05, and thereby significant. However, because this variable is a control variable and not central to the hypotheses, a two-tailed test was used for the purposes of this study.

Table 2.2: Estimates of OLS Regression Models Predicting Respondents' Frequency of Contact with Family Members, U.S. Adults, 2002

Variable	Nuclear Family Index	Father	Mother	Sibling	Adult Child	Extended Family Index	Aunt or Uncle	Nephew or Niece	Cousin
	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i>
White Non-Hispanic	-.263† (.139)	-.336† (.209)	-.137 (.184)	-.255 (.186)	-.757† (.416)	-.281††† (.073)	-.154† (.094)	-.326†† (.108)	-.298††† (.095)
Black Non-Hispanic	.002 (.180)	-.793** (.292)	.225 (.241)	.161 (.239)	-.500 (.496)	.089 (.095)	.192 (.122)	-.047 (.140)	.185 (.122)
Different City from Age 16	-.565*** (.105)	-.808*** (.177)	-.781*** (.146)	-.232 (.140)	-.314 (.245)	-.160** (.055)	-.213** (.071)	.023 (.081)	-.225** (.071)
Different State from Age 16	-1.373*** (.107)	-1.527*** (.183)	-1.795*** (.152)	-1.022*** (.146)	-.885*** (.244)	-.305*** (.056)	-.286*** (.072)	-.299*** (.082)	-.323*** (.072)
Sex (1 = female)	.014 (.089)	-.236 (.155)	.015 (.125)	-.085 (.118)	.590** (.214)	-.005 (.046)	-.008 (.060)	.101 (.068)	-.092 (.060)
Age	.007 (.004)	-.002 (.008)	-.013* (.006)	-.015** (.005)	-.001 (.012)	-.006** (.002)	-.008** (.003)	-.008** (.003)	-.005 (.003)
Ever Been Married	-.618*** (.111)	-.798*** (.179)	-.575*** (.150)	-.659*** (.150)	-.318 (.633)	-.094 (.058)	-.159* (.074)	.016 (.088)	-.131 (.074)
Education	-.017 (.017)	-.013 (.030)	.024 (.025)	-.040 (.023)	-.020 (.038)	.008 (.009)	-.001 (.012)	.005 (.013)	.012 (.012)
Income	-.012 (.008)	-.008 (.015)	-.016 (.012)	-.009 (.011)	-.020 (.038)	-.002 (.004)	-.008 (.006)	.006 (.006)	-.004 (.006)
Constant	4.774*** (.265)	5.115*** (.446)	5.197*** (.372)	5.410*** (.357)	5.741*** (.891)	2.416*** (.138)	2.517*** (.179)	2.508*** (.205)	2.324*** (.178)
R^2	.265	.236	.300	.214	.096	.136	.123	.070	.111
F	30.316***	15.776***	27.716***	19.665***	3.055**	13.338***	10.821***	5.384***	10.352***
N	766	471	592	658	268	771	705	658	754

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$. (two-tailed test)

† $p \leq .05$. †† $p \leq .01$. ††† $p \leq .001$. (one-tailed test)

Source: The 2002 General Social Survey.

NOTE: b = unstandardized regression coefficient with standard error in parentheses

children, suggesting that women have significantly more frequent contact with their adult children than do men. Age had a significant negative effect in the models for mothers ($p < .05$) and siblings ($p < .01$), while having been married has a significant negative effect ($p < .001$) in the models for mothers, fathers, and siblings, but no significant effect in the model for adult children.

Frequency of Contact with Extended Family

Similar to the analysis of frequency of contact with nuclear family, the OLS regression analysis of the index of frequency of contact with extended family resulted in a good fitting model ($R^2 = .136$; $p < .001$). The regression analysis found that Latinos demonstrated a significantly higher frequency of contact with extended family ($p < .001$, one-tailed test) than white respondents, but no statistically significant difference when compared to black non-Hispanics. In addition to the white non-Hispanic variable, the control variables pertaining to residential mobility had negative statistically significant effects (same state/different city $p < .01$; different state $p < .001$), with the negative effect of age ($p < .01$) the only other statistically significant control variable. This suggests that Latinos have a higher frequency of contact with extended family than do white non-Hispanic respondents, but not black non-Hispanic respondents, and therefore supports my hypothesis regarding extended family contact.

All of the models for the individual extended familial categories were statistically significant at the .001 level, however, the R^2 of these models tended to be lower than was observed among most of the nuclear familial categories. The weakest model was associated with frequency of contact with nieces/nephews ($R^2 = .070$; $p < .001$), while the strongest model was associated with frequency of contact with aunts/uncles ($R^2 = .123$; $p < .001$). White non-

Hispanics had significantly less frequent contact with aunts/uncles ($p < .05$, one-tailed test), nieces/nephews ($p < .01$, one-tailed test), and cousins ($p < .001$, one-tailed test) than did Hispanics, while black non-Hispanic had no significant difference in frequency of contact with any extended family category. Same state/different city from age 16 had a significant negative effect in the models for aunts/uncles ($p < .01$), and cousins ($p < .01$), but no significant effect in the model for nieces/nephews. This is not surprising when one considers that the variable for different city/same state was not significant in the model for siblings, and siblings are the parents of nieces and nephews. In other words, visiting with siblings is likely to include visiting with one's nieces or nephews. Age had a significant negative effect ($p < .01$) in the models for aunts/uncles and nieces/nephews, but not in the model for cousins. Finally, having ever been married only had a significant negative effect on the model for frequency of contact with aunts/uncles ($p < .01$).

Discussion

Considering Keefe's (1979) research, it is not surprising to find that Hispanics tend to maintain more frequent contact with family members than do white non-Hispanics. Particularly informative are the findings that, among nuclear family members, there was no significant difference in contact with mothers or siblings. The fact that only two of the individual nuclear family categories were significant, while all extended family categories were significant, seems to be in keeping with Keefe's assertion that familialism includes a wide circle of familial connection that is inclusive of extended family as well as immediate family. As such, it appears that a key distinctive of familialism is the significance of extended family ties. In other words, while white non-Hispanics appear to draw more distinct lines between nuclear family and

extended family, Hispanics and black non-Hispanics seem to deemphasize the differences between nuclear family and extended family, at least in terms of contact.

The finding that, with the exception of fathers, there was no statistically significant difference between Hispanics and black non-Hispanics in terms of frequency of familial contact runs counter to the view that high levels of familialism is a uniquely Hispanic characteristic. This finding is not surprising, however, when one considers the work of Hays and Mindel (1973) alongside that of Keefe (1979). Each study found that white non-Hispanics maintained less frequent contact with family members than the group upon which their study was focused (black non-Hispanics for Hays and Mindel, and Hispanics for Keefe), but neither study compared the frequency of contact of Hispanics and black non-Hispanics. The present study appears to confirm what a comparison of these previous studies suggests – both Hispanics and black non-Hispanics are, more or less, equally familial in terms of frequency of contact. Additionally, by controlling for income and education, this study supports the view that familialism is not correlated with socioeconomic status. In other words, as suggested by Keefe, familialism is not directly related to efforts to overcome the effects of poverty. It is still possible, however, that there is an indirect relationship between poverty and familialism, as the histories of marginalization and inequality experienced by Hispanics and black non-Hispanics may have shaped cultural characteristics, such as familialism.

The findings of this study appear to fill in a few gaps in the work of Keefe (1979) and Hays and Mindel (1973). First, by including both Hispanics and black non-Hispanics in the analysis, this study not only confirms the findings of Keefe and Hays and Mindel that Hispanics and black non-Hispanics maintain more frequent family contact vis-à-vis white non-Hispanics, but also addresses the previously unanswered question of whether there is a difference in familial

contact between Hispanics and black non-Hispanics. This is an important finding, as it challenges the broad assumption that familialism is a uniquely Hispanic characteristic. Another gap in Keefe's study was that it did not control for the effect of having more available relatives with which to visit, as the result of larger families. The design of the GSS survey items for contact with nuclear family members allowed for this study controlled for the effect of larger families, as respondents were asked about contact with the most frequently contacted family member from categories in which it is common to have multiple family members (i.e., siblings and adult children). In other words, each respondent was asked about the frequency of contact with their "top" sibling, rather than contact with all siblings, thereby controlling for the number of siblings one might have, in examining the frequency of contact with siblings. This feature of the study helps to demonstrate that the more frequent contact observed by Keefe is not simply a function of larger families, but rather it likely also involves more frequent contact with individual family members. However, because the survey items pertaining to contact with extended family were constructed to include contact with any member of that familial category (i.e., any cousin, not just the most frequently contacted cousin), frequency of contact with extended family is likely still affected by the size of one's extended family. As such, there is an opportunity for future research to examine whether, controlling for number of extended family members, there is still a difference in frequency of contact between Latinos and white non-Hispanics. Furthermore, by examining frequency of contact with indices of nuclear family and extended family, as well as individual familial categories, this study was able to provide additional information about family contact that was not available in Keefe's study. One example of this is the afore-mentioned finding that differences in frequency of contact were observed between Hispanics and white non-Hispanics among all models for extended family members, but

only two nuclear family categories. Another example is the finding that black non-Hispanics maintain significantly less frequent contact with fathers. This might be partly explained by the overrepresentation of single-mother families among African Americans (Nichols-Casebolt, 1988), as it is conceivable that this has long-term effects on frequency of contact with fathers, among black non-Hispanics. To control for the effect of single-mother households on the frequency of contact with fathers, future research should consider controlling for the marital status of the respondents parents (i.e., if the respondents mother and father are still married, is there still a significant difference between black non-Hispanics and other groups in terms of contact with fathers?).

Although not the primary concern of this study, there are some interesting findings pertaining to the effect of age and marital status on familial contact. Age had a significant negative effect ($p < .01$) in the models for aunts/uncles and nieces/nephews, but not in the model for cousins. There are a number of possible explanations for this finding. It is possible that individuals are more likely to have contact with aunts and uncles while they are younger, because it is often part of interacting with cousins. In other words, when a young adult visits with cousins it may be at gatherings that include their cousins' parents (i.e., one's aunts and uncles). However, as one gets older, those aunts and uncles are more likely to have passed, and interactions with cousin are therefore less likely to include aunts and uncles. A similar explanation might be offered for the negative effect of age on contact with nieces and nephews, as, while they are children, interacting with nieces and nephews is part of interacting with siblings. As one becomes older, nieces and nephews become adults, and interacting with siblings is less likely to include those nieces and nephews. Also of note is that having ever been married

was much more likely to have a negative effect on contact with nuclear family (with the exception of adult children) than extended family.

Overall, this study demonstrates the value of studying behavioral familialism, in addition to attitudinal familialism. By examining frequency of family contact, this study augments our understanding of familialism through behavioral measures. Additionally, it is important to remember that frequency of contact with family is but one narrow measure of familialism, among a collection of patterns and tendencies that characterize this cultural phenomena. As such, future research should not only seek to further explore frequency of family contact, but also patterns of reciprocal aid, the degree to which extended family relationships demonstrate characteristics of primary social relationships, and possible elements of familialism.

Furthermore, future research should compare Latino familialism and black non-Hispanic familialism, to determine similarities and differences between these groups, and whether the findings of research pertaining to Hispanics and familialism also apply to black non-Hispanics. Such future research will expand our understanding of familialism and better inform research aimed at exploring the relationship between familialism and other areas such as education, health, and socioeconomic status. Moreover, research in this area can aid policy makers in areas such as human services, healthcare, and other areas where understanding the characteristics and needs of families adds value to policy.

CHAPTER 3

MACHISMO, MARIANISMO AND COLLEGE ASPIRATIONS/EXPECTATIONS

Introduction

Hispanics in the U.S. face a wide range of educational inequalities compared to members of other major racial and ethnic categories (De La Rosa & Maw, 1990; Fry, 2002). As such, social scientists have endeavored to study the causes and characteristics of these educational inequalities. One topic of inquiry in this area is the relationships between educational aspirations, expectations, and educational outcomes. The present study examines qualitative data and compares the locus of educational aspirations and expectations among a sample of Hispanic and white non-Hispanic, first generation college students, with parents combined annual income of less than US\$40,000. Like Hispanic college students, first generation college students (students whose parents do not have a bachelor's degree⁶), are a category of students who face a wide range of social and educational disadvantages, when compared to continuing generation college students (Bui, 2002; Hahs-Vaughn, 2004; Martin Lohfink & Paulsen, 2005; Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004; Pike & Kuh, 2005; Pratt & Skaggs, 1989; Warburton, Bugarin, & Nuñez, 2001). My analysis finds that the influence of the educational aspirations/expectations of significant others is a particularly prominent theme among the Hispanic females in our sample, while all other participants are more-or-less similar to each other in terms of the prominence of the aspirations/expectations of individuals and significant others. I offer that the concept of *marianismo* provides an explanation for this finding.

⁶ Studies vary in terms of how they define first generation college students. The two common definitions are 1) those students whose parents have not attained a bachelor's degree; or 2) those students whose parents have not attended a college or university, whatsoever. For the purposes of this study, I consider first generation college students to be those whose parents have not earned a bachelor's degree.

College Aspirations and Expectations

There exists a large body of social science literature on educational aspirations and/or expectations (e.g., Agnew & Jones, 1988; Cheng and Starks, 2002; Crowley & Shapiro, 1982; Goyette, 2008; Goyette & Xie, 1999; Haller, 1968; Hanson, 1994; Morgan, 1998; Swidler, 1986; Vaisey, 2010; Young, 2004; etc.). A survey of this literature finds two key dimensions of educational aspirations and expectations: Aspirations (hopes) versus expectations (plans); and significant others' aspirations or expectations versus the aspirations or expectations of the individual. Haller (1968) provides an overview of these dimensions, although the way in which he uses the terms aspirations and expectations differs from how these terms are used in most of the later sociological literature. Haller advocated using the term 'aspirations' to refer only to the goal-orientations of the individual (ego), and 'expectations' to refer only to those held by significant others (alter) for the individual (ego). Haller goes on to cite Kurt Lewin's (1939) differentiation between those goal-orientations that are 'realistic' and those that are 'idealistic,' and suggests that aspirations (individual goals) and expectations (significant others' influence) can be further divided into those that are realistic and those that are idealistic. In other words, he differentiates between those goals that one believes can really be attained (realistic), and those goals one hopes might be attained, if things go well (idealistic).

Although Haller's work provides a valuable starting point for identifying the two dimensions of educational aspirations/expectations, a vast majority of the sociological literature pertaining to educational aspirations and/or expectations does not follow his lead in the use of terminology. Most of the studies that differentiate between idealistic educational goals and realistic educational goals use the term 'aspirations' to refer to idealistic educational goals, while the term 'expectations' is used to refer to realistic educational goals (e.g., Agnew & Jones, 1988;

Crowley & Shapiro, 1982; Hanson, 1994; Vaisey, 2010). These terms are usually operationalized by using survey questions that ask how far a student *hopes* to go in school (aspirations), and questions asking how far a student *expects* to go in school (expectations). There are also a number of studies that examine the educational goals of the individual versus the educational goals held by significant others (e.g., Cheng & Starks, 2002; Hao & Bonstead-Bruns, 1998; Hossler & Stage, 1992). These studies tend to refer to the aspirations/expectations of ‘students’ and those of ‘parents’ or ‘significant others’ to represent Haller’s concepts of aspirations (ego) and expectations (alter). For the purposes of this paper, I conform to the conventions of later works, wherein aspirations refer to hopes (idealistic goals), while expectations refer to plans (realistic goals), and both terms can be applied to the goals of the individual or significant others.

In general, the goal of earning a bachelor’s degree has gone from being common only among societal elites, to being a normative societal aspiration (and even expectation) for members of a wide range of social strata. In examining trends in educational expectations, Goyette (2008) found that the expectation of earning a bachelor’s degree rose significantly between 1980 and 2002. According to Goyette, in 1980 about 43 % of high school sophomores expected to earn a bachelor’s degree, while in 2002 the expectation of earning a bachelor’s degree rose to 62 %. She further notes that the increase was more substantial for students whose parents do not possess a bachelor’s degree (from 38% in 1980 to 79.4% in 2002, an increase of 31.4%), than it was for those students whose parents do possess a bachelor’s degree (from 72.4% in 1980 to 92.2% in 2002, an increase of 19.8%).

There are also a number of studies that compare the educational aspirations and expectations of students from different racial and ethnic categories. For example, Goyette and Xie (1999) compare the aspirations/expectations of Asian and white non-Hispanic students, and

Morgan (1998) compares those of black non-Hispanic and white non-Hispanic students. Crowley and Shapiro (1982) examined aspirations and expectations, as well as the congruence between aspirations and expectations (the percent of students whose educational expectations matched or exceeded their educational aspirations) among black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and white non-Hispanic students. They found that educational aspirations did not vary greatly by sex or race. Additionally, they found that parents' education (positive effect), having traditional attitudes regarding the role of women (negative effect), number of siblings (negative effect), living with both parents at age 14 (positive effect), foreign born versus U.S. born (foreign born had higher expectations), and having children of one's own (negative effect), were all significant predictors of a student's educational expectations. Furthermore, when controlling for family background characteristics, current family situation, and respondent values (i.e., traditional attitudes regarding the role of women, etc.), black non-Hispanics and Hispanics had higher educational expectations than did white non-Hispanics. Their analysis of the congruence of aspirations and expectations found that Hispanic females were generally less likely than other females to expect to complete their desired level of educational attainment, and that, among youth with aspirations beyond high school, Hispanics were slightly less likely than white non-Hispanics to have expectations that matched or exceeded their aspirations.

Vaisey (2010) examines differences in educational aspirations and expectations of poor and non-poor youth. He found that poor youth tend have lower educational aspirations and expectations than non-poor youth, and that expectations were a better predictor of college enrollment among non-poor youth, while aspirations were a better predictor among poor youth. Based on these findings, he suggests a "swimming upstream" explanation wherein non-poor tend to live in settings that propel them toward pursuing higher education, in both obvious and non-

obvious ways, while poor youth are less likely to be exposed to this sort of influence. Moreover, he notes that those who live in poor communities and aspire to pursue higher education are often subject to stigmas and sanctions for deviating from local norms (i.e., choosing to pursue educational attainment higher than that of peers). As such, he argues that the decision for poor youth to pursue higher education involves going against the flow, or swimming upstream.

In a study that utilized nationally representative data from the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS), Cheng and Starks (2002) provide an example of a study that examined both dimensions of educational aspirations and expectations (individual versus significant others; and idealistic/aspiration versus realistic/expectation). This study examined racial differences in the educational expectations of high school students, the educational aspirations of the students' significant others (as perceived by the students), and the effect that the educational aspirations of significant others' had on the educational expectations of the students. Cheng and Starks included not just immediate family, but also extended family, peers, and teachers among those identified as significant others. Among other things, this study found that, with the exception of aspirations for earning a graduate degree, both white non-Hispanic students and their parents tend to have higher educational aspirations than Hispanic students and their parents. They also found that the aspirations of Hispanic mother had significantly less influence on the educational expectations of students than did those of white non-Hispanic mothers, while there was no difference observed regarding the influence of fathers' aspirations. Additionally, the influence that significant others' aspirations had on the educational expectations of the student varied across type of significant other, and by ethnicity. While this study provides valuable insight into the aspirations and expectations of high school students and their significant others, it does not examine the aspirations or expectations of students who are

actually attending college, or their significant others. As such, it is conceivable that the patterns observed in Cheng and Starks study may not be observed among a sample of college students.

Purpose of the Study

Much of the existing research on aspirations and expectations examines differences in the levels of educational aspirations or expectations (i.e., the highest level of education one aspires or expects to attain) between members of different racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic categories. Additionally, some studies examine the relationships between aspirations or expectations and actual educational outcomes, while others examine relationships between aspirations and expectations, and/or relationships between the aspirations or expectations of individuals and those of significant others. There are, however, two methodological characteristics that are shared by a vast majority of the existing research on aspirations and/or expectations: They are overwhelmingly quantitative in approach; and most attempt to control for a variety of background characteristics (e.g., family income, parents' education, test scores and other indicators of past academic performance, sex, race/ethnicity, etc.). There is, however, a lack of qualitative research on aspirations and expectations, and there are few studies that explore relationships between educational aspirations/expectations and other values⁷. Moreover, much of the research examines the aspirations and expectations of students prior to entering college (usually high school students), rather than examining the aspirations/expectations of students who actually do go to college⁸. While understanding the educational aspirations and expectations of high school students is valuable, there is also a value to examining the aspirations and

⁷ There are some studies that give limited consideration to values. For example, the study by Crowley and Shapiro (1982) controls for religious affiliation, frequency of church attendance, and for whether respondents hold traditional attitudes regarding the role of women.

⁸ See Vaisey (2010) for an example of an exception to this tendency.

expectations of those students who actually make the decision to attend college, and go through with that decision. In other words, understanding the patterns, characteristics, or tendencies present among those students who actually attend college, will help researchers and educators understand how aspirations and expectations relate to college attendance.

The current study adds to the existing literature on aspirations and expectations by using qualitative methods to explore the aspirations/expectations of a sample of Hispanic and white non-Hispanic, low socioeconomic status, first generation college students. Using qualitative methods, I explore how students construct their views of educational aspirations and expectations, and search for connections between aspirations/expectations and values or concepts that have not been considered in the previous quantitative work. This approach has the potential to offer themes and hypothesized relationships that can be tested in future studies. Additionally, by limiting the sample to low-income, first generation college students, I can compare the experiences of a sample of Hispanic and white non-Hispanic participants for which income advantages have been more-or-less neutralized. This is a particular advantage, in that any differences in patterns or themes between Hispanic and white non-Hispanic participants are unlikely to be due to socioeconomic status, and can be explored as possible cultural differences.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a sample of 42 students from colleges or universities in a metropolitan area of a southwestern state during the summer of 2009.

Recruitment flyers were posted at a number of colleges and universities in and around the metropolitan area, and indicated that respondents would receive US\$40 for participating in an

interview that would last about one hour. The flyer also indicated that participants must meet the following study criteria: A first-generation college student, meaning that neither parent is a college graduate (some college attendance is okay, but no degree of any kind); an undergraduate student (student did not need to be enrolled in summer courses to participate); and parents' combined annual income is \$40,000 or less. We sought 20 Mexican-American participants and 20 white non-Hispanic participants, with each ethnic category comprised of 10 males and 10 females. Because students self-reported their study qualifications, I cannot confirm that all participants fully met these criteria, and there are at least a few cases in which I have reason to believe that participants did not strictly meet these criteria. For example, at least one participant indicated during the interview that her mother had gone back to school and completed her degree during the time that the participant was in college, while another respondent discussed the concrete business his father owns, thereby casting doubt onto the likelihood that his parents' combined annual income was below US\$40,000. I do not, however, believe that these minor qualification inconsistencies pose a significant concern to the purpose and findings of the present study, beyond that which is common in any study that employs self-reported qualification criteria.

When potential participants contacted study staff, they were asked whether they met each of the above-mentioned study criteria. If the individual met the study criteria, a one-on-one interview was scheduled with one of two graduate student researchers (the author and another graduate student hired for the project). Interviews were conducted in either a private office provided for the study, or in public locations such as coffee shops, if the study office was not a convenient location for the participant. All interviews were recorded and transcribed using a third-party transcription service. The interview guide for the semi-structured interviews is shown

in Table 3.1. The duration of the interviews ranged from as brief as seven minutes, to as long as 80 minutes, with most interviews lasting between 30 and 45 minutes.

Participant ages ranged from 18 to 35 years old, with a mean age of just under 23 years old. The sample included 11 Hispanic females, 10 Hispanic males, 10 white non-Hispanic females, and 11 white non-Hispanic males. Most participants had been enrolled in college during the previous semester (interviews occurred during the summer session), though at least one participant indicated that she was about to enroll in her first semester at a local university, while at least one other participant indicated that she had just graduated. The participants came from diverse majors including music, psychology, biology, political science, math, dance, sociology, business administration, information technology, and hospitality management. There were, however, a large number of students (12) from the social sciences (political science, psychology, and sociology).

Coding and Analysis

The contents of the transcribed interviews were analyzed and coded to find statements that directly or indirectly identify individual educational aspirations/expectations, or significant others' educational aspirations/expectations. Following the lead of Cheng and Starks (2002), a wide definition of 'significant others' was employed, that included parents, siblings, peers, extended family, and other individuals who the participants identified as influential in their decision to attend college, though in most cases the significant others were parents or other family members. In addition to differentiating between the loci of aspirations/expectations, the statements were also coded as either strong/dominant or weak/subordinate. After the initial

Table 3.1: Interview Guide

Question 1	When you were a child, did you think about going to college? If yes, then why did you want to go to college? If no. then what made you change your mind about going to college?
Question 2	When you were in high school, did you participate in extracurricular activities? If so, what kinds of activities, and did these activities have any influence on your decision to go to college?
Question 3	Discuss the views of your family regarding going to college.
Question 4	Tell me if, and how, your teachers influenced your decision to go to college.
Question 5	Tell me if, and how, your counselors influenced your decision to go to college.
Question 6	Tell me if, and how, your coaches or sponsors of other extracurricular activities influenced your decision to go to college.
Question 7	Tell me if, and how, your family influenced your decision to go to college.
Question 8	Tell me if, and how, your friends influenced your decision to go to college.
Question 9	What was the biggest challenge you faced when you decided to go to college, and what is the biggest challenge you continue to face today in college?
Question 10	Tell me about your major, and what drew you to it.
Question 11	If you could go back in time, what advice would you give yourself about preparing for college?
Question 12	Are there any questions I did not ask that I should have?

Note: These questions served as a guide for the semi-structured interviews, however interviewers were free to phrase these questions in a conversational manner, and to ask follow-up questions as they deemed appropriate.

coding, all cases were revisited to verify consistency in the coding logic. Following this step, the codes and relevant excerpts were forwarded to a co-researcher to be reviewed. Next, the codes were converted into a list of dichotomous (0/1) variables to facilitate basic analysis and categorization. The analysis process resulted in four coding categories for aspirations or expectations: Strong/dominant individual aspirations/expectations; weak/subordinate individual aspirations/expectations; strong/dominant significant others' aspirations/expectations; and

weak/subordinate significant others' aspirations/expectations. These coding categories were observed in a number of combinations, such as those who had strong/dominant individual aspirations/expectations accompanied by weak/subordinate significant others' aspirations/expectations, those who had only strong/dominant individual aspirations/expectations, etc.

In the excerpts and discussion that follow, I provide examples of cases with strong individual aspirations/expectations and cases with strong significant others' aspirations/expectations. I also show examples where these strong aspirations/expectations are accompanied by subordinate aspirations/expectations from either the individual or significant others (if the strong aspirations/expectations are from the individual, the subordinate aspirations/expectations are from significant others, and vice-versa). Finally, I also provide an example of a case where there appear to be individual aspirations/expectations, and significant others aspirations/expectations that are more-or-less equally strong.

The interview with Anthony⁹, a 23-year-old Hispanic male, provides an example of strong individual aspirations/expectations with no evidence of the aspirations/expectations of significant others. In discussing what made him think about going to college, Anthony identifies his own aspirations: "I just [had] a strong desire after I graduated; an intense desire to... get out of my hometown and do something." Later in the interview, when asked whether his family influenced his decision to go to college, Anthony provides convincing evidence that the aspirations/expectations of significant others were not part of his decision: "No, just me – all me." Moreover, there were no other statements in his interview that point to the aspirations/expectations of others as an influence on his decision. This does not mean there were

⁹ All names were changed to maintain confidentiality of participants.

no other individuals who influenced his decision, as there was likely some manner of significant others' influence involved in his decision. However, these quotes identify his perception of the level of influence his parents had, and there is likely a correlation between his perceptions and the actual level of influence. Ultimately, those influences were apparently not significant enough in his view to warrant mention.

Like Anthony, Emily, an 18-year-old white non-Hispanic female, demonstrates strong individual aspirations/expectations. However, her interview also provides evidence of subordinate significant others' influence. When asked whether her family influenced the decision to go to college, Emily responded:

Um, maybe. I don't know. I knew I wanted to do it on my own because I knew that life would be so much better if I did go to college and like financially stable and stuff. So they did encourage it and they always said, you know, "Be what you want to be." But I wouldn't say that they really like put the idea in my head. It was kind of on my own.

While there is some evidence that her family made attempts to influence her toward college, it is clear that her own aspirations/expectations were the dominant motivation, and whatever influence her family may have had is subordinate to her aspirations. Thus, this case was coded as having strong/dominant individual aspirations/expectations, and weak/subordinate significant others' aspirations/expectations.

Sophia, a 23-year-old Hispanic female, provides an example of a case with clear indications of strong significant others' influence, but no notable expression of individual aspirations or expectations. When asked if she thought about college as a child, she responds, "Um, yes. I think I did. My mom always made it like it was fact that I was gonna go, so [laughs]... Yeah. I never knew what I was gonna be, but I knew we were gonna go to college." Sophia's hesitation to discuss her own thoughts of college, followed by the quick redirection toward the expectations of her mother, provides evidence that the aspirations/expectations of her

mother were the dominant influence in her thoughts of college. Stronger evidence of this observed later in the interview:

Interviewer: And what did you think about that? What were your thoughts on college?

Sophia: Um, I guess I just thought it was something I had to do [laughs]. Um, I guess it was like another step in the process. Uh, it was very important to her for us to, I guess, succeed, to – uh, my dad never even graduated high school, and she never made it back to college, and we're like kind of struggling. Her dad was really hard working, so, um, I guess she wanted that next generation to be really [laughs] um, better than they were, and I thought it was a good idea. I mean, I figured I was gonna do it, so [laughs].

Though asked more directly about her individual thoughts, she again minimizes her thoughts, and redirects to the expectations of her mother. The remainder of the interview lacked any clear allusions to the influence of individual aspirations/expectations, so I coded this case as having strong significant others' aspirations/expectations, and no noteworthy observations of either strong or weak individual aspirations/expectations.

Terri, a 22-year-old Hispanic female, is an example of a case with dominant significant others' influence, along with subordinate individual aspirations. When asked whether she thought about college as a child, Terri stated "I did. I wanted to be a veterinarian when I was a kid, but then – I don't know how I switched over into medical. [Laughs] First, I wanted to be a doctor and then I wanted to be a nurse, so now I'm stuck with nursing." Terri was then asked why she decided to go to college, to which she responded:

I don't know. I guess it was 'cause it was something that people were just telling me I had to do. They were just like you have to go to college, you've got to get an education, you've got to do for yourself what other people can't do for themselves. That kind of thing.

Terri's childhood thoughts about college point toward her career (individual) goals as a motivation for her thoughts of college. However, when asked to identify the reason she wanted to go to college, her response points back to the influence of significant others, rather than her

individual goals. As such, significant others' aspirations/expectations were identified as the dominant theme, while her individual aspirations/expectations were a present, but subordinate theme.

In addition to the cases in which the aspirations/expectations of either the individual or significant others were dominant, there were a number of cases in which the perceived influence of both the individual and significant others was about equal. The interview with Jasmine, a 20-year-old Hispanic female, is an example of such a case, with evidence of both strong significant others' aspirations/expectations and strong individual aspirations/expectations. When asked why she wanted to go to college, she responded, "Because ever since I was a child, I wanted to become a teacher." Because the only reason articulated in her response is based on individual career goals, I coded her case as involving strong individual aspirations/expectations. Later, when asked what kind of views her family has about college, Jasmine responds:

They... take education as the No. 1 priority over everything – uh, over work, even over like activities outside and everything, and like pretty much in a tie with family and everything. Education is pretty much No. 1, and so it was very important that I go to college because they didn't have the privilege of doing so.

Based on this response, I coded Jasmine's case as involving strong significant others' aspirations/expectations. Certainly, one can make the argument that the aspirations/expectations of others likely influenced her own aspirations/expectations. However, both influences were present, and neither appears to be subordinate to the other. Compare how Jasmine discusses her family's expectations with how Emily discusses those held by her family. Emily's statement clearly places the aspirations/expectations of her family in a subordinate position compared to her own aspirations/expectations, while Jasmine allows the aspirations/expectations of her family to stand unchallenged. Still, her own career goals stand alone as the only reason articulated for her decision to attend college.

Results

Table 3.2 provides an overview of the frequency of codes by ethnicity and sex categories¹⁰. Overall, 20 cases had expressions of strong significant others' aspirations/expectations, while 27 cases were found to have evidence of strong individual aspirations/expectations. When also considering weak expressions of significant others' aspirations/expectations (17 cases), 37 of the 42 total cases had some manner of significant others aspirations/expectations. Similarly, when including weak expressions of individual aspirations/expectations (6 cases), there were 33 cases that expressed individual aspirations or expectations at some level. I also wanted to take into consideration the possible effect that significant others' aspirations/expectations may have on the aspirations/expectations of the individual. In order to do this, the respondents were grouped into two non-overlapping categories: 1) those with strong individual aspirations/expectations and either weak statements of significant others' influence or no observed statements of significant others' influence (dominant individual influence); and 2) those with strong significant others' influence, regardless of the presence and/or strength of statements of individual aspirations (dominant others' influence). The logic for these groupings is as follows: If an individual has strong individual aspirations or expectations and strong significant others' aspiration/expectations, it is likely that the individual aspirations/expectations were at least in part influenced by the aspirations or expectations of

¹⁰ The codes representing strength of aspirations/expectations within a particular locus do not overlap. In other words, within the category of individual aspirations/expectations, no cases were coded as having both strong and weak individual aspirations/expectations. Conversely, codes can overlap across categories representing locus of aspirations/expectations, regardless of strength. In other words, it was possible for a case to be coded as having both individual aspirations/expectations and significant others' aspirations/expectations, regardless of the strength of those aspirations/expectations. In all, six cases had both strong individual aspirations/expectations and strong significant others' aspirations/expectations, while six cases had a strong others/weak individual combination, sixteen cases had a strong individual/weak others combination, and one case had a weak individual/weak other combination.

significant others, as part of the individual's socialization. However, it is unlikely that the strong aspirations/expectations held by significant others came as a result of the strong aspirations/expectations of the individual. With this said, I recognize that significant others may develop some manner of educational aspirations in response to the aspirations/expectations of the individual (e.g., parents who are being supportive of their child's goals), however such reactive aspirations/expectations from significant others would likely have been coded as weak, rather than strong. As such, these cases would be grouped into the category of strong individual aspirations/expectations with weak/subordinate significant others' aspirations/expectations, which are not part of the group for which I propose that others' aspirations/expectations leads to individual aspiration/expectations. The frequency of these "socialization-adjusted" categories across ethnicity/sex categories is found in table 3.3.

From these analyses, one observation stands out: Strong significant others' aspirations/expectations appear to be more common among Hispanic females (9) than any other ethnicity/sex category in our sample (all other ethnicity/sex categories had 3 or 4 cases with strong significant others' aspirations/expectations). Similarly, only three Hispanic females expressed strong individual aspirations/expectations, while nine white non-Hispanic females and nine white non-Hispanic males had such expressions. The difference in the number of cases with strong individual aspirations/expectations between Hispanic males (6) and Hispanic females (3), or between Hispanic males and white non-Hispanic females (9) and white non-Hispanic males (9), was too small to identify it as a noteworthy finding. Our socialization-adjusted categories reflect a similar pattern, as the noteworthy differences between Hispanic females (9 with dominant others' influence and 2 with dominant individual influence) and all other ethnicity/sex categories were also observed in the socialization-adjusted groupings.

Table 3.2: Frequency of Codes by Ethnicity and Sex

	Strong others	Weak others	Strong individual	Weak individual
Hispanic female	9	1	3	3
Hispanic male	4	5	6	2
White female	3	5	9	0
White male	4	6	9	1

Table 3.3: Frequency of Socialization-Adjusted Categories

	Total	Dominant others' influence*	Dominant individual influence**
Hispanic female	11	9	2
Hispanic male	10	4	6
White non-Hispanic female	10	3	7
White non Hispanic male	11†	4	6

* Category includes any case with strong significant others' aspirations/expectations

** Category includes only cases in which there were strong individual aspirations/expectations, and either no observed significant others' aspirations/expectations, or weak/subordinate significant others' aspirations/expectations.

† One white non-Hispanic male had weak significant others' aspirations/expectations and weak individual aspirations/expectations, and thereby does not fit either of the categories shown in this table.

Marianismo and the Locus of Aspirations/Expectations

Taken together, the observed differences between the Hispanic females and all other ethnicity/sex categories in our sample provide compelling evidence that there is something different going on among the Hispanic females in our sample, in terms of the locus of college aspirations and expectations. The cultural norms associated with *marianismo* offer a possible explanation for these observed differences. In Mexican American culture, the traditional gender roles associated with men and women are often identified as *machismo* and *marianismo* (Castillo

& Cano, 2007; Stevens, 1973). *Machismo* and *marianismo* are tied to *familismo*, or what is often called familism or familialism (Castillo & Cano, 2007; Castillo, Perez, Castillo, & Ghosheh, 2010; Keefe, 1979; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987; Vega, 1990). Contained within *machismo* and *marianismo* are expected behaviors and values, which are viewed as being in the interest of defending the honor and integrity of the family (Castillo & Cano, 2007; Castillo, Perez, Castillo, & Ghosheh, 2010).

Though *machismo* is often viewed in negative terms, and as involving hyper-masculine, dominant, chauvinistic attitudes and behaviors (Castillo & Cano, 2007), researchers have noted that this negative view is an oversimplified stereotype that fails to recognize the broad spectrum of values associated with the cultural expectations of Hispanic males (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008; Castillo & Cano, 2007; Torres, Solberg, & Carlstrom, 2002). For example, Arciniega et al (2008) argue that a fuller understanding of *machismo* involves two parts – one negative, and one positive – identified as “traditional *machismo*” and “*caballerismo*” (a term associated with an ethical code of masculine chivalry). Traditional *machismo* is associated with hyper-masculinity and individual power, while *caballerismo* is associated with emotional connectedness and social responsibility. *Marianismo* is often treated as a companion to the concept of *machismo* – the submissive female, in relation to the dominant male (Castillo & Cano, 2007). The concept of *marianismo*, rooted in Catholicism and its reverence for the Virgin Mary, involves a view of women as spiritually superior, humble, and virtuous beings (Castillo & Cano, 2007; Stevens, 1973). Because of this spiritual superiority, women are expected to be self-sacrificing, submissive, and chaste for the sake of the family (Castillo & Cano, 2007; Castillo, Perez, Castillo, & Ghosheh, 2010). Similar to *machismo*, scholars have pointed to the reductionist tendency to view *marianismo* as including only stereotypical traditional gender

norms (Castillo & Cano, 2007; Castillo, Perez, Castillo, & Ghosheh, 2010). Moreover, stereotypical views of *marianismo* have been criticized for their tendency to “blame the victim” for the mistreatment women face at the hands of males (Ehlers, 1991). Viewing Hispanic female gender norms as simply passive acceptance of the will of males, however, is an overly simplified stereotype. Castillo et al (2010) help provide a more comprehensive understanding of *marianismo* through their construction and validation of a five-point scale measuring *marianismo* cultural values, that they call the Marianismo Belief Scale (MBS). Castillo et al identified five value categories that make up *marianismo*: serving as a family pillar; being virtuous and chaste; being subordinate to others; silencing self to maintain harmony; and serving as a spiritual pillar for the family. Throughout the five categories identified by Castillo et al, can be seen themes of self-deference for the sake of the family, and a sense of responsibility to the expectations and needs of the family.

Though both *machismo* and *marianismo* are rooted in *familismo* and involve expected behavioral and attitudinal norms intended to support the family and defend its honor, there is one key difference between *machismo* and *marianismo* that is important to note, as it relates to these findings: While the expectations associated with *machismo* are characterized by primacy, and permit the expression of the wants of the individual, *marianismo* is characterized by an expectation that women suppress their individual wants, and acquiesce to both the generalized expectations of cultural norms and the specific expectations of individuals who are viewed as higher in the social hierarchy of the family and community. Based on the acquiescence that characterizes *marianismo*, it stands to reason that the presence of significant others’ educational aspirations or expectations serve as an important “endorsement” of the decision to attend college among Hispanic females, especially when one considers how attending college can be viewed as

in conflict with some expectations associated with *marianismo* (e.g., moving from the parents' home to the husband's home, starting a family early in adulthood, focusing time and energy on nurturing family rather than pursuing a career, etc). Moreover, even if a Latina holds strong individual educational aspirations/expectations, but views attending college as being in conflict with familial expectations, the aspirations/expectations of significant others may be the difference between attending college or not attending college.

The evidence within the data in support of the *marianismo* argument is not as conclusive as the evidence suggesting Latinas are more likely than other participants to be influenced by the aspirations/expectations of significant others. There was, however, an interesting pattern regarding observed themes of familialism. Because the values and expectations contained within *marianismo* are fundamentally tied to familialism, I analyzed the interviews for any evidence of familialism. Familial themes were coded based on direct statement regarding familialism-related cultural expectations, statements wherein the individual indicated that attending college far from home was a significant challenge, or instances where the respondent discussed missing family members. For example, let us revisit Jasmine's response to the question regarding the views her family holds about college:

They... take education as the No. 1 priority over everything – uh, over work, even over like activities outside and everything, and like pretty much in a tie with family and everything. Education is pretty much No. 1, and so it was very important that I go to college because they didn't have the privilege of doing so.

In this excerpt, along with discussing the importance her family placed on education, Jasmine makes a clear statement regarding the importance of family. The interviews from all nine Hispanic females that had strong significant others' aspirations/expectations, also included some evidence of familialism. What is also interesting is that the only other interviews with evidence of familialism came from Hispanic males (4 cases), and white non-Hispanic females that had

evidence of strong significant others' aspirations/expectations (2 cases). Though the evidence of familialism in these cases is not direct or conclusive evidence supporting the *marianismo* hypotheses, what it does demonstrate is that the Hispanic females in our sample appear to be particularly attuned to, or affected by familialism. Ergo, if familial values are particularly salient among the Hispanic females in our sample, it seems likely that the values contained within *marianismo* would be, more or less, equally present. In all, while this does not provide conclusive evidence supporting the hypothesis linking *marianismo* to the importance of significant others' aspirations/expectations among Hispanic females, it does provide compelling indirect support.

Rewriting the Machismo/Marianismo Script

There are a number of quotes in the interviews that demonstrate evidence of *marianismo* values and expectations. Moreover, these quotes appear to provide insight into how societal expectations regarding college attendance may be leading to changes in *machismo/marianismo* scripts. Consider a quote from Constance, a 19-year-old Hispanic female, and the only Latina in the sample with no evidence of significant others' aspirations/expectations (strong or weak).

While discussing her family's feelings about her moving out to attend a college that was within driving distance from home, Constance stated:

Well, they just really never thought that – they thought that – okay, because like my family's very close together, and we have strong, uh, I guess Mexican culture that, you know, you don't move until you get married, and you know, they're very like that. And so I was 17, and I was coming to college, and I was trying to move out of the house, my dad felt like I was doing it because I wanted to go and party and just experience things I hadn't experienced back at home. And he felt that by me moving out, I was just gonna be a total mess. He thought that he needed to be there in order for me to have guidance in life.

Constance clearly articulates the familialism/*marianismo* norm wherein women are expected to live with their parents until they are married, and identifies this expectation as a source of conflict with her parents. Because Constance's parents did not have aspirations or expectations that she attend college, the tension between her desire to live on campus and traditional cultural expectations, helps to illuminate how familial norms within *machismo* and *marianismo* can come into conflict with the reality that, as Goyette (2008) demonstrates, in the U.S., attending college is becoming an increasingly normative expectation for all students.

Our analysis, however, suggests that this tension is leading to changes in familialism and *marianismo*. While discussing her mother's views on education, Sophia provides an example of how the societal norm of college attendance appears to have led to a "rewriting" of the traditional familialism/*marianismo* script regarding the expected life stages of a Latina:

And it just seemed like the – the next thing you do, with the way she talked about it 'cause you go to high school, then you go to college, and then you get married and have a family, and that's just one of the steps, I guess, she taught me that I need to do.

Sophia articulates her mother's expectations as a series of life stages: "you go to high school, then you go to college, and then you get married and have a family." The traditional familialism/*marianismo* script, wherein a woman is expected to live with her parents, get married, move in with her husband, and then have a family, has been reconstructed to include college as an additional expected stage that resides between high school (concurrent to living with parents) and getting married. Now let us consider how Nicole, a 23-year-old Hispanic female, responded when asked what led her to start thinking about college:

I went to an all-girl's private catholic school and it was very, um, it was very rigorous and testing was always there, you know. We had a very, uh, stressful, uh, studying environment kind of thing, so it was – everything was put forth to the goal of achieving a good college, you know. So once I got there it was like, oh, this is what I'm – this is a college prep, this is what it's for, you know. So, obviously, once I got to the high school it was like, oh, that's where I'm supposed to go afterwards. I mean, I don't see life not

having college in there, so, I mean, it's the next step right after. And I, I didn't – once I was there it just was like a natural flow. So I'm like, oh, once I finish high school, it's college next and then that's when you work.

Like Sophia, Nicole frames these educational expectations in terms of a progression of expected life stages. This is particularly evident when Nicole says “once I finish high school, it's college next and then that's when you work.” Although the significant others in Nicole's case are the educators and peers who established and reinforced the college-going expectations of the private school she was attending, rather than her family, she still uses the same life-stage script to articulate the expectations that were a part of the school's culture. Overall, the framing of education in terms of ‘life-stage expectations’ was observed in interviews from four Hispanic females, three Hispanic males, and one white non-Hispanic male. While research suggests that Latino familialism has withstood the influences of urbanization, acculturation, and socioeconomic mobility (Keefe, 1979), and that some behavioral indicators of familialism persist when controlling for socioeconomic status (Comeau, 2012; Desmond & Turley, 2009), there is evidence that familial norms among U.S. Latinos have changed over time (Lanale & Oropesa, 2007). The findings in this study suggest that the *machismo/marianismo* aspects of familialism are being forced to change, when faced with societal expectations regarding college. Moreover, these changes appear to involve a rewriting of the life-course scripts associated with *machismo/marianismo* in such a way so as to include college education as an expected life stage.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide a number of points for discussion. For example, the *marianismo* hypothesis, wherein the aspirations/expectations of significant others serve as an important endorsement of college among Latinas, suggests that policies and educational

initiatives aimed at increasing the educational expectations that Hispanic parents have for their daughters, may be an effective way to increase educational attainment among Hispanic females. Another finding of interest is that *machismo* and *marianismo* norms appear to be evolving in response to the increased educational expectations across U.S. society. When one considers the way college attendance is apparently becoming a normative part of the familial life-course script among some Hispanics, and Goyette's (2008) finding that bachelor's degrees have become an increasingly common expectation across the U.S., suggests that college aspirations and expectations are a "moving target," and what researchers such as Cheng and Starks (2002), Vaisey (2010), and others find today, may not hold true tomorrow. With this in mind, future studies should consider exploring the processes whereby educational aspirations and expectations develop, change, and interact with other cultural values, such as has been demonstrated with my analysis of changes to the familial scripts.

As a qualitative study that employs a non-probability sample, the current study has limitations that provide opportunities for future research. First, although the study was limited to first generation college students whose parents earned US\$40,000 or less annually, I was not able to fully control for background variables in the same way that is possible using quantitative methods. Second, because the study employed a non-probability sample, the findings cannot be generalized to the larger population. Finally, the proposed relationship between the locus of educational aspirations/expectations among Latinas and *marianismo* has not been tested and supported with empirical methods. A future study might use the Marianismo Belief Scale (Castillo, Perez, Castillo, & Ghosheh, 2010) and Arciniega et al's (2008) *machismo* and *caballerismo* scale to test the relationship between *marianismo*, *machismo*, significant others' aspirations/expectations, and college attendance among Latinas and Latinos. With these

limitations noted, I feel that this study makes a significant contribution to the existing research on educational aspirations and expectations, as well as *machismo* and *marianismo*. One of the values of qualitative research is its richness of data, and ability to uncover themes and patterns that researchers might not have otherwise considered. While I have not fully substantiated the proposed relationship between the locus of educational aspirations/expectations among Latinas and *marianismo*, this study offers testable hypotheses for future quantitative studies of this relationship. Studies of educational aspirations and expectations play an important role in the efforts to reduce the education gap between Hispanics and members of other racial and ethnic categories. In addition to studying racial and ethnic differences, when we consider Vaisey's suggestion that poor youth must "swim upstream" against not only financial barriers, but also social barriers, the need to study aspirations and expectations among low-income youth of all racial and ethnic categories is of great importance. In sum, understanding the relationships between educational aspirations, educational expectations, and educational outcomes, can aid educators, policy-makers, non-profit organizations, and others in their efforts to reduce educational inequalities. The present study contributes to the conversation regarding educational aspirations and expectations, and I encourage other researchers to continue the conversation.

CHAPTER 4

LATINO FAMILIALISM AND COLLEGE CHOICE

Introduction

Social science literature suggests that Latinos are characterized by higher levels of familialism – which is defined as a sense of loyalty, identification, solidarity, and attachment to both nuclear and extended family – than are members of many other racial and ethnic categories (Griswold del Castillo, 1984; Keefe, 1979; Marin, 1993; Moore, 1970; Torres V. , 2004; Vega, 1990). If we accept the proposition that Latinos are characterized by particularly high levels of familialism, then there are a number of behavioral manifestations of familialism that social scientists might anticipate. In particular, within the context of higher education, it seems logical to predict that familialism influences the choices students make regarding where to attend college. As such, the first aim of this study is to explore the relationship between familialism and college choice, by using a nationally representative data set to determine whether Latino students, other things being equal, are more likely than students from other major racial and ethnic categories to attend an institution close to their permanent residence. Furthermore, if Latinos are more likely than non-Latinos to attend a college or university close to home and their familial networks, it seems reasonable to expect this likelihood to affect their educational outcomes. For example, by selecting a college or university based on its proximity to home, Latinos may be in effect truncating their educational horizons, resulting in what has been termed “undermatching” (Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson, 2009; Roderick et al., 2008). That is, Latinos may end up at a college or university that is less selective than what would be expected based on their qualifications. While several studies have provided some evidence of Latino undermatching (Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson, 2009; Roderick et al., 2008), these studies have covered

relatively limited geographic areas and control variables. Consequently, the second aim of our study is to use a nationally representative and substantively comprehensive data set to examine whether Latinos (and members of other major racial and ethnic groups) tend to attend less selective institutions than white non-Latinos, other things being equal.

Given our interest in the role of Latino familialism, if we find that Latinos are more likely to attend a college or university close to home, and that the institutions they tend to attend are less selective than those attended by white non-Latinos, the third aim of our study is to investigate the extent distance from home explains or mediates the relationship between race and ethnicity and school selectivity. Specifically, we want to find out if controlling for whether a student attends a college or university close to home reduces or eliminates the selectivity gap between Latinos and white non-Latinos (hereafter, referred to as whites), but not the gaps between members of other major racial and ethnic categories and whites.

Such an examination is warranted when one considers that undermatched students have lower graduation rates than those who are appropriately matched (Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson, 2009; Roderick et al., 2008) , and Latino students are characterized by lower completion rates (49.1% degree completion within six years) than white students (60.2%) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). Although there is literature that suggests Latino familialism impedes the geographic mobility associated with college attendance (Moore, 1970), Desmond and Turley (2009) provide the only empirical attempt to investigate the relationship between familialism, college selection, and institutional selectivity. In their study, which uses data from a 2002 survey of Texas high school seniors, students were asked to rate the importance of the ability to live at home while attending school, as it pertains to choosing a college or university. This study found that Latinos were more likely than black non-Latinos (hereafter,

referred to as blacks) or whites to place a high value on living at home while attending school, even among those students whose parents are college educated. Desmond and Turley go on to examine whether the preference for living at home affects the likelihood that students apply to any college, apply to a four-year college, or apply to a selective college. As a result of these analyses they find that, while controlling for socioeconomic variables, demographic variables, and measures of educational qualifications (i.e., grade-point-average, etc.), the preference for living at home significantly reduces the gap between Latinos and whites in terms of applying to any college and applying to a four-year college, and erases the gap in the likelihood of applying to a selective college.

There are, however, opportunities to extend Desmond and Turley's research. To begin, Desmond and Turley identify the regional nature of their sample (i.e., only students from Texas) as a limitation, and encourage researchers to take up this topic using nationally representative data. In addition to this limitation, there are opportunities to address other gaps in their study. For example, while responses from surveys of high school seniors can provide insight into the thoughts and values that go into the college selection process, they do not necessarily capture the "end of the day" decisions of the students. In other words, there are a number of ways that familialism may come into play somewhere between the attitudes expressed as a high school senior and the decisions made as an incoming freshman. For example, what if Latinos who are accepted to selective colleges are more likely than non-Latinos to decline that opportunity in the interest of attending close to home, thereby making the familialism effect on selectivity even stronger than Desmond and Turley suggest? Conversely, perhaps those Latinos who "overcome" the influences of familialism, and decide to apply to a selective college, are less likely than non-Latinos to turn down an acceptance from a selective institution. This seems plausible when one

considers the possibility that, for Latinos, choosing to apply to selective institutions involves “swimming against the tide” of familialism, and requires high levels of emotional and psychological energies, subsequently making the individual more invested in the decision, and less likely to turn down an acceptance from a selective institution.

Additionally, while there are benefits to using an attitudinal measure, the dependent variable used by Desmond and Turley pertaining to preference for living at home does not capture those students who select a college or university based on its proximity to home, but opt to live on campus or in off-campus housing other than their familial home. This seems particularly important, as the decision to attend a college close to home, even if one does not choose to live at home, may be equally as familial as the preference to live at home. In fact, one could argue that, if a student and their family can afford for the student to live on campus or in off-campus housing other than their familial home, the decision to attend a university close to home may be a better indicator of familialism than choosing based on a preference to live at home. In other words, living at home may be as much an economic decision as it is a matter of familialism, while attending a college close to home for a student who can afford to live outside of the familial home is less likely to be a matter of economic need, leaving familialism as one of the more likely explanations. While Desmond and Turley show that the preference for living at home persists when controlling for parents’ education, and education tends to be correlated with income, they do not offer a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between socioeconomic status and the preference for living at home. In other words, they do not adequately divorce familialism from socioeconomic status in the analysis of their measure of familialism. Nor do they control for other relevant variables (e.g., sex, immigration generation status, region of the country, language spoken in the home, etc.) in this analysis. Though they do control for a wide

range of variables in their subsequent analysis of how the preference for living at home affects college application decisions, Desmond and Turley seem to treat the validity of their measure of familialism as a given, with the exception of controlling for parents' education. Moreover, aside from parents' educational attainment, Desmond and Turley were limited in terms of the available measures of family socioeconomic status and worked with the best options available (e.g., whether parents own or rent their home, and school level measures of economic disadvantage). While these are serviceable measures of socioeconomic status, it would be ideal to use more direct measures.

Latino Familialism

While some studies suggest that other racial and ethnic categories are also characterized by strong family ties (Comeau, 2012; Hays & Mindel, 1973; Schwartz, 2007; Youn, Knight, Jeong, & Benton, 1999), they are especially strong among Latinos (Comeau, 2012; Marin, 1993; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987). Keefe's (1979) research, for example, suggests that Mexican-American families have maintained strong familial ties, despite the fact that urbanization and other influences tend to lead to decreased levels of familialism. She also identifies four key characteristics of Mexican-American familialism: The extended kin group tends to include a wide circle of relatives, such as cousins, aunts, uncles, and so forth; extended family members tend to live in close proximity to one another; the extended family serves as the primary social unit; and the extended family functions as a reciprocal aid system. Furthermore, she notes that the effect of familialism tends to become stronger after the first generation in the U.S., and that familialism is not directly related to poverty and efforts to seek resources that may be lacking within the nuclear family.

Past studies of Latino familialism have identified attitudinal, behavioral, and structural dimensions of the concept (Comeau, 2012; Desmond & Turley, 2009; Lugo Steidel & Contreras, 2003; Marin, 1993; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987; Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1994). However, most existing studies, including Desmond and Turley (2009), use attitudinal measures of familialism (e.g., Esparza & Sanchez, 2008; Gaines et al., 1997; Lugo Steidel & Contreras, 2003; Rodriguez, Mira, Paez, & Myers, 2007; Sabogal et al., 1987; Villarreal, Blozis, & Widaman, 2005). The preference for attitudinal measures is based primarily on the view that, due to the effects of language, generation, acculturation level, etc., attitudinal measures are more stable than behavioral measures (Sabogal et al., 1987; Villarreal et al., 2005). Still, studies that use behavioral measures, such as Keefe (1979) and Comeau (2012), have made valuable contributions. Moreover, by examining actions instead of attitudes, such studies control for the social desirability effects that can be present in studies that employ attitudinal measures.

In the current study, we consider how familialism might manifest itself within the context of the college selection process. If Latinos do indeed possess higher levels of familialism than their non-Latino peers, it seems likely to expect that familial values would be a part of the process whereby students weigh the pros and cons of applying to, and enrolling in a particular college or university. Desmond and Turley (2009) operationalized the effect of familialism on college choice using a survey item that asked high school students to rate the importance of the ability to live at home while attending school, as it pertains to choosing a college or university. As previously noted, while this measure is likely to identify many students whose college choice was influenced by familialism, it is also likely to miss a great many (i.e., those who are not opposed to moving out of their familial homes, but want to stay close to home). As such, we propose that the distance from home to college or university, other things being equal, is a

measure that will capture a wider range of familialism-influenced behavior, in terms of college choice. Using a measure of distance from home to college still presents the challenge of determining how to specifically operationalize distance. In other words, what is “close to home?” In the next section, we discuss this question.

Distance from Home to College

Existing research and other conventions support the definition of close to home as a destination that is less than fifty miles from one’s permanent residence (Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 2010; Dillman, Yeatts, & Cready, forthcoming; Frenette, 2004; Frenette, 2006). A study of Canadian college attendance patterns, controlling for economic, gender, parents’ educational level, and other relevant variables, examined the likelihood that a student would select a community college or a university if a community college, university, or both were located within commuting distance of the student’s permanent residence (Frenette, 2004). The study found that, if a university is not within commuting distance but a community college is within commuting distance, students are generally more likely to attend the community college rather than a university. It is noteworthy, however, that students from higher income backgrounds were less influenced by this proximity pattern than other students – that is to say for students from families with higher incomes, there was a minimal increase in likelihood of attending a community college due to a university not residing within commuting distance. A related study found that living beyond commuting distance from a university was a deterrent to attending a university, due to the prohibitive costs of moving and other living costs (Frenette, 2006). Furthermore, this study found that students from lower income families were particularly disadvantaged by distance. Both of these Canadian studies considered 80 kilometers or more to

be beyond commuting distance (direct geographic distance, rather than actual travel distance), which is the equivalent of 49.7 miles. Additionally, according to the methods employed in the Bureau of Transportation Statistics' National Household Travel Survey, "Long Distance Trips are more than 50 miles from home to the furthest destination" (Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 2010). If, as we hypothesize, Latino college students are more likely than their non-Latino peers to attend college close to home, the next question we must explore is "how does this affect the educational outcomes of Latinos?" The research on undermatching offers one likely answer to this question.

Undermatching

Recent studies by Roderick, Nagaoka, Coca, Moeller et al (2008), Roderick, Coca, and Nagaoka (2011), and Bowen, Chingos, and McPherson (2009) have brought to the fore discussions of what has been called "mismatching" or "undermatching" in college enrollment. In analyses of high school students in North Carolina (Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson) and the Chicago area (both by Roderick et al), these studies observed that many students enroll in colleges that are significantly less selective than what would be expected based on the students' qualifications. Furthermore, it was observed that students who were undermatched had lower graduation rates than those who were appropriately matched. Much of the discussion pertaining to the causes of undermatching focuses on economic capital, social capital, and structural influences. Some specific considerations discussed include economic constraints, lack of information or guidance regarding the colleges to which students are likely to be admitted, lack of information and guidance regarding how to determine which colleges are an overall good fit, applying to too few colleges, difficulties and lack of guidance with the financial aid process,

attending secondary schools that lack a culture that encourages going to college, limited assistance from guidance counselors, and the active recruiting practices of occupational colleges (Roderick et al., 2008; Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson, 2009; Person & Rosenbaum, 2009).

Of particular relevance is that Latinos were observed to be significantly more likely than Asians, blacks, or whites to enroll in institutions that can be described as undermatching their qualifications (Roderick et al., 2008). Furthermore, Latinos are significantly more likely than blacks or whites to enroll in two-year institutions (Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson, 2009). Moreover, Arbona and Nora (2007) found that “a student’s expectation of attaining a bachelor’s degree, plans to attend college right after graduation, completion of an academic or a rigorous academic curriculum in high school, and a majority of the student’s peers with similar plans to attend a four-year college (p. 256)” influenced the likelihood Latinos would attend four-year institutions following high school graduation. Another study discovered patterns of “chain enrollment,” wherein Latinos were more likely than non-Latinos to attend “enclave” colleges based on primary social contacts (Person & Rosenbaum, 2009). These contacts were said to “provide the newcomer with information about the institution and its programs, assist and may even accompany the student during application and enrollment processes, and support the new student on arrival” (p. 54). This study further noted that many Latinos who enrolled in enclave schools were less likely than non-Latinos to spend time with students outside of their existing connections, or participate in college activities beyond the classroom, resulting in lower levels of social integration.

The current study has three purposes. First, we aim to determine if familialism influences college choice among Latinos. This will be operationalized by asking if, controlling for the effects of socioeconomic status, student qualifications, and other relevant factors, are Latinos

more likely than Asians, blacks, and whites to attend an institution that is less than fifty miles from their permanent residence. Secondly, influenced by the literature on undermatching, we compare Asians, blacks, and Latinos to whites in terms of the selectivity of institutions attended. Finally, extending the work of Desmond and Turley, we seek to determine if attending an institution close to home has a mediating effect on the selectivity level of the institution attended. In other words, does the tendency to attend institutions close to home explain differences in selectivity between racial and ethnic categories, other things being equal?

Data and Method

This study analyzed data from the National Center for Educational Statistics' 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS or NPSAS08 when referring specifically to the 2008 NPSAS data). The NPSAS is a study comprised of comprehensive student-level data, and includes nationally representative samples of undergraduate and graduate students from various types of institutions, such as two-year, four-year, private, public, and major research universities. In describing NPSAS data collection methods, the National Center for Education Statistics (2010) states that:

NPSAS data come from multiple sources, including institutional records, government databases, and student interviews. Detailed data on participation in student financial aid programs are extracted from institutional records. Data about family circumstances, demographics, education and work experiences, and student expectations are collected from students through a web-based multi-mode interview (self-administered and computer-assisted telephone (CATI)).

Although NPSAS data is primarily aimed at providing information regarding how students fund their education, it contains an extensive collection of variables pertaining to student demographic information, information pertaining to parents of students, characteristics of the institutions attended by students, and other related information. As such, NPSAS data are highly adaptable to a wide range of research questions in the area of postsecondary education.

NPSAS data are accessible in two versions: public use and restricted use. The public use version is accessible via online data analysis interfaces (DAS and PowerStats), with limited analysis methods available, and limited statistics that are reported (largely due to confidentiality). The restricted use version, which provides full access to the data, is available to researchers through a licensing process. Both the analysis of distance from home to school and the analysis of the selectivity level of institution attended in the current study were conducted using the restricted use version of NPSAS08.

Our sample included Asian, black non-Latino, Latino, and white non-Latina dependent students, who were attending a postsecondary institution within the U.S. (excluding outlying areas such as Puerto Rico) during the 2007-2008 academic year. The sample was also filtered to include only U.S. citizens or resident aliens, and the analysis of distance from home to school employed an additional filter to exclude students whose entire academic program was through distance learning.

In order to operationalize the question of whether a student attends a college or university close to home or far from home, the NPSAS08 continuous variable DISTHOME, which is the distance in miles from the institution to the student's permanent home, and ranged from 0 to 12428 miles, was used to create a dichotomous dependent variable. This dichotomous variable consisted of a reference category of less than fifty miles from school to permanent residence

(coded 0) and the category of fifty miles or further from school to permanent residence (coded 1).¹¹ In the analysis of the selectivity level of institution attended, the NPSAS08 variable SELECTV2, was used as the dependent variable.¹² This variable was recoded for the analysis as follows: “neither private nor public not-for-profit 4-year” (e.g., 2-year colleges, private for-profit 4-year institutions) and “open admission” = 1; “minimally selective” = 2; “moderately selective” = 3; and “very selective” = 4. In both analyses, the independent variables consisted of a set of race/ethnicity dummy variables. These variables included Asian, black non-Latino, and white non-Latino, with Latino as the reference category.

In the analysis of distance from home to school we used a residual approach to determine whether familialism plays a more significant role in college selection among Latinos than it does for Asians, blacks, or whites. In other words, we argue that by controlling for a set of relevant variables, the remaining race/ethnicity effect, as it pertains to the likelihood of attending a college or university that is fifty miles or further from home, is an indicator of familialism. In order to make this argument, it is important to control for any other variables that are likely to have a significant influence the likelihood of attending a college or university far from home. As

¹¹ Although the literature supports 50 miles as a cutoff point, we acknowledge that this number is somewhat arbitrary in nature and raises some methodological concerns. For example, a student who attends a college 48 miles from home may not be qualitatively different from a student who attends a college 51 miles from home. With this in mind, in addition to the logistic regression model employed in our analysis of the likelihood of attending a college or university close to home, we estimated a similar linear regression model using the natural log of distance in miles from permanent residence to school as the dependent variable. This analysis found no differences in terms of the significance of the race/ethnicity independent variables when compared to the logistic regression model.

¹² The selectivity measure used to create the SELECTV2 variable was developed for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Criteria used in constructing this variable include “whether the institution was open admission (no minimal requirements), the number of applicants, the number of students admitted, the 25th and 75th percentiles of ACT and/or SAT scores, and whether or not test scores were required” (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). See Cunningham (2005) for further details on how the measure was constructed.

such, this analysis included control variables for sex, age, high school grade point average (GPA), whether the student earned Advanced Placement (AP) credit in high school, parents' educational attainment, parents' income, whether English is the primary language spoken at home, immigration generation, whether the student attends a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), region of the student's permanent address, and the urbanization level of the student's permanent address.

Age and sex were included as standard demographic variables.¹³ Because our sample was filtered to include only dependent students, the maximum age of respondents was 23 years old. Sex (NPSAS08 variable GENDER; 1=male; 0=female) was included to determine whether differences in societal norms influenced the likelihood of attending a college or university far from home (i.e., are females expected to stay closer to home?). High school GPA (NPSAS08 variable HSGPA; 1=below 2.0; 2=2.0 to 2.4; 3=2.5 to 2.9; 4=3.0 to 3.4; 5=3.5 to 4.0) and whether students earned AP credit in high school (NPSAS08 variable HSCRDAP; 1=yes; 0=no) were used as measures of the students' qualifications, as students with better qualifications have a wider range of options, and are therefore less likely to be limited to local institutions. Furthermore, these qualifications are related to merit-based financial aid, which is also likely to enable students to attend institutions further away from home.

Parents' educational attainment has been linked to student educational outcomes (Burnhill, Garner, & McPherson, 1990; Haveman & Wolfe, 1995), and is often included in studies of educational attainment. The NPSAS08 variable for parent's highest education level (PAREduc) was collapsed into three categories, identified as "no college or do not know

¹³ We estimated a model including interaction terms for race/ethnicity and sex to determine whether there was an interaction between these two variables. This model found no significant interactions between race/ethnicity and sex.

parent's education level", "associate's degree, vocational training, or some college," and "bachelor's degree or higher." These three categories were selected based on literature on educational credentials and first-generation college students (FGCS). Credentialing theory argues that level of educational credential is more significant than years of schooling (Brown, 2001), therefore having a bachelor's degree or higher is a qualitatively significant threshold, and subsequently supports the use of the category (and dummy variable) "bachelor's degree or higher" (1=yes; 0=no). Researchers have used different criteria for defining FGCS, with most identifying FGCS as those whose parents have not attended college whatsoever (Warburton, Bugarin, & Nuñez, 2001; Bui, 2002; Hahs-Vaughn, 2004; Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004; Martin Lohfink & Paulsen, 2005). Yet other studies define FGCS as students whose parents have not earned a college degree, although they may have completed some college coursework (Ishitani, 2003; Ishitani, 2006; Collier & Morgan, 2008; Martinez, Sher, Krull, & Wood, 2009). Because some of the literature pertaining to FGCS considers parents having attended at least some college as significant, we decided to include the dummy variable of "associate's degree, vocational training, or some college" (1=yes; 0=no) in order to capture this "middle group" between no college and a bachelor's degree, for whom there may be some cultural capital advantages that influence college selection. The reference category of "no college or do not know parent's education level" includes students whose parents have no postsecondary enrollment whatsoever as well as those students who do not know the educational attainment level of their parents.

Because attending college away from home is likely to bring about added costs of living that might otherwise be circumvented by living with parents, parental income is likely to be an enabling factor as it pertains to attending college more than 50 miles from a student's permanent

residence. The NPSAS08 variable measuring parents' income for dependent students (DEPINC), which was based on the student's financial aid application or interview and ranged from \$0 to \$500,000 annual income, was used to control for such economic means.

There is reason to believe that immigration generation status (Kao & Tienda, 1995; Perreira, Harris, & Lee, 2006), and whether English is the primary language spoken at home (Pachon & Moore, 1981) affects educational outcomes, therefore we include measures of these two variables. For the measure of immigration generation status (NPSAS08 variable IMMIGEN), first generation immigrants (students who were not born in the U.S.) were used as the reference group, while dummy variables were created for second generation immigrants (U.S. born student with one or both parents foreign born) (1=yes; 0=no), and third generation and beyond (U.S. born students with both parents U.S. born) (1=yes; 0=no). The variable for whether English was the primary language at home (NPSAS08 variable PRIMLANG) was coded 1 for yes and 0 for no.

In addition, the variable for whether a student attends a Historically Black College or University (NPSAS08 variable HBCU; yes =1; no =0) was included, as these institutions have a historical and cultural significance which might draw students who may have otherwise selected a college or university closer to home (or perhaps the opposite occurs, as students attend an HBCU close to home instead of another institution further from home – either way, this variable may influence the likelihood of attending college far from home).¹⁴ Finally, dummy variables

¹⁴ In this study we chose to include a variable for HBCUs, but not Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI). This decision was based on our belief that there are qualitative differences between HBCUs and HSIs in terms of their historical and social significance. HBCUs were established with a charter to serve black students, and play an important part in the history and culture of blacks in the U.S. As such, their identity as HBCUs serves as a draw for students of color. Conversely, colleges and universities can apply for HSI status if at least 25 % of their full-time undergraduate enrollment is Hispanic, and HSIs do not have the same sort of draw as HBCUs.

were created for region of the U.S. (NPSAS08 variable STUSTATE was collapsed into the following categories¹⁵: New England, Mid East, Great Lakes, Plains, Southeast, Rocky Mountains, Far West, with Southwest as the reference category), and urbanization level of the student's permanent address (NPSAS08 variable LOCALEST was collapsed into the following categories: City, Suburb, Town, Rural as the reference category, and an indicator for missing values).¹⁶

Because NPSAS08 employs a complex sampling design, Taylor series variance estimates were used in all analyses. Taylor series variance estimates employ sampling weight, strata, and primary sampling units (PSUs) to account for complex sampling designs. STATA 10 was used

Another way of explaining this is to frame these institutions and the racial/ethnic composition of their enrollment in terms of cause and effect: for HBCUs, status as an HBCU is the cause, and the significant black enrollment is the effect; for HSIs, the significant Hispanic enrollment is the cause, and HSI status is the effect. With this said, we did estimate an alternate model for the analysis of distance from home to school that included a variable indicating whether or not the student attends an HSI. There were two key differences observed in this alternate model: First, the dummy variable representing Asians was significant at the .01 level, instead of the .001 level. Secondly, the sex variable was significant at the .05 level, while it was not significant in the model that did not include the HSI variable. Based on this analysis, even if one argues that the HSI variable should be included in the model, its inclusion would not alter the overall findings of the study.

¹⁵ New England = CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT; Mid East = DE, DC, MD, NJ, NY, PA; Great Lakes = IL, IN, MI, OH, WI; Plains = IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD; Southeast = AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV; Southwest = AZ, NM, OK, TX; Rocky Mountains = CO, ID, MT, UT, WY; and Far West = AK, CA, HI, NV, OR, WA.

¹⁶ Because NPSAS data employ a complex sampling design, each filter applied to the sample has the potential to result in the omission of sampling strata. We found that omitting cases with missing values in the measure of the urbanization level of student's permanent residence (which includes 1.5 % of the sample) resulted in the loss of an additional sampling stratum. Although omitted strata is a normal part of working with complex sample designs, we decided it was best to avoid what we felt was an unnecessarily omitted stratum, and included a variable to capture the cases with a missing value in the measure of urbanization. We also estimated versions of the models with these cases omitted. The alternate model for the analysis of distance from home to school had no differences in the significance of the race/ethnicity independent variables. In the analysis of selectivity, the only observed difference among the race/ethnicity independent variables was that the variable for Asians was not significant in Model 1, but it was still significant at the .001 level in Models 2 and 3. Again, these differences do not alter the overall findings of this study.

for all analyses (StataCorp, College Station, TX). Logistic regression was used in the analysis of the likelihood of attending a college or university fifty miles or further from home, as this is an appropriate analysis method when working with a dichotomous dependent variable. In the analysis of the selectivity of institutions attended, three linear regression models were estimated to allow for progressive adjustment analysis of the mediating effect that attending close to home might have on selectivity (Mirowsky, 1999). Diagnostic tests were performed and results indicated no problem with multicollinearity or outliers. Means, standard deviations, and percentages were used to describe the two samples.

Results

Attending College Fifty Miles or Further From Home

The sample for the analysis of the likelihood of attending college fifty miles or further from home included 57,090 students (NPSAS requires unweighted *N*s be rounded to the nearest ten), and descriptive statistics are shown in Table 4.1. We see that a majority (62.2%) of students attend a college or university close to home (i.e., less than 50 miles from their permanent residence). We also see that the racial and ethnic composition of the sample is approximately representative of national percentages (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011), and that the sex ratio is relatively balanced. We also observe that nearly one-half (47.6%) of the sample has at least one parent with a bachelor's degree or greater, and another 21.6 % has at least one parent who completed some college, but no bachelor's degree. On the surface, these findings appear to support views regarding the role that cultural capital, that is, parental experience with higher education, plays in the likelihood of children attending college. The average student in our sample was 20 years old, had approximately a 3.0 high school GPA, and came from a family

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics for Analysis of Distance from Permanent Residence to School

Variables	Mean	Std. Err.	%
Distance from permanent residence to school			
<i>Less than 50 miles</i>			62.2
<i>50 miles or further</i>			37.8
Race/ethnicity			
<i>Asian</i>			6.0
<i>Black non-Latino</i>			10.8
<i>Latino</i>			13.1
<i>White non-Latino</i>			70.1
Sex			
<i>Male</i>			47.0
<i>Female</i>			53.0
Age	20.04	.012	
High school GPA†	3.97††	.014	
Earned Advanced Placement (AP) credit in high school			24.4
Parent's education			
<i>No post-secondary/do not know</i>			30.8
<i>Some post-secondary education</i>			21.6
<i>Bachelor's degree or above</i>			47.6
Parent's income (in thousands)	79.52	.645	
English is the primary language spoken at home			89.0
Immigration generation			
<i>1st generation immigrant</i>			7.3
<i>2nd generation immigrant</i>			15.3
<i>3rd generation or beyond</i>			77.4
Attend an HBCU			1.8
Region of student's permanent residence			
<i>New England</i>			4.7
<i>Mid East</i>			17.7
<i>Great Lakes</i>			15.9
<i>Plains</i>			7.5
<i>Southeast</i>			23.4
<i>Southwest</i>			10.8
<i>Rocky Mountains</i>			3.4
<i>Far West</i>			16.6
Urbanization of student's permanent residence			
<i>City</i>			28.4
<i>Suburb</i>			39.6
<i>Town</i>			7.8
<i>Rural</i>			22.7
<i>Missing</i>			1.5

Source: 2007-2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (National Center for Education Statistics)

† High school GPA was coded as follows: 1 = below 2.0; 2 = 2.0 to 2.4; 3 = 2.5 to 2.9; 4 = 3.0 to 3.4; 5 = 3.5 to 4.0

†† This is the equivalent of approximately a 3.0 GPA on a four point GPA scale

N = 57,090 (NPSAS restrictions require that all unweighted N's be rounded to the nearest ten)

where the parents had an annual income just over \$79,500. As might be expected, most of the students in the sample were third generation or beyond in terms of immigration generation status (77.4%) and spoke primarily English in the home (89.0%).

Table 4.2 shows the results of the logistic regression model predicting whether a student attends a college or university fifty miles or further from her or his permanent residence.¹⁷ The model shows that Asian, black non-Latino, and white non-Latino students are significantly more likely than Latino students ($p \leq .001$) to attend a college or university fifty miles or further from their permanent residence, even when controlling for relevant variables. Blacks were about 61 % more likely than Latinos to attend a college fifty miles or further from home, while Asians were about 45 % more likely and whites were about 41 % more likely. Most of the control variables in the model were significant ($p \leq .05$). Most notably, as expected, attendance far from home was associated student qualifications, such as having a high GPA and earning AP credit in high school. It was also associated with being native-born, speaking primarily English in the home, higher parental income, and parent's college degree.

Among the control variables that were not significant ($p > .05$), it is somewhat surprising to find sex and the variable for parents having some postsecondary education, but no degree. Regarding the variable for sex, although one might predict that traditional gender norms (i.e., women are traditionally expected to be less “adventurous” or independent than men, etc.) would make it less likely that women go to college far from home, this prediction is not supported by the data. The finding that some college, but no degree is not significant runs counter to the view

¹⁷ Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) were used to test for multicollinearity among predictor variables. All tolerance levels and VIF scores in the analysis of distance from home to school and in the analysis of selectivity were within an acceptable range. Because STATA does not have collinearity diagnostics for survey data, Tolerance and VIF were estimated using the method described at <http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/stata/faq/svycollin.htm>.

Table 4.2: Logistic Regression Models Predicting Whether Students Attend a College or University Fifty Miles or Further from Permanent Residence

Predictor	<i>b</i>	Std. Err.	Odds Ratio (e^b)
Race/ethnicity (Latino as reference category)			
<i>Asian</i>	.369***	.094	1.446
<i>Black non-Latino</i>	.478***	.072	1.613
<i>White non-Latino</i>	.341***	.058	1.407
Sex (1 = male; 0 = female)	.048	.029	1.049
Age	-.022**	.008	.978
High school GPA	.347***	.017	1.414
Earned AP credit (1 = yes; 0 = no)	.406***	.037	1.501
Parent's education (no post-secondary education/do not know as reference category)			
<i>Some post-secondary education</i>	.032	.037	1.033
<i>Bachelor's degree or above</i>	.415***	.036	1.514
Parent's income (in thousands)	.004***	.0002	1.004
English is the primary language spoken at home (1 = yes; 0 = no)	.190**	.067	1.210
Immigration generation (1 st generation immigrant as reference category)			
<i>2nd generation immigrant</i>	.129*	.065	1.137
<i>3rd generation or beyond</i>	.251***	.073	1.285
Attend HBCU (1 = yes; 0 = no)	1.017***	.187	2.766
Region of student's permanent residence (Southwest as reference category)			
<i>New England</i>	.400**	.131	1.492
<i>Mid East</i>	.206*	.102	1.229
<i>Great Lakes</i>	.078	.114	1.081
<i>Plains</i>	.274*	.134	1.316
<i>Southeast</i>	-.0009	.100	.999
<i>Rocky Mountains</i>	-.069	.186	.933
<i>Far West</i>	-.187	.115	.830
Urbanization of student's permanent residence (Rural as reference category)			
<i>City</i>	-.283***	.049	.753
<i>Suburb</i>	-.284***	.050	.753
<i>Town</i>	.027	.059	1.027
<i>Missing</i>	-.240	.132	.786
Constant	-2.745***	.211	
Model <i>F</i>	60.54***		
Model degrees of freedom†	25, 850		

Source: 2007-2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (National Center for Education Statistics)

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$ (two-tailed test).

$N = 57,090$ (NPSAS restrictions require that all unweighted N s be rounded to the nearest ten)

† Model degrees of freedom rounded to the nearest ten, per NPSAS requirements

that the cultural capital parents gain from attending at least some college increases the likelihood that their children go to school far from home. It is noteworthy, however, that this variable includes parents who have vocational or technical training, associates degrees, or attended any amount of college without earning a bachelor's degree or higher. As such, it is still possible that students whose parents have some college attendance (i.e., if we exclude those with vocational or technical training), benefit from the cultural capital their parents gained, and are more likely to attend college far from home.

Selectivity of Institution Attended

The sample for the analysis of the selectivity of institution attended, which includes 57,580 students (rounded to the nearest ten), differs only slightly from that of the analysis of distance from home to school (approximately 500 more respondents than the sample for the analysis of distance from home to school). The differences between the samples in terms of descriptive statistics, which are too small to merit discussion here, are primarily due to the fact that the analysis of distance from home to school filters out students whose entire program is completed via distance education, while the analysis of selectivity includes these students in the sample. The descriptive statistics for the analysis of selectivity, which can be found in Table 4.3, show that nearly half of respondents (44.6%) attend either an open admission institution, or an institution that is neither a public nor a private not-for-profit 4-year college or university. A small percent (6.6) attend minimally selective institutions, nearly one-third (31.6%) attend moderately selective institutions, and only 17.1 % attend very selective institutions.

In order to test whether Asian, black non-Latino, and Latino students attend less selective institutions than white non-Latinos, and to test whether distance mediates the relationship

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics for Analysis of Selectivity

Variables	Mean	Std. Err.	%
Selectivity of institution	2.21	.030	
<i>Open admission/not public or private NFP 4-year</i>			44.6
<i>Minimally selective</i>			6.6
<i>Moderately selective</i>			31.6
<i>Very selective</i>			17.1
Race/ethnicity			
<i>Asian</i>			6.0
<i>Black non-Latino</i>			10.9
<i>Latino</i>			13.1
<i>White non-Latino</i>			70.1
Sex			
<i>Male</i>			47.0
<i>Female</i>			53.0
Age	20.05	.012	
High school GPA†	3.97††	.014	
Earned Advanced Placement (AP) credit in high school			24.4
Parent's education			
<i>No post-secondary/do not know</i>			30.9
<i>Some post-secondary education</i>			21.6
<i>Bachelor's degree or above</i>			47.5
Parent's income (in thousands)	79.35	.643	
English is the primary language spoken at home			89.0
Immigration generation			
<i>1st generation immigrant</i>			7.4
<i>2nd generation immigrant</i>			15.3
<i>3rd generation or beyond</i>			77.3
Attend HBCU			1.8
Region of student's permanent residence			
<i>New England</i>			4.7
<i>Mid East</i>			17.7
<i>Great Lakes</i>			15.9
<i>Plains</i>			7.5
<i>Southeast</i>			23.4
<i>Southwest</i>			10.8
<i>Rocky Mountains</i>			3.4
<i>Far West</i>			16.6
Urbanization of student's permanent residence			
<i>City</i>			28.3
<i>Suburb</i>			39.6
<i>Town</i>			7.8
<i>Rural</i>			22.8
<i>Missing</i>			1.5
Distance from permanent residence to school			
<i>0-49 miles</i>			62.4
<i>50+ miles</i>			37.6

Source: 2007-2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (National Center for Education Statistics)

† High school GPA was coded as follows: 1 = below 2.0; 2 = 2.0 to 2.4; 3 = 2.5 to 2.9; 4 = 3.0 to 3.4; 5 = 3.5 to 4.0

†† This is the equivalent of approximately a 3.0 GPA on a four point GPA scale

N = 57,580 (NPSAS restrictions require that all unweighted Ns be rounded to the nearest ten)

between ethnicity and selectivity among Latinos, a progressive adjustment analysis was conducted using three linear regression models (Mirowsky, 1999). Model 1 measures the total association by regressing the measure of institutional selectivity on the dummy variables for race and ethnicity. Model 2 adjusts for precursors by introducing all control variables, except for the distance variable. Finally, Model 3 introduces the dichotomous variable indicating whether the student attends a college or university fifty miles or further from her or his permanent residence. This method enabled simultaneous testing of the second and third research questions, as Model 2 allows examining of the question of whether Asian, black non-Latino, and Latino students attend less selective institutions than white non-Latino students, while comparing Models 2 and 3 answers the question regarding whether distance has a mediating effect on the difference in selectivity between Latinos and white non-Latinos. The results of these models are presented in Table 4.4.

Model 1 shows us that, without any control variables, Asian students attend more selective institutions than do white students, but both blacks and Latinos attend less selective institutions than whites ($p \leq 0.05$). When control variables are introduced in Model 2, the difference in selectivity between blacks and whites becomes statistically insignificant, and the difference remains insignificant when the distance variable is introduced in Model 3. Interestingly, the advantage Asian students possess over whites in terms of institutional selectivity becomes more pronounced and significant when the control variables in Model 2 are introduced (from $b = .130, p \leq .05$ to $b = .227, p \leq .001$). In other words, while Asian students tend to enroll in more selective institutions than whites, the effect would be about 75 % stronger if not for the control variables in Model 2 ($100 \times [.130 - .227] / .130 = -74.6$). Additionally, as Model 3 shows, while the distance variable has the expected significant positive effect on

Table 4.4: Regression Models Predicting Selectivity of Institution

Predictor	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	<i>b</i>	Std. Err.	<i>b</i>	Std. Err.	<i>b</i>	Std. Err.
Race/ethnicity (white non-Latino as reference category)						
<i>Asian</i>	.130*	.063	.227***	.047	.227***	.043
<i>Black non-Latino</i>	-.334***	.048	-.021	.036	-.043	.031
<i>Latino</i>	-.501***	.049	-.120**	.040	-.071*	.035
Sex (1 = male; 0 = female)			.002	.015	-.006	.013
Age			.047***	.005	.051***	.005
High school GPA			.311***	.010	.253***	.009
Earned AP credit (1 = yes; 0 = no)			.410***	.023	.332***	.020
Parent's education (no post-secondary/do not know as reference category)						
<i>Some post-secondary education</i>			.105***	.019	.102***	.017
<i>Bachelor's degree or above</i>			.368***	.019	.294***	.017
Parent's income (in thousands)			.003***	.0001	.002***	.0001
English is the primary language spoken at home (1 = yes; 0 = no)			.016	.034	-.007	.031
Immigration generation (1 st generation immigrant as reference category)						
<i>2nd generation immigrant</i>			.098**	.034	.073*	.031
<i>3rd generation or beyond</i>			.084*	.041	.040	.038
Attend HBCU (1 = yes; 0 = no)			.478**	.168	.289*	.148
Region of student's permanent residence (Southwest as reference category)						
<i>New England</i>			.720***	.126	.647***	.114
<i>Mid East</i>			.509***	.099	.471***	.089
<i>Great Lakes</i>			.192†	.101	.177*	.090
<i>Plains</i>			.214*	.110	.162	.103
<i>Southeast</i>			.273**	.094	.272***	.084
<i>Rocky Mountains</i>			.003	.139	.015	.125
<i>Far West</i>			.011	.100	.041	.090
Urbanization student's permanent residence (Rural as reference category)						
<i>City</i>			.099**	.031	.149***	.028
<i>Suburb</i>			.062*	.031	.113***	.028
<i>Town</i>			-.008	.031	-.012	.027
<i>Missing</i>			-.167*	.069	-.123*	.059
Distance in miles from permanent residence to school (1 = 50+; 0 = 0-49)					.834***	.025
Constant	2.306***	.032	-.877***	.136	-.884***	.128
Model <i>F</i>	50.03***		95.13***		135.53***	
Model degrees of freedom††	3, 870		25, 850		26, 840	
<i>R</i> ²	.026		.247		.352	

Source: 2007-2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (National Center for Education Statistics)

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$, † $p = .059$ (two-tailed test)

$N = 57,580$ (NPSAS restrictions require that all unweighted N s be rounded to the nearest ten)

†† Model degrees of freedom rounded to the nearest ten, per NPSAS requirements

institutional selectivity ($b = .834, p \leq .001$) its introduction has no effect on the Asian advantage over whites.

On the other hand, in comparing Latinos with whites, the models appear to be consistent with our predictions. The control variables introduced in Model 2 explain a good bit of the Latino disadvantage compared to whites in terms of selectivity of institutions; still their disadvantage ($b = -.120$) remains significant at the .01 level. Moreover, when we introduce the distance variable in Model 3 we find that, while the difference between Latinos and whites remains negative ($b = -.071$) and significant at the .05 level, the distance variable mediates the effect by about 41 % ($100 \times [-.120 - .071] / -.120 = 40.8$). In sum, as predicted, attending a college or university fifty miles or further from home mediates the relationship between race/ethnicity and institutional selectivity for Latinos, but not for Asians or blacks.

There were few surprises in terms of the significance of control variables, as most socioeconomic measures, indicators of high school academic performance, and other variables typically believed to influence educational outcomes, were statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$) and had the expected effects. One finding of note, however, is that the variable indicating whether English was the language primarily spoken at home was not statistically significant in either of the models in which it appears. While the literature gave us reason to believe this may be a significant predictor of educational outcomes (Pachon & Moore, 1981), it does not appear to be significant in terms of the selectivity of institutions attended. Also, as with the analysis of distance from home to school, sex was not a significant predictor in the analysis of selectivity. Additionally, Model 3 shows us that, in general, the distance variable has a significant ($p \leq 0.001$) and positive effect on selectivity. In other words, students who attend a college or university fifty miles or further from home tend to go to more selective colleges and universities

than students who attend close to home. Finally, we also note that the distance variable reduces both the magnitude and significance level of the difference between first generation immigrants and second generation immigrants, and renders the difference between first generation immigrants and third generation or beyond insignificant. In other words, the distance variable also appears to mediate the relationship between immigration generation and selectivity.

Discussion

In the analysis of the likelihood of attending a college or university that is fifty miles or further from students' permanent residence, we set out to determine if familialism plays a role in colleges selection among Latinos. By controlling for measures of family socioeconomic status, students' educational qualifications, etc., we were able to demonstrate that Latinos, other things being equal, are less likely than Asian, black, or white students to attend a college or university that is far from home. Clearly, there is a residual effect observed among Hispanics that is not explained by the "usual suspects" (i.e., parents' education, parents' income, students' academic qualifications, etc.), and we argue that this remaining effect is, at least in part, the result of Latino familialism. Our residual approach to identifying the effects of familialism stands as both a limitation and a strength of the present study. In terms of limitations, we do not have anything linking the residual effect to familialism, other than our theoretical argument and our view that our methods have falsified other likely explanations. As such, it is possible that the observed differences among Latinos are based on some cultural value or phenomena other than familialism, and we invite researchers to explore other possible explanations for why Latinos are more likely to attend college close to home. At the same time, our methods are a strength, in that by measuring action (i.e., where students attend college, in relation to their permanent residence)

rather than attitudes, our findings are not affected by socially desirable responses to survey items. Overall, we believe that our analysis of distance from home to school contributes to the existing research on the effects and manifestations of Latino familialism. In addition to standing on its own merits as an empirical finding, the analysis of distance from home to school serves to validate our use of the distance variable to measure the effects of familialism in our analysis of selectivity.

Our analysis of selectivity serves to extend both the work on undermatching, and Desmond and Turley's study. Although we do not replicate the methods employed in previous studies of undermatching (i.e., identifying whether a particular student is appropriately matched, undermatched, etc.), we do compare the levels of selectivity of Asian, black, and Latino students with those of white students, while controlling for relevant variables. This analysis advances the literature on undermatching in that, while the previous studies of undermatching use data from the Chicago area and North Carolina, our study employs nationally representative data, allowing us to demonstrate that undermatching is an issue at the national level. Our results indicate that compared to whites, Asians tend to enroll in more selective institutions, while blacks and Latinos tend to enroll in less selective institutions. Furthermore, we find that introducing relevant control variables strengthens the effect for Asians, explains away the effect for blacks, and partially explains the effect for Latinos.

The effects of control variables are interesting in a number of regards. The fact that introducing the control variables in Model 2 increases the selectivity gap between Asian and whites, suggests that certain characteristics (perhaps socioeconomic status, immigration generation, etc.) may serve as a buffer for whites, compared to Asians. Models 2 and 3 also suggest that, while the differences in selectivity between blacks and whites can be fully

explained by socioeconomic status, educational qualifications, etc., the variables in Models 2 and 3 do not fully explain the difference between Latinos and whites. Moreover, the fact that our distance variable has a mediating effect for Latinos, but not for Asians or blacks, suggests that, not only does familialism influence college selection among Latinos, but also that this influence partially explains differences between Latinos and whites in the selectivity of institutions attended. In other words, for all of the benefits that strong familial values possess, familialism appears to play a role in the educational disparities experienced by Latinos.

Desmond and Turley's work broke important ground in examining this topic, and our study builds on their work in a number of noteworthy ways. First, we address a gap in Desmond and Turley's study by more fully demonstrating that our measure of familialism is not tied to socioeconomic status, academic qualifications, region, or other potentially confounding variables. Second, our measure of familialism captures not only those students who place a value on living at home while attending college, but also those students who decide to attend close to home, even if they are living on campus or in off-campus housing, other than their familial home. Third, our use of selectivity of institution attended, rather than whether or not a student applies to a selective institution, captures the actual enrollment decisions of students. Fourth, while Desmond and Turley found that their measure of familialism caused the Latino-white gap in the likelihood of applying to at least one selective college to disappear, we find that familialism only partially mediates this gap. Finally, Desmond and Turley, who used data collected from Texas high school seniors, call on researchers to employ nationally representative data to expand on their work. By using NPSAS08 data in our analysis of familialism and selectivity, we have answered their call.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In Chapters 2-4, I have reported findings from three original and relevant empirical studies. All three studies were concerned with U.S. Hispanics, and all three explored some behavioral aspect of Latino familialism. In this concluding chapter I briefly summarize the findings of these three studies, discuss implications for policy and practice, and offer recommendations for how future research might build upon the findings of these studies.

Summary of Findings

Study 1, *Race/Ethnicity and Family Contact: Toward a Behavioral Measure of Familialism*, which was published in the May, 2012 edition of the *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, makes valuable contributions to the literature on Latino familialism. First, by comparing black non-Hispanics, Hispanics, and white non-Hispanics in terms of frequency of contact with family, I extend the work of Keefe (1979), who only compared levels of familial contact among Hispanics and white non-Hispanics, and the work of Hays and Mindel (1973), who only compared levels of familial contact of black non-Hispanics and white non-Hispanics. Moreover, the finding that, though Hispanics maintained more frequent contact with family than did white non-Hispanics, there was no difference in the frequency of family contact (with the exception of contact with fathers) between black non-Hispanics and Hispanics, suggests that Latinos may not be as uniquely familial as the literature maintains. At the very least, this finding emphasizes the importance of including black non-Hispanics (not just Hispanics and white non-Hispanics) in any study that aims to compare levels of familialism.

In Study 2, *Machismo*, *Marianismo* and College Aspirations/Expectations, I employed qualitative methods to explore the educational aspirations and expectations of a sample of low-income Hispanic and white non-Hispanic, first generation college students. This analysis resulted in a number of noteworthy findings. First, the Hispanic females in the sample were more likely to identify the educational aspirations/expectations of significant others as influential in their decision to go to college, than Hispanic males, white females, or white males. Additionally, the Hispanic females in the sample were also more likely to articulate themes of familialism than were other participants. Furthermore, I suggest that the values contained within the familialism-related concept of *marianismo* offer a likely explanation for the prominence of significant others' influence among Latinas. I argue that, because of the acquiescent nature of *marianismo*, the educational aspirations or expectations of significant others serve as an important "endorsement" of college for Latinas. In other words, because *marianismo* cultural norms socialize Latinas to defer to the wishes of those who are viewed as being higher on the familial or social hierarchy, Latinas are more likely to heed the aspirations or expectations of significant others. Conversely, those Latinas who do not have this endorsement from significant others face the uphill battle of going against the *marianismo* norms that expect a woman to live with her parents until she marries (as going away to college would go against this norm), and the expectation that a woman puts the good of the family ahead of her own desires (such as college aspirations). Finally, I observed a pattern of life-stage framing of educational aspirations/expectation, wherein participants discussed the educational expectations of significant others in terms of a series of expected life stage (e.g., high school, then college, then marriage, then family). This pattern was observed primarily among Hispanic participants, and appears to be a re-writing of the *machismo/marianismo* familialism life-course script, with college included as an added step. I

argue that this rewriting of familialism life-stage scripts, is a way that traditional familialism values are adapting in the face of contemporary societal expectations, wherein attaining a bachelor's degree has become the norm.

The third and final study of this dissertation, Latino Familialism and College Choice, examines the relationship between familialism, college choice, and whether the effects of familialism contribute to educational undermatching. A nationally representative data set was used to test for familialism in college selection, by determining whether Hispanic college students are more likely than Asian, black non-Hispanic, or white non-Hispanic students to attend a college or university close to their permanent residence, other things being equal. This study found that, other things being equal, Hispanic college students were more likely than Asian, black non-Hispanic, or white non-Hispanic students to attend a college or university within fifty miles of their permanent residence. Progressive adjustment regression analysis was then employed to determine whether attending college within fifty miles of home explained difference between different racial/ethnic groups, in terms of the selectivity of college and universities attended. This analysis found that attending close to home partially mediated the differences in selectivity between Hispanics and white non-Hispanics, but was not a significant mediator of differences in college selectivity between any other racial or ethnic group. The findings of this study make important contributions to the existing research by demonstrating that familialism does appear to influence college choice among Latinos, and by improving on the previous study by Desmond and Turley (2009), who used regional data (Texas high school students), and limited measures of familialism and socioeconomic status to argue that familialism had a negative effect on the likelihood of applying to any college, applying to a four-year college, or applying to at least one selective college.

Implications for Policy and Practice

In addition to contributions to social science research, the findings contained within this dissertation have a wide range of potential implications to policy and practice. In general, when we consider the various inequitable outcomes experienced by Latinos, understanding various aspects of Latino culture is of prime importance to meeting the needs of this population. Policy and practice that are informed by a greater understanding of cultural and social concepts, such as familialism, is likely to be more effective and more readily received by Latinos. Attempts to serve Latinos, whether it be in health and human services, or in improving educational outcomes, will become increasingly important as the Latino population continues its rapid growth in the U.S., and research such as that contained within this dissertation will play a vital role in informing those efforts.

While policy implications are best identified and implemented by policy experts, I will suggest a few possibilities for how the findings of the present studies might be useful in practice. The findings from Study 1, regarding frequency of family contact, may be of value to various human services agencies as they develop policies and programs related to families, or that rely on understanding levels of interaction among families. The findings in Study 2 should be of particular interest to educators or organizations that aim to increase college attendance among Hispanic females. For example, if the educational aspirations and expectations of significant others have a uniquely strong influence on college attendance among Hispanic females, then programs designed to educate Hispanic families regarding the importance of developing and communicating such aspirations and expectations for their daughters. Similarly, educators may develop initiatives aimed at encouraging teachers to articulate clear aspirations and expectations among the Latina primary and secondary students. The findings in Study 3 are likely to be of

particular interest to educators and education policy makers. For example, initiatives aimed at increasing college enrollment among Hispanics, may opt to promote distance education programs in communities with large Hispanic populations. Additionally, colleges and universities might develop programs aimed at helping Latina/o students adjust to being away from family. These are but a few suggestions regarding how this research might inform policy and practice, and my hope is that these studies will be beneficial to those who are tasked with developing and implementing such policies.

Recommendations for Future Research

In intellectual inquiry, every answer raises multiple new questions. As such, I offer a few suggestions for how future research might build upon the findings from the three studies contained within this dissertation. In Study 1, I found generally comparable levels of family contact between black non-Hispanics and Hispanics, challenging the widely held notion that Latinos have higher levels of familialism than all other major racial and ethnic groups in the U.S. Based on this finding, there is a need for studies that compare the familial values, characteristics, and practices of these two groups. For example, using qualitative methods, a researcher might explore how Latinos and black non-Hispanics view the family in a number of regards. Such a study is likely to uncover a number of informative themes and patterns.

Study 2 raises a number of questions and testable hypotheses for future studies. As a qualitative study with a non-probability sample, all key findings can and should be explore through quantitative methods, ideally using probability samples. For example, a study might ask participants to rate the degree to which their own educational goals were influential in the decision to attend college, as well as those of a list of significant others, such as parents,

teachers, etc. By doing so, it would be possible to determine whether Hispanic females are indeed more likely to view significant others' aspirations or expectations as the major influence in their decision to attend college. Additionally, by including the Marianismo Belief Scale, developed by Castillo et al (2010), this study could test to determine whether controlling for *marianismo* values mediates the perceived importance of significant others aspirations or expectations among Hispanic females.

In Study 3, a residual approach is used to determine whether familialism influences college choice. In other words, by controlling for all other likely predictors of how far from home a student can or will go for college, the remaining race/ethnicity effect is argued to be related to familialism. With this in mind, future research might inquire more directly regarding the degree to which being close to family was a consideration in selecting a college. While the method in Study 3 has certain advantages, such as eliminating the effect of social desirability in responses, it would be valuable to have these findings confirmed (or challenged) by a study that asks direct questions regarding the degree to which familialism was involved in the college selection process. Study 3 also raises a number of questions regarding the colleges and universities attended by Latinos and members of other racial/ethnic categories. For example, how will changing technologies come into play if Latinos do indeed place a value on staying close to familial networks? It would seem likely that Latinos may become more likely to choose distance education program, versus a traditional on-campus experience. If so, what effects will this have on educational attainment, the comparative selectivity levels of colleges and universities that Latinos attend, and other considerations such as the social and cultural capital gained from a traditional college experience? Perhaps Latinos will tend to choose online education programs, but will also tend to receive credentials from less-respected institutions as a result. Conversely,

perhaps the Latinos who tend to choose online education as a means to stay close to family are those who would not have otherwise gone to college. Moreover, will the lack of social networking opportunities associated with online education, as compared to the traditional college experience, mean that Latinos will tend to receive less upward mobility in return for their educational investments, than their non-Latino peers? These are a few among a wide range of related questions that can and should be addressed in future research.

Conclusion

By building on previous social science research and addressing gaps in that research, the studies contained within this dissertation offer contributions to the existing body of literature on Latino familialism, *machismo* and *marianismo*, educational aspirations and expectations, college choice among Latinos, and the role of familialism in educational undermatching. The findings of these studies not only contribute to the body of existing research in these areas, but also provide new opportunities for inquiry, as well as direction for policy-makers and educators. It is now the task of researchers (me included), policy-makers, and educators to find the most effective ways to advance and apply these findings.

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