THE EFFECTS OF LATINO PARENT ENGAGEMENT ON THE NUMBER OF
LATINO STUDENTS ATTENDING FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITIES

A Thesis

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Joanna Danielle Saldaña

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THE EFFECTS OF LATINO PARENT ENGAGEMENT ON THE NUMBER OF LATINO STUDENTS ATTENDING FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITIES

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Date

Graduate and Professional Studies in Education
Abstract

of

THE EFFECTS OF LATINO PARENT ENGAGEMENT ON THE NUMBER OF
LATINO STUDENTS ATTENDING FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITIES

by

Joanna Danielle Saldaña

Brief Literature Review

Much of the literature on parent involvement from the educator’s perspective
focuses on programs designed to include parents in the process of schooling (Cutrona,
Cole, Colangelo, Assouline, & Russell, 1994). That is, parental involvement from most
educators' points of view is about how to get parents into schools, or how parents can
support the school's efforts at home by doing things like reading to their children. Many
efforts are directed toward "training" parents about the American system of schooling and
how parents can help their children succeed in that system (Bermudez, 1996; Epstein,
1992; Rioux & Berla, 1993). The goal of most educational research on parental
involvement efforts is to find out how to make children more "ready" for school and how
to improve academic achievement by supporting more rigorous school initiatives at
home.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact parent engagement has on
the academic performance of Latino students attending a 4-year private institution.
Methodology

A quantitative multiple-choice questionnaire was given to 139 Latino students from University of the Pacific. By surveying Latino students enrolled at a private 4-year university, the researcher aimed to identify if certain aspects of parental engagement impacted their perceptions of their own ability and desire to pursue a college degree. Descriptive statistics were compiled from the data into graphs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Different families may require different responses or treatments from an institution to become more engaged. If policy and practice are designed to serve only one type of parent—namely, parents who are eager to be involved—others, such as parents of first-generation college students, may be left out. Those left out could provide an important source of support for their students in college.

___________________________, Committee Chair
José Chávez, Ed.D.

___________________________
Date
DEDICATION

Ever since I imagined writing a thesis I imagined my dedication page. Here it is, my favorite part of my thesis. Well, besides the page that names me as the author of this book.

This thesis is dedicated to you mom and dad, oh... and you too Danny.

I love you Mom and Dad, for helping make me the woman I am today, for teaching me to be proud of who I am, for showing me how to be strong, for giving me the courage to be weak, and giving me the strength to always strive for better, no matter what... and giving me the wisdom to know when to turn away and when to charge ahead... you are my rock and foundation!

I am honored to be your daughter.

Thank you for all the sacrifices you made for me, which you consider nothing at all, but I appreciate. And most of all, thank you for giving me the best childhood I would have never been smart enough to ask for.

And to all my family and friends, yes, I am officially done with my “homework.” At least for another 25 years.

…To be continued.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my committee members who were more than generous with their expertise and precious time. A special thanks to Dr. José Chávez for his countless hours of reflecting, reading, encouraging, and most of all patience throughout the entire process. Thank you Dr. Geni Cowan, Dr. Davin E. Brown, and Dr. Susan Heredia for agreeing to serve on my committee. I would also like to acknowledge and thank University of the Pacific Office of Research and Graduate Studies for allowing me to conduct my research and to Dr. Inés Ruiz-Huston and Mr. Jesus Margarito for providing any assistance requested.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Latino community as a whole makes up a large percentage of California’s population. Latinos make up 36.6% of all students in California (Zarate & Burciaga, 2010). For this reason, it is important to not allow Latino students to fail academically. As of 2010, about 12.7% of Latinos earned baccalaureate degrees compared to 30% of Whites (Zarate & Burciaga, 2010). Although the Latino students making up 42% of community college students is the group the most likely to attain a bachelor’s degree, Zarate and Burciaga (2010) explained the negatives of attending a community college versus a 4-year institution. These negatives include students taking longer to graduate as well as not transferring at all to 4-year institutions (Zarate & Burciaga, 2010). For the Latino community, it is the access to four-year institutions that seems impossible. In the current economic situation, many universities are increasing their tuition while less grant money is made available (Auerbach, 2004). Latinos are disproportionately affected in this climate in addition to being underrepresented at 4-year institutions (Auerbach, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact parent engagement has on the academic performance of Latino students attending a 4-year private institution.
Latino parents need to better understand the demands of school and how their help with schoolwork at home can greatly increase the chances of the student entering a 4-year university. With this research, additional strategies can be recommended to engage parents in supporting their children on their paths to 4-year universities. Parents are a critical component of their child’s educational aspiration. To accomplish the researcher’s objectives as presented above, the following questions were answered.

1. What effect does parental engagement have on Latino students’ preparedness for college?

2. What are Latino parents currently doing at home to prepare their children for college?

Through this study, the researcher will expand on the information 4-year universities have on Latino parents regarding their informational needs and how to best address them. If organizations expand their knowledge of the parents with whom they are working, they are able to refine their approach. The more information gained about Latino parents and their involvement in their child’s educational career, the more efficient and effective organizations’ educational relationships with parents will be. The ability to better inform parents is expected to positively impact their ability to participate with their children in their educational careers. Both student and parent will benefit with this enhanced involvement. The student will receive the active support from the parent helping him/her successfully pursue a higher education.
Definition of Terms

Achievement Gap

Refers to the gap in performance scores and college transition rates between historically disadvantaged students and their White and Asian counterparts.

Lines of Influence

Parents are the first line of influence in a person’s upbringing.

Parent Engagement

Direct interaction between parents and school faculty. Parents attend back to school night, participate in extracurricular activities, and help with homework. If there is a language barrier, find resources for additional help.

Parent Involvement

Involved in child’s school, but not actively engaged.

Post-Secondary

For the purpose of this research study, this refers to 4-year colleges and universities. Although community colleges are an integral part of the higher education system, particularly in California, this research focuses on underserved students’ transition into four-year institutions.

Limitations

Although two separate email reminders were sent to the sample with the hopes of garnering more responses, the respondent pool remained virtually the same as it was after
one email. Had the researcher made the survey available for a longer period of time or advertised a final response date, a more robust pool of respondents may have been created.

**Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study was to reinforce or dismiss the theories presented by previous researchers regarding how the lack of parent engagement contributes to the poor numbers of Latino students attending 4-year institutions. The researcher focused on determining ways to encourage and improve parent engagement. The researcher investigated what perceptions Latino parents had toward post-secondary education as compared to their perceptions toward K-12 education. Research shows the more resourced and empowered parents become, the more likely their students are to consider attending and enrolling at a 4-year university (Engle, 2010).

This study enhanced the knowledge and awareness of the impact parent engagement has on Latino students attending 4-year universities. This research provides development on current knowledge and research on Latino students in higher education and the support needed for enrolling in post-secondary education. California serves a large number of underserved students, with Latino students comprising more than half of all K-12 students (Edsource, 2012). Parents and families of Latino students are increasingly becoming more integral to the entire educational process. Reaching the
families at the core and providing proven services such as tutoring, mentoring, and testing assistance show impressive results in improving student achievement at all levels.

As the dynamics of the student population changes, educational leaders must be prepared to handle the unique challenges the changes present. Currently, California has the largest minority population in the country. By researching how parental engagement may impact the likelihood of Latino students entering post-secondary education, educators at all levels may be able to find ways to enhance college transition and see the necessity of engaging these families in the college-going culture and processes. There is a need for an increase in the partnership between secondary schools, colleges, and historically disadvantaged families such as the Latino population. Engaging Latino parents in their child’s academic career at an early age is vital to their student’s success. Often, what is found to have the most substantial impact on Latino students’ academic performance and perceptions about higher education is parents not only being involved, but being engaged in their child’s education. Building partnerships with Latino parents and other underserved families may provide insight on other topics such as mental health, self-identity, and retention issues this population may face during college.
Chapter 2
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact parent engagement has on the academic performance of their Latino students’ attendance at a 4-year private institution. This chapter introduces the theoretical framework (theory of involvement and Tinto’s theory [1993]). The literature on parental involvement, as well as on public perception, suggests, “parental involvement” supports achievement in schooling. Just how the involvement of parents contributes to academic achievement, however, is not so easily agreed upon (Harper & Quaye, 2007). Parental involvement with children relative to education can take many forms and depends on a wide variety of factors. Even the term “parental involvement” has various meanings and is seen differently by constituents concerned with parents' roles in education. In the United States, the study of relationships between parents and schooling has been dominated by educators and sociologists, both groups bringing their own perspectives to bear on how to frame the concept of parental involvement with children relative to education (Schneider & Coleman, 1993).

Much of the literature on parent involvement from the educator’s perspective focuses on programs designed to include parents in the process of schooling itself (Cutrona, Cole, Colangelo, Assouline, & Russell, 1994). That is, parental involvement
from most educators' points of view is about how to get parents into schools or how parents can support the school's efforts at home by doing things like reading to their children. Many efforts are directed toward “training” parents about the American system of schooling and how parents can help their children succeed in that system (Bermudez & Marquez, 1996; Epstein, 1992; Rioux & Berla, 1993). The goal of most educational research on parental involvement efforts is to find out how to make children more ready for school and how to improve academic achievement by supporting more rigorous school initiatives at home.

As opposed to educators who want to teach parents what to do to promote academics, sociologists view parental contributions to academic performance through the broader lens of socio-demographic factors such as family income, occupational status, educational level of parents, and family relationships (Coleman, 1988). They study what resources or social capital is available to parents to support involvement in either home or school educational activities, resources like money and social networks. The term “cultural capital” has also been used by some sociologists (Bourdieu, 1977; Lareau, 1989) to describe social and cultural resources available to families as a result of their social class, particularly resources possessed by the upper classes.

Since an overriding concern for promoting academic achievement is behind parental involvement, research and literature in education and sociology focuses on parents whose children are at greatest risk of not achieving academically—children from economically or educationally disadvantaged families who tend to be from racial and
ethnic minority groups (Kerbow & Bernhardt, 1993). Indeed, many of the recent programs and policy initiatives in parent involvement are designed to increase minority parent participation in the education of their children, or at least, to promote educators' versions of what parents should be doing to help educate their children. An underlying assumption of these initiatives is, of course, that the level or type of involvement from minority parents is inadequate and is somehow contributing to their children's lack of success in school.

**Shifting Demographics**

Policies have been created to give minorities a better opportunity to attend college. In the 1960s, former president Lyndon B. Johnson enacted educational reform for all Americans through his War on Poverty Campaign, and Title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965 created the largest pre-collegiate programming for underrepresented students (Cochrane & Walters, 2008). Even with that, the achievement gap still favors the students who come from affluent backgrounds. Policies can be created to encourage a more equal opportunity for all potential college students. With the release of The State of Latinos in Higher Education in California by The Campaign for College Opportunity (2013), the message is clear: improve access to college and ensure Latino students finish with a degree. The report provides an accurate and startling portrait of not only the Latino educational experience in California, but also the national Latino experience.
Forty-two percent of Latino adults 25 years or older are without a high school diploma, while only 11 percent have a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Among our high school graduates, less than 30 percent took the minimum requirements to be considered college-ready.

Nearly 69 percent of freshmen are enrolled in community colleges, yet only four out of every 10 students complete college in six years.

The picture is slightly better in the University of California system, where 74 percent of Latinos graduate within six years, yet less than 5 percent of first-time freshmen enrolled in the fall 2012 semester were Latino. (Bustillios, 2013, para. 2)

The literature suggests educators do not expect students of color and those from the lower-socioeconomic status (SES) groups to perform at the same levels as their White and Asian counterparts. They often underestimate the needs associated with being a first-generation, college-bound student. Due to the two-tiered educational system that exists in America, underserved students receive a less rigorous curriculum than their peers (Cochrane & Walters, 2008). Recent statistics suggest that (a) students of color are attending colleges at 29.7% vs. 37.4% of Caucasians (Harvey, 2004); (b) students from upper-income families are seven times more likely than students from lower-socioeconomic statuses (SES) to obtain a bachelor’s degree by age 24 (Hoffman, 2003); and (c) 27% of first-generation students actually enroll at a 4-year institution while 71% of students whose parents have bachelor’s degrees do so (Harvey, 2004).
California has the second lowest number of minority students graduating in the country (Kortering & Christenson, 2009). Several factors may contribute: increasing Latino population, high English-language learner population and the high school exit exam. According to the Alliance for Excellence in Education’s 2009 report (Kortering & Christenson, 2009), over a 20% gap exists in the high school graduation rates between White students and Black and Hispanic students. As a result, it is estimated that $4.2 billion will be lost by dropouts from the class of 2008 in lost wages over their lifetime. The achievement gap is first noticeable in middle school. Math and English course grades are lower for minority students than for their peers. These two classes have become indicators of academic success at the high school level and beyond. Suburban schools more often have greater access to resources than urban schools and those students often outperform their urban peers in math and English (Camblin, 2003). The shift in demographics that allows more minorities to attend college is a step in an ongoing process that will allow for a more balanced society and more social equality. The increase in minority participation in college will be broader across the elite colleges that have higher admission standards as well as the colleges to which minority students are being admitted. President Barack Obama’s 2020 College Completion Goal set goals that future students need to reach in order to be competitive in the global stage (Mullin, 2010).
Student Services/Persistence

Engagement

Both the learning institution and the student must complement each other. The student provides the desire to gain knowledge and a positive experience, and, in the process, becomes a well-rounded person. The learning institution must provide support mechanisms, e.g., student services, which will allow the student to thrive in his or her quest for an improved self, both intellectually and spiritually. Student engagement is simply characterized as participation in educationally effective practices, both inside and outside the classroom, which lead to a range of measurable outcomes (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckkley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2007). Kuh et al. (2007) also noted student engagement is represented by two critical features. The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. The second component of student engagement is how the institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum, other learning opportunities, and support services to induce students to participate in activities that lead to the experiences and desired outcomes such as persistence, satisfaction, learning, and graduation. If one of these two critical components falters, it will negatively affect the other component. “The impact of college is largely determined by individual effort and involvement in the academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings on a campus” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, p. 602). Researchers have found that educationally purposeful engagement produces gains, benefits and outcomes in the following domains: cognitive and skill development (Anaya
1996; Baxter Magolda, 1992); college adjustment (Cabrera, Nora, Terenzini, Pascarella, & Hagedorn, 1999; Kuh, Palmer, & Kish, 2003); moral and ethical development (Evans & Evans, 1987; Rest, 1993); practical competence and skills transferability (Kuh, 1993, 1995); the accrual social capital (Harper, 2008); and psychosocial development, productive racial and gender identity formation, and positive images of self (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Harper, 2004; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2003).

Students engaged both inside and outside the classroom are more likely to persist through college than those students who are disengaged (Astin, 1975; Tinto, 1993, 2000). Vincent Tinto, a frequently cited author on the college student retention topic, stated that engagement, or as he refers to it, academic and social integration, is positively related to students’ persistence through college. Tinto’s research confirmed that engagement is the single most significant predicator of persistence (Tinto, 1993). Tinto contended that many students who discontinue their college education do it due to the fact they do not feel connected to anyone at the institution. “Leavers of this type express a sense of not having made any significant contacts or not feeling membership in the institution” (Tinto, 2000, p. 7). Tinto also argued that a student who is more engaged in academic and social communities on campus often feels committed to the institution, compelling a student to persist.
Involvement

Alexander W. Astin (1984) defined student involvement as “the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience” (p. 297). Astin’s theory of involvement refers to behaviors and what students actually do, instead of what they think, how they feel, and the meanings they make of their experiences. “The extent to which students can achieve particular development goals is a direct function of the time and effort they devote to activities designed to produce these gains” (p. 301). Astin’s theory is frequently cited in higher education literature.

There is a difference between involvement and engagement. One may be involved in something without necessarily being engaged. For instance, a student who is present and on time for every weekly meeting of an organization but sits passively in the back of the room and never offers an opinion or volunteers for committees, interacts infrequently with the group’s advisor or fellow members outside of weekly meetings, and would not dare consider running for an office could still legitimately claim she is involved in the group (Harper, 2007). However, few would argue this student is actively engaged, as outcomes accrual is likely to be limited. The same could be said for the student involved in a study group for his psychology class but contributes little and asks few questions when the group meets for study sessions. Action, purpose, and cross-institutional collaboration are requisite for engagement and deep learning (Kinzie & Kuh, 2004; Kuh et al., 2007; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005). Kuh (2001) suggested student engagement is a measure of institutional quality. The more engaged its
students are in educationally purposeful activities, the better the institution. Pascarella (2001) said, “An excellent undergraduate education is most likely to occur at those colleges and universities that maximize good practices and enhance students’ academic and social engagement” (p. 22). With this, it is essential for educators to view engaging diverse populations as “everyone’s responsibility” including their own. “Knowing that students and society could ultimately benefit from new approaches to cross-cultural learning, but failing to take the necessary steps to intentionally create enabling conditions [inside and] outside the classroom is downright irresponsible” (Harper & Antonio, 2008, p. 12).

[This] magical thinking provides no guidance for campuses on assembling the appropriate means to create environments conducive to realization of the benefits of diversity or on employing the methods necessary to facilitate the educational process to achieve those benefits. Under this rationale, the benefits will accrue as if by magic. (Chang, Chang, & Ledesma, 2005, pp. 10-11)

Simply providing services for students is not sufficient to enrich their educational experiences.

**Ecological Development**

“One of the most effective ways to improve student engagement is to invite those who are the least engaged to share their knowledge and experiences” (Harper, 2007, p. 9). As the authors of Learning Reconsidered recommended: “All institutions should establish routine ways to hear students voices, consult with them, explore their opinions, and
document the nature and quality of their experiences as learners” (ACPA & NASPA, 2004, p. 33). With this, educators can begin to develop customized services to improve student outcomes.

In Learning Reconsidered, student affairs educators and faculty members sought to redefine student learning in higher education and build a common knowledge base from the most pressing challenges confronting today’s college students (ACPA & NASPA, 2004). More interactions between groups need to be enforced. Students should feel free to say whatever it is they need to say and be comfortable with whatever they need to say. Students should be encouraged to voice their opinions, feelings, and general state of mind without the fear of being ridiculed. The authors of Learning Reconsidered concluded:

The bottom line is that student affairs preparation must be broad based, interdisciplinary, grounded in theory, and designed to prepare forward-thinking, confident, and competent educators who will see the big picture and work effectively with other institutional agents to ensure that colleges and universities become learning communities in which students develop the skills they need to enter the rapidly changing world in which we now live. (ACPA & NASPA, 2004, p. 32)

Both faculty and student affairs educators need to be on board with each other and combine classroom learning and co-curricular activities. In Student Engagement in Higher Education: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical Approaches for Diverse
*Populations*, Harper and Quaye (2008) show how all educators at different levels (elementary, high school college) are responsible for a student’s holistic learning experience. The authors modeled this by using, for example, psychological, environmental, and student development theories to guide the interventions proposed at the end of each chapter. They shared some ideas for how faculty and student affairs educators could build on each other’s expertise to improve the educational experiences of students.

Racial/ethnic minority students in predominantly White classrooms represent varying levels of racial identity development (Evans et al., 1998). Faculty who lack the understanding of this process can misinterpret or fail to understand these students’ behaviors in the classroom. Torres et al. (2003) noted that recognizing the role of racial identity development is essential to assisting students in understanding their own and others’ views of knowledge. How will students at various stages of racial identity development respond to the material and to each other? An educator who is unaware of this might blame students for not wanting to engage material presented during class, rather than taking into account students’ development levels, readiness, and interest in certain literature (Helms, 1994; Howard-Hamilton, 2000; Tatum, 1997). The concept of academic identification was explored by Steele (1997) in his study of stereotype threat. Steele posited that students’ views of self reflect their abilities to establish an achievement-oriented belief in academic success, but the threat of a negative stereotype can impede a student’s ability to perform to the best of her or his ability. Therefore,
students at later stages of racial identity development can respond to stereotypes in more productive ways. Students come from different backgrounds, with different upbringings. Thus, individual experiences will vary tremendously. It is essential for faculty to be cognizant of the need to procure diverse perspectives. The “proving process” is a phrase introduced by Fries-Britt and Turner (2001) that calls attention to the struggles of racial/ethnic minority students in predominantly White classrooms. These students tend to have a profound sense of loneliness and often feel the need to prove their intellectual abilities. Negative stereotypes and deficit-minded approaches to understanding student achievement also pose barriers to racial/ethnic minority students who often encounter questions about their academic capabilities and the right to enroll in higher education being labeled an “affirmative action” admit (Chang, 1999). Even high-achieving students contend with issues of self-doubt and questions of belonging in higher education (Fries-Brit & Turner, 2001). Continually having to represent their entire race/ethnicity in discussions of diversity and feeling that one’s actions as a racial/ethnic minority person will be generalized to the entire group are two significant challenges faced by racial/ethnic minority students in predominately White classrooms (Tatum, 1992). For classroom environments to be more inclusive and welcoming for racial/ethnic minority students, attention needs to be given to ensuring that faculty members represent a wide array of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences (Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004; Smith, 1989).
Not only do racial/ethnic minority students have differing cultural needs, they also exhibit diverse learning styles. Therefore, it is important educators are cognizant of the varied ways by which students learn and employ multiple strategies to engage students (Gardner, 1993). Solorzano and Yosso (2000) contended:

When a collegiate racial climate is positive, it includes at least four elements: (a) the inclusion of students, faculty, and administrators of color; (b) a curriculum of color; (c) programs to support the recruitment, retention and graduation of students of color; and (d) a college/university mission that reinforces the institution’s commitment of pluralism. (p. 62)

The self-efficacy of racial/ethnic minority students affects their social and academic engagement (Bandura, 1986; Dembo & Seli, 2007; Schunk, 2004; Zimbardo & Gerrig, 1996). The historical context of oppression coupled with students’ situatedness in predominately White environments negatively affects these students’ beliefs about success and academic achievement (Freire, 1970; Hardiman & Jackson, 1997). Typically, students with higher self-efficacy set higher goals and exhibit greater feelings of satisfaction and competence (Zimbardo & Gerrig, 1996). However, given oppressive classroom practices that deny racial/ethnic minority students’ cultures and identities, some students display less self-efficacy (Steele, 1997).

Steele and Aronson’s (1995) research on stereotype threat demonstrates the influence of stereotypes on one’s self-concept. Steele’s study begins with an important premise: Students must identify with the postsecondary institution of which they are a
part and possess an achievement-oriented mentality to achieve academic success. Students who do so have a higher sense of self, or self-efficacy. Additionally, self-efficacy is dependent upon one’s belonging at the institution, a factor mentioned in the previous discussion of racial climate.

The “feel” of a campus can have a major influence on a student’s involvement in campus activities, both academic and social (Cabrera et al., 1999; Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001). An environment perceived as prejudicial discourages student involvement and can lead to disconnection with the institution (Cabrera et al., 1999; Eimers, 2001; Harper et al., 2005). According to Sutton and Kimbrough (2001), campus climate plays a major role in engaging racial/ethnic minority students. A negative perception of campus climate can cause students to become detached from the college experience, resulting in dissatisfaction and disengagement (Cabrera et al. 1999).

Student support services such as cultural centers help first-year racial/ethnic minority students create their own social and cultural networks in an otherwise unwelcoming environment. Supportive environments and specialized, culturally appealing programs and activities can greatly aid in engaging first-year racial/ethnic minority students (DeSousa & King, 1992; Gloria et al., 1999; Kenny & Stryker, 1996). Despite these intended efforts, many first-year racial/ethnic minority students do not utilize support services. Research shows various reasons lie behind this. Helm, Sedlacek, and Prieto (1998) found that not all of these programs address the various needs and interests of first-year racial/ethnic minority students. For example, depending
on the stage of identity development at which a student is, some support services may not seem beneficial. Moreover, many first-year racial/ethnic minority students are simply unaware that certain resources and support sources exist in campus (Kenny & Stryker, 1996; Roe Clark, 2005). If these students are immediately disengaged in campus activities because of the campus climate, culture, then they are unlikely to seek out any campus services or to learn that such services exist.

Astin (1984) defined involvement as “the quantity and quality of physical and psychological energy that students invest in the college experience” (p. 307). Astin’s Theory of Student Involvement is “qualitatively different” from other types of developmental theory commonly used in the study of college students (e.g., psychosocial, cognitive-structural, moral, ethical) in that it does not suggest that development occurs in hierarchically arranged stages. Also, involvement refers to behaviors and what students actually do, instead of what they think, how they feel, and the meanings they make of their experiences. The theory is principally concerned with how college students spend their time and how various institutional processes and opportunities facilitate student development. “The extent to which students can achieve particular developmental goals is a direct function of the time and effort they devote to activities designed to produce these gains” (Astin, 1984, p. 301).

Model for Student Involvement

Emerging from a longitudinal study of college students, Astin (1984) offered five basic postulates in his theory: (1) involvement entails the investment of physical and
psychological energy in different “objects” that range in the degree of their specificity; (2) involvement occurs along a continuum, with different students investing varying degrees of energy in various objects at different times; (3) involvement includes qualitative and quantitative components; (4) the amount of student learning and development is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of involvement; and (5) “the effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement” (p. 298).

It is important to note that Astin’s theory (1984) is based on a broad definition of involvement that extends far beyond memberships in clubs and student organizations. Spending time on campus, living and participating in residence hall communities, interacting with faculty in class and out of class, and socializing with peers about academic and non-academic matters are all included in Astin’s definition. The theory suggest that student time is the most precious resource during the college years and how students spend that time affects what they gain from college. This theory is a useful tool for designing programs and strategies to combat racial/ethnic minority students’ adjustment problems and engage them in out-of-class activities.

**Parent Engagement**

The term “parental involvement” was previously reserved for K-12 education. The term has recently migrated to the vocabulary of college administrators. Since the late 1900s, colleges and universities have noted a cultural shift in the relationship
between most parents and their traditional-age college students. This new relationship is puzzling to college staff and administrators, partly because it does not reflect the experience of their own college years but mostly because it affects the relationship of both students and parents to the university itself. The role of parents as a critical secondary audience has introduced a new dynamic in providing communications, events, and services for families. “As we consider the continuing role of parents in the lives of their college-age students, we seek to define the issues, the questions, and the relationship the phenomenon of parental involvement has raised for students, parents, and the institution” (Wartman & Savage, 2008, p. 1).

K-12 Parent Engagement

When examining the literature and research on parental involvement, one must include K-12 literature along with the research about college access programs designed to help low-income students gain admission to and prepare for college. In these access programs, the role of parents in students’ development is more clearly defined and readily embraced than in higher education literature on college student development. More importantly, that parental role in K-12 sets the pattern, through its success, for parental behaviors that are often viewed as intrusive at the college level.

What should the role of a parent be in a student’s education? What are the effects of this role? The answers to these questions are mixed and conflicting. A tension exists between the effects of parental involvement in the literature discussion on K-12 education, promoting involvement and literature from the field of higher education,
which tends to support individuation and a student’s development of autonomy specifically through separation from parents and family.

The literature on K-12 education is important because most of the literature on the framework of parental involvement comes from a K-12 context. Although not much research has been undertaken on the effects of parental involvement on traditional-age college students, the effects of the parent-child relationship on students from early childhood through high school are better known. Admittedly the developmental goals for high school and college students are different, and they require different types and amounts of parental involvement in the same way developmental goals differ in elementary and high school. For all students—early childhood, elementary school, middle school, and high school—the literature indicates that high levels of parental involvement make a significant positive difference in personal and academic growth (Wartman & Savage, 2008).

Parental involvement throughout the K-12 years has been linked to such positive outcomes as higher grades, success in school, higher standardized test scores, higher self-esteem, more social competence, reduced substance use, aspirations for college, enrollment in college, and participation in out-of-school programs (Harvard Family Research Project, 2007). In the K-12 arena, parents (or more broadly, family) involvement can be defined by three main processes: (a) parenting, which considers the values and attitudes parents have, which in turn affect how they raise their children; (b) home-school relationships, which reflect the role of the institution in the parent-child
relationship—the formal and informal connections between the family and the school; and (c) responsibility for learning that is parents’ emphasis on activities promoting students growth, both socially and academically (Harvard Family Research Project, 2007).

Unlike higher education, standards for parental involvement in K-12 education are clearly understood and clearly articulated. Parental involvement is an important component of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which has had an influence on the education of today’s traditional-age college students. A U.S. Department of Education publication designed to help parents of K-12 students understand No Child Left Behind suggested the following actions for parents:

- Work with your child’s teacher and school to keep the lines of communication open. Partner with the teacher to enhance the academic success and social well-being of your child. Attend parent-teacher meetings and stay informed about your child’s academic progress. Discuss with your child’s teacher what you can do at home to help your child. Go on field trips with your child’s class and volunteer to help the teacher in the classroom, on the playground or at special events. Talk with your child daily about school. Ask your child what he or she learned that day. Ask how the day went, and ask about your child’s friends. Review your child’s homework each evening, and consult homework Web sites if available. Be sure that your child completes all of his or her assignments. (Baker, Shanahan, Linan-Thompson, Collins, & Scarcella, 2007, p. 5)
College Parent Engagement

**What is college parental involvement?** Parental encouragement in college can be defined by the frequency of parents’ and students’ discussions about parents’ expectations, hopes, and dreams for their children with regard to attending college. Parental support is more tangible and includes behaviors such as parents saving money for college, visiting college campuses, and attending financial aid workshops (Hossler, Schmidt, & Vesper, 1999). Parental support and encouragement play a much more significant role in shaping the educational aspirations of their children than either their educational background or income level (Hossler et al., 1999).

**Transition into college.** What are students’ experiences of parental involvement in the transition to college? How do students in these studies view their relationship with their parents? What role do parents play in college admission and the adjustment process, according to these students? Attinasi (1989) conducted an explanatory study from Mexican American students’ points of view regarding the context surrounding their decisions to persist or not persist in higher education. Through his interviews of 18 students, he found that oral communication of expectations was extremely important to students. Parents played an important role in that they communicated to their children the fact that they belonged in the category of college-goers (Attinasi, 1989). A student’s willingness to “stick it out” once in college seemed to reflect preparation for college from parents (Attinasi, 1989, p. 270). One issue is not all students have the experience of parents who express academic expectations or support.
Low-income, first-generation students face many barriers to college access that affect their higher education experience, and many of them occur during transition. First, they experience difficulty preparing academically and socially for college. Low-income, first-generation students lack sufficient support networks such as family, peers, or mentors who understand the various challenges college students face (Phinney & Hass, 2003). In particular, these students may lack the knowledge and skills needed to obtain educational resources, scholarships, and advice (Oliverez & Tierney, 2005). Parents who have not gone to college cannot transfer such knowledge to their own children, such as information about school or the types of credentials needed for specific careers (Brewer & Landers, 2005). Tierney and Auerbach (2004) pointed out that families play a crucial role as a support network as students prepare for college. Since first-generation students may not be able to request help from their families, they lack resources and must look for alternative forms of support. When students do not have a family support network that helps them prepare for college, then the information burden shifts from the adults as givers to the student as collectors, a role that low-income and first-generation students are ill equipped to play. The immediate challenges of collecting information on colleges and financial aid can force them to place their educational plans on hold (Hagerdorn & Fogel, 2002; McDonough, 1997).

Ceja’s qualitative study (2006) focused on parents and their role in the transition to college. The participants in Ceja’s series of three interviews were first-generation college-bound Chicanas from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. Although the parents
wanted the best for their students, they did not have the same notion of college “fit” as parents of higher-socioeconomic groups because they did not attend college. Through his constant-comparative analysis of interviews, Ceja (2006) found that the role parents were able to fulfill during the college choice process was actually limited. The parents lacked a formal understanding of the college choice process. This lack of familiarity was true for all the Chicanas in the study, regardless of their level of academic achievement (Ceja, 2006). For example, one student in the study described feeling that the college choice process was entirely up to her.

I’ve told them the schools and I am going to [apply] and they ask me, ‘Where is that at?’ and ‘Why do you want to go there?’ I tell them that it is a good school. It’s like they don’t know anything about it and they [can’t] help me out with the college choice process. I think that’s all been left to me. (Ceja, 2006, p. 95)

As a result of their parents’ lack of information about colleges and the college choice process, students in the study found they were engaged in the double-duty task of learning and experiencing the college choice process themselves while also informing and familiarizing their parents with it (Ceja, 2006).

Parental involvement and encouragement are important to all students’ college choice processes, but they are particularly important to students from low socioeconomic classes because such students are less likely to consider college as an option early in their schooling and are also less likely to persist if they do enroll (Stage & Hossler, 2000). Hence, parental proactive support in the transition to college via admissions, good fit, and
financial aid, among other aspects, enhances a student’s chance of entering college. Parental support and encouragement are the best predictors of postsecondary educational aspirations (Hossler, Schmidt, & Vesper, 1999; Stage & Hossler, 1989).

**Family relationships.** Some students reported experiencing anxiety over a changing relationship with parents and other family members. Students in Terenzini et al.’s (1994) focus groups for a study on the transition to college, particularly those from Black, Hispanic, or Native American families, reported that as parents (or as other parental figures such as grandparents) realized their students might never metaphorically “return home,” they tried to maintain a consistent relationship the students realized may be changing (Terenzini et al., 1994, p. 66). One student described this tension:

> My grandmother. Even though she is a big inspiration to me, uh, she has this way of clinging. She hates to let go of things. And I can understand. I think that’s why she takes in a lot of us, as we’re going along. She hates to let us go. (p. 66)

In the transition to college, students’ development of independence and their own identity formation are influenced by these relationships with parents. Torres (2004) looked at familiar influences on the identity development of Latino first-year students through a longitudinal study of first-year students and a grounded-theory analysis. She found that family members were the primary conveyors of cultural heritage for students and that the development of students’ ethnic identity was determined by the degree to which parents were acculturated or the degree to which they intermingled Latino and Anglo cultures (Torres, 2004).
One aspect of culture related to education is upward mobility. According to London (1989), one of the biggest challenges for first-generation Latino students is reconciling the tension that emerges between requirements of family memberships and upward mobility. For many first-generation students, personal growth from their student experience may be accompanied by a loss in their relationship with their family (London, 1989). Some parents give students conflicting messages—to both stay home and achieve in the outside world—causing an internal struggle for this population (London, 1989). Students speak of this push-pull and their struggle to find their own voices amid the echo from home (London, 1989). One student in London’s study mentioned about her experienced with her mother, “She has this idea that I’m way up there somewhere and she wants to drag me back” (p. 160). Because of this tension, first-generation college students may internalize feelings of shame rather than taking pride in their upward mobility (Duffy, 2007).

When students move into this “other” culture, they may have to renegotiate relationships with their families as well as with themselves (London, 1992, p. 6). These students find themselves living on the “margins of two cultures” (London, 1992, p. 7). One student in London’s study said she felt she was “living in both worlds” (p. 8). The very act of going to college may signify to the family that the student is interested in moving into the middle class and attaining a white-collar position not previously held by a member of the family (London, 1992). Even if students are not necessarily concerned with upward mobility, they still may struggle when they find themselves in a new social
status group at college. Sometimes they test the reactions of their family members by “trying on” and experimenting through displaying cultural symbols and artifacts of this higher social group (London, 1992, p. 7). This experimentation may cause concern for family members about the student’s outward changes.

**Attachment, separation, and the parent-student relationship.** Rendon (1992), an education professor and scholar, described the “pain of separation” (p. 58) she personally experienced as a poor, first-generation college student in her essay “From the Barrio to Academy: Revelations of a Mexican American ‘Scholarship Girl.’” She wrote about the fear both she and her mother experienced during this transition. When Rendon asked her mother why she was afraid of Rendon’s leaving home to be on her own, to be by herself, her mother told her, “I am afraid – I don’t know why” (p. 59). Rendon too was scared.

> I sensed that deep in my mother’s soul she felt resentful about how this alien culture of higher education was polluting my values and customs. I, in turn, was afraid that I was becoming a stranger to her, a stranger she did not quite understand, a stranger she might not even like. (p. 59)

Cutrona et al. (1994) looked at attachment theory from the perspective of social support. They measured whether perceived social support from parents would influence academic performance in college during the first two years. They predicted that academic social support from family members would cause students to have low anxiety and that low anxiety would in turn influence academic self-efficacy, or the belief that one
has the ability to meet his or her goals. Academic self-efficacy would then be a predictor of the student’s academic performance, which could be measured by his or her grade point average (GPA) (Cutrona et al., 1994). In fact, the study did show a positive correlation between parent support and GPA; parent support predicted higher GPAs across a heterogeneous sample group of varying majors and abilities (Cutrona et al., 1994).

In terms of qualitative research, Sanchez, Reyes, and Singh (2005) looked at the role of significant relationships in the academic experiences of a sample they described as Mexican American college students. They found that students reported their parents provided different types of support: cognitive guidance, emotional support, informational and experiential support, modeling, and tangible support. These types of support are not that far from attachment. The love of parents in combination with practical support from educational sources, especially in the area of scholarships and financial aid, is what made them successful.

The literature also discusses parental involvement in campus life. Some studies point to positive effects from secure parental attachment and suggest involving parents in student life at college. For example, Hinderlie and Kenny (2002) recommended open communication with family members on the part of the college and suggested colleges enable family members to play more of a role in campus life and feel more comfortable on campus. Wintre and Yaffe (2000) emphasized the importance of involving and educating parents about university life because parents directly affect their students’
adjustment to the university. Terenzini et al. (1994) mentioned it is important to orient parents as well as students so they understand the nature of what students will be experiencing.

**Specific student groups.** In lieu of parental support, however, students must turn to college counselors, teachers, and student peers to help them navigate the process of applying to college. Although these substitutes for parental support are useful in guiding students through college and financial aid, they cannot fully address issues of college aspirations. A lower level of college aspirations forms another barrier for low-income and first-generation students.

In the discussion of students from lower socioeconomic status groups, it is critical to include information about parents’ education levels and literature about first-generation college students or students whose parents have no college or university experience (Billson & Terry, 1982; Pascarella et al., 2004; York-Anderson & Bowman, 1991). The two variables, parent education level and socioeconomic class status, are closely related because the definition of socioeconomic status used for this analysis is not necessarily how much income one has but how much culture capital one has, or the degree of ease one has with the dominant culture of society (Bourdieu, 1985). Parents’ education levels combined with their incomes are the best indicators of socioeconomic status (Astin & Oseguera, 2004). Parental involvement and students’ perceptions of this involvement may differ depending on socioeconomic status or being a first-generation student. For example, although most students perceived amounts of parental involvement
in their lives as being “just right,” first-generation students and Latino students in particular were more likely to say their parents had “too little” involvement, particularly with regard to choosing college activities and courses but also in terms of helping with college applications and influencing college choice (Higher Education Research Institute, 2008).

Research has shown that first-generation college students tended to be at a disadvantage when it came to having basic knowledge about post-secondary education as a result of their lack of cultural capital (Pascarella et al., 2004). Individuals with highly educated parents may have an advantage over these students with regard to understanding the culture of higher education (Pascarella et al., 2004). Parents of higher socioeconomic status groups play a strong role in “managing” their children’s pathways to college (Auerbach, 2004; McDonough, 1997). Parents of students in lower-socioeconomic groups may offer support for their children’s desire to attend college, but few of these families themselves have enough knowledge, without a tradition of attending college, to help their children navigate the pathway to college (Auerbach, 2004). In general, first-generation students and their parents tend to have less congruity between students’ and their parents’ values toward educational goals, both financial and emotional (Billson & Terry, 1982). Levels of parental involvement in the college admissions process have been found to be lower for students from lower socioeconomic families than they are for students from higher socioeconomic families (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000, 2001).
Institutional Responsibility for Parent Engagement

The relationship between college students and parents involves a key third player that cannot be ignored—the institution. Just as the relationship between parents and their students in college has changed over time, so too have the relationships between students and institutions and between parents and institutions. To consider these changes, we must examine the overarching question that guides discussion on this topic and provides perspective on the shifting relationship among these three parties: What causes a parent to be involved? According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997), three main factors cause parents to become involved in their children’s education: the parent’s construction of his or her role in the child’s life, the parent’s sense of efficacy for helping the child succeed in school, and the institutional role or the general invitations and opportunities for parental involvement presented by both the child and the school.

The role of the institution in the parent-student relationship is important. The degree to which a parent is involved depends not only on the relationship with his or her particular student but also with the student’s school and the extent to which parents are inclined and encouraged to participate in their child’s educational process (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Working with parents is not a one-way street. Aside from the fundraising benefits that colleges and universities may gain through a parent relations program, parents provide a means of reinforcing institutional messages in ways the institution cannot. Most colleges and universities, for example, have tried every tactic available to reduce college drinking, to talk about campus safety, and to promote a
healthy lifestyle. Despite all the research and efforts, parents question the institutional responses to drinking, safety, and other student issues such as mental health, excessive use of credit cards, and sexuality.

By bringing parents into the educational equation on personal, social, and economic issues, administrators gain a partner who has the most at stake in their student’s well-being. Moreover, parents can add to institutional messages by infusing them with family or personal history. Increasingly, schools consider parents as not only an audience but also a stakeholder in the messages they deliver to students.

What does this relationship mean for higher education? If K-12 institutions are encouraging parental involvement and telling parents what involvement is, how does it translate to the college years? How do parents know what their role is in higher education? Is it still the institution’s role to define appropriate involvement for parents? In higher education, the definition of the term “parent involvement” and what the parent-student relationship means in the context of institutions of higher education is just beginning to be formulated. The answers to these questions are influenced by the parents’ socioeconomic status and culture. The discourse about trends in parenting and institutional standards for parent involvement is most frequently based on middle-class behaviors, though. Parent-school interactions and the degree to which parents meet the standards for involvement are affected by parental class status (Lareau, 1987). Also, many of those who work with students are concerned that parents prevent students from becoming individuals and developing along traditional lines like the many generations of
students before them (Savage, 2003). Will parent involvement ultimately help or hinder student development? It helps to take a look at where the responsibility for the student lies.

*In loco parentis* is Latin for “in the place of a parent” (Gifis, 1996). For example, a parent:

may…delegate part of his parental authority, during his life, to the tutor or schoolmaster of his child, who is then in loco parentis, and has such a portion of the power of the parent committed to his charge, viz. that of restraint and correction as may be necessary to answer the purposes for which he is employed.

(Blackstone as cited in Zirkel & Reichner, 1987, p. 466)

This doctrine of *in loco parentis* was later imported from English law as protection for early American teachers who felt it was necessary to administer corporal punishment to their pupils (Zirkel & Reichner, 1987). Over time, the doctrine of in loco parentis has been adapted to changes in both schools and society (Zirkel & Reichner, 1987).

In the context of higher education, *in loco parentis* was a central tenet of the early colonial colleges. According to Henry Dunster, president of Harvard College from 1640 to 1644, the mission of the 17th-century college was

- to advance in all learning, divine and humane, each and every learned student who is or will be entrusted to your tutelage, according to theirs several abilities;
    - and especially to take care that their conduct and their manners be honorable and without blame. (Thomas, 1991, p. 34)
From the beginning, American higher education institutions closely monitored their students’ behavior. The courts supported this stance in *Gott v. Berea College* in 1913 (as cited in Thomas, 1991). Several Berea College students were expelled after violating a college rule that they could not enter local establishments not controlled by the college. Gott, who owned a restaurant in the town, brought action against the college in an attempt to have it do away with the rule. The court found in favor of the college, holding that the college may impose any rule or regulation “for the government or betterment of their pupils that a parent could do for the same purpose” (Thomas, 1991, p. 34).

*In loco parentis* was the predominant driver of the relationship between the university and its students until the 1960s and 1970s, when, as a result of students’ demands for more autonomy, a shift away from this model occurred and colleges began to take a more hands-off approach to student conduct. The 1960s and 1970s were considered periods of turmoil when college students, through collective and individual efforts, continually challenged the administration’s policies and practices regarding student rights (Grossi & Edwards, 1997). When the traditional power structure of the university was crumbling, so too was the traditional power structure of the family. Increasingly, parents lost their status as authority figures and control of their children in college (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997).

As a result of the shift in philosophy about the relationship between students and the university during this time, new policies were implemented to reflect students’ increasing independence. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) was
passed in 1974, placing restrictions on what information universities could share with parents (Lowery, 2005). FERPA is a “spending clause structure,” which means it applies to any school that receives federal funds from a U.S. Department of Education program. FERPA grants three main rights to college students (or to parents if students are younger than 18): (1) the right to inspect and review or the right to access their educational records; (2) the right to challenge the content of their education records; and (3) the right to consent to the disclosure of their education records (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 1974). Once a student is older than 18 or enrolled in a higher education institution, the school must have written permission from the student to release any information from his or her educational record to any party. Certain people such as school officials with “legitimate educational interest” qualify as an exception to this rule, but parents of a student age 18 or older are not exempt from the restrictions (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 1974).

FERPA formalized a hands-off approach for colleges and universities not only in terms of communication with families but also in terms of oversight of students. Regulations of visiting hours in residence halls, policies related to overnight guests of the opposite gender, and other policies related to personal lifestyle were relaxed. This hands-off approach was relatively short lived, however. Beginning in the 1980s, colleges gradually began a return to controlling, regulating, and disciplining their students (Weigel, 2004). Students began to expect more services from colleges such as career placement, tuition assistance, protection against criminal attack and harm inflicted by
others, and safeguards against injuries that resulted from their own carelessness (Gibbs & Szablewicz, 1988). As a result, today’s colleges offer myriad services and protections for their students, from stricter codes of student conduct to security doors on residence halls and attendance at the front desks of halls to check in residents and their guests (Weigel, 2004).

Since the initial demise of in loco parentis, some have argued that it has returned, as students and parents as well as the courts are forcing institutions to take the increasing responsibility for student behavior. Although the relationship between the university and the student has evolved since the 1960s and the 1970s, it is difficult to produce a clear definition today. Contradiction exists in the literature regarding whether in loco parentis may have returned (Gibbs & Szablewicz, 1988) or whether a new version of this relationship has emerged (Grossi & Edwards, 1997).

**Rationale for the Study**

Parent-school partnerships have shown to make a positive impact on Latino students attending 4-year universities. One obstacle to parents becoming more engaged in supporting students is parents not knowing how to help their child. This is especially true when parents barely completed high school or did not complete it at all. Latino families of low socioeconomic groups face many barriers to parent involvement in college. There are various manners for implementing best practices to meet and support the needs of students and families. Institutions need to find more ways to not only invite
Latino parents to participate, but to engage them and make them active participants throughout their child’s academic career path. Schools must provide parents with the resources so parents can more effectively help their children at home. This study is necessary because previous literature indicates that parent engagement is expected at a younger age for the most part. The literature also indicates low rates of college entry and transfer by low-income, first-generation Latino students, which could be due to a discrepancy between their parents’ engagement in admissions and that of other middle-class students’ parental engagement.

**Summary**

The objective in striving for higher education is ultimately to create a more well-rounded individual. All those involved in Latino students’ educational paths need to be aware of possible unintended consequences. Society has propagated the idea of higher education, which many Latino first-generation students want to achieve. Unintended consequences for Latino students may include detaching from their cultural roots on their ascension to a higher education. Latino students may feel they are leaving behind family members who may not have been exposed to the same opportunities. Once in college, Latino students may encounter another obstacle, the feeling of not belonging. Higher education institutions must not only provide resources to help the student reconcile this dichotomy, they should ensure Latino students are aware of the many conflicts that may
arise in their transition to college. They should also prepare them to handle such conflicts in a positive and productive manner with outreach resources and engagement.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact parent engagement has on the academic performance of their Latino students attending a 4-year private institution. This quantitative research study aimed to understand the impact of parental engagement on Latino students’ decisions to pursue higher education, specifically at a private 4-year university. Parents play a crucial role in the success of their students, but this role becomes increasingly more critical when dealing with historically disadvantaged students. By understanding the role of parents and the impact they have, it is the hope the researcher could provide this information to educators who work directly with Latino students and their families. The researcher also sought to identify ways in which parents can become more engaged and how secondary and post-secondary institutions can collaborate to support the transition of Latino students.

The study involved a quantitative analysis and utilized a survey through a web-based questionnaire to answer the following research questions:

1. What effect does parental engagement have on Latino students’ preparedness for college?

2. What are Latino parents currently doing at home to prepare their children for college?
An analysis of the data collected from 139 Latino students enrolled at University of the Pacific is presented from the quantitative study. This chapter discusses the population and sample of the study, the design of the study, data collection, instrumentation, and data analysis procedures.

**Research Design**

This quantitative research study aimed to understand the impact of parental engagement on Latino students’ decisions to pursue higher education, specifically enrollment at a 4-year university in California. Survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a variety of statements centered on the parents’ levels of education, biggest contributor to their success in attending college, and parents’ engagement in their academic career.

**Setting of the Study**

The research for this study was conducted at The University of the Pacific, a private institution founded in 1851. It has a total undergraduate enrollment of 3,867, its setting is urban, and the campus size is 175 acres. It utilizes a semester-based academic calendar. University of the Pacific's ranking in the 2014 edition of Best Colleges and National Universities was 112. Its tuition and fees were $39,810 (2013-14). The school mission is:

University of the Pacific's mission is to provide a superior, student-centered learning experience integrating liberal arts and professional education and
preparing individuals for lasting achievement and responsible leadership in their
careers and communities. (University of the Pacific, 2014, para. 1)

Population and Sample

The Latino student population at University of the Pacific was 9%. Research for
this study was conducted at The University of the Pacific in spring 2014. The following
data were taken from Universality of the Pacific’s frequently asked questions web page.
The Stockton campus has about 4,500 students (3,360 undergraduates, 620 professional
pharmacy students, and 540 graduate students, mostly in Education and Business).
Approximately 80% were from California, the remaining were from 43 other states and
42 other countries. Student demographics reported were African American 3%,
Asian/Pacific Islander 30%, Hispanic 9%, Multi-Ethnic 1%, Native American 1%,
White/Caucasian 45%, International 3%, Unknown 8%. In fall 2010, University of the
Pacific had the largest incoming class of U.S. Hispanic students in Pacific's history with
146 freshmen and 55 transfer students.

The sample for this study reflects University of the Pacific students who identified
as Latinos, were 18 years of age or older, and were subscribed to University of the
Pacific’s email distribution list. Every University of the Pacific student who identified as
Latino was asked to participate in the study by completing a questionnaire in electronic
format. An electronic mail message was sent out and included a link to the survey (see
Appendix A). University of the Pacific’s Latino students were asked to follow the link to
the survey if they chose to participate.
**Data Collection**

The data were collected through an online questionnaire sent to University of the Pacific’s students who identified as Latino. The anonymous questionnaire was sent through Survey Monkey, an Internet-based survey tool. Due to the approval of University of the Pacific’s Office of Research and Graduate Studies, a link to the survey questions was provided through electronic mail along with a letter of consent. To preserve confidentiality of the respondents, no personal data were collected. The data were collected from the sample of participants after the completion of the web-based questionnaire. The number of completed surveys, response percentages, and response count were recorded. The survey program computed descriptive and summary statistics from the survey responses.

**Instrumentation**

In spring 2014, surveys were sent electronically to 800 Latino students enrolled at University of the Pacific. The survey was administered solely online, via the Internet. Students were asked to complete the survey on SurveyMonkey with a link to the consent form being attached to the email invitation. Participants received no reward or compensation for participation in the research. The research design stated that those who participated might not directly benefit from the research, but the research could be beneficial to future underserved students. The questions were designed to help the researcher uncover a better understanding of the needs of Latino students during their educational career and the students’ perceptions of parental involvement throughout their
upbringing. This study will help answer some of the questions associated with Latino students’ low college transition rates to 4-year institutions. There were 20 questions on the survey, which took no more than 15 minutes to complete (see Appendix B). The research design allowed for no personal interaction with the students. If students needed help or had questions regarding the survey or research in general, they could use the researcher's provided contact information for further support. Aside from this, the survey was designed to be user friendly while utilizing language both relevant to the field and comprehensible by Latino students. The survey questions were given to 139 Latino students attending University of the Pacific, both males and females.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

This study was intended to allow common themes regarding the experiences of Latino students’ parental engagement throughout their academic careers to surface. The data for this study were collected through the data collection system of SurveyMonkey. This data collection system allowed the researcher to ask the questions of the students, collect the responses, and analyze the data collected. SurveyMonkey collected, recorded, and summarized the results online, which facilitated the tracking of respondents and the viewing of results during the survey period. Once the respondents answered the questions, the results were saved in the researcher’s account on the SurveyMonkey homepage. At the end of the response period, the researcher collected the survey results with responses from individual respondents and compiled percentages of respondents’ answers for each question for each of the different possible Likert-type scale scores. The results,
through charts and graphs, are highlighted in Chapter 4 to present the final results of the study to the reader.
Chapter 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact parent engagement has on the academic performance of Latino students attending a 4-year institution. Through the following questions, this study provides information based on the experiences of Latino college students who successfully gained access to and were enrolled in a 4-year institution.

1. What effect does parental engagement have on Latino students’ preparedness for college?

2. What are Latino parents currently doing at home to prepare their children for college?

This chapter shows the results from the survey and guide notes based on the researcher’s observations. Student demographic information, themes captured, and supporting research are presented to understand the experiences related to Latino students’ parental engagement that influenced their ability to access and enroll in a 4-year institution. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the data.
Demographics

The sample for this study was taken from the population of approximately 800 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at University of the Pacific (Pacific) during the 2013/2014 academic school year. The participants in this study were Pacific students who identified as Latino. The survey for this study was provided to students enrolled at a private 4-year university, University of the Pacific. The sample size was 139 Latino students, which consisted of both males and females. Most respondents (99.21%) identified themselves as Latinos. The sampling was not a true random sample, as the students who participated were chosen and contacted based on being Latino.

Survey Results

Respondent Demographics

The researcher examined Latino students 18 and older at University of the Pacific in Stockton, California.
Forty-six percent (46%) of respondents indicated their success in attending college was due to family support. Almost five percent (4.8%) of respondents indicated their teacher, faculty, or counselor support or knowledge was the biggest contributor to their success in college. Figure 1 shows that the biggest contributor to Latino students’ success attending college strongly involved their family. Forty-two and one-tenth percent of respondents said their personal motivation contributed to their success in attending college, which can sometimes be attributed to parents since they are raising the student.
Figure 2  Parents’ levels of education

What is the highest level of school your father completed or the highest degree he received?

What is the highest level of school your mother completed or the highest degree she received?
In Figure 2 the percentage of students whose parents earned a degree higher than a high school diploma was significantly low. Less than 10% of respondents’ parents attained a college degree. This illustrates the lack of college experience Latino parents possessed.

Figure 3 School discipline source

Of the students who responded, 75.4% indicated their parents/guardians were strict with them regarding the completion of their schoolwork (see Figure 3). The high number of students agreeing with this statement indicates parent perseverance in motivating their child to attend college and the instillation of high school performance.
Figure 4 illustrates how many students had help from their parents with their schoolwork. Just over half (50.8%) of respondents indicated that while growing up, their parents did not help them with their schoolwork, and 51.6% indicated their parents did in fact help them with their schoolwork. This can lead the researcher to believe there was a lack of parent involvement in helping their child with their schoolwork, whether it was due to interest or their ability to help their child.
The responses to the question in Figure 5 (almost 50/50) leads the researcher to conclude there is a lack of understanding amongst Latino parents as to the importance of reading to their children at a young age. The researcher believes the percentage should be a more overwhelmingly positive response.
When asked about parental expectations of them, an overwhelming number of participants responded affirmatively that their parents/guardians expected them to graduate from high school (see Figure 6). At this point in the student’s educational career, expectations are still typical, illustrated by the 97.6% of respondents who agreed with the statement.
As the graph in Figure 7 indicates, expectations diminished as to how much the student should achieve educationally. Sixty-three percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that parent/guardians expected them to earn a master’s degree or doctorate. Latino parents do not yet see the importance of a master’s or doctorate when compared to that of a high school diploma.
In answer to the question, “My family was supportive of me going to college,” 90% of respondents agreed as shown in Figure 8. Often times, young students need emotional reassurance that they are making the right decision or are on the right path.
Figure 9 shows participant responses about whether their parents or guardians were strict regarding their schoolwork completion. Seventy-five percent of respondents agreed their parents were strict with regard to their schoolwork completion. The majority of parents were inculcating discipline.
Figure 10  Back to school night and open house

Figure 10 shows the high percentage (80%) of support the respondents received from their parents while at school. Attending open house/back to school night is an indicator of parent engagement.

Findings and Interpretation

This study was formulated with the intention of gaining an understanding of what effects Latino parental engagement had on their child’s post-secondary education. Parents of underserved Latino first-generation students typically do not have an understanding of the steps a student must take to prepare for and apply to colleges and universities. College fairs and other college-related events often happen during times when Latino parents of low socioeconomic status work or cannot find care for younger children. Staff then often view Latino parents as not involved or engaged and it is the student who may be left to navigate this unfamiliar process on his or her own. This is
more often the case when the student is the first in the family to attend college. The data collected from the surveys of 139 Latino schools at University of the Pacific were analyzed. The researcher discovered three primary themes that affected Latino students and their entry into a 4-year university: Parent Background, Parent Expectations, and Parent Engagement. The themes are discussed with regard to the literature and its connection to the data in the following sections.

**Parent background.** First-generation Latino students and those from working-class families can find the transition to college particularly difficult. Just as their cultural background might distinguish such students from other college students, their identity as college students often differentiates them from their community and their families (Rendon, Garcia, & Pearson, 2004). They lack the skills and information about managing the college experience that is shared when family members have college experience (Rendon et al., 2004). Students whose parents do not speak English as a first language struggle to interpret college information for their parents, and students may not even know the words in their parents’ language for “financial aid,” “syllabus,” “study group,” or “registrar’s office.”

Culture may also play a role in the relationship between students of color and their parents. For example, Latinos are known to be very family oriented and consider their primary commitment to be to a group rather than to an individual (Padilla, Trevino, Gonzalez, & Trevino, 1997). This outlook may impact Latino students’ decision to live
away from home or the role of parents in day-to-day lives (Terry, Dukes, Valdez, & Wilson, 2005).

Parent engagement, as far as their child’s education goes, can either be seen as positive or negative. This has plenty to do with the parents’ own levels of education. The lower the parents’ education is, the less likely they will see college as beneficial. Also, cultural differences can come into play since Latino families typically are close-knit families and do not necessarily want to separate from other family members. In question 6, respondents were asked what level of education their parents received. On average, 75% of respondents’ parents did not complete high school; therefore, their experience with college would most likely be minimal. It can be viewed differently because if one is a low-income minority, one may not regard higher education the same way as someone of a higher socioeconomic status who knows the benefits of a good education.

**Parent expectations.** Parents played an important role in that they communicated to their children the fact that they belonged in the category of college-goers (Attinasi, 1989). Ceja (2006) found, in his study of first-generation Chicana students, parents were limited in terms of how much they could offer the students, especially with regard to expectations because they had not gone to college themselves. Expectations from the respondents’ parents were low. Most of the respondents did agree their parents expected them to graduate from high school, but their parents’ expectations diminished as the educational level increased. Only 73% of students had parents who
expected them to get a graduate degree. It may be students felt their parents’ expectations were limited to what their parents had accomplished. Approximately 75% of the respondents’ parents did not earn a high school diploma. This is a strong indicator of parents having minimal knowledge of navigating the college process. Hence, respondents’ parents could not see beyond their own experiences.

Some parents, based on religious or moral principles, are unwilling to allow their children to live on campus. In Latino Families, young unmarried women are encouraged to stay close to home; consequently, Latina college students are more likely to enroll in a nearby college and live at home (Rendon et al., 2004). Limitations in terms of attendance at specific colleges can negatively affect a student’s “fit” with the college.

**Parent engagement.** The researcher defined parent engagement as parents showing interest in the lives of their students in college, gaining more information about college, knowing when and how to appropriately provide encouragement and guidance to their students, connecting with the institution, and potentially retaining that institutional connection beyond the college years. The family experience as a whole is critical. Parents who have been to college themselves and know the system provide support in different ways from parents who have never been to college.

For children from lower-income and socioeconomic status groups, contemporary childhood looks different. Poor and working-class parents want the best for their children, just like middle-class parents. But tasks such as putting food on the table, paying for housing, protecting students from the problems in unsafe neighborhoods,
arranging for health care, cleaning clothes, and getting children into bed for a good night’s rest are all challenging when economic resources are scarce (Lareau, 2003). This is why parental engagement in the Latino community is substantially lacking. There are always more pressing matters to attend to. As the results from question 9 show, only 50% of respondents’ parents read books to them and 50% did not. This ratio is not a positive one for indicating parent engagement.

The U.S. Department of Education recommends parents with children at the K-12 level:

- work with your child’s teacher and school to keep the lines of communication open. Partner with the teacher to enhance the academic success and social well being of your child. Attend parent-teacher meetings and stay informed about your child’s academic progress. Discuss with your child’s teacher what you can do at home to help your child. Go on field trips with your child’s class and volunteer to help the teacher in the classroom, on the playground or at special events. Talk with your child daily about school. Ask your child what he or she learned that day. Ask how the day went, and ask about your child’s friends. Review your child’s homework each evening, and consult homework Web sites if available. Be sure that your child completes all of his or her assignments. (Baker et al., 2007, p. 5)

In question 13, regarding parents’ open communication with their child’s educators, 70% of respondents stated their parents communicated with their teachers,
which can indicate a positive effect (they are currently attending University of the Pacific) their parental engagement had on the students’ attendance at a 4-year university.

As previously mentioned, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) offer three main factors prompting parents to become involved in their children’s education: the parent’s construction of his or her role in the child’s life, the parent’s sense of efficacy for helping the child succeed in school, and the institutional role or the general invitations and opportunities for parental involvement presented by both the child and the school. The simple parts in what parent engagement infers are easily attained as shown on the results of question 15. Eighty percent of respondents’ parents attended back to school night/open house. Typically at these events, parents do not have the opportunity to fully engage with their child’s educators or education material. They merely present a superficial opportunity for parents to satisfy their own perceived requirements in their children’s education, yet it is still an important part of engagement. The parents become more aware of what their students are doing.

Levels of parental involvement in the college admissions process have been found to be lower for students from lower socioeconomic families than they are for students from higher socioeconomic families (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000, 2001). Responses to question 17 in the survey support the statement that Latino parents are not as engaged in their child’s education as some may expect. Approximately 40% of respondents stated that compared to other students’ parents, their parents were not very involved in their
education. It would be safe to expect that most, if not all, parents could be more involved in their child’s education.

Parent engagement is proportional to the level of education the parents possess. In their first years of their child’s education, parent involvement is at its highest level. As the child progresses through school, the data show that the amount of parental engagement diminishes and as the student reaches college, parental engagement is at its lowest. The researcher believes that this is due to the lack of understanding the college process. Parents feel they have very little to offer in the college application process and beyond.

Summary

Most of the data gathered indicated the students surveyed were equally self-motivated and motivated by their parents/family to attend college. This leads the researcher to conclude there is a strong need to improve parent engagement from the beginning of the child’s education. The three common themes in the researcher’s findings were: parent education, parent expectations, and parent engagement. Each theme was discussed with regard to its impact on first-generation Latino students’ attendance at a 4-year university. The fact that the majority of students chose family as their primary contributing factor for entering college indicates including the family, specifically parents, would be wise for higher education institutions.
Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was designed to provide insight into Latino parental engagement and its impact on their students’ transition into post-secondary education. There are many hurdles Latino students face when beginning the college preparation and application process, beginning as early as Kindergarten. Literature indicates the importance of parental engagement in the success of a student attaining a higher education. As the data show, the lack of parent engagement proves we need to do more to get parents involved. It is particularly important to look at this group of students because it seems that parental involvement and students’ perceptions of this parental involvement differ. For example, the Higher Education Research Institute (2008) found that first-generation students and Latino students in particular were more likely to say their parents had “too little” involvement, primarily with regard to choosing college activities and courses but also in terms of helping with college applications and influencing college choice. Transition to college is a critical place for those whose family members have never gone to college and cannot offer them advice or assistance with the process.

Students were asked to self-reflect on how involved their parents were in their educational careers and if their parents’ educational level impacted their desire to
consider attending college. In addition to these areas, the researcher wanted to gain a deeper understanding of the issue through the following research questions:

1. What effect does parental engagement have on Latino students’ preparedness for college?
2. What are Latino parents currently doing at home to prepare their children for college?

By surveying Latino students who were enrolled at a 4-year university, the researcher aimed to identify whether certain aspects of parental engagement impacted their perceptions of their own ability and desire to pursue a college degree.

Perceptions of parental engagement through the lens of an underserved student were examined in the research. All data were collected for this study through surveys given to students enrolled at University of the Pacific in the 2014 spring semester. The target audience consisted of 800 enrolled Latino students from which the researcher was able to accurately gather responses from 139 students. Participants were invited to voluntary respond to a survey administered through SurveyMonkey. All participants were given 30 days to access the online survey after which the web-based survey was set to automatically close. Two reminder emails were sent to the sample group to garner additional responses, yet the number of replies remained virtually unchanged.

Chapter 4 presented the results of the survey and examined experiences related to the lack of parent engagement as it related to Latino students entering post-secondary
The findings of the study included three themes: Parent Education, Parent Expectations, and Parent Engagement.

**Conclusions**

As noted throughout the study, Latino first-generation and low-income students face an uphill battle when preparing for post-secondary enrollment. Parents are the first to lay the foundational groundwork for educational expectations for their students. It is from there that students formulate their own aspirations about higher education, and by middle school, have already begun to see where they fit into this picture. However, once they enter high school, when parental engagement becomes increasingly critical, many underserved Latino students are left to navigate the college choice process alone or with limited assistance from the high school counseling staff. Parental engagement, regardless of definition, has an impact on underserved Latino students’ transitions into higher education. Although this study did not ask questions of institutional personnel, institutions play a large role in parent engagement.

Colleges and universities are increasingly looking at the role of parents in students’ success. Every year, more institutions develop or formalize parent services. The benefits of these services extend beyond simply satisfying those vocal parents who make demands of colleges and universities to educating parents about the college experience they are financing. Parents also are becoming valuable partners in reinforcing our messages to students, and they are becoming major institutional donors.
Different families may require different responses or treatments from the institution. If policy and practice are designed to serve only one type of parent—namely, parents who are eager to be involved—they may leave out others such as parents of first-generation college students who could provide an important source of support for their students in college. As schools look to the future, they are challenged to extend their parent services to those underserved populations. Increasingly, new issues are likely to emerge as more colleges and universities plan to work with different cultural and ethnic groups.

In recent years, institutions have begun to look more carefully at how they communicate to different audiences in their parent populations. Several institutions translate printed materials into the languages of their largest non-English-speaking families. The College of St. Catherine, a Catholic women’s college with a growing multi-cultural student population, for example, has developed videos for parents specifically from Latino, Hmong, and Somali groups to help them understand the college experience their daughters will receive. Extensive research before production of the videos allowed the school to address the greatest cultural concern for each population, and the videos feature students who speak the parents’ language and discuss concerns they know their own parents had about college.

Historically disadvantaged students, depending on the resources available at their middle and high schools, may have the opportunity to participate in an academic support program such as the federally funded TRIO programs like Upward Bound and Academic
Talent Search, and many others. Underrepresented students who come from low-income backgrounds or are the first in their family to attend a college or university, face several barriers before they enroll in their first college course. During the last 20 years, there has been a large push from all levels to provide access to higher education for historically disadvantaged students. Seeking to increase diversity, campuses across the state of California began partnering with local counties and school districts to provide early college access to these students and families sometimes as early as the sixth grade, which is the case for a local collaborative program known as College: Making it Happen! The aforementioned programs have shown great results in the college transition and later success of many low-income and first-generation, college-bound students.

**Recommendations**

In light of this study along with the literature on the topic, the researcher offers several recommendations for future study and practice in education.

- It is recommended administrators understand the value of parental engagement and the positive effects a relationship with parents can have on a student’s growth so their fears about the timeline for students’ individuation may be quelled.

- The researcher recommends attachment theory be taught in student development classes as part of standard curriculum.

- Institutions can respond to and build on new parenting relationships through the development of parent outcomes along with the student outcomes they promote.
and by considering parents as a primary, or at least a very important secondary, constituency.

- The researcher recommends that parent programs and college administrators keep diversity at the forefront when thinking about serving today’s students and their parents.
- In addition, the researcher recommends colleges take on the role of working with parents before students matriculate, particularly the parents of Latino first-generation college students.
- Future studies need to be conducted to identify ways to improve Latino parent engagement.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Emails to Participants

From: Ines Ruiz-Huston <iruiz@PACIFIC.EDU>
Date: March 6, 2014, 1:55:42 PM PST
To: Pacific Latino Outreach <pacific_latino_outreach@lists.pacific.edu>
Cc: "joannasaldana@csus.edu" <joannasaldana@csus.edu>
Subject: Latino/a Student Survey by Pacific Alum

Invitation to Participate

I would like to invite you to participate in a survey I am conducting as part of my studies in the Educational Leadership Program, a master’s program at the California State University Sacramento. The survey is to gain an understanding of the reasoning behind the lack of parent engagement in their children’s educational career, which contributes to poor numbers of Latinos attending 4 Year Universities.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete, and is completely confidential. If you would like to participate simply click on the link below and you will be provided with a consent form. After providing your consent you will be directed to the survey. Please complete survey by Thursday, March 15, 2014.

If you have any questions about the survey please feel free to contact me at (209) 688-1089, or by email at joannasaldana@csus.edu.

To proceed to the survey click here https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/joanna_survey

Thank you,
Joanna Saldana
University of the Pacific Alumna 2012
&
Dr. Inés Ruiz-Huston
Hello welcome back from Spring Break!

Recently I sent you an invitation to participate in an important survey I am conducting about the factors which influence the lack of parent engagement in Latino student’s academic career.

The website for the survey is https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/joanna_survey

Please click on the above address to go directly to the survey. If that does not work, copy and paste this address into the address bar of your internet Browser.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete, and is completely confidential. Your completion of the survey indicates your consent to participate in the study.

Please complete survey by March 23, 2014. If you have any questions about the survey please feel free to contact me at [redacted].

Thank you,
Joanna Saldana
University of the Pacific Alumna 2012
and

Dr. Inés Ruiz-Huston
APPENDIX B

Survey

Consent to participate in research

You are being asked to participate in research which will be conducted by Joanna Saldana, a graduate student in the Education Leadership and Policy Studies program at California State University, Sacramento. The purpose of the study is to research how parental engagement could be increased to increase the number of Latino students attending a 4-year private University.

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire about your parents’/guardians’ engagement in your educational career. Most respondents can complete this questionnaire in about 10 minutes, although individual progress varies by how quickly you move through the questions.

There is minimal to no risk associated with participation in this study. However, there could be questions that you are uncomfortable answering or to which you would simply prefer not to respond. Your participation in this survey is strictly voluntary, and you will be under no obligation whatsoever to answer any questions that you are not inclined to answer. You may choose not to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

You may not personally benefit from your participation in this research. It is hoped that the results of this research will benefit colleges and parents by identifying strategies/resources that can be used to help engage parents in their children’s educational career.

No personal identifying information will be collected for this survey. Your responses will be kept confidential to the degree permitted by the technology used. However, no absolute guarantees can be given for the confidentiality of electronic data. All responses will be kept in a password-protected Survey Monkey account until they are destroyed at the end of the study. Responses will not be reported individually; instead, all response data will be aggregated for analysis.

You will not receive any compensation for participating in this study.

Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. If you volunteer to complete this survey, you may decide not to complete the survey for any reason at any time without consequence of any kind. You completion of the web based survey indicates your consent to participate in the study.

If you have any questions about this research you may contact Joanna Saldana at [email protected] or by email at [email protected]

1. I consent to the above conditions
   ○ Yes
   ○ No
Welcome

Welcome to a survey on the effects of parent engagement contributing to their child’s preparedness to attend a 4-Year University. The results of this survey will help us understand the need for parents to be more engaged in their children’s educational career.

If you have questions about the survey, please contact Joanna Saidana [redacted] or by email at [redacted].

Thank you for your participation.

Completing the Survey:
• Click on each response after you read each question.
• You will not be able to return to the survey, so please complete it in one sitting.
• To review a question, you may scroll back to that question.
• Click “Exit this survey” if you do not want to complete the survey.
• Click “Next” to skip any item that does not apply to you or to continue with the survey.
2. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent?

- Yes, Hispanic or Latino
- No, not Hispanic or Latino
### Survey

3. Are you 18 or older?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

4. How many semesters of college have you completed?
- [ ] 0-1
- [ ] 2-3
- [ ] 4-5
- [ ] 6+

5. What is the biggest contributor to your success in attending college?
- [ ] My family support
- [ ] My personal motivation
- [ ] Teacher, faculty or counselor support/knowledge
- [ ] My preparation in high school academics
- [ ] Other

6. What is the highest level of school your father completed or the highest degree he received?
- [ ] Less than high school degree
- [ ] High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)
- [ ] Some college but no degree
- [ ] Associate degree
- [ ] Bachelor degree
- [ ] Graduate degree

7. What is the highest level of school your mother completed or the highest degree she received?
- [ ] Less than high school degree
- [ ] High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)
- [ ] Some college but no degree
- [ ] Associate degree
- [ ] Bachelor degree
- [ ] Graduate degree
8. My family was emotionally supportive of me going to college.
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Disagree

9. Growing up, I would be disciplined if I did not get A’s and B’s or higher.
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Disagree

10. Growing up, my parents or guardians were strict with me regarding the completion of my school work.
    - [ ] Agree
    - [ ] Disagree

11. Growing up, my parents or guardians monitored my school work.
    - [ ] Agree
    - [ ] Disagree

12. Growing up, my parents or guardians helped me with my school work.
    - [ ] Agree
    - [ ] Disagree

13. In my K-12 education my parents or guardians communicated with my teachers.
    - [ ] Agree
    - [ ] Disagree

14. Growing up, my parents or guardians talked to me about the importance of college.
    - [ ] Agree
    - [ ] Disagree

15. Growing up, my parents or guardians went to open house or back to school night.
    - [ ] Agree
    - [ ] Disagree

16. When I was younger, my parents or guardians read books to me.
    - [ ] Agree
    - [ ] Disagree
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<td>17. Compared to other students' parents, my parents or guardians are very involved in my education.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. My parents or guardians expected me to graduate from high school.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<td>19. My parents or guardians expect me to graduate from college.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. My parents or guardians expect me to get a master's degree or doctorate (PH.D.).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
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</table>
THANK YOU!

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,
Joanna Saldana
REFERENCES


