THE IMPACT OF FAMILY SUPPORT ON STUDENT RETENTION OF LOW-INCOME, FIRST-GENERATION LATINO MALES AT A FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY

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Alejandro A. Sandoval

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THE IMPACT OF FAMILY SUPPORT ON STUDENT RETENTION OF LOW- INCOME, FIRST-GENERATION LATINO MALES AT A FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY

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Graduate and Professional Studies in Education
Abstract

of

THE IMPACT OF FAMILY SUPPORT ON STUDENT RETENTION OF LOW-INCOME, FIRST-GENERATION LATINO MALES AT A FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY

by

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Brief Literature Review

The current trend in research focuses on the academic journey of Latino males throughout K-12 and college and is designed to look at what educational systems can provide to retain and graduate Latino men (Fry, 2002). The research shows Latino males are more likely to drop out of college than their white and gendered counterparts. As first-generation, low-income, and neglected men, they face a series of disadvantages (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, Bámaca, & Zeiders, 2009). As a result, educating parents on how to help their children navigate the educational system is crucial to the student’s success (Benmayor, 2002). The goal in the majority of limited educational research on Latino parent engagement is discovering the role of the Latino male in the dynamics of the family and how that affects his experience as a college student. Researchers hope to find out how to properly support Latino parents prior to
their children attending college and how to support the Latino men during their college years in order to improve the retention rates in higher education.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this research was to look at how family support affects first-generation Latino males. Currently, first-generation Latinas are more likely to graduate from college (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009) and only 39% of first-generation Latino men succeed in attaining a bachelor’s degree (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Overall, what role do Latino parents play in their students schooling that significantly more Latinas than Latinos are graduating from 4-year universities?

Methodology

The researcher collected data through an online survey sent to first-generation Latino males in the Educational Opportunity Equity Program offered by California State University, Sacramento. The sample for this study included 18 Latino men from the EOP program. EOP serves low-income, first-generation students and provides support for students who come into the university at a disadvantage. The researcher aimed to identify how the students perceived support from their families.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Latino men are being swept under the rug now more than ever. At a young age, they are marginalized by a school system that reacts with punishment rather than understanding. Latino parents need to ensure they reach out to their child’s school, and
schools need to ensure parent outreach is accessible to low-income parents. As social and cultural capital rises for Latinos, Latino and Latina graduation rates will grow.

__________________________, Committee Chair
José Chávez, Ed.D.

__________________________
Date
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my family.

Working 84 hours a week, waking up at 5 and getting out at 6, 7 days a week, cold rain or scalding sun, my dad taught me the true meaning of hard work; that we don't complain, we just do. This man has sacrificed so much for my siblings and me. It is without a doubt that he will always be the motivation and foundation of my successes. I love you dad!

To my mother, because when I fell, you were there to stand me up. You showed me the power of love, and that I really could do anything I put my mind to. You too are my backbone, raising a family of 5 and working as well, there is no way on this earth that I can fully repay you for all that you have done. I love you, chula!

There comes a time when you find that unconditional love comes from more than your father or mother. To my Tia Mari who always made sure I was giving it my all and never losing sight of the ball. This too is for you, te quiero mucho, tia!

Although I am the first in my family to have gotten my Masters, another explorer came before me and led the path to success. Without her guidance and bravery into the world of academia this thesis would not have been possible. Thank you to my older sister Cindy, the first one to attend college, and not the last! I love you!

To my right hand man, my sidekick and loyal follower, my younger brother Danny. I know you too will do great things and I cannot wait to see them. I'll keep setting the bar in hopes that you break it!
To my family members, my tios, tias, grandparents, cousins, thank you for your support as well. I strongly believe I am the result of the beautiful people around me and without you this too would not have been possible. I like to think I am part of the larger sequence of dominoes, where one falls the others follow. One goes to college and the rest will too.

And last but not least, I’d like to take a moment and dedicate this thesis to myself. There were times when giving up seemed like a feasible option but luckily I realized it was not. Thank you to the Alejandro of the past for sitting down and getting down to business. Never forget that continuous improvement is forever our mantra.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A big thanks you to everyone who has supported me throughout this process. To my EDLP professors, Dr. Geni Cowan and Dr. José Chávez. Thank you for showing me the ropes during the past two years. Thank you as well to my cohort members who never hesitated to help me in times of need and a greater thank you to the EOP department and its great students; for I would not have been able to conduct my researcher without your help and courteous participation. And last but not least, to my advisor Dr. José Chávez and second reader Timoteo Rico for taking the time out of their hectic schedules to help me get through this process.
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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

Background
The Latino population in California is growing, fast. With it, there has been an increase of Latino enrollment in postsecondary institutions. The United States Census released data in 2003 acknowledging that the Latino/Hispanic population has become the nation’s largest ethnic minority, larger than that of African Americans (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Although more Latinos overall are attending college, the percentage of first-generation males who attend college and/or complete their degree is dismal when accounting for their gendered counterparts. In 2009, women who received degrees outnumbered males by 30,000 (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). The data beg the question that if Latinas are doing well but Latinos are not, then what is going on? It is the purpose of this study to understand if family support impacts the retention of first-generation Latino males. When looking at the micro-level of the populous, Latinas are more likely to stay and graduate college than their male counterparts. Although it is important to get more men of color into universities, it is just as important to ensure they graduate.

Statement of the Problem
The purpose of this research was to look at how family support, whether financial or psychological, affects first-generation Latino males. Looking at their gendered
counterparts, first-generation Latinas are more likely to enroll and graduate from college. Among Latinos enrolled, 61% are women (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Comparatively, only 39% of Latinos enrolled in college are men. Looking at the graduating rates, this gap is similarly illustrated when in 2009, only 39% of the bachelors degrees were earned by Latino males (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Overall, why is it that significantly more Latinas are graduating than Latinos from 4-year universities? The following questions were addressed:

1. What types of support do Latino families provide for their first-generation males?
2. What roles do parents play in the student’s academic journey?
3. Do Latino males face disadvantages because of their family background?

Through this study, the researcher identified the current roles that parents play in the Latino male’s college experience and how that may have impacted his decision to remain enrolled. The vast literature on Latino retention focuses primarily on Latinas. The more information gained about Latino males and their college experiences, the more what is working and what is not for Latinos in higher education can be understood and compared. By further understanding their role, universities and parents will be better prepared when engaging in the Latino male’s educational journey.

**Significance of the Study**

This study aids in understanding how to retain Latino students in higher education. This study will allow educators to better understand motivational factors of
the first-generation Latino male. The majority of research done on the Latino population focuses primarily on Latinas, and very little research looks at the first-generation Latino male college experience. Moreover, this study showcases how the Latino family dynamic impacts college success. Whether family support is a negative or positive influence, universities will be better abled to provide for these students. In turn, campuses will increase the retention rates of Latino males and ensure they get a college education.

It is with great necessity that Latino males graduate from a 4-year university not just to increase statistical numbers but also to improve the quality of life for Latino families and improve their social mobility. It is a well-known fact that an education is the bridge to the middle class from poverty. Latino males today have a greater chance of going to prison than they are to find themselves in a 4-year university. The devastating effects that Latino imprisonment has on the Latino family is too often felt. By engaging more Latino males in and through college, crime will decrease, imprisonment of Latino males will decrease, and Latino families will be better off than they find themselves today.

**Definition of Terms**

Familismo

A strong commitment to the family
First-generation student

A student whose parents or guardian never completed college

Latino

The use of the term “Latino” is to be inclusive of all first-generation students who identify with this term. Latino is used interchangeably with Hispanic in this study. In this thesis, it is also primarily meant to refer to Latino men.

Low-income

For the purpose of this study, low-income pertains to an individual whose parents earn below $65,000 per year.

Parental Engagement

Interaction between the parent and the school for the well being of the student

Parental Support

Emotional or financial support provided to a student by his family during his college career

Student Retention

The process for which a university retains students and guides them through to graduation

Limitations

This study was limited by the response rate of the population for this sample. Very few students responded to the initial email. Fortunately, the follow-up email
provided enough participants. Prior to the invitational email, the researcher should have looked at the click conversion rates for students in the EOP program in order to understand what would be the best path for engagement in the survey.

Organization of the Remainder of the Thesis

This thesis contains five chapters. Chapter 2 contains a review of related literature with existing research findings and conclusions. The literature explores the demographics, extent of parental involvement, an in-depth look at Latino men in K-12 and college, and theoretical frameworks. In Chapter 3, the research methodology and procedures for collecting and analyzing data are discussed. Chapter 4 presents the data collected from the researcher’s survey along with an analytical presentation of findings and an interpretation of those findings. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the research conducted as well as conclusions and recommendations for further study.
Chapter 2
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand how family support impacts the retention of low-income, first-generation Latino males at a 4-year state university. In this chapter, the theoretical framework of social and cultural capital, as it relates to the success of Latino males in college, is introduced. Holistically, family support is perceived to positively impact the college experience students. According to Durand and Perez (2013), “research indicates that Latino parents strongly value education and have high expectations for their children” (p. 4). However, the current state of affairs is that Latino males are not currently succeeding academically as well as their Latina and white counterparts. Strayhorn (2010) stated, “less than a quarter (23.2%) of Latino postsecondary students graduate with a four-year degree within 10 years of high school graduation—less than half the rate of White students (47.3%)” (p. 312). According to Huerta and Fishman (2014), “in 2010, only 11% of 25-34-year-old Latino males earned bachelors’ degrees between 1977 and 2009, Latino males earned almost 28,000 fewer bachelors’ degrees than their female counterparts” (p. 1).

The research shows Latino males are more likely to drop out of college than their white and gendered counterparts (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). As first-generation, low-income, and neglected men, they face a series of disadvantages (Alfaro et al., 2009;
College outreach groups believe that more Latino men will graduate college if they get involved on campus. Although this will have an impact on the retention rates, studies recommend that college retention does not start in college at all but in the younger schooling years. As a result, educating parents on how to help their children navigate the educational system is crucial to the student’s success (Benmayor, 2002; Carey, 2005; Carrion, 2014; Collier & Morgan, 2007; Engle, 2007; Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, 2010).

**Demographics**

In 2003, the United States Census confirmed the long-predicted growth of Latinos in the United States. The National and California Latino population has grown rapidly in the past decade, surpassing that of African Americans and the Census data show that the Latino population will continue to drive population and labor force growth (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Further, the 2010 census data show that one in six Americans (roughly 16.3%) is non-white Hispanic. The Hispanic population alone was the factor contributing to the population growth, as their population increased in every state across the nation (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Latino children in particular are the largest minority group in the U.S. and the fastest growing. Although the common misconception is that this growth is due to increasing immigration, researchers Saenz and Ponjuan (2011) attribute
this rapid growth to native-born Latinos and argue that they will be the key drivers for the coming decades.

Unfortunately, although the Latino population has grown and continues to grow at a rapid rate, Latino students remain underrepresented in 4-year colleges and universities (Ceballo, 2004). As Latino students continue to make up the majority of the K-12 population in California but are underrepresented in higher education, policymakers and stakeholders should fully embrace the sizeable demographic shift and mold it into economic and social prosperity (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011).

**Parental Involvement**

Latino parental involvement in the educational system has been largely misunderstood. Past narratives paint Latino families in a negative light and often describe them as “unwilling” or “uninvolved” in their child’s education. As a result, Latino parental involvement and engagement have been further described as low to nonexistent (Lopez, 2009), especially when compared to Euro-American families (Durand & Perez, 2013). In 2009, a National Survey of Latinos led by Mark Hugo Lopez, the Director of Hispanic Research of the Pew Research Center, asked Hispanics ages 16 and older about their educational goals, experiences with high schools and colleges, and their opinions about educational institutions (Lopez, 2009). “The survey was conducted from Aug. 5 through Sept. 16, 2009, among a randomly selected, nationally representative sample of 2,012 Hispanics ages 16 and older, with an
oversample of 1,240 Hispanics ages 16 to 25” (p. 1). This study found that Latino adults ages 26 and older, “believe there are many reasons for the lack of achievement amongst Latino students when compared to other groups” (p. 1).

However, recent studies argue the opposite (Lopez, 2009; Martinez & Cervera 2012; McCarron & Inkelas, 2006; O’Donnell & Kirkner, 2014; Ryan, 2012; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009, 2011). Almost two-thirds (65%) of Latino youths in Lopez’s study strongly agreed that their parents play (or played) active roles in their education. These same students rated their universities or colleges high (Lopez, 2009). Further, 60% of surveyed college students say their parents played or play an active role in their college education (Lopez, 2009). Research done by Durand and Perez indicates that Latino parents actually value education and have high expectations for their children (Durand & Perez, 2013).

Parent education plays an important role and is a great factor in how involved parents can be. Parental encouragement and support with schoolwork has shown to be more important than family income when balancing contributing factors to a child’s education (McCarron & Inkelas, 2006). When looking at parental involvement amongst Latino families specifically, it is clear little research has been done. By understanding how education is valued, researchers are able to get a better understanding of the Latino family.

In addition, Durand and Perez (2013) found that Education, or “Educacion,” is a core cultural value in Latino families and is more comprehensive as it features an
intimate link between moral, interpersonal, and academic goals. Furthermore, researchers Durand and Perez showed that Latino parents strongly value education and have high expectations of their children. Latino parents do want to help their children in school but sometimes they cannot.

In K-12, schools have been shown to rarely reach out to Latino families in meaningful and culturally appropriate ways that can help narrow the information gap and level the playing field for college access (Ceballo, 2004). Due to racial stereotypes, teachers and principals have lower expectations of these students, and the school is often too quick to label the students as having behavior problems (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Engaging family members and the community with developing a culture of college-going success during these crucial times will sustain and engrain the needed knowledge, behavior, skills, and other tools to graduate more men of color (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Latino families should be thought of as a crucial component when creating and instilling the culture of going to college (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011).

As Latino males move on to college, the level of support they receive decreases and they face greater adversity as college students. While limited, current research focuses on K-12 students on the basis that collegial support for the student begins in those critical school years before college. Hence, more than ever, Latino students will benefit from social and cultural capital. Studies have shown that students with parents who attended college and knew how to navigate the college system had greater access to forms of cultural and social capital that facilitate educational and economic opportunities
in our society (Engle, 2007). Social and cultural capital translate into a variety of crucial characteristics for a successful college student. Social capital includes how the parents and students are able to interact in their school climates.

According to McCarron and Inkela (2006), “social capital is the knowledge of the campus environment and campus values, access to human and financial resources, and familiarity with terminology and a general functioning of a higher education setting” (p. 535). With more social capital, parents are better able to know what is going on around the school that their child attends. In cases in which students are first generation, more social capital can help them meet other students in their community who have gone through the educational system and learn tips from them. Meeting others allows them to build and strengthen their social capital as they communicate about school procedures and experiences. This interaction in turn helps build their cultural capital.

In addition to social capital, Latino males, their parents, and the entire Latino community will benefit from greater cultural capital. As the cultural capital of first-generation families increases, there is a long-term demystification of the educational system. If students do not understand how to be college students, they face an obstacle that is not readily overcome. The current explanations for whether students will succeed or fail all emphasize the complex relationship between the individual and an institution. Collier and Morgan (2007) found that “some first-generation students do not understand the professor’s expectations about how many hours a week they should study and then may not allocate enough time to master key course skills or to identify and retain key
content areas” (p. 426). Many researchers have used Tinto’s models (1975) of student retention as a framework to show that student integration and academic integration are the best predictors of first-generation college students’ matriculation (Collier & Morgan, 2007). However, without adequate cultural capital, Latino males find themselves left out in both the academic and social college worlds, for which the proper tools to navigate these systems are typically passed down by family and, in turn, their social class (Collier & Morgan, 2007).

**Latino Males**

**The Latino Male in K-12**

To fully comprehend the status of the Latino male in higher education, it must first be understood how the Latino male is brought up academically during K-12 and what factors prevent him from continuing on to higher education. Foremost, researchers Saenz and Ponjuan (2009) admit it is no longer true that boys outnumber girls in K-12 or even college. The assumption has historically been that the educational system has been set up to favor males. Data today show otherwise as males are struggling to keep up with young females at every level of education across all racial and ethnic groups. The authors give clear examples that Latino boys are not treated equally to girls (Huerta & Fishman, 2014; Lopez, 2009; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009, 2011). As such, the discussion about how to engage young boys in higher student achievement has been kept to a
minimum as some deem it “unconstructive at best or cynical at worst” (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011, p. 59).

In the younger years of K-12, boys are consistently marginalized. The representation of Latino males in special education tracks, expulsion rates, referrals to juvenile agencies, and high school dropout rates remain at an all-time high, and males are consistently overrepresented in such groups (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Moreover, in comparison to their female peers, boys are struggling. The evidence is clear when looking at their early years of schooling (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Gurian and Stevens argued that “boys are put into a system that does not understand how they learn and completely ignores the possibility that there is a mismatch in male learning styles in current educational practices” (as cited in Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011, p. 60). This lack of care from their educational guardians has put them at clear disadvantages, as boys lag behind their female peers in reading and writing. By third grade, boys are already an average of a year to a year and a half behind, and from fourth to eighth grade, boys are twice as likely as girls to be held back a grade (Huerta & Fishman, 2014). Unfortunately, it does not stop there. Gurian and Stevens (2005) suggested:

- boys are twice as likely to be labeled “learning disabled” and seven times more likely to be diagnosed with a mental illness such as attention deficit or attention hyperactivity disorder. This injustice is so prevalent in our system that boys constitute 67% of the population of students in special education. (as cited in Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011, p. 60)
School staff and administrators need to act and ensure that boys are properly looked after and given the proper attention and care they need rather than be put on predetermined tracks where they are categorized as helpless and incapable of learning. Saenz and Ponjuan (2011) make it clear:

Recent educational attainment data clearly suggest that young males are struggling to keep up with their female peers at each level of education and across all racial and ethnic groups, especially in accessing higher education. This is not to suggest that the success of girls has been assured or that it has come at the expense of male students, as structural and gender inequalities remain pervasive in America’s schools. When we conjoin the growing gender gap with the persistent educational attainment gap between Latinas/os and other racial and ethnic groups in this country, the phenomenon of the vanishing Latino male is cause for even greater concern. (p. 56)

In high school, Latino boys remain at a disadvantage. The dropout rates for Latino men ages 16 to 24 were 28.4% of the population in 2004. In comparison, 18.5% of school dropouts were Latinas and 7.1% were white men (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Boys who do not find themselves on the path to college or who never had a chance to consider it, drop out and join the workforce. Without a high school education, these men can now only work in low-skilled jobs, find themselves in trouble with the law, or join the military. For those who do get jobs, they almost always work in labor intensive ones. To be clear, the percentage of these men in these situations tell all. Sabol, Minton, and
Harrison (2007) show that Latinos make up 20.9% of the male prison inmates, and 63% of these men are college aged and between the ages of 18 and 24. As a result, the ratio of Latino males in a prison dormitory to those in a college dormitory is 2.7 to 1. Additionally, Mariscal (as cited in Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011) found that “in the military, Latinos make up 17.7% of the positions most related to combat” (p. 57). If this is where the majority of our Latinos are going, what about those who do make it to college?

**The Latino Male in College**

More Latinos are attending college than have in the past two decades but they are not graduating at the same rate. Strayhorn (2010) found that “less than a quarter of Latino students graduate with a four-year degree within 10 years of high school graduation. This is less than half of the rate that white students are graduating at which is at 47.3%” (p. 312). Although the graduation rates show that Latino males cannot stay in college, it certainly does not mean they do not want to. When interviewing a sample of Latino men aged 16 to 25, Lopez (2009) found that “6 in 10 say that they want a bachelor’s degree or more” (p. 4).

Latinos face a varying degree of obstacles when attempting to enter college. For one, Latino males must circumvent the social economic barriers. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the Latino male is stuck in a culture in which going to college is not the norm. Moreover, due to the high costs of college attendance, Latino males are turned off by the idea of asking their parents for money and are unaware of the resources available to them.
As a result of their families’ low-income status, first-generation Latino men lack a substantial amount of social capital. As discussed in an earlier section, according to McCarron and Inkela (2006), “social capital is the knowledge of the campus environment and campus values, access to human and financial resources, and familiarity with terminology and a general functioning of a higher education setting” (p. 535). In essence, Latino males do not know how to navigate the system because it was never endowed into their families or communities. Both Latino men and their parents are left in the dark with the men having to guide themselves through the educational system.

**Latino Males as First-Generation Students**

Latino men face a variety of disadvantages. The odds continue to stack against them as the majority of them are most likely to be first generation. A college education continues to gain importance in our growing economy and the wage gap between the working class and the elite continues to increase (Engle, 2007). Although there have been more students such as first-generation Latino males attending colleges in the past decade, these students continue to face a large range of obstacles in their education simply because their parents did not attend college themselves (Engle, 2007). First-generation students make up 31% of the college and university student population (Somers, Woodhouse, & Coofer, 2004), and in 2003, there were 364,000 first-generation students amongst the 1.3 million first-time freshmen who took the SAT (Ishitani, 2003). Studies show that first-generation students come to universities unprepared (Carey, 2005; Engle, 2007; Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, & Leonard, 2006; Ishitani, 2003; Stebleton & Soria,
2012; Tym, McMillion, Barone, & Webster, 2004), have very little knowledge of navigating the system (Benmayor, 2002; Carey, 2005; Carrion, 2014; Collier & Morgan, 2007; Engle, 2007; Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, 2010), and are very likely to drop out (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, Bámaca, & Zeiders, 2009; Carey, 2005; Engle, 2007; Ishitani, 2003; Somers et al., 2004). These students are also more likely to work full-time while going to school (Carey, 2005; Inkelas et al., 2006; Ishitani, 2003; Somers et al., 2004), do not engage in campus activities (Engle, 2007; Inkelas et al., 2006; Pelco & Lockeman, 2014; Stebleton & Soria, 2012), and often feel guilt and perceive a lack of support due to leaving their families (Carey, 2005; Engle, 2007; Inkelas et al., 2006). Furthermore, Carey (2005), a key researcher of first-generation students, discovered:

compared to their non-first generation peers, first generation students are more likely to attend school part-time (31 percent vs. 13 percent), are delayed in entering college after high school graduation (46 percent vs. 19 percent) and receive financial aid (51 percent vs. 42 percent). (p. 9)

Although there is a correlation between first-generation students, low-income students, and ethnic minorities, being first generation does not exclude anyone from a different demographic. In fact, many first-generation students are not students of color (Pelco & Lockeman, 2014). Additionally, first-generation students nationally are more likely to be non-native English speakers, immigrants, and single parents, and these
students are also more likely to be financially independent from their parents (Stebleton & Soria, 2012).

Researchers also found that “first generation students were more than twice as likely (23 percent vs. 10 percent) to withdraw from a 4-year institution before their second year than students who’s parents had a bachelor’s degree” (Pelco & Lockemen, 2014, p. 2). This statistic takes into account working full-time, delayed enrollment after high school, financial aid, gender, and ethnicity. Regardless of whether these characteristics were controlled for, “first generation students still face a greater likelihood of dropping out after their first year” (Choy as cited in Inkelas et al., 2006, p. 406).

Due to their low-income status, these students are often located in low quality schools and therefore enter college unprepared. Compared to their peers, they are less likely to take rigorous high school curriculum such as Advanced Placement courses; as a result, they tend to score lower in entrance exams such as the SAT and Act. These students enter college with impaired reading, writing, and math skills and then need to take workload courses to get them up to speed. This can usually set them back a year to several and lowers their chances of graduating in four when in a 4-year university (Carey, 2005; Engle, 2007; Inkelas et al., 2006; Ishitani, 2003; Stebleton & Soria, 2012; Tym et al., 2004).

The educational attainment of the student’s parents heavily impacts the entire experience. Latino men, as first-generation students, are at a huge disadvantage because their parents did not attend college (Engle, 2007). Foremost, Latino parents who did not
attend college are more likely to have a low income and as a result usually have the male members of the family participate early on in the workforce so they can help the family make ends meet. For this reason, Latino men who enter college are faced with having to support themselves and their families financially throughout college. If he cannot, he has no choice but to face an undeniable guilt that he has left his family. Even though his family may disagree, the perceived stress may have an impact on his mental state and prevent him from asking his family for help when he needs it.

Moreover, because of this need for financial support, Latino males find themselves short on time and do not engage in on-campus activities. Several studies cite that campus engagement has been shown to be a crucial component when assessing whether or not a student will graduate from college (Engle, 2007; Inkelas et al., 2006; Pelco & Lockeman, 2014; Stebleton & Soria, 2012).

Too many first-generation students, and even more first-generation Latino men, do not finish college. In looking at the larger population of first-generation students, fewer than 4 out of 10 will graduate in four years and barely 6 in 10 will make it out in 10 years. The statistics are even lower for Latino men. In fact, there are so few Latino men graduating from college that the process has been commonly referred to as an educational pipeline where only 8 out of 100 Latino men who enroll in ninth grade end up graduating from college in California (Swail, Cabrera, Lee, & Williams, 2005). Although there are various barriers faced by first-generation males, there are practices that parents, K-12 schools, colleges, and universities can implement to increase retention. Little research
has been done on how first-generation Latino men are supported by their parents, but the consensus is that the Latino male is left to navigate the college system alone (Benmayor, 2002; Carey, 2005; Carrion, 2014; Collier & Morgan, 2007; Engle, 2007; Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, 2010). Nonetheless, his parents can continue to give emotional, and if possible financial support, so that the student does not feel he is “betraying” his family by getting an education. By preparing the student with the proper tools to produce long-term goals, he will be less likely to be discouraged by small setbacks (Somers et al., 2004). In addition, K-12 schools, colleges, and universities can work together to implement proper outreach programs during the earlier schooling years that continue on through the university system. Studies have shown that “retention strategies are key early in to the student’s academic experience” (Carey, 2005, p. 19).

**Familismo**

Latino men are seen as the primary breadwinners in the Latino culture. Familismo, a term used to describe the Latino family structure has a heavy-handed influence in how Latino boys are brought up. Specifically, familismo is defined as a strong commitment to the family. For Latino males, their role in familismo is to follow in the footsteps of their fathers and provide for the family at all costs. In familismo, well being of the family always comes first for the Latino man. Saenz and Ponjuan (2011) noted:

Familismo holds constant qualities across generational lines and immigrant status. Familismo orientation among Latino families serves to define gender roles and
expectations for family members such that sacrificing the needs of the individual over the needs of the family is commonplace. The Latino male’s responsibility is to “provide for, protect, and defend his family”. Young Latino males are raised with the expectations that they are to be family oriented, strong, brave, hardworking, and family contributors. (p. 64)

If these men can no longer sustainably provide for a family there will be dire consequences for Latino family dynamics. For instance, Huerta and Fishman (2014) argued, “the Latino male as a spouse, father, and role model to young men will be challenged as a result of the continuing struggles the men face in the education system” (p. 58). If the man can no longer compete economically and socially, he is unable to set the example for his children and adequately provide for his family and he becomes emasculated. For Latino men, their identity is strongly connected to their cultural masculinity. Saenz and Ponjuan (2011) referenced, “for Latino males, Barajas and Pierce (2001) note that although they do see themselves as part of a larger Latino cultural group, they tend to have less positive notions of cultural identity than their Latina peers” (p. 74).

Hence, these men will choose to stay home and work in low skilled jobs in order to help out their parents rather than “turn their back” and go to college. These men need to understand they are only prolonging the help to their family and the return will be 10 times greater if they attend college. It is critical for them to see this and find social networks in college that will support them where their parents are unable. For example, Figueroa (as cited in Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011) found that Latino males are more prone to
succeed academically and graduate college when they find responsive social networks that are nurturing and help them defy the obstacles of culture shock.

Familismo should not be seen as counterproductive when engaging the Latino male in his role in family and higher education. Due to the strong ties that familismo produces within the family, all that is needed is a culture change in which the male understands he is taking a similar but lengthier road in helping his family. In fact, familismo can be used as a form of social capital that will facilitate lifelong success in Latino families for generations to come (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011).

The marginalization young Latino males face will not be easily remedied, as it has become a catch-22. The teaching profession is primarily made up of women. Specifically, of the close to 4 million teachers employed in K-12 only about a quarter of them are male. Much more alarming is the fact that less than 2% of those men are Latinos (Obama, 2010). As a society, we must ask ourselves: How can our current system produce more Latino male role models to influence boys when there are very few? How do we ensure that teachers can readily understand and teach to Latino boys when there are very few Latino male teachers to show them how? Of course, all blame cannot be placed on a lack of Latino men in the profession, as all teachers and administrators can be proactive and engage in finding a way to reach out to Latino boys.
Rationale for the Study

As previously mentioned, there is very little understanding of the first-generation Latino male’s educational experience and what role parents play in it. Latino males are vanishing from the educational system at an alarming rate. Institutions need to start paying attention to the gender gap that has been created over the past decade. Although understanding the Latina experience can provide insight on the Latino family dynamics and achievement, more attention needs to be given to the academic achievement of Latino men. Society has had a tendency to blame the parents of the Latino boys, insinuating that they do not put the effort into teaching them proper skills that will allow them to flourish in school. On the contrary, we see that Latino parents do want to help their sons succeed but often do not have the resources or “know how” to help them. Institutions need to find out how to identify struggling families and intervene effectively by educating the parents on how to get their children in and through college. This study, and many others, is necessary. We see that the minimal literature on the subject recommends an in-depth analysis of the Latino male’s education and how parents play a role in retaining their students throughout K-12 and higher education.

As discussed in the journal article “The Vanishing Latino Male” by Saenz and Ponjuan (2009), “recent educational attainment data clearly suggest that young males are struggling to keep up with their female peers at each level of education and across all racial and ethnic groups, especially in accessing higher education” (p. 55). At this point
in time, Latino men have a ridiculously tremendous high school dropout rate, college dropout rate, and are four times more likely to be jailed than their white counterparts.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Overview

In this chapter, the sample of the study, population, design, data collection, and data analysis are discussed. The purpose of this study was to understand how family support impacts the retention of first-generation Latino males at 4-year public state universities. Parents can make or break a child’s success in K-12 and in higher education. The parental role is crucial to the successes of their students especially when systemic societal roadblocks have put the students at a disadvantage when compared to their white and female counterparts. Furthermore, it is the belief of the researcher that understanding the impact parents have on the retention of Latino males can increase the dismal graduation rate of Latino males throughout California and nationwide. The researcher sought to recognize different ways students perceived parental support to establish meaningful interpretations that positively impact the Latino male college experience and increase retention rates.

The study consisted of a quantitative analysis, which utilized an online questionnaire to purposefully answer the following research questions:

1. What types of support do Latino families provide for their first-generation males?
2. What roles do parents play in the decision-making process to attend a 4-year university?
3. Do Latino males face disadvantages because of their family background?

Data collected from the quantitative study of 18 Latino males enrolled in the Educational Opportunity Program at California State University, Sacramento were analyzed and are presented in Chapter 4.

**Research Methodology and Design**

In this quantitative research study, the researcher sought to recognize the impact that parental involvement has on first-generation Latino males at a 4-year California state university. The researcher asked participating EOP students to answer a series of questions that focused on how engaged their parents were in their K-12 education, and college career and the different extent to which their parents were involved.

**Selection of Site and Participants**

The researcher chose to conduct this study through the Educational Opportunity Program at the California State University in Sacramento (Sacramento State). Founded in 1947 as Sacramento State College, Sacramento State is a 4-year public University in the heart of the state capitol of California. One of every 22 Sacramento-area residents has graduated from Sacramento State, which offers seven academic colleges and 58 undergraduate majors. Although sometimes perceived as a “commuter” school, the campus spans 300 acres and had 29,349 enrolled undergraduates (91%) and the remaining 9% as graduate students enrolled in 2014 (California State University, Sacramento Office of Institutional Research, 2014). As of fall 2014, Sacramento State’s
student body demographics show that 43% were male students and 57% were women. Twenty-two percent of the student body identified as Latino, 35% identified as White, 21% Asian, 11% other, 6% African American, and 1% American Indian (California State University, Sacramento, 2014). Research for this study was conducted in early spring 2015.

The Educational Opportunity Program prides itself on excellence and advancing the educational opportunities of historically underrepresented students (California State University, Sacramento, n.d.). The Educational Opportunity program was established in 1969 to:

- identify and admit students who have the potential to succeed at California State University campuses, but who have not achieved their higher education goals because of economic and/or educational background. The program works to equip students with resources and tools to ensure success in college through services delivered by a welcoming and supportive staff. (California State University, Sacramento, n.d., p. 1)

To participate in the Educational Opportunity Program at Sacramento State, students must come from low-income and educationally disadvantaged families. Dependent and independent students can see if they qualify for the program by comparing their family size to their families’ maximum income as seen in Figure 1.
Figure 1  EOP Family Size and Income Chart for Eligibility

![EOP FAMILY INCOME CRITERIA](chart.png)

Source: California State University, Sacramento (n.d.)

The sample of this study represents low-income, first-generation Latino males who were enrolled in the Educational Opportunity Program at Sacramento State at the time of the study. Participants in the survey were all first-generation, low-income Latino males over the age of 18.

**Instrumentation and Data Collection**

To properly collect data on Latino males in EOP, an email was sent out through the EOP program to invite enrolled Latino males to participate in an online survey. Through the email, students followed a link that took them to a Google form where they could anonymously participate in the research study. The anonymous online survey was distributed through the Google form’s platform and approved by the University IRB. No identifying or personal data were kept throughout this research study so as to protect the
confidentiality of the EOP participants. The only information stored on the Google form was the number of participants, date the completed survey was submitted, and the answers to the questionnaire.

Once students arrived at the survey from the accompanied link in the email sent out to them by the EOP department, students were prompted with a splash screen informing them that the survey was completely voluntary and if they chose to not continue with the study, they could quit at any time. Students had to agree with the consent form on this screen or else they would not be allowed to continue with the study. If students decided to be part of the study, after initially deciding not to, they were given a second chance to participate and landed back on the consent form splash page (see Appendix A). Students were given one invitation to the study and one reminder from the EOP department (see Appendix B). The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions, and should have taken no more than 10 minutes to complete. An incentive was given to participants through a chance to opt-in to a raffle for a $25 Amazon gift card. In a separate survey, participants who properly completed the survey were asked to leave their name and Sacramento State email for the opportunity to enter the raffle for the gift card. Information from the initial survey could not be linked to the contact information in the additional survey for the raffle. Participation in the raffle was completely voluntary. If students had questions, the contact information of the researcher and his advisor were provided in the invitation to participate, the reminder to participate, and the consent form needed to participate in the survey.
Data Analysis Procedures

To conduct this research, data were collected through the online Google Forms platform freely available through Google. A two-step authenticated Gmail account administered by the University of California, Davis in cooperation with Google ensured that no personal data would be stored or easily accessible to any external parties. Google Forms collected the responses onto a Google Spreadsheet available to the researcher through the same Gmail account.

The participant survey was composed of 20 questions whereby a majority of the questions used a Likert-type scale (see Appendix C). Of the 20, seven questions used a dichotomous scale to develop a clearer picture of the participants’ demographics and one fill-in-the-blank question to understand the age of the participants. The remaining 12 questions used the Likert-type scale to understand student perceptions. Four themes were developed and used when creating the questions for analysis. The following themes used for the focus of the study were: level of parental involvement (12, 13), systems of support (14, 15, 16, 17, 19), and parental expectations (18, 20) as well as crucial demographic information (1-11).

Summary

This study aimed to understand the perception that students held in regard to how involved their parents had been, and continue to be, through their academic career. Students were given one invitation to the study and one reminder from the EOP
department. The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions and should have taken no more than 10 minutes to complete. At the end of the study, and once the researcher indicated he was no longer accepting responses, the researcher collected the results of the completed surveys. Eighteen students participated in the study and the data from the responses to the 20 questions from those students were collected and analyzed by the researcher. The results were then compiled into meaningful graphs and charts, which indicate the response rate for each question included in the survey. These results are shown in Chapter 4 of this research study.
Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand how family support impacts the retention of low-income, first-generation Latino males at a 4-year university. The following research questions were used to design a survey, which provides information about first-generation, low-income Latino males from the experiences of first-generation, low-income Latino males in the Educational Opportunity Program at Sacramento State.

1. What types of support do Latino families provide for their first-generation males?
2. What roles do parents play in the student’s academic journey?
3. Do Latino males face disadvantages because of their family background?

In this chapter, results from the survey are addressed. To understand the experiences of these students and how their perception of family support has impacted their decision to continue their higher education, the chapter looks into the various themes and demographic information from the results as well as provide supplemental researcher.

Demographics

For this study, the research took a sample of first-generation, low-income Latino males enrolled in the Educational Opportunity Program at Sacramento State. According
to the Program Assessment Summary Report provided by EOP, the program enrolled 383 students in the fall 2012 cohort of which 144 were Hispanic, and 123 (32.1%) of the total population were male. The report does not look into subgroups by gender and ethnicity so the researcher could not determine the total number of Hispanic Latino males. Of the 144 students who identified as Hispanic, 13 responded to the research survey that met the research criteria as first-generation, low-income Latino males. Hence, this quantitative study provides a purposive homogeneous sample.

**Survey Results**

Figure 2 shows the majority of students in the sample, a total of 54%, were aged 21-23 years. The smallest age range was that of 27-30 with only one student from the sample falling in the range. The remaining students were either 18-20 (2 students, 15%) or 24-27 (3 students, 23%).
Figure 2  Age of participants
When looking at the respondents’ years at the university, 29% (29%) indicated they had attended Sacramento State for six years (see Figure 3). Twenty-four percent (24%) of respondents had been at the university for five years. This shows that the majority of the sample had been at Sacramento State longer than two years whereby students are better able to determine motivations for their ongoing persistence. Only 5% of students had been at Sacramento State for one year or less.

Figure 3  Years at Sacramento State

Figure 4 shows the highest level of education for the fathers of the students who participated in the study. Thirty-one percent (31%) of students in the sample identified their father’s highest education level as high school, and another 31% responded that their father’s highest level of education attained was middle school. No participating first-generation students indicated their parents attained an educational level of college or
higher. Lastly, 15% indicated that their father’s highest education level was elementary level, and 23% indicated their father never received an education.

Figure 4  Father’s educational level
The highest level of education for the mothers of the students who participated in the study was high school at 38% (see Figure 5). Of note, the second highest percentage indicated that 31% of the students’ mothers did not hold an education. As first-generation students, no students reported that they had a mother with a college education. The remaining respondents indicated their mothers had an elementary education (1, 8%) and middle school education (3, 23%).

Figure 5  Mother’s educational level
Fifty-four percent (54%) of first-generation, low-income Latino males indicated that their family income was $30,000-40,000 (see Figure 6). Twenty-three percent (23%) indicated that their parents’ income was between $10,000 and $20,000 a year. One student, 18%, indicated that their parents’ income level was $50,000-$60,000. There were no students in this study who reported that their parents earned between zero and $10,000 or $70,000 and upward.

Figure 6  Parents’ income level
Thirty-one percent of participants indicated that their parents were moderately involved in their K-12 education. For each category, respectively, 23% of students indicated their parents were somewhat involved or heavily involved in their K-12 schooling. Eight percent (8%) of students responded that their parents were not invested at all in their education, and 15% indicated that their parents were very involved in their K-12 education (see Figure 7).

Figure 7  Parental involvement in K-12
Thirty-one percent (31%) of correspondents indicated their parents were very involved in their college education. Twenty-three percent of respondents indicated parental involvement in their college education as somewhat involved, and another 23% indicated that their parents were not involved at all in their college education. The remaining 15% of students indicated that their parents were heavily involved, and 8% indicated that their parents were moderately involved in their college education (see Figure 8). This shows that the majority of students in the survey felt that their parents were involved in their college education.

Figure 8  Parental involvement in college education
Thirty-one percent (31%) of respondents indicated they were emotionally very supported by their parents. When looking at “not at all,” 23% of students felt their parents did not support them emotionally whereas a total of 77% noted their parents provided some to heavy emotional support.

Figure 9  Emotional support from parents
Figure 10 shows that the respondents did not feel strongly that their parents provided financial support. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of students said their parents only somewhat supported them financially. The majority of students perceived some form of financial support, regardless of how little, with a total of 85%. Parents from this study do support their children financially, and only a very small percentage, at 15% do not support the students financially at all.

Figure 10  Financial support in college
The majority of respondents indicated that the university provided financial support for them. Forty-six percent (46%) of respondents said the university supported them financially “very well” and 23% indicated the university supported them financially “heavily.” Zero respondents indicated they did not receive any financial support from the university. Financial support from the serving institutions may make or break a student’s stay at a university (see Figure 11).

Figure 11  Institutional financial support

An overwhelming percentage of students perceived that their parents believed they would succeed in college. Forty-six percent indicated their parents “heavily” believe their son would succeed, and another 39% responded that their parents “very well” believe that their son would succeed. No students (0%) indicated that their parents “did not” believe they would succeed in college and no students (0%) indicated their
parents “somewhat” believed they would succeed. Figure 12 shows that the majority of respondents felt their parents believed they would succeed in college and the majority of students (62%) believed their parents expected them to continue on toward a professional degree after their undergraduate schooling.

Figure 12  Parental expectations: Personal success
Figure 13  Parental expectations: Continuance expectations

Your parents expect you to continue on after your undergrad.
Figure 14 shows that the majority of students “very well” believed they belonged at Sacramento State with 54%. No students reported that they did not feel they belonged at the university. Feeling one belongs to a university is a good indicator of student engagement.

Figure 14  Feeling of belonging to Sacramento State
When asked to answer, “What was the biggest contributor to your success in attending college?,” 54% of students indicated that their success in attending college was due to their own actions. Thirty-one percent (31%) responded that their success in attending college was due to their family and 15% indicated it was due to a campus resource (see Figure 15). When preparing for college, first-generation Latino males did not have many resources to help them navigate the application process.

Figure 15 Biggest contributor to success in attending college

**Findings and Interpretation of the Data**

The purpose of this study was to understand how first-generation Latino males viewed their parents’ involvement in their education. Upon analyzing the results, the researcher discovered three primary themes that show Latino male persistence at a 4-year
university. The following themes—level of parental involvement, systems of support, and parental expectations—are discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

**Parental Involvement**

The literature discussed that parents who attained a higher education helped their children navigate through the educational system. Students whose parents hold college degrees have been shown to do better than their peers in both K-12 and in college. The subjects in this study had parents who had very little education. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the respondents’ mothers had no education. The highest level of schooling for parents of the students in the sample was high school. Due to the lack of education and experience navigating the educational system, Latino parents are stigmatized for not being involved in their child’s education. The researcher found otherwise, as Latino males in the study indicated that their parents were highly involved in their child’s education in K-12 and college. Latino parents do, and want to be, involved in their child’s academic successes. Unfortunately, no matter how much they want to help out, they do not know how or where to look for help. Language and economic barriers prevent parents from locating resources, as most often the parents do not understand what the teachers or professors are telling them.

The majority of students responded that their family income levels were between $30,000 and $40,000. At this income level, parents struggle constantly to put food on the table for their children, and because of work, they cannot attend events in which the schools try to reach out. The researcher concluded that although these parents had a low
income and a low education level, they made great attempts to show their children the importance of an education.

**Systems of Support**

It is crucial for any college student to have support from their parents and universities. Students need adequate economic and psychological support so they can thrive as full-time students. Students in this survey indicated that they received financial and emotional support from their parents.

Low-income, first-generation Latino males need emotional support from their families. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the students in our survey indicated that their parents were very supportive emotionally throughout their college careers. Although parents may not know how to navigate the systems, the simple act of trying or checking in with their sons can have a great impact. In “Marginality and Mattering: Urban Latino Male Undergraduates in Higher Education,” Huerta and Fishman (2014) saw the importance of parental involvement and support in one of their subjects named Jack. According to Jack, “As far as my drive and my motivation goes, it has to be my parent. I guess the whole first generation mentality is you always want to make your parents proud” (p. 8).

With increasing tuition costs, it has never been truer that first-generation Latino males need financial support from their parents and the university. In fact, first-generation students are still more likely than their peers to work during college in both
part-time and full-time jobs (Martinez, Sher, Krull, & Wood, 2009). Fortunately, it
seems that the students in the survey have been adequately receiving both.

**Parental Expectations**

The parental expectation of success for their child continues through college and beyond. The students in the survey indicated that their parents believed their children would be successful at Sacramento State and continue their education after graduating from college. In fact, 62% of the males in the survey agreed. The importance of Latino men continuing even throughout college should not be ignored. When looking at the educational pipeline, only 2% of Latino males continue on to earn a professional degree. That is to say that 2 out of 100 males who go into college actually earn a professional degree. As the times change and the demand for specialization grows, the demand for highly skilled professionals increases. Gone are the days when a man could provide for his family without a college degree, let alone a high school diploma. Unfortunately, no matter how much these parents want to help their first-generation children, they will not be able to help them navigate through the unknown postsecondary school system. Without guidance, the Latino males are left to navigate the education system on their own. As a result, the majority of Latino males in this study indicated that the main reason for their success in attending college is due to their own personal actions.
Summary

Contrary to popular belief, the researcher found in the gathered data that Latino males perceive great parental support from their parents. Parents of students in the study provided financial, emotional, and motivational support for their children. Students believed they could succeed at Sacramento State and felt a strong bond with the university. Overall, although strong support was perceived by the students, the data show that Latino families need more guidance regarding navigating the educational system, when working with their children.
Chapter 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This quantitative study looked at understanding the impact of family support on low-income, first-generation Latino males at a 4-year university. The theoretical framework proposed that one’s academic success was linked to their parent’s education and social capital provided during their K-12 schooling. The literature implied that family support is perceived to be lacking by K-12 faculty, and the support that is provided to the parents by the schools does not successfully cater to their demographic. In addition, the researcher wanted to understand and confidently address the following research questions:

1. What types of support do Latino families provide for their first-generation males most?
2. What roles do parents play in the student’s academic journey?
3. Do Latino males face disadvantages because of their family background?

The researcher aimed to identify how the Latino male at a 4-year institution perceived their parental support as well as how much of an impact it has had in their ability to remain on their path toward earning a bachelor’s degree. To understand the impact that family support has on the Latino male, the researcher examined participants’ perceptions of family support throughout their K-12 and college education. The
researcher collaborated with the Equal Opportunity Program at Sacramento State to target an audience of 144 Hispanic students. Although it was unclear how many first-generation, low-income Latino males are enrolled in the program, 13 thoughtful students participated in the survey. Students received an invitation to participate in the study via email from the EOP department. Given the small population, the survey was open to participants for five weeks and a follow-up email was sent out as a reminder.

**Conclusions**

Without a doubt, more research needs to be done with first-generation, low-income Latino males. The lack of literature, undeniable gender gap, and impending economical crisis are but a few of many reasons for academics to further investigate. To improve our current state of affairs and ensure that more Latino males do not fall into the cracks, stakeholders and policymakers need to ensure that faculty and staff at both primary and secondary schools successfully engage with parents and understand how Latino boys learn. Latino parents can no longer be the sole blame for the lack of social mobilization. As seen in this study, and in answer to the research questions, Latino parents provide as much financial and emotional support as they can. From the study, the researcher believes two things must be addressed before we see any significant changes in the graduation rates of Latino men.

Latino parents need to be able to know the where, when, what, and why's of K-12 and college. Of course, this will not be easy. However, it is up to K-12 institutions to
provide the resources for these parents via convenient means, allow enough time for adequate information, and help the faculty and staff make their job easier by learning about and better understanding their community members. Latino parents have a tendency to work throughout the day and get out of work in the evening. As seen in the study, parents are working class and money for their family is a great issue that impacts resources for their students’ education. To remedy the lack of information available to these parents, school leaders should budget for an after school advisor who can set up appointments with the parents, conduct workshops, or offer drop-in hours where parents can learn about their role in their child’s education and how they can help them. Although a lack of funding for schools has also attributed to lack of grassroots programs, creating college access informational programs for parents can be funded with the new Local Control Funding Formula categorical funds. Students in this study fall under the LCFF concentration grants and are highly likely to attend schools that qualify for this funding.

Nationally, we can no longer ignore this silent crisis. Latino men are being incarcerated and dropping out of our educational system at alarming rates. Although some fairly recent programs, such as President Obama’s “My Brother’s Keeper,” have started, they are not enough.
**Recommendations**

The researcher offers the following recommendations for future study and practice for the betterment of Latino males in education.

- Although this study adds some insights on parental support and disadvantages faced by Latino men, more studies need to be conducted to look specifically at the experience of Latino males throughout K-12.

- The researcher found that very little research has been done on persistence of Latino males through college and how family support impacts their success. More studies need to be conducted and look at how Latino males persist through college.

- This research study found that Latino parents are perceived to be highly concerned for their child’s schooling; however, they do not have the tools to provide adequate support due to a lack of cultural capital. The researcher recommends that institutions not underestimate the Latino parent’s role and instead reach out and teach them how to provide further support to their children while in college.

- The researcher recommends that school administrators and staff understand how to engage Latino boys in learning.

- At the same time, the majority of the students surveyed had working class families. School staff need to understand how difficult it is for parents to be
involved in school events when working over 40 hours per week and should think about best practices for this subgroup.

- Future studies need to look into best practices for engaging Latino males in education starting in K-12 and connect these practices with engagement of Latino parents.

- In California, lawmakers can ensure that dollars allotted by the Local Control Funding Formula to the most vulnerable students actually go to those students. The research study purposefully looked at Latino males and their parents who were low income and found that the majority of the study participants’ parents only made $40,000 a year. It should be acknowledged that money to offset this is already in California statute and Latino males allow districts to qualify for these supplemental grants.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Consent to Participate

You are being asked to participate in research, which will be conducted by Alejandro Sandoval in the College of Education at California State University, Sacramento. The purpose of the study is to investigate how family support impacts the retention of first-generation Latino males. Your participation will allow the researcher to better understand how Latino males navigate the higher education system with or without the support of their parents, and for increasing Latino male retention and graduation at four year universities.

You will be asked a series of questions pertaining to your experiences as a first generation Latino male on the Sacramento State Campus. This study involves minimal to no risk involved.

As a participant, if you complete the anonymous survey and submit it, the researcher will be unable to remove anonymous data from the database should you wish to withdraw it. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the researcher, Alejandro Sandoval, at albertosandoval@csus.edu or his advisor Dr. Jose Chavez at Chavez@csus.edu.

By completing this survey, you are agreeing to participate in the research. Further, to continue as a participant of this study click “I agree” and submit the response. If you do not agree, click “I do not agree” and submit your answer. Participation is voluntary, the refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you may be entitled to, and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

Please answer every question, and to the best of your knowledge. The survey should take you no more than 10 minutes.

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.

Please note, as compensation for your time your name will be given the opportunity to enter into a raffle for a $25 dollar amazon gift card. This prompt will only be available upon survey completion, please enter your email and phone number when prompted. Your anonymity will be preserved if you also choose to participate in the raffle. Any information collected for the raffle will not be matched to your survey answers. Thank you for your time.
APPENDIX B

Invitation to Participate in the Study

From: CSUS EOP

Sent: Monday, March 23, 2015 3:30 PM

Subject: Educational Leadership Program Study

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. Although enrollment has increased in the recent decades, Latino males are still not graduating at the same rate as Latinas. The survey is to gain an understanding of how parent support impacts the retention of first generation Latino males.

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 April 10th. Once complete, you will be able to enter for a raffle for a $25 Amazon gift card! Thank you for your time and consideration.

If you have any questions about the survey please feel free to contact me at (530) 794-8586, or by email at albertosandoval@csus.edu. Additionally, you can also contact my advisor Dr. Jose Chavez for any questions via email at Chavez@csus.edu.

To proceed to the survey please click here or enter the following into your web browser http://goo.gl/forms/BssKXzqXzd

Best regards,

Alejandro Sandoval
Hello all,

Recently you received an email from me with an invitation for 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. Although enrollment has increased in the recent decades, Latino males are still not graduating at the same rate as Latinas. The survey is to gain an understanding of how parent support impacts the retention of first generation Latino males.

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 (date). Once complete, you will be able to enter for a raffle for a $25 Amazon gift card! Thank you for your time and consideration.

If you have any questions about the survey please feel free to contact me at [hidden], or by email at [hidden]. Additionally, you may also contact my advisor Dr. Jose Chavez for any questions you may have at Chavez@csus.edu.

To proceed to the survey click at the following link
http://goo.gl/forms/bG5QmDfg1v

Best regards,

Alejandro Sandoval
APPENDIX C

Survey

Family Support, Latino Males, and the Four-Year University

The research has begun
Please take your time, and answer each question to the best of your knowledge.

Do you identify as male?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Other: ________________

Do you identify as Hispanic or Latino?
The U.S. Government has defined Hispanic or Latino persons as being “persons who trace their origin or descent to Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central and South America, and other Spanish cultures.”
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Other: ________________

What is your current age?

Are you currently enrolled in Sacramento State?
☐ Yes
☐ No
How many years have you completed at Sacramento State?

- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five
- Other: [ ]

Are you currently enrolled in EOP?

- Yes
- No

Are you a first generation college student?

- Yes
- No

Do you live with your parents?

- Yes
- No

What is the highest level of education of your father attained in the US?

- No Education
- less than elementary
- elementary
- middle
- high school
- college

What is the highest level of education of your mother attained in the US?

- No Education
- less than elementary
- elementary
- middle
- high school
- college

What is your parent’s household income?

in the thousands
What is the biggest contributor to your success in attending college?
- My family support
- My personal motivation
- My preparation from K-12
- Support from an on campus resource
- Other: 

How invested were your parents in your K-12 schooling?
- not at all
- somewhat
- moderately
- very
- heavily

How invested are your parents in your college education?
- not at all
- somewhat
- moderately
- very
- heavily

How much have your parents supported you emotionally while at college?
- not at all
- somewhat
- moderately
- very
- heavily

How have your parents supported you financially while at college?
- not at all
- somewhat
○ moderately
○ very
○ heavily

How much do you feel you belong to be in college?
○ not at all
○ somewhat
○ moderately
○ very
○ heavily

How much do you feel you belong at Sacramento State?
○ not at all
○ somewhat
○ moderately
○ very
○ heavily

How much would you say your parents believe you will succeed in college?
○ not at all
○ somewhat
○ moderately
○ very
○ heavily

How has the university supported you financially while at college?
Grants, Scholarships, or General Financial Aid
○ not at all
○ somewhat
○ moderately
○ very
○ heavily

Overall, my parents or guardians expect me to continue my education after college (MA, PhD, JD, etc.)
○ Agree
○ Disagree
REFERENCES


California State University, Sacramento. (n.d.) *Welcome to EOP!* [Brochure]. Sacramento: California State University, Sacramento.


