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Cultural Predictors of Academic Motivation in Hispanic College Students

Laura Yvette Mendez

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CULTURAL PREDICTORS OF ACADEMIC MOTIVATION IN HISPANIC COLLEGE
STUDENTS

A Thesis

by

LAURA YVETTE MENDEZ

Submitted to Texas A&M International University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

December 2016

Major Subject: Counseling Psychology

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Approved as to style and content by:

Chair of Committee,	Gilberto Salinas
Committee Members,	Ediza Garcia
	Elizabeth Terrazas
	Marcus Ynalvez
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ABSTRACT

Cultural Predictors of Academic Motivation in Hispanic College Students (December 2016)

B.A., Texas A&M International University, 2010, Psychology;

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Latinos make up 16 percent of the overall U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010); however, in 2012, they only represented 9 percent of individuals obtaining a college degree (NCES, 2012). Several studies suggest that social-cultural factors (i.e. familismo, parental involvement, acculturation, etc.) play a significant role in the academic motivation and academic success of Latino students (Jeynes, 2003; Perez et al., 2009; Perna & Titus, 2005). This study explored the extent to which *familismo*, parental involvement, and academic motivation are related to one another. This study also explored the extent to which parental involvement and *familismo* predict academic motivation in a predominately Latino college student population. The results of this study suggest that familismo is a significant predictor of academic motivation, where parental involvement was not a predictor of academic motivation.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Carmen and Francisco. I hope that this achievement makes you proud and that it completes the dream that you had for me all those many years ago. I also dedicate this thesis to my siblings, Frank, Mely, and Diana. I thank you for believing in me, especially when I doubted my own ability. Without my family, I would not be where I am today. It is because of them, that I know who I am.

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INTRODUCTION

Transitioning from high school to college is considered a major academic milestone for students (Clark & Schroth, 2010). However, novice students are still faced with challenging academic and social demands that they must learn to overcome (Clark & Schroth, 2010; Reynolds & Weigand, 2010). For instance, despite their new-found independence, college students must readily learn to navigate an unfamiliar campus, learn to be self-reliant in terms of attending classes and turning in assignments on time, and learn to cope with the impact that attending college will have on their former roles and relationships with family members and friends (Clark & Schroth, 2010; Reynolds & Weigand 2010). The students' success in overcoming such demands, especially in the first year of college, is crucial in determining overall academic success (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Crisp & Nora, 2010; Reynolds & Weigand, 2010). According to Clark and Schroth (2010), academic motivation plays a central role in the choices that students make and whether they can meet these new academic and social expectations. Those who are able to adapt and overcome these obstacles gain confidence in their abilities, develop supportive friendships, and gain a sense of belonging (Reynolds & Weigand, 2010). In essence, academic motivation is a crucial determinant of academic performance and overall academic achievement in students (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, & Bámaca, 2006; Clark & Schroth; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002).

Academic Motivation

Academic motivation is defined as, “the factors that influence a person to attend school and obtain a degree” (Clark & Schroth, 2010, p.19). According to Linnenbrink and Pintrich

This thesis follows the style of *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*

(2002), academic motivation is a dynamic, multi-faceted phenomenon that consists of self-efficacy, positive qualities, intrinsic motivation, and goals. In such, they argue against labeling students as either “motivated” or “not motivated” because a single global motivation score does not explain the multiple factors that motivate students (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002).

Academic motivation is also theorized to be a contextual trait that varies depending on different environmental factors, such as the instructor’s efforts and the physical structure of both the classroom and the school (Alfaro et al., 2006; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002). In his research, Vallerand et al. (1992) discussed three different types of motivation: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation. In education, this theoretical approach considers whether students are intrinsically motivated, extrinsically motivated, and/or amotivated to pursue and complete an academic degree (Vallerand et al., 1992).

Intrinsic motivation (IM) suggests that individuals engage in a certain behavior because it satisfies an internal drive or need (Reynolds & Weigand, 2010; Vallerand et al., 1992). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation suggests that individuals perform a specific task or engage in some type of behavior because of an external reward or outcome (Reynolds & Weigand, 2010; Vallerand et al., 1992). Lastly, amotivation refers to individuals who are neither intrinsically nor extrinsically motivated, and who do not identify possible outcomes from their behaviors (Reynolds & Weigand, 2010; Vallerand et al., 1992). According to Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2002), each student plays an active role in regulating his/her academic motivation, thinking, and behavior that in turn, facilitates their academic achievement. In short, it is important to identify the factors that both impact academic motivation, as it has been found to be an essential determinant of academic success (Clark & Schroth, 2010; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002).

According to Garn, Mathews, and Jolly (2010), academic motivation is influenced by both personal factors and social factors. For instance, Etten, Pressley, Freebern, and Echevarria (1998) noted that future motivation depends greatly on how one explains previous achievements and failures. Students who are highly motivated to succeed academically typically regard their past failures to lack of hard work and their achievements to both their academic ability and hard effort (Etten et al., 1998). Students who typically avoid taking academic risks because of fear of failure, usually credit their failures to their poor abilities and their successes to influences out of their control (Etten et al., 1998). They fail to see their own potential and how they could have contributed to such achievements. Academic motivation can also be positively influenced by the individual's expectations regarding academic performance and academic success; belief in their ability to carry out specific tasks (self-efficacy); academic interests; and ability to overcome test anxiety (Etten et al., 1998; Garn et al., 2010).

Etten et al. (1998) also identified the following external factors that positively influence academic motivation: positive and constructive feedback and praise from teachers; authoritative parents- those with realistic expectations and who provide appropriate levels of support; and academically motivated peers. Econometric theorists; however, argue that an individual's decision to go to college stems from comparing the costs and benefits for all possible college-enrollment decisions (Perna, 2002). In such cases, the individual is likely to select the one with the greatest benefit and the one that fit's his/her preferences (Perna, 2002). In short, academic motivation is indeed a multi-faceted phenomenon that is impacted by both personal and social factors (Garn et al., 2010; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002).

Academic Motivation in Hispanic Students

Currently, Latinos are considered the largest and fastest growing ethnic minority in the

United States (Alfaro et al., 2006). According to the American Council on Education (2011), Hispanics experienced the largest gains in both associate's and bachelor's degrees in comparison to all other ethnic/racial groups. In 2009-2010, Hispanics earned 13% of all associate's degrees, nine percent of all bachelor's degrees, and seven percent of all master's degrees awarded in the U. S. (Department of Education, 2012). Although the number of Hispanic college students earning a degree has increased, it is not representative of how much the Hispanic population in the U.S. has actually grown (Arbona & Nora, 2007; United States Census, 2010). The U.S. Census (2010) reported that, within the past decade, the Hispanic population increased by 43%, and currently, 50.5 million (16%) identify as Hispanic. Additionally, these estimates suggest that by the year 2050, nearly 30% of the United States population will be Hispanic (Crisp & Nora, 2010). In spite of this growth, there continues to be a great discrepancy between the number of Hispanics obtaining college degrees and the number of Hispanics currently residing in the U.S. (Santiago, Gudiño, Baweja, & Nadeem, 2014). Several studies suggest that social-cultural factors, such as familismo and parental involvement, play a significant role in Hispanic students' academic motivation and eventual academic success (Garn et al., 2010; Jeynes, 2003; Lopez, Ehly, & Garcia-Vazquez, (2002); Perez, Espinoza, Ramos, Coronado, & Cortez, 2009; Perna & Titus, 2005; Santiago et al., 2014).

Previous studies have identified several factors that play a role in motivating Hispanic students to pursue and complete their academic degree (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Fuligni 2007). For instance, low SES, when combined with parental support and involvement, was found to positively impact and increase academic motivation in Hispanic college students (McCaron & Inkelas, 2006). Such parental support and involvement is likely to be present if the student comes from an intact family (Jeynes, 2003; Ojeda et al., 2011). Additionally, those who hold strong

familial ties report higher levels of academic motivation and greater academic goals (Fuligni, 2007). Parental education was also found to be a contributing factor to academic success, as they are more likely to transmit the value of higher education to their children and to provide them with the knowledge needed to navigate the college environment (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Crisp & Nora, 2010; McCaron & Inkelas, 2006; Plunkett & Bámaca-Gomez, 2003). Several studies; however, argued that a more significant predictor of academic motivation and achievement is academic encouragement and support from parents and peers (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Fuligni, 1997; Ojeda et al., 2011). They contended that the student's microsystem is the most influential factor regarding academic outcomes (Alfaro et al., 2006).

While several studies identified social support as being a crucial determinant for academic motivation and success, other studies claimed that academic preparation, positive skills, and positive attitudes gained in high school are the best predictors of academic achievement (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Crisp & Nora, 2010). These factors are thought to predict academic performance during the first year in college, which then determines whether or not the student persists or withdraws from college (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Crisp & Nora, 2010). Other factors that contribute to the completion of a college degree in Hispanics include: starting college within six months of graduating from high school, commitment to the academic goal, and involvement in academic activities on-and-off campus (Arbona & Nora, 2007). In short, there are factors prior to enrolling in college and during college that play a role in motivating students academically.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is consistently linked to having a significant positive impact on children's academic motivation, academic goals, and overall academic achievement (Alfaro et

al., 2006; Jeynes, 2003; McCaron & Inkelas, 2006; Santiago et al., 2014; Plunkett & Bámaca-Gomez, 2003). McCaron and Inkelas (2006) defined *parental involvement* as parents' attendance at their children's extracurricular activities. Jeynes (2003) defined *parental involvement* as consisting of the following four components: parental expectations, parental interest, parental involvement in school, and family community. Of these four, Jeynes (2003) claimed that parental expectations are the most important in regards to academic motivation and achievement. In the context of a negative parenting style; however, such parental expectations are likely to have negative effects on their children's overall academic achievement (Jeynes, 2003). Nevertheless, encouragement and support from parents and significant others is predictive of academic motivation and of a better transition to the college life (Alfaro et al., 2006; Arbona & Nora, 2007; Fuligni, 1997).

Parents who have earned a college degree are more likely to offer such academic support and involvement because they value education and are familiar with the college-related demands and responsibilities (McCaron & Inkelas, 2006). On the other hand, less educated parents are likely to provide lower levels of academic support and involvement, including advocating for their child and volunteering at school, due to working long hours, limited English proficiency, and/or lack of confidence in their ability to help their children with their schoolwork (Crisp & Nora, 2010; Fuligni, 1997; Jeynes, 2003; McCaron & Inkelas, 2006; Plunkett & Bámaca-Gomez, 2003). This is particularly true for first-generation college students from immigrant families (Fuligni, 1997; McCaron & Inkelas, 2006). Plunkett and Bámaca-Gomez (2003) argue that even if parents are unable to help their children because of language barriers, perceived parental support still helps children develop a higher self-esteem, which in turn, helps to motivate them academically. Fortunately, most Hispanic children find themselves in a family that is supportive

of academic achievement and success, possibly because parents view education as the best way to improve one's quality of life (Fuligni, 1997; Plunkett & Bámaca-Gomez, 2003). However, it is the extent to which parents are involved in their children's academics that is quite limited (Fuligni, 1997; Plunkett & Bámaca-Gomez, 2003).

Familismo

In Latino cultures, *familismo* (familism) is a term that is used to describe the significance and importance of the family, both nuclear and extended, whereby the interests of the family system take precedence over the interests of the individual (Antshel, 2002; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002; Ojeda, Navarro, & Morales, 2011; Santiago et al., 2014; Sy & Romero, 2008). Contrary to the values of individuality and independence which are strongly emphasized in the U.S. culture, *familismo* stresses family closeness, support, loyalty, commitment, and dedication (Ojeda et al., 2011; Santiago et al., 2014, Sy & Romero, 2008). According to Alfaro et al. (2006), this familistic orientation is one of the strongest cultural values possessed by Latino populations. Such emphasis on familial ties and support is thought to increase when the family is experiencing some type of economic crisis (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002). Previous research has supported the argument that *familismo* serves as a protective factor for Hispanic families (Kuhlberg, Peña, and Zayas, 2010; Piña-Watson, Ojeda, Castellon, & Dornhecker, 2013). According to Piña-Watson et al. (2013), *familismo* contributes to positive psychological functioning in Hispanic youths, by increasing the individual's self-esteem and life satisfaction through the strong sense of connection the child feels to their parents. Additionally, Kuhlberg et al. (2010) noted that *familismo* serves as a protective factor against parent-adolescent conflict as both parent and child actively try to resolve any issues that may disrupt the harmony within the family.

Sy and Romero (2008) also stated that *familismo* determines the obligations Hispanic children and young adults fulfill for their families. Such obligations include: translating for parents or other family members; spending time with family; helping with household tasks; caring for siblings; and contributing financially to the family's expenses (Sy & Romero, 2008). These familial obligations are considered to be lifelong norms for Latin American families (Fuligni, 2007; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002). Lastly, a strong familistic orientation is likely to result in educationally resilient children, or those who strive for academic success despite environmental challenges (Plunkett & Bámaca-Gomez, 2003). Those who place a strong value on the family and who desire to support and consider the needs of the family, also place a stronger value on education and thus, report higher levels of academic motivation (Fuligni, 2007; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002).

While some studies suggest that *familismo* serves as a protective factor against mental health issues, parent-adolescent conflict, and poor academics, others argue that this strong familistic orientation can, indeed, be experienced as a stressor (Fuligni, 2007; Kuhlberg et al., 2010; Ojeda et al., 2011; Santiago et al., 2014; Sy & Romero, 2008). Paradoxically, familial obligations between the ages of 19-21 tend to increase (Fuligni, 2007; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002). Entrance into young adulthood produces a greater sense of maturity whereby children feel a stronger sense of responsibility to care for their families (Fuligni, 2007; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002). The demands to fulfill such expected cultural obligations reduces the time students can dedicate to their college pursuits; thus, making the transition to college even more challenging (Fuligni, 2007; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002; Sy & Romero, 2008). In addition, Hispanic children may feel pressured to succeed academically because of a sense of obligation to advance their family; therefore, they may pursue a college degree, not only for themselves, but

for their family as well (Ojeda et al., 2011). This need to help the family, attend school, or both is likely to cause stress and anxiety among students with a strong sense of *familismo* (Crisp & Nora, 2010; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002; Santiago et al., 2014).

However, Fuligni and Pedersen (2002) argued that this sense of obligation to the family actually helps combat such stress by providing young adults with a sense of purpose and identity during a period in their life that is highly undefined in American society. Furthermore, motivation to succeed academically will not be affected, even when physically separated from their family and community during college, if strong emotional ties are maintained (Arbona & Nora, 2007). This association between *familismo* and academic motivation is posited to stem from the matured youth's awareness of the sacrifices their parents have made to provide for them, and a strong desire to pay them back through academic success (Fuligni, 2007; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002; Ojeda et al., 2011). In short, a strong sense of connection and responsibility to the family motivates Hispanic students to maintain their focus on both their family and their academics (Fuligni 2007; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002; Sy & Romero, 2008).

Given the marked discrepancy between the number of Hispanics obtaining college degrees and the number of Hispanics currently residing in the U.S. (Santiago et al., 2014), it is imperative that research identifies the cultural and other factors, if any, that impacts academic motivation in Hispanic college students. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to gather additional data on the key variables of parental involvement and *familismo* that may influence academic motivation in a predominantly Hispanic college student population. Understanding the relationship among these variables may make an essential contribution to the current research that has found academic motivation to be impacted by such cultural factors. Three primary research questions identified in this study were (1) to what extent are *familismo*, parental

involvement, and academic motivation related to one another, (2) to what extent does *familismo* predict academic motivation, and (3) to what extent does parental involvement predict academic motivation?

METHODS

Participants

Using Cohen's (1992) power analysis table, it was calculated that for two predictor variables (parental involvement and *familismo*), at a power level of .80, set for a medium effect size with $\alpha = .01$, a minimum sample size of 97 participants was needed. A total of 283 undergraduate students were recruited from several psychology courses at a predominantly Hispanic university in South Texas. The sample consisted of 71 (25.1%) men and 209 (73.8%) women (3 participants [1.1%] did not indicate gender). It should be noted that only the completed surveys from students identifying as Hispanic were used in the analysis of this research.

Thus, this study used a sample of 271 participants (see Table 1). The sample consisted of 68 (25.1%) males and 200 (73.8%) females (3 participants [1.1%] did not indicate gender). The average reported age of participants was 22.4, with a standard deviation of 3.8. The majority of the sample ($N=129$; 47.6%) was between 21-23 years of age; 78 (28.8%) were between 18-20 years of age; 38 (14%) were between 24-26 years of age; 13 (4.8%) were between 27-29 years of age; 4 (1.5%) were between the ages of 30-32; 3 (1.1%) were between the ages of 33-35; 2 (0.7%) were between the ages of 36-38; and 3 (1.1%) were 42 or older. One participant (0.4%) did not specify age. This sample of students consisted of 12 (4.4%) freshmen; 34 (12.5%) sophomores; 102 (37.6%) juniors; and 119 (43.9%) seniors. Four students (1.5%) did not specify classification. In regards to language, 111 (41%) students identified speaking primarily English and 138 (50.9%) students identified speaking primarily Spanish at home (22 participants [8.1%] did not specify a primary language). The average reported GPA was 3.08, with a standard deviation of 0.44.

Table 1

Demographics for Latino Participants

	n	%	M	SD
Age	270		22.44	3.79
Gender	271			
Male	68	25.1		
Female	200	73.8		
Unspecified	3	1.1		
Classification				
Freshmen	12	4.4		
Sophomore	34	12.5		
Junior	102	37.6		
Senior	119	43.9		
GPA	246		3.08	.44
Primary Language	271			
English	111	41.0	.07	
Spanish	138	50.9		
Unspecified	22	8.1		

Procedures

Once approval for the study was obtained by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB), emails were sent out to professors to establish dates and times for recruitment of participants. Participants were recruited from several undergraduate psychology courses (abnormal psychology, psychology of personality, life-span growth and development, and research) during the first three weeks of the Fall 2016 semester. Prior to administering the survey, a script discussing the purpose and importance of the study, confidentiality, and voluntary participation, was read to the participants. Students were then provided with both an information sheet and the survey, and were encouraged to read the information sheet and to ask

any questions they might have before beginning the survey. Once completed, to guarantee anonymity, packets were stacked at the front of the class in no specific identifiable order. After all participating students had completed the survey, packets were retrieved and secured in a locked cabinet for data entry at a later time. A total of 283 undergraduate students completed the survey. Of the 283 completed surveys, 12 were removed from the analysis due to either excessive missing data or students identifying as non-Hispanic. The resulting sample; therefore, consisted of 271 undergraduate college students.

Instruments

Demographic questionnaire. A basic demographic questionnaire was used to gain a better understanding of the overall background of the participants. The information collected included: age, gender, name of college/university, GPA, classification, ethnicity, primary language spoken at home, place of birth, number of years living in the U.S., mother's place of birth, father's place of birth, maternal grandparent's place of birth, and paternal grandparent's place of birth.

The Attitudinal Familism Scale (AFS) (Steidel & Contreras, 2003). The Hispanic cultural value of *familismo* was assessed using the AFS. The AFS is an 18-item self-report scale designed to assess familial support, familial interconnectedness, familial honor, and subjugation of self for the family. It is based on a ten-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 10 ("strongly agree"). A sample item from the AFS assessment is: "A person should always support members of the extended family, for example, aunts, uncles, and in-laws, if they are in need, even if it is a big sacrifice." The AFS has been used in previous studies and has been reported to yield satisfactory levels of internal consistency for the overall

scale ($\alpha = .83$) (Steidel & Contreras, 2003). In this study, the AFS produced strong levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$).

The Parental Involvement Scale (PIS). The original 22-item youth component of the PIS was developed by Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) to assess parental involvement from the child's perspective within four domains: school, home, cognitive, and personal. This study used an adapted 10-item self-report version of this scale to measure college students' perceptions of their parents' involvement in their education. It is based on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 0 ("never") to 3 ("a lot"). A sample item from the PIS assessment is: "My parent asks about my academic goal and plans." The original youth component of the PIS has been used in previous studies and has been reported to yield satisfactory levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .83$) (Davidson & Cardemil, 2009). In this study, the adapted version of the PIS produced strong levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .88$).

The Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) (Vallerand et al., 1992). Motivation towards education was assessed using the AMS. This 28-item self-report scale uses a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("does not correspond at all") to 7 ("corresponds exactly") to assess three types of motivation: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation. Extrinsic motivation suggests that individuals engage in a certain behavior for some external reward; intrinsic motivation suggests that individuals perform or behave in order to satisfy an internal drive; and amotivation implies that there is a lack of autonomy and motivation (Reynolds & Weigand, 2010).

This study used a modified version of the AMS. The four items measuring academic amotivation (items 5, 12, 19, & 26) were removed from the analysis. Participants were; therefore, asked to answer items pertaining to intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation in

order to obtain a global total score for academic motivation. Participants were asked to respond to the questions “why do you go to college?” A sample item measuring intrinsic motivation is: “because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.” A sample item measuring extrinsic motivation is: “in order to have a better salary later on.” The AMS has been used in previous studies and has been reported to yield satisfactory levels of internal consistency (mean alpha value = .81) (Vallerand et al., 1992). In this study, the AMS produced strong levels of internal consistency (mean alpha value = .93).

RESULTS

Several levels of analyses were performed to adequately answer the following three research questions: (a) to what extent are *familismo*, parental involvement, and academic motivation associated with each other in a Latino college sample, (b) to what extent does *familismo* predict academic motivation, and (3) to what extent does parental involvement predict academic motivation.

As part of the initial data analysis, means, range, standard deviations, and alpha reliability coefficients for each scale used in this study were calculated and are presented in Table 2. In addition, correlation coefficients were computed to examine the relationships between the Attitudinal Familism Scale, the Parental Involvement Scale, and the Academic Motivation Scale (see Table 3). There was a statistically significant, although weak, positive correlation between *familismo* and academic motivation ($r = .25, n = 231, p < .01$), suggesting that Hispanic undergraduate students who reported higher levels of *familismo* tended to have higher levels of academic motivation. There was also a statistically significant, moderate positive correlation, between *familismo* and parental involvement ($r = .31, n = 234, p < .01$), suggesting that Hispanic students who reported higher levels of *familismo* tended to also report higher levels of perceived parental involvement. Lastly, there was no relationship between parental involvement and academic motivation.

A linear regression was computed to predict academic motivation based on *familismo* (see Model 1 in Table 4). A significant regression equation was found, ($F(1, 229) = 14.91, p < .001$), with *familismo* predicting 6% of the variance in academic motivation. A similar linear regression was computed to predict academic motivation based on parental involvement (see

Table 2
Alpha Coefficients, Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges for All Scales

Variables	M	SD	Range		A
			Min	Max	
AFS	122.19	25.39	46.00	176.00	.89
PIS	18.35	6.72	.00	30.00	.88
AMS	140.72	2.96	61.00	168.00	.93

Table 3
Correlations for Familismo, Parental Involvement, and Academic Motivation

	1	2	3
Familismo (1)	--	.31**	.25**
Parental Involvement (2)	.31**	--	.07
Academic Motivation (3)	.25**	.07	--

** $p < .01$

Model 2 in Table 4). A non-significant regression equation was found, ($F(1, 253) = 1.14, p = .29$).

A multiple regression was used to predict academic motivation with parental involvement and familismo as predictors, while controlling for age, gender, classification, primary language, and GPA. The demographic variables did not account for significant variance in academic motivation, $R^2 = .032, F(5, 181) = 1.21, p = .31$ (see Model 3 in Table 4). As shown in Model 4 (see Table 4), the total variance in academic motivation explained by the model as a whole was 11 %, $F(7, 179) = 3.04, p = .005$. In this final model, the standardized beta coefficients

indicated that *familismo* ($\beta = .29$, $p < .001$) was significantly and positively related to academic motivation whereas and parental involvement ($\beta = -.04$, $p = .66$) was not.

Table 4
Taxonomy of Multiple Linear Regression Models

Variables	M1		M2		M3		M4	
	Beta	Std. E	Beta	Std. E	Beta	Std. E	Beta	Std. E
GPA (1-4)	-	-	-	-	.02	3.37	.04	3.28
Classification (1-4)	-	-	-	-	.05	1.97	.08	1.92
Language (1= English; 0 = Spanish)	-	-	-	-	-.05	3.01	-.07	2.92
Age (1=19; 2=22; 3=25; 4=28; 5=31; 6=34; 7=37; 8=40; 9=24)	-	-	-	-	-.03	.40	-.01	.39
Gender (0=male; 1= female)	-	-	-	-	.17	3.53*	.17	3.42*
Familismo (1-10)	.25	.05***	-	-	-	-	.29	.06***
Parental Involvement (0-3)	-	-	.07	.20	-	-	-.04	.24
R²	.06		.00		.03		.11	
N	231		255		187		187	

Dependent Variable: Academic Motivation

DISCUSSION

Relationship Between Familismo and Academic Motivation

This study explored the relationships between *familismo*, parental involvement, and academic motivation in Hispanic college students. The findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between *familismo* and academic motivation. This suggests that students who report a higher sense of *familismo* also report greater levels of academic motivation. In addition, the regression analysis revealed that *familismo* is indeed a predictor of academic motivation. This implies that a strong sense of connection to the family helps individuals believe in their own academic ability, resulting in greater levels of academic motivation. According to Ryan, Stiller, and Lynch (1994), a strong support system helps create self-reliance, rather than dependence, which would be the expected notion in a collectivistic culture. These findings are; therefore, congruent with previous studies that report *familismo* is a predictor of academic motivation (Fulgini, 2007; Fulgini & Pedersen, 2002; Sy & Romero, 2008).

Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Academic Motivation

The results in this study revealed that there is no statistically significant relationship between parental involvement and academic motivation. That is, parental involvement alone is not a significant predictor of academic motivation. This absence of a correlation between parental involvement and academic motivation could be accounted for by the participants' generational status. According to the website of the university where the study was conducted, over half of all undergraduate students registered every semester identify as first-generation college students (Texas A&M International University, 2016). Previous studies demonstrate that first-generation college students are likely to receive lower levels of parental involvement and support, not because they are opposed to education, but because parents are unfamiliar with the

college lifestyle (Crisp & Nora, 2010; Fuligni, 1997; Jeynes, 2003; McCaron & Inkelas, 2006; Plunkett & Bámaca-Gomez, 2003). Therefore, it is likely that most of these students reported little to no parental involvement because they are the first in their family to pursue a higher degree.

Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Familismo

The findings from this study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between parental involvement and *familismo*. This indicates that students who report a greater sense of *familismo* also perceive their parents as being involved in their education. These results are consistent with previous findings explaining the relationship between parental involvement and *familismo* (Jeynes, 2003; Ojeda et al., 2011). Namely, Jeynes (2003) reported intact families facilitate parental involvement. Ojeda et al. (2011) also reported that parental encouragement significantly mediates the relationship between *familismo* and college persistence. In essence, the greater the cohesion in a family, the higher the likelihood that parents are involved in their children's educational pursuits.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Several limitations of the present study should be noted. The generalizability of the results may be limited for several reasons. First, participants were a convenience sample from one border-town university and therefore, may not be representative of Hispanics in other geographic areas. Future studies should therefore, attempt to utilize a larger sample of Hispanic students from a wider range of educational institutions throughout to United States to gain a better understanding of how *familismo* and parental involvement predict academic motivation. In addition, the demographic questionnaire did not inquire about generational status and therefore, data regarding how many participants are first-generation college students had to be obtained through the university's website. In such, it may not accurately represent how many participants, from the convenience sample in this study, are first-generation college students. Future studies should ensure that the survey inquires about generation status so a more meaningful generational comparison can be made.

Another limitation of this study was the disproportionate gender ratio. In this study, more females (N = 200) participated in the survey as opposed to males (N = 68). In such, the results may be more reflective of female students' academic motivation, and their experiences and perceptions of *familismo* and parental involvement. A further limitation of this study is that gender roles and differences were not controlled for. According to Fuligni and Pedersen (2002), traditional Latino gender roles often expect women to provide assistance directly to the family and therefore, will typically combine family obligation with school. On the other hand, men are expected to financially provide to the family and as a result of this, will combine work and school (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002). Future studies need to ensure more balance in gender composition of participants so that more robust gender comparisons occur. In addition, future

studies should explore the degree to which gender roles influence *familismo*, parental involvement, and academic motivation in Hispanic college students. Similarly, this study had a disproportionate ratio of students in terms of classification. There were more upper-class students (102 juniors and 119 seniors) than there were freshmen (N=12) and sophomores (N=34). In such, the data may be more reflective of the experiences of upper-class students. Future studies should then, aim for a more balanced composition of participants, in terms of classification, to ensure greater generalizability.

Finally, future examination of other variables that may be moderating or confounding the effects of *familismo* and parental involvement on academic motivation may provide greater insight for ongoing research. For instance, SES is a factor that should be taken into consideration as low SES has been shown to increase academic motivation when combined with parental support (McCaron & Inkelas, 2006). Other variables that can be examined in the future are marital status, acculturation, ethnic identity, and marital status. Lastly, based on the findings of this study, additional research on the cultural factors impacting academic motivation in Hispanic students is warranted. Longitudinal and qualitative data may allow a greater understanding of cultural values and how they influence the academic motivation in Hispanic college students.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The results of this study suggest the following implications for educational institutions serving Hispanic students. First, the positive relationship between *familismo* and academic motivation suggests a need to include Hispanic families in their children's academic pursuit in order to guarantee greater levels of academic motivation and to ultimately, increase the number of college degrees being awarded to Hispanic students. This can be achieved by hosting family-related activities on campus. Not only will with these events allow the family to take part in their child's educational quest, but it will also reinforce the familial support that has already been proven to increase academic motivation. This need to incorporate the family is greater for first-generation college students whose parents are unfamiliar with the college life. By incorporating them, families can gain a better understanding of what their children's everyday college-life is like. In addition, children will feel better understood by their parents and; therefore, will feel more supported and motivated to continue their college pursuits. Another implication for practice is the need to incorporate family therapy with academically unmotivated college students. As the results suggest, family plays a central role in the lives of young adults. Therefore, campus counseling centers could therefore, enhance their services by including the family in therapy.

The results of this study also suggest implications for Hispanic parents of first-generation college students who are unfamiliar with the college life. In order to increase the degree to which parents are involved in their children's academics, it is imperative that parents become familiar with the demands that their children face as they pursue their college degree. This can be achieved by offering a family-based college orientation, in addition to the freshmen orientation, before the start of each academic school year. Schools can provide

psychoeducational workshops for parents that aim to familiarize them with not only the physical structure of the campus, but also to college-related responsibilities that their children have chosen to take on. These workshops must be offered in English and Spanish to ensure the overall understanding of their children's academic life. The overall goal is for parents to understand the different degrees that the university offers, the demands of each degree, and the benefits of completing a college degree. It is expected that once parents are aware of what their child's college life is like, they will become more involved and consequently, increase their child's motivation to complete a college degree.

CONCLUSION

In closing, the findings from this study provide valuable information on how certain cultural factors, specifically *familismo*, influence academic motivation in Hispanic undergraduate students. Families with a strong sense of *familismo* are likely to encourage academic success because they view education as the best way to improve one's overall quality of life (Fuligni, 1997; Plunkett & Bámaca-Gomez, 2003). In addition, young adults are likely to view academic success as a way in which they can reward their parents for the sacrifices that they have made for them (Fuligni, 2007; Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002; Ojeda et al., 2011). The transition to college may therefore, be a period in which young adults become closer to their families, feel a greater responsibility to their family, and report greater levels of academic motivation.

Furthermore, parental involvement is likely to be present when the child comes from an intact family and/or when parents are familiar with college-related demands and responsibilities (Jeynes, 2003; McCaron & Inkelas, 2006; Ojeda et al., 2011). Parents who are unfamiliar with the college life are likely feel inadequate in getting involved in their children's academics. Therefore, first-generation college students are likely to report lower levels of parental involvement. Fortunately, most Hispanic students will come from families that are supportive of academic success, it is only the degree of parental involvement; however, that seems to be limited in some students (Fuligni, 1997; Plunkett & Bámaca-Gomez, 2003).

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APPENDIX

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Please do not write your name on this form. It will be stored separately from any other information that you complete during this study and will not be linked with your responses in any way. The information will allow us to provide an accurate description of the sample.

For the following items, please select the *one* response (unless otherwise specified) that is most descriptive of you or fill in the blank as appropriate.

Age:

- 18-20 30-32 42+
 21-23 33-35
 24-26 36-38
 27-29 39-41

Gender: Male Female

Name of college/university: _____ GPA: _____

Classification: Freshmen Junior
 Sophomore Senior

Ethnicity: (*Check all boxes that apply*)

- Caucasian/White Hispanic/Latino
 African-American Asian/Pacific Islander
 Native American Puerto Rican
 Middle-Eastern Asian Indian
 Other (specify) _____

Primary Language Spoken at Home:

- English
 Spanish
 Arabic
 Other _____

Place of Birth: _____

Number of years you have lived in the United States: _____

Number of years you have attended this college/university: _____

Mother's place of birth: _____

Father's place of birth: _____

Maternal Grandparents' (Mother's Parents) place of birth: _____

Paternal Grandparents' (Father's Parents) place of birth: _____

APPENDIX

ATTITUDINAL FAMILISM

Please rate each statement using the following response scale:	1 Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Strongly agree
1. Children should always help their parents with the support of younger brothers and sisters, for example, help them with homework, help the parents take care of the children, and so forth.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. The family should control the behavior of children younger than 18.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. A person should cherish the time spent with his or her relatives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. A person should live near his or her parents and spend time with them on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5. A person should always support members of the extended family, for example, aunts, uncles, and in-laws, if they are in need even if it is a big sacrifice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6. A person should rely on his or her family if the need arises.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7. A person should feel ashamed if something he or she does dishonors the family name.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8. Children should help out around the house without expecting an allowance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9. Parents and grandparents should be treated with great respect regardless of their differences in views.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10. A person should often do activities with his or her immediate and extended families, for example, eat meals, play games, or go somewhere together.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11. Aging parents should live with their relatives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
12. A person should always be expected to defend his/her family's honor no matter what the cost.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
13. Children younger than 18 should give almost all their earnings to their parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14. Children should live with their parents until they get married.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
15. Children should obey their parents without question even if they believe they are wrong.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
16. A person should help his or her elderly parents in times of need, for example, helping financially or sharing a house.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
17. A person should be a good person for the sake of his or her family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
18. A person should respect his or her older brothers and sisters regardless of their differences in views.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

APPENDIX

PARENT INVOLVEMENT SCALE

Directions: Read each item below and mark the number that corresponds to the rating that best describes at least one parent.

	3 A lot	2 Sometimes	1 Not very often	0 Never
1. My parent attends school events and activities (sports, plays, presentations)	3	2	1	0
2. My parent asks me about what I did in school	3	2	1	0
3. My parent reads papers/essays that I write for school	3	2	1	0
4. My parent tells me how important school is	3	2	1	0
5. My parent talks about current events with me	3	2	1	0
6. My parent knows what I am learning in school	3	2	1	0
7. My parent takes me to museums, plays or concerts	3	2	1	0
8. My parent knows when it is time for midterms and finals	3	2	1	0
9. My parent does a lot to help me do better in school	3	2	1	0
10. My parent asks about my academic goals and plans.	3	2	1	0

APPENDIX

ACADEMIC MOTIVATION SCALE (AMS-C 28)

*Robert J. Vallerand, Luc G. Pelletier, Marc R. Blais, Nathalie M. Brière,
Caroline B. Sénécal, & Évelyne F. Vallières.*

Using the scale below, indicate to what extent each of the following items presently corresponds to one of the reasons why you go to college.

Does not correspond at all	Corresponds a little	Corresponds moderately	Corresponds a lot	Corresponds exactly		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

WHY DO YOU GO TO COLLEGE?

1. Because with only a high-school degree I would not find a high-paying job later on.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Because I think that a college education will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. For the intense feelings I experience when I am communicating my own ideas to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Honestly, I don't know; I really feel that I am wasting my time in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. For the pleasure I experience while surpassing myself in my studies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. To prove to myself that I am capable of completing my college degree.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. In order to obtain a more prestigious job later on.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. For the pleasure I experience when I discover new things never seen before.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Because eventually it will enable me to enter the							

job market in a field that I like. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Does not correspond at all	Corresponds a little		Corresponds moderately		Corresponds a lot		Corresponds exactly	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

WHY DO YOU GO TO COLLEGE?

11. For the pleasure that I experience when I read interesting authors. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. I once had good reasons for going to college; however, now I wonder whether I should continue. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. For the pleasure that I experience while I am surpassing myself in one of my personal accomplishments. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. Because of the fact that when I succeed in college I feel important. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. Because I want to have "the good life" later on. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. For the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. Because this will help me make a better choice regarding my career orientation. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. For the pleasure that I experience when I feel completely absorbed by what certain authors have written. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. I can't see why I go to college and frankly, I couldn't care less. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. For the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult academic activities. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. To show myself that I am an intelligent person. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Rodríguez, E. E., González, K. R., Mendez, L. Y., Vaquera, D. K., Aviles, J., & Ynalvez, M. (2016, November). *The Impact of Culturally Responsive Mental Health Presentation in a U.S. – Mexico Bordertown*. 13th Annual TAMUS Pathways Student Research Symposium, Texas A&M University, Prairie View, Texas.

Mendez, L. (2016, October). *Social-Cultural Predictors of Academic Motivation in Hispanic College Students*. National Latina/o Psychological Association Biennial Conference, Orlando, Florida.

Mendez, L. (2016, April). *The Impact of Parental Involvement on Academic Success Among Hispanic Students in a Border Town*. Lamar Bruni Vergara & Guillermo Benavidez Z Academic Conference, Texas A&M International University, Laredo, Texas.

Mendez, L. (2016, April). *The Impact of Familism on Alcohol Use Among Hispanic College Students in a Border Town*. Lamar Bruni Vergara & Guillermo Benavidez Z Academic Conference, Texas A&M International University, Laredo, Texas.

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The typist for this thesis was Ms. Laura Yvette Mendez