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THE RELATIONSHIP OF SPIRITUALITY AND THE WELL-BEING OF LATINO COLLEGE STUDENTS

A Thesis

by

ANDREA PATRICIA ALMAGUER

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

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2016

Major Subject: Counseling Psychology

The Relationship of Spirituality and the Well-Being of Latino College Students

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Approved as to style and content by:

Chair of Committee,	Sara Castro-Olivo
Committee Members,	Gilberto Salinas
	Ediza Garcia
	Marcus Ynalvez
Head of Department,	Jose Lozano

May 2016

Major Subject: Counseling Psychology

ABSTRACT

The Relationship of Spirituality and the Well-Being of Latino College Students (May 2016)

Andrea Patricia Almaguer, B.A., Psychology, Texas A&M International University;

Chair of Committee: Dr. Sara Castro-Olivo

The Latino population in the United States continues to grow (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012b). Besides their significant representation in the general population, national data has shown that Latinos are at great risk for health problems that usually go unmet (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). There is little research that focuses on the effects of spirituality on their well-being. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between spirituality, purpose in life, and mental well-being of Latino college students. Data was obtained and analyzed for 184 Latino college students at a Hispanic serving University in South Texas. Linear regression analyses were conducted to examine the predictive relationship between spirituality, well-being, purpose in life as well as familismo, well-being, and purpose in life. Data showed that spirituality significantly predicted mental well-being and purpose in life for Latino college students. Ways in which mental health practitioners can use this information to develop culturally relevant interventions and consider cultural protective factors such as spirituality and familismo for Latinos will be discussed.

Keywords: *spirituality; well-being; ethnic identity; Latinos*

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INTRODUCTION

Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States, constituting 17% of the United States population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Given that Latinos are considered the fastest growing ethnic minority group in the U.S., and an important part of the future economic role of this country, meeting their various needs should be a priority. National data on academic, social, and emotional outcomes of various ethnic groups in the U.S. suggests that more research is essential to better meet the needs of Latinos. For example, research has shown that there is a noticeable gap in college completion for Latino college students when compared to members of other ethnic groups (Fry, 2004). According to Kouyoumdjian, Zamboanga and Hansen (2003), in 2000 almost seven percent of Latinos who were 16 years or older were unemployed compared to 3.4 percent for non-Hispanic Whites. A report in 2014 focused on Latinos labor found that there was an increase of unemployment rate from 6.1 percent in 2007 to 7.3 percent in 2008 for Hispanics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015c). The unemployment rate for foreign-born Hispanics also increased from 5.5% to 7.5% from 2007 to 2008 (Kochhar, 2008). Latinos not only had a higher rate of unemployment compared to non-Hispanics Whites but also earned less money. Twenty three percent of Hispanics earned $35,000 or more, compared to forty nine percent of non-Hispanic Whites (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2003).

In addition to financial difficulties and wage differences, Latinos have also been found to experience higher mental health problems when compared to members of other ethnic groups (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2003). Research has found that U.S. born Latinos and Latino immigrant adults have a higher prevalence of depression compared to African Americans or Whites (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2003).

This thesis follows the style of *Mental Health, Religion & Culture.*

Based on a survey done by the National Institute of Mental Health (2014), 5.6% of Hispanics had at least one Major Depressive Episode compared to 4.2% for Asians and 5.4% for Blacks. Research comparing the prevalence of psychiatric disorders also found that Latinos have higher rates of depression, depressive symptoms, alcohol abuse, alcohol dependency and mental illness diagnosis (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2003). Aside from higher prevalence rates of mental health problems, according to Kouyoumdjian et al. (2003), Latinos have been found to underutilize mental health services compared to members of other ethnic groups. Furthermore, Latinos also have higher rates of premature treatment termination (Antshel, 2002). Many researchers argue that cultural mismatch between Latinos and the mental health field (i.e. therapists and therapeutic techniques) could be contributing to the higher prevalence of mental health problems and the underutilization of services (Castro, Barrera, & Martinez, 2004). Such a hypothesis is supported by research that has found that Latinos, especially immigrants who are in the process of acculturation, are more likely to experience discrimination and other stressors that have been proven to negatively affect their health (Ayón, Marsiglia, & Bermudez-Parsai, 2010) and seem to benefit from therapeutic techniques that have been culturally adapted (Griner & Smith, 2006).

Social-Cultural Factors Important to Latinos' Well-Being

With the rapid growth of the Latino population, it will be primordial that health professionals have knowledge in cultural and protective factors associated with this population (Antshel, 2002). Chavez-Korell, Benson-Flórez, Rendón and Farías (2014) mention that "health services based on western approaches often lack cultural relevance for Latinos seeking treatment" (p. 256). According to Antshel (2002), when patients are under the care of a culturally

competent health professional they are more likely to be satisfied with health care services and show improvement in their health status. Culturally component counselor must become familiar protective factors that could benefit help their clients (Young, Wiggins-Frame, & Cashwell, 2007). Equally important, culturally competent counselors must be familiar with the socio-cultural risk factors that could get in the way of a client's success. Counselors must know how to best conceptualize treatment and present alternative techniques to clients that will make the therapy meet best their cultural reality (Bernal, Bonilla, & Bellido, 1995). Some of the socio-cultural factors that have been found to serve as protective factors for Latinos are: parental involvement, familismo, positive community support and positive self-concept (Blanco-Vega, Castro-Olivo, & Merrell, 2007).

As previously stated, familismo has been identified by recent research to serve as a protective cultural factor for Latinos in their mental health well-being. Familismo can be defined as "the priority placed on the family and the willingness to sacrifice personal interest for greater good of the family unit, as well as strong feelings of family member support" (Stacciarini, Smith, Garvan, Wiens, & Cottler, 2015, p. 2). Some of the characteristics found in familismo are respect towards authority figures and presence of gender roles. In Latinos it is very likely that the family will be involved in treatment decision-making (Antshel, 2002). Chavez-Korell et al. (2014) found that there are positive correlations between familismo and psychological health for Latinos; familismo has also been found to correlate with help-seeking behaviors. In addition to facilitating help seeking behaviors, familismo has also indicated lower reports of depression (Stacciarini et al., 2015), and a buffer to other psychological stressors (Chavez-Korell et al., 2014). Based on the current research, familismo should be a socio-cultural factor that should be further studied in Latino populations in order to better conceptualize and carry out culturally

competent mental health services. It is important to note that familismo is a socio-cultural factor that has been understudied with Latino populations and the available research is equivocal (Ayón et al., 2010; Kouyoumdjian et al., 2003) for this reason, familismo was selected as a construct of interest in the current study.

Spirituality

Another factor that has been found to need additional attention when studying Latino populations is spirituality. According to Young et al. (2007), 75% of Americans report that religion and spirituality are important to them. Studies across the nation have found that spirituality and religiosity vary across racial groups even when controlling for factors such as age, education, income and region. For many people beliefs about mental health and mental illness are connected to religious beliefs or spiritual practices (Faver & Trachte, 2005). According to Reed and Rousseau (2007), spirituality is a human quality that serves as a resource through life's transitions and maintaining wellness. Spirituality has also been found to be a protective factor against the onset and development of mental illness (Luna & MacMillan, 2015). According to Visser, Garssen and Vinherhoets (2010), "Spirituality refers to the universal human phenomenon that involves finding meaning in life, transcendence of self boundaries, and connection with God, a higher being, nature and others" (1). In 2011, the United States Bureau gave a survey to a total of 228,182 individuals for religious identification among the adult population. Seventy-five percent of the adult population self-identified as Christians, of which 30% identified as Catholic. The remaining 25% percent of respondents identified with other religions such as Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism. Spirituality is often associated with religion; yet religion is defined as an organized system of beliefs and practices related to a particular faith or

institution (Luna & MacMillan, 2015). Spirituality is not always experienced with in a religious context, meaning that they are different constructs (Young et al., 2007). Snodgrass and Sorajjakool (2011) explain that to many health and social science researchers there is an agreement that spirituality is a universal human phenomenon that involves giving meaning in life and that meaning in life is often reached through one's spirituality. According to Snodgrass and Sorajjakool (2011), spirituality can help or hinder one's capacity to cope with adversity.

Research has indicated that higher well-being and quality of life have being associated with spirituality (Visser et al., 2010). A study conducted on cancer patient's spirituality and well being found that spirituality was related to better quality of life and less distress. Patients who scored high on spirituality reported high levels of enjoyment in life, regardless of the pain or fatigue (Visser et al., 2010). A study conducted by Young et al. (2007) with 300 college students indicated that spirituality was a moderator between negative life experiences and depressive symptoms. Research by Faver and Trachete (2005) indicated that spirituality is an important cultural factor in Latino college students. Studies have found that spirituality can be a protective factor for young adults but also for high-risk behaviors (Faver & Trachete, 2005). Religious congregation and private prayer were negatively correlated with drug use (Campesino, Belyea, & Schwartz, 2009). Luna and MacMillan (2015) found an inverse relationship between spirituality and anxiety and depressive symptoms. Spirituality serves as a protective factor towards the onset and development of depressive symptoms. The study was conducted among 1,129 undergraduate psychology or social work students; approximately 90% were minorities with 579 Latinos, 228 African-American, 126 Caucasian and 196 Caribbean. The study found that spirituality, believing in God's presence, age, gender and ethnicity were correlated to depressive symptoms ($r = .90$) (Luna & MacMillan, 2015). Results also indicated that some of the participants who had

lower levels of spirituality were more likely to have greater depressive symptoms (Luna & MacMillan, 2015).

Despite the importance of research done in spirituality, the influence of religiosity or spirituality on Latinos mental health is rarely studied. Previous research has suggested that spirituality is an important socio-cultural factor that needs more attention in mental health research, in particular among populations who are underserved and have endorsed spirituality in the context family and community settings (Campesino et al., 2009). Hilton and Child (2014) mention how Latinos describe their spirituality in terms of intimate relationships with God, family and community; Latinos also reported that these relationships are the ones that help them maintain their health and well-being.

Spirituality and Latinos

For many Latinos spirituality is a core cultural value. Faith experiences are embedded for Latinos at a family and community level (Campesino et al., 2009). Kouyoumdjian et al. (2003) explain that Latinos endorse a collectivistic view in their culture therefore tend to reach out to members of their own cultural group. Furthermore, research suggests that Latinos seek assistance of spiritual leaders before mental health services (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2003). Findings have demonstrated that spirituality plays an important role for many minority groups specifically in Latinos as it can provide comfort and relief from feelings of anxiety and depression (Hilton & Child, 2014). According to Dunn and O'Brien (2009), there is evidence to suggest that some existential factors such as spirituality and meaning in life are helpful in coping with adversity for Latinos. It was also found that Latinos tend to prefer a more public way of displaying their faith as it helps them create supportive social networks (Hilton & Child, 2014). A study conducted by

Campesino et al. (2009) found that Latinos tend to be more religiously involved than non-Latino college students. In that study, 27% of the Latino participants reported attending church services compared to 7% of the non-Latinos. Latinos also reported to engage in personal prayer outside of the church at higher rates (i.e., 38 % compared to 19% of the non-Latino participants). Additionally, spirituality in adolescents was also negatively correlated with alcohol use (Campesino et al., 2009). Similar results were found when reporting amount of discussion of spiritual beliefs with others; Latinos results had a total of 35% while non-Latinos had a total of 27%. Their study also found that Latinos who reported a stronger identification with Latino cultural values had higher spirituality scores. Therefore, spirituality involvement among college students is a variable that needs be considered when examining the well-being of this population (Campesino et al., 2009). In addition, spirituality also serves as a protective factor in the lives of older Latinos (Hilton & Child, 2014). The findings in this study suggest that spirituality in older Latinos could be a moderator to emotional and physical pain. The results for Hilton and Child (2014) demonstrate that spirituality in Latinos predicts their well-being. Dunn and O'Brien (2009) also explained that psychological interventions for Latinas that include spiritual components have been correlated with positive well-being. To this date there is limited literature available that studies the relationship of spirituality and other socio-cultural factors on the mental health and well-being of Latinos. More research is needed in this area to better aid counselors in search for culturally relevant protective factors.

Meaning in Life and Well-Being

Another factor (i.e. outcome variable) that has not been well studied with Latinos is meaning of life, which has been defined by Dunn and O'Brien (2009) as "search for meaning

and presence of meaning in one's life" (p. 207). Previous research has found that having a sense of purpose in life can be essential to having a healthy psychological well-being (Melton & Schulenberg, 2008). In their 2008 study, Melton and Shulenberg, found that people who obtained higher scores in the Purpose in Life scale tended to feel more in control of their situation, had more positive attitudes toward life and acceptance of the self. In addition, Melton and Schulenberg (2008) also found that people who had higher levels of Purpose in Life also reported living in the present and have fuller awareness of their emotional reactions. Similarly, Dunn and O'Brien (2009) found that participants who indicated to be in an active search for meaning also felt their lives were meaningful. Hilton and Child (2014) suggest that people who rate a higher sense of meaning tend to have better physical health, be happier and have less depressive symptoms of depression. Melton and Schulenberg (2008) found that there is a correlation between high scores in Purpose in Life and Happiness in that college students who had a higher perception to one's life reported higher levels of happiness. Another finding in this research was that the higher the meaning and purpose in life the easier they were able to cope with difficulties they face and reported a better psychological well-being despite the external difficulties. More research needs to be conducted on Purpose in Life with Latinos because it could minimize the focus on psychological disorders (i.e. depression or anxiety) that have been historically stigmatized this population (Dunn & O'Brien, 2009). Findings on purpose in life with Latinos have indicated that those who had a strong search for meaning or presence of meaning also indicated lower levels of depression and anxiety (Dunn & O'Brien, 2009). Making interventions that are culturally competent and promise more on purpose in life could be a way to increase the interest of Latinos on mental health services. Given the importance of existential

factors in Latinos more emphasis should be placed in creating environments where these factors are integrated to better serve this population.

PROPOSED RESEARCH

There is still a lack of research between the relationships of spirituality, well-being and considerations of cultural factors among the Latino population. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to study these factors in order to inform mental health practitioners about the relationship between spirituality, purpose in life and the well-being of Latinos specifically, Latino college students.

Research Questions

1. To what extent are spirituality, familismo, meaning of life, and positive well-being correlated for a Latino college sample?
2. To what extent does spirituality influence positive well-being and meaning of life in a Latino sample?
3. To what extent does familismo influence of positive well-being and meaning of life in a Latino sample?

Hypotheses

Based on the current literature, it was hypothesized that:

1. There is a significant correlation between spirituality, familismo, meaning in life and positive well-being in Latino college students.
2. Spirituality will have a significant positive relationship between positive well-being and meaning in life in a Latino sample
3. Familismo will have a significant positive relationship between positive well-being and meaning in life in a Latino sample.

METHODS

Participants and Setting

A total of 199 Latino college students participated in the study, 15 of the participants were excluded as they identified with another ethnic identity data from the remaining 184 participants who self-identified as Latinos were included in the analyses for this study. Participants were enrolled in a Hispanic-serving university in South Texas. Where 90 percent of the overall study body identifies as Hispanic students were recruited from student organizations, undergraduate psychology or graduate psychology classes. In regards to gender the study had 57 males and 141 females who were part of the study. Out of the 184 Latinos, the mean age of the students was 23 years (SD= 4.58), with students ranging in age from 17-51 years. 87.5% of the participants identified as single and 8.2 percent identified as married. Students were asked to rate themselves between low, middles and high SES and 84% identified as middle socio-economic status class. Participants were also asked to indicate their religion/spiritual background, 55% of the population identified as Catholic, 31% with Christianity and the remaining 13% varied with in Agnosticism, Atheism, Protestant, and other. Participants were asked to rate the importance of their religion in their daily lives, 65.2% of the participants rated religion as important and very important in their daily lives, 67% rated as very important, 53% rated religion as important and 39% as somewhat important. Further detailed demographic characteristics of the participating sample are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographics for Latino participants.

	n	*%*	*M*	*SD*
Age	183		23.23	4.588
Gender	184		1.29	0.466
Male	51	27.7		
Female	132	71.7		
Unspecified	1	0.5		
Education	184		3.15	1.147
High School/GED	24	13.0		
Vocational/Technical	1	0.5		
Some College	102	55.4		
Bachelor's Degree	17	9.2		
Some Graduate	29	15.8		
Marital Status	184		1.19	0.582
Single	161	87.5		
Married	15	8.2		
Separated	2	1.1		
Divorced	5	2.7		
Number of people in Household	184		4.28	1.563
Racial/Ethnic Identity	184		4.00	0.000
Latino	184	100.0		
Religious/Spiritual background	184		5.34	7.9092
Protestant	3	1.6		
Catholicism	101	54.9		
Hinduism	0			
Agnosticism	5	2.7		
Atheism	5	2.7		
Christianity	57	31.0		
Other	8	4.3		
Religion Importance in daily life	184		3.07	1.003
Not important	13	7.1		
Somewhat Important	39	21.2		
Important	53	28.8		
Very Important	67	36.4		
Don't Know	5	2.7		
SES	184		1.91	0.414
Lower	24	13.0		
Middle	154	83.7		
Upper	5	2.7		

Recruitment

After receiving approval from the University's Institutional Review Board, Psychology professors were contacted to schedule a time in which the students could participate in study. All professors from the psychology department were sent an e-mail requesting them for permission to have the last 20-25 minutes of class or meetings to recruit students for study. Once professors agreed via e-mail a time and place was set for recruitment. Students were informed about study and were asked to participate in study during class time or student organization meeting. All information and instructions were provided in English. Recruitment of all students was obtained within a 3-month period.

Materials and Procedures

On average it took the students between 25 to 30 minutes to complete the surveys. In appreciation of student's participation they were offered extra credit for course. Students were explained that in order to participate a signed a consent form was needed and had to be given back before handing them the surveys. Participants were informed that their participation in the study was completely voluntary and all data was going to be maintained confidential. Students who participated had to fill out a demographic information survey, which asked information about age, sex, social economic status, GPA, level of education, ethnic identity and religious background. In addition there were surveys on familismo, spirituality, purpose in life, and well-being. A description of each of the measures used in this study is provided below.

Instruments

The *Spiritual Perspective Scale* (Spiritual Perspective Scale; Reed, 1986) is a 10-item survey that measures the saliency of spiritual perspective in a person's life. Specifically, it measures the extent to which they hold spiritual views and engage spiritual interactions (Reed, 1986). The scale is based on a conceptualization of spirituality as a human experience that is relevant in everyday life, during health related events and during times of increased awareness of mortality. Spirituality Perspective Scale uses a 6-type Likert scale where 1= Not at all; 2= Less than once a year; 3= About once a year; 4= About once a month; 5= About once a week; 6= About once a day. A sample item of the SPS includes, " In talking with your family or friends, how often do you mention spiritual matters?" A research study that used the Spirituality Perspective Scale with 223 Latino and Non-Latino college students in the United States had a Cronbach's alpha of .89 for Latinos and .94 for Non Latinos (Campesino et al., 2009). Within this study the Cronbach's alpha for the Spirituality Perspective Scale was .96 (see Appendix B).

The Purpose in Life Test (PIL; Reed, 1986) is the instrument used to measure the degree to which a person experiences meaning and purpose in their life. The Purpose In Life is a 20-item scale and each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale and total scores are aggregated (not averaged) therefore scores range from 20 (low purpose) to 100 (high purpose). An example of an item in the measure is, "My personal existence is: (1) utterly meaningless, without "purpose" to (5) "purposeful and meaningful". The internal consistency for this measure in this current research is a = .91. Previous research on the Purpose In Life has yield similar internal consistency scores with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .86 - .97. (Melton & Schulenberg, 2008; see Appendix C).

The Warwick-Edinburgh *Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWS)* (Stewart-Brown & Janmohamed, 2008) was used to examine the participants' well-being. This scale is composed of 14 Likert scale items. According to Stewart-Brown et al. (2008), the 14-item scale is designed to measure mental well-being covering subjective well-being and psychological functioning. All items are worded positively and address aspects of positive mental health. The scores can vary from a low score of 14 to a high score of 70 (Stewart-Brown et al., 2008). Example items are, "I've been dealing with problems well" and "I've been feeling good about myself." Answers range from (1) "none of the time"; (2) "rarely"; (3) "some of the time"; (4) "often"; and (5) "all of the time." However, based on previous research conducted on 1749 participants the Cronbach's alpha was .91 (Stewart-Brown et al., 2008). The Cronbach's alpha for this measure in the current study was .85 (see Appendix D).

DATA ANALYSIS

Bivariate correlation analyses were conducted to examine relationships among the studied factors. Separate multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine how familismo and spirituality predicted the mental well-being and purpose in life of Latinos college students.

RESULTS

Relationship between Familismo, Spirituality, Purpose in Life, and Mental Well-Being

In order to answer research question #1 "To what extent are spirituality, familismo, meaning of life, and positive well-being correlated for a Latino college sample?", bivariate correlations were conducted. Bivariate correlations were chosen because analyses were needed to determine the relationship and strength between two continuous variables (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2013). The results from these bivariate correlations showed that familismo and spirituality had a low correlation ($r=.20, p<.01$). Spirituality on the other hand yielded more low to moderate correlations with the two other outcome variables for this study (i.e. purpose in life, and well-being). The results were as follows: spirituality was found to correlate at low significant levels with purpose in life, $r= .28$, $p < .00$ and with well-being $r=.16$, $p < .03$. Purpose in life and well-being, on the other hand yielded a strong correlation, $r=.70$, $p < .001$. Table 3 summarizes the correlations between all variables examined for this study.

Table 3. Correlations of spirituality, well-being and familismo among Latino college students.

Measure	1	2	3	4
1. Familismo				
2. Spirituality	.19*	_		
3. Purpose In Life	.11	.28*	--	
4. Well-being	.14	.16*	.69*	--

Note.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The Spiritual Perspective Scale ranged from 10-60 (*M* = 42.50, *SD* = 15.30) and Purpose in Life ranged from 46-100 (*M* =83.12, *SD*=11.46). The Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale ranged from 28-103 *(M=54.11, SD=9.91).* Table 2 summarizes the means and standard deviations.

Table 2. Means and standard deviations for scores on the SPS, WEMWS, PIL and attitudinal familismo in Latino college students.

	n	*M*	*SD*
Spiritual Perspective Scale	175	42.50	15.30
Purpose in Life Test	181	82.12	11.46
Warwick-Edinburg Mental Well-being Scale	179	54.11	9.91
Attitudinal Familismo	171	127.92	27.83

Regression Analyses

Regarding research questions 2 and 3 ("To what extent does spirituality influence positive well-being and meaning of life in a Latino sample?" and "To what extent does familismo influence of positive well-being and meaning of life in a Latino sample?"), linear regressions were selected as the proper analysis for these questions given the low correlations between variables. Given that familismo was not correlated with the identified outcome variables, the authors determined that a path analysis. The original plan for conducting a pathway analyses would not be feasible and analyzing familismo and spirituality would only weaken the model; therefore, individual linear regressions were run to examine the extent to which the independent variables contributed to the variance. Simple linear regression analysis is used to predict the values of a dependent variable based on the values of the independent variables (Christensen et al., 2013). Linear regression assumes normality, linearity and independence between the independent variables and dependent variables. In order to test for normality and linearity, scatterplots and skewedness tests were conducted. Scatter plots were created for each of the significant regressions to depict the relationship between the variables (see Figures 1, 2 and 3).

Figure 1. Linearity between spirituality and well-being

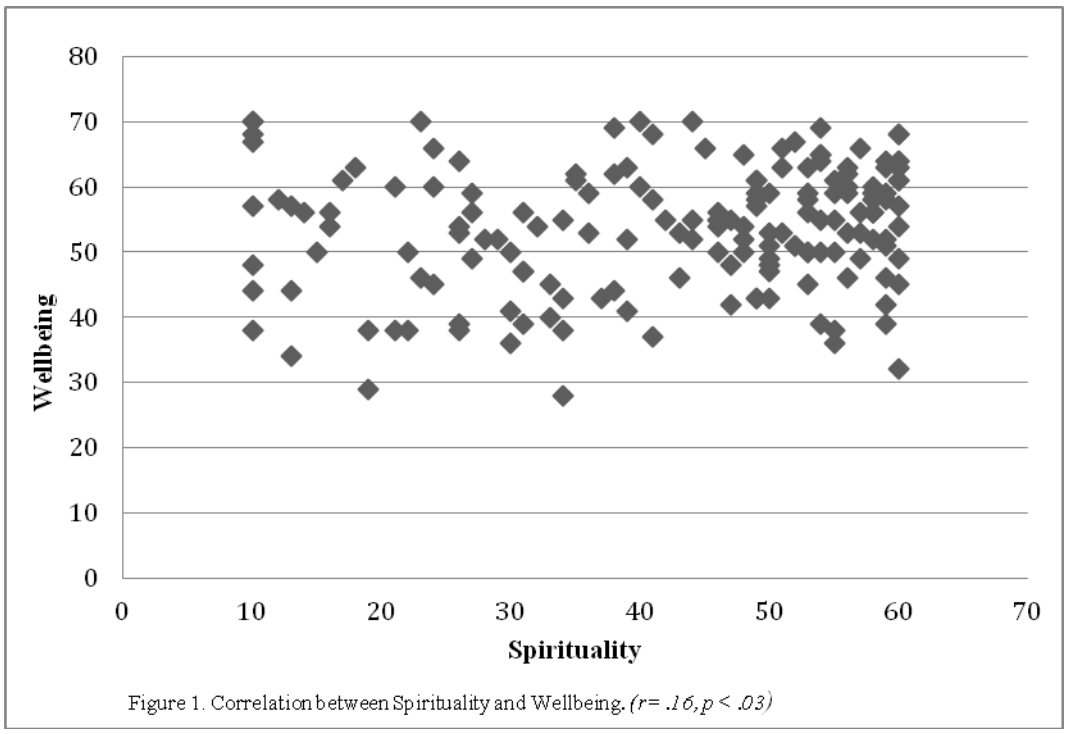


Figure 1. Correlation between Spirituality and Wellbeing. *(r= .16, p < .03)*

Figure 2. Linearity between spirituality and purpose in life

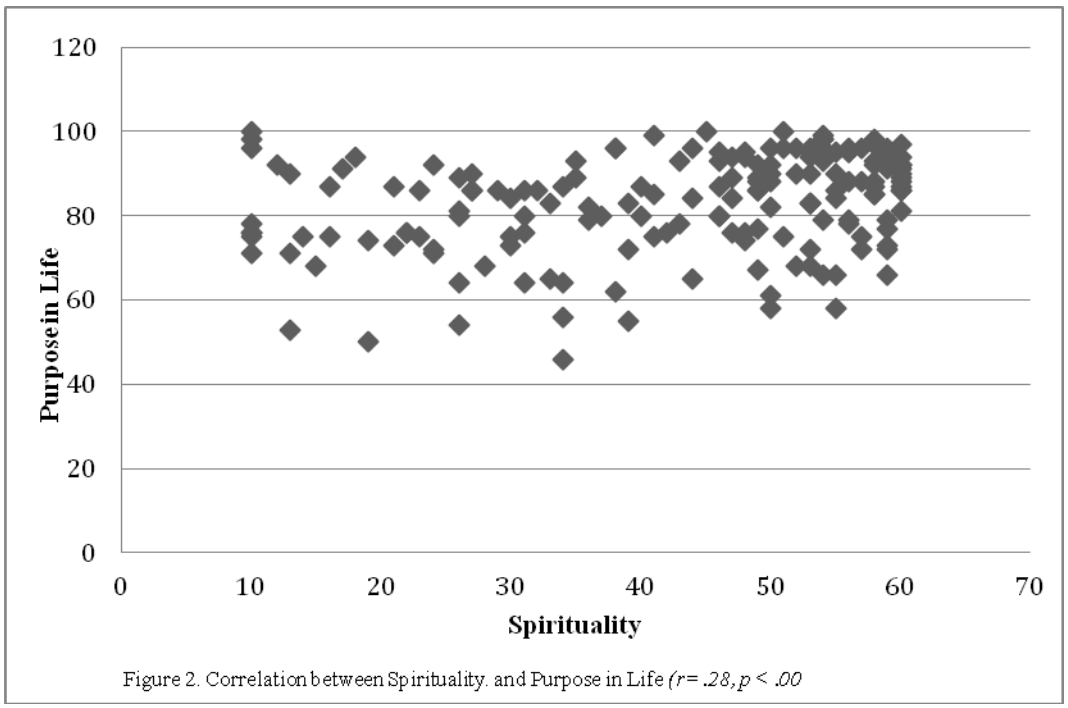
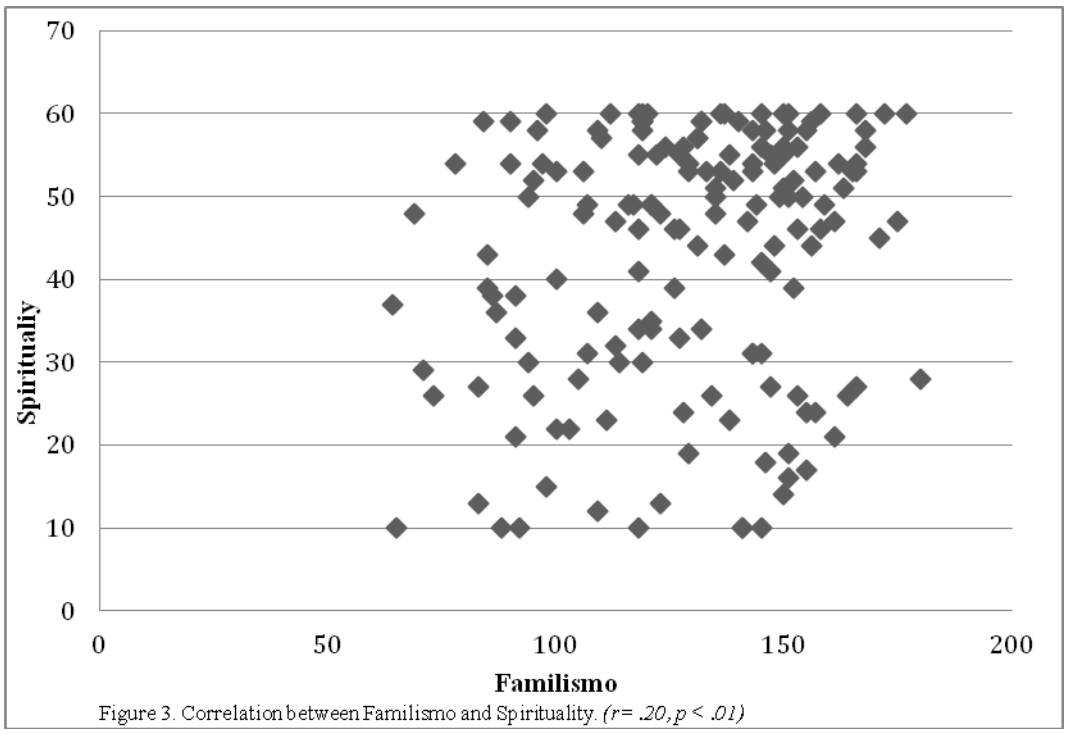


Figure 2. Correlation between Spirituality. and Purpose in Life *(r= .28, p < .00*

Figure 3. Linearity between familismo and spirituality



Results of regression analysis are presented in Tables 4 and 5. The results in Table 4 show that spirituality significantly predicted purpose in life (β= .16, p < .00), as did mental well-being (β =.28, p < .03). The results of the regression indicated that spirituality and purpose in life were significant (R2 =.07, F (1,170) = 14.43, p <.00). Results of the regression also indicated that spirituality and mental well being were significant (R2 =.02, F (1,168) = 4.51, p <.35).

Table 4. Summary of simple linear regression statistics for spirituality among Latino college students.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Spirituality	B	Std. E	β	t	Sig.
Purpose In Life	.213	.056	.280	3.799	.000
Mental Well Being	.106	.050	.162	2.125	.035

Table 5 presents the regression analysis for the independent variable familismo and dependent variables purpose in life and mental well-being. Regression analysis for familismo, did not show a significant prediction of purpose in life (β=.05, p< .13) and mental well-being (β=.05, p< .07) in Latino college students. Familismo and purpose in life were not significant (R2 =.01, F (1,166) = 2.36, p <.13). The results of the regression indicated the two predictors familismo and mental well-being were not significant (R2 =.02, F (1,164) = 3.40, p <.07).

Table 5. Summary of simple linear regression statistics for familismo among Latino college students.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Familismo	B	Std. E	β	t	Sig.
Purpose In Life	.051	.033	.118	1.537	.126
Mental Well Being	.052	.028	.143	1.845	.067

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to increase knowledge on the relationship and effects of familismo and spirituality on the mental health well-being of Latino college students. The results of the current study showed that spirituality is correlated with familismo, well-being, and purpose in life. Spirituality was also found to explain 27% of the variance between mental well-being and purpose in life respectively. Findings from this study are aligned with previous research that have found that spirituality and meaning in life are related to each other (Hilton & Child, 2014; Snodgrass & Sorajjakool, 2011) and studies that have also found that people who rate high in spirituality have a higher sense of purpose in life (Cranney, 2013). Based on the factors analyzed in this study the following paragraphs will address some of the considerations for future study.

Relationship between Spirituality, Purpose in Life and Well-Being

More studies should focus on Latinos' spirituality, since it is a factor that is correlated with purpose in life and well-being in this study. Previous research by Hilton and Child (2014) was aligned with the findings in this study that spirituality has been found to help Latinos cope with physical and mental problems. It has also been shown to provide them with meaning in life and offers hope of life after death (Hilton & Child, 2014). Given the importance that this particular sample placed in the importance of religion in their daily lives when asked in the demographics section, we can conclude that this population is strongly identifies with their religion and/or spirituality. Given that this sample resides in a border city it might not be reflective of other Latinos across the U.S. Therefore, spirituality in Latinos should be explored more in depth in other regions.

Relationship between Familismo, Purpose in Life and Well-Being

Another variable of interest for this study was familismo, and although it was found to correlate with spirituality, it was found to not predict well-being or purpose of life for this sample. These results are aligned with some research on familismo that has shown could be both a protective and a risk factor for the Latino population. Previous research conducted by Ayón et al. (2010) and Calzada, Tamis-LeMonda and Yoshikawa (2013), has found that familismo is positively correlated with well-being and negatively correlated with substance use. This cultural value is also considered a big protective factor for Latinos as it helps many of them to adjust and feel supported when socially adapting or being discriminated against in the United States (Ayón et al., 2010). The findings in Ayón et al. (2010) affirmed that family social support could be a buffer for psychological distress. However other research has also found that familismo can be a risk factor as it can be a barrier to receiving mental health services. Chavez-Korrell et al. (2014) explained how familismo could make Latinos seek help within the family rather than outsiders minimizing their access to more adequate services. Surprisingly, familismo was not as strongly related to purpose in life and well-being as expected; this could be due to beliefs and rules that can come with this cultural value. As previously mentioned, familismo tends to be involved with the family in decision-making. This can create stress and affect the person's perception and individual meaning in life (Antshel, 2002). However, previous research of familismo in Latinos have suggested that Latinos consider their family a support system and a group that has precedence over the individual interest (Antshel, 2002). These findings aligned with the ideas of this study, that familismo would have an influence on purpose in life and well-being in Latinos. The aim of this study was to look at how each factor correlated with the other among a Latino population. Based on the lack of literature and research in Latino mental health it is crucial that

health practitioners from all fields gain the proper knowledge and training in Latinos' cultural values, as well as protective and risk factors. Learning about their culture, values, beliefs and protective factors will better prepare health practitioners and educators to provide effective services to this population (Bernal et al., 1995). As previously mentioned, it has been found in literature that cultural factors can play an important role in the well-being of Latinos (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2003).

In addition, this study makes an important contribution to the field of counseling psychology because it focuses on the importance of including Latinos' spirituality within the mental health field, specifically counseling settings. Previous research has found that although spirituality has been reported to be a significant protective factor for a significant proportion of the population, it is rarely studied and addressed in counselors' education (Luna & MacMillan, 2015). Based on the results of this study, spirituality should be viewed as an important factor that needs to be considered when working with Latino college students.

LIMITATIONS

The findings in this study have provided some understanding on how some of the embedded cultural values of Latinos correlate. The idea is that more research is needed on these factors and that mental health professionals are aware of different cultural values when working with the Latino population. Although this study is a crucial contribution to the limited amount of research on Latinos' spirituality and well-being, it also has a number of limitations, which are discussed below.

Recruitment and Sample

The location of the university where participants were recruited (south Texas border with Mexico) could be viewed a significant limitation for this study and practitioners' ability to generalize these results to Latinos outside of border towns in Texas. According to Cuellar et al. (1997), the border in South Texas has a population of 87% of Mexican heritage. The sample was not reflecting other Latino heritage group such as Latinos from Central and/or South America. Even though many consider themselves Latinos, the cultural beliefs, values, traditions and spirituality might differ among Latino nationalities. Barreto (2002) explains how the census has had a difficulty time distinguishing among the countries of origin within the Latino population; he emphasizes the importance of distinguishing the nationalities within the Latino population. Now that Latinos are the largest minority in the U.S. more focus should be placed in cultural values according to the nationality to best reach the Latino population (Barreto, 2002). A previous study conducted at a border city in Texas, mentioned that a limitation to their study was the Mexican American population because it was also not representative of other Mexican Americans in the U.S. (Faver & Trachte, 2005). Additional research should be conducted, as the

sample used in this study (i.e., Latino college students) might not be an adequate representative sample of the Latino population.

This particular sample is also not representative of all Latinos as the participants in this study had an average age of twenty-three years old, single, middle social economic class and had some university background. The education level of the participants used in this study might not be reflective of Latinos in other parts of the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015a), only 23% of all Latinos will receive associates degree or more and only 15% of all Latinos will have receive a bachelor's degree or more. Latinos are also the ethnicity with the lowest rates of achieving a Bachelor's degree within the 25-year and older population when compared to Asians, Whites and Blacks (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b).

Skewedness

Results in this study indicated that there was moderately left-skewed for both spirituality (skewness = -.699) and familismo (skewness = -.457). The lack of a normal distribution means that the sample used in this study was not representative of the normal sample. This can be due to the location or the homogeneity of the population used in the study. This population of Latino college students in the border region of the Unites States might not reflect other Latino population in the northern area of the U.S. According to a similar study conducted within college students living in the border (Faver & Trachte, 2005), an advantage of living on border to Mexico is that the Latino population has easy access to their religious and cultural values compared to those Latino populations who live further north. This limitation can be a reason as to why data showed that the participants rated high in both spirituality *(M= 42.50, SD= 15.30)*, with possible range of 10-60 and familismo *(M= 127.92, SD=27.83),* with possible range of 47-

180. More focus should be placed in recruiting a sample that is representative of Latinos in other locations of the Unites States.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Population

Further research should focus on how different ethnicities (such as Whites, Asians and/or African Americans) and further research should focus on how the well-being of different ethnicities is affected by spirituality. According to Luna and MacMillan (2015), spirituality can be a buffer and/or protective factor for experiencing lower quality of life in different ethnic groups. Other studies have demonstrated that spirituality appears to also be a core values for other ethnicities such as Caucasians and African Americans (Luna & MacMillan, 2015). Further research should be conducted to examine how spirituality influences different ethnicities (Luna & MacMillan, 2015).

Familismo

As previously mentioned familismo can be a cultural protective factor for Latinos' mental well-being as it provides support for the individuals. More research should be conducted to understand the extent that familismo has on Latinos' mental health and well-being. Perhaps, familismo is only a protective factor of problem behaviors but not as much of positive ones. Some research has found that familismo can be a risk factor for Latinos as it can be a cultural barrier to receiving proper mental health services (Kouyoumdjian et al., 2003). Familismo correlations with depression and anxiety in Latinos should be further examined. Based on previous research, acculturation is also a factor that is associated with psychological well-being for many Latinos. Many Latinos experience different levels of acculturation. Therefore it is important to further study the effects of acculturation and well-being regarding Latinos,

specifically within border cities where the acculturation process might be more complex to measure and different to other Latinos experiencing acculturation.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Spirituality is an important component for Latinos' well-being and limited research conducted with Latinos and well-being have suggested that cultural values such as spirituality and familismo should be considered when studying the mental well-being of this population (Chavez-Korell et al., 2014; Kouyoumdjan et al., 2003; Luna & MacMillan, 2015).

One of the aims of this study was to examine the relationships between spirituality and meaning in life, well-being and familismo. The second purpose was to explore the extent to which spirituality and familismo influence meaning in life and well-being. Regression analyses conducted in this study demonstrated that spirituality was significantly correlated to purpose in life. Regression analyses between familismo, purpose in life and well-being were insignificant. However, familismo did significantly correlate with spirituality. The results of this study suggest that there is a need to be more aware of cultural factors such spirituality and familismo when trying to increase the mental well-being of Latinos. It is crucial for health practitioners to be aware the cultural values that the populations they are serving have to ensure that the clients' needs are being met.

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APPENDIX A
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

Instructions: Please DO NOT write your name on this form as it will not be linked with your responses in any way. Please provide ONE response for each of the following questions OR fill in the blank as appropriate.

1. What is your age? _____

2. What is your sex?

Female ○ Male ○ Unspecified ○

3. Gpa _____

4. What is the highest level of education that you have achieved to date?

○ High school graduate/GED ○ Vocational/Technical training ○ Some College
○ Completed College (bachelor's degree) ○ Some graduate school

5. What is your marital status?

Single ○ Married ○ Separated ○ Divorced ○ Widowed ○

6. Number of people that live in your house hold? _____

7. With which racial or ethnic category do you identify?
○ African American ○ Asian/Pacific Islander ○ Caucasian ○ Latino ○ Native American
Other: _____

8. What is your religious/spiritual background?
○ Protestant ○ Catholicism ○ Judaism ○ Islam ○ Buddhism ○ Hinduism
○ Agnosticism ○ Atheism ○ Christianity Other: _____

9. If you specified a religion, how important is it in you daily life?

○ Not important ○ Somewhat important ○ Important ○ Very important ○ Don't know

10. Socioeconomic status:

○ Lower ○ Middle ○ Upper

APPENDIX B
SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE SCALE ©Reed, 1986

Introduction and Directions: In general, spirituality refers to an awareness of one's inner self and a sense of connection to a higher being, nature, others or to some purpose greater than oneself. I am Interested in your responses to the questions below about life. There are no right or wrong answers. Answer each question to the best of your ability be marking an "x" in the space above that group of words that best describes you.

Item	1 Not at all	2 Less than once a year	3 About once a year	4 About once a month	5 About once a week	6 About once a day
1.In talking with your family or friends, how often do you mention spiritual matters?						
2.How often do you share with others the problems and joys of living according to your spiritual beliefs?						
3.How often do you read spiritually related material?						
4.How often do you engage in private prayer or meditation?						
5.Forgiveness is an important part of my spirituality.						
6.I seek spiritual guidance in making decisions in my everyday life.						
7.My spirituality is a significant part of my life.						
8.I frequently feel very close to God or a "higher power" in prayer, during public worship, or at important moments in my daily life.						
9.My spiritual views have had an influence upon my life.						
10.My spirituality is especially important to me because it answers many questions about the meaning of life.						

If possible, please describe how you define spirituality on the back of this page, or provide any other comments you feel are important for the researcher to know about. Thank you.©Reed,1986

APPENDIX C
PURPOSE IN LIFE TEST (Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964)

Instructions: Circle the number (1 to 5) next to each statement that is most true for you right now.

1. I am usually:				
1	2	3	4	5
Bored				…….enthusiastic
2. Life to me seems:				
1	2	3	4	5
Completely routine				always exciting
3. In life, I have:				
1	2	3	4	5
No goals or aims				clear goals & aims
4. My personal existence is:				
1	2	3	4	5
utterly meaningless…… ……..				purposeful & meaningful
without purpose				
5. Every day is:				
1	2	3	4	5
Exactly the same				constantly new & different
6. If I could choose, I would:				
1	2	3	4	5
Prefer never to have been born				want 9 more lives just like this one
7. After retiring, I would:				
1	2	3	4	5
Loaf completely the rest of my life				do some exciting things I've always wanted to
8. In achieving life goals, I've:				
1	2	3	4	5
Made no progress whatever				progressed so complete fulfillment
9. My life is:				
1	2	3	4	5
Empty, filled only with despair				running over with exciting things
10. If I should die today, I'd feel that my life has been:				
1	2	3	4	5
Completely worthless				very worthwhile

11. In thinking of my life, I:				
1	2	3	4	5
Often wonder why I exist				always see reason for being here
12. As I view the world in relation to my life, the world:				
1	2	3	4	5
Completely confuses me				fits meaningfully with my life
13. I am a:				
1	2	3	4	5
Very irresponsible person				very responsible person
14. Concerning freedom to choose, I believe humans are:				
1	2	3	4	5
Completely bound by limitations of hereditary and environment				totally free to make all life choices
15. With regard to death, I am:				
1	2	3	4	5
Unprepared and frightened				prepared and unafraid
16. Regarding suicide, I have:				
1	2	3	4	5
Thought of it seriously as a way out				never given it a second thought
17. I regard my ability to find a purpose or mission in life as:				
1	2	3	4	5
Practically none				very great
18. My life is:				
1	2	3	4	5
Out of my hands and controlled by external factors				in my hands I'm in control of it
19. Facing my daily tasks is:				
1	2	3	4	5
A painful and boring experience				a source of pleasure and satisfaction
20. I have discovered:				
1	2	3	4	5
No mission or purpose in life				a satisfying life purpose

APPENDIX D
The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)

Below are some statements about feelings and thought.
Please check the box that best describes your experience of each over the last weeks

Item	None of the time	Rarely	Sometime of the time	Often	All of the time
1.I've been feeling optimistic about the future					
2.I've been feeling useful					
3.I've been feeling relaxed					
4.I've been feeling interested in other people					
5.I've had energy to spare					
6.I've been dealing with problems well					
7.I've been thinking clearly					
8.I've been feeling good about myself					
9.I've been feeling close to other people					
10.I've been feeling confident					
11.I've been able to make up my own mind about things					
12.I've been feeling loved					
13.I've been interested in new things					
14. I've been feeling cheerful					

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS) © NHS Health Scotland, University of Warwick and University of Edinburgh, 2006, all rights reserved

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