THE FAMILY AND THE SCHOOL CONTEXT: WHICH IS INFLUENTIAL ON

THE ACADEMIC OUTCOMES OF IMMIGRANT AND NATIVE LATINO

YOUTH?

THESIS

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by

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ABSTRACT

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Research revealed that Latino youth have relatively high drop-out rates and poor academic performance (Hirschman 2001). Despite these adversities, there is a significant amount of Latinos that succeed in school and earn college degrees. Academic resilience and success has been more prevalent among immigrant Latinos than their native counterparts (Kao 2004). The reason for this disparity in academic

outcomes among the three different generations is due to Latino immigrant families valuing interdependence and providing a wide support network for their youth, which can buffer the negative effects of their living situation (Zhou 1997). However, as a child assimilates into the mainstream culture the family ties become loose and individualism is valued more within the family. Therefore, as Latinos assimilate, their peer networks and school communities become influential to their academic outcomes. Seeing as both the family and the school context are important factors in the outcomes of Latino adolescents, the purpose of this research study is to investigate how these factors positively influence the academic performance of immigrant Latino adolescents compared to their native counterparts. This generational research study will add to the existing research on the positive factors that affect the academic outcomes of Latino youth. The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (ADD health) survey was used to answer these proposed questions.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Latinos are the largest and fastest growing minority group in the United States and demographers have estimated this population will continue to increase for several decades due to the large influx of immigrants entering the country every year (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). The Latino population is also relatively young, median age is 25 years old (U.S. Census Bureau 2000), and 28 percent of Latino youth under the age of 18 are living in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau 2002). Research revealed that Latino youth have relatively high drop-out rates and poor academic performance (Hirschman 2001; Van Hook and Fix 2001; Ryabov and Van Hook 2006). These problems are also due in part to Latinos overrepresentation in schools that are in poor inner-city communities, have a lack of resources, and low teacher quality (Portes 1995; Crosnoe 2005; Eamon 2005).

Despite these adversities, there is a significant amount of Latinos that succeed in school and earn college degrees. There is a plethora of sociological research that has concentrated on the risks Latinos face that

cause academic failure (Hirschman 2001; Van Hook and Fix 2001; Ryabov and Van Hook 2006). Recently, research has been redirected to focus on academic success among underprivileged Latinos, specifically immigrant Latinos (Gonzalez and Padilla 1997; White and Glick 2000; Kao 2004; Eamon 2005).

Whether a child wants to graduate from college or receive a well-paying job these factors are dependent on his or her success in school (Stanton-Salazar 2001). The National Center of Educational Statistics reported that 47 percent of Latinos who had scored high on the mathematics standardized test received a college degree, whereas 4.9 percent of Latinos who scored low on the test graduated from college (National Center for Educational Statistics 2005). This relationship between math scores and graduation rates occurred for all other ethnicities. However, youth who live in poverty are less likely to succeed in education compared to affluent adolescents due to their lack of financial capital (i.e. family household income) and human capital (i.e. parents' educational background) (Coleman 1990). Human capital is the skills and knowledge that is acquired by a person to make them productive (Coleman 1990; Perrieira, Harris, and Lee 2006).

Families living in poverty are likely to have a lack of resources for their children, such as books to read, and the parents' educational background is low. Limited resource availability and parents' low educational background can related to academic failure because the lack

of needed support to achieve academically. Also, living in poor communities is disadvantageous to youth due to the limited capital such as that can be obtained within the community. Whereas many Latino adolescents are living in poverty and located in poor inner-city communities, some were resilient to the risk factors associated with these conditions and achieved positive educational outcomes (Crosnoe 2005). Crosnoe (2005) found that Mexicans immigrant children who attended schools in high poverty levels were resilient to the risk factors associated with these conditions and did not perform poorer, as previously found, than those in other schools. The researcher theorized that this resilience was because in a high poverty school there was "a more even playing field in which the sociodemographic aspects of the lives of the average student are counterproductive to academic functioning and general well-being" (Crosnoe 2005:297). Ryanbov and Van Hook (2006) found similar findings, they found schools with a low socioeconomic status (SES) had a positive effect on grade point average while schools with a high minority composition had a negative effect on grade point average among immigrant Latinos.

Academic resilience and success have been more prevalent among immigrant Latinos than their native counterparts (Portes and Zhou 1993; Kao and Tienda 1995; Kao 2004). The reason for this generational disparity in academic outcomes is due to Latino immigrant families valuing interdependence and providing a wide support network for their

youth, which can buffer the negative effects of their living situation (Zhou 1997).

However, as a child assimilates into the mainstream culture the family ties become loose and individualism is valued more within the family (Zhou 1997). Therefore, as Latino children assimilate, their peer networks and school communities become influential to their academic outcomes. Given that a large percentage of Latino youth are living in poverty and located in poor inner-city communities, researchers have suggested that teachers and administrators facilitate a positive atmosphere of collaboration and support to buffer the negative consequences of high poverty rates. Schools need to shift their focus on meeting the socio-emotional needs of their youth rather than focusing on standardized tests and grade point averages of these youth. Past research has found that school attachment can positively affect the academic outcomes (i.e. grade point averages) of Latino youth (Goodenow and Grady 1993; Gonzalez and Padilla 1997; Sanchez, Colon, and Esparza 2004). School attachment is when students feel they belong to their school, feel the school is not prejudiced towards them, and feel safe at the school. Researchers hypothesized this relation occurs among Latino adolescents because of Latinos' collective values, as discussed earlier (Goodenow and Grady 1993). When schools facilitate a supportive and collaborative environment, Latinos will likely benefit most given that these collectivist values are embedded in their culture. Collectivism is

when a society values human interdependence rather than independence and gives priority to societal goals over individual goals.

<u>Proposed Study</u>

In as much as both the family and the school context are important factors in the outcomes of Latino adolescents, the purpose of this research study is to investigate how these factors positively influence the academic performance of immigrant Latino adolescents compared to their native counterparts. This generational research study will add to the existing research on the positive factors that affect the academic outcomes of Latino youth. In researching the factors that positively, rather than negatively, affect the educational outcomes of Latino adolescents, educators can better understand and meet the emotional and academic needs of these adolescents so they may be successful in life despite their associated risk factors.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociological Theory

Durkheim (1897) explained that when an individual was more

integrated in his or her society or community, the society or community

was able to have greater control over the individual's actions. Given that

the individual felt strongly bonded to the group norms, he or she was

less likely to reject the social norms due to the social consequences

(Durkheim 1897). In regards to the family and school context, youth who

are socially integrated in their family and/or school community are more

likely to meet or exceed the group norms (Durkheim 1897). Although

Latinos are more likely to live in poverty and have limited resources to be

able to meet the group norms, financial status does not always impede

them in achieving the expected norms.

Sociologist James Coleman (1988,1990) theorized that beyond

financial capital (i.e. family household income) and human capital (i.e.

parents' educational background) social capital was most fundamental

for a child's academic success. Social capital was defined by Coleman as

a child's relationship with her or his family, teachers, and community. While financial and human capital are important to positive academic outcomes, social capital is essential for children to reap the rewards of the other two. Within the family, social capital can be measured by positive discussions between the child and her or his parents about school and other intellectual issues (Coleman 1988). Also, social capital can be measured by the parents' educational expectations for their child. Coleman (1988) found that youth whose mothers had college expectations for them were 8.6 percent less likely to drop-out of high school compared to those whose mothers had no college expectations.

Outside the family, social capital can be defined as the positive interactions between the child and his or her school community. For example, Gonzalez and Padilla (1997) found when children had a positive relationship with their teachers and felt attached to their school community, their academic performance was positively affected. Attachment to the school community also was negatively related to school drop-out rates (Perriera, Harris, and Lee 2006). However, immigrant students differ in their attachments to their school community compared to native-born students and, thus, immigrant students academic performance may not be as affected by their school as their native counterparts.

<u>Assimilation Theory</u>

To explain generational disparities in Latino youth's educational

outcomes, this section discusses how Latinos assimilate into the mainstream culture. Classical assimilation theorists suggest that recent immigrants, like immigrants from the early 1900s, should assimilate into the dominant culture, so they may move upward socioeconomically (Gordon 1964; Glazer and Moynihan 1970). Assimilation into the mainstream culture may have allowed European immigrants to move up the economic ladder, but this has not always been the case for recent immigrants from Latin American and Asian countries (Portes 1995). According to Portes (1995), the differences between European immigrants and immigrants from non-Western countries is the fact that certain ascribed physical features, such as skin color, prevent them from being assimilated and moving upward. Moreover, ascribed physical features are not the only reasons why current immigrants assimilate differently from European immigrants; their physical location is an important factor as well.

Research on the recent immigration wave finds that immigrants assimilate differently from earlier waves of immigrants (Portes and Zhou 1993). European immigrants in the early 1900s assimilated into the dominant culture through straight-line assimilation, whereby they would lose their language and culture and adopt the host culture. Recently, immigrants most often assimilate through a process termed as "segmented assimilation" (Portes and Zhou 1993). "Segmented assimilation" refers to how immigrants assimilate into different segments

of society instead of all immigrants assimilating into the same segment as previously done. Portes and Zhou (1993) argue that immigrants today are being immersed into dissimilar sections of the American society ranging from affluent and middle-class suburbs (i.e. Asian immigrants) to poor inner-city communities (i.e. Latino immigrants). The researchers argue that depending on where they are located, assimilating into the mainstream culture may or may not be advantageous to recent immigrants (Portes and Zhou 1993).

For example, recent Asian immigrants have been consistently located in Anglo-majority affluent and middle-class suburbs. Due to the fact that these suburbs had little to no previous existing Asian population the families were closely bonded to maintain their heritage culture and language (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes 1995; Zhou 1997). These families' close bond helped Asian youth excel in their educational outcomes (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes 1995; Zhou 1997). The close bond helped Asian youth excel academically because the parents had greater control over their children's actions and outcomes. Unlike Asian immigrants, Latinos were more likely to immigrate into poor inner-city communities where existing Latino populations already existed. Hence, Latino immigrants would assimilate into this existing population, in which "oppositional cultures" usually existed (Portes and Zhou 1993). "Oppositional cultures" are groups that oppose academic achievement and have negative views towards the mainstream culture due to their

social isolation and deprivation from the Anglo-American culture (Portes and Zhou 1993).

Scholars found that when assimilation occurs, immigrants and their native counterparts differ in their attachment to their families and communities. Depending on their attachments and locality this could be beneficial or disadvantageous. For example, upon arriving in the United States, first generation immigrant youth are closely bonded to their parents and families (Kao and Tienda 1995; Zhou 1997; Kao 2004). In these families, there exists a wide support network and interdependence of family is valued (Griswold del Castillo 1984). Interdependence within Latino families refers to their reliance on one another for economic and emotional support. For Latinos, this support network can help buffer the negative consequences of living in poor inner-city communities.

The second generation youth maintain their strong bonds to their families but because of their increased language proficiency in English they also become connected to their communities, such as their peers and school communities (Zhou 1997). This provides the second generation with more social-psychological resources than the first generation, which explains why this generation academically outperforms the first and third generation (Portes and Zhou 1993; Kao and Tienda 1995; Kao 2004).

By the third generation, the interdependent values lessen and individualistic values emerge; consequently, this generation is more

attached to their peer network than their family (Zhou 1997). A substantial percent of Latino youth under the age of 18 are located in inner-cities, about 46 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2000), where "oppositional cultures" exist, perhaps leading to negative educational outcomes for third generation youth.

"Oppositional cultures" in inner-cities cause Latino youth to stay in poor inner-city communities by negatively affecting their academic outcomes (Portes and Zhou 1993). For that reason, it is disadvantageous for third generation Latino youth to assimilate and be attached to their peer networks in these communities. This relates to why Kao and Tienda (1995) found "the longer the U.S. residence the more maladaptive the outcomes, whether measured in terms of school performance, aspirations, or behavior regardless of immigrant groups" (Kao and Tienda 1995:978). Furthermore, low school performance is probably also due to the fact there are less resources that this group can pull from because family interdependence at this generation is reduced (Kao and Tienda 1995).

Although there is a substantial percentage of Latinos that are living in poverty and in impoverished communities, like the family context, the school environment can help buffer these negative consequences by providing support to these youths and facilitating a positive collaborative environment. Furthermore, school attachment was found to be positively related to academic achievement (Goodenow and

Grady 1993; Gonzalez and Padilla 1997; Sanchez, Colon, and Esparza 2004) and negatively related to school drop-out rates (Perriera, Harris, and Lee 2006) among Latinos. School attachment and belonging were related to positive academic outcomes because youth who felt the school supported them were more attached to the school and met the expectations of the school community rather than rejecting them.

Given that both the family and the school environment are influential on the educational outcomes of Latino adolescents; how do these factors influence academic performance, such as grade point average? Also this research paper addresses generational differences among Latino youth. In the next two sections, the next two sections discusses in-depth how the family and the school context positively influence the academic outcomes of Latino adolescents.

<u>Family Influences</u>

Within the family, social capital that relates to academic achievement can be measured by the family values, family structure, parental practices, and parental expectations. The Latino family is unique because of the importance it places on the family, the extended family (i.e. compadrazgo), interdependence, positive familial communication, and familism, which means that family values are more important than individual values. "Close bonds of affection and assistance among members of family household and a wide network of kinfolk have been found to be one of the most important characteristics

of Mexican-American family life" (Griswold del Castillo 1984:40). Hagen, MacMillan, and Wheaton (1996) found that the family bonds among Latino immigrants were stronger than their native counterparts. When geographic mobility occurs, which can negatively affect children's social capital, these familistic behaviors and bonds buffered the disruption caused by the move. There was little disruption probably because the family bond was strong enough to continue to provide support in the new territories.

This strong sense of familism was also found to positively affect academic achievement (Portes and Zhou 1993; Valenzuela and Dornbusch 1994). Family prosperity and positive interaction among family members were the reasons children achieved academically. The structure of the Latino family was also as important as familism to the academic outcomes of its youth.

The Latino family structure was found to be hierarchal and authoritative, which means the father assumes the dominant role and the parents value their children conforming (Okagaki and Sternberg 1993). In these types of households, the parents had more control of the parent-child decision-making process than other types of households, which positively affected the academic outcomes of these youths (Kao and Tienda 1995). Kao and Tienda (1995) found immigrant youth who came from authoritative households had higher grades than those who came from other households. The disparity in grades was because the

family structure these youth were integrated in had greater control of their youth's actions and was not accepting of deviation from the expected norms. Within this tightly-knit family structure, parents who had supportive education practices were able to provide their youth with the resources needed to achieve academically.

Parents who had strong practices that supported education were found to positively affect their adolescents' academic outcomes. Caplan, Choy, and Whitmore (1992) found that among immigrant households there was an emphasis on education, such as doing homework or being strict on making good grades, rather than doing chores. These parental practices caused the students to be more concerned about their school success rather than their household duties. Furthermore, youth whose parents provided cognitively stimulating home environments (i.e. providing and reading books), were involved with them academically, and engaged in less conflict over common family rules had positive academic outcomes, such as high reading and math scores (Eamon 2005). Parenting practices that support education are beneficial to positive academic outcomes; however, parents who were not able to engage these practices due to lack of human or financial capital but who had high educational aspirations were just as beneficial to the academic performance of their adolescents (Crosnoe, Mistry, and Elder 2002).

Although a large percentage of Latino youth are living in poverty and are located in inner-cities, the family context can provide a buffer to

the negative risk factors associated with these conditions through high educational aspirations. Research found among economically disadvantaged families, that parents' promotion of education positively affected their children's academic outcomes. "As long as disadvantaged parents believed they could make a difference, they were tenacious in steering their adolescents into protective environments, managing their adolescents' lives, and mapping out opportunities for them" (Crosnoe, Mistry, and Elder 2002:700). According to their results, disadvantaged parents' promotion of education influenced their children's road to success and avoided the negative consequences of being in a poor inner-city community (Crosnoe, Mistry, and Elder 2002).

Previous research has also found that there were generational disparities in parental influence on the academic outcomes of immigrant youth. Kao and Tienda (1995) found that parental involvement, family ties, and high aspirations affected academic achievement among immigrant youth. The researchers found children of immigrant parents and foreign-born children were more likely to be successful in their educational achievement than their native counterparts (Kao and Tienda 1995). The researchers found three dimensions important to academic achievement: family decision-making, closeness of parent-child ties, and extent of parent-child discussions (Kao and Tienda 1995). The researchers also found that second generation youths were more likely to achieve academic success because of their increased English skills and

attachment to their families, which allowed their parents to communicate the importance of education (Kao and Tienda 1995). Though immigrant parents do not discuss school, in general, they emphasize to their children the need to attend college. Kao and Tienda (1995) argue that parents strongly influence their children because immigrant children are found to be closer to their parents than their native counterparts (Kao and Tienda 1995). Additionally, Latino immigrant parents' educational aspirations for themselves affected the educational aspirations of their children. The higher the educational level of the parents the more likely they aspire to acquire more education in the U.S. and the higher the aspirations their children have for education (Behnke, Piercy, and Diversi 2004).

<div align="center">School Influences</div>

Like the family, schools are influential to the social development and academic performance of youth. Similar to the family institution, the school community is a socialization agent whose function is to mold, reform, and educate its students according to the goals and ideals set by the host society (Coleman 1990). However, the goals and ideals of the school may not always parallel those of immigrant parents and their youth, which can cause conflict and generational disparities (Greenfield, Quiroz, and Raeff 2000).

In the United States, the goals and ideals of schools are individualistic in that they desire students who "work independently,

strive for excellent individual achievement, and engage in skillful self-expression" (Greenfield, Quiroz, and Raeff 2000:95). This contradicts what immigrant parents from collective societies want for their children. Immigrant families advocate for their children to be "teachable students", who are "well-taught, respectful, obedient, quiet, and amiable child[ren]" (Greenfield, Quiroz, and Raeff 2000:95). First generation youth, those who immigrated at an older age, are more likely than second generation youth to fulfill the collective ideals of their immigrant parents. Second and later generation youth are likely to shift their values from interdependence and collectivism to individualism, which parallel those values of the school community. This shift in values will cause assimilated Latino youth to become attached to the school community (Zhou 1997). Attachment and positive interactions with the school community can positively affect the academic performance of Latino youth.

Latino youth who felt attached and had a sense of belonging to their school environment were more likely to achieve academically (Gonzalez and Padilla 1997) and less likely to drop out of high school (Perrieira, Harris, and Lee 2006). Gonzalez and Padilla (1997) found in their study that a sense of school belonging was more significant in academic achievement, measured by school grades, among Mexican youth than family and peer support (Gonzalez and Padilla 1997). However, the researchers didn't analyze generational disparities because

they only identified their population as Mexican Americans or Chicanos and did not distinguish between generations. As discussed earlier, there are generational disparities in attachment to family and the school community. Therefore, does a generational difference exist in a sense of belonging and its effects on academic achievement among Latino youth? Since past research has shown that the family and school context are both influential to Latinos academic achievement, then the second research question is what factors are important to immigrant and native-born Latinos?

Perrieira, Harris, and Lee (2006) studied the generational disparities in school attachment as one of their school variables and included the family variable in their study. However, the researchers' dependent variable was dropping out of high school. The results of their study found a negative relationship between school attachment and drop-out rates. Overall, in their study they found that first generation youth were less likely to drop out of school than the second and third generation. Would the same pattern and relationship occur with academic achievement (i.e. GPA) as the dependent variable?

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

A substantial percentage of Latino adolescents are living in poverty and are located in poor inner-city communities. These risk factors are negatively related to the educational outcomes of youth. However, the family and school community can buffer these risk factors and help Latino youth succeed academically. Moreover, researchers found that there are differences in the effect of these two factors on their academic performance. In the first and second generation, Latinos are closely bonded to their families, which can positively influence Latino youth's academic outcomes. However, in the third and later generations, Latino youth become closely attached to their peers and school communities, which can negatively and positively affect Latino youth's academic outcomes. This study examines the following questions:

1. Does the family context matter in the academic outcomes of Latino youth?

2. Does the school context matter in the academic outcomes of Latino youth?

3. How does the effects of the family and school context change with generation among Latino youth?

Family Influences on the Academic Outcomes of Latino Youth

Null Hypothesis 1: The family context does not positively influence the academic outcomes of Latino youth.

Research Hypothesis 1: The family context does positively influence the academic outcomes of Latino youth.

School Influences on the Academic Outcomes of Latino Youth

Null Hypothesis 2: The school context does not positively influence the academic outcomes of Latino youth.

Research Hypothesis 2: The school context does positively influence the academic outcomes of Latino youth.

Generational differences in Family and School Effects

Null Hypothesis 3: The family and school context do not positively influence the academic outcomes of first, second, and native generation Latino youth.

Research Hypothesis 3: The family and school context do positively influence the academic outcomes of first, second, and native generation Latino youth.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

<u>Sample</u>

To conduct my research an existing dataset was employed called

the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (ADD Health). The

ADD Health dataset consists of a nationally representative sample of

20,745 adolescents in grades ranging from 7th to 12th. This survey is

comprised of a wide-range of adolescent behavioral outcomes and how

family, peers, and school variables affect these outcomes. The study was

conducted in three waves. In the first wave, the researchers surveyed a

selected sample (20,745) of the total in-school sample size (approximate

90,000) at home. They also interviewed at home a parent or guardian of

the adolescent. For the purpose of this study, wave one was solely used

because it interviewed the adolescents during their middle and high

school years.

In this research study, a subsample was extracted from the total

sample size that included Latino and White adolescents. Whites were the

reference group. The subsample totals were 3,325 adolescents who

reported their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino and 11,073 who reported their ethnicity as Non-Hispanic Whites.

Family Variables

The Latino family was found to have an influence on the academic outcomes of Latino adolescents and to act as a buffer from the risk factors associated with these youths. One of the key factors that increases the chances of successful academic outcomes is parenting practices. Parenting practices has been positively related to academic achievement among minorities and immigrants, such as Latinos. Previous literature found immigrant Latino parents that provide a cognitively stimulating home environment, such as reading and providing books, and discussing education with their child promoted academic achievement (Eamon 2005). This independent variable was measured using six items from the dataset. These items asked the adolescent to answer "yes" or "no" if he or she had done the following in the past four weeks with his or her mother: "talked about your school grades," "worked on a project for school," and "talked about other things you're doing in school." The same questions were asked about her or his father. This was a summative scale and ranged from zero to six; the higher the value, the higher the level of this scale. The internal consistency, assessed by Cronbach's alpha, for this variable was at 0.75.

Similar to parenting practices, parental expectations are important factors for Latinos' academic achievement. Parental expectations were

measured using four items derived from the dataset. The items were on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 is low and 5 is high. Students were asked "how disappointed would [your mother] be if you did not graduate from high school?" The same question was asked for graduating college. These questions were asked about the father as well. This scale was summative and the ranged from four to 20. The Cronbach's alpha was at 0.80 with higher scores indicating higher levels of parental expectations.

School Variable

Previous literature has shown a positive relationship between a sense of school belonging and academic achievement, such as grade point average (Gonzalez and Padilla 1997) and negatively related to school drop-out rates (Perrieira, Harris, and Lee 2006) among Latino adolescents. A sense of school belonging was measured by using six items from the questionnaire. Responses to the questions were on a five-point scale: 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=disagree, and 5=strongly disagree. The following items were administered: "You feel close to people at your school," "you feel like you are part of your school," "students at your school are prejudiced," "you are happy to be at your school," "the teachers at your school treat students fairly," and "you feel safe in your school." All these items, except the item "students at your school are prejudiced", were reverse coded. This was a summative scale and ranged from zero to five. The Cronbach's alpha was at 0.72. High values on this scale indicate high levels of school

belonging.

Academic Outcome Variable

To study the generational disparities of positive academic outcomes among Latino youth, the adolescents' grade point average was used since standardized test scores were not available on the ADD health dataset. Academic achievement was measured in this study by using the students' self-reported grades. The grades were reported on a 4-point scale: 1=A, 2=B, 3=C and 4=D or lower. These grades were reversed coded so that higher scores corresponded to higher grades. These grades reflected assessment in four major subject areas: English or Language Arts, Math, History or Social Studies, and Science. Given that not all the students took all of the subjects the previous school year the missing information was replaced by the mean of the variable. This was a summative scale and ranged from zero to four. When including self-reported grades, it is important to be cautious because low-achievers at times tend to inflate their grades, but previous research has found that youth's self-reported grades are generally accurate indicators of achievement (Dornbusch et al. 1990).

Generational Status Variable

Generational status was created in a manner similar to past research (Kao and Tienda 1995; White and Glick 2000; Perreira, Harris, and Lee 2006) definitions of first, second, and third generation related to immigration. The generational variable had four categories: 1=first

generation, >10 years of age when immigrated; 1.5=one and a half generation, <=10 years of age when immigrated; 2=second generation, adolescent born in the United States to an immigrant mother; 2.5=two and a half generation, adolescent born in the United States to a native born mother; and 3= third generation, adolescent born in the United States to both native-born parents. Since past research has shown that the mother's immigrant status has been more influential on a child than the father's, I decided to use only the mother's immigrant status when creating the second and two and a half generations (Kao and Tienda 1995).

Control Variables

Several socio-economic factors that influence grade point average are controlled for in the analysis. They are age, sex, mother's education, household income, and family type. Since there was a significant number of respondents who did not report their income level, the missing information was replaced by the mean ($45,730) of the variable. The mother's education level was reported by the adolescent using a 12-point scale, in which 1=eighth grade or less and 12="doesn't know if she went to school." For the purpose of this study, this variable was recoded reducing the scale to a 5-point scale instead: 1=less than high school, 2=high school or GED, 3=some college, and 4= college graduate and higher. If the respondent did not know the education level of his/her mother it was coded as missing. Family type included the following: two-

biological parent, two-parent step, single mother, single father, and other family types.

Analytical Approach

To analyze the influences of family and school social capital, I looked at three key independent variables – parenting practices, parental expectations, and a sense of school belonging. Academic outcome was the dependent variable measured by the adolescents' self-reported grades in four subject areas. The analyses were broken down by generational status. To answer my research questions, I conducted three linear regression models; comparative models with White adolescents were also developed. In general, the models are: 1) with parenting practices and parental expectations as the independent variables; 2) with a sense of school belonging as the independent variable and; 3) with parenting practices, parental expectations, and a sense of school belonging as the independent variables. The third linear regression model was included to assess the independent effects of the predictor variables.

There were two models for each generation. The first model analyzed the effects of the key independent variables on the dependent variable. The second model analyzed the effects of the key independent variables on the dependent variable after the control variables were included.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Descriptives

Presented in Table 1 are the descriptive statistics of the

independent variables in this study for Latino and Non-Hispanic White

adolescents. The table consists of the means or percentages for each

variable. The percentages of Latinos in each generation are as follows:

11% belonged to first generation, 16% belonged to 1.5 generation, 34%

belonged to second generation, 20% belonged to 2.5 generation, and 19%

belonged to third generation and higher. The sample consisted of 51%

Latinos and 49% Latinas, and 49% White males and 51% White females.

The mean age of Latinos was at 16.5, while the mean age of Non-

Hispanic Whites was at 16. The family income level of Latinos ($37,679)

was less than that for Whites ($51,711). The percentage of Latinos in

each type of family structure was as follows: 56% belonged to two-

biological parents, 9% belonged to blended family, 23% belonged to

single mother, 4% belonged to single father, and 8% belonged to other.

The percentage of Non-Hispanic Whites in each type of family household

Table 1: Descriptives for Latinos and Whites

VARIABLES	LATINOS	WHITES
Generation (%)		
1st generation	11%	------
1.5generation	16%	------
2nd generation	34%	------
2.5 generation	20%	------
3rd generation	19%	------
Family (mean)		
Parental Expectations	14.17(0.15)	15.12(0.07)
Parenting Practices	1.90(0.037)	2.13(0.02)
School (mean)		
Sense of Belonging	4.52(0.02)	4.54(0.01)
Academic Outcomes		
Grade Point Average	2.57(0.02)	2.86(0.01)
Covariates		
Family Income (mean)	$37,679	$51,711
Age (mean)	16.5(0.04)	16(0.02)
Gender (%)		
Male	51%	49%
Female	49%	51%
Family Type (%)		
Two-biological parents	56%	53%
Blended Family	9%	10%
Single Mom	23%	25%
Single Dad	4%	4%
Other	8%	8%
Mother's Education(%)		
<High School	42%	11%
High School/GED	30%	38%
Some College	14%	21%
College Graduate+	13%	29%
Total Sample Size	3525	11073

Source: The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (ADD Health)–Wave 1
Note: All means were weighted using the gswgt1 weight.

was as follows: 53% belonged to two-biological parents, 10% belonged to

blended family, 25% belonged to single mother, 4% belonged to single

father, and 8% belonged to other. The percentages of Latino adolescents

in each family type are similar to White adolescent families. Mother's

education level for Latinos was as follows: 42% less than high school,

30% high school diploma or GED, 14% some college, and 13% college degree and higher. Whites have higher levels of education than Latinos. Mother's education level for Non-Hispanic Whites was as follows: 11% less than high school, 38% high school diploma or GED, 21% some college, and 29% college degree and higher.

Latinos had medium levels of parental expectations (14.17). Parenting practices were low at 1.90. School belonging was 4.52. Comparatively, Whites had medium levels of parental expectations (15.12). Parenting practices were low at 2.13. Sense of school belonging was high at 4.54. As predicted by previous research, Latinos reported lower (2.57) grade point averages than Non-Hispanic Whites (2.86).

<u>Academic Outcome and Familial Factors</u>

Table 2 contains the regression model with GPA as the dependent variable and familial factors as the independent variables for Latinos and White students. The familial factors are parenting practices and parental expectations. Six set of models were developed – five for Latinos and one for Whites. Each set had two models. In the first model, only the key independent variables were entered. In the second model, the control variables that influence GPA were added. The models for Latinos are broken down by generational status.

Parenting practices and parental expectations both positively influenced the academic outcomes of Latino adolescents. In my research, there were generational differences in the positive effects of these two

Table 2: Family Regression Model of Latinos with GPA as the dependent variable

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	1ST GENERATION		1.5 GENERATION		2ND GENERATION	
	Model 1a	*Model 2a*	*Model 1b*	*Model 2b*	*Model 1c*	*Model 2c*
FAMILY						
Parental Expectations	0.015^ (0.008)	0.017^ (0.009)	0.005 (0.008)	0.003 (0.008)	0.009 (0.006)	0.005 (0.006)
Parenting Practices	0.019 (0.034)	0.009 (0.038)	0.012 (0.026)	0.026 (0.026)	0.089*** (0.021)	0.092*** (0.022)
COVARIATES						
Gender (Female)#	----	0.260** (0.100)	----	0.088 (0.069)	----	0.163** (0.056)
Income (logged)	----	0.103* (0.052)	----	0.064 (0.044)	----	0.030 (0.048)
Age (round)	----	-0.022 (0.030)	----	-0.030 (0.021)	----	-0.031 (0.018)
Family Type#						
Blended	----	-0.174 (0.129)	----	-0.037 (0.164)	----	-0.136 (0.108)
Single Parent	----	0.012 (0.116)	----	-0.053 (0.076)	----	0.0002 (0.075)
Other	----	0.073 (0.205)	----	0.110 (0.136)	----	-0.142 (0.175)
Mother's Education#						
<High School	----	-0.106 (0.150)	----	-0.214 (0.141)	----	-0.010 (0.116)
High School/GED	----	-0.048 (0.089)	----	-0.131* (0.064)	----	-0.040 (0.062)
Some College	----	-0.151* (0.063)	----	-0.048 (0.050)	----	0.032 (0.052)
Constant	2.390***	1.698**	2.483***	2.526***	2.294***	2.521***

Source: The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (ADD Health) –Wave 1
Note: All means were weighted using the gswgt1 weight. ^$p<.10$ *$p<.05$ **$p<.01$ ***$p<.001$
Reference groups are male, two-biological parent family, and college or higher level of education

Table 2 - Continued

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	2.5 GENERATION		3RD+ GENERATION		WHITES	
	Model 1d	*Model 2d*	*Model 1e*	*Model 2e*	*Model 1f*	*Model 2f*
FAMILY						
Parental Expectations	0.009 (0.011)	0.009 (0.013)	0.032*** (0.010)	0.030** (0.010)	0.029*** (0.002)	0.021*** (0.002)
Parenting Practices	0.066^ (0.040)	0.051 (0.043)	0.064** (0.022)	0.053* (0.023)	0.043*** (0.005)	0.029*** (0.005)
COVARIATES						
Gender (Female)#	----	0.040 (0.086)	----	0.144* (0.073)	----	0.237*** (0.022)
Income (logged)	----	0.094 (0.064)	----	0.017 (0.074)	----	0.078*** (0.017)
Age (round)	----	-0.032 (0.024)	----	0.018 (0.024)	----	-0.027** (0.006)
Family Type#						
Blended	----	-0.081 (0.144)	----	-0.102 (0.106)	----	0.010 (0.028)
Single Parent	----	0.161 (0.103)	----	0.097 (0.087)	----	-0.013 (0.019)
Other	----	0.092 (0.157)	----	0.048 (0.167)	----	-0.017 (0.038)
Mother's Education#						
<High School	----	-0.023 (0.132)	----	-0.315** (0.121)	----	-0.422*** (0.035)
High School/GED	----	0.030 (0.059)	----	-0.076 (0.049)	----	-0.122*** (0.012)
Some College	----	0.025 (0.052)	----	-0.055 (0.038)	----	-0.044*** (0.008)
Constant	2.235***	1.720*	1.922***	1.606^	2.322***	2.133***

Source: The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (ADD Health) –Wave 1
*Note: All means were weighted using the gswgt1 weight. ^p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001*
 # Reference groups are male, two-biological parent family, and college or higher level of education

independent variables on the dependent variable. Parental expectations were marginally and positively significant (p<0.10) in the first and significant in the third generation. Parenting practices were significant in the second, two and a half, and third generation.

For the first generation, for every unit increase in parental expectations, GPA increased 0.015 units (p<0.10) for Latino adolescents.

Upon controlling for socio-economic variables that influence GPA, GPA increased 0.017 units for each unit increase in parental expectations ($p<0.10$). In the third generation, for every unit increase in parental expectations, GPA increased 0.032 units. Upon controlling for socio-economic variables, GPA increased 0.030 units for each increase in parental expectations. In the second generation, for each unit increase in parenting practices, GPA increased 0.089 units. After socio-economic variables were controlled for, GPA increased 0.092 units for each unit increase in parenting practices. In the two and a half generation, GPA increased 0.066 units, but this was not significant after controlling for socio-economic variables.

Females had significantly higher levels of GPA in the first, second, and third generation. Mean level of GPA for first generation females was higher than males by 0.260 units. For second generation females, the mean level of GPA was higher compared to males by 0.163 units. Mean level of GPA for females was higher compared to males by 0.144 units.

Also, adolescents whose mothers had at least a college level education had higher levels of GPA relative to those whose mothers had less than a college degree. Mother's education was significant in the first, one and a half, and third generation. Mean levels of GPA for first generation Latinos whose mothers had some college were lower compared to mothers that were college-educated by 0.151 units. For one and a half generation Latinos whose mothers graduated high school or

received a GED had lower mean levels than Latinos with college-educated mothers by 0.131 units. In the third generation, Latinos whose mothers had less than a high school education had lower mean levels of GPA compared to Latinos with college-educated mothers by 0.315 units. Income was positively significant to GPA in the first generation. For every unit increase in income, GPA increased 0.103 units.

Comparatively, family variables were also positively and significantly related to GPA for Non-Hispanic Whites. For every unit increase in parental expectations, GPA increased 0.029 units for Whites. For every unit increase in parenting practices, GPA increased 0.043 units. After factoring for control variables that affect GPA, the two variables continue to be highly significant (p<.001). Like Latinos, White females had higher mean levels of GPA than White males. The mean level for White females was 0.237 units higher than males. For every unit increase in income, GPA increased 0.078 units for White youth. GPA decreased 0.027 units for every unit increase in age. White adolescents whose mothers had less than a college degree had lower mean levels of GPA. For those whose mothers had less than a high school degree the mean level of GPA was 0.422 units lower than mothers with a college degree; those whose mothers had a high school degree or equivalent had a mean level of GPA 0.122 units lower than mothers who had a college degree. For White adolescents whose mothers had some college the mean level of GPA was 0.044 units lower than mothers with a college degree.

Academic Outcome and the School Factor

Table 3 presents the findings for the regression model with GPA as the dependent variable and the school factor as the independent variable. The school factor was sense of school belonging. This regression was divided by generational status as well. Sense of school belonging was positively and significantly related to GPA in all the generations except the first generation. Moreover, the effects of sense of school belonging on GPA increased in value by each generation. In the one and a half generation, for every unit increase in sense of school belonging, GPA marginally increased 0.109 units (p>0.10). This was not significant after controlling for socio-economic variables. Unlike the one and a half generation, the second, two and a half, and third generation coefficients continued to be significant after controlling for socio-economic variables that influence GPA. For every unit increase in sense of school belonging, GPA increased 0.172 units for second generation Latino adolescents. For two and a half generation Latino youth, for every unit increase in sense of school belonging, GPA increased 0.177 units. For the third generation, for every unit increase in sense of school belonging, GPA increased 0.210 units.

Mean levels of GPA were higher for females compared to males in the first, second, and third generation. For first generation females, the mean level of GPA was 0.240 units higher than males. The mean level of GPA for second generation females was higher than males by 0.156

Table 3: School Regression Model of Latinos with GPA as the dependent variable

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	1ST GENERATION		1.5 GENERATION		2ND GENERATION	
	Model 1a	Model 2a	Model 1b	Model 2b	Model 1c	Model 2c
SCHOOL						
Sense of Belonging	0.076	0.104	0.109^	0.080	0.186***	0.172***
	(0.099)	(0.113)	(0.064)	(0.063)	(0.043)	(0.042)
COVARIATES						
Gender (Female)#	----	0.240*	----	0.098	----	0.156**
		(0.098)		(0.067)		(0.054)
Income (logged)	----	0.116^	----	0.072^	----	0.048
		(0.058)		(0.041)		(0.048)
Age (round)	----	-0.020	----	-0.029	----	-0.024
		(0.029)		(0.021)		(0.019)
Family Type#						
Blended	----	-0.225^	----	-0.009	----	-0.103
		(0.126)		(0.158)		(0.101)
Single Parent	----	-0.001	----	-0.020	----	0.003
		(0.118)		(0.076)		(0.076)
Other	----	0.199	----	0.102	----	-0.119
		(0.215)		(0.131)		(0.181)
Mother's Education#						
<High School	----	-0.180	----	-0.217	----	-0.021
		(0.156)		(0.139)		(0.115)
High School/GED	----	-0.106	----	-0.130*	----	-0.028
		(0.090)		(0.064)		(0.060)
Some College	----	-0.187**	----	-0.044	----	0.046
		(0.064)		(0.047)		(0.053)
Constant	2.294***	1.411^	2.088***	2.138***	1.771***	1.704**

Source: The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (ADD Health) –Wave 1
Note: All means were weighted using the gswgt1 weight. ^p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001
Reference groups are male, two-biological parent family, and college or higher level of education

Table 3 - Continued

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	2.5 GENERATION		3RD+ GENERATION		WHITES	
	Model 1d	*Model 2d*	*Model 1e*	*Model 2e*	*Model 1f*	*Model 2f*
SCHOOL						
Sense of Belonging	0.193**	0.177**	0.219***	0.210***	0.258***	0.223***
	(0.064)	(0.068)	(0.046)	(0.049)	(0.015)	(0.016)
COVARIATES						
Gender (Female)#	----	0.057	----	0.178*	----	0.239***
		(0.085)		(0.072)		(0.021)
Income (logged)	----	0.090	----	0.034	----	0.130***
		(0.069)		(0.080)		(0.015)
Age (round)	----	-0.032	----	0.025	----	-
		(0.023)		(0.023)		0.019***
						(0.006)
Family Type#						
Blended	----	-0.059	----	-0.049	----	0.023
		(0.149)		(0.117)		(0.029)
Single Parent	----	0.168^	----	0.077	----	-0.015
		(0.101)		(0.093)		(0.019)
Other	----	0.053	----	0.025	----	-0.012
		(0.177)		(0.164)		(0.039)
Mother's Education#						
<High School	----	-0.025	----	-0.339**	----	-
		(0.135)		(0.135)		0.420***
						(0.033)
High School/GED	----	0.023	----	-0.069	----	-
		(0.059)		(0.053)		0.122***
						(0.011)
Some College	----	0.029	----	-0.046	----	-
		(0.051)		(0.053)		0.039***
						(0.009)
Constant	1.579***	1.128	1.623***	0.992	1.168***	0.829***

Source: The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (ADD Health) –Wave 1
*Note: All means were weighted using the gswgt1 weight. ^p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001*
 # Reference groups are male, two-biological parent family, and college or higher level of education

units. In the third generation, mean levels of GPA for females were higher than males by 0.178 units.

The scores for the control variables, family type and mother's education, were also significant. First generation Latino adolescents who were in a blended family had a marginally lower mean level of GPA

compared to Latino adolescents in a two-biological parent family by 0.225 units. Family type was only significant in the two and a half generation. For Latino adolescents living in a single parent home, GPA increased by 0.168 units. Latinos whose mothers had less than a college degree had lower levels of GPA compared to those who had at least a college degree. First generation Latino adolescents whose mothers had some college had a mean level of GPA lower than Latinos whose mothers were college-educated by 0.187 units. Mean levels of GPA for one and a half generation Latino youth whose mothers had a high school degree or GED were lower than college-educated mothers by 0.130 units. In the third generation, Latino youth whose mothers had less than a high school degree had lower levels of GPA compared to Latinos with college-educated mothers by 0.339 units.

Additionally, sense of school belonging was positively and significantly related to GPA for White adolescents. For every unit increase in sense of school belonging, GPA increased 0.258 units for White adolescents. After including the control variables, sense of school belonging continued to be significant. For every unit increase in sense of school belonging, GPA increased 0.223 for Whites after adding covariates. Similar to the family regression model, most of the control variables were significantly related to GPA. The mean level of GPA for White females was 0.239 units higher than White males. Adolescents whose mothers had less than a college degree had lower mean levels of

GPA than those adolescents whose mothers had a college degree or higher. For every unit increase in income, GPA increased 0.130 units. Age had the reverse effect on GPA compared to income. For every unit increase in age, GPA decreased 0.019 units.

Familial and School Factors

Presented in Table 4 is the regression model where all the familial and school factors are included to predict the dependent variable. This strategy was adopted to assess the independent effects of all three key independent variables on the dependent variable. Consistent with the previous two regression models, this regression model is sectioned by generation status for Latinos. A comparative model for Whites had also been developed.

The school factor continued to be positively and significantly related to GPA in Table 4, whereas some familial factors were not significant any longer. Familial factors, parenting practices and parental expectations, were only significant in the second and/or third generation and no longer significant in the first generation (i.e. parental expectations). The control variables that influence GPA continued to have similar patterns as the previous regression models. Although some of the variations in GPA previously explained by familial factors are now explained by school belonging, in general, familial and school factors positively relate to GPA and there does exist a generational disparity among Latino adolescents. Overall, it appears that school belonging

Table 4: Final Regression Model of Latinos with GPA as the dependent variable

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	1ST GENERATION		1.5 GENERATION		2ND GENERATION	
	Model 1a	*Model 2a*	*Model 1b*	*Model 2b*	*Model 1c*	*Model 2c*
FAMILY						
Parental Expectations	0.013 (0.008)	0.014 (0.008)	0.002 (0.008)	-0.000 (0.008)	0.008 (0.006)	0.004 (0.006)
Parenting Practices	0.020 (0.035)	0.014 (0.038)	0.008 (0.025)	0.025 (0.025)	0.078** (0.021)	0.083*** (0.022)
SCHOOL						
Sense of Belonging	0.049 (0.099)	0.086 (0.103)	0.117^ (0.066)	0.074 (0.063)	0.162*** (0.044)	0.153*** (0.043)
COVARIATES						
Gender (Female)#	----	0.245* (0.099)	----	0.099 (0.094)	----	0.158** (0.055)
Income (logged)	----	0.097^ (0.054)	----	0.065 (0.067)	----	0.033 (0.047)
Age (round)	----	-0.019 (0.030)	----	-0.017 (0.030)	----	-0.022 (0.019)
Family Type#						
Blended	----	-0.193 (0.127)	----	-0.013 (0.160)	----	-0.125 (0.104)
Single Parent	----	0.020 (0.116)	----	-0.039 (0.076)	----	0.006 (0.074)
Other	----	0.126 (0.213)	----	0.115 (0.136)	----	-0.133 (0.170)
Mother's Education#						
<High School	----	-0.149 (0.155)	----	-0.209 (0.164)	----	-0.030 (0.113)
High School/GED	----	-0.077 (0.092)	----	-0.173* (0.073)	----	-0.039 (0.058)
Some College	----	-0.166* (0.064)	----	-0.063 (0.057)	----	0.029 (0.052)
Constant	2.193***	1.409^	2.00***	2.170***	1.603***	1.169**

Source: The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (ADD Health) –Wave 1
Note: All means were weighted using the gswgt1 weight. ^p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001
Reference groups are male, two-biological parent family, and college or higher level of education.

Table 4 – Continued

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	2.5 GENERATION		3ᴿᴰ+ GENERATION		WHITES	
	Model 1d	*Model 2d*	*Model 1e*	*Model 2e*	*Model 1f*	*Model 2f*
FAMILY						
Parental Expectations	0.006 (0.011)	0.007 (0.013)	0.028** (0.010)	0.027** (0.010)	0.026*** (0.002)	0.019*** (0.002)
Parenting Practices	0.047 (0.041)	0.033 (0.044)	0.052* (0.023)	0.043^ (0.023)	0.035*** (0.006)	0.022*** (0.005)
SCHOOL						
Sense of Belonging	0.171** (0.064)	0.161* (0.069)	0.178*** (0.049)	0.177*** (0.052)	0.226*** (0.016)	0.206*** (0.016)
COVARIATES						
Gender (Female)#	----	0.057 (0.087)	----	0.164* (0.073)	----	0.238*** (0.021)
Income (logged)	----	0.078 (0.067)	----	0.034 (0.076)	----	0.076*** (0.016)
Age (round)	----	-0.031 (0.024)	----	0.025 (0.023)	----	-0.016** (0.006)
Family Type#						
Blended	----	-0.058 (0.149)	----	-0.086 (0.108)	----	0.014 (0.027)
Single Parent	----	0.163 (0.10)	----	0.072 (0.088)	----	-0.014 (0.019)
Other	----	0.075 (0.173)	----	0.021 (0.167)	----	-0.008 (0.038)
Mother's Education#						
<High School	----	-0.30 (0.133)	----	-0.292* (0.123)	----	-0.389*** (0.034)
High School/GED	----	0.026 (0.059)	----	-0.057 (0.049)	----	-0.117*** (0.011)
Some College	----	0.029 (0.051)	----	-0.043 (0.038)	----	-0.037*** (0.008)
Constant	1.534***	1.18^	1.203***	0.564	1.367***	1.080***

Source: The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (ADD Health) –Wave 1
Note: All means were weighted using the gswgt1 weight. ^p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001
 # Reference groups are male, two-biological parent family, and college or higher level of education

exerts independent effect on GPA, while in some generations family variables lose their independent impact.

Summary of Results

As hypothesized, the family and school context are both positively related to the academic outcomes of Latino adolescents. Moreover, there does exist a generational disparity in the effects of these independent variables on GPA among Latinos. Sense of school belonging was significant at all generations except in the first generation.

The family variable, parenting practices, was positively related in both the second and third generation in the two regression models, while the parental expectations variable was significant in the first and third generation. The effects of parental expectations on GPA were only marginally significant in the first generation while highly significant in the third generation in the first regression model. However, after including a sense of school belonging the effects of this family variable were not significant in the first generation but continued to be significant in the third. The effects of the school variable, sense of school belonging, was only marginally significant in the one and a half generation but did not sustain significance after factoring for the control variables. This occurred in the two regression models with this variable included. In the second generation and beyond, a positive relationship with sense of school belonging and GPA was observed. These effects sustained in the last regression model with the family variables included and even after controlling for socio-economic variables.

In addition, also a gender gap was found in effects of all three independent variables on GPA. This gender disparity occurred in the

first, second, and third generation for Latino youth. Finally, for white adolescents there was a significant negative relation between age and grade point average. This relationship was not found among Latino youth.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

Durkheim (1897) and Coleman (1988, 1990) both suggested that the social relationships between an individual and his or her society or community affect her or his actions and outcomes. The results of this study demonstrated that familial and school factors do positively influence academic achievement among Latinos. The results of this study also found a generational disparity between Latinos and their school and familial factors.

In all three models, the second and third generations were positively affected by both the school and family. Parental expectations were only significant in the third generation and not in the previous generations. According to Kao and Tienda's (1995) optimist theory the second generation had more optimism in their educational future than the first and later generations because of their recent arrival and their parents' beliefs that there were many opportunities available. However, in my findings only the third generation continued to be influenced by

parental expectations after the school variable was included. The results of my study were inconsistent with the researcher's theory and other previous research; the second generation was not influenced by their parents' aspirations in the final regression model. Additionally, the first generations' academic outcomes were not influenced by the family variables, which was inconsistent with previous research. What can explain this variation in the results of the current study and the researcher's conclusions?

Reasons for the inconsistencies between previous research and my research could be explained by the different approaches in methodology, such as differences in generational status, dataset analyzed, age of population, and race. There continues to be inconsistencies in how first, second, third, and later generations are defined by sociological research. For instance, first generation has consistently been defined as youth who were born outside of the United States, second generation has been defined as native-born youth born to immigrant parents, and third or native generation has been defined as native-born youth born to native-born parents (Kao and Tienda 1995). Recently there has been a shift in how generational status is created by including the generations in between, such as the one and a half and two and a half generation (Perrieira, Harris, and Lee 2006). But even there are inconsistencies at what age of entrance to the United States is considered first and one and a half generation.

Another reason for the differing results from previous research and this research study was the dataset used. For instance, certain datasets have an overrepresentation of Latinos whereas others can have a minimal representation of Latinos. The overrepresentation of Latinos in a dataset can be more generalized to Latinos than the dataset with a minimal representation.

Also the age of the population is very important factor to consider when comparing research. This research study analyzed a broad age range ranging from 12-19 years of age. Crosnoe (2001) explained that parental involvement was dependent on the age of the adolescent. For instance, he said that the older a child is the more autonomy is given and less involvement the parents' have in his or her life (Crosnoe 2001). The age of the population is especially important because there could have been a significant proportion that dropped out of high school, thus not being included in this study.

Lastly, the race variable is an important variable that was not included in this research but has been consistently been included in previous research. For instance, previous research has concentrated on the Mexican immigrant population since this group has been more consistently had disadvantage backgrounds (Crosnoe 2005). But beyond these reasons for the inconsistencies in this research study and previous research, was that this study included both the family and school context.

While this study set out to explore if family factors influenced academic achievement, the study also set out to find if family influences continued to be influential after factoring for the school variable. The effects of family variables on GPA were insignificant in the first generation after including the school variable. Although family factors do play an important role on children and adolescents, the school community is as, if not more, important as the family in their effects on academics. Moreover, parental practices and expectations are at times dependent on the school community and the child's adjustment to it.

<div align="center">Limitations</div>

The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health dataset is one of the most thorough and representative of adolescents in the United States but like other datasets there are limitations. Some of the limitations encountered were race, generational status, and assessment. As explained in the literature review, assimilation is a complex process that occurs differently in each generation and by race and ethnicity (Portes and Zhou 1993). There are very few secondary data sets that identify and distinguish between generational status beyond the third or native generation (i.e. both parents and child are native-born). Further investigations would help explain if generational disparities in family and school influences continue to occur beyond the third generation and distinguishing between third, fourth, fifth, and later generations.

Academic outcomes of Latino adolescents were solely based on

self-reported grades in four subject areas, for which some students had missing grades because they did not take the course the previous school year. Moreover, ADD Health did not consist of standardized test scores and grades reported by an educator or administrator. Unlike grades, standardized test scores can compare students from different schools making the study more reliable. Future research studies that either includes both standardized test scores and self-reported grades or official school grades would be more reliable in analyzing.

Additionally, the dataset that was used was over ten years old and because of this, many of the results may not be consistent with outcomes in datasets that have been conducted more recently. Despite these limitations, ADD Health was chosen for this study because it had a wide range of factors that could explain positive academic outcomes.

<center>Conclusion and Future Direction</center>

This study explored the effects of the school and family context on the academic performance of Latino youth. The results of this study were consistent with the research hypotheses except for the effects of the family effects on the academic outcomes of the first generations. The school variable was influential on all the generations except the first generation. Assimilation into the dominant society, allows for family and school to influence the academic outcomes of Latino adolescents. This finding was opposite of that predicted by the assimilation theory that was theorized by Portes and Zhou (1993), which said that the more integrated

into the dominant society the more negative results would occur. Future studies should further investigate

To conclude, to further understand this school and family interdependence and assimilation theory, future studies should more thoroughly explore why and when immigrant and native Latino parents are more academically involved and influence their child's academics.

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VITA

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