ABSTRACT

FAMILISMO: A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH FOR THE BACHELOR DEGREE PERSISTENCE OF HISPANICS

This study examined undergraduate Hispanic students at California State University, Fresno and their attitudes about familismo and college persistence. The Attitudinal Familismo Scale was used to measure their attitudes about familismo. For the purpose of the study, the item degree commitment was used to measure college persistence on the College Persistence Questionnaire. A quantitative study with 100 undergraduate Hispanic participants from California State University, Fresno took part in this study. The research method of Pearson’s $r$ and bivariate correlation was used to find a correlation between attitudinal familismo and degree commitment. My research found that attitudinal familismo is influenced by the age and gender of undergraduate Hispanics. The strengths-based approach was the theoretical framework used.

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FAMILISMO: A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH FOR THE BACHELOR’S DEGREE PERSISTENCE OF HISPANICS

by
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

At California State Universities, “19 percent of students earn a bachelor’s degree within four years; and just over half (54%) do so in over six years” (Public Policy Institute of California, 2015). The college persistence for Hispanics after 6 years diminishes to more than 70% (California State University, 2010). Examining attitudinal familismo, a cultural characteristic of Hispanics, was important in understanding the way it influenced their degree attainment. Attitudinal familismo refers to Hispanics’ beliefs surrounding immediate and extended family members like following the desires, goals, and needs of their family (Marsiglia & Kulis, 2009). The researcher focused on the role attitudinal familismo had on college persistence; in particular, its influence on the degree commitment of Hispanic students at California State University, Fresno.

Identification of the Problem

According to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the undergraduate Hispanic rate based on a 6-year graduation period from fall 2009-2015 was 77.5% at California State University, Fresno (Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2015c). The graduation rate of Hispanics showed that California State University, Fresno had been effective in getting their Hispanic population to attain a college degree. The issue was that the 6-year graduation period for Hispanics had contributed to them “being the lowest-achieving group in education over the past four decades” (Ortiz, Valerio, & Lopez, 2012, p. 137). Because culture is an important part of their lives, it is important to look at the role attitudinal familismo played in their degree commitment.

Attitudinal Familismo places an emphasis on support whether it is the individual receiving and/or providing it to immediate and extended family
members. Support from their family had the potential to “encourage and [raise certain] expectations” in the degree commitment of Hispanics (Davidson, Beck, & Milligan, 2009, p. 379). Researchers who have studied college persistence have mentioned the importance of focusing on individual variables that contribute to Hispanics remaining in college (Metz, 2004). An individual variable to focus on was attitudinal familismo, because a study found it to influence their college persistence (Cerna, Perez, & Saenz, 2009). There is a lack of empirical knowledge that has yet to define attitudinal familismo as the variable that has a significant impact on Hispanic college persistence.

In the state of California, there will be a demand for employees with a bachelor’s degree by 2030 (Public Policy Institute of California, 2015). It is important for Hispanic students to have a bachelor’s degree to be prepared to enter the workforce. California State University, Fresno has made an educational commitment to improve the 6-year graduation rate of Hispanics (Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2016). As a commitment to student academic success, the university will focus on improving the graduation rate of its Hispanic students. Educators are aware that college persistence amongst Hispanics must be addressed.

Educators Encounter This Problem

At California State University, Fresno, educators should be concerned with the unemployment rate and the poverty level of Hispanics in the County of Fresno. Being unemployed or living at the poverty level can affect undergraduate Hispanic students’ chance of living a “better life” (Martinez, 2013, p. 21). California’s, unemployment rate from March 2015-March 2016 was 5.8% whereas the County of Fresno had a 10.5% unemployment rate (State of California: Employment
Development Department, 2016). The County of Fresno had a higher unemployment rate than the state. Hispanics increase their chances of being unemployed due to not having a bachelor’s degree (Niemeyer, Wong, & Westerhaus, 2009). If they do not obtain an employment with benefits or the opportunity to earning a living wage it can affect their yearly income (Pike, Hansen, & Childress, 2014). There are many consequences that are the result of not having a bachelor’s degree. Perhaps the consequence that is most likely a result of not having a higher education was their chance of living in poverty. About 34.9% percent of Hispanics live below the poverty line in the County of Fresno (United States Census Bureau, 2014). Educational educator’s knowledge about the unemployment rate and poverty level amongst Hispanics should influence them to continue their efforts to improve their academic success. Educators need to recognize that attitudinal familismo was a common trait amongst Hispanics (Martinez, 2013). Attitudinal familismo happened to be an important aspect amongst Hispanics because it is a cultural strength that promoted parental support.

Affected by the Problem

At California State University, Fresno, the retention rate for new undergraduate Hispanic students at 1 year was 88.8% (Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2015a). After 3 years their retention rate was 25.4% (Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2015b). Their retention rate at 1 year compared to 3 years was a difference of about 63%. Undergraduate Hispanic student’s retention rate decreased with the increased number of years enrolled in higher education. The reason for their decreased retention rate varies. Hispanic students’ academic persistence influenced the retention rate at their prospective university (Arbona &
Nora, 2007). They have a significant impact on the Office of Effectiveness-retention and graduation, academic gap, and cohort persistence rates because of their population size (Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2015a).

**The Scope of the Problem**

An increase in the bachelor’s degree attainment of Hispanics will be crucial to meet the needs and future demands of the workforce in America. They need to meet the educational qualifications to apply for those employments and be considered potential employee candidates. The Center for Education and Workforce estimated that the United States will need 19 million new workers with postsecondary degrees by 2018 (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2010). Their prediction of an increase in professional careers means there will be a demand in the workforce for millions of employees with postsecondary degrees. It is important that upcoming employees have the degrees and skills to fulfill the projected growth in the workforce. Improving their graduation and retention rates is essential to combat the lack of higher degree attainment amongst Hispanics (Alon, Domian, & Tienda, 2010).

**Educators’ Role in College Persistence**

Educators should implement “culturally tailored programs aimed at promoting higher education” (Turcios-Cotto & Milan, 2012, p. 1399). As part of the school faculty, they can advocate for the creation of higher education programs that promote familial integration. The emphasis of these programs is to promote their values of attitudinal familismo. Educators need to promote academic success while promoting cultural competency. Attitudinal familismo is a strength in Hispanic families because it is an in-home educational support system (Martinez, 2013). They need to understand the role their families play in their lives and in
their decision making. Their families play an important role in deciding whether they will be pursuing or remaining in college to pursue a postsecondary degree (Arbona & Nora, 2007).

**Theoretical Conceptualization**

The conceptual framework was the social work strength based approach/perspective. This framework states that “people should strive to reach their innate potential through the exercise of their capabilities, most importantly, their reason and intellect” (Gray, 2011, p. 5). Strengths based approach/perspective refers to a person’s abilities and resources in their environment that helps them resolve their problems (Rogers, 2010). The environment of Hispanics is largely influenced by their cultural values surrounding family. In Hispanic families, attitudinal familismo is a strength that can be used to help undergraduate Hispanic students attain their bachelor’s degree. Part of this approach towards knowledge was the researcher’s concern about the issue of attitudinal familismo and college degree persistence (Creswell, 2013).

**Research Question and Hypothesis**

The primary research question: Does attitudinal familismo have an influence in the degree commitment of undergraduate Hispanic students at a Hispanic Serving Institution?

Hypothesis: There is a positive correlation between Undergraduate Hispanic students’ attitudinal familismo and college persistence.

Null Hypothesis: There is not a correlation between undergraduate Hispanic students’ attitudinal familismo and college persistence.
Collection of Data

Research participants took a survey based on the Attitudinal Familismo Scale (Steidel & Contreras, 2003) and the College Persistence Questionnaire (Davidson et al., 2009). The Attitudinal Familismo Scale was used to find the students attitudes about family. From the College Persistence Questionnaire the “Degree Commitment” variable was used because it is influenced by family. A survey with three open-ended demographic questions asked about the student’s age, ethnicity, and gender. A Likert-type Scale was used on questions 1-18 (Attitudinal Familismo) and questions 19-23 (Degree Commitment). The data collection hoped to measure Hispanic students’ attitudinal familismo and college persistence by comparing their scores using Pearson’s r and bivariate correlation.

The researcher collected data from 100 undergraduate Hispanic students at California State University, Fresno. Two students from a different ethnicity took part in the study; however, their scores were excluded from the data collection. Students that were recruited for the study were from College Assistance Migrant Program (C.A.M.P), the Social Work Student Association, Club Austral, Alpha Si Sigma, the Henry Madden Library, and the University Student Union. Consent was received from the program director, faculty advisors, club presidents, and the individual. They received a consent form with their survey. The surveys took about 5-10 minutes to complete. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was analyzed using Pearson’s r and bivariate analysis. Survey data was initially inputted into Microsoft Excel that included demographic information, an attitudinal familismo score and a college persistence score.

Summary

Undergraduate Hispanic students continue to have a low attainment of bachelor’s degrees in America. Research has found attitudinal familismo to
influence the degree commitment of college student’s by promoting degree persistence. The researcher sought to find that attitudinal familismo influences the degree commitment of Hispanic students. The following chapter will further discuss the theoretical and empirical literature, in regards, to the role attitudinal familismo has in the college degree commitment of Hispanic college students.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitudinal Familismo and college persistence tends to have influenced the degree commitment of Hispanic students. Degree commitment is the area of college persistence where family has the most influence on college students. This study sought to find how attitudinal familismo from a strengths based approach/perspective is important to the degree commitment of Hispanics. The concepts of attitudinal familismo and college persistence along with conceptual and empirical research will be analyzed by the researcher.

Conceptual Literature

Hispanics tend to be well-known for having strong beliefs about their families. They tend to remain loyal to this familismo value system that promotes familial obligations, unity, and fulfilling familial expectations (Taylor, Larson-Rife, Conger & Widaman 2012, p. 313). A family value system, that promotes attitudinal familismo, can influence undergraduate Hispanic students’ degree commitment. Hispanic students were more likely to experience “acculturative stress, discrimination… and difficult campus climate [that] can negatively affect academic performance, self-confidence, and college completion” (Morgan Consoli, Delucio, Noriega, & Llamas, 2015, p. 2). Some of those factors are the in-direct results of the cultural, economic, and social division that occurs in society. The divisions that occur in society amongst the dominant and minority groups for the most part are reflected in the American educational system (Garcia, 2012). Hispanics that experienced first-hand those different factors can help them decide whether to remain enrolled, to depart from school, and/or to return another semester (Cerna et al., 2009). They can be determinants in the educational plans of undergraduate Hispanic students.
The academic pathway of Hispanics has often been a conflict between their collectivistic culture and the individualist culture of American society. Some Hispanics students have to adapt to the mainstream Anglo norms and/or culture that promotes individuality in their classrooms (Hirsch, 1999). Hispanic students “are hesitant to volunteer for individual activities that would make them the center of attention” in their classrooms (Quinn, 2001, p. 47). They were more comfortable working with at least another partner when doing their classroom assignments instead of just working by themselves. Hispanics were more comfortable working collectively with their classmates than working individualistically. Adapting to the culture and norms of Anglo-mainstream culture in their classrooms while keeping their Hispanic culture in their home has been an issue that Hispanic students endure.

Applying attitudinal familismo, as a form of familial support, for Hispanic Undergraduate students can lead them to remain enrolled in college (DeFrain & Asay, 2007). They have to apply the norms of both their Hispanic and Anglo mainstream culture to their academic and/or personal lives. Both interconnect with each other that it is important to integrate aspects of their culture into their education. Hispanics need to rely on their familial support they obtain at home. Family support has been a predictor for higher academic achievement in Hispanic college students (Morgan Consoli et al., 2015).

The Strengths Approach/Perspective

The Strengths Based Approach/Perspective considers the persons’ strengths when helping them reach their inner potential and capabilities (Gray, 2011). It holds the same belief that everyone has “skills, capabilities and strengths” to overcome adversity in their lives (Rogers, 2010, p. 41). In Hispanics, their family
oriented culture is one of their strengths because of their family interconnectedness and unity (Smith-Morris et al., 2012). Familismo impacts all three levels of their ecological systems. The ecological systems refer to the micro, mezzo, and macro level systems. The micro-level system includes the individuals’ connection with their mezzo level systems (family, peers), and macro level system (policies, school) (Neal & Neal, 2013). The ecological systems connect and interrelate with each other. Attitudinal Familismo is believed to be a more efficient cultural value when it coexists with their micro, mezzo, and macro ecological level systems (Calzada, Tamis-LeMonda, & Yoshikawa, 2012).

Hispanic students integrate their culture and the mainstream culture through acculturation and enculturation. The process of acculturation is where students feel compelled to integrate their culture into their academic world (Stuart, Rios-Aguilar, & Deil-Amen, 2014). Some Hispanic students have experienced acculturation stress as they try to acculturate into the mainstream culture. Acculturation stress can be due to “(a) communication and language stress, (b) family stress, (c) immigration stress, (d) peer stress, (e) school and academic stress, and (f) social and economic stress” (Widstrom, 2012, p. 147). They tend to also have experienced the enculturation process, where Hispanics maintain their cultural strengths and heritages (Marsiglia & Kulis, 2009).

**Empirical Literature**

Research by Turcios Cotto and Milan, (2012), examined how 537 urban youth from a low-income Connecticut city “pictured their lives in 5 years” (p. 1399). The survey participants were Hispanic, White, African/American, Black, Asians and Arabic’s. For the Hispanic research participants, it was noted that familismo, the cultural value that promotes family unity and loyalty, influenced
future academic and personal plans. Their likely to have future plans of forming their own family. Attending college and graduating from college was not an achievement that Hispanics see themselves accomplishing within 5 years. To build on this study, a Phenomenological qualitative study on 20 Hispanic senior students’ from South Texas sought to find out their college choices. Individual, semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. Researchers found that their parents play a major role in their education aspirations (Martinez, 2013). Parents were shown to be the main support system and influence for Hispanic students. The college aspirations of Hispanic students were fueled by their familial bonds and cultural beliefs. Attitudinal familismo promoted a collectivist frame of mind for Hispanics because they put the needs and wants of their family before their own (Martinez, 2013).

Steidel and Contreras (2003) studied the attitudes and beliefs of Hispanics towards attitudinal familismo. Both of them composed a new 18-item Attitudinal Familismo Scale for Latinos that studied attitudinal familismo, familial interconnectedness, and their belief in familial reciprocity. The scale was administered to 124 Latino adults. The researchers developed this scale to be able to address the different aspects associated with attitudinal familismo. Other familismo scales lacked components that did not give them validity. This new attitudinal familismo scale has validity unlike the previous scales. Another study, examined 163 Caucasian and Hispanic students using questionnaires (Niemeyer et al., 2009). They found that attitudinal familismo and parental academic involvement for Hispanics takes place at home. Parental involvement for Hispanics consisted of traditional school involvement and non-traditional school involvement. Traditional school involvement refers to attending parent teacher meetings, being involved with the school, and staying in contact with the teachers
of their children. Non-traditional school involvement is “instilling cultural values, talking with their children, and sending them to school clean and rested” (Niemeyer et al., 2009, p. 614). Parental involvement is often a barrier for ethnic parents because of language and cultural barriers (Altschul, 2011). Ethnic parent’s academic parental involvement is different.

The pathway for Hispanics to earn their bachelor’s degree usually starts at the Community College level. They are more likely to enroll in the 2-year educational institutions because of “low tuition cost, flexible schedules, proximity, and a classroom size that may be seen as less intimidating when compared to a 4-year institution” (Ortiz et al., 2012, p. 144). The National Center for Education Statistics, conducted a study from 1975-2009. They examined Hispanic academic trends for students who enrolled for 2 and/or 4 year programs in the fall semester. Enrollment numbers increased about 50% for the 2 year fall enrollment in college and the 4 year fall enrollment increased to about 76 % for Hispanics (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008). Their enrollment numbers do not necessarily predict bachelor’s degree attainment.

Alon et al. (2010) conducted a qualitative study on five different data sets that examined the Bachelor degree attainment for students who enrolled in competitive college and universities. Hispanic students were found to “have earned a bachelor’s within six years of enrollment” (p.1828). Their degree commitment lacks that of their other counterparts that obtain a degree in a shorter amount of time. Hispanics were found to be “significantly less likely to graduate from college” (Song & Elliot III, 2011, p. 2162). An emphasis in their study was placed on Mexicans and Cubans because they compose the largest Hispanic populations in America. They found that about 9.7% of Mexicans and 28% of Cubans graduated with their bachelor’s degree in 2010. As Hispanics continue to
enroll in college, they are working towards closing the achievement gap (Kugelmass & Ready, 2010). They are enrolled in higher education systems, thus getting them to graduate is the key to academic success. It is important to focus on college students attitudes on persistence.

A 53-item College Persistence Questionnaire that focused on institutional commitment, degree commitment, academic integration, social integration, support services satisfaction, and academic conscientiousness was developed to find students attitudes about retention (Davidson et al., 2009). Two studies were conducted by Davidson et al. In the first study, about 2,022 students participated from four colleges and universities. The vast majority of the participants were Caucasian. A correlation was found between institutional commitment and degree commitment. The second study was meant to predict the reasons freshman students returned as sophomores. A total of 283 freshman students that returned their sophomore year took part in the study. Amongst the participants the best predictors of retention were institutional commitment, academic consciousness, and academic integration. Research has predicted that one of the major predictors of student’s persistence have to do with their ethnic-group status; in particular, Hispanics have been shown to not really value education (Becker & Luthar, 2002).

Gaps in the Literature

Research has shown that Hispanic families hold to a high standard the role of familismo and the way it applied to its family members. Attitudinal Familismo are actions and behaviors that are part of this value system that esteems family obligations, support and emotional closeness, and family as referent (Martinez, 2013). This cultural value is a form of strength that only occurs at home when they are with their individual families. The strengths perspective mentioned that
focusing on the client’s strength like their culture is essential for their well-being. There was a lack of conceptual and empirical frameworks research on attitudinal familismo, strengths perspective and/or college persistence. Searching academic search engines such as EBSCO Host and conducting a Boolean/phase search modes for strengths perspective and familismo or strengths perspective and Hispanic students found no results. However, changing familismo to familism and strengths perspective found one article. Familism is the English word for familismo. It is important to note that the cultural concept of attitudinal familismo has been studied widely by researchers. Research has found both positive and negative results with attitudinal familismo and academic achievement. It was difficult to conclude whether attitudinal familismo is a positive or negative influence on Hispanic student’s academic achievement. It is my hope that my study can improve the documented research that exists on both familismo and college persistence.

Summary

Attitudinal Familismo and college persistence as mentioned is understood from a strengths based perspective. The factor of degree commitment was more likely to be influenced by attitudinal familismo because it is emphasis is on familial aspects. The next chapter will discuss the research methodology such as data collections, reliability/trustworthiness, human subject’s protection, limitations, and data analysis procedures.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Research has found attitudinal familismo in the form of familial support to influence the degree commitment of college students. Many researchers have studied attitudinal familismo, however, it has not been studied as a predictor of college persistence. A quantitative research method of Pearson’s r using Microsoft Excel and a bivariate correlation using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) will be applied. Both the Attitudinal Familismo Scale and the College Persistence Questionnaire were combined into one survey for the purpose of this study. The Likert-type Scale survey consisted of three demographic questions, 18 questions about their attitudes on familismo and five questions on degree commitment. The researcher used the scale and questionnaire to investigate attitudinal familismo and degree commitment of undergraduate Hispanic students at California State University, Fresno.

Setting and Participants

The original recruitment strategy was to email and/or handout the survey link from Qualtrics Research Suite to participants. Due to a lack of participants, the researcher had to recruit participants through student clubs, organizations, fraternities, and I approached students on campus. Their participation was voluntarily. Most of the student participants were recruited from the College Assistance Migrant Program (C.A.M.P). A Carbon Copy email was sent to the program director and academic and career counselor with the attachment of the survey that included demographic questions, the Attitudinal Familismo Scale, the College Persistence Questionnaire, and the researcher’s internal Review Board approval. Both the program director and academic and career counselor forwarded the email to the C.A.M.P. instructor. All parties agreed to let the C.A.M.P.
participants take the paper survey in their class. The rest of the participants were recruited via email or through phone calls to the club presidents of the Social Work Student Association and Alpha Pi Sigma. An exception was made to Club Austral because the faculty advisor of the club was contacted prior to the contact of the club president. More research participants were approached by the researcher and recruited from the Henry Madden Library and the University Student Union area. 100 undergraduate Hispanic students were recruited to participate voluntarily from California State University, Fresno.

A nonprobability sampling approach was used by the researcher to recruit the research participants. They were informed about the intention of the study, the consent form, and their rights as participants (see Appendix A). Their right to withdraw from the study was also addressed with the participants. Participants were given the option of keeping a copy of the consent form. The guidelines of the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at California State University, Fresno, were followed in conducting this research. The Department of Social Work Education-Human Subjects Committee approved the researcher’s methodology in December 2015.

**Procedures**

A total of 100 undergraduate Hispanic students were recruited by the researcher to participate in this study. Two students from a different ethnicity took the survey; however, they were excluded from the data collection. The researcher explained the informed consent form and confidentiality, a time commitment of 5-10 minutes, and the instructions about the survey. All research participants were entered into a raffle with the possibility of winning one $5 Starbucks gift card for their participation (see Appendix A).
Due to a lack of participants using the online survey database Qualtrics Research Suite another data collection method was used by the researcher. Research participants were approached in person, via email and/or a phone call to obtain permission to recruit participants on the California State University, Fresno campus. The target population of this study was undergraduate Hispanic students. Quota sampling was used to recruit participants that fit into certain categories and their participation was voluntary. The research participants were provided with the Informed Consent Form, the purpose of the study, researcher and Chair’s contact information, the possible risks and benefits of the participants and the research, anonymity and confidentiality of the surveys, and other relevant information of the survey (see Appendix A). The data was entered into the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet program and then into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

**Procedures for the Protection of Human Subjects**

The research study followed the necessary procedures for the Protection of Human Subjects (see Appendix D). These procedures were considered minimal to no risk. The participants were not minors and/or members of vulnerable populations. Their participation was voluntary. The participants were informed that the researcher would be utilizing the information gathered from this study to hopefully reach a positive conclusion about attitudinal familismo and college persistence.

**Instruments**

Research instruments included Likert-type Scale questions from the Attitudinal Familismo Scale (Steidel & Contreras, 2003) and the College Persistence Questionnaire (Davidson et al., 2009). A three question demographic
questionnaire about the participants' age, ethnicity, and gender was also included in the survey.

Demographic Information

Demographic information such as age, gender, and ethnicity were collected from the participants. The demographic information was coded into an excel sheet and into SPSS.

The Attitudinal Familismo Scale

The Attitudinal Familismo Scale is a self-report survey with 18-items on a five-point Likert-type scale (0-strongly disagree, 1-disagree, 2-neither agree or disagree, 3-agree, and 4-strongly agree). The quantitative Method of bivariate correlations and Pearson’s $r$ will be used to measure attitudinal familismo and its possible correlation with college persistence (see Appendix B). The Attitudinal Familismo Scale is best used to learn attitudes pertinent to familismo. The reliability of the scale was found in “the Cronbach’s alphas for all the scale was .83., .72 for Familial Support, .69 for Familial Interconnectedness, .68 for Familial Honor, and .56 for Subjugation of Self for Family” (Steidel & Contreras, 2003, p. 323). A correlation was found between the subscales. Validity of the attitudinal familismo subscales and scores was found in the subscales and scores. The attitudinal Familismo Scale is best used with Latino populations to find out their attitudes towards familial support, familial interconnectedness, familial honor and subjugation of self for family (Steidel & Contreras, 2003). The researcher received permission from the author to use the Attitudinal Familism Scale (see Appendix C).
The College Persistence Questionnaire

The College Persistence Questionnaire is a self-report survey with thirty-five item questionnaire on a 5 item Likert-type Scale (0-very unlikely, 1-unlikely, 2-undecided, 3-likely, and 4-very likely). The College Persistence Questionnaire scores six factors: institutional commitment, degree commitment, academic integration, social integration, support services satisfaction, and academic consciousness (Davidson et al., 2009). They are scored to predict student attrition in college. Reliability was found amongst the coefficients and their interconnectedness to the College Persistence Questionnaire scale scores that test for means and standards deviation. Validity was found using regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals. The researcher received permission from the author to use the College Persistence Questionnaire (see Appendix C).

Data Analysis

Information on demographics, the Attitudinal Familism Scale, and the College Persistence Questionnaire scores were entered into a Microsoft Excel sheet then into SPSS to statistically analyze the correlation between attitudinal familismo and college persistence. The participant’s level of attitudinal familismo was analyzed to find a potential correlation to college persistence using Pearson’s $r$ and bivariate correlation. From that data information was entered into SPSS for a quantitative analysis of demographic information and the correlation between attitudinal familismo and college persistence.

Summary

The purpose of the research was to find a correlation with attitudinal familismo and college persistence amongst undergraduate Hispanic students. A correlation was sought to find a possible link between both variables. Research
participants that took part in the study were undergraduate Hispanics students of
different majors at California State University, Fresno. Initially, the use of the
Qualtrics Research Suite, SONA systems, and emailing the link of my survey to
certain professors to distribute to their students was planned. Due to lack of
research participants, surveys were handed out in person to research participants
on the California State University, Fresno campus. The instruments used for the
survey were the Attitudinal Familismo Scale and the College Persistence
Questionnaire. The quantitative Method of Pearson’s $r$ was used to find a
correlation between attitudinal familismo and college degree persistence to test the
hypothesis.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The data collected from the surveys conducted at California State University, Fresno will be discussed in this chapter. Data information such as demographic information, attitudinal familismo scores, and college persistence scores were statistically analyzed to find a correlation between attitudinal familismo and college persistence. The Likert-type Scale survey contained demographic questions, the Attitudinal Familismo Scale (Steidel & Contreras, 2003), and the College Persistence Questionnaire (Davidson et al., 2009). A quantitative research method of Pearson’s $r$ using Microsoft Excel and the bivariate correlation on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was applied. The survey used for this research was conducted on 100 Hispanic undergraduate students at California State University, Fresno. About nine surveys were returned with missing demographic information and were included in the research. Since the focus of the research was based on the demographic variable ethnicity, the participants in this study had to be Hispanics. Pearson’s $r$ failed to demonstrate a correlation between attitudinal familismo and college persistence. A bivariate correlation found age and gender to have a statistically correlation with attitudinal familismo. The data demographics of students’ age and gender were statistically correlated to attitudinal familismo.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive Statistics are summarized in Table 1. A total of 100 participants answered the Attitudinal Familismo and College Persistence Questions. The Attitudinal Familismo was scored 0-strongly disagree, 1-disagree, 2-neither agree nor disagree, 3-agree, 4-strongly disagree for a total score of 72 (Mean=46.47, SD 8.07). The College Persistence Questionnaire focused on degree
commitment 0-very unlikely, 1-unlikely, 2-undecided, 3-likely, 4 very likely for a total score of 20 (Mean=18.29, SD=2.51). Only ninety-one students answered demographic questions (N=91). The participants’ age ranged from 18 to 26 years old (Mean=20.257, SD 2.33). A total of 34 males, 57 females, and nine unknown students’ were part of the research.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familismo</td>
<td>46.4700</td>
<td>8.07472</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College_P</td>
<td>18.2900</td>
<td>2.51177</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>.48645</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>20.25</td>
<td>2.33140</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attitudinal Familismo Scale**

Participants’ attitudes about familismo were measured using the Attitudinal Familismo Scale. The Attitudinal Familismo was scored on a 4-point Likert-type Scale 0-strongly disagree, 1-disagree, 2-neither agree nor disagree, 3-agree, and 4-strongly disagree. Based on the 18 questions from the Likert type Scale, the total was 72. The mean of the participants’ attitudinal familismo score was 46.47 out of 72 points, while the standard deviation was 8.07 (see Table 1). The questions measures participants’ attitudes and beliefs that “family comes before the individual, familial interconnectedness, familial reciprocity in times of need, and familial honor” (Steidel & Contreras, 2003, p. 319) (see Table 2).
Table 2
*Questions on the Attitudinal Familismo Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familismo Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Children should always help their parents with the support of younger brothers and sisters, for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>example, help them with homework, help the parents take care of the children, and so forth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The family should control behavior of children younger than 18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A person should cherish the time spent with his or her relatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A person should live near his or her parents and spend time with them on a regular basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A person should always support members of the extended family, for example, aunts, uncles, in-laws,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if they are in need even if it is a big sacrifice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. A person should always be expected to defend his/her family’s honor no matter what the cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A person should rely on his or her family if the need arises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A person should feel ashamed if something he or she does dishonors the family name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Children should help out around without expecting an allowance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Parents and grandparents should be treated with great respect regardless of their differences in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. A person should often do activities with his or her immediate and extended families, for example,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eat meals, play games, or go somewhere together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Aging parents should live with their relatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. A person should always be expected to defend his/her family’s honor no matter what the cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Children younger than 18 should give almost all of their earnings to their parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Children should live with their parents until they get married.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Children should obey their parents without question even if they believe they are wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. A person should help his or her elderly parents in times of need, for example, helping financially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or sharing a household.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. A person should be a good person for the sake of his or her family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. A person should respect his or her older brothers and sisters regardless of their differences in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>views.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A bivariate correlation on attitudinal familismo, age and gender found a correlation amongst some variables. Attitudinal familismo had a correlation with age and gender (see Table 3). Only ninety-one participants answered the demographic questions of age and gender. Bivariate correlation tests for Pearson’s $r$ on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The bivariate correlation found age and gender to have a statistically significant correlation with attitudinal familismo age $r = -0.228$, $p < 0.05$ and gender $r = -0.257$, $p < 0.05$.

Table 3

| Variable: Attitudinal Familismo, College Persistence, and Demographic Variables |
|---------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|------|
| Variable                        | Pearson’s $r$  | Sig. (2-tailed) | N=   |
| College Persistence             | .123           | .222            | 100  |
| Gender                          | -.257*         | .014            | 91   |
| Age                             | -.228*         | .030            | 91   |

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

Pearson’s $r$ was used to examine the relationship between attitudinal familismo and college persistence questionnaire on Microsoft Excel. There was not a significantly significant correlation between familismo and college persistence $r = .123$, $p < .05$.

Validity and Reliability

The Attitudinal Familismo Scale and the College Persistence Questionnaire were tested by their publishers and authors. Both of the measurements tools had validity and reliability. The Attitudinal Familismo Scale reliability is found in “the Cronbach’s alphas for all the scale was .83, .72 for
Familial Support, .69 for Familial Interconnectedness, .68 for Familial Honor, and .56 for Subjugation of Self for Family” (Steidel & Contreras, 2003, p. 323). The Validity was found between the attitudinal familismo subscales and scores because it is best used with Latino populations to find out their attitudes towards familial support, familial interconnectedness, familial honor and subjugation of self for family. The College Persistence Questionnaire reliability was found amongst the coefficients and their interconnectedness to the CPQ scale scores. Its validity was found using regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals (Davidson et al., 2009).

**Summary**

The data indicated that students attitudinal familismo about college persistence was not statically correlated according to Pearson’s $r$. Correlation statistics found a correlation between age and attitudinal familismo and college persistence. Chapter 5 will discuss interpretations, implications and recommendations for this research results.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

In this chapter the research findings, discussion of research question, strength of the study, implications and recommendations, and a summary of this study will be discussed. The researcher sought to find a correlation with attitudinal familismo and college persistence. Exactly 100 research participants participated in this study. The majority of the participants were from the College Assistance Migrant Program (C.A.M.P). The rest of the participants were gathered from the Social Work Student Association, Alpha Pi Sigma, Club Austral, the Henry Madden Library, and the University Student Union area.

Results

The Attitudinal Familismo Scale and the College Persistence Questionnaire were used to find a significant correlation between Hispanics students and attitudinal familismo. Of the student population approached, 102 participants answered the Attitudinal Familismo Scale and filled-out the College Persistence Questionnaire. Only 100 participants were included in the data collection because two participants were from a different ethnicity. The questions on degree commitment, included in the College Persistence Questionnaire were also analyzed in the study. They relate to the role and perceptions of family regarding the college persistence of students. There was not a statistically significant correlation between attitudinal familismo and college persistence $r=.123, p<.05$. Demographic information was found to have a correlation with the participants’ attitudinal familismo and degree commitment that leads to their college persistence. Only ninety-one participants answered demographic questions about their age and gender. There was a statistically significant correlation amongst demographic factors, attitudinal familismo, and college persistence.
Discussion of Research Question and Hypothesis

This study found that Attitudinal Familismo did not influence the college persistence of undergraduate Hispanic students at a Hispanic Serving Institution. The participants’ degree commitment was found to be more influenced by familial support. This is part of the concept of familismo, but their level of acculturation has influenced their understanding of this cultural value. The younger participants, between the ages 18-23, scored higher on the Attitudinal Familismo Scale and the older participants, between the ages 24-28, scored lower on the scale.

The Hypothesis of the study was not confirmed because there is not a positive correlation between Undergraduate Hispanic students’ attitudinal familismo and college persistence. The hypothesis was null. There is not a correlation between undergraduate Hispanic students’ attitudinal familismo and college persistence. Hispanic student attitudes change as they become acculturated into the educational value system (Kim, Soliz, Orellana, & Alamilla, 2009). Different sets of beliefs, found in their varying educational institutions, reflect an individualistic perspective. The Hispanic attitudinal familismo value system is based on a collectivist belief system. Assumptions that can be made is that the younger participants still hold onto their attitudinal familismo value system. The younger participants were likely to have their college persistence be influenced by their attitudes on familismo. Research participants’ mean age was 21, a young student population.

Strengths of the Study

All of the research participants that participated in this study from Alpha Pi Sigma, Club Austral, the College Assistant Migrant Program (C.A.M.P), and the Social Work Student Association provided different perspectives on their attitudes about familismo and college persistence. The research participants were either
female or male Hispanic students; their ages ranged from 18-26, and open to all majors. An in-depth analyzes of the Hispanic students attitudes about the beliefs and role of their families was accomplished with the Attitudinal Familism Scale. It has reliability and validity because it considered Hispanics attitudinal familismo value system.

**Implications and Recommendations**

The number of participants was a limitation in the study. A sample size of 100 did not provide results to find a significant correlation between attitudinal familismo and college persistence. An increased number of participants would be more likely to find a positive correlation. Being a Hispanic Serving Institution, California State University, Fresno has a large Hispanic population. Sampling more Hispanic students should not be difficult to accomplish for the purpose of this study. The demographic information should include a question that asks participants or their major. They should also be asked to disclose whether or not they have left school due to their attitudinal familismo value system.

The study, being limited to Hispanic students at California State University, Fresno, restricted participants from different ethnic backgrounds. A more ethnically diverse population would not have created barriers for the researcher. The researcher was seeking to recruit participants that were undergraduate Hispanics. If the study would have been opened to other ethnicities, it would be an accurate picture of the diverse student population at California State University, Fresno.

The study was conducted within a short amount of time. The initial idea of recruiting participants was by using an online survey database. There were not enough participants that used that method to participate in the study. An
alternative recruiting method was adopted by the researcher to recruit participants. The researcher recruited participants in person by approaching students and contacting other university student programs and organizations. Better time management, on behalf of the researcher, would have probably rendered more participants. Having more time to recruit participants would make a difference in the findings of the study.

Participants’ level of enculturation and acculturation can influence their attitudes about familismo (Kim et al., 2009). An appropriate scale should be used to measure the level of enculturation and acculturation of participants. For further research it is important to measure participants’ acculturation and enculturation to find a link between their cultural beliefs and their attitudinal familismo.

Conclusion

This study concluded that attitudinal familismo is most present with participants who are 20 years old. The demographic factors such as age and gender were correlated with attitudinal familismo and college persistence. Attitudinal familismo was not correlated to college persistence. Further research needs to include more research participants to further investigate the role family plays in the college persistence of Hispanic students.
REFERENCES
REFERENCES


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM
Thank you very much for considering participating in this research.

The purpose of this research is to gather information on how familismo has contributed to the Bachelor degree persistence of undergraduate Hispanic transfer students. If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked to fill out a survey regarding your personal opinion on familismo and the way it has contributed to your academic persistence.

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. All information you provide is confidential, and the final report of this study will contain individual level-data. Your decision to participate or not will not affect your relationship with California State University, Fresno.

If you have any questions concerning this study or its results, please contact Blanca Godinez at 559-301-6174 or via email at blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu. Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with California State University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue your participation without any penalty. Research subjects are going to enter into a raffle with the possibility of winning one $5 Starbucks gift card. The Committee on the Protection of Human Subjects at California State University, Fresno has reviewed and approved the present research. Questions regarding the rights of research subjects may be directed towards Dr. Iran Barrera, Chair, CSUF Committee on the Protection of Human Subjects, 559-278-0398. You may keep a copy of this letter for your own records.

Once again, thank you very much for your participation.

________________________________________________________________________
Signature                        Date
APPENDIX B: RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS
Please answer the following questions:

What is your gender? ____________________________

What is your age? ______________________________

What is your ethnicity? ________________________
The Attitudinal Familismo Scale

Please circle the word you most agree with in the statement.
1. Children should always help their parents with the support of younger brothers and sisters, for example, help them with homework, help the parents take care of the children, and so forth.

   Strongly Disagree
   Disagree
   Neither Agree or Disagree
   Agree
   Strongly Agree

2. The family should control the behavior of children younger than 18.

   Strongly Disagree
   Disagree
   Neither Agree or Disagree
   Agree
   Strongly Agree

3. A person should cherish the time spent with his or her relatives.

   Strongly Disagree
   Disagree
   Neither Agree or Disagree
   Agree
   Strongly Agree

4. A person should live near his or her parents and spend time with them on a regular basis.

   Strongly Disagree
   Disagree
   Neither Agree or Disagree
   Agree
   Strongly Agree

5. A person should always support members of the extended family, for example, aunts, uncles, and in-laws, if they are in need even if it is a big sacrifice.

   Strongly Disagree
   Disagree
   Neither Agree or Disagree
   Agree
Strongly Agree

6. A person should rely on his or her family if the need arises.
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree

7. A person should feel ashamed if something he or she does dishonors the family name.
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree

8. Children should help out around without expecting an allowance.
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree

9. Parents and grandparents should be treated with great respect regardless of their difference in views.
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree

10. A person should often do activities with his or her immediate and extended families, for example, eat meals, play games, or go somewhere together.
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree

11. Aging parents should live with their relatives.
12. A person should always be expected to defend his/her family’s honor no matter what the cost.

13. Children younger than 18 should give almost all of their earnings to their parents.

14. Children should live with their parents until they get married.

15. Children should obey their parents without question even if they believe they are wrong.

16. A person should help his or her elderly parents in times of need, for example, helping financially or sharing a house.
Neither Agree or Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree

17. A person should be a good person for the sake of his or her family.

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree

18. A person should respect his or her older brothers and sisters regardless of their differences in views.

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
The College Persistence Questionnaire

Please circle the word that you most agree with in the statement.

Degree Commitment

1. When you think of the people who mean the most to you (friends and family), how disappointed do you think they would be if you quit school?
   Very Unlikely
   Unlikely
   Undecided
   Likely
   Very Likely

2. At this moment in time, how certain are you that you will earn a college degree?
   Very Unlikely
   Unlikely
   Undecided
   Likely
   Very Likely

3. At this moment in time, how strong would you say your commitment is to earning a college degree, here or elsewhere?
   Very Unlikely
   Unlikely
   Undecided
   Likely
   Very Likely

4. How strong is your intention to persist in your pursuit of the degree, here or elsewhere?
   Very Unlikely
   Unlikely
   Undecided
   Likely
   Very Likely

5. How supportive is your family of your pursuit of a college degree, in terms of their encouragement and expectations?
   Very Unlikely
   Unlikely
   Undecided
   Likely
   Unlikely
Consent to use Attitudinal Familismo Scale

5 messages
Blanca Godinez <blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu>  Thu, Feb 18, 2016 at 10:22 PM
To: jgrau@kent.edu
Hello Dr. Grau,

I am a social work graduate student at California State University, Fresno. I would like your consent to use the Attitudinal Familism Scale for my data research.

Thank you
Blanca Godinez <blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu>  Fri, Feb 19, 2016 at 10:21 AM
To: "jgrau@kent.edu" <jgrau@kent.edu>
Hello,

I am a graduate social work student at California State University, Fresno. I would like your consent to use the Attitudinal Familism Scale for my thesis data collection.

Thank You
GRAU, JOSEFINA <jgrau@kent.edu>  Fri, Feb 19, 2016 at 12:03 PM
To: Blanca Godinez <blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu>
Hello Blanca,

You have my permission to use the familism scale. Do you have the English and Spanish versions?

Josefina Grau
[Quoted text hidden]
Blanca Godinez <blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu>  Fri, Feb 19, 2016 at 12:04 PM
To: "GRAU, JOSEFINA" <jgrau@kent.edu>
I have both versions.

Thank You
[Quoted text hidden]
GRAU, JOSEFINA <jgrau@kent.edu>  Fri, Feb 19, 2016 at 12:20 PM
To: Blanca Godinez <blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu>
Great. Good luck with your study.
Consent to use College Persistence Questionnaire

Blanca Godinez <blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu>  Thu, Feb 11, 2016 at 7:31 PM
To: Bill.davidson@angelo.edu
Hello,

I am a graduate social work student from California State University, Fresno in Fresno, California. I would like your permission to use the College Persistence Questionnaire as part of my data collection for my thesis.

Thank You

Bill Davidson <William.Davidson@angelo.edu>  Sat, Feb 13, 2016 at 3:16 PM
To: Blanca Godinez <blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu>
Thanks for your interest in the CPQ, Blanca. You have permission to use it in your thesis.
Best wishes,
Bill

William B. Davidson, PhD
Professor of Psychology
Angelo State University
Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work
ASU Station #10907
San Angelo, TX 76909
Phone: 325-227-1016 (mobile), 208-719-0117 (office)
bill.davidson@angelo.edu

---

From: Blanca Godinez [blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu]
Sent: Thursday, February 11, 2016 9:31 PM
To: Bill Davidson
Subject: College Persistence Questionnaire

[Quoted text hidden]
Blanca Godinez <blnc_gdnz@mail.fresnostate.edu>  Sat, Feb 13, 2016 at 5:32 PM
To: Bill Davidson <William.Davidson@angelo.edu>

Thank You.
Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that Blanca Godinez successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course “Protecting Human Research Participants”.

Date of completion: 03/30/2015

Certification Number: 1734346
Fresno State

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**Blanca Leticia Godinez**

Type full name as it appears on submission

April 14, 2016

Date