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Building Dreams: The Role of Family in Promoting the Educational Expectations and Achievement of Latino Immigrant Youth

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ABSTRACT

Past research on multiple race-ethnic groups shows that nativity and socioeconomic status explain the majority of disparities in educational outcomes. However, within one ethnic group, demographics matter little compared to the influence that families and schools have on students' educational success. Using data from LA-SIAA and NC-SIAA, we evaluate how family involvement, familism, social acceptance at school, and discrimination at school influence the educational expectations and achievement of Latino high school seniors. Furthermore, we compare the school and family contexts of Latino youth living in a new immigrant-receiving community, North Carolina, with those living in a traditional immigrant-receiving community, Los Angeles. We find that parents' achievement expectations promote Latino youths' academic success while future family obligations inhibit them. Additionally, we find that schools remain essential in promoting Latino immigrant youths' achievement by providing a supportive and safe learning environment. While our study illustrates the importance of school and familial contexts as opposed to demographic characteristics influence on Latino students' educational expectations and achievement, unmeasured differences between settlement locations remain.

INTRODUCTION

When comparing race-ethnic groups, Latinos continue to perform the worst academically; Latinos constantly have the highest dropout rate and lowest student achievement. In 2009, 17.6% of Latino students (ages 16-24) dropped out of school while their black and white peers dropped out at a rate of only 9.3% and 5.2%, respectively (Chapman, Laird, Ifill, & KewalRamani, 2011). White students significantly outperform Latino students in both reading and math assessments (Hemphill, Vanneman, & Rahman, 2011). Subsequently, the Latino population continues to have the lowest educational attainment (only 13% of Latino adults have a bachelor's degree or more compared to 33% of non-Latino whites) and the lowest average earnings (Aud, Fox, & KewalRamani, 2010).

The Latino population is growing rapidly in the US and settling in new locations where schools have little to no experience supporting immigrant adolescents. Prior to 1990, Latino immigrants settled largely in 5 states—California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Colorado (Parrado & Kandel, 2010). However, in the past few decades, they started moving to mid-sized urban and rural areas in new settlement states, particularly in the South (Massey, 2008). In North Carolina, the number of Latino families increased rapidly (218% between 1995-2000; Schachter, 2003). Research on these new immigrant destinations, including North Carolina, indicate that immigrant students continue to have a high dropout rate and low student achievement (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2012; Wainer, 2006; Wortham, Murillo, & Hamann, 2002).ⁱ

Research on immigrant adolescents illustrates the important role that the context of reception plays in their academic adaptation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). For immigrant students to successfully adapt, they need to form strong and supportive relationships at school, the setting in which they are first introduced to US cultural values and norms (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001;

Zhou & Bankston, 1998). In traditional immigrant-receiving communities, such as Los Angeles, public schools already have an established infrastructure to assist and support Latino immigrant students. Schools in new settlement locations have fewer linguistic support structures and have difficulty providing resources to immigrant students (Muller & Dondero, 2012). However, schools in new destinations also report having a number of high quality school indicators such as less school problems, fewer students eligible for free lunch, and smaller teacher-pupil ratios (Fry, 2011; Muller & Dondero, 2012). While studies have identified several differences between schools in new and traditional settlement locations, only a few have examined the specific academic values that motivate immigrant students to be academically successful in these different locations (Fuligni, 1997, 2001).

Past research on the educational attainment of children illustrates the importance of nativity and family socioeconomic status (SES) in explaining race-ethnic disparities in educational outcomes (Kao, Tienda, & Schneider, 1996; Kao & Thompson, 2003; Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999; Rumberger, 1995; White & Glick, 2000). One study showed that family SES predicted dropout rates for Hispanics and whites but not for blacks (Rumberger, 1995). In fact, controlling for family SES almost completely explains the Latino-white test gap (Kao et al., 1996; Warren, 1996). Yet, even after taking into account family SES, differences by nativity remain (Kao et al., 1996; Portes & MacLeod, 1996). White and Glick (2000) found that among youth from low SES backgrounds, first-generation students who immigrated to the US were more likely to complete high school than their US-born peers. Another study showed that among Latinos and Asians, third-generation youth have much lower aspirations than their first- and second-generation peers (Kao & Tienda, 1995). In studies including multiple race-ethnic

groups, demographic and family characteristics explain the majority of differences in students' academic performance.

Some studies, however, focus on the specific ways in which families and schools promote the educational expectations and achievement of Latino immigrant children (Degarmo & Martinez, 2006; Eamon, 2005; Gonzales, 2011; Henry, Merten, Plunkett, & Sands, 2008; Stone & Han, 2005) although few consider that there may be differences in the characteristics of new and traditional settlement locations. Prior research has shown that Latino parents' high academic aspirations and expectations for their children are associated with their children's school performance (Eamon, 2005; Henry et al., 2008). Out of respect for and support of their parents, Latino adolescents will also set high academic expectations for themselves (Gonzales, 2011). At school, Latino students who feel accepted and valued by their school community not only perform better academically but are also more highly motivated to achieve and acculturate (Perreira, Fuligni, & Potochnick, 2010; Stone & Han, 2005). In contrast, discriminatory experiences lower Latino youths' achievement and increase their risk of dropping out (Degarmo & Martinez, 2006; Stone & Han, 2005).

In this study, we build upon this prior research by evaluating how family involvement, familism, social acceptance at school, and discrimination at school influence the educational expectations and achievement of Latino immigrant high school seniors. Furthermore, we compare the school and family contexts of Latino youth living in a new immigrant-receiving community, North Carolina, with those living in a traditional immigrant-receiving community, Los Angeles. Thus, we identify how social contexts of school and family shape the academic adaptation of Latino youth.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Students' academic aspirations, expectations, and achievement typically reflect their future educational attainment. These measures, however, slightly differ from one another. Generally higher than their expectations, students' aspirations illustrate how far students would like to go in school (Mickelson, 1990). In setting their aspirations, students often do not take into account the realities of their life situations and potential barriers that may hinder them from furthering their education. In contrast, expectations measure how far, realistically, students will go in school and are indicative of students' academic performance (Bohon, Johnson, & Gorman, 2006; Haller & Portes, 1973; Kao & Thompson, 2003; Wells, Lynch, & Seifert, 2011). Thus, as found in previous studies, we anticipate that Latino immigrant youths' educational expectations will be lower than their aspirations. High school achievement is measured in a variety of ways including students' grade point average (GPA), standardized test scores, and selectivity of course enrollment. Generally, students' GPA strongly predicts high school completion and college enrollment (Eccles, Vida, & Barber, 2004; Zwick & Sklar, 2005).

This study builds on both status attainment models of academic achievement and segmented assimilation theories on the adaptation of immigrant youth. Status attainment models argue that family background characteristics, such as family structure and socioeconomic status, influence children's academic expectations and achievement (Duncan, Featherman, & Duncan, 1972; Haller & Portes, 1973; Sewell & Hauser, 1972). Segmented assimilation theory illustrates how immigrants' successful adaptation depends on their social context of reception (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Rumbaut, 1991, 1997). This context of reception is not just shaped by the broad culture in which immigrants settle but also by the particular setting in which they spend the majority of their time. For immigrant children, their families and schools shape their context of reception and social interactions. In combination, these theories illustrate

how the context of the settlement location, family, and school shapes adolescent's academic adaptation.

State Context

The social context of North Carolina vastly differs from Los Angeles. Beginning in 1990, North Carolina experienced some of the fastest growth in its immigrant population, including a 205% increase in the percent of children of immigrants enrolled in grades 6 through 12 (Capps, Fix, & Murray, 2005). As a new immigrant-receiving community, North Carolina has had few experiences helping immigrants successfully adapt to their new surroundings prior to 1900 (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2012). Subsequently, North Carolina lacks educational resources that would benefit immigrant children academically and socially compared to an established immigrant-receiving community such as Los Angeles (Gozdziak & Martin, 2005; Hamann, 2003; Hamann, Wortham, & Murillo, 2002; Massey, 2008; Perreira, Chapman, & Livas-Stein, 2006; Wainer, 2006). However, studies in North Carolina have also reported that Latino immigrant students have high academic aspirations and few experiences of discrimination (Perreira, Fuligni, & Potochnick, 2010; Valencia & Johnson, 2006) despite being more demographically disadvantaged compared to other Latino settlement locations in the US (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2012).

Prior to the Latino diaspora, Latino immigrants typically settled in urban locations. However, the most recent Latino immigrants are actually more likely to settle in rural areas than in urban areas. This is partly due to economic restructuring, which has attracted Latino immigrants to migrate to new and rural destinations in the US (Kandel & Parrado, 2005). Most Latino immigrants in these new rural settlement locations work for low wages in labor-intensive industries such as landscaping, meat processing, or construction (Hirschman & Massey, 2008).

Not surprisingly, there are some major differences in the contexts of these urban and rural communities. For example, residential segregation is more prevalent in new rural immigrant-receiving communities than in urban settlement locations (Kandel & Cromartie, 2004; Lichter, Parisi, Grice, & Taquino, 2007; Wahl, Breckenridge, & Gunkel, 2007). In North Carolina in particular, more opposition towards Latinos was found in rural areas with a large black population (Marrow, 2008).

Historically, Los Angeles has been a major immigrant destination and has a strong coethnic presence. Latino immigrants benefit from the established community networks and the available linguistic and cultural resources (Saito, 1998). Latinos have acquired political power and are recognized as important members of the business community. While past research showed that Latino youths in established immigrant-receiving communities were more likely to be segregated socially, economically, and linguistically than in new immigrant-receiving communities (Orfield & Lee, 2005; Park & Iceland, 2011; Van Hook & Snyder, 2007), the most recent research has found the opposite to be true (Hall, 2013). Consequently, we argue that in general the availability of resources in traditional immigrant-receiving communities would lead to better educational outcomes.

Family Context

Families strongly influence adolescents' social context, and parents influence children's educational outcomes through direct involvement in their schooling. Parents also instill specific beliefs and values in their children. Familism, a central feature shaping family context, refers to the degree to which family members are connected to one another (Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1994). Being raised in a collectivist culture, Latino children are taught to respect the authority of the family (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999). This respect for the family leads both Latino children

and their parents to feel a sense of duty and obligation that both directly and indirectly influences Latino youths' educational success.

Familism consists of three dimensions: attitudinal, behavioral, and structural. The structural dimension refers to adolescents' family composition and network. The behavioral dimension pertains to the daily actions and tasks performed that demonstrate adolescents' feelings towards their families (Marin, Otero-Sabogal, & Marin, 1987). Lastly, attitudinal familism illustrates adolescents' beliefs and feelings about their families (Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1994). In the present study, we focus on attitudinal familism.

Each dimension has a specific relationship with students' academic achievement and motivation. One study showed that attitudinal familism increased students' academic motivations while behavioral familism hindered it (Tseng, 2004). In other words, while children's feelings of respect for their families motivated them to do well academically, their actual achievement was inhibited by having to take time away from studying and other school activities so they could participate in family events or contribute to household chores.

Familism influences Latino parents' involvement in their children's education. Some parents explicitly migrate to the US to provide their children with more opportunity and a better education (Chao, 1996; Mordkowitz & Ginsburg, 1987). Immigrant parents typically have high educational expectations for their children and communicate these expectations and hopes to them. Kao (2004) found that both parents' aspirations and child-parent interactions were associated with higher GPAs for immigrant students. Additionally, discussions among parents and their children, especially pertaining to school experiences, positively influence children's academic performance (Aldous, 2006; Desimone, 1999; Glick & White, 2004; Hao & Bonstead-Bruns, 1998; Muller, 1998). Thus, we hypothesize that families will promote adolescents'

educational success through their active involvement in setting expectations for their children, talking about future plans, and encouraging their participation in school activities

Latino children exhibit respect for their parents by doing well in school (Crosnoe & Turley, 2011; Gonzales, 2011; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995). Students retaining strong family identities tend to perform better at school (Portes & Schauffler, 1994). Consequently, we hypothesize that families will promote adolescents' educational success through two dimensions of familism—family respect and family identity. Youth with immigrant parents often have stronger feelings of family obligations than youth with US-born parents (Tseng, 2004) and demonstrate respect for their parents' sacrifices by achieving academically (Chao, 1996; Mordkowitz & Ginsburg, 1987). However, family obligation can also inhibit immigrant youth from performing well academically. For some adolescents, especially those from households struggling to make ends meet, helping their families financially may limit their time to focus on academics. Part time jobs or additional household chores may take precedence over completing homework (Henderson, 1997). Even after accounting for family SES and parental education, Latino students' academic aspirations may be constrained by their sense of family obligations. For example, Latino youth who believed it was important for them to stay close to home after graduating from high school were less likely to apply to college (Desmond & Lopez-Turley, 2009). Consequently, we have two hypotheses concerning future family obligations. First, we hypothesize that future family obligations may promote educational attainment if adolescents feel a sense of duty to their parents to achieve academically and do not have other family obligations competing with their time to study. Simultaneously, we also hypothesize that a strong sense of future family obligations may lead adolescents to focus on the short-term financial needs of their family and forgo long-term investments in additional education.

School Context

Immigrant children are exposed to US cultural values and norms through school, their primary context of reception (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Adolescents encounter both positive and negative influences during their academic adaptation. While feelings of school belonging are typically associated with positive outcomes such as increased academic motivations and engagement (Gillen-O'Neel & Fuligni, 2013; Suarez-Orozco, Rhodes, & Milburn, 2009), their effects on academic achievement remain unclear. A recent study found that high school students with a sense of school belonging also believed that their education was intrinsically valuable and useful. However, they were not necessarily higher achieving. Thus, even when students *struggle* academically, a positive school climate can decrease their chances of dropping out (Gillen-O'Neel & Fuligni, 2013). In contrast, schools can also create unsupportive environments where immigrant youth feel threatened or discriminated against. Feeling unsafe at school has been linked to lower student achievement for Latino immigrants (Perguero, 2009) although these negative effects can be mediated by positive relationships with adults at school (Suarez-Orozco, Rhodes, & Milburn, 2009). Therefore, at the school level, we hypothesize that social acceptance at school will increase Latino immigrant youths' educational success while discrimination will decrease their educational success.

DATA AND METHODS

Data

We used data on high school seniors from the UCLA Study of Adolescents' Daily Lives (LA-SIAA), a mixed methods study of the social identifications and academic adaptations of Latino adolescents, and from the North Carolina Southern Immigrant Academic Adaptation Study (NC-SIAA) project, a companion study to the UCLA study. In LA, the sample was

selected from three public high schools with high concentrations of Latino youth. The North Carolina data was collected through a stratified cluster design. High schools with at least 24 Latino students enrolled in 9th grade in 2000 were stratified into two groups—urban and rural. Urban high schools were defined as serving counties where over 50% of the population lived in an urbanized area or cluster. Rural high schools included counties where 50% or less of the population lived in an urbanized area or cluster. Four schools from the urban stratum and five schools from the rural stratum participated.

Sample

The combined LA-NC SIAA data includes 511 Latino high school seniors with 297 in Los Angeles during the 2008-2009 academic year and 214 in North Carolina during the 2009-2010 academic year. Reflecting the general Latino population in new and traditional immigrant-receiving communities, the majority of Latino students in Los Angeles were third-generation, while those in both urban and rural North Carolina were more likely to be first-generation. The majority of Latino students in rural North Carolina (67%) and Los Angeles (55%) were from Mexican heritage while only 38% in urban North Carolina had a Mexican background. We deleted missing observations on each of the dependent variables so that our study samples consisted of 502 for the educational aspirations models, 501 for the educational expectations model, and 491 for the GPA model. In our final analyses, our sample was reduced to 483, 482, and 469, respectively, due to missing values on independent variables.

Measures

Educational aspirations and expectations. To measure aspirations, Latino youth were asked, “How far would you like to go in school?” To measure expectations, youth were asked “How far do you think you actually will go in school?” For both questions, respondents could

choose to complete less than a high school degree, a high school degree, a 2-year college degree, a 4-year college degree, or a graduate degree. None of the high school seniors said they aspired or expected to complete less than a high school degree and only a small number reported wanting to obtain only a high school degree. Therefore, these two categories were combined with those who aspired or expected to complete a 2-year college degree. The remaining three categories included: (1) complete 2-year college degree or less, (2) complete 4-year college degree, and (2) complete graduate school degree.

Academic performance. To measure academic performance, we used students' unweighted cumulative high school GPAs collected from their high school transcripts. If students' transcripts were missing, we used GPAs provided by students on their in-school survey when asked, "On your last report card, what was your overall GPA?" To ensure the reliability of students' self-reported GPA, we checked the correlation between their self-reported and transcript GPA for those who reported both (N=234), which was .80 (See Appendix Table 1A).

Family Involvement. We considered three dimensions of family involvement—parent achievement expectations, talks about future plans and school, and parental school encouragement. Parent achievement expectations ($\alpha = .77$) examined the degree of pressure students felt from their parents to achieve academically by evaluating four statements such as, "my parents will be disappointed if I don't get very high grades" and "my parents will be disappointed if I don't get mostly As on my report card." Next, the variable measuring the frequency with which youth and their parents talked about future plans and school ($\alpha = .84$) was based on three questions asking how often youth discussed their "future job plans," "future educational plans," and "the classes [they were] taking in school" with their parents (Fulgini, et al., 1999). Finally, parental school encouragement measured how often youth felt support and

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assistance from their parents to succeed academically. Students answered two questions asking how often their parents encouraged them “to take college placement or honors courses” and “to continue [your] their education after high school.” Each statement was evaluated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (“almost never”) to 5 (“almost always”). For all three measures, responses were averaged, with a higher score indicating higher expectations, more talks, or further encouragement, respectively. There was a mild correlation between talking with parents and parental school encouragement ($r = .41$).

Familism. Three dimensions of familism were evaluated—family respect, future family obligations, and family identity. Family respect was based on six items focusing on the importance of making sacrifices for one’s family and respecting parents and older family members ($\alpha = .76$; Fuligni et al., 1999). The future family obligations construct was also measured using six items evaluating how important it was to youth to support their parents in the future by living close to them or by providing financial assistance ($\alpha = .77$; Fuligni et al., 1999). Each statement was evaluated using a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (“not at all important”) to 5 (“very important”), and final scores were averaged. These two variables were highly correlated ($r = .59$)

Our family identity variable, adapted from Tyler and DeGoey (1995), measured if respondents felt valued by and important to their families. Using a 5-point scale, participants responded to eight statements, such as “My family is important to the way I think of myself as a person” and “I feel like a valued member of my family.” The averaged family identity score had good internal consistency ($\alpha = .90$). This family identity variable and family respect variable had a correlation of .49.

Social Acceptance. We defined social acceptance along four aspects related to students' school environment—positive school climate, encouragement from adults at school, liking school, and school identity. A modified version of Tyler and Dogoey's (1995) school climate variable was based on five statements pertaining to students' feelings about their school (i.e. "The teachers at my school treat students fairly," "I feel like a valued member of my school," and "My school is important to the way I think of myself as a person"). Our variable for adult encouragement evaluates how often students feel encouraged by adults at school to pursue harder classes and to further their education. The variable assessing if students liked school is based on two questions asking how much students enjoy or dislike doing their schoolwork (Eccles, 1983; Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005). Finally, school identity reflects if a student feels like a valued and important part of their school community. School identity was highly correlated with our school climate variable ($r = .62$) and mildly correlated with our likes school variable ($r = .40$). All measures ranged from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating more feelings of social acceptance. Both school climate ($\alpha = .89$) and school identity ($\alpha = .87$) had good internal consistency.

Social Discrimination. We defined six dimensions of discrimination: perceived likelihood of discrimination, concern about discrimination, rejection sensitivity, discrimination from adults, discrimination from kids, and discrimination from adults and kids. The first three variables are derived from measures used by Mendoza-Denton and colleagues (2002). Our measure for perceived likelihood of discrimination was based on four hypothetical scenarios of mistreatment due to students' race-ethnicity (i.e. being watched by a store clerk or not being chosen by a teacher) and evaluated on a Likert scale. Our variable measuring concern about discrimination assessed participants' responses to these same situations. For both dimensions, responses to the

four scenarios were summed so scores ranged from 1 to 20, with higher scores indicating a greater perception of or concern for discrimination. They were highly correlated ($r = .73$). The rejection sensitivity variable measured students' sensitivity to race-ethnicity in the same situations as those used for our previous two discrimination variables. For each situation, the "concern" and "perception" variables was multiplied together, creating four scores, which were then averaged and ranged from 1 to 25. Not surprisingly, the rejection sensitivity was extremely correlated with perceived discrimination ($r = .90$) and concern for discrimination ($r = .89$). All measures had good internal consistency of .83 for perceived discrimination, .85 for concern for discrimination, and .83 for rejection sensitivity.

The last three dimensions of discrimination assess how often participants' felt discriminated against by adults, kids, or both (i.e. how often adults/kids threatened or harassed a participant, treated them with less respect, treated them unfairly; Greene, Way & Pahl, 2006; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Both measures for discrimination from kids and adults had seven questions answered with a Likert scale ranging from 1 ("never") to 5 ("all the time") and were highly correlated with each other ($r = .76$). Scores were averaged separately (i.e. one for discrimination from adults and one for discrimination from kids) and then together (i.e. all 14 responses were averaged). Internal consistency was high; Cronbach's alpha for discrimination from adults was .90, from kids was .91, and from both was .94.

Additional Controls. Student characteristics that may have influenced Latino youths' educational outcomes were also controlled for such as gender, age, ethnicity (Mexican=1, not Mexican=0), English fluency (survey taken in English=1, survey taken in Spanish=0), generational status, and ethnic belonging. First-generation students were defined as foreign-born with foreign-born parents. Second-generation students were defined as US-born with at least one

foreign-born parent. Third-generation students were defined as US-born with US-born parents. Ethnic belonging measured the degree to which students felt like members of their own ethnic group (Phinney, 1992). Scores ranged from 1 to 5, with higher scores meaning students felt a higher sense of belonging to their ethnic group. We also controlled for family characteristics such as whether a student lived with two parents (1=yes, 0=no) and if at least one parent had graduated from high school (1=yes, 0=no).

Analytic Plan

To analyze our data, descriptive statistics were calculated; after assessing differences in the distributions of our three dependent variables, we examined differences in the distributions of our independent variables by settlement location. Then, we evaluated the unadjusted associations between each independent variable and dependent variable, using ordered logits (for the educational aspirations and expectations model) or OLS (for the GPA model). Our final model is based on the results from our unadjusted models. A final model was run for each of our dependent variables; as aforementioned, ordered logits were used for two of the dependent variables, educational expectations and aspirations, and OLS was used for the dependent variable, GPA.

RESULTS

In general, educational expectations were lower than educational aspirations, as hypothesized. Thirty-nine percent aspired to complete a graduate degree but only a quarter (26%) expected to achieve this goal (Table 1). Educational expectations and aspirations were highest in Los Angeles where eighty-two percent expected to complete a four-year college degree or more. No differences in educational aspirations were identified between rural and urban NC. About a quarter of adolescents living in urban (24%) and rural (25%) North Carolina aspired to complete

a two-year college degree or less. However, the expectations of youth in rural NC were significantly lower than those in urban NC. Thirteen percent less in rural North Carolina (29%) expected to complete a 4-year college degree than in urban North Carolina (42%).

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

We find several significant differences in the characteristics of Latino students across locations (Table 2). In general, Latino students in North Carolina experienced higher levels of family involvement, familism, and social acceptance than those in Los Angeles. However, Latino students in rural North Carolina perceived a higher likelihood of discrimination than those in Los Angeles. These findings may explain differences in educational outcomes reported in Table 1. Latino students in rural NC had significantly lower educational aspirations and expectations than students in Los Angeles (Table 3). Yet their academic performance was similar. Only Latino youth in urban NC performed worse academically than their peers in Los Angeles (Table 2).

[INSERT TABLE 2 HERE]

Student characteristics, family structure, and socioeconomic characteristics explained little of the variation in students' educational expectations and achievement (Table 3). Students of Mexican heritage reported lower educational aspirations and expectations but academic performance did not vary by ethnic background. We found no differences in educational aspirations or expectations by nativity or ethnic belonging. However, second-generation children of immigrants performed worse academically than both first- and third-generation children. In our sample of primarily low-income Latino children of immigrants, family structure and socioeconomic status explained little of the observed variation in educational aspirations, expectations, and performance.

We found strong positive associations between most dimensions of family involvement and educational outcomes (Table 3). Associations between familism and educational outcomes vary by the dimension measured. Future family obligations were associated with lower educational aspirations, expectations, and academic performance. Only family identity was positively associated with educational outcomes, but this association was only significant for our GPA model.

[INSERT TABLE 3 HERE]

After accounting for differences in student characteristics, family context, and school social contexts across locations, we still find significant differences in educational outcomes across contexts (Table 4). Latino youth in North Carolina still had lower aspirations and expectations than those in Los Angeles even though the academic performance of those in rural North Carolina was similar to Latino students in Los Angeles. In contrast, the academic performance of youth in urban North Carolina remained significantly lower than those in Los Angeles.

Adjusted for student characteristics, family structure, and family SES, we continued to find that families promote educational expectations and achievement in several ways (Table 4). With respect to family involvement, parents' high achievement expectations were significantly associated with students' high educational expectations and performance. With respect to familism, having a better sense of family identity was positively associated with students' academic performance. Only one indicator of familism, was associated with lower educational outcomes; students who felt obligated to support their families in the future had lower academic expectations and performance.

Similar to families, schools strongly influenced the educational success of Latino immigrant youth. Educational expectations and achievement were higher for youth who felt more

encouragement from adults and who liked school. In contrast, schools hindered youths' educational expectations and aspirations when they contributed to the perception of discrimination experienced by youth. However, perceptions of discrimination were not directly related to students' academic performance.

[INSERT TABLE 4 HERE]

DISCUSSION

Past research has shown that school and family contexts help explain the educational outcomes of adolescents (Fuligni, 1997, 2001). Our paper contributes to the existing literature by focusing on how school and family contexts promote or inhibit the educational success of, specifically, Latino immigrant youth living in new and traditional settlement locations. As segmented assimilation theory purports, we find that Latino adolescents' context of reception is related to their academic expectations and achievement. Furthermore, even after controlling for youths' school and family contexts, differences related to their educational outcomes remain between settlement locations.

Previous research shows that family structure and socioeconomic status primarily explain youths' educational expectations and achievement. However, within one ethnic group (in our case, Latinos), family demographics mattered little; instead, what occurred *within* the family was more important in explaining Latino students' educational outcomes. In particular, we found that support for our hypothesis that parents' achievement expectations promote Latino immigrant youths' educational expectations and achievement. We also found support for our hypothesis that future family obligations can inhibit them. Considering our sample of Latino immigrants is mostly from low SES backgrounds, it is likely that these youth feel pressured to join the workforce quickly so they can contribute to their family financially.

Besides families, we also showed that schools remain essential in promoting Latino immigrant youths' achievement by providing supportive and safe learning environments. Both negative and positive experiences at school were related to Latino students' educational outcomes. Our hypothesis that students who felt encouraged by adults at school were more likely to have higher expectations and achievement was supported. In contrast, Latino students who felt discriminated against had lower aspirations and expectations. Interestingly, we did not find support for our hypothesis that perceptions of discrimination had no effect on students' GPA although feelings of increased social acceptance did. Previous research suggests that feelings of school belonging and social acceptance not only influence students' academically but also promotes students' resiliency and makes them less susceptible to the harmful effects of discrimination (Gonzalez & Padilla, 1997; Stone & Han, 2005). This may help explain why perceptions of discrimination have almost no effect on Latino students' academic achievement.

While our study illustrates the importance of school and familial contexts as opposed to demographic characteristics influence on Latino immigrants' educational expectations and achievement, unmeasured differences between North Carolina and Los Angeles could further explain Latino immigrant youths' educational outcomes. For example, immigrant youths' documentation status has a direct effect on their educational expectations (Perreira & Spees, forthcoming), and the percent of the immigrant population who is undocumented has spread more broadly in new immigrant states, such as North Carolina (Passel & Cohn, 2009). Unauthorized Latinos face additional financial and legal barriers to continuing their education that discourage them from achieving academically (Mehta & Ali, 2003). Past research shows documentation status has a direct effect on Latino immigrant youths' educational expectations (Perreira & Spees, forthcoming). Second, Latino youths' educational outcomes may also be

explained by differences in the school systems between Los Angeles and North Carolina. Teachers and counselors in Los Angeles most likely have more experience working with immigrant youth than those in North Carolina (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2012). In general, compared to established immigrant-receiving destinations, North Carolina lacks the school resources, such as linguistic support, that would help immigrant children socially and academically (Godziak & Martin, 2005; Hamann, 2003; Hamann Wortham, & Murillo, 2002; Massey, 2008; Muller & Dondero, 2012; Perreira, Chapman, & Livas-Stein, 2006; Wainer, 2006). Yet, simultaneously, immigrants in new immigrant-receiving destinations have higher educational aspirations (which we also found to be true) and attend higher quality schools (Fry, 2011; Muller & Dondero, 2012; Perreira, Fuligni, & Potochnick, 2010).

Other limitations of our study should also be acknowledged. Most importantly, our study analyzes a cross-sectional sample using only two locations. Thus, we do not argue that Los Angeles and North Carolina represent all traditional and new immigrant-receiving communities, respectively. Differences in the policies and programs of school systems in other settlement locations may influence immigrant students' educational outcomes. Furthermore, our sample consists of high-achieving Latino students since they are high school seniors close to graduating. Therefore, our results would not apply to Latino students at the highest risk of dropping out. Finally, our sample size does not provide sufficient power to detect other covariates with only marginal effects.

Despite these limitations, our study advances current research by illustrating how both schools and families can support and influence students' educational expectations and achievement. In both new and established immigrant-receiving destinations, schools and families can provide academic support to immigrant students, even those from low SES backgrounds.

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However, different policies and programs may need to be implemented in these two destinations considering unmeasured differences remain between Los Angeles and North Carolina. Future research should focus on identifying these remaining differences in order to determine the most effective policies and programs to implement in each settlement type.

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Table 1. Mean Differences in Educational Aspirations, Expectations, and Unweighted GPAs of 12th Grade Latino Students in Los Angeles and North Carolina

	Full Sample		NC Rural		NC Urban		LA Urban		Diff
	%/mean	(se)	%/mean	(se)	%/mean	(se)	%/mean	(se)	
Educational Aspirations									
Complete a 2-year college degree or less (1-3)	15%	(0.03)	25%	(0.04)	24%	(0.09)	9%	(0.01)	b,c
Complete a 4-year college degree (4)	46%	(0.05)	42%	(0.04)	38%	(0.07)	50%	(0.07)	
Complete a graduate degree (5)	39%	(0.04)	33%	(0.05)	38%	(0.03)	41%	(0.07)	
Educational Expectations									
Complete a 2-year college degree or less (1-3)	29%	(0.05)	52%	(0.03)	34%	(0.08)	18%	(0.02)	a,b,c
Complete a 4-year college degree (4)	45%	(0.05)	29%	(0.05)	42%	(0.07)	52%	(0.04)	b
Complete a graduate degree (5)	26%	(0.03)	19%	(0.04)	24%	(0.07)	30%	(0.05)	
Achievement									
Overall Unweighted GPA (survey-adjusted transcript data, range: 0-4)	2.58	(0.06)	2.64	(0.07)	2.34	(0.04)	2.63	(0.05)	a,c
Sample Size	502		106		104		292		

Note: Unweighted Ns and %s. Standard errors adjusted for clustering. Indicates statistical differences ($p < .05$) between the sample means: a=NC rural vs NC urban, b=NC rural vs. LA, and c=NC urban vs. LA.

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Table 2. Mean Differences in Covariates, by Location (N=501)

	Full Sample		NC Rural		NC Urban		LA Urban		Diff
	%/mean	(se)	%/mean	(se)	%/mean	(se)	%/mean	(se)	
Student Characteristics									
Female	55%	(0.03)	56%	(0.10)	50%	(0.05)	57%	(0.03)	
Age (mean)	18.31	(0.09)	18.65	(0.14)	18.51	(0.10)	18.12	(0.03)	b,c
Mexican Background	54%	(0.05)	67%	(0.07)	38%	(0.10)	55%	(0.05)	a,c
English Fluency	98%	(0.01)	95%	(0.03)	94%	(0.04)	100%	-	b,c
Generational Status									
First Generation	29%	(0.07)	42%	(0.07)	52%	(0.08)	16%	(0.01)	b,c
Second Generation	53%	(0.04)	52%	(0.07)	44%	(0.09)	56%	(0.04)	
Third Generation	18%	(0.05)	6%	(0.01)	4%	(0.02)	27%	(0.04)	b,c
Ethnic Belonging (alpha=.85)	3.72	(0.24)	4.39	(0.04)	4.39	(0.06)	3.26	(0.10)	b,c
Family Structure and Socioeconomic Status									
Lives with two parents	69%	(0.01)	70%	(0.04)	70%	(0.02)	69%	(0.01)	
Parent graduated high school	65%	(0.05)	35%	(0.07)	74%	(0.10)	73%	(0.05)	a,b
Family Involvement									
Parent Achievement Expectations (alpha=.77)	2.90	(0.09)	3.20	(0.10)	2.95	(0.12)	2.77	(0.10)	b
Talk about Future Plans (range: 1-5, alpha=.84)	3.83	(0.07)	3.76	(0.16)	3.90	(0.10)	3.83	(0.09)	
Parental School Encouragement (range: 1-5, r=.42)	3.95	(0.05)	3.88	(0.10)	4.05	(0.17)	3.95	(0.00)	
Familism									
Family Respect (range: 1-5, alpha=.76)	4.06	(0.07)	4.27	(0.03)	4.27	(0.04)	3.91	(0.02)	b,c
Family Future Obligations (range: 1-5, alpha=.90)	3.54	(0.06)	3.74	(0.04)	3.72	(0.06)	3.41	(0.03)	b,c
Family Identity (range: 1-5, alpha=.90)	4.07	(0.07)	4.23	(0.13)	4.29	(0.08)	3.94	(0.03)	b,c
Social Acceptance									
Positive School Climate (range 1-5, alpha=.89)	3.49	(0.06)	3.59	(0.09)	3.68	(0.15)	3.39	(0.03)	c
Adult School Encouragement (range 1-5, r= .40)	3.85	(0.08)	4.05	(0.08)	4.07	(0.07)	3.71	(0.05)	b,c
Likes School (range: 1-5, r=.69)	2.84	(0.08)	3.10	(0.20)	2.97	(0.19)	2.71	(0.05)	b
School Identity (range: 1-5, alpha=.87)	3.15	(0.04)	3.22	(0.10)	3.17	(0.12)	3.12	(0.02)	
Discrimination									
Perceived Likelihood of Discrimination (range: 0-20, alpha=.83)	8.82	(0.27)	9.99	(0.26)	9.11	(0.20)	8.31	(0.30)	b
Concern about Discrimination (range: 0-20, alpha=.85)	8.82	(0.21)	9.24	(0.30)	8.78	(0.39)	8.69	(0.32)	
Rejection Sensitivity (range: 1-25, alpha=.85)	6.16	(0.27)	7.00	(0.49)	6.39	(0.33)	5.78	(0.35)	
Discrimination from Adults (range: 1-5, alpha=.85)	1.91	(0.03)	2.03	(0.09)	1.85	(0.05)	1.88	(0.04)	
Discrimination from Kids (range: 1-5, alpha=.85)	1.85	(0.05)	1.91	(0.12)	1.89	(0.03)	1.82	(0.07)	
Discrimination from Adults and Kids (range: 1-5, alpha=.94)	1.88	(0.04)	1.97	(0.09)	1.87	(0.04)	1.85	(0.05)	
Sample Size	502		106		104		292		

Note: Unweighted Ns and %s. Standard errors adjusted for clustering. Indicates statistical differences (p<.05) between the sample means: a=NC rural vs NC urban, b=NC rural vs. LA, and c=NC urban vs. LA.

Table 3. Unadjusted Odds Ratios for Educational Expectations and Aspirations, and Simple Regression Coefficients for Unweighted GPA

	Educational Aspirations (N=502)			Educational Expectations (N=501)			Unweighted GPA (N=491)	
	OR	[95% CI]		OR	[95% CI]		B	(se)
Location								
Urban Los Angeles (ref)								
Urban North Carolina	0.63	(0.29- 1.39)		0.58	(0.25- 1.32)		-0.28	(0.06) ***
Rural North Carolina	0.54	(0.28- 1.04)	*	0.29	(0.18- 0.47)	***	0.02	(0.09)
Student Characteristics								
Female	1.77	(1.04- 2.98)	**	1.15	(0.85- 1.55)		0.13	(0.12)
Age	0.65	(0.47- 0.89)	**	0.60	(0.39- 0.91)	**	-0.12	(0.07)
Mexican Background	0.56	(0.35- 0.90)	**	0.56	(0.37- 0.86)	**	0.27	(0.17)
Generational Status								
First Generation	1.01	(0.47- 2.19)		0.75	(0.35- 1.58)		-0.06	(0.08)
Second Generation	0.80	(0.39- 1.67)		1.05	(0.48- 2.30)		-0.11	(0.04) **
Third Generation (ref)								
Ethnic Belonging	0.81	(0.59- 1.11)		0.78	(0.56- 1.08)		-0.05	(0.03)
Family Structure and Socioeconomic Status								
Lives with two parents	1.04	(0.73- 1.48)		1.06	(0.64- 1.76)		0.09	(0.06) *
Parent graduated high school	1.23	(0.65- 2.33)	*	1.62	(0.83- 3.16)		-0.02	(0.08)
Family Involvement								
Parent Achievement Expectations	1.51	(1.10- 2.08)	**	1.25	(0.99- 1.57)	*	0.10	(0.03) ***
Talk about Future Plans (range: 1-5)	1.20	(0.92- 1.57)		1.35	(1.11- 1.64)	***	0.05	(0.04)
Parental School Encouragement (range: 1-5)	1.47	(1.22- 1.77)	***	1.53	(1.25- 1.87)	***	0.09	(0.04) **
Familism								
Family Respect (range: 1-5)	0.84	(0.57- 1.23)		0.77	(0.53- 1.13)		-0.04	(0.06)
Family Future Obligations (range: 1-5)	0.78	(0.65- 0.94)	**	0.72	(0.52- 0.99)	**	-0.10	(0.05) *
Family Identity (range: 1-5)	1.01	(0.86- 1.18)		1.06	(0.88- 1.28)		0.09	(0.03) **
Social Acceptance								
Positive School Climate (range 1-5)	1.13	(1.00- 1.27)	*	1.22	(1.03- 1.44)	**	0.12	(0.04) ***
Adult School Encouragement (range 1-5)	1.34	(1.02- 1.74)	**	1.42	(1.19- 1.69)	***	0.17	(0.03) ***
Likes School (range: 1-5)	1.23	(0.97- 1.55)	*	1.23	(0.92- 1.65)	*	0.09	(0.02)
School Identity (range: 1-5)	1.06	(0.83- 1.35)		1.19	(0.85- 1.64)		0.06	(0.04) *
Discrimination								
Perceived Likelihood of Discrimination (range: 0-20)	0.94	(0.90- 0.97)	***	0.92	(0.89- 0.96)	***	-0.01	(0.01)
Concern about Discrimination (range: 0-20)	0.96	(0.92- 1.01)		0.95	(0.88- 1.02)		-0.01	(0.01)
Rejection Sensitivity (range: 1-25)	0.96	(0.93- 0.99)	**	0.95	(0.91- 0.99)	**	0.00	(0.00)
Discrimination from Adults (range: 1-5)	0.78	(0.67- 0.89)	***	0.73	(0.57- 0.94)	**	-0.10	(0.03) ***
Discrimination from Kids (range: 1-5)	0.78	(0.65- 0.94)	**	0.77	(0.61- 0.97)	**	-0.06	(0.03)
Discrimination from Adults and Kids (range: 1-5)	0.75	(0.63- 0.90)	***	0.72	(0.55- 0.94)	**	-0.09	(0.04) **
*p<.10, **<.05, ***p<.01								
Note: Standard errors are adjusted for clustering.								

Table 4. Final Ordered Logits for Educational Expectations and Aspirations, and Regression Coefficients for Unweighted GPA

	Educational Aspirations (N=483)			Educational Expectations (N=482)			Unweighted GPA (N=469)	
	OR	[95% CI]		OR	[95% CI]		B	(se)
Location								
Urban Los Angeles (ref)								
Urban North Carolina	0.51	(0.30- 0.87)	**	0.46	(0.22- 0.97)	**	-0.32	(0.07) ***
Rural North Carolina	0.45	(0.16- 1.29)		0.29	(0.15- 0.57)	***	-0.06	(0.11)
Student Characteristics								
Female	2.00	(1.13- 3.54)	**	1.13	(0.74- 1.72)		0.08	(0.12)
Age	0.73	(0.53- 1.00)	**	0.75	(0.42- 1.33)		-0.10	(0.08)
Mexican Background	0.47	(0.28- 0.78)	***	0.56	(0.36- 0.87)	**	0.06	(0.06)
Generational Status								
First Generation	1.45	(0.59- 3.58)		1.25	(0.59- 2.67)		-0.11	(0.06) *
Second Generation	1.10	(0.57- 2.14)		1.66	(0.91- 3.03)	*	-0.15	(0.04) ***
Third Generation (ref)								
Family Structure and Socioeconomic Status								
Lives with two parents	1.19	(0.73- 1.93)		1.04	(0.59- 1.84)		0.13	(0.06) *
Parent graduated high school	0.78	(0.41- 1.48)		1.01	(0.63- 1.60)		-0.10	(0.09)
Family Involvement								
Parent Achievement Expectations	1.78	(1.19- 2.65)	***	1.36	(1.08- 1.71)	**	0.11	(0.04) ***
Talk about Future Plans (range: 1-5)	1.07	(0.73- 1.58)		1.23	(0.95- 1.59)		0.00	(0.04)
Familism								
Family Future Obligations (range: 1-5)	0.63	(0.43- 0.94)	**	0.59	(0.43- 0.80)	***	-0.18	(0.06) ***
Family Identity (range: 1-5)	1.08	(0.90- 1.29)		1.08	(0.86- 1.37)		0.12	(0.04) ***
Social Acceptance								
Adult School Encouragement (range 1-5)	1.21	(0.89- 1.66)		1.37	(1.11- 1.68)	***	0.14	(0.04) ***
Likes School (range: 1-5)	1.19	(1.00- 1.41)	*	1.33	(1.08- 1.63)	**	0.08	(0.03) **
Discrimination								
Perceived Likelihood of Discrimination (range: 0-20)	0.93	(0.89- 0.98)	***	0.94	(0.90- 0.98)	***	0.00	(0.01)

*p<.10, **<.05, ***p<.01

Note: Standard errors are adjusted for clustering. Analysis includes an indicator variable for missing values on living with two parents and parent graduated from high school.

ⁱ However, Clotfelter and his colleagues (2012) also find some evidence that Hispanic students close the achievement gap as they progress through school in North Carolina when compared to students from similar backgrounds.