University of Nevada, Reno

Latina Perceptions: Making Meaning of Familial and Financial Tensions While Pursuing a College Degree

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education

by

Sandra Rodríguez

Dr. Rita M. Laden/Dissertation Advisor

December 2019

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

We recommend that the dissertation
prepared under our supervision by

Sandra Rodriguez

Entitled

Latina Perceptions: Making Meaning of Familial and Financial Tensions

While Pursuing a College Degree

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctorate of Philosophy

Dr. Rita Laden , Advisor

Dr. Janet Usinger , Committee Member

Dr. Pat Miltenberger , Committee Member

Dr. Stephen Rock , Committee Member

Dr. Daniel Enrique Perez , Graduate School Representative

David W. Zeh, Ph.D., Dean, Graduate School

December-2019

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the role that campus employment played as Latina students navigated familial obligations and financial constraints while pursuing an undergraduate degree. Specifically, this research addressed the following question: How do Latina women who are enrolled and working on campus navigate and negotiate educational and familial systems while obtaining a college degree?

Fifteen full-time first-generation Latina students who were employed on campus at a public land grant institution participated in semi-structured interviews that focused on their experiences in transitioning from high school to college, their familial situation, on-campus work, and their expectations for graduation. Four themes emerged from the analysis of data: a context of financial constraints; cultural tensions; feeling overwhelmed; and the importance of meaningful relationships.

A qualitative research design that utilized a constructivist grounded theory was used to understand the perceptions about student employment as a lived social construct struggled with and shared by the study participants. Through the study of this phenomena, self-efficacy and agency were used as the theoretical lenses.

There were tensions that played out for these Latina women when they entered the college environment and the academic and student employment expectations they met. It was the expectations within the context of the institutions – family and university – that became the mechanism for building self-efficacy and agency. Through the interplay between the self and family and the self and the institution they began to understand themselves as autonomous beings with a dream of obtaining a college degree. Through this endeavor, the women in this study did not appear to assimilate into either

institution – family or higher education – to obtain their goals; rather, they created

environments that mirrored values of both. They honored relational collectivism while

learning to operate as independent agents. Gratitude and aspirations drove the connection

between the family and imparted self-efficacy necessary to fulfill the family's dream.

Obligation drove the self-efficacy to tackle the tensions and stresses associated with

reconciling the familial conflicts that arose within the family. Optimism and expectations

drove the connection between the women's desire to obtain a degree for themselves.

Determination drove their agency in their attempts to navigate the institutional demands

of an education and student employment.

Dedication

To mom and dad, Antonia and Porfirio Rodriguez, for the dream deferred.

To Griselda, Hermelinda, Porfirio, Oscar, Leonor, and Amy for the dream conferred.

Thank you, Dr. Rita Laden, for never giving up on my potential, for your guidance and your patience. Thanks to Dr. Janet Usinger for being the qualitative guru. Thanks to Pat Miltenberger for being the best example of a student affairs administrator. And finally, thanks to Dr. Stephen Rock and Dr. Daniel Enrique Perez for the gifts you brought to my committee.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Grawe (2018) reported that through the "evolution of inflation-adjusted levels of household income" from 1965 to 2000, households saw an increase in each of the 20th, 40th, 60th and 80th percentiles (p. 88). Actual gains varied in each percentile. The 95th percentile's income grew by 70 percent, 60th and 80th percentile grew by 40-50 percent while the 20th and 40th percentile grew by 20-30 percent. To make this more concrete, the 80th percentile experienced an increase of $38,000 while the 20th percentile experienced a $6,000 increase in actual dollars. It is important to note that in addition to a greater percentage gain, the base from which the gains were added was higher for upper income individuals and families than lower income individuals and families. Grawe further reported that since 2000, income levels have flattened, and the recession of 2008 has occurred.

In addition to disproportionate incomes that have flattened in recent years, requirements for maintaining a comfortable lifestyle have increased. As the economy of the United States has shifted from an industrial base to information-focused jobs and careers, some form of postsecondary education has increasingly been required to support a middle-class lifestyle (Latino, Stegmann, Radunzel, Way, Sanchez, & Casillas, 2018). This has driven more individuals toward higher education. Indeed, participation in postsecondary education has increased dramatically in the past several decades (Latino et al., 2018).

Increases in postsecondary enrollment have coincided with increased costs. Grawe (2018) noted that colleges and universities have raised fees faster than inflation in

response to increasing demand; however, demand explains only part of the increases. Funding for public higher education is largely derived from three sources: state funding, grants and scholarships, and family contributions. State funding can vary, depending upon legislative priorities. St. John, Duan-Barnett, and Moronski-Chapman (2018) argued that as a nation, the United States has effectively moved financing of higher education away from the "social contract of human capital theory" (p. 2) which guided higher education finance for nearly 50 years from the end of the Great Depression through the end of the cold war toward promotion of economic development. State legislators generally understand that maintaining a robust state economy requires a highly educated populace. However, as mandatory budget items such as health, safety, and primary and secondary education have increased, discretionary funding for postsecondary education has decreased; this is particularly the case during economic downturns. The relative reduction in state funding has shifted the burden of paying for a college education toward the student and has had a direct impact, especially for students at the lowest end of the socioeconomic continuum.

Students are eligible for merit-based and need-based grants, which do not have to be repaid. The federal Pell Grant programs, authorized by Title IV of the 1965 Higher Education Act, as amended (HEA; P.L. 89-329), is the single largest source of federal grant aid supporting postsecondary education students. For 2018-2019, the total maximum Pell grant award was $6,095 (Congressional Research Service, 2018). This maximum amount often does not cover the cost of postsecondary attendance.

When calculating a financial aid package for students to meet postsecondary costs, family contribution is also considered. This source can be from family income or savings, with the understanding that loans could help bridge the contribution gap. However, many low-income students do not qualify for loans because their parents must be cosigners, or they must take the loans themselves. What researchers have found is that rising tuition costs disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities and those at the bottom quartile of income. Abraham and Clark (2006) found that enrollment "increased by 3.6 percentage points for every $1,000 of aid" among underrepresented low-income groups (p. 607).

According to Grawe (2018), changing demographics mean that public universities are increasingly drawing poorer minority students from the poorest school districts; these students require more financial aid to pay for college. The contribution gap between the financial aid package and the cost of tuition and fees is exacerbated. As a result, these students often find themselves without a choice but to use student employment to close that financial gap. On-campus student employment has become invaluable to students in reaching their educational goals. However, the research related to student employment is conflicting in assessing its value in student development, persistence, and graduation. "Overall, the empirical literature on student employment is marked by diversity and contradiction" (Riggert, Boyle, Petrosko, Ash, & Parkins, 2006, p. 69). Studies are contradictory in how time spent in student employment adds to cognitive development and/or impairs degree attainment.

There has been minimal effort to frame the relationship of student employment and higher education in a theoretical context. No theoretical models were found that exclusively (or even primarily) focused on the student employment–higher education relationship. Perhaps the lack of theoretical underpinnings has contributed to the discontinuity across empirical investigations. (Riggert et al., 2006, p. 70)

The predicament of needing to work during college to pay the increasing costs coupled with inadequate financial aid associated with attending college particularly impacts Latina students who are the first in their families to attend college (i.e., first-generation) and who come from families with low incomes. According to the U.S. Census (2015), female college students numbered 10.6 million by fall 2015. Latinas represented 1.8 million of that group. Indeed, Latina college students are more likely to be employed during their college experience, as they tend to come from families with limited incomes. The census showed that over 70 percent of Latinas experienced employment while attempting to obtain a college degree.

Financial aid is critical to those students who need it to access higher education and succeed in degree attainment. Santiago (2013) challenges that policy making should use a "latino lens" as a baseline to reimagine financial aid and address the challenges of "the inability of federal aid to keep up with the increase in college costs and because the growing representation of students do not meet the characteristics of traditional college students" (p. 3). Traditional college students have historically been the focus of

policymaking. Where Latinos represented 14 percent of students in higher education in the past, they now comprise 25 percent of students enrolled in K-12 (Santiago, 2013).

Latina women with limited incomes face more than the financial and academic challenges of college. Latinas are expected to support the family through financial considerations. Further, there is expectation that they continue to help with the day-to-day familial needs. In essence, Latina women from families with low incomes must attempt to obtain college degrees by balancing academics, student employment, and family expectation. All have proven to be major obstacles to overcome, regardless of aspiration (Cardoza, 1991; Engberg & Allen, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

As the cost of a higher education continues to increase, limited family incomes, diminishing financial aid packages, and increasing reliance on loans are posing challenges for many students, particularly first-generation racial and ethnic minorities whose numbers are increasing in entrance to college but not in persistence to graduation. As the discrepancy between entrance and persistence has increased, both scholars and practitioners have sought to better understand those factors that influence a student's success. Researchers have spent the last 45 years researching various components of the college student development experience in order to learn those factors that influence persistence and graduation. These areas include social identity theory (e.g. race, ethnicity, sexual identity, gender, religion, ability, social class), psychosocial identity development, cognitive/epistemological development, moral development and holistic self-authorship

(Patton, Renn, Guido & Quaye, 2016). Researchers are just now beginning to study college student employment during the undergraduate years.

Student employment is a reality that many students embrace but is particularly important for first-generation Latina women. Culturally, Latina women have family expectations that other groups do not experience. For this population of students who feel responsibility for the family, financial issues add to the stress associated with attending higher education (Cano & Castillo, 2010; Castillo & Hill, 2004; Engberg & Allen, 2010; Walpole, 2003). There is limited research that examines the impact of academic, familial, and work obligations and how they might affect the Latina student experience.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the role that campus employment played as Latina students navigated familial obligations and financial constraints while pursuing an undergraduate degree. Specifically, this research addressed the following question: How do Latina women who are enrolled and working on campus navigate and negotiate educational and familial systems while obtaining a college degree?

Study Design

A qualitative research design was used to gain an understanding of how Latina women made meaning of the college student employment experience within the context and complexities of their lives. Creswell (2014) defined qualitative research as "an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 246). This study of Latina college women utilized constructivist grounded theory to understand the perceptions around student employment

as a lived social construct struggled with and shared by the study participants. This study specifically examined the lived experiences of Latina women in higher education who were pursuing their academic degrees, were employed on campus, and had familial obligations.

Theoretical Framework

A constructivist frame as described by Creswell (2014) guided this examination of the lived experiences of Latina undergraduate students as they balanced being full-time university students, while working and meeting the cultural expectations of their families. Through the study of this phenomena, a reflexive stance on what is known about self-efficacy was used as the theoretical lens. Bandura (2006) described self-efficacy as "the foundation of human agency. Unless people believe they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to act, or to persevere in the face of difficulties" (Bandura, 2006, p .170). Researchers have found that educational aspiration, the motivation within an individual to obtain a college degree, is the most important predictor of college attendance and persistence (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). Research on college student development, college student employment, and Latina familial obligations were also used to explore the themes that emerged from the participants' narratives.

Significance

Although postsecondary institutions provide college employment to help students bridge the gap in the cost of their education, little research has focused specifically on first-generation Latina women. This research contributes to the literature on Latina

women and how they balanced college student employment, familial obligations, and pursing an academic degree. Findings can be used to assist practitioners in higher education working with student employees in framing positive work environments conducive to overall college student development. Findings also contribute to the understanding of the lived experience of Latina women who work, pursue degrees, and meet familial obligations.

Limitations

This study consisted of 15 participants who all attended the same university, therefore the transferability of findings from this study are limited. Indeed, although the findings may be familiar to many, no assumptions should be made that all Latinas in higher education have the same experience. Other limits include that there were no variances in gender, ethnic, or sexual orientation for conducting comparative analyses.

Another limitation is that the researcher is a Chicana. However, she carefully engaged in reflexivity during the study to ensure that trusted colleagues challenged her perceptions, interpretations, and construction of the information shared by participants.

Definition of Terms

Definitions important to this research include:

1. First-generation: Participants who are the first in their families to enter an institution of higher learning in the U.S. (Horn & Nuñez, 2000).

2. Familialism: A "cultural value emphasizing family closeness and loyalty" (Sy, 2006, p. 369).

3. *Marianismo*: A "cultural value that emphasizes the self-sacrificing role of females and highlights the females' role as family caretaker" (Sy, 2006, p. 369).

4. Persistence: "The rate at which students who begin higher education at a given point in time continue in higher education and eventually complete their degree, regardless of where they do so" (Tinto, 2010, p. 128).

5. Self-efficacy: "This core belief is the foundation of human agency. Unless people believe they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to act, or to persevere in the face of difficulties" (Bandura, 2006, p.170).

6. Agency: The ability to influence intentionally "one's functioning and life circumstances. Human agency consists of core properties including intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness and self-reflectiveness" (Bandura, 2006, pp.164-165).

Summary

As income inequality has grown in the past several decades, the requirement for some form of postsecondary education to maintain a comfortable lifestyle has increased. Furthermore, as state funding for public higher education has decreased, the burden of paying for a postsecondary education has shifted more to the student. Merit-based and need-based grants and scholarships have not kept pace with the increasing costs, creating a gap in the financial aid awarded and final cost of tuition in fees for students. Grawe (2018) found that changing demographics means that students from the poorest school

districts and from families with limited financial means are being recruited to higher education. Those students who access higher education from the lowest end of the socio-economic continuum use student employment to bridge that gap between cost of tuition and fees and financial aid awarded. Indeed, student employment has become a lived reality for most first-generation, low income students. Latina women who gain access to higher education are most likely to enter at the intersection of being ethnic minorities, possessing financial constraints, and having first-generation status. Hence the focus of this research was the exploration of Latina lived experiences as student employees as related to and is impacted by social class, familial obligation, the desire to obtain a college degree, and their expectations for the future.

This dissertation is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study. Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature related to trends in college student enrollment, college student employment, and various aspects of college student development. Chapter 3 describes the methodology and methods used in this study. The findings of the study are presented in Chapter 4. The findings are discussed in light of the literature and professional practice in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to explore the role that campus employment played as Latina students navigated familial obligations and financial constraints while pursuing an undergraduate degree. Specifically, this research addressed the following question: How do Latina women who are enrolled and working on campus navigate and negotiate educational and familial systems while obtaining a college degree?

The literature review is divided into four sections. The first section describes general trends in college enrollment. This is followed by a section on college student employment. College student development includes subsections on social identity development, racial identity theory, Latino/a racial/ethnic identity in college students, Latino culture and family obligations, social class and identity, cognitive/epistemological development, self-efficacy, agency, and institutional environments, moral development and holistic self-authorship. The final section is a summary of the chapter.

Trends in College Enrollment

As the economy of the United States has shifted from an industrial base to information-focused jobs and careers, some form of postsecondary education has increasingly been required to support a middle-class lifestyle (Latino et al., 2018). Historically, higher education served white, middle-and upper-class men between the ages of 18-24. As a result of several federal efforts, participation in postsecondary education has increased dramatically in the past eighty years. In 1944, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, better known as the G.I. Bill, opened the door to higher education of men who were from all walks of life. It was the first significant public policy that allowed

individuals from all socio-economic backgrounds to access the promise of education as a vehicle for social mobility. The Higher Education Authorization Act of 1965 followed, introducing federal financial aid so those who were academically qualified could access higher education.

According to Fry and Cilluffo (2019), in the 2015-16 academic year, nearly 20 million students were enrolled in undergraduate education, up from 16.7 million in 1995-96. The National Center of Education Statistics (2019) reported that between 1996 and 2006, fall enrollment in higher education institutions increased by 24 percent and total enrollment was 12 percent higher in 2016 (19.8 million) than in 2006 (17.8 million). The increase in female students from 2006-2016 was 10 percent and male students was 14 percent. From 1976 to 2016, ethnic and racial minority student enrollment increased: Hispanics (from 4 percent to 18 percent); Asian/Pacific Islander (from 2 percent to 7 percent); Black (from 10 percent to 14 percent); American Indian/Alaska Native (from 0.7 percent to 0.8 percent). During this time period, White student enrollment decreased from 84 percent to 57 percent.

In addition to increases in ethnic and racial minority enrollment, there has also been an increase in enrollment of students who come from families with limited incomes and students who are the first in the family to attend college (i.e. first-generation status). According to Fry and Cilluffo (2019), in the 2015-16 academic year, 31 percent of students at higher education institutions experienced poverty, up from 21 percent 20 years ago. Skomsvold (2015) reported that approximately one third of all college students were considered first-generation, defined as those whose parents did not attend college.

Applying to and enrolling in a postsecondary educational institution presents greater challenges for students who come from lower socioeconomic families, who are racial/ethnic minorities, and who are first-generation. According to Balemian and Feng (2013), educational obtainment by parents affects the educational obtainment of their children. Students whose families have histories of attending college enroll in higher education upon completion of high school at a rate of 82 percent. First-generation students whose parents completed high school entered college at a rate of 54 percent. First-generation students whose parents had less than a high school degree entered higher education at a rate of only 36 percent. The less education the parents have attained, the less likely their children are to enter higher education. Engle (2007) described the college-going experience as a normal continuation of ones' academic and social experiences after high school for children whose parents attended college, but this same experience was described as a disjunction in the lives of first-generation students and their families. As a result, first-generation students are overrepresented among the most disadvantaged groups in the pipeline and are more likely to delay college entry, need remedial coursework, and drop out of college (Engle, 2007). First-generation students are also less likely to understand how to access higher education, the costs associated with obtaining a college degree, and how to access financial aid; they also may be less academically prepared (Engle, 2007).

Once enrolled in an institution of higher education, persistence is the second challenge for low-income, first-generation, and racial/ethnic minority students. Lohfink and Paulsen (2005) found that "first-generation college students are disproportionately

overrepresented in the most disadvantaged racial, income, and gender groups" (p. 409). Specifically, they found a difference in first to second year persistence of first-generation Latinos/as. They discovered that Latino/a first-generation students were 35.4 percent less likely to persist from the first year to the second year than white first-generation students. Income was cited as a determining factor. Lohfink and Paulsen (2005) found that "each $10,000 increase in family income was associated with a 2 percent increase in the probability of persisting" (p. 415).

Persistence by Latino/a students is also impacted by the type of higher education institution they first enter. According to Santiago (2013), 51 percent of eligible Latino/a students enter higher education through two-year public institutions, 13 percent enter through private institutions, and 36 percent enter through four-year public institutions. Latino/a students attend college throughout the process in both full-time and part-time status. This means they are more likely to still be enrolled in college after six years.

Researchers have found that persistence rates for Latino/as can be positively impacted through various means including institutional agents that use their social capital to empower Latino/a students (Garcia & Ramirez, 2019); validation by faculty for experiences these students bring into the academy (Alcantar & Hernandez, 2018); rigorous academic expectations prior to arriving in college through programs such as GEAR UP (Sanchez, Lowman, & Hill, 2018); and environmental supports such as accelerated learning in high school and financial aid (Latino et al., 2018).

College Student Employment

Paying tuition and fees for a college education comes from four primary sources: financial aid packages, which include grants and scholarships that do not have to be repaid; family contributions; loans which have to be repaid; and students themselves, generally in the form of employment during their college years. Scholarships and grants (e.g., Pell grant, state need-based aid) were designed to fill the gap between the cost of postsecondary attendance and the student's ability to pay (Grawe, 2018). Unfortunately, for many low-income students, there is an increasing gap between the financial aid package and the cost of tuition and fees. Furthermore, low-income families are often unable to contribute to their child's college education and many low-income families are either reluctant or not eligible to assume the debt of student loans. Baum (2010) noted that the Federal Work-Study program was originally created as financial aid to give students employment experience while placing an emphasis on academic performance. This normed an expectation that students work while attending college.

McCormick, Moore, and Kuh (2010) reported on the need for college students to work in order to help finance their college education. In addition, students also used college employment as a means of gaining work experience and developing networks to help them enter a professional career after graduation (Carnevale, Smith, Melton, & Price, 2015; Perna, Asha Cooper & Li, 2007). Higher education institutions likewise value college employment as a means of assisting students in gaining work experience and also helping with expenses. In a study of 239 public and private higher education institutions conducted by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators

(NASPA), researchers found that institutional goals for college employment were: to equipment students with career-readiness competencies (81 percent); to improve financial security (78 percent); retention and completion (69 percent); and build connections to campus (67 percent) (Burnside, Wesley, Wesaw, & Parnell, 2019).

Researchers from the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University found that, "over the last 25 years, more than 70 percent of college students have been working while enrolled. These 14 million college students face the challenge of balancing work, school and other life priorities" (Carnevale et al., p.1). Baum (2010) noted that work patterns for full-time college students between 1976 and 2006 reflected a marked change in levels of employment of full-time undergraduate students. In 1976, 37.6 percent of full-time undergraduate students were employed and worked 20 hours per week. By 2006, those numbers showed that 46.5 percent of full-time undergraduate students worked an average of 20 hours per week. By 2010, "half of all full-time undergraduates and 81 percent of all part-time undergraduates are employed while enrolled" (Baum, 2010, p. 3) which indicates that necessity is driving the employment as current financial aid levels are insufficient to cover educational and living expenses.

A larger percentage of Hispanics work while in school than any other ethnic group. The NCES (2019) reported that in 2017, 46 percent of full-time Hispanic students worked, followed by White (45 percent), Black (39 percent), and Asian (29 percent). The percentage of part-time undergraduate students who worked was not measurably different among racial/ethnic groups (NCES, 2019).

Studies conducted on the impact of college employment on student success have resulted in mixed or inconclusive results (Perna, 2010; Riggert, Boyle, Petrosko, Ash, & Rude-Parkins, 2006). It appears from the literature that two factors determine whether academics are impacted by student employment: the number of hours worked and whether the job is on or off campus. Kuh, Kinzie, Cruce, Shoup, and Gonyea (2007) found that students who worked 20 or fewer hours on campus had higher grades than students who did not work at all, who worked more than 20 hours per week, or who worked off campus. Controlling for students' characteristics and levels of engagement, Pike, Kuh, and Massa-McKinley (2008) found that among first-year students there was a statistically significant negative relationship between working more than 20 hours a week and grades. They also found that those students who worked 20 hours or less on campus had higher grades than those who did not work. Hawkins, Smith, Hawkins, and Grant (2005) found that students can work between 16-25 hours before negatively impacting their academic progress.

Focusing on full-time and part-time undergraduate students, Dariolia (2014) found little impact on student grades. However, he did report that full-time students who worked more than 15 hours per week completed fewer credits per semester which increased the amount of time it took to earn their degree. While controlling for characteristics at entry, Callender (2007) quantified the impact of student employment on grades and degrees obtained by 1,000 students from six UK universities. She found a detrimental effect on both their final year grades and their degree results. Students who worked were a third less likely to get a good degree than a student who did not work.

Hunt, Lincoln, and Walker (2004) found that the mean percentage grade for working students was 1.7 percentage points lower than that of those who did not work.

Dundes and Marx (2006) reported results contrary to Kuh et al. (2007) and Pike et al. (2008) regarding off-campus employment. They found that those students who worked 10-19 hours per week off campus studied more hours and earned higher grades than other students who worked and students who did not work, suggesting the "key is an optimal work-college balance that establishes structure and discipline not achieved by working too few or too many hours" (Dundee & Marx, 2006, p. 107).

In his study of 1,827 students in the United Kingdom, Robotham (2012) found that students spent more hours a week working than they spent in the classroom. He reported both positive and negative outcomes of working while going to school. Seventy percent of students surveyed indicated that working while in college improved their ability to deal with other people and 67 percent indicated that work improved their communication skills. The students reported two negative consequences of working while in school as well: less time spent on academics (42 percent) and a decrease in social engagement (53 percent). Wang, Kong, Shan, and Vong (2010) also found positive effects of student employment, including greater academic success and an increase in social support networks.

The impact of student employment on persistence and retention has been examined with conflicting results. Tinto's 1993 study examined reasons for students leaving higher education. He found a positive correlation between study time and grade point average. Tinto concluded that as study time diminishes, so does academic

performance. He cited that student employment takes time away from academics and integration into the social fabric of the university, thereby having a negative effect on persistence. Titus (2010) found a negative relationship between the number of hours a student worked and completing a bachelor's degree in six years. In this study, women were more likely than men to obtain a degree during the six-year period.

In a recent study, Bluml (2019) investigated the relationship between on-campus employment and retention among 1,582 students who were first-generation, low socioeconomic status (SES), and racial and ethnic minorities. He found that students who worked on campus during the first year of college were nearly twice as likely to be retained as those students who did not work on campus.

While college student employment has become necessary in order to pay for a college education, it has become a stressor. In a study on student employment and drinking that included 106 full-time college students, 75 percent who were female, Butler, Dodge, and Faurote (2010) found that the number of hours worked in a day was positively correlated to the number of drinks consumed. Their findings "illustrate that employment during the academic year plays a significant role in college student drinking" (Butler et al., 2010, p. 291).

McNall and Michel (2010) conducted a study with 314 employed college students to examine how they managed work and school roles and how participants felt about work and school. The investigators did not differentiate between on-campus and off-campus student employment. Their research found that students who were "more efficacious, emotionally stable individuals who have positive self-evaluations and feel

like they have control over their environment are less likely to feel that work interferes with school" (McNall & Michel, 2010, p. 405). The researchers concluded that these students identified more with their role as a student than as an employee. Dundes and Marx (2006) found that the number of hours worked affects stress levels of students. In their study, 70-80 percent of those who worked 10 or more hours experienced stress whereas only 19 percent of those working less than 10 hours experienced stress.

In their longitudinal study of 23 colleges, Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, and Terenzini (1998) investigated the impact of student employment (on and off campus) on cognitive development during the first three years of college. Their study concluded that there was little impact on cognitive development during the first year. However, their research indicated that "on campus work in excess of 15 hours per week or off campus work in excess of 20 hours per week had a negative impact" (Pascarella et al., 1998, p. 75).

Perna (2010) made the following recommendations related to the experiences and employment of college students:

- "Student" is only one of several roles related and responsibilities for many undergraduates;
- Work has both benefits and costs to students' educational experiences and outcomes;
- Work should be reconceptualized as an experience that may promote students' educational outcomes. (p. 283)

College Student Development

For decades, leaders of higher education institutions have sought to understand factors that promote student development and increase a student's chance of success. The American Council of Education (1937, 1949) proposed that institutions not only focus on the academic experiences of students but to consider the *whole student*. Development of the whole student is very complex and no one theory can inform higher education officials on how to serve the needs of all.

Beginning in the 1960s, considerable research was conducted with college students and numerous theories emerged from those studies. Between 1970 and 1989, nearly 2,600 studies were conducted to assess the impact of the higher education experience on students (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). These theories became known generally as college student development theories. Patton et al., (2016) posited that "student development theory provides a basis for higher education and student affairs practice designed to stimulate positive growth in students" (p. 25). Patton et al. categorized college student development theories into several categories, including social identity development (e.g. race, ethnicity, sexual identity, gender, religion, ability, social class), psychosocial identity development, cognitive/epistemological development, moral development, and holistic self-authorship.

Social Identity Development

Several college student development theories emerged in the 1970s; student affairs professionals, in particular, were encouraged to study the early theories in order to better serve students. Scholars such as Chickering, Marcia, Perry, and Kohlberg were

instrumental in developing theories so that staff could better understand students. However, student affairs educators began to realize that these theories were based on the experiences of white, traditional-aged men (18-24) and failed to take into consideration the experiences of students of color and women students of all backgrounds (Patton et al., 2016; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). The role of most student affairs practitioners is to assist in the development of students to reach their potential. Identity development theories "help practitioners to understand how students go about discovering their abilities, aptitude and objectives while assisting them to achieve their maximum effectiveness" (Torres, Jones, & Renn, 2009, p. 577).

Patton et al. (2016) defined social identity development as "the process by which people come to understand their social identities (ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, and others) and how these identities affect other aspects of their lives" (p.73). These theories also seek to gain an understanding of the environments in which this development occurs.

Additional social identity theories emerged as college campuses began enrolling students from more diverse backgrounds. Many of the theories focus on racial identity (e.g. Cross Model of Psychological Nigrescence, Helm's White Identity Development Model, and Atkinson, Morten, and Sue's Minority Development model).

Racial identity theory. Changing demographics in the United States influenced research related to college student development. As student populations diversified, there was increased pressure to focus on ethnic and racial identities, as well as the development of voice and the self (Perozzi, 2009). African American identity theories brought to light

the process of owning one's racial identity and the emergence of self-consciousness (e.g. Cross, 1991, 1995; Gay, 1984; Jackson, 1976, 2001). Such was also the case for Asian American racial identity theories (e.g. Atkinson, Morton, & Sue, 1993; Kim, 2001; Liang, Lee, & Ting, 2002; Maekawa Kodama, McEwen, Liang, & Lee, 2002). White racial identity theories focused on awareness of the self, privilege, and gaining consciousness of power (e.g. Hardiman, 2001; Helms, 1990, 1995; Helms & Cook, 1999). Latino and Hispanic racial identity theories were rooted in cultural awareness, generational differences, stages of acculturation, and familial impact on identity (e.g. Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Keefe & Padilla, 1987; Torres, 2003).

     Latino/a Racial/Ethnic Identity in College Students. Patton el al. (2016) reviewed the complexities of ethnic identity research within the Latino/a diaspora. Latinos/as are not a homogeneous group. Complexities span identifiers, class, nationalism, and other identities. Torres (2003) discovered a connection between acculturation and ethnic identity among Hispanic college students. Three influences on the identity development of Latino students were found. The first influence was the environments where the student grew up (diverse to predominately white environments). Students "who came from diverse environments tended to have a strong sense of ethnicity and were more likely to enjoy the diversity around them" (Torres, 2003, p. 537). The second influence was family and generational status, which "explored the properties associated with level of acculturation of the student as well as the parents and the dimensions of this condition within the context of the college environment" (Torres, 2003, p. 538). The third influence focused on self-perception and status in society. The

perception was "associated with social economic status, but here it is more generally described as students perceiving some advantage or privilege as compared to others" (Torres, 2003, p. 540). The basic dimension of this influence involved the perception of privilege.

While coding her data, Torres (2003) found a "relationship between process and structure while connecting categories" that "influenced change in ethnic identity" (p. 540). The sub-processes of the categories included cultural dissonance and changes in relationships within the environment. Cultural dissonance are behaviors that "refer to the experience of dissonance or conflict between one's own sense of culture and what others expect" (Torres, 2003, p. 540). Changes in relationships within the environment looked at "the peer group that the individual seeks out while in college" (Torres, 2003, p. 541).

Ferdman and Gallegos' (2001) model of Latina and Latino Ethnoracial Orientations proposed orientations through which Latinos/as view their identity. These orientations include: White identified; undifferentiated/denial; Latino as other; subgroup identified; Latino-identified; and Latino-integrated. These orientations span an identity development that goes from seeing other Latinos as inferior, to a color-blind ideology, to neither being Latino nor white, to a strict subgroup identification, to an expansive Latino identification, to a full integration of Latino identity. They further explained that Latinos/as may use only one or many of the orientations to view themselves throughout their lives (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001).

In 2012, Ferdman and Gallegos followed their original 2001 model with questions that enhanced the understanding of perspectives around identity development. The questions included:

1. How do identity orientations affect Latino's interactions with each other and with non-Latinos, as well as the ways in which Latinos see themselves as similar to or different from other Latinos?

2. How are acculturation and enculturation filtered through a racially tinted lens?

3. Under what conditions do Latinos see themselves linked to the larger community around them? When do they make the effort, for example, to bridge their neighborhoods with the larger world? For Latinos embedded in a highly Latino community, when do they venture out and for what purposes? For those Latinos/as embedded in a mostly non-Latino context, what triggers them to reconnect (or connect) to the Latino world? How do they feel about those connections?

4. When and how do Latinos see (and experience) their differences from others as an advantage and value, rather than as a hindrance? How do they make attributions of difference?

5. How do Latinos understand and explain discrimination? (Ferdman & Gallegos, as cited in Patton et al., 2016)

Rischall and Meyers (2019) examined risk variables for Latino college students based on their desire to hold on to their culture and found that "cultural incongruity, negative perceptions of the university environment and intragroup marginalization

emerged as risk factors associated with psychological and academic outcomes" comprised of depression, college adjustment, and drop-out intentions (p. 343). In order to fit in, Latino/a college students feel pressured to adopt the dominant culture so they can fit in within the academic institution (Cano, Castillo, Castro, Dios, & Roncancio, 2013; Gloria & Robinson Kurprius, 1996). As a result, these students feel estranged from the family further exacerbating the pressures that come with retaining their culture (Castillo, Conoley, Brossart, & Quiros, 2007).

Latino culture/family obligations. The field of behavioral sciences has found that for Latinas, specifically, the added stress of familiar influences and obligations further exacerbates their diminished ability to persist and graduate. Latino cultural demands add to the difference or otherness of a Latina's status as a college student (Padilla & Perez, 2003; Sy, 2006; Sy & Brittian, 2008; Sy & Romero, 2008; Tokar, Withrow, Hall, & Moradi, 2007). Further, researchers have theorized that Latina women are more likely to be faced with diminished personal support and lack of expectations from educational systems, both K-12 and higher education because of their race and gender (Cammarota, 2004; Castillo-Montoya & Torres- Guzmán, 2012; Hornberger, 2007; Hornberger & Link, 2012). These systems play a role in influencing self-perception, self-efficacy, and the impact on how family is viewed in relation to the identity development of Latino/a transnational life stories.

Researchers also posit that the race/gender binary identity embraced by these women aid and assist them as they move from one environment to another to negotiate "genderized and racialized pathways" within both the family and institutional systems

(Cammarota, 2004, p. 54). These systems yield women who successfully challenge and thrive within educational environments based on this binary dilemma (Cammarota, 2004; Castillo-Montoya &Torres- Guzmán, 2012; Tan Barton, Kang, & O'Neill, 2013) as they learn to negotiate "identities in practice" (Tan, Barton, Kang, & O'Neill, 2013, p. 1144).

Sy (2006, 2008) focused on the role that *familialism* plays on the decision-making process of young Latinas within Latino culture. Familialism is defined as a "cultural value emphasizing family closeness and loyalty" (Sy, 2006, p. 369). Whereas traditional European American families value individuality as part of the culture, Latino culture places an emphasis on putting the family before individual interest. Personal sacrifice is underscored in decision-making. Therefore, Latinas are expected to place the interests of the family before their own (Sy, 2006).

Additionally, Sy (2006) defined *marianismo* as a "cultural value that emphasizes the self-sacrificing role of females and highlights the females' role as family caretaker" (p. 369). Latino parents value education; however, they continue to view daughters as family-oriented caretakers during their early adulthood (Azmitia, Cooper, García, & Dunbar, 1996; López, 2001; Rabow & Rodriguez, 1993).

Social class and identity. Yeskal (2008) defined social class as "a large group of people who share a similar economic and/or social positioning in society based on their income, wealth, property, ownership, job status, education, skills or power in the economic and political sphere in relation to those who have more and those who have less" (p. 3). Patton et al. (2016) proposed that there is a difference between social class and socioeconomics. Socioeconomic status is representative of "objective dimensions

such as household income, occupational status, and educational status" whereas social class is "socially constructed, fluid, subjective, and relationally bound" (Patton et al., 2016, p. 218). This relative positioning results in individuals outside of the social class drawing conclusions about those within it. Patton et al. argued that these differences play a role in who accesses higher education and whether they will succeed in the institution due to perceptions of college accessibility and affordability.

The significance of introducing social class relates to the prevalence of certain myths. According to Patton et al. (2016), these myths include that: America is a classless society so we strive to identify with middle class status; access to an education places us equally on a trajectory to upward mobility; in America, opportunity and starting point are equal for everyone in spite of the fact some Americans have factors that work against them; and finally, issues of social class are the fault of the individual and a lack of work ethic rather than systemically imparted. Framed in this manner, social class identities become a hindrance for first-generation, low-income and working-class students.

Hooks (1994) emphasized the impact of the omission of social class in understanding identity by emphasizing that "nowhere is there a more intense silence about the realities of class differences than in educational settings" (p. 177). It is common for professionals in higher education to hold assumptions about first-generation, low-income students that dismisses the social and cultural capital (interdependency, aspirational, language) they bring when they enter the institution (Yeskal, 2008; Zandy, 1996; Sanders & Mahalingam, 2012). Indeed, there is a tendency to view these students

through a deficit lens, thereby shaping how the students view themselves and the choices they believe they have or do not have for themselves.

Cognitive/Epistemological Development

Patton et al. (2016) described cognitive theories as "the process of epistemological and intellectual development during the college years…these theories focus on how people think, reason, and make meaning of their experiences…how the mind uses stages as assumptions by which individuals adapt to and organize their environments" (p. 275). These theories generally consider adaptation, organization, and dissonance in how students process information and experiences.

Perry's (1968) Theory of Intellectual and Ethical Development uses positions to address duration, central tendency, and lenses as a place from where individuals view the world. He sought the practicality of locating students within a model that reflects people in constant movement. He used "terms of right-wrong, good-bad, and concludes with complex forms in which individuals seek to affirm personal commitment" (Perry, 1968, p. 3). Patton et al. (2016) described Perry's theory as "portraying the basic differences in the primary modes of meaning making, along with an explanation of the deflections that delay cognitive growth" focused on duality, multiplicity, relativism and commitment (p. 276). Duality involves meaning making through a lens that views the world as a simplified dichotomy. There are right and wrong answers to everything. As individuals experience dissonance, they move toward multiplicity and begin to consider diverse viewpoints as equally valid. Individuals then move to relativism as they begin to differentiate between opinions. Individuals arrive at commitment when the choices, based

on knowledge, are made to move from the cognitive toward the ethical (Perry, 1981).

Many researchers have used Perry's framework as a springboard to examine the cognitive

and intellectual development of college students (e.g., Mentkowski, Moeser, & Strait,

1993; Carmel-Gilgilen & Portillo, 2010; Olson & Finson, 2009).

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's (1986) Women's Ways of Knowing

theory equates knowing with perspective intertwined among the concepts of voice, mind

and self. Their research explained the perspectives through which women learn:

- silence – authority reduces them to mindless, voiceless and obedient;

- received knowledge – lacking self-confidence women learn through listening to

  the voice of others;

- subjective knowledge – failure of a male figure moves these women to believe the

  truth lies within themselves;

- procedural knowledge – learning moves from self-doubt to believing as the course

  is now from empathy and care emerging from personal experience not authority

  figures; and finally,

- constructed knowledge – learning comes from a place where women have found

  their voices/self and they see themselves as constructing what is known. (Belenky,

  Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986, pp. 23-31)

  Self-efficacy, agency and institutional environment theories. According to

social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is one's perceived ability to deal with a task or

situation (Bandura, 1994). Individuals become "agents" by intentionally influencing

"their functioning and life circumstances" (Bandura, 2006, p.164). There are four

core properties of human agency, which, according to Bandura (2006), include:

1. Intentionality: "People form intentions that include action plans and strategies

    for realizing them";

2. Forethought: the "temporal (time) extension of human agency. It includes

    more than future directed plans and involves setting goals and anticipating

    outcomes of actions to guide and motivate efforts.";

3. Self-reactiveness: "Agents are not only planners and forethinkers. They are

    also self-regulators."; and

4. Self-reflectiveness: "People are not only agents of action. They are also self-

    examiners of their own functioning". (p.164)

By harnessing the core properties of agency, the sense of self is adjusted through the

modification of behavior to reach the outcomes desired; adjusted behavior leads to

accomplished goals.

By interacting with environments and accomplishing goals, the sense of self is

reaffirmed. In turn, the environment influences the responses of overcoming obstacles

and challenges. As a result of daily interaction with these environments, individuals both

influence and are influenced by these factors. They are being shaped by environments

and are shaping environments. Bandura (2006) called the interplay between the

"intrapersonal, behavioral and environment determinants a triadic interaction" (p. 165). It

is through this interplay that individuals become agents and influence the events that

shape the course of their lives. Bandura (2006) rejected social cognitive models that

relied on the input, throughput, and output relationship because he argued that they "stripped humans of agentic capabilities, a functional consciousness and a self-identity" (p. 167). In doing so, individuals harness the three modes of human agency – individual, collective and proxy. Bandura (2006) contended that "everyday functioning requires an agentic blend of these three forms of agency" (p. 165). "Given that individuals are producers as well as products of their life circumstances, they are partial authors of the past conditions that developed them, as well as the future courses their lives take (Bandura, 2006, p. 165).

Educational settings, as environments of social class reproduction, become "contexts in which individuals develop their own identities" (Ostrove & Cole, 2003). Therefore, understanding the intersection between self-efficacy, social class, gender, ethnic identity, and the educational and family environments in which the identity develops is important (Gushue, 2006; Gushue & Whitson, 2006; Ostrove & Cole, 2003; Tierney & Venegas, 2006, 2009).

Tinto's (1975, 1986, 1987, 1993, 2010) research focused on individual characteristics associated with college persistence and graduation. Characteristics such as low socioeconomic status, parent's education, parental expectations, and personal attributes were found to be challenges to social integration within the institution of higher learning. Factors lacking in the ability for students to persist in their education were peer group support, a connection to the institution, and understanding how to negotiate the institution.

In addition, student development theories began to emerge about the role campus climate played in persistence and graduation rates. Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, and Whitt (2010) posited that the institution's ability to create welcoming environments that led students to believe that they mattered was vital to a student's positive experience.

Moral Development

Patton et al. (2016) described "moral development in college students as the "process through which individuals develop more complex principles and ways of reasoning about what is right, just, and caring" (p. 292). Kohlberg's (1971) Theory of Moral Development focused on how human beings arrive at moral judgements from childhood through adulthood. He described three levels of moral development. The first level, *preconventional,* is indicative of the moral reasoning common in children and includes two stages – heteronomous morality and individualistic, instrumental morality. The second level, *conventional,* is indicative of moral reasoning found in adolescents and adults and includes two stages – interpersonally normative morality and social system morality. The third level, *post conventional,* consists of principled moral development and includes two stages – human rights and social welfare morality and morality of universalizable (Kohlberg, 1971).

Holistic Self-Authorship

Patton et al. (2016) described self-authorship as "college students' ability to make meaning of the world and their lives in it" and is the "processes related to developing the ability to self-author- to write one's own life" (p. 307). They described two theories of

self-authorship, including Kegan's Theory of the Evolution of Consciousness and Baxter-Magolda's Theory of Self-Authorship.

Kegan's (1982) Theory of the Evolution of Consciousness focuses on how ones' experiences inform the evolution of conscience, as well as how that evolution results in stability, instability, and reconstructed relationships between the self and the environment. This occurs as individuals situate and resituate themselves as autonomous beings embedded in the larger world. The stages or phases of moving from one level of consciousness to the next include:

1. Order 0 is indicative of the newborn infants and their self in the world;

2. Order 1 is indicative of children and how they view the self through feelings, fantasies, attachment to the moment and the things and people in that moment;

3. Order 2 (Instrumental Mind) is indicative of the self as who they are and wants;

4. Order 3 (Socialized Mind) is indicative of the self that can think more abstractly, is aware of their feelings and the ability to make commitments to others and possesses a desire for acceptance by others and how others perceive them to move toward relationships;

5. Order 4 (Self-Authoring Mind) is indicative of owning our authority by establishing values and ideologies, and becoming self-regulating and establishing our independence;

6. Order 5 (Self-Transforming Mind) rarely reached before the age of 40 is indicative of a self as interconnected with the world (Kegan, 1982).

Patton et al. (2016) described Baxter-Magolda's Theory of Self-Authorship as "epistemological development was intertwined with the development of sense of self and the relationship with others" (p. 315). In a longitudinal study that followed college students into their 30s, Baxter-Magolda (2009) identified four phases "in the journey toward self-authorship involving movement from external to internal definition…through cognitive, intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions in each phase" (p. 324). These phases were indicative of an individual moving from the initial stage of relying on an authority figure to lay out their lives to a person who knew exactly who they were and capable of mapping their own lives. By the time these research participants had reached their 30's, they had connected to the three elements of self-authorship: trusting the internal voice (control over thinking and response to events); building an internal foundation (developing a personal philosophy/framework to guide actions); and securing internal commitments (integration of internal foundations with external worlds).

Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature related to trends in college enrollment, college student employment, and college student development. Trends in college student enrollment have uncovered the gap between financial aid and tuition and fees specifically for first-generation, low-income students. College student employment, originally meant to add to the learning experience, is normalized as a necessity in bridging that gap between financial aid and cost of education. Research about the impact of college student employment remains inconclusive. Many studies point to a diminished social connection, grade point average and persistence when students engage in employment, while other

studies show that students who work (in particular those who work on campus) are more successful than those who do not work. As Latina women enter higher education in larger numbers, limited financial resources are ensuring student employment is a part of their educational experience. Further exacerbating this demand, inherent to the Latina identity, is the desire to support the family emotionally and financially. Much of the college student development theory has been developed devoid of a specific focus on Latina women. Educational environments consist of complexities that can both add to or detract from a positive experience for Latina college women. At stake for Latina women is the ability to navigate and negotiate these systems to ensure their experiences build on, instead of detract from, self-efficacy and agency that allows them to charter a successful course in obtaining a college degree.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore the role that campus employment played as Latina students navigated familial obligations and financial constraints while pursuing an undergraduate degree. The research question that guided this study was: How do Latina women who are enrolled and working on campus navigate and negotiate educational and familial systems while obtaining a college degree?

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section describes the research design that was used. The second section is a description of the participants. This is followed by the data sources and their collection. Data analysis is subsequently described. Finally, the chapter is summarized.

Research Design

A qualitative research design was used to carry out this study. Creswell (2014) defined qualitative research as "an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 4). Qualitative methodology is emergent, utilizing open-ended questions, interview data, observations, document data, audiovisual data, texts, and images to find themes and patterns. The data are then interpreted utilizing a holistic approach and taking care to engage in reflexivity to ensure the data's integrity is kept intact (Creswell, 2014, 2015). This study examined the lived experiences of Latina women as they worked to obtain a bachelor's degree within a constructed social reality of college student employment. The study also explored how participants reconciled tensions they experienced in their daily lives. In essence, the study examined the meaning that the 15 participants of this study made of

the college student employment, educational, and familial systems while getting a college degree.

The study was undertaken within a constructivist grounded theory framework. In constructivist grounded theory, researchers acknowledge that participant reality is socially constructed. Therefore, spatial, socially transmitted cultural and linguistic knowledge impacts the meaning-making of a participant's constructed reality. The researcher's values play a role in the creation of the interview questions, as well as the analysis of the data (Charmaz, 2000, 2003, 2005). Both participant and researcher become co-creators of the knowledge derived from the study. In this study of Latina college women, a constructivist grounded theory design was utilized to capture the participants' perceptions of college student employment and its connection to obtaining a degree while managing familial obligations.

Participants

This study was conducted under the auspices of the University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participants were recruited in the following manner. A formal request to send an email to all students employed on the campus, requesting participation in this study, was submitted to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources (see Appendix A for recruitment email). Because there was a no response to the email, select university faculty, staff and student organizations were asked to assist in recruitment by sending out the recruitment email to their student employees and club members. Those students who agreed to participate via email were asked to identify a convenient time and

place for the interview. Twenty students responded and were scheduled for an interview.

Four did not show up for their interview and one did not meet the criteria.

Participants included 15 first-generation Latina students who, at the time of data

collection, were employed on campus at a public land grant institution in the southwest

United States (U.S.) and who had the characteristics listed below:

1. Enrolled as a full-time undergraduate, pursing a bachelor's degree;

2. Obtained a minimum of Junior status (60 credits);

3. Self-identified as Latina, Hispanic or Chicana;

4. Were U.S. citizens;

5. Were between the ages of 18-24;

6. Identified as first-generation college students whose parents' educational level
   did not exceed high school, either in the U.S. or their country of origin;

7. Employed within Student Services, Academic Affairs, or Business Affairs of
   the university.

While all participants attended the same southwest public land grant institution of

higher learning, only two of fifteen participants had parents born in the U.S. (4 of 30

parents). Of those remaining, most study participants had parents born in Mexico (22 of

26 parents). The remainder of their parents were born in El Salvador (3) and Costa Rica

(1).

The parent's household primary language was Spanish for 10 of the 15

households. Family income was self-reported by six of the study participants at $24,999

or less; by five of the study participants at $49,999 or less; by three study participants at

$69,999 or less. One participant reported the family income at more than $70,000. All study participants were U.S. citizens with only one of 15 identifying Spanish as her primary language. She was a naturalized citizen whose family lived in Mexico.

Ten of the fifteen participants had Senior class standing while five participants had Junior class standing. Two participants were 19 years old, seven were 20 years old, four were 21 years old, one was 23 years old, and one reported being 24 years old. All study participants identified as the first in their family to attend college (i.e., first-generation). This status was defined through their parents' educational attainment which did not exceed high school either in the U.S. or their country of origin. Many of the parent's educational attainment did go beyond grade school.

None of the participants were married nor did they have children. Four participants lived with parents; two participants lived in the residence halls while nine lived in an apartment/dwelling near campus. Thirteen participants commuted to campus five or more days per week to work, study, attend class, and participate in co-curricular activities.

Noteworthy is that one third of the study participants had worked both on and off campus. At the time of the study, all study participants worked across the university divisions, including seven participants from Student Services, two from Business Affairs, and six from Academic Affairs. Seven study participants reported working 21-30 hours per week while eight reported working 10-20 hours per week; those that worked the most hours did so within Student Services.

Eleven of 15 study participants had filled out their FAFSA. All except one were eligible for financial aid; the exception was a participant in her sixth year of college. All participants needed their student employment to bridge the financial aid gap in paying for school and meeting familial obligations.

Academically, 12 study participants self-reported their GPAs in the 3.0 range, two in the 2.0 range and one had a 4.0 GPA. Pseudonyms for the study participants were used to ensure confidentiality. Participants chose their pseudonym for themselves. See Table 1 for a summary of the characteristics of the participants.

Table 1

Characteristics of Study Participants

Pseudonym	Number of Siblings	Birth order	Household Language	Family income	Live with Parents	Work
April	2	2nd	English	< $24,999	No	21-30 hrs
Andrea	1	1st	Spanish	< $24,999	No	21-30 hrs
Alejandra	2	2nd	Spanish	< $24,999	No	21-30 hrs
Bartimaeus	4	3rd/triplet	Spanish	< $69,999	Yes	10-20 hrs
Tania	4	3rd	Spanish	< $69,999	No	10-20 hrs
Maria Elena	0	1st	Spanish	< $69,999	No	21-30 hrs
Patty	4	3rd	English	>$70,000	Yes	10-20 hrs
Kate	1	3rd	Spanish	< $24,999	No	10-20 hrs
Val	2	2nd	English	< $24,999	No	21-30 hrs
Jane	3	1st	Spanish	< $49,999	Yes	10-20 hrs
Evelyn	3	3rd	Spanish	< $24,999	No	21-30 hrs
Renee	2	2nd	English	< $49,999	No	21-30 hrs
Jannet	1	1st	Spanish	< $49,999	Yes	10-20 hrs
Deena	2	1st	Spanish	< $49,999	No	10-20 hrs
Lulu	2	1st	English	< $49,999	No	10-20 hrs

Data Sources

Two sources of data were used for this study: an intake questionnaire and an interview which included a photo prompt of the family. The intake questionnaire focused on demographics and was used to ensure that the student met the study participation criteria (see Appendix B). These questions were utilized to gain an understanding of familial, socioeconomic, academic standing, and other characteristics.

Interviews consisted of open-ended questions that focused on three main areas. The first group of questions was designed to get to know the participant's life story, where she was raised, and her journey to get to college. The second set of questions focused on their families. Each participant was asked to bring a photo of their family to the interview. This was used as a prompt to create a more in-depth discussion of the familial relationship and its impact on participant decision-making, obligation to the family, and future goals. The participants retained the photograph. The third set of questions was about their campus employment. Finally, participants were asked to describe how they balanced work, family, and school. See Appendix C for the interview questions. The interview protocol was followed diligently for each interview (see Appendix D).

Data Collection

Interviews were conducted over a two-month period in Fall, 2018. The consent form (see Appendix E) was reviewed with each participant before the interview and any questions about the study were addressed. Next, the intake questionnaire was administered to make sure the student met the participant criteria. Finally, the interview

was conducted. Interviews lasted between 34 and 65 minutes; the average length was 49

minutes. Interviews were conducted in English. The researcher is bilingual, allowing

some participants to use Spanish to describe pieces of their experiences, as well as more

accurately describe the cultural nuances of their experiences. Interviews were recorded

and transcribed professionally. Each participant was made aware that the interview was

being recorded. The interview was concluded by thanking the participant and giving them

a twenty-five-dollar gift card.

All audio recordings, transcripts, and field notes were stored on a password

protected computer hard drive and cloud system. Paper copies of the intake questionnaire

and the consent form were stored separately in a locked file. Pseudonyms were used on

all transcriptions, notes and saved files.

Data Management and Analysis

Consistent with a qualitative design, analysis began during interviews (Charmaz,

2006). Field notes were written to capture the tone of what participants shared and

participant body language during parts of the interview process was noted. Translation of

data that was shared in Spanish occurred within the field notes.

Immediately following the interview, the audio recording was uploaded on to a

password-protected hard drive. The audio recording was checked to make sure it existed

for the entirety of the interview. The audio recording was appropriately labeled by

participant pseudonyms and then it was copied to a second password protected file.

Data audio recordings were transcribed by a professional transcriber. Then the researcher listened to the audio recording while reading the transcript to correct errors and clarify Spanish phrases.

The researcher then listened to the audio recordings and read the transcription to gain an understanding of tone and inflection; the transcript was reconciled against memos and notes taken during the interview. Finally, the researcher read the transcripts to gain a holistic understanding of prominent ideas. The data were prepared for analyses by condensing the transcribed data into initial codes, aggregating into expanded codes, categorizing into final codes and then summarizing into major themes. Creswell and Poth (2016) referred to this framework of presenting data analysis as a "codebook."

Charmaz (2006, 2008) highlighted three steps in coding to include initial or open coding (theoretical insights), refocused coding (identifying recurring and significant codes), and then constructing a grounded theory. During open coding, transcripts were reviewed line-by-line, looking for insights into participant experiences. For example, undocumented status of parents, financial constraints, conflict with the family, conflict with traditional norms, expectations by family to gain a college degree, participant self-care, and feelings of pride and guilt during the educational journey were all noted. Words, phrases, and sentences were coded to ensure that the meaning participants gave to the data was represented; otherwise, the analysis could be considered biased, as described by Charmaz (2003, 2006, 2008).

During the second line-by-line reading of the data, the concept of managing being overwhelmed by keeping a focus on long term goals of success (e.g., getting a

degree, financial stability, setting boundaries with family time, and work relationships) was identified and appropriately coded. At this point, a focus on emotional and mental self-care was noted. Additionally, the need for meaningful and reciprocal relationships and the participant as a familial caretaker became apparent and coded appropriately. Likewise, student employment experiences which emphasized an appreciation for learning, the value of a flexible work schedule in meeting academic and familial obligations, and on how jobs can create a sense of belonging were found. Additional concepts included the support they had or had not received from family and high school personnel in gaining entrance to the institution and overcoming the challenges to gain a college degree, as well as relationships with campus employers. The final concepts that emerged during the second reading were focused on the guilt and pride associated with navigating the familial considerations and the educational journey.

During refocused coding, recurring and significant codes that had "analytic momentum" and "carry the weight of analysis" (Charmaz, 2008, p. 164) were organized. These codes then became the final themes and subthemes:

Theme 1: A Context of Financial Constraints
      1.   Financial Instability
          a. History of financial insecurity

Theme 2: Cultural Tensions
      1.   Cultural expectations
          a. Traditional norms
      2.   Reconciling Tensions
          a. I can't drop the ball; I can work hard for my family
          b. I can/have to take financial responsibility off my parents
          c. My parents sacrificed for me
          d. I work hard, but my parents work harder
          e. I want to make my parents proud
          f. I try to be/am a role model

Theme 3: Feeling Overwhelmed
1. Managing My Time
   a. My school and work are set schedules
      a. I'm grateful for my campus job flexibility with my school demands
      b. My academics are a priority sometimes my job is not
   b. Time with family/friends is stressful because sometimes it cannot be planned
   c. Situations I can't control
2. Acts of Self-Care
   a. I matter
   b. I am seeking formal and informal counseling
   c. My friends as supporters and distractors
   d. I may compartmentalize demands and emotions
   e. Mind over matter

Theme 4: Need for Meaningful Relationships – Family & Work
1. The importance of family
   a. My family is so important to me and I feel emotionally responsible for parents and siblings
   b. I visit, call, text, and regularly checking in with family members
   c. I consciously avoid flaunting my education out of respect for my parents' wisdom and/or hard work
2. The importance of familial support
   a. My parents support me
   b. My mom supports me
   c. My dad supports me
   d. My siblings support me
3. When family does not support
   a. I know when you don't understand me and stressors I endure
   b. I feel like I'm on my own doing this
   c. I feel disrespected sometimes
4. The importance of work family
   a. I can build relationships with co-workers
   b. I have supervising that helps me grow
   c. I have supervisors that know me and my story
5. When work does not support me
   a. The hours demanded displace my family/academic responsibilities
   b. I want/need to work but you take advantage
   c. I feel work is not fulfilling – you have low expectations of me

Finally, a theory was constructed from the data through interpretation of how and why participants constructed meanings and actions from specific situations (Charmaz, 2006).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the role that campus employment played as Latina students navigated familial obligations and financial constraints while pursuing an undergraduate degree. A qualitative research design was employed; specifically, constructivist grounded theory provided the framework of the study. Fifteen first-generation, full-time undergraduate students in their Junior or Senior year were recruited to participate in an interview that lasted approximately one hour. Interview questions focused on the student's journey to get to college, their families, working on campus, and finally, how the participants balanced the three. Data analysis consisted of holistic and line-by-line reading to arrive at four primary themes with subthemes in each.

Chapter 4 – Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore how Latina college women understood their student employment on campus while pursuing a degree in higher education. Further, it explored how these women made meaning of tensions associated with familial obligations and financial constraints. Specifically, this research addressed the following question: How do Latina women who are enrolled and working on campus navigate and negotiate educational and familial systems while obtaining a college degree? The first three chapters included an overview of the problem, the literature review, and the research methodology. This chapter presents the findings of this study through the data collection and analysis.

Question

The research question that guided this qualitative study was: How do Latina women who are enrolled and working on campus navigate and negotiate educational and familial systems while obtaining a college degree?

Research Findings

Four major themes emerged from the analysis of data. The first theme was a context of financial constraints. The second theme focused on cultural tensions the participants experienced. The third theme was feeling overwhelmed. The fourth theme was the importance of meaningful relationships.

A Context of Financial Constraints

Financial instability was a pervasive concern of all the participants in this study. Money issues were reported to have existed prior to entering college; indeed, financial insecurity was described as part of their entire lives. Two reported having moved several times during their childhood because their parents lost their homes either due to immigration status or job injury.

> (Alejandra) *He (dad) was using a false social security. They were illegal and so we moved to Las Vegas when I was eight. He had some issues at work, had to quit, lost the house, and we moved to North Las Vegas, which is a really low-income part of the city.*

> (Evelyn) *My mom was a housekeeper in a hospital and then my dad was part of this like cable company and he worked five days out of the week outside of town. He would work in San Jose and then come back over the weekends. … My parents no longer work, either of them. Because my dad was involved in a work-related accident in 2012. So, my mom no longer works to be his full-time care person.*

Others reported challenges related to parental drug addiction, mental health issues, and low wages.

> (April) *My dad suffered from bipolar disorder. He was also an alcoholic and had an opioid addiction. So, the house was always in and out of fights. I kind of had to grow up pretty fast. I had to get a work permit. I got my first job at fifteen and a half and started paying bills.*

> (Alejandra) *I was looking for a job since I turned 17 because I was fed up with not having anything. And it wasn't my parent's fault by any means. So, I went out and I got a job. There's a problem and you solve it. That's how you do it.*

Financial instability was reported to have affected many of their decisions, including applying for college. From an early age, study participants learned the value of money, and the importance of how it is spent.

(Val) *I was just really nervous because I was like, do I even still do this (apply for college)? Or it is like, I know I have good grades and stuff like that, but I still might not get accepted and then I'm like throwing away that money that could be used for something else. I don't want to do that because like, growing up it was like you don't just throw away money. It all has to go to a purpose and stuff like that. So it was nerve-wracking. But like after talking to people, it was usually like, "you have a good chance at doing this" and "you only grow from this" and "it can only help you in life to get a degree." I was like okay a hundred dollars compared to like what I could gain from it.*

Several women indicated that they had been reasoning through important financially

related decisions for themselves and their families from a young age.

(April) *I think growing up and seeing my family struggle, I didn't want that for myself and I wanted to do more. So, instead of, I don't know, instead I just wanted more. So, every day I was like "this is what I have to do, I have to work hard, do well in school" I just kind of had to figure out that I was going to do it on my own.*

Cultural Tensions

Within the context of chronic financial constraints, participants traversed the

tensions related to cultural tradition. In many ways, these cultural traditions were

consistent with the experience of immigration. Traditional norms were important, but

they came into conflict with the often-stated "dream" of immigrants to have a "better

life" in the U.S. The traditional Latina role centers on helping with siblings, family

matters, and financial expectations. However, these women wanted, valued, and sought

more than the traditional cultural norms. As a result, they faced the cultural tensions of

tradition and seeking a college degree.

(Andrea) *I felt like I broke my family because I came here (U.S.) looking for my dreams. But I know my parents want the best for me so I always say "It's like ok" to my parents. But I feel like they are always wondering what would have happened if I never came here [university]. I think that hurts because it makes me feel selfish, like I should have stayed at home. So it is always the guilt that I carry with me.*

(April) *My siblings were pretty young and they dealt with abandonment from my dad leaving us. So, when I left I got a lot of "well you're leaving" and tears. And to this day, my little sister will call me crying saying "why did you leave?*

(Deena) *It's the idea that you're supposed to go from your father's home to your husband's home. And they didn't understand why, if there is a university there in (city), why I was leaving my family and putting them through that hardship to go somewhere else. They told me that "I wasn't American" and I shouldn't follow the "American way of doing things; that I should follow the Mexican way of doing things." So that was such a bad summer. Everyone just lectured me. My cousin used the example of his parents, who are deceased, and said "I wish I could have them and you're leaving them" so it was just a lot, but I had already signed the contract and I was really set.*

(Jane) *I feel like one of the biggest conflicts. Like I said, well my dad is very traditional in the sense that like women in a traditional role, like being home, cooking, doing laundry. Now I feel like a lot of the time I'm everywhere. I'm at home, I'm at school, I'm doing homework, or I'm working. It's hard to explain to him why I'm so busy.*

Many of the study participants also described the cultural expectations to support their families financially. They reported that even if they could only send their parents a little bit of money, they knew it helped with the responsibilities.

(April*) I still help financially with my family and my mom never lets it go unnoticed, even to my siblings. And for a while I didn't want them to know because I didn't want them to look at my mom differently. But she was like "No, we're all going to understand our struggles and it's not going to be a secret." She's always telling me, like she'll send me every day a text like "you're doing so well." You're making me proud out there doing school, still sending money for the kids.*

The impediments that the participants described were not perceived as insurmountable; rather, the women appeared to be very cognizant of the obstacles, and were determined to find solutions. They indicated a strong fear of failing.

(*April) I think it just kind of comes down to, I can't drop the ball because if I do then I won't be able to stay. If I work less then I can't afford to live here. And if I slack off on school, then again, I won't be able to be here. Family is everything so*

there has been situations in the past where I've had to decide, is it too hard on my family, do I need to go back?

Reconciling the cultural tensions. Interviews were replete with feelings of being conflicted about the cultural expectations their families placed on them. On the one hand, they valued their families and indicated they would do anything for them. On the other hand, they knew their academic requirements and were determined to be successful in their classes. The manner in which the participants reconciled their own desires with cultural expectations was by connecting the two in such a way that their families could share in their personal success and be proud of them.

For the participants in this study, family was extremely important. All shared feeling like a caretaker of family members.

> (Jane) *I learned how to drive young, like around 16, because my mom didn't drive and we needed to get around for like doctor's appointments and stuff.*

> (Tania) *My oldest brother, it's because he, I just worry about him because I'm not really sure where he's going. I know he didn't really like school so he's for sure not going back. But the job he's at now, I know I make more money than him and I'm at the Student Health Center. And I know he has a child.*

> (April) *I think I just had to be strong for my family since I was fifteen so I kind of have to do that. My mom kind of just breaks down. So when my dad left, I just kind of had to stand up and, you know, be the strong one.*

Participants described visiting, calling, and regularly checking in with various family members. They reported that the interaction was just as much for them as it was for the family. Some relied on social media to see family posts, others phoned or texted frequently, while some did surprise drop-in familial visits.

Caretaking was described as reciprocal; they recognized the sacrifices their parents had made for them. They were clear about how hard their parents worked. Many of the women had always been told that the future for the family was dependent on their obtaining a college degree. This resulted in their sense of being "first-generation" college students.

> *(Deena) My parents, they are immigrants from Mexico; they didn't go to college here or in Mexico. But they always fed to us that the opportunity is important, and they didn't come here for us to not be successful, to not get a college education, to not try to do the best out of what we can in this country. I always knew that I would go to college. I always knew that was next.*

Even though going to college and working one, two, or three jobs was described as hard, the study participants shared that their parents worked even harder. None of their parents were reported to have had an education past high school; many ended their education after grade school. Three participants described dealing with family members who were undocumented or formerly undocumented. This led participants to describe their parent's job skills as minimal, which relegated them to the least appealing of jobs. Study participants conveyed that their parents worked hard, suffered degrading indignities, and sacrificed all they could for their children. They saw their parents through the limited opportunities and expectations society had for the parent; therefore, the burden was on the study participant to have higher expectations and work hard to gain a college degree to advance the family:

> *(Jannet) I think seeing my mom struggle was really huge for me…just seeing her (mom) so hard working. She has to clean houses for a living. Since I was little I would have to go clean houses with her too. Growing up I hated vacations because…I always had to go clean houses with her. My mom loves doing it because it's like easy money for her and when she didn't have her papers; so she would make a lot of money from it. I hated it because I thought it was a little*

degrading the way the people look at you and sometimes the way people talk to my mom is just horrible and I was always like, No, we deserve better.

Study participants reconciled parental sacrifices by acknowledging how fortunate they were to be able to go to college. When they attempted to compare the parental struggles to their own struggles of working and going to school, their future financial prospects as someone with a degree was put into perspective by reflecting on family. It was as if all the sacrifices that their parents had made would be "ok" if they could live up to their parents' dreams.

(Patty) *I feel like for me, my reason for doing all of this is for my family, like a big part of it. Also, for myself, but my family has done so much for me that this is my way of repaying them, or trying to do as much as they did. I don't know how my mom was able to raise me and my sister; and then there's me stressing about school some days. Sometimes I try and compare the two and I'm like "You're fine. You're living life. You're okay."*

By reconciling that they were contributing to their family, albeit in a non-traditional way, seeking a degree became a source of pride for the study participants and their families. While nearly every interview included family hardships, they also yielded examples of the connection between attending college and familial pride, joy, happiness, and expectations that their daughter served as a model for what the family will become.

(Jane) *They were happy. My mom, I think my mom posted it on Facebook like "Oh my god look at my daughter!" And my dad was really excited. And then, I also showed my little cousin because I also have three younger siblings. And I was like "Look I'm going to go to college" and I could kind of sense that they were like "Wow she's going to do it." … I feel very happy. I feel kind of butterflies in my stomach because, I mean, I really care about my family a lot. Especially with my brothers, my siblings, I try to be a role model for them.*

(April) *Just working a ton. So being in that state, I was like I want to get out and do more to be an example to my siblings and my family. I think that was a huge part of it too.*

(Kate) *I cannot wait to be a doctor and I cannot wait to impact someone's life and I cannot wait to go to medical school even though I know it's going to be really hard. And I just know that I can get through with it with everything else that I've done. I know that if I do have an obstacle, I'll just deal with it then. My family will be there at the end and I know that they're going to be very proud of me and it's just going to make everything better.*

In summary, study participants managed the tensions of both school and work because they could envision the long-term goal of obtaining the degree to create a better life for themselves and their families.

Feeling Overwhelmed

The tensions identified above highlighted a feeling of being overwhelmed. This was the second theme identified in the data. These tensions triggered feelings related to scheduling time. At the same time, participants described in detail using self-care to counteract their feelings of being overwhelmed.

Managing my time. Making choices in prioritizing school, work, family, and sometimes friends often resulted in the feeling of being overwhelmed. Participants shared how set schedules of their classes and work were extremely helpful. Indeed, that was the easy part.

(Bartimaeus) *I have a planner, for one. For the most part I just take things as they come. So I know my schedule for the (job) is practically set in stone unless I ask for days off. And I know my school schedule and I know more or less how long each assignment takes or could possibly take… So, essentially just my work and my school are the easy stuff.*

Gratitude was expressed for jobs and supervisors who understood the prioritization of study participants' academic needs.

(Jannet) *So definitely, I knew I wanted to get a job, and also a job that was around my schedule. So (employer) would always talk about it and be like, if you get a job on campus it'll be around your schedule; if you have to get a paper*

done, then they're really accommodating. And I needed that because I needed to graduate college.

(Tania) *Since our supervisor knows that she's working with students, if we need time off, it's very easy to get that. There's a lot of teamwork happening.*

By managing time effectively and having understanding supervisors, these women could remain focused on the long-term goal of obtaining a degree. Indeed, successful orchestration of their calendars allowed them to maintain school as a priority.

(Val) *But it's all just about managing time and making sure that I'm not overloading myself. But just remembering what my priorities were and what comes first. If I have exams and stuff, I make sure to ask for that time off so that I know that I can study.*

(Alejandra) *One thing about me too is that I always prioritize what I need to prioritize. If I'm not doing good in classes or I feel like I need to study more I'll call out. It is what it is.*

However, not all of the participants felt the same way about their campus jobs. Some would give up their job if it interfered with school. Many did not prioritize the job as it was merely a means to an end. One enjoyed working and being busy because the job was part of a larger schedule that kept her focused.

(Lulu) *That's kind of really hard. If I had to, like absolutely had to, I think I would give up working. But I don't want to give up working because I like it and it keeps me busy and it kind of helps me prioritize everything with classes and studying and outside stuff like preparing for the MCAT and volunteering and trying to get myself to med school.*

When participants were able to plan and follow a set schedule, their lives went fairly smoothly. However, feeling overwhelmed resulted when family obligations were added to the mix.

(Jane) *Now I feel like a lot of the time I'm everywhere. I'm at home, I'm at school, I'm doing homework, or I'm working. It's hard to explain to him (dad) why I'm so busy. And he's like "no no no you need to make time for us there's no reason why*

you're so busy because we're family." Or he's like "you need to do this. I never see you home" and I feel like that's where the biggest conflict comes from is that I try to explain like "hey I don't go to school from 9 to 5. I have classes from like 8 in the morning to 8 in the evening sometimes." And I just feel like he doesn't understand where I'm coming from.

Also important to the study participants was the ability to spend time with friends. Many shared how they struggled with both explaining their priority choices with friends and, to some extent, to themselves.

> (Patty) *I feel like I don't go out as much as a college kid does, which I'm fine with. I honestly don't mind. But there's times where my friends will make comments like "We never see you. You never come out with us." I'm like "I know but I don't know what to tell you, I'm trying to prioritize my things and obviously my education and my family to me is above all the most important thing for me." I feel like I do have a very packed schedule and then my weekend is when I can de-stress a little bit. Then it's back at it like routine. But it's a good routine. I like having the busy-ness. Sometimes you do get overwhelmed like midterms coming up.*

As much as the study participants tried to plan, control, and execute a routine that prioritized their goals, extraordinary events could completely overwhelm them. One study participant explained how the death of a friend caused anxiety that she was unaware of until it hit her all at once. This led her to the realization that she needed support in overcoming the emotional experience.

> (Patty) *Emotionally, it's actually been pretty rough for me this semester. I just started going to therapy, like the Counseling Services, 2-3 weeks ago. The reason for that though is that I had a friend pass away in December, right after Christmas. She was in a car accident. She didn't come here, but we went from kinder to high school together. She was a year above me, so she wasn't like my best friend. But she was someone that I could talk to. And I didn't realize how much of an impact that was having on me until three weeks ago, my mom comes in my room she was like "Are you okay?" and I was like "Yeah" and I just started balling. And we had a super long talk that night. I hadn't realized how much it had been affecting me and how anxious I was feeling. That's when I decided "Okay. I need help" and so I started going to counseling…*

In summary, scheduling played a vital role in bringing a sense of routine and priority for choices. Nevertheless, demands and expectations outside of their routine resulted in feeling overwhelmed. Therefore, self-care had to be a part of the priorities these women juggled.

Acts of self-care. Participants showed an understanding of the connection between getting a degree, working, and family obligations that sparked being overwhelmed. As a result, participants knew they had to prioritize their mental and emotional wellbeing. Study participants articulated an understanding of prioritizing themselves and setting boundaries in their journey to get a degree.

> (Alejandra) *I wish I didn't have to work as much, but I'm poor so whatever. How do I balance everything? I have a good support group up here. My friends are great. So, whenever I do feel burnt out or stressing and stuff I just go to them…Like I'm going to prioritize myself, no one else is prioritizing me. Why would I not do that for myself?*

At least half of the study participants mentioned support networks that took the form of roommates, friends, siblings, mentors, and coaches. Many mentioned that parents also remained a source of support during their journey. Other strategies included taking time out during the day to center and refocus their energy.

> (Lulu*) It's rough sometimes. Especially at the beginning of this year. It was really rough for me…I was just like, okay I need to start taking care of myself. I have to take five minutes of my day to do something that makes me happy. That's how I deal with the stress of work and classes and making family happy. It's kind of just self-care.*

All the study participants expressed a sense of self-reliance. They deconstructed the challenges and tensions in their journey, met them head on, and sought to overcome them. None reported being immobilized by the conditions for an extended period. When

the emotional journey became too great of a burden to carry, they turned to both formal

and informal help-seeking behaviors to address the tensions.

> (Andrea) *I went to counseling because I was a wreck a couple years ago. But I always had to carry this guilt of breaking my family off where I'm never going to see them again. Because now that I'm finishing college, I'm like "I'm not going back to Mexico to work there."*

> (Bartimaeus) *I'm a psychology major so I do know about the mindfulness and resting and relaxation. When I have time and when I see them I like to go to the certified Counseling Services and maybe cartoon a bit, draw a bit…I'll attend any event over there just to get away from the work of school and just enjoy myself as a student.*

Friends were invaluable to study participants as support groups; however, they

also knew when not to bend to the request of these groups. They expressed an ability to

put friends and socializing on a back burner to remain focused on school and family.

Whereas some study participants were able to share examples about how they

take care of themselves, others struggled engaging in these actions and instead

compartmentalized demands and emotions. They put aside their concerns until they

actually had the time to deal with them.

> (Kate) *It's a weird thing actually because my roommate and I talk about it all the time; I put myself in this category, that, I wouldn't say ignore your emotions, but like…What I got is what I got and if I know this is good or not is based off what I believe. … I don't want to say that I'm cold, I don't feel emotion because I do; but it's just kind of always like, not necessarily ignored but, just like take it in mind but never the first priority. Always knowing that there were more important things to do and if I had to think about something, it was always very fast. And I've always dealt with my emotions very well, like whether it's talking to my roommate about it…*

If all else failed, one study participant mentioned pretending that things were ok

to help her feel better, rather than "freaking out" over everything. She reported knowing

that professional counseling was available to her, but instead remained "calm" until she

could seek help from support systems.

> (Renee) *Emotionally, I'm pretty bad at that. I do a lot and I know that I should be seeking out more, especially since we get the free counseling here at (university). Just because I tend to be the person that holds it all in. I feel like as long as you present yourself like it's together, then it kind of helps you. Because then you feel like you're more together and like you have it all. So that's what I just tend to do. But if I am going through a little bit of a difficult time, then I do talk to my coach and things like that. But more often, I like to just pretend that everything's good. I feel like that kind of helps because I feel like my life is more together and just manageable if I act like it's manageable instead of like freaking out over everything. If I just try and stay in control and calm.*

In summary, study participants showed an understanding of the tensions that

comprise working, maintaining important relationships, and obtaining a degree. Where it

may not have been an exact science for them, they reflected the ability to manage their

time through scheduling efforts that allowed them to meet familial obligations and

engage in self-care.

Meaningful Relationships

The third theme found in the interviews was the importance of meaningful

relationships at work, at home, and with their peers. Their ability to manage their outlook

was dependent on how they perceived their relationships. Indeed, these relationships

helped them work through the tensions and the feelings of being overwhelmed. They

described the value of family support; they also shared how family could be non-

supportive. Finally, they shared how colleagues and supervisors at work could be both

supportive and non-supportive.

The value of family support. Study participants shared the importance of family

support during their educational journey. These women shared that the support from

family took various forms. Some parents were supportive by cheering on the study

participant, even as they lacked understanding of the educational journey. Other parents

showed support by setting aside their feelings about their daughter leaving home because

it was necessary to obtain an education. Some parents were described as supporting the

dream but pragmatically sharing that the study participant would have to figure it out on

their own. Finally, some study participants reported receiving support through tough love.

> (Alejandra) *My parents are big supporters of what I do. They're not like active supporters, if that makes sense. Like they help me do anything. They are just like cheering for me in the background.*

> (Deena) *My parents were supportive, they were upset, but they were supportive. They said, "It was for your future and we have no say in hindering you." So, that's what happened.*

> (Evelyn) *Like I said, my parents always supported the idea of me going to college. There was never really actually another option for me, like taking a break and working. It was only ever like "you're going to college and we're going to support you" so you have to figure it out.*

> (Maria Elena) *I'd say both my mom and dad (are supportive). My dad seems to do it a little more quietly. But definitely my mom too. She gets so so excited every time I do little things. Like right now I'm going through a process to become a supervisor for the (place of work) and it's hard explaining to them because the process goes all the way until December. I was like oh okay because it'll be in phases and I say "Oh okay. I'm done with this phase" and I'll tell them, and they'll be like "Oh did you get the job already? That's so great. What about this this and this?" and I'm like "Wait I'm not done. Not yet. Not yet. Not yet." Or when I get a test back and I'm like "I at least passed this exam" and they're like "Great. Try harder."*

Almost all study participants reported feeling supported by their mothers in

particular. The support was evident in financial and emotional needs, as well as

succeeding academically. These women reported that support for the dream of an

education was something they counted on the most.

(Kate) *My mom. Whatever I decide, even when I try to explain to her things, like I want to become a physician so bad. I learned a lot about what it takes - and it is a lot. So I would try to explain things to her like the MCAT or the process or always volunteering like the things I can do, I have to do, and everything. And no matter what, she's just always supports. I know she doesn't understand it specifically, and I know as many times as I try and explain it to her. I don't think that it's not, that she doesn't care; she just doesn't understand. And no matter what, she's like "well you got to do what you've got to do. Yeah, just as long as you can do it, if it's going to benefit you, then go and do it" She's, no matter what, has always been there for me and supported everything that I've done.*

Three women voiced that their fathers were supportive of their educational journey. Support was described as not resorting to traditional expectations of their daughters, but rather removing these challenges from their daughter's journey. Another reported that her father wanted a better life for them and gained tremendous pride from his daughter's success. The women appreciated the father's wisdom. One participant reported that the father's emphasis for an education for her was guilt-free and expressed a desire to accomplish more than her parents had accomplished.

(Renee) *I think my dad influences me the most. I think it's never come from anywhere like I need to follow in his footsteps or anything like that. I think it's just kind of from a pure sense of being proud and prideful in me. He always just tells me that no matter what I do, he's always so proud. And he really likes to see me and my little brother prosper because it's something that he never got to do and that just kind of keeps me going and inspires me.*

(Maria Elena) *I think a lot of it had to do because my parents where big on education, especially my dad. He always said "Study. Become friends with the professors, try to take advantage of that opportunity because I didn't have that." And the conversation never rolled around him making me feel guilty that he didn't have the opportunity. He just said "You know I want you to get there. I want you to be better than us and do more than us."*

Nearly all the participants shared a special comradery that underscored the support from their siblings. Older brothers and sisters were described as giving unconditional support. Younger brothers and sisters shared admiration and respect for

their college-going sibling. One study participant shared wanting to reach the level of

academic accomplishment of her two older sister whose lives were on professional

trajectories.

> Deena) *I feel that the most important person to me personally is my brother because there are times when my parents and I disagree on certain things. And my brother is always kind of the one that tells me "Hey it's going to be okay, it's going to be fine." And he's younger than me so he's really wise for his years. He's like "Hey. It's fine. Go to college. Don't listen to them. Don't listen to the fact that they're shutting you down. You do you. Do your own thing."*

> (Evelyn) *Yeah, it comes to school and like accomplishments, probably my two oldest sisters because they've already gone through all of this and they both have adult jobs now and successful and they have their life together, it seems. I always try to keep them in mind when I make my decisions…What I'm actually doing right now so just to be accomplished and make my parents proud and make my sisters proud that I'm following in their footsteps and trying to shoot high all the time.*

> (Patty) *But I think I was just fortunate enough to have a family that was very supportive of me. I know not many people have that. But, from the very beginning I knew that my family would be able to help me somehow. Especially my sister, I feel like my sister was the person that I would go to even though we didn't really have the same path, she still had an idea.*

The study participants shared that relationships mattered because there was

dependence, action, influence, and an exchange of privileges that defined reciprocity in

the relationship.

Lack of family support. Study participants shared that these meaningful

relationships also fell short at times. They expressed the disappointment that came when

delivering the news of college acceptance morphed into a negative experience. Whereas

many of the families were excited, some parents and siblings immediately expressed a

neutrality or even a discontent for the decision to engage an educational journey. They

shared their dismay, which was followed by questioning decisions around their future.

(Tania) *I was very excited. It still is pretty unreal. But I just remember a lot of pain associated with the letter, because I remember that best friend showing her mom and she was so excited. They had, not a party but like a special dinner or whatever. I remember telling my parents and it was like "Cool. I guess you're going" but there wasn't many congratulations or anything like that.*

For one participant, the discontent was interpreted through a cultural lens.

(Deena) *… important would have to be my dad and he's supportive, but he's always told me "Why are you choosing such a long path? Why don't you just choose a technical career? Why don't you just do that? It's still school." He didn't understand why I would want to do it for 7 years. He kind of thought that if I really wanted that in my life, I should marry a man who went to school and was a doctor and do that for myself instead of doing it (going to school) for myself.*

As a result, three participants felt like they were on their educational journey alone. They voiced that they felt solely responsible for taking care of themselves. One participant even expressed "guilt" for the burden placed on her father to attend a college preparation meeting in addition to his work.

(Tania) *Oh, they (parents) were not there. I remember telling my parents "Okay I need money to apply to college. I need to visit these campuses." And they were just not there. Going to the (recruiting event), it was always that friend's mom who was like there for me or would come pick me up from my house and take me to those events. And the one time my dad did take me, he just fell asleep during the whole thing because he works ten-hour shifts, five days a week. And so I always kind of felt guilt for getting them involved in the process. Oh god that's triggering. Yeah.*

A second participant expressed anger when it became evident that one parent would not play any role in getting her to college. She expressed the lack support meant that she would have to do it on her own.

(Lulu) *because I would go home and talk to my mom about it, but she doesn't know. So she would say "well ask the College and Career Center" or "ask them" or "ask Mr. (teacher)"…My dad even worse. He wasn't really a part of the whole process and didn't believe me. In my eyes, I was going to go to college. And it wasn't until I told him "I'm going to the (University). You can help me or not. You can support me or not. But I'm going whether you like it or not." The*

application process was rough. Especially with FAFSA and all that stuff, that was really difficult.

Finally, one participant stated that she felt disrespected because her family could not appreciate her choice for an educational journey. She expressed how the family fell short of understanding her desire to the point of being dismissive.

(Deena) *Well, I mean, it felt horrible. Definitely every night that I was in Mexico, I was like "Oh my god, I hate my life." And I was really upset because I had done this amazing thing. Other people's parents, like my friend's parents, were like "Wow. You're incredible. I can't believe you got into that program" and they honor me for it and they respect me for it. But my own family was like not. They didn't even look at what the program was or anything. And then some people were like "Well, if you're so smart, why don't you just go to Harvard?" because that's all they hear. They don't really pay attention to what I'm doing.*

The study participants expressed both the joy and the heartache that came with their need for meaningful and reciprocal relationships. They felt like caretakers of the family, but also relied on support from the family that at times fell short.

Meaningful relationships at work. Meaningful relationships also included how work was configured as an extension of family. Study participants shared that their coworkers and supervisors were seen as a familial connection and created a sense of belonging.

Participants described valuing the ability to build relationships that extended beyond the typical definition of co-worker or supervisor in several ways. They conveyed being content to walk into a place of work that had of feeling of "family." They valued comfortable settings where they worked collectively with coworkers to problem-solve, mentor, as well as share responsibilities and passion for the work. They described the excitement of motivating each other to do better on the job.

(Renee) *I would say that the best thing (job) is like that family feeling. I like going to work and being so comfortable around everyone and having other peer mentors. So we can share job responsibilities and duties. And then I can go to them with problems, like how do I figure this out or how do I solve this. And they're like in the same situation and like going through the same thing, so they can help me out. So, that's nice. The worst thing about that one is maybe just knowing that you won't always be able to help everyone there.*

(April) *The best part of my job is doing something that I'm passionate about and being able to love my job and make money and feel happy and be a part of a team. … We're all pushing each other, motivating. I work on a smaller team so, there's only sixteen of us, so we all are pretty close. And we hang out outside of the office too.*

(Evelyn) *Best part of my job at the (place of employment) has probably been, I guess, the social component. I've become really good friends with a lot of my coworkers. And those probably would have been people that I wouldn't have met had it not of been for my job there. I'm very grateful for all of the friendships that I've made and also all of the professional relationships that I have made. I now have professional relationships that I know I could go to them for references if needed and they'd be more than happy to fill those out for me.*

They described the bonus when co-workers became friends or an additional support system that they did not previously have. One participant lamented that for too long her employment was off campus and that she should have gotten an on-campus job earlier into her college career.

(Patty) *So, when I saw that they (job) had posted a front desk job, I was like, okay I can do that. And for the longest time I refused to get a job on campus because I wanted a life outside of campus. I wanted something different. And then when I started working there I realized like wow I should have been doing this from a long long time ago. It's very nice. It's very easy and I feel like I've been able to connect with my coworkers. I feel like we have more similarities since we're all in the (job.) In the beginning, I was like "I'm never going to work at (university)" and now I love it. I should've done it from the beginning.*

Participants also confirmed that supervisors were a key component of the on-campus job experience by creating opportunities to help them grow. Many viewed supervisors as mentors and coaches who challenged them to become better at their jobs,

taught them to be more professional, and called attention to weaknesses that needed to be improved. These women shared that their supervisors conveyed appreciation for their work, often provided trainings and meetings so they had everything they needed to succeed in the workplace. Participants also expressed the value of working for supervisors who understood their need for flexibility in the schedule for academic and familial duties.

> (April) *I'm very passionate about it (job). Like I said, it's what I'm going to school for. I have great mentors and yeah, everyday I'm excited to come to work. I definitely couldn't do it for free, the money part is essential. But no, I would say I'm excited to come and learn things.*

> (Evelyn) *My job environment is kind of hectic. And I thought that it was me at first, maybe not integrating well. But I expressed that concern with my supervisor not too long ago and she reassured me that, no it's just a hectic environment regardless. It's a go go go sort of thing; we always want to be one step ahead. A lot of that has been like sink or swim. And that's been helpful trying to, like I said, multitask efficiently and manage my time better. But it's all very supportive, she's always made it very obvious that she's there to support us; that everyone there is appreciative of your work. Your work doesn't go unnoticed. Therefore, that's been nice.*

> (Jane) *It's super inclusive and welcoming. Nobody is left behind. And especially the staff there at (job), they want to make sure that you have all the tools necessary to approach the students and stuff. And they offer everything. They offer like meetings and trainings and stuff. So they offer a lot. I like, I love working there. I love working for the office too, it's super neat.*

> (Patty) *(job) has definitely taught me skills for the future because for the first two weeks I was late for my eight am shifts on Fridays and I got in big trouble by my boss. But he is a very nice guy and I told my mom all of this and she was like "Good. He's teaching you to be on time" because that's an issue in our family, we always run late, like right now. So, I'm still learning. But he's definitely taught me the importance of being on time and how it presents you as a person. But it's still hard.*

One participant described how she valued the willingness of her supervisor to listen to her situation when she was unable to come into work.

(Jane) *I love working for the office too, it's super neat. Me and my boss get along well. She's super nice and we're super supportive of each other. She's also really really understanding. If I ever need to not come in and I tell her why. She's super understanding. She's like "Yeah, I understand."*

It was apparent to study participants when supervisors expressed concern for their mental and emotional wellbeing. This expression led participants to believe the supervisor understood the tensions involved with working, family, and seeking a degree. They expressed the value of the job as going beyond meeting financial need to meeting developmental needs.

(Jannet) *They make sure that I'm well-adjusted and taking care of myself and my academics because they know how important it is to all of us. That's kind of nice. I love that on campus jobs are a thing too, so that's kind of cool.*

(Patty) *I feel like it's really important to know, not everyone goes through college the same way. Like one year will be way harder than another one, either emotionally or academically. I feel like it's important for, I guess, the boss to always be checking on their employees to be like "Okay. How are you really doing? How is work actually going for you?" Because I know when I walk into the office every day, they are like "Good morning. How are you?" and everyone says good. But there's definitely days where I'm not feeling good but I'm just saying it…*

(Tania) *I guess I would just like administrators to get to know people more than just the surface level. Because there are certain things that you don't need to necessarily know about the person working for you. But that doesn't also mean that you shouldn't assume that it's happening. Just like checking in, I work right next to my boss so she's constantly like "How is your weekend? How are you feeling today?" which I really appreciate. But I know not every administrator has the time or works the same schedule as their student worker but it would still be nice to just check in. She also does evaluations. But, yeah just checking in with how is school going? How's your family?*

Study participants were clear in expressing the meaningfulness of work relationships in creating a sense of belonging. They also were able to articulate when work relationships were detrimental or unsupportive.

Lack of supervisor support. Because study participants described work as an extension of family, they also named those practices that undermined the meaningfulness and reciprocity they sought from the work relationships. Negative thoughts were linked to demanding hours, as well as displacing family and academic responsibilities.

> (Tania) *It was an internship that I found through the career fair upstairs in the ballrooms. But they had a very, how should I explain this, their hours were so long and it was so hard to get time off for holidays. So that's what kind of prompted me to try and work on campus and the job that I have now at the Student Health Center.*

Study participants expressed a deep dissatisfaction with being taken advantage of at work. They sought to balance working at jobs they loved without being overworked in the process. One participant shared that her supervisor would make her feel bad because she did not want to work the extended hours being asked of her.

> (Kate) *It was just a specific job that they wanted me to give so many hours. And, to me, like yes, I like tutoring and I like being able to tell someone, kind of write things down for them and help them understand. But this specific supervisor just wanted me to tutor all day. All day. All day. All day. It was ridiculous. No one wants to tutor for ten hours, no one wants to tutor for five hours in a row like that's ridiculous. So, I would give them what I could. And he would get mad and he would say "This is not enough." And I would say, "Well, this is what I can give you." And then he would make me feel bad for having other jobs. These jobs make me happy. Why would I sacrifice what makes me happy for working something that didn't and for him specifically just wasn't understanding?*

The last experience that failed to meet participants' desire for meaningful relationships included having to work at jobs that were unfulfilling. Shredding papers and making copies were considered mundane tasks that represented a lack of expectation of them. They conveyed feeling underestimated and stereotyped, specifically as Latina women. They sought to challenge the shortsightedness by expressing a desire to have more meaningful work delegated to them.

(Maria Elena) *I know with different people they've always created a stereotype with Latina students, especially that we aren't able to do certain things, that they're not as positive as people have told me I've been. That, I guess, just create a chance for us. That we're capable of doing so much more, no matter if I come from a great background with my parents supporting me or if I had parents that didn't support me. That we're able to do a lot more than they think we can.*

(Jannet) *When I left there I did recommend the job to someone else and I felt really bad because I just needed them to replace my job because I had to leave. That place was really dry and really hard, some of the people were really nice there. I know some, some student jobs will let you work on your homework, this one didn't - and they didn't give you stuff to do. I would feel hostile working there because if you don't give me stuff to do, then what am I supposed to do for a couple of hours? The lady who was in charge of me would sit in front of my desk, so she was like right there. She would just glance over at what I was doing the whole time. I would spend so many hours shredding because they wanted to move everything electronically. I'm not even going to lie to you from here to like there from the floor to up there full of documents to shred.*

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine how Latina women made meaning of the college student employment experience. They enrolled and worked on a college campus and learned to navigate and negotiate educational and familial systems while obtaining a college degree. The analysis of the data presented conveyed how study participants managed the cultural tensions. Participants shared a history of financial insecurity before and after they entered the university. They also endured the cultural tensions that came with being Latinas who stepped outside of traditional norms in seeking a degree. As participants sought the degree, they reconciled these tensions because it was important to their families and to themselves for a better future. Feeling overwhelmed by the tension at times, they understood the value of time management and self-care in negotiating the pressures. Study participants conveyed that they needed meaningful relationships to successfully navigate the educational attainment, the work

component, and the familial caretaking. They sought reciprocity in familial relationships through serving as both familial caretaker and recipient of familial support. They were clear in expressing what did not constitute support from family. Study participants saw work as an extension of family. Work families created a sense of belonging for participants when they were able to build relationships with coworkers, had supervisors that helped them to grow, and who understood their stories. Lack of support from the workplace/supervisors was exemplified when study participants worked too many hours which displaced familial and academic responsibilities. In addition, participants felt unsupported when supervisors took advantage of the relationship and when the work was unfulfilling or lacked expectations of them.

Chapter 5 - Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the role that campus employment played as Latina students navigated familial obligations and financial constraints while pursuing an undergraduate degree. The research question that guided the study was: How do Latina women who are enrolled and working on campus navigate and negotiate educational and familial systems while obtaining a college degree? This chapter is divided into five sections: a summary of the findings, discussion, implications for professional practice, future research, and conclusion.

Summary of the Findings

Each of the women in this study revealed a deep commitment to her family. Participants described their parents with compassion and gratitude for the sacrifices they had made for their families, particularly for the daughters themselves. Family belief in the daughter's future success was portrayed as having been nurtured throughout their childhood out of familial need and the dream of an education. Even those that felt they had not been supported by their families generated a deep resolve to be successful for themselves as well as their families. Based on their descriptions, all participants appeared to have brought a strong sense of self-efficacy into their college experiences. What was particularly noteworthy was the interconnection between the family's and the daughter's goals; the student's future was described as inexorably linked to the family's future. Participants discussed this linkage with pride that they could lift their entire family through their own efforts.

Although gratitude toward the family's support was in evidence, there was also a tinge of guilt that they could not always do what they felt their family expected of them. They expressed frustration when family members expected them to continue to fulfill traditional roles of a Latina daughter. This was particularly apparent with regard to regular visiting, participating in family social activities, and obligations they felt for younger siblings.

Notwithstanding the connection they felt with their families, each of the women in this study expressed an equal commitment to her own future. They described in detail their own hopes and dreams that, while consistent with their family's hopes and dreams, belonged exclusively to them. A strong commitment to use their education to march into their futures was in evidence, even if this dedication created conflict with trying to fulfill their sense of obligation to their families.

The tensions and stress of managing family obligations and their own dreams were described in detail, as was the manner in which the women reconciled their internal conflicts. They balanced pursuing their own dreams with family obligations by such things as sharing wages they earned from their campus employment with their families to alleviate issues of economic scarcity. They sacrificed spending time with friends, and sometimes family, to ensure that they did not get behind academically.

Whereas some of the participants tended to compartmentalize the tensions they experienced, self-care was in evidence as well. For some, self-care involved relying on support networks, including friends and family members; mothers were consistently described as the student's biggest supporter. Others sought professional counseling that

was available through the university. Many sought meaningful relationships beyond their families by creating a family-type relationship with co-workers and supervisors in their campus employment.

The upshot of their journeys to reconcile the pressures in their lives were the self-defining moments specific to each woman that deepened their self-efficacy. They combined the relational collectivism consistent with the Latino culture with the independence-focused experiences of higher education in the values they revealed during the interviews. Both relationships and autonomy were equally important; neither held sway over the other. A model of this process is found in Figure 1.
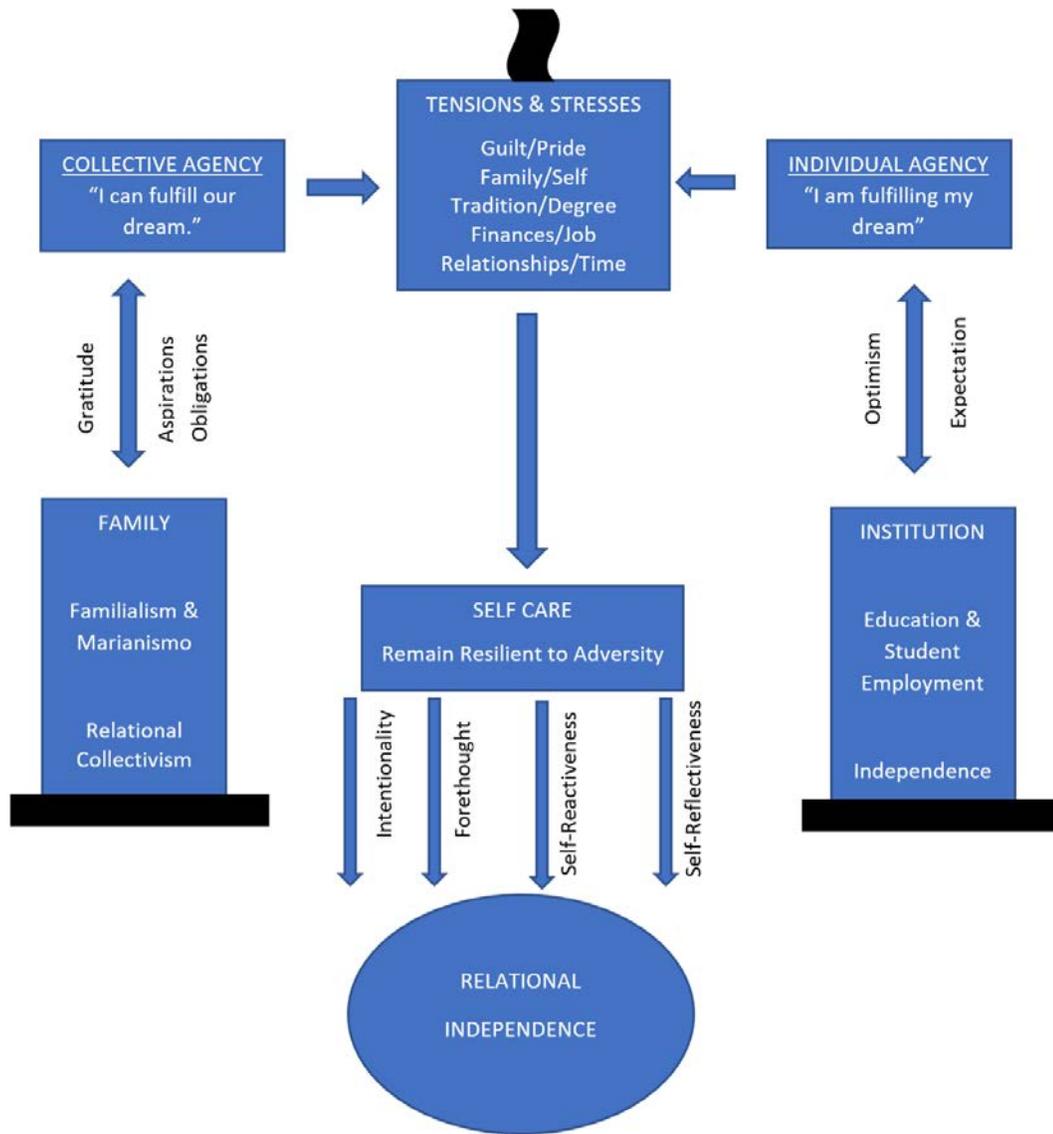
Figure 1. Modes of Human Agency Within a Latina's Collegiate Experience

Discussion

Findings of this study revealed three salient points. First was their self-definition that combined relational collectivism from their cultural heritage with independence and self-determination that was reinforced through their higher education experiences. Second, participants had enough self-awareness to engage in self-care behaviors to allow them to manage feeling overwhelmed. Third, there was a lack of meaningfulness given to campus employment other than as a means to an end.

Self-definition. Fulgini and Pedersen's (2002) study noted cultural differences in their study of family obligations in the transition into young adulthood. While turning 18 is considered the beginning of legal emancipation and autonomy for children of European-American families, the study found that Latino and Pilipino students, particularly women, felt an increased obligation to support the family financially and emotionally during this time. It is notable that the 15 Latina women in the study demonstrated characteristics of both familial obligations, consistent with the Latino and Pilipino students, and autonomy, consistent with the European-American students.

For students in this study, maintaining strong relationships with their families was of critical importance. They saw their families as the foundational support unit who had sacrificed for them; in turn, they felt obligated to support their families. This sense of reciprocity is consistent with research in behavioral sciences that has found that Latina women are subject to the stresses of familial influences and cultural demands, often called familialism. They include loyalty to the family in place of personal goals, a desire to meet the demands of the maternal figure, and a desire to add to the family income

(Padilla & Perez, 2003; Sy, 2006; Sy & Brittian, 2008; Sy & Romero, 2008; Tokar, Withrow, Hall, & Moradi, 2007). Indeed, the Latina women in this study not only described in detail attempting to meet the needs and expectations of their families, but student employment provided financial support for their families.

Findings from this study add to the literature related to familialism in that the concept of family was extended to their employment situations. Participants valued work settings that reproduced family in a way that the women felt they were an important part of the workplace. Relationships with their supervisors and peers contributed to a sense of belonging in that setting. They sought supervisors who demonstrated that the student's wellbeing was a priority.

Whereas familialism was central to the findings, the women in this study were cognizant of the tensions and stresses that pitted family obligations against the self in working toward their own goals of a college degree. They were committed to their familial obligations but were equally determined to make the journey their own. Indeed, the participants displayed evidence of both self-efficacy and agency in their pursuit of a college education.

Social cognitive theory "adopts an agentic perspective toward human development, adaptation and change" whereby humans act as individual agents that "influence intentionally one's functioning and life circumstances" (Bandura, 2006, p. 164). The core properties of agency include intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness. There are three different modes of agency in normal day-to-day human performance: individual, collective, and proxy. Bandura (2006) described

individual agency as exercised when "people bring to bear on their own functioning on environmental events" (p. 165). He described collective agency as "people working together through interdependent effort to pool their knowledge, skills and resources, and act in concert to shape their future…conjoined belief in their collective capability to achieve given attainments" (Bandura, 2006, p. 165). Proxy agency is when people realize "they do not have control over some conditions that affect their lives…so by influencing others who have resources, knowledge and means to act on their behalf they secure the outcomes they desire" (Bandura, 2006, p. 165).

Participants in this study maintained a commitment to their own goals and desires, suggesting a strong sense of individual agency. However, the findings also indicated that these women arrived in higher education by working in collective agency with their families. The family was described as imparting the dream of a college degree to their daughters as a form of collective agency; the women transformed this collective dream to a personal one as a form of individual agency. In essence, these Latina women cognitively balanced collective and individual agency to address the tensions associated with familialism and their own desires. It must be noted, however, that proxy agency was not found in the data.

Self-care behavior. The women in this study emotionally reconciled the tensions and stresses of meeting the demands of family, work, and academics by intentionally engaging in self-care. There is strong evidence that alleviating stress and tensions during the college years is not unique to Latina students. A plethora of research exists that focuses on risky behaviors that are engaged by undergraduate students. College students

have been found to be more likely to overuse the internet as a means of social interaction and to escape, causing a negative impact on academic performance and neglecting normal day to day responsibilities (Chou, Condron, & Belland, 2005; Widyanto & Griffiths, 2006). Scott-Sheldon, Carey, and Carey (2010) found a correlation between heavy drinking and risky sexual behavior among college students. Women were less likely to use condoms with steady partners when heavy alcohol consumption was at play. Butler, Dodge, and Faurote (2010) found a correlation between the number of drinks consumed by the undergraduate students and the number of hours worked in a day, illustrating that employment during the academic year can play a significant role in college student drinking.

Despite working up to 30 hours a week, the Latina women in this study did not report succumbing to the types of risky behavior often associated with college students. Rather, all forms of self-care described by the participants involved human interactions without external stimuli. Friends and family members, particularly mothers and siblings, were cited as providing relief from stress. Meaningful relationships at work were highly valued. Finally, some sought counseling services available to students by the university. All of the self-care approaches the women of this study drew upon were consistent with the collectivist characteristic of Latino culture. Torres (2003) underscored the family influence and self-perception of Latina women as tied deeply to the family. As such, these women sought self-care approaches that included support from their families and siblings.

Absence of meaningfulness related to employment. For the students in this study, campus employment was largely a means to an end. All indicated that some form of employment was required for both themselves and their families. Some enjoyed their work; many worked merely to get a paycheck. Some enjoyed the learning that took place. Many would leave the place of work if it did not allow them to meet academic or familial obligations or if the work was meaningless. These findings are consistent with Perna (2010) who argued that student employment for undergraduate students is a necessary but a contradictory experience in terms of learning, persistence, and graduation.

Findings also support Baum (2010) who asserted that employment is a pragmatic decision. Students in this study knew they had to work; they did so as a matter of fact. Their pragmatism was particularly evidenced by the common argument that participants made: their parents worked harder than they did, so they had no reason to complain.

Although McNall and Michel's 2010 study did not differentiate between on campus and off campus employment, they concluded that students who were "more efficacious, emotionally stable individuals who have positive self-evaluations and feel like they have control over their environment are less likely to feel that work interferes with school" (p. 405). The women in this study reported feeling in control of their work environment by asserting what they did and did not need from the student employment experience. They appreciated supervisors who were sensitive to their academic requirements; some did not hesitate changing jobs to meet their personal needs.

Implications for Professional Practice

Researchers have theorized that Latina women are likely to be faced with diminished personal support and lack of expectations from institutional systems which play a role in influencing self-perception, self-efficacy, and the impact on how family is viewed in relation to the identity development of transnational life stories (Cammarota, 2004; Castillo-Montoya & Torres-Guzmán, 2012; Hornberger, 2007; Hornberger & Link 2012). Findings from this study are generally consistent with these concerns. The women of this study were the first in their families to attend college. Although it could be assumed that the women were given specific information during their educational journey, they primarily described being guided by the hopes and dreams of their parents, several whose education ended after grade school. The strategies they offered to navigate the environments in which they found themselves appeared to intentionally draw upon their cultural knowledge. They harnessed the gratitude, aspirations, optimism, and expectations with an outlook that allowed them to remain resilient to adversity.

Educational environments that develop a sense of self are key for all students, but especially for under-represented, first-generation students who find themselves on the lowest end of the social class continuum. Findings from this study suggest that Latina students brought a level of self-efficacy, rooted in collective agency, with them to college because of their lived experience focused on relational collectivism. How institutional practice anchors that experience can be the difference in the resiliency necessary for these students to overcome adversity. Professional practice must go beyond supporting self-efficacy that teaches students to believe in their abilities to self-efficacy rooted in an

optimism derived from intentionality, self-reflectiveness, self-reactiveness, and forethought. The action initiated from the latter approach suggests a respect for the self – and the journey necessary for students to accomplish their individual goals.

Findings from this study inform the concept of belonging on a college campus. Re-creation of *family* can have both negative and positive implications in developing students. Whereas relational collectivism was the force that got the student to higher education, it can also bring with it the traditions/norms that keep students from higher education or become the reasons why students drop out. Student employment jobs can be framed in a setting that values team members as family. It is critical, however, to remain vigilant against re-creating the very tensions and stresses that are unsupportive of building individual agency of students. The concepts of familialism, putting the family first, and *marianismo*, the self-sacrificing role of Latinas within the family, can play out in the re-created work family and inhibit the aspiration for the college degree.

College student employment should effectively challenge the capacities of students, but also support the students' end goals. It is important to understand why students are seeking college student employment. A questionnaire to pinpoint the need(s) as part of the hiring process might better inform the educational/developmental aspects of a student job. Developing learning outcomes that purposefully target and develop a personal agency can focus both the employer and the employee by assessing the individual and collective agency built into the experience of first-generation students. In order for this to happen successfully, student affairs administrators must have a thorough

understanding of the concepts of self-efficacy and agency. Without that understanding, all the trainings and orientations related to student employment will be framed poorly.

The women in this study brought cultural and social capital to the workplace that needed to be both validated and built upon. Social and cultural capital included a work ethic, sacrificing for a larger purpose, multitasking institutions (i.e., family and academia) and their obligations to both. These are noble qualities in an employee. College student employers can be purposeful in framing jobs and leadership positions that maximize the best qualities these women bring to the workplace. In doing so, it is possible to build on the self-efficacy and agency that Latina women will carry into a career after college.

For too long student affairs programs have focused on college student development research embedded in the assumption that possession of aspiration is the motivator for success related to persistence and graduation. That focus needs to shift to examining and researching the practical day-to-day obstacles that impede students, especially those students with less ability to read or understand the systemic issues that undermine their aspirations. It is the job of student affairs administrators to address and connect these impediments to larger institutional decision making and to change it. Otherwise, the institution itself lacks aspirations for the success of these students.

Future Research

By reconceptualizing college student employment, it is possible to design opportunities for first-generation students in a way that prepares them for their departure from first-generation status. This is not intended to leave a part of their history behind, but rather it is to harness the experience in a way that becomes scaffolding for the future

agentic self. Several books and journal articles have been written on *imposter syndrome* for women of color within the academy at the masters and doctoral levels. Future research can focus on foundations that build self-efficacy and agency in the undergraduate years that may pave the way to the masters and doctorate free of this syndrome. As a matter of practice, institutions of higher education assess the financial status of an entering student to assign financial support; students are stratified by placing labels such as *first-generation* to understand lived experience and potential obstacles and barriers. Future researchers could develop a tool to assess the status of self-efficacy and agency at the point of entrance to the institution. This would facilitate having an entire picture of the entering first year student and allow professional practice to incur a truly holistic approach to developing these students.

Conclusion

This study sought to explore the role that campus employment played as Latina students navigated familial obligations and financial constraints while pursuing an undergraduate degree. Fifteen first-generation Latina students who were employed on campus at a public land grant institution participated in semi-structured interviews that focused on their experiences in transitioning from high school to college, their familial situation, the student's on-campus work, and their expectations for graduation. Four themes emerged from the analysis of data: a context of financial constraints, cultural tensions; feeling overwhelmed; and the importance of meaningful relationships.

Findings indicated that the women in this study reconciled the pressures in their lives by defining themselves via combining relational collectivism, consistent with the

Latino culture, with the independence-focused experiences of higher education. It appears that the women in this study intentionally harnessed the self-efficacy that had been nurtured throughout their childhoods by supportive family members to develop a strong sense of who they were, what their goals were, and how to achieve their goals. Their transition into adulthood reflected personal goals and personal achievements, but they were not on their journeys alone. They were intentionally bringing their families along with them, but rather than being their family's dream, the dream had become theirs. In essence, what had been the family's original dream of their daughter having an education became the daughter's dream that included her family. This transformation was possible because the women in this study were able to navigate through the influences of familialism to build their own individual agency.

References

Abraham, K. G., & Clark, M. A. (2006). Financial aid and students' college decisions evidence from the District of Columbia Tuition Assistance Grant Program. *Journal of Human resources*, *41*(3), 578-610.

Alcantar, C. M., & Hernandez, E. (2018). "Here the Professors Are Your Guide, Tus Guías": Latina/o Student Validating Experiences with Faculty at a Hispanic Serving Community College. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 1538192718766234.

American Council on Education (1937). Retrieved from http://www.acenet.edu/Pages/default.aspx

American Council on Education (1949). Retrieved from http://www.acenet.edu/Pages/default.aspx

Astin, A. W. (1993). What Matters in College. *Liberal Education*, *79*(4), 4-15.

Atkinson, D. R., Morten, G., & Sue, D. W. (1993). Counseling American minorities (4th ed.) Madison, WI: Brown and Benchmark Publishers.

Azmitia, M., Cooper, C. R., García, E. E., & Dunbar, N. D. (1996). The ecology of family guidance in low-income Mexican-American and European-American families. *Social Development*, 5(1), 1-23.

Balemian, K., & Feng, J. (2013). First-generation Students: College Aspirations, Preparedness and Challenges. *College Board*.

Bandura, A. (1994). *Self-efficacy*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Bandura, A. (2006). Toward A Psychology of Human Agency. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 2(1), 164-180.

Baum, S. (2010). Student work and the financial aid system. *Understanding the working college student: New research and its implications for policy and practice*, 3-20.

Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. M. (1997). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice and mind*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Bluml, J. (2019). *On-campus employment and retention of first-time, full-time college student* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Semantics Scholar.

Burnside, O., Wesley, A., Wesaw, A., & Parnell, A. (2019). *Employing student success: a comprehensive examination of on-campus student employment*. Retrieved from National Association of Student Affairs Administrators website: https://www.naspa.org/report/employing-student-success-a-comprehensive examination-of-on-campus-student-employment

Butler, A. B., Dodge, K. D., & Faurote, E. J. (2010). College student employment and drinking: a daily study of work stressors, alcohol expectancies, and alcohol consumption. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, *15*(3), 291.

Callender, C. (2008). The impact of term-time employment on higher education students' academic attainment and achievement. *Journal of education policy, 23*(4), 359-377.

Cammarota, J. (2004). The gendered and racialized pathways of Latina and Latino youth: Different struggles, different resistances in the urban context. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *35*(1), 53-74.

Cano, M. Á., & Castillo, L. G. (2010). The role of enculturation and acculturation on Latina college student distress. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, *9*(3), 221 231.

Cano, M., Castillo, L. G., Castro, Y., Dios, M. A., & Roncancio, A. M. (2013). Acculturative stress and depressive symptomatology among Mexican and Mexican American students in the U.S.: Examining associations with cultural incongruity and intragroup marginalization. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 36, 136-149.

Cardoza, D. (1991). College attendance and persistence among Hispanic women: An examination of some contributing factors. *Sex Roles*, *24*(3), 133-147.

Carmel-Gilgilen, C., & Portillo, M. (2010). Developmental trajectories in design thinking: An examination of criteria. *Design studies*, *31*(1), 74-91.

Carnevale, A. P., Smith, N., Melton, M., & Price, E. (2015). Learning While Earning: The New Normal. *Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce*.

Castillo, L. G., Conoley, C. W., Brossart, D. F., & Quiros, A. (2007). Construction and validation of the Intragroup Marginalization Inventory. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 13, 232-240.

Castillo, L. G., & Hill, R. D. (2004). Predictors of distress in Chicana college students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, *32*(4), 234-248.

Castillo-Montoya, M., & Torres-Guzmán, M. E. (2012). Thriving in our identity and in the academy: Latina epistemology as a core resource. *Harvard Educational Review*, *82*(4), 540-558.

Charmaz, K. (2003). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In N.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.

Charmaz, K. (2008). Grounded theory as an emergent method. *Handbook of emergent methods*, *155*, 172.

Chou, C., Condron, L., & Belland, J. C. (2005). A review of the research on Internet addiction. *Educational Psychology Review*, *17*(4), 363-388.

Congressional Research Service (2018). The Higher Education Act (HEA): A primer.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.

Cross Jr, W. E. (1991). *Shades of black: Diversity in African American identity*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Cross Jr, W. E. (1995). The psychology of nigrescence: Revising the Cross model.

Darolia, R. (2014). Working (and studying) day and night: Heterogeneous effects of working on the academic performance of full-time and part-time students. *Economics of Education Review*, *38*, 38-50.

Dundes, L., & Marx, J. (2006). Balancing work and academics in college: Why do students working 10 to 19 hours per week excel? *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, *8*(1), 107-120.

Engberg, M. E., & Allen, D. J. (2011). Uncontrolled destinies: Improving opportunity for low income students in American higher education. *Research in Higher Education*, *52*(8), 786-807.

Engle, J. (2007). Postsecondary access and success for first-generation college students. *American Academic*, *3*(1), 25-48.

Ferdman, B. M., & Gallegos, P. I. (2001). Racial identity development and Latinos in the United States. *New perspectives on racial identity development: A theoretical and practical anthology*, (pp. 32-66). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Fry, R., & Cilluffo, A. (2019). A Rising Share of Undergraduates Are From Poor Families, Especially at Less Selective Colleges, *The Pew Center.*

Fulgini, A. J., & Pedersen, S. (2002). Family obligation and the transition to young adulthood. *Developmental psychology*, *38*(5), 856-868.

Garcia, G. A., & Ramirez, J. J. (2018). Institutional agents at a Hispanic serving institution: Using social capital to empower students. *Urban Education*, *53*(3), 355-381.

Gay, G. (1985). Implications of selected models of ethnic identity development for

    educators. *Journal of Negro Education*, *54*(1), 43-55.

Gloria, A. M., & Robinson Kurprius, S. (1996). The validation of the Cultural Congruity

    Scale and the University Environment Scale with Chicano/a students. *Hispanic*

    Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 18, 533-549.

Grawe, N. D. (2018). *Demographics and the demand for higher education*. JHU Press.

Gushue, G. V. (2006). The relationship of ethnic identity, career decision-making

    self-efficacy and outcome expectations among Latino/a high school students.

    Journal of Vocational Behavior, *68*(1), 85-95.

Gushue, G. V., & Whitson, M. L. (2006). The relationship of ethnic identity and gender

    role attitudes to the development of career choice goals among Black and Latina

    girls. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *53*(3), 379.

Hardiman, R. (2001). Reflections on White identity development theory. *New*

    perspectives on racial identity development: A theoretical and practical

    anthology, 108-128. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Hawkins, C. A., Smith, M. L., Hawkins, II, R. C., & Grant, D. (2005). The relationships

    among hours employed, perceived work interference, and grades as reported by

    undergraduate social work students. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *41*(1), 13

    27.

Helms, J. E. (1990). *Black and White racial identity: Theory, research, and practice*.

    New York, NY, England: Greenwood Press.

Helms, J. E., & Cook, D. A. (1999). *Using race and culture in counseling and psychotherapy: Theory and process*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Helms, J. E. (1995). An update of Helm's White and people of color racial identity models. In J.G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki, & C.M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 73-92). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA, Public Law 89-329).

Hooks, B. (1994). Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom. New York: Routledge

Horn, L., & Nuñez, A. M. (2000). *Mapping the road to college first-generation students' math track, planning strategies, and context of support*. Diane Publishing.

Hornberger, N. H. (2007). Biliteracy, transnationalism, multimodality, and identity: Trajectories across time and space. *Linguistics and Education, 8*(3), 325-334.

Hornberger, N. H., & Link, H. (2012). Translanguaging and transnational literacies in multilingual classrooms: A biliteracy lens. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *15*(3), 261-278.

Hunt, A., Lincoln, I., & Walker, A. (2006). Term-time employment and academic attainment: evidence from a large-scale survey of undergraduates at Northumbria University. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 28*(1), 3-18.

Jackson, B. W. (1975). Black identity development. *Journal of Educational Diversity*, *2*(5), 1925.

Jackson, B.W. (2001). Black identity development: Further analysis and elaboration. *New perspectives on racial identity development: A theoretical and practical anthology* (pp. 831). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Keefe, S. & Padilla, A.M. (1987). *Chicano ethnicity*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.

Kegan, R. (1982). *The evolving self*. Harvard University Press.

Kim, J. (2001). Asian American identity development theory. *New perspectives on racial identitydevelopment: A theoretical and practical anthology*, (pp. 67-90). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Kohlberg, L. (1971). Stages of moral development. *Moral education*, *1*(51), 23-92.

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J. H., & Whitt, E. J. (2010). *Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Cruce, T., Shoup, R., & Gonyea, R. M. (2007). *Connecting the dots: Multi-faceted analyses of the relationships between student engagement results from the NSSE, and the institutional practices and conditions that foster student success*. Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.

Kulm, T. L., & Cramer, S. (2006). The relationship of student employment to student role, family relationships, social interactions and persistence. *College Student Journal*, *40*(4), 927-938.

Latino, C. A., Stegmann, G., Radunzel, J., Way, J. D., Sanchez, E., & Casillas, A. (2018). Reducing gaps in first-year outcomes between Hispanic first-generation college students and their peers: The role of accelerated learning and financial

aid. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 1521025118768055.

Liang, C. T., Lee, S., & Ting, M. P. (2002). Developing Asian American leaders. *New Directions for Student Services*, *2002*(97), 81-90.

Lohfink, M. M., & Paulsen, M. B. (2005). Comparing the determinants of persistence for first generation and continuing-generation students. *Journal of College Student Development*, *46*(4), 409-428.

Lopez, G. (2001). The value of hard work: Lessons on parent involvement from an (im) migrant household. *Harvard educational review*, *71*(3), 416-438.

Maekawa Kodama, C., McEwen, M. K., Liang, C. T., & Lee, S. (2002). An Asian American perspective on psychosocial student development theory. *New Directions for Student Services*, *2002*(97), 45-60.

Magolda, M. B. B. (2009). *Authoring your life: Developing an internal voice to navigate life's challenges*. Stylus Publishing, LLC.

McCormick, A.C., Moore, J.V., III, & Kuh, G.D. (2010). Working during college: Its relationship to student engagement and educational outcomes. *Understanding the working college student: New research and its implications for policy and practice (pp. 179-212). Sterling, VA: Stylus.*

McNall, L. A., & Michel, J. S. (2011). A dispositional approach to work–school conflict and enrichment. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *26*(3), 397-411.

Mentkowski, M., Moeser, M., & Strait, M. J. (1983). *Using the Perry scheme of intellectual and ethical development as a college outcomes measure: A process*

and criteria for judging student performance. Alverno College, Office of Research and Evaluation.

National Center on Education Statistics. (2019). College Student Employment, Washington, D.C., U.S. Office of Education.

Olson, J. K., & Finson, K. D. (2009). Developmental perspectives on reflective practices of elementary science education students. *Journal of Elementary Science Education*, *21*(4), 43-52.

Ostrove, J. M., & Cole, E. R. (2003). Privileging class: Toward a critical psychology of social class in the context of education. *Journal of Social Issues*, *59*(4), 677-692.

Padilla, A. M., & Perez, W. (2003). Acculturation, social identity, and social cognition: A new perspective. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *25*(1), 35-55.

Pascarella, E.T., Edison, M.I., Nora, Amaury, Hagedorn, L.S., & Terenzini, P.T. (1998). Does work inhibit cognitive development during college? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 20*(2), 75-93.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991). *How college affects students: Findings and insights from twenty years of research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research. Volume 2*. Jossey-Bass, An Imprint of Wiley. 10475 Crosspoint Blvd, Indianapolis, IN 46256.

Patton, L. D., Renn, K. A., Guido, F. M., & Quaye, S. J. (2016). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice*. John Wiley & Sons.

Perozzi, B. (Ed.) (2009). *Enhancing student learning through college employment*. Bloomington, IN: Association of College Unions International.

Perna, L. W., Asha Cooper, M., & Li, C. (2007). Improving educational opportunities for students who work.

Perna, L. W., & DuBois, G. (2010). *Understanding the working college student: New research and its implications for policy and practice*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, Llc.

Perry, W. G. Jr. (1968). *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme.* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Perry Jr, W. G. (1981). Cognitive and ethical growth.

Pike, G. R., Kuh, G. D., & Massa-McKinley, R. C. (2008). First-year students' employment, engagement, and academic achievement: Untangling the relationship between work and grades. *Naspa Journal*, *45*(4), 560-582.

Rabow, J., & Rodriguez, K. A. (1993). Socialization toward money in Latino families: An exploratory study of gender differences. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 15(3), 324-341.

Riggert, S. C., Boyle, M., Petrosko, J. M., Ash, D., & Rude-Parkins, C. (2006). Student employment and higher education: Empiricism and contradiction. *Review of Educational Research*, *76*(1), 63-92.

Rischall, E. & Meyers, S. A. (2019). Conflicting cultural pressures and the adjustment of Latino college students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, *18*(4), 343-356.

Robotham, D. (2012). Student part-time employment: characteristics and consequences. *Education and Training, 54*(1), 65-75.

Sanchez, J. E., Lowman, J. L., & Hill, K. A. (2018). Performance and persistence outcomes of GEAR UP students: Leveling the playing field in higher education. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory &Practice*, *20*(3), 328-349.

Sanders, M. R., & Mahalingam, R. (2012). Under the radar: The role of invisible discourse in understanding class-based privilege. *Journal of Social Issues*, *68*(1),112-127.

Santiago, D. A. (2013). Using a Latino Lens to Reimagine Aid Design and Delivery. *Excelencia in Education (NJ1)*.

Santiago, D. (2018). College Completion through a Latino Lens. *Excelencia in Education*.

Scott-Sheldon, L. A., Carey, M. P., & Carey, K. B. (2010). Alcohol and risky sexual behavior among heavy drinking college students. *AIDS and Behavior*, *14*(4), 845 853.

Skomsvold, P. (2015). Web Tables—Profile of Undergraduate Students: 2011–12 (NCES 2015- 167). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics

St. John, E. P. S., Daun-Barnett, N., & Moronski-Chapman, K. M. (2018). *Public policy and higher education: Reframing strategies for preparation, access, and college success*. Routledge.

Sy, S. R., & Romero, J. (2008). Family responsibilities among Latina college students from immigrant families. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, *7*(3), 212-227.

Sy, S. R. (2006). Family and work influences on the transition to college among Latina adolescents. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *28*(3), 368-386.

Sy, S. R., & Brittian, A. (2008). The impact of family obligations on young women's decisions during the transition to college: A comparison of Latina, European American, and Asian American students. *Sex Roles*, *58*(9), 729-737.

Tan, E., Barton, A.C., Kang, H., &O'Neill, T. (2013). Desiring a career in stem-related fields: How middle school girls articulate and negotiate identities in practice in science. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, *50*(10), 1143-1179.

Tierney, W. G., & Venegas, K. M. (2006). Fictive Kin and Social Capital: The Role of Peer Groups in Applying and Paying for College. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *49*(12),1687-1702.

Tierney, W. G., & Venegas, K. M. (2009). Finding money on the table: Information, financial aid, and access to college. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *80*(4), 363 388.

Tinto, V. (1975). Dropouts from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Higher Educational Research, 45*, 89-125.

Tinto, V. (1986). Theories of college student departure revisited. In J.C. Smart (Ed.). *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research,* (Vol. 2, pp. 359-384). New York, NY: Agathon Press.

Tinto, V. (1987). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. University of Chicago Press, 5801 S. Ellis Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637.

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tinto, V. (2010). From theory to action: Exploring the institutional conditions for student retention. In *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (pp. 51-89). Springer Netherlands.

Titus, M. A. (2010). Understanding the relationship between working while in college and future salaries. *Understanding the working college student: New research and its implications for policy and practice*, 261-282.

Tokar, D. M., Withrow, J. R., Hall, R. J., & Moradi, B. (2003). Psychological separation, attachment security, vocational self-concept crystallization, and career indecision: A structural equation analysis. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *50*(1), 3-19.

Torres, V. (2003). Influences on ethnic identity development of Latino college students in the first two years of college. *Journal of College Student Development*, *44*(4), 532-547.

Torres, V., Jones, S. R., & Renn, K. A. (2009). Identity development theories in student affairs: Origins, current status, and new approaches. *Journal of College Student Development*, *50*(6), 577-596.

US Census Bureau (2000), unpublished tabulations from United States fact sheets for race, ethnic, or ancestry group, available at: www.factfinder.census.gov.

US Census Bureau (2015), Percent of College Graduates of the Population 18 years and over by Hispanic Origin available at http://www.census.gov/hhes/school/data/cps/2012/tables.html.

Walpole, M. (2003). Socioeconomic status and college: How SES affects college experiences and outcomes. *The Review of Higher Education*, *27*(1), 45-73. The Effects of College Student Employment on Academic Achievement Lauren E. Watanabe.

Wang, H., Kong, M., Shan, W., & Vong, S. K. (2010). The effects of doing part-time jobs on college student academic performance and social life in a Chinese society. *Journal of Education and Work*, *23*(1), 79-94.

Widyanto, L., & Griffiths, M. (2006). 'Internet addiction': a critical review. *International Journal of mental health and Addiction*, *4*(1), 31-51.

Yeskel, F. (2008). Coming to class: looking at education through the lens of class introduction to the class and education special issue. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *41*(1), 1-11.

Zandy, J. (1996). Decloaking class: Why class identity and consciousness count. *Race, Gender & Class*, *4*(1), 7-23.

Appendix A: Introductory Email/Letter

Greetings:

Are you Latina/Hispanic/Chicana? Are you a full time Junior or Senior student at UNR? Do you work at UNR? Are you the first in your family to go to college? Are you a U.S. citizen? Are you between the ages of 18-24? If so, we want to hear your voice.

Sandra Rodriguez is conducting a research study to explore how Latina college women understand their student employment on campus while pursuing a bachelor's degree. She wants to understand the roles that educational and family environments play in your personal and academic identity.

If you agree to participate, you will be interviewed by Sandy; the interview will last approximately one hour, although there may be a follow-up interview, if necessary. You will be asked to complete a short demographic questionnaire and bring a picture of your family to prompt questions and ideas that you have about yourself.

Your time is valuable, therefore, if you agree to participate in the study, you will receive a $25 gift card. Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. The researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. **Your current university employer will never know that you are a part of this research.** You will be provided with an approved consent form for your signature before any information will be requested

If you would like further information or to participate in this study, please contact Sandra Rodriguez at srodz@unr.edu or 775-830-6344.

Best Regards,
Sandra Rodríguez

Appendix B: Demographics Questionnaire
Latina College Students and College Student Employment
Demographic Questionnaire

Name:

Date:

Pseudonym you would prefer:

Family Information

1. Mother's country of origin:

2. Father's country of origin:

3. What city is your family's home located?

4. Number of siblings?

5. What is the primary language in the home?

6. Are any of your siblings from a second family?

7. What is your birth order?

8. Family income:

    a. $24,999 or less

    b. $49,999 or less

    c. $69,999 or less

    d. More than $70,000

Study Participant Information

1. Major?

2. Minor?

3. Class standing?
    a. Fr (29 hrs earned or less)

    b. So (59 hrs earned or less)

    c. Jr. (89 hrs earned or less)

    d. Sr. (90 hrs earned or more)

4. Age?

5. Are you a first-generation college student? This means your parents' educational level does not exceed high school, either in the U.S. or their country of origin.

    a. Yes

    b. No

6. How do you self-identify?

    a. Latina/x

    b. Chicana

    c. Hispanic

    d. Other:

7. Gender?

    a. Female

    b. Gender non-binary

    c. Transgender

8. Have you earned any of the following?

    a. GED

    b. High School diploma

    c. Associates degree from a community college

    d. Bachelor's degree from a university

7. Marital status?

    a. Single never married

    b. Single – separated

    c. Single – divorced

    d. Married

8. Do you have children? If so, how many and their ages?

9. Do you live in the same house with your parents and siblings?

10. If not, where do you live?

    a. university residence halls

    b. Apartment or dwelling near campus

    c. With children in your own home

11. Do you belong to a student club or organization? How many?

12. How many days per week do you commute to campus to attend class, work, study in the library, attend social events or club meetings?

    a. None, I live on campus

    b. 2 days/week

    c. 3 days/week

    d. 4 days/week

    e. 5 days or more

13. Do you work?

    a. On campus

        1. Business Affairs?

        2. Academic Affairs?

3. Student Services?

b. Off campus

c. Both on campus and off campus

14. How many hours do you work per week on average?

a. 10-20 hours per week

b. 21-30 hours per week

c. 31-40 hours per week

d. 41 or more hours per week

15. Did you fill out your fafsa this year?

16. Are you eligible for financial aid?

17. Are you eligible for the Pell grant?

18. Are you eligible for Work Study?

19. What is your overall GPA?

20. What semester and year do you expect to graduate?

Appendix C: Interview Questions

Thank you for being part of my research study. I really appreciate the time you are spending with me.

Let's begin by reviewing the consent document. Please read it. If you have any questions, I'm more than happy to answer them. Upon reading it, if you are comfortable, please sign and date it.

As a reminder, I'm going to record this interview so I can pay attention to you and not be worried about writing notes.

1. Just so I know you a bit better, can you tell me a little bit about yourself. According to your questionnaire, you are a junior/senior and you work in … Maybe the best place to start is if you tell me about how you got to UNR.
   a. Where were you raised?
   b. Where did you go to high school?
   c. Did you come directly to UNR or did you "stop" along the way?
2. At what point did you decide to go to college?
   a. How did you make that decision?
   b. Who influenced you?
   c. Were there any conflicts within your family about your going to college?
3. Since you were the first in your family to go to college, did you just figure it out yourself or did someone help you?
   a. Tell me specifically about the application process.
   b. Tell me about being accepted.
4. Now I'd like to focus on your family. Let me see a picture of your family. Tell me about this picture.
   a. Who is in it? (pay attention to the order in which they are named)
5. What feelings do you have when you look at the picture?
6. Different family members play different roles in a person's life.
   a. Who in your family worries you the most? Why?
   b. Who influences you the most? How does the influence happen?
   c. Who do you consider your "cheerleader" or greatest supporter? Why?
   d. If there is conflict in your family, how is it generally resolved?
7. Now let's focus on your work here at UNR. Just as a reminder, where do you work?
   a. When did you start working on campus? What prompted your working?
   b. How did starting to work on campus actually happen? (work study, application, word of mouth)
8. Tell me about your job. What do you normally do at your job?

a. Sometimes a job is just a way to make some money; other times you're learning things that will help you in the future. How would you describe your current campus job?
9. How would you describe the atmosphere of where you work?
10. What is the best part of your job? What is the worst?
11. Let's say you get another job. Would you recommend your job to a friend? Why or why not?
12. Now I'd like to tie these three things together. You are going to school, your family seems to be very important to you (if that is true), and you are working. That's quite a lot. How do you manage everything?

13. If you could give up one of these three parts of your life, which would it be (including none of them)? Why?

14. Tell me one thing you would like for administrators at the university who provide jobs to know about your student employment experience.

15. Tell me one thing you would like for your family to know about your journey to obtain a degree.

Appendix D: Interview Protocol
Latina Women and College Student Employment

Introduction
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. You have been selected to participate in this study because your point of view and experiences are very important. I know that your schedule must be very busy so I really appreciate your involvement in this research study.

Purpose
This study is the focus of my doctoral dissertation research. The purpose of this study is to better understand how your campus employment experience may or may not impact your familial obligations, obtainment of a degree and identity as a Latina woman so that campus policymakers and student affairs personnel can improve your college experience.

Guidelines
Before we begin the interview, I want to remind you that this interview will be digitally recorded. All of the information shared will be kept confidential. Information may be used for research purposes, but no specific identifying information will be used. I will ask that you think about a pseudonym that you would like me to associate with the interview data and when reporting the findings. What pseudonym would you like to use?

If you are unsure at this point, I can ask you again at the end of the interview. Do you have any questions? Let's begin the interview. Please let me know if you need to take a break for any reason.

Prior to beginning first interview:
☐ Each participant should complete the consent form and demographic questionnaire prior to beginning the interview.
☐ Clarify any information received from the interest form.

At the end of first interview:
☐ Thank each individual for participating.
☐ Ask each participant to identify a pseudonym that will be used throughout the study.
☐ Remind participants that their comments will remain anonymous. Explain that they will receive an electronic copy of the interview transcript via email within a week of the interview so that they can offer any corrections or clarifications.
☐ Let each participant know you will give them the $25 gift card after they verify their transcripts.
☐ Ask participants if they have any questions or additional thoughts that they would like to share.

Follow up on First Interview

☐ Ask participants if they have any corrections or comments regarding the previous transcript/interview.

☐ Ask participants if they have any questions that remain from the first interview or additional thoughts they would like to share.

☐ Provide a summary of some of the key points raised during the first interview, particularly with regards to setting a context for the second interview if necessary.

**Appendix E: Consent to Participate in Research
Latina Women and College Student Employment**

Sandra Rodríguez, PhD candidate in Education at University of Nevada, Reno is conducting a research study.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because:
- Current full-time Latina/Hispanic/Chicana student pursuing a bachelor's degree at the   University of Nevada, Reno
- Must have obtained Junior (60 credit hours) or Senior (90 credit hours) status
- Be between the ages of 18–24
- Be an American citizen
- Identify yourself as a Latina, Hispanic, or Chicana
- Be first-generation

Why is this study being done?
The purpose of this study is to better understand how your campus employment experience may or may not impact your familial obligations, obtainment of a degree and identity as a Latina woman so that campus policymakers and student affairs personnel can improve your college experience.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?
If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following: Meet with the researcher for an interview sessions of 60 minutes during which your responses will be audio recorded.

- Meet with the researcher to confirm that the data collected in the interview process accurately conveys your experiences and the meanings you assign to them.
- No private, identifiable information will be required.
- You will select a pseudonym that will identify your responses throughout the research process
- All interviews will be conducted on the campus of the University of Nevada, Reno

How long will I be in the research study?
Participation will take a total of about 1–3 weeks during Spring 2018.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that I can expect from this study?
- Discussion of personal identity formation, religious or spiritual beliefs, and/or negative experience recollection and reflection.
- Students may voluntarily or inadvertently reveal personal information regarding private family or other information pertaining to personal life not specified in interview questions.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?
You will not directly benefit from your participation in this research. The results of the research may potentially impact future Latina women and their college student employment in higher education by providing information that may improve their campus experience.

What other choices do I have if I choose not to participate?
You will be considered a respected and valuable member of the academic community.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?
Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

- Confidentiality will be maintained by means of personal and institutional pseudonyms and all data will be kept locked and secure in the researcher's personal office and computer password protected.
  - Only dissertation committee members will have access to this information.
  - Coding (categorizing) of material will be thematic and not reveal personal data.

Your current employer will never know you are participating in this study

What are my rights if I take part in this study?
- You can choose whether you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you, and no loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.
- You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?
If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, please contact: srodz@unr.edu or 775-830-6344.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

_____
SIGNATURE OF STUDY PARTICIPANT
Name of Participant: _____
Date: _____

_____
Sandra Rodríguez
Contact Number: _____
Date: _____