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Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

ARTS EDUCATION AS A PATHWAY TO COLLEGE:  
A CASE STUDY OF TITLE I LATINO STUDENTS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy

by

Eva Lara Arrechiga

July, 2018

Diana Hiatt-Michael, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Eva Lara Arrechiga

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all Latino student with a desire for greatness. Follow your dreams, anything is possible if you put your mind to it. *¡Si se puede!*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my doctoral chairperson, Dr. Diana B. Hiatt-Michael. I will always be indebted to your tutelage. You believed in me, pushed me to work harder than I thought I was capable of and provided the ongoing guidance required to finish this dissertation. I appreciate you taking my calls, responding to my texts and emails at all hours of the day and night. You are the epitome of a dissertation chair! You helped this Latina beat the odds when all odds were against her.

To my committee members Dr. Reyna Garcia-Ramos and Dr. Marguerite Williams thank you for your support and encouragement during this learning process. Your assistance is greatly appreciated and will always be remembered.

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Finally, I’d like to thank my family and friends for their support during my dissertation journey. I’ve spent most weekends, holidays and late weeknights the past two years working on “my paper.” Everyone was so supportive of me as I strived to achieve my personal goal. A special thank you to my husband Rigoberto Arrechiga for believing in me even when I didn’t believe in myself. Throughout this process there were many doubts, regrets and frustrating moments when all I wanted to do was quit. But as you say, “Arrechigas never give up” and here we are, finally done. Now, I get my life back! Thanks to my little sister, Stacy Lara Elenes for always believing in me and for thinking that I’m smarter than I actually am. To my parents Jose and Ofelia Lara, gracias! Asael and Sebastian Arrechiga, without me even knowing it, I’ve done this for you boys. I’m humbled and grateful for all of the support I’ve received on this journey.

## VITA

**Education**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY                        | 2017 |
| Doctor of Education (Ed. D.)                 |      |
| LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY                  | 2005 |
| Master of Arts in Special Education (M.A.)   |      |
| UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE          | 2001 |
| Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (B.A.) |      |
| Minor in Spanish Literature                  |      |
| BENJAMIN FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL                | 1996 |
| High School Diploma                          |      |

**Credentials**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| LOS ANGELES UNIFIED NEW ADMINISTRATOR PROGRAM    | 2017 |
| Administrative Service Credential Level II       |      |
| NATIONAL UNIVERSITY                              | 2008 |
| Administrative Service Credential Level I        |      |
| LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY                      | 2005 |
| K-12 Multiple Subject Teaching Credential (SPED) |      |

**Administrative Experience**

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Ramon C. Cortines School of Visual and Performing Arts (LAUSD) | 2015 – Present |
| Assistant Principal  |                |

**Coordinatorships**

Abraham Lincoln High School (LAUSD) 2008 - 2014  
Title I Coordinator  
Special Education Coordinator  
WASC Coordinator  
Testing Coordinator

**Teaching Experience**

Abraham Lincoln High School (LAUSD) 2003 - 2008  
Special Day Class Teacher

## ABSTRACT

Latino high school graduates enroll into 4-year colleges at disproportionately lower rates compared to their White peers. The visual and performing arts have been documented for having a positive influence on academic achievement. The current study measured the influence of a visual and performing arts high school program and nine independent factors that might explain Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' decision to apply to a 4-year college.

A total of 160 Latino students from one visual and performing arts (VAPA) high school in an urban school district participated in this study. 40 students from each academy (dance, music, theater and visual arts) were included using purposive sampling. Glasser's (1998) Choice Theory and Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) College Choice model were used as theoretical frameworks. Data was collected from the students' completion of the high school version of the Factors Influencing Pursuit of Higher Education (FIPHE) Questionnaire (Harris, 1998). The FIPHE is a researcher-developed instrument designed to gather data on factors that could affect a person's decision to pursue higher education. The FIPHE consisted of 92 questions and measured the following variables: (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence.

A Hierarchical Linear Regression revealed the best predictors on the likelihood of pursuing higher education were self-appraisal and peer influence. The glass ceiling effect and sister's influence were negative predictors. Correlation tests revealed self-appraisal and peers influence had the strongest correlation with the likelihood of applying to college. Based on a one sample t-test, the mean score of 4.9 out of 10 revealed the visual and performing arts had an influence.

Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that: (1) Teachers seek out opportunities to build Latino students' self-appraisal and increase peer interactions; (2) Hiring practices include teachers with a mindset for dispelling glass ceiling ideology; (3) Low-income schools provide opportunities in various art programs; (4) Urban school districts should utilize Title I funds to support art programs in low-income schools.

## Chapter 1: Overview of the Problem and Study

### Introduction to the Problem

In 2015, California had the largest Latino population in the nation with 15 million residents (Krogstad & Lopez). But state statistics reported that Latinos had the lowest percent of 4-year college completion rates (PEW, 2016). Only 12% of California's Latino adults ages 25 and over held a bachelor's degree compared to 42% of White adults (Gazzar, 2015).

Furthermore, data from the national Latino educational pipeline showed that of the Latino population aged 25 and older, 15.5% students graduated with a bachelor's degree and 4.7% with an advanced degree. In comparison, for White students, 32.8% graduated with a bachelor's degree and 12.1% with an advanced degree (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2015). The relationship between race and ethnicity and student achievement is complex, but the juxtaposition of these two groups highlights a long-standing disparity between minority Latino and White students that is referred to as the *racial achievement gap* (Fryer & Levitt, 2004; Noguera & Wing, 2006). In order to close the achievement gap, educators need to address college pathways for Latino students, beginning at kindergarten and continuing throughout post-secondary education.

According to the Institute of Higher Education and Policy (2015), college readiness has been lacking nationwide, with California reported among the lowest performing states in the country. In 2014, less than 25% of all eighth graders scored at or above the proficient level on each of the four subjects of the National Assessment of Education Progress standardized test (NAEP). Further down the secondary school track, only 25% of juniors who took the California State University Early Assessment Program test (EAP) were designated "college ready" in English and 10% in mathematics. Proficiency rates for Latino students were even lower, with

only 15% having demonstrated readiness in college-level English and only 4% in mathematics. According to the State of Higher Education in California – Latino Report (2015) among the first-time freshmen enrollment of the Fall 2013 undergraduate student body, only 22% of Latinos enrolled in California’s public university system, of which 16% enrolled in the California State University (CSU) system and 6% enrolled at a University of California (UC) campus.

Access to a high-quality free education is the right of every student and the responsibility of the state. The California Department of Education’s P-16 Council on Closing the Achievement Gap (pre-kindergarten through higher education) recognized that “the state of California has not lived up to this commitment for all students, particularly poor, racial/ethnic minority students; English learners; and students with disabilities” (CTAG, 2008). Only 12% of California’s 15 million Latino adults ages 25 and over have completed a bachelor’s degree versus 42% of White adults (Gazzar, 2015). The challenge is particularly startling when Latino high school graduates enroll into community colleges at disproportionate rates. The California Fall 2015 data indicated that 50% of first-time community college students were of Latino descent (California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Management Information Systems Data Mart, 2016). While most of the entering students wanted to transfer to a senior (i.e., 4-year) college after 1 to 2 years to pursue their baccalaureate degree, according to estimates of the Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy (2015), 70% of all students that enroll failed to ever graduate or transfer. This is of great concern, as there is a significant disparity between state goals and community college institutional transfer rate realities. It is imperative for California to increase equal participation of all Californians in higher education.

Educational researchers and policy analysts document the benefit of a college education. Foremost is acquiring the sophisticated 21<sup>st</sup> century skills necessary for an economy driven by

information, knowledge and innovation (Apte, Karmarkar & Nath, 2008). Although the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015) reported that 58.7% of U.S. jobs were minimum wage occupations and required a high school diploma or less, the value of a college education in the labor market has increased and it became essential to secure well-paying jobs, positions above the mean salary (Berger & Peter, 2013). The benefits of a college education extend to other facets of life for the American Latino, including increased access to democratic participation (Oakes, Hunter-Quartz, Ryan, & Lipton, 2000), improved quality of life (Adam, 2006), and ultimately a more caring society (Nodding, 1995). Given these brief examples of the economic, civic, and social contributions provided by the college graduate, it is incumbent on Latinos' quality of life that 4-year college enrollment and completion rates increase.

The reasons why Latino students fail to pursue higher education have historically been unclear. One long-standing area of concern affecting college enrollment is the percentage of high school graduates who enter directly into college (Carter & Wilson, 1993; Casas & Vasquez, 1996; Cejda, Casparis, & Rhodes, 2002). Before educators can increase the number of Latino college graduates, they must first find and understand the factors that motivate individuals to pursue higher education.

Harris (1998) created the Factors Influencing Pursuit of Higher Education Questionnaire, a literature-based, researcher-developed instrument that gathers information on the factors thought to affect a person's decision to pursue higher education. Among those factors are social variables, cultural determinants, locus of control belief, availability of financial assistance, elements of the educational process, and general preparation for college. Among the social factors are variables such as parental influence, extended family support, peer support, and the presence of role models and mentors (Harris, 1998). Specific to Latinos, Ceja (2006) and

Alvarez (2010) investigated familial factors that may play a role in influencing Mexican-American high school students' conscious decision to attend college. Their resulting analysis was framed by the *likelihood* of these students to attend college and achieve success in their college careers. Informed by their work, this study employed the high school version of Harris' (1998) questionnaire to investigate factors that may influence the likelihood that Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will to apply to a 4-year college.

### **Background of the Study**

Latino students in the United States are less likely to apply to a 4-year college compared to their peers. The percentage of recent high school Latino graduates who entered directly into college is not increasing, "indicating a need to enhance efforts to encourage Latino high school students to prepare for, enroll in, and succeed in college" (Rivera, 2010). The majority of these youngsters live in conditions in which they are in a daily struggle to overcome adverse situations that place Latino students at risk for not applying to a 4-year college despite being academically qualified. Primary risk factors include low socio-economic status (Tapia, 2004); school environment such as fewer books (Oakes & Saunders, 2004); less qualified teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2004); and lack of social networks that can lead to increased access to college-going information and strategies to overcome educational barriers (Stanton-Salazar, 2001).

Despite facing adversity, there are some Latino students who do decide to pursue a college education and are successful in doing so. These students demonstrate competence, independence, and internal locus of control, and feeling of empowerment and social competence (Benard, 1995). The motivating factors of these students need review, particularly in terms of assessing the role of positive motivating factors (Rivera, 2010). Yet, minimal research exists

that explores the perspectives of Latino students in urban settings who have succeeded academically and applied to 4-year colleges upon high school graduation. Equally important is to investigate Latino students who did not apply. There is a need to learn about what students themselves perceive to be factors that may have positively influenced their *likelihood* to apply to a 4-year college. Exploring both students who did apply and those who did not apply to college was the focus of this study. This study measured nine internal and external factors influencing Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' *likelihood* to pursue higher education as well as the influence of an arts high school education.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem of this study is that Latino high school graduates enroll into 4-year colleges at disproportionately lower rates compared to their White peers.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative case study was to measure the influence of a visual and performing arts (VAPA) high school program and nine independent factors that might explain Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' decision to apply to a 4-year college. The independent variables include: (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by Glasser's (1998) choice theory and Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) college choice process. Choice theory is a theoretically based approach to study choice and decision-making. Developed by psychiatrist William Glasser (1998), choice theory postulates that choice is based on individual needs in which an individual makes decisions

irrelevant of external factors in life. Choice theory is an internal control psychology that explains how and why we make the choices that determine the course of our lives. The internal world is referred to as the *quality world*, an ideal place where all our basic needs are met. Glasser compares this to what he calls the *real world*, which we perceive through our sensual, total knowledge and value filters. According to Glasser, we are constantly attempting to align our perceived real world with our internal quality world. When they are balanced, we have no need to behave in a way that tries to adjust our perceived world.

Choice theory provided a lens with which to analyze Latino high school seniors' perceived real world with their internal quality world. This study used choice theory to identify the influences impacting Latino students' perception of influential factors and ultimate decision-making in actively pursuing or not pursuing a college education. For example, consider an individual who has the ability to study and make the choice to attend college. Choice theory supports the conscious awareness that Latino students have a choice to enroll in college. Choice theory manifests itself in what Glasser (1998) called "total behavior;" that is, almost all behavior is deliberately chosen and genetically intended to satisfy the basic needs "love, belonging, power, freedom, and fun" (p. 72). Moreover, the most important need is love and belonging, "as closeness and connectedness with people we care about is a requisite for satisfying all the other needs" (p. 28).

Glasser argued that we have direct control of our lives, that is, we "individuals control how we choose to think and act" (p. 74). Thus, the only behavior we can control is our own. Accordingly, having the power to choose may itself be sufficient to explain why students decide to pursue college.

**College choice.** Researchers have used various models to provide insights on the college choice process. Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) college choice model postulates that decisions can be influenced by outside factors such as parents, socioeconomic status, gender, and perceptions of financial aid. This college choice model ranges from students' early decisions regarding higher education aspirations to eventual choice of higher education institution and subsequent enrollment. The college choice process is divided into three stages: (a) *predisposition*, the decision to go to college instead of taking other path; (b) *search*, searching for general information about college and learning about specific institutions; and (c) *choice*, in which students choose a specific institution to attend and complete an application.

Not all students experience the college choice process in the same way. Factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, and generational status may influence college choice decisions and outcomes. In an effort to expand Hostler and Gallagher's (1987) college choice model, Alvarez (2010) focused on how the Latino family as a unit experienced such a decision-making process. This body of research suggests that parental influence plays a major role in the postsecondary choices of Latina/o students. Similarly, Ceja (2006) found that Latinas, many who were first generation college students, noted parents as their main influence in deciding to pursue higher education, making the college choice for these students a familial affair. These findings provided a lens to analyze Latino college choice process including factors specific to Latino culture that may mediate college choice decisions and outcomes.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study contributes to the valuable efforts to increase 4-year college application rates of Latino students upon high school graduation. In 2014, Latinos represented 53% of California's K-12 public school students (California Department of Education) yet only made up

a minority of college graduates. Improvements in their academic performance will lead to better chances of financial earnings and overall quality of life while their under-achievement has serious social, political and economic ramifications (Singham, 1998). Many Latino high school students have to overcome environmental risk factors that lead to their academic underachievement when compared to their White counterparts who perform statistically higher. With so much attention on school reform, educators, policy makers, and school administrators should better understand the factors that foster academic success among Latino students. Understanding how these influences impact the *likelihood* to apply to 4-year colleges can lead to the development and implementation of targeted policies, interventions, and practices to support this significantly at-risk student population.

Many studies have shown a positive correlation between the visual and performing arts and academic achievement, but few have looked at the influence of the visual and performing arts on Latino 4-year college applications upon high school graduation. This study focused on one visual and performing arts high school that is comprised of a predominately Latino student population. This study focused on understanding how dance, music, theater and visual art courses along with other outside factors influenced Latino students' decision to apply to college.

This study provides valuable information on supporting Latino high school students in their pursuit of higher education. These art courses promote increased peer interactions and collaborations. Thus, the results of this study could influence instructional practice, teacher hiring practices and encourage the allotment of Title I funding in supporting the arts for those students who need it the most. Furthermore, the results of this study may be used to create district-wide plans to encourage and maintain Latino students' interest in school throughout the K-12 educational process. It is crucial for district officials to identify factors impacting students'

decision to pursue college education. This will enable the district to better serve the Latino students by implementing programs that encourage and attract more students to enroll in colleges. This research is intended to add to the body of literature on ways to service the needs of Latino students. The findings quantify the value of an arts education as perceived by Latino students and how it improved access to a higher education.

### **Definitions of Terms**

In order to have a more thorough understanding of this dissertation, the following definitions are given to clarify the terms. The definitions used in the study pertain to Latino youth, high schools, and visual and performing arts programs. The definitions are identified in the literature.

- Family influence: The degree to which family members such as parents and grandparents influence a person's decision to pursue higher education (Harris, 1998).
- Financial aid concerns: The importance of financial aid in a person's pursuit of higher education (Harris, 1998).
- Glass ceiling effect: The degree to which individuals believe their opportunities to pursue certain aspirations to be limited or blocked (Harris, 1998).
- Peer Influence: The degree to which peers influence a person's decision to pursue higher education (Harris, 1998).
- Preparation for college: An individual's general preparation for college in academic subject areas (Harris, 1998).
- Relative functionalism: Assesses an individual's perception of the function of higher education; recognition and/or awareness of the benefits, both concrete and abstract, of a college education (Harris, 1998).

- Secondary school support: The levels of encouragement students receive from secondary school personnel such as teachers and guidance counselors (Harris, 1998).
- Self-appraisal: Measures the self-efficacy of the participant in relation to his or her college major or a student's ability to clearly articulate a major or field of study, degree of confidence in attaining that goal, preparation and perceived obstacles, and realistic appraisal of the time and resource investments needed to achieve that goal (Harris, 1998).
- Sister influence: The degree to a sister(s) influences a person's decision to pursue higher education (Harris, 1998).
- Visual and performing arts education: The learning, instruction and programming based upon the visual and performing arts which includes dance, music, theater, and visual arts such as drawing, painting, sculpture, and design works (US Legal, 2001).

### Research Questions

The study addressed the following questions:

1. What influence, if any, do the following factors have on the *likelihood* that Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will apply to a 4-year college: (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence?
2. What influence, if any, does the integration of the visual and performing arts high school program have on the *likelihood* that Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will apply to a 4-year college?

3. What differences, if any, of Latino 4-year college application rates per academy (dance, music, theater, visual arts)?

### **Delimitations of Study**

This research study is delimited to Latino high school 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who attend one urban visual and performing arts public high school. Thus, the results cannot be generalized for Latino students in non-visual and performing arts high schools, rural or suburban settings, nor can the results be generalized for other populations of at-risk students. This researcher recognizes that many external and internal factors affect high school graduates' decisions to apply to institutions of higher education. This study focuses on an arts education in affecting these decisions, at the same time recognizing that educators, family, community, and the individuals themselves also have roles to play in increasing the educational attainment of Latinos.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study is limited to the influence of a visual and performing arts high school program and nine independent factors that might explain Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' decision to apply to a 4-year college. The nine variables include: (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence. Due to non-probability nature of the sampling, the external validity was limited to study participants. This study is limited to the number of participants who identify as Hispanic/Latino and were willing to participate in the study. This study relied on the openness, honesty, and ability of each participant to accurately answer the high school version of the Factors Influencing the Pursuit of Higher Education (FIPHE) Questionnaire (Harris, 1998) in relation to their own experiences.

## **Assumptions**

This study is based upon the following assumptions:

1. Students responded to the FIPHE and demographic questionnaire honestly and accurately.
2. A quantitative methodology provided the researcher with a deep understanding of the stated problem.
3. The score on the FIPHE questionnaire accurately reflected students' *likelihood* to apply to a 4-year college.
4. Increasing 4-year college application rate of Latino students is a compelling and moral imperative to educators.

## **Timeline for Study**

The data was collected from participating students in March and April 2017.

Recruitment letters, informed consent and questionnaires were sent to all participating students via Homeroom teachers.

## **Organization of the Study**

The study description is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 provided background information, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, definition of key terms, theoretical framework, research questions, limitations, delimitations, and assumptions inherent in the study. Chapter 2 provided a review of the literature including a brief history of the problem, Latino educational pipelines, literature related to perceived barriers to college education, the nine independent factors and review of arts programs in school and how they promote academic achievement in at-risk Latino students. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in this study and includes the selection of participants, data collection, and

procedures for analysis. Chapter 4 will provide complete data analysis and describe the study's findings according to the stated research questions and the results of the data analysis for the research questions. Chapter 5 includes a summary conducted, a discussion of key findings for theory and practical application, recommendations for future research and conclusions.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Overview

Throughout public (K-12) school districts in the United States, there are millions of students who succeed despite facing adversities. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2015), the national graduation rate reached a high of 82% in 2013-2014, the highest level since states adopted a new uniform way of calculating graduation rates. This academic success holds true for Latinos, but especially true for Latina women who are making extraordinary progress in recent years. According to The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics Report (2015), in the decade between 2003 and 2013, “Latinas raised their high school graduation rate by more than 14 percentage points. They have been steadily increasing in college degree attainment by about 0.5 percentage points each year, and over the last decade have raise their representation between 30 and 40 percentage points in professions such as teaching, law, medicine, and management” (p. 5). Despite facing a myriad of barriers, Latinas have made significant progress over the last decade.

While this is the case for Latinas, the same cannot be said for Latinos as a whole group. Nationwide, Latino students graduate from high school and enroll into 4-year universities at far lower rates than their non-Latino peers. In 2014, for example, Asian and White students as subgroups earned high school diplomas at rates of 89% and 87% respectively, much higher than the 76% rate of Latinos (NCES, 2015). Those Latino students who do graduate from high school do not fare as well as their peers in terms of pursuing college education. The National Center for Education Statistics revealed that of the 2014 graduating class, only 3 million Latino students enrolled into undergraduate programs, compared to almost 10 million White students. Arbona and Nora (2007) argued that in order to promote upward mobility and academic achievement for

Latinos, research needs to focus on factors that predict student enrollment in a 4-year college instead of 2-year college. In order to better understand why there is a wide educational achievement gaps between Latino and White students, this study examined the path of college and non-college aspiring Latino students and the factors that influence their decision to enroll at a 4-year university.

Chapter 2 explores the literature and research related to the research study. This chapter provides a brief history of Mexicans in the United States, which leads to historical context of the problem under discussion. Following this, the Latino educational pipeline is described. Descriptions of cultural, economic and social capital are presented. The nine independent variables are discussed in the form of external and internal factors that influence college decision. Adversities faced by Latino students in terms of pursuing a college education are highlighted. The chapter concludes with a review an art education as a pathway to college. These various topics were selected because they are associated with factors that influence a person's decision to apply to college and the adversities Latino students continue to face today.

### **Search Process**

The search for this literature review was performed using electronic databases such as ERIC, JSTOR, EBSCOhost, and PsycINFO. Search engines such as Google and Google Scholar were also utilized to a certain degree. Terms such as *Latino education, Mexican-American in higher education, college access, barriers to college, college choice, arts education, Latino educational pipeline, family influence, self-appraisal, secondary school support, relative functionalism, peer influence, sister's influence, preparation for college, financial aid concerns, glass ceiling effect* in relation to college access were used as keywords in the initial searches to

explore the topic. These resources were studied to identify the best practices for implementation of college pathways that meets the needs of Latino students and families.

### **Historical Context of the Problem**

*Mestizos* (Indian and Spanish mixed individuals) today known as Latino predate Anglos on this continent 11 years before the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in 1609. While there is no one history of Latinos in the United States, the history of Mexican Americans, the largest Latino sub-group, captures the issues surrounding Latinos in the U.S. and their educational experiences today. Five major historical events are important in defining the status of Mexicans in the United States: (a) the Mexican American War, (b) the two World Wars, (c) the economic restructuring of the U.S. at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, (d) and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and (e) the de-industrialization of the U.S. in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Under the doctrine of “Manifest Destiny” the U.S. pushed westward, and it estimated that at the time of the U.S. arrival in the Southwest there were 80,000 Mexicans living in that part of the continent. Eventually this led to conflict with Mexico over the state of Texas. The Mexican American War began in 1846 and ended in 1848, with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The treaty led to three important consequences. First, the U.S. annexed a sizeable portion of what is now the western region of the United States: Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, California, Colorado, Nevada, and parts of Utah. Second, for those Mexicans who decided stay in what was now the U.S. found themselves to be American citizens, the first Mexican Americans. As U.S. citizens, they were afforded all the rights of U.S. citizens. Unfortunately, their rights were not honored by the dominant Anglo culture in the Southwest. Thirdly, the war relegated Mexicans to the status of conquered people. It is this viewpoint that some argue has been maintained over time.

In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were schoolhouses, but few formal educational systems. As the Anglo immigration surged, however, conflict arose over language. For example, in Santa Barbara, California in 1855 bilingual education was tried in public schools. But neither Mexicans nor Anglos liked the situation, which was resolved when Mexican families who could, took their children out of public school and sent them to parochial school where they could study Spanish. Overall, the education provided to Mexican American children in the lands acquired by the U.S. in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo could best be characterized as segregated and inferior, a state of affairs that persisted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

California has a long history of separation in its schools. Latino students today are highly concentrated in schools that have significantly lower quality as measured by the academic performance standards, more poor students, and are linguistically segregated (Orfield and Ee, 2014). For example, in 1970, the average Latino attended schools that were 54% White, but now they attend schools that are 84% non-White (Orfield and Ee, 2014). Although the state Supreme Court recognized a broad desegregation right in the state constitution, and the state legislature mandated that school boards take action to enforce this right, both were reversed by voter approved Propositions One which led to the end of the desegregation plan.

The proportion of intensely segregated school doubled in two decades. Of California's 53.6% Latino students in public schools, in 2014 more than half attended "intensely segregated" schools, which means they attend schools with 10% or less of White peers (California Department of Education). While White and Asian students disproportionately attend highly rated schools as measured by academic standards and are thus better prepared for college. Latino students continue to fall behind by attending schools lacking resources.

**Title I.** According to the California Alliance for Arts Education (2016), California schools receive \$1.6 billion in Title I funds each year. Title I is provision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) passed by President Lyndon B. Johnson’s “War on Poverty” and has been noted as the most far-reaching legislations affecting education ever passed by the United States Congress. As a part of the Great Society, Johnson believed in expanding the federal government’s role in education and health care as prevention strategies. Some federal programs from the War on Poverty policy initiative remain in existence today such as Head Start, which provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. The act was originally authorized in 1965 and has reauthorized the act every five years since its enactment.

Title I funds are intended to help meet the needs of low income and low performing children in high poverty schools. Schools and districts receiving Title I funds are charged with using these additional resources to supplement their regular education programs, in particular to support English Language Arts, mathematics and parent involvement. Funds are authorized for professional development, instructional materials, resources to support educational programs, and for parental involvement. The act emphasizes equal access to education, yet a 2011 survey found that students attending Title I schools in nation’s largest school district, the Los Angeles Unified had disproportionately low access to arts education compared to more economically advantaged peers (Waldorf and Atwill, 2011).

A substantial body of research demonstrates that integrating the arts with instruction in areas such as English Language Arts can increase student learning and help transform the learning environment by fostering student engagement, attendance, and motivation to learn (Podlozny, 2000; Ingram and Riedel, 2003). Despite the evidence, a study conducted by the

California Alliance for Arts Education (2014) found that schools and districts are not including arts education in their Title I strategies. Title I funds are not used to support the achievement of low-income students through art as districts are in fear of losing Title I funding for not meeting state or federal expectations.

**A-G rates.** Despite the rising cost of higher education, the benefits of a college degree remain worth the investment (Autor 2014; Goldin & Katz, 2008; Autor, Levy, & Murnane, 2003). To be eligible for admission to California's public university system students must satisfy 15 college-preparatory courses known as A-G courses with a grade of 'C' or better. The A-G sequence consists of yearlong courses in seven subject areas: (a) history/social science, (b) English Language Arts, (c) laboratory science, (d) mathematics, (e) world languages, (f) visual and performing arts, (g) college preparatory elective. Recognizing the educational and economic benefits of a college degree, education policymakers at the federal, state, and local levels have made college preparation a priority. College readiness can be measured in many ways, but one key component is rigorous high school coursework. California has not yet adopted a statewide college readiness requirement, but a growing number of school districts including Los Angeles Unified, San Jose Unified, Oakland Unified, San Diego Unified and San Francisco Unified require students to complete the A-G courses to meet high school graduation requirement (Gao, Lopes, & Lee, 2016).

Despite the increase in participation and performance in rigorous high school courses among California's high school students, a large majority is not taking the courses that can prepare them for college. Less than half, 43% of high school graduates in 2015 completed the A-G requirements. Although Latino students have made the most progress with a 51% increase from 2000 to 2014, the completion rate has been significantly lower compared to Whites (Gao,

2016). The Institute of Higher Education Policy (2015) reported only 29% of Latino high school graduates in 2013 completed the a-g sequence, leaving 141,000 Latino graduates ineligible to apply to California's public 4-year universities.

**High school dropout.** The high school dropout rate has been used to measure indicators of educational outcomes. Today, minority dropout rates of Latino students are higher than their White peers. In 2015, 14% of Latino students dropped out nearly three times the rate of White students at 5% (PEW Hispanic Center, 2016). For some, dropping out becomes necessary when outside obligations such as new parenthood or the need to care for a relative interfered with school responsibilities. For other students, problems in school such as suspension for defiance can be the cause of dropping out (Smyth & Hattam, 2004). The distinctions in the cause of dropping out are important. "Push out" theories propose the student dropout as often caused by factors located within the school setting, discouraging students from continuing their education (Lan & Lanthier, 2003; Stearns & Glennie, 2006). In other words, students are pushed out of school because the institution failed to create adequate support systems for challenged students to succeed. Additionally, schools can force a student out through the use of policies and procedures such as mandatory expulsion for misbehavior (Rumberger & Thomas, 2000).

The inability of schools unable to deal with challenging youth is not without consequence. According to Ogbu (1987), when Black students perceived racial barriers to success, they developed an "oppositional culture" that resulted in the rejection of school. The disenfranchised youth develop an identity defined by their collective oppositional defiance in response to the system that they perceive has intentionally discriminated against them. In fact, for many minorities there is an open rejection of the majority White culture. Black students will demean each other for "acting White" (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). Thus, pursuing an education in

the White-controlled system is viewed as selling out to the dominant group. Ogbu and Simons (1998) later argued that the theory of “acting white” should be extended to include other marginalized groups. In 2011, researchers proposed that oppositional culture has the same effect for Latinos (Bradley & Renzulli, 2011).

However, some scholars have rejected the validity of oppositional culture and argue that many minority students in fact do have a pro school attitude (Downey, 2008; Harris & Robinson, 2007; Tyson, Darity, & Castellino, 2005). Other researchers focus on “pullout” theories, which describe leaving school because of a cost-benefit analysis (Stearns & Glennie, 2006). Due to the amount of time and effort a student must invest in school in order to succeed, researchers acknowledge that some decide to leave school as a result of many competing factors (McNeal, 1997). Despite competing explanations on dropout rates, oppositional culture theories continue to be at the forefront of academic discussions.

### **Latino Educational Pipeline California Profile**

**College enrollment and completion.** The PEW Hispanic Research Center (2016) found that Latino college enrollment has increased over the past 20 years. Latinos now represent the largest minority group on U.S. college campuses. A reported 2.2 million Latino students enrolled in college, up from 728,000 in 1993 (PEW, 2015). However, Latino college enrollment is heavily concentrated in 2-year colleges. According to 2013 statistic data, 46% of all Latinos in college attended a 2-year college making this the highest share of any other ethnic group. This 2-year college enrollment pattern is not without risks. Arbona & Nora (2007) found that, “Contrary to popular belief, community colleges have not served as the gateway to a Bachelor’s degree for large numbers of low-income and ethnic minority populations” (p. 248). According to estimates of the Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy (2015), 70% of all

students that enroll in 2-year colleges fail to ever graduate or transfer. Students at two-year institutions have lower academic preparation. This setback reduces the students' chance of graduating. Starting at a 2-year college decreases the chance of finishing a Bachelor's degree by 15% to 20% compared to those who start at a 4-year university (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Inequalities in California's 4-year college enrollment parallel 2-year college national statistics. Krop et al. (1998) found that California's 4-year college eligible Latino students often fail to apply, opting for local community colleges instead. The California Fall 2015 data indicate that 50% of first-time community college students were of Latino descent (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Management Information Systems Data Mart, 2016). The State of Higher Education in California Report (2015) indicates among the 2013 graduating class, 22% of Latino high school graduates enrolled to California's 4-year public university system of which 16% enrolled in the California State University (CSU) system and 6% enrolled at the prestigious University of California (UC).

Those Latino students that do enroll in 4-year colleges do not fair as well compared to their White peers. College completion is challenging, especially for low-income students (Tinto, 2006; Astin & Oseguera, 2004). In 2013 data indicated that among 25- to 29-year-olds, only 15% had a Bachelor's degree or higher. By comparison, among the same age group, 40% of Whites had a Bachelor's degree or higher, as did 20% of Blacks and 60% of Asians (PEW, 2015). Latinos fall behind all other ethnic groups in 4-year degree completion rates. As noted by current community college enrollment statistics, the bachelor's degree attainment gap is due in part because Latinos are less likely than other groups to enroll in selective 4-year colleges and universities (Carnevale & Rose, 2003; Krogstad & Lopez, 2015). Research showed that enrolling at 4-year institutions leads to better completion rates (Fry, 2004). "Though access to

higher education has increased, greater equality in attainment of 4-year college degrees has not followed suit. For too many low-income students, access to higher education has become a revolving door, the promise of a Bachelor's degree unfulfilled" (Tinto, 2006, p. 12).

**Deficit thinking.** The literature revealed that deficit-based perspectives are conspicuous in the U.S. approach to higher education (Valenzuela, 1999; Valencia and Black, 2002; Gonzalez, 2015; Rios-Aguilar & Kiyama, 2012). Deficit thinking places the blame on low-performing children and families while ignoring school policies and practices (Gonzalez, 2015). In Valenzuela's (1999) ethnographic study of Mexican American high school students, Valenzuela found that when it comes to educating Latinos, schools most often work in ways to help "disadvantaged" students whose race and class have left them lacking necessary knowledge, social skills, abilities, and cultural capital to succeed academically. At the same time, deficit thinking takes the position that minority students are at fault for poor academic performance because: (a) students enter school without normative cultural knowledge and skills; and (b) parents neither value nor support their child's education to the degree that White and model minority parents do. Valenzuela argued that these assumptions about communities of color most often lead schools to default teaching styles where the student is a passive learner and information is deposited. As a result, schooling efforts usually aim to "fill up" supposedly passive students with forms of cultural knowledge deemed valuable by mainstream society.

Sosa and Gomez (2012) in their study of Mexican American high school dropouts found that students who dropped out of school had attributed their decision to "being bored," "frustrated," or "not getting it" (p. 5). Such reactions to school may be because of the type of environment created by low expectations and lack of teacher connection with students. In fact, these students were only able to name one or two teachers who they felt really cared for them.

Sosa and Gomez (2012) and Valenzuela (1999) found the students were critical of what they perceived was the absence of caring and helpful teachers, reporting that the school worked against helping students solve issues outside of school.

Garcia and Guerra's (2004) research acknowledged that deficit thinking permeates U.S. society, and both schools and those who work in schools mirror these beliefs. Arguing, "this highlights the contradictory nature of education, wherein schools can oppress and marginalize while they maintain the potential to emancipate and empower." Critical race theory (CRT) recognizes racism is engrained in American society (Bernal, 2002). The framework of Latino critical race theory (LatCrit) suggests that the social construction of race is central to how Latina/o are constrained in society (Treviño, Harris & Wallace, 2008). LatCrit scholars assert that based on immigration status, sexuality, culture, language accent and surname Latina/o experience racialized subordination of Latina/o experiences (Montoya, 1994; Johnson, 1999). Yosso (2005) argued that "CRT is a framework that can be used to theorize, examine and challenge the ways race and racism implicitly and explicitly impact on social structures, practices and discourse" (pg. 70).

Earlier work on the educational experience of Latino students in the United States concentrated primarily on explaining racial and ethnic differences on educational attainment largely from cultural perspectives (Heller, 1966; Holtzman, Diaz-Guerrero, & Swartz, 1975). In general, the cultural deficit model focuses on the detrimental effects of factors such as parenting style, claiming that Latino parents place less value on education and upward mobility (Carter & Segura, 1979; Sowell, 1981). The cultural deficit framework postulates that Latino individual cultural values, as transmitted through the family unit and specifically the parents, are dysfunctional and therefore are the reason for their low educational attainment and later

occupational attainment (Banfield, 1970; Dunn, 1987; Sowell, 1981; Wilson, 1987). Numerous studies have discredited this deficit mindset.

## **Capital**

**Cultural capital.** Bourdieu (1986) put forth forms of capital in relation to the ways in which society reproduces, and how the dominant classes retain their position. “Social reproduction” central to Bourdieu’s argument is the role capital plays in the reproduction of class inequalities in educational attainment. Bourdieu argued that the dominant class uses capital to their own exclusive benefit, preserving their position of prominence. For Bourdieu, this could not be explained by economics alone, he explained cultural capital was the way people use cultural knowledge to secure their place in the hierarchy of society. People identify themselves ‘above’ others on the social ladder and demonstrate the difference between from those ‘below’ by use of taste and preferences. Bourdieu and Passero (1977) explained that capital acts as a social relation within a system of exchange. Sharing the same taste in things like material belongings, movies, or degrees from particular universities creates a sense of collective identity and group position. Bourdieu pointed out that cultural capital is also a major source of social inequality. Certain forms of cultural capital are valued over others and can help or hinder one’s social mobility just as much as education or wealth.

According to Bourdieu, cultural capital comes in three forms: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized. One’s speaking accent is a form of embodied cultural capital, while a luxury watch, or collection of art works are examples of cultural capital in its objectified state. In its institutionalized form, social capital refers to formal education such as degrees or credentials that symbolize competence and authority. Bourdieu referred to the physical embodiment of cultural capital as “habitus,” which are the deeply ingrained habits, skills, and dispositions we that we

possess due to our life experiences (1977). Yosso (2005) challenged Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) cultural capital theory and introduced an alternative concept called, "community cultural wealth." Yosso (2005) theory critiqued the assumption that minority students come to class with cultural deficiencies. Yosso's (2005) model systematically defined cultural assets that Latino families transfer to their children. These forms of capital draw on knowledge minority students bring with them from their homes and communities into the classroom.

**Social capital.** Bourdieu (1992) used this term to explain the cold realities of social inequalities. He went on to define social capital as: "the sum of the resources, actual or vital, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu, 1992). This is exemplified in the old adage, "it's not what you know, it's *whom* you know." The elite get ahead in life, where the good paying jobs go to the wealthy who attended the exclusive schools. Even more drastic, middle and upper class making sure that spheres remain exclusive. Here, social capital is another tool the upper class use to ensure the "wrong" kinds of people don't enter their circles (Bourdieu, 1986, 1992). According to Bourdieu (1992), social capital is an exclusionary device.

Coleman (1988) purposed social capital as relationships based on trust and shared value that develops within communities. To get access to it, you need to move into the community (or one like it) and establish relationships. Coleman (1988) postulated 'human capital' arises from social capital which he defined as a sense of self-identity, confidence in expressing one's opinions, emotional intelligence that enables young people to become better learners and so more successful in society. Coleman (1988) presented social capital in gentile context where people look beyond themselves and engage in supportive or helpful action, not because they

expect to keep lower class out, but because they believe it's a good thing to do. Coleman's contribution offered a broader view of social capital. Unlike Bourdieu's description, Coleman highlighted the usefulness of social capital for people in any social class. Perna and Titus (2005) found that the relationship between parental involvement as social capital and the likelihood of enrolling in college varied across ethnic groups, "African-Americans and Hispanics not only possess fewer types of capital that promote college enrollment, but also attend schools with fewer resources that promote college enrollment" (p. 509).

### **External Factors Influencing Latino Pathways to Higher Education**

**Family influence.** Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) and Perna (2000) found that parental factors such as parents' educational status, socio-economic status and college knowledge helped predict college entry. Both studies point out parental encouragement and involvement as predictors to college enrollment. Latino parental encouragement may look different than that offered by White, middle-class parents. Lucas (2001) described many Latino parents "cheer" their children on in their efforts to reach college, while socio-economically advantaged parents "cheer" and "coach" their children through schooling, able to offer first hand college-going information. U.S. Census Bureau data (2015) indicated that approximately 33.3% of Latino adults have less than a high school education. Placing Latino youth at a disadvantage, nonetheless, the positive influence of Latino parents on the development of educational goals has been well documented (Perez, 1999; Alvarez, 2010; Ceja, 2004, 2006;). Zarate and Pachon (2007) found Latino students placed significant importance on the emotional support and motivation that their parents provided. Support such as:

- Telling stories of examples of failure and success
- Asking questions about the student's day

- Giving general encouragement
- Establishing trust with the student
- Encouraging siblings to look out for each other
- Providing transportation to extracurricular events
- Providing discipline
- Monitoring attendance
- Offering incentives/disincentives for proper behavior

They perceived their parents had established a strong foundation by enforcing school attendance, establishing high expectations for academic success and enforcing discipline. Students shared these actions were crucial to later to academic success.

Latino parental encouragement is also in the form of articulating the value of a college education through stories told by parents about their own lived experiences of struggle. Delgado-Gaitan (1994) emphasized how *consejos* offer valuable learning opportunities, explaining that *consejos* are more than storytelling, but instead function as problem solving. Gandara (1995) called this phenomenon a “culture of possibility.” Delgado-Gaitan (1994) found the stories of parents’ lived hardships translated into powerful sources of motivation not only to do well in school, but also to view college as an attainable goal. Family support provides Latino students with the emotional and psychological support they need to deal with academic and other stressed amounts of college (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Ceja, 2001).

**Sister’s influence.** Latino siblings play an important role in the college choice process. Ceja (2006) found that having older siblings who attended college influenced the predisposition phase of the college choice process. The older siblings served as role models, shared information about college, and provided encouragement. They established a college-going

tradition. This paved a path to college by inculcating a mindset that if their older siblings could do it, then they could do it also. In the search phase, Ceja (2006) found that older siblings were an important source of guidance that Latino parents could not provide. Older siblings helped navigate the college application process, spoke to them about which college to attend, discussed potential college majors, and noted what classes to enroll in. Older siblings helped move from the search phase and toward the choice phase. The influence of siblings is often examined in the context of developing aspirations for college and serving as sources of information about college.

Studies showed that family responsibilities fall more often on Latinas than Latinos (Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004; Valenzuela, 1999). Typically, Latino cultures defined the primary role for women as family caretakers (Cammarota, 2004). Latinas are expected to help with household chores, translation for their parents, and child care for their younger siblings (Sy & Romero, 2008). Sy and Brittan (2008) found that too many family responsibilities are detrimental to Bachelor's degree completion. According to Sanchez et al. (2010) family obligations were a central theme in making decisions about life after high school. This creates added pressure for Latina adolescents with college aspirations arguing this strong emphasis on family may lead Latinas to favor the well-being of the family over their own work or school.

**Familism.** Post-secondary institutions in the United States expect college students to become more independent, choose academics over family and separate from family. The idea of self-reliance is not in harmony with the Latino cultural expectation that family needs should remain above personal needs (Ginorio et al., 1995). To advance the understanding of family factors, the concept of *familismo* (familism) requires evaluation as a cultural value. *Familismo* emphasizes loyalty and closeness within the family unit, such as when an individual family member feels the responsibility to put the needs of the family first, even if it leads to personal

sacrifices (Sy & Romero, 2008). *Familismo* is a characteristic valued by many Latino populations (Vega, 1990). A fundamental contention put forth by *familismo* is that Latino cultural values, beliefs, and practices promote close relationships (Updegraff, McHale, Whiteman, Thayer & Crouter, 2006). A recent California Senate Office of Research Report (2014) indicated that although the average California nuclear family consisted of 2.9 people, in contrast, the average Latino nuclear family contained 4.37 people. Sarkisian, Gerena, & Gerstel (2006) found that Latinos in fact, do report high degrees of familial cohesion and intimacy and assist family members in major decision-making. Given these findings, it may be more accurate to think of the Latino college choice process as familial instead of an individual process.

Hernandez and Okerson (2014) put fourth that Latino culture promotes a sense of interdependence, rather than autonomy. Similarly, Alvarez (2010) and Delgado-Gaitan (1994) contend that decision-making among Latinos does not tend to happen in isolation. In this collective decision-making, family members prefer to reach consensus and make a decision together. Familism, as a cultural value, is an important concept for understanding Latino family relationships. A better understanding of how the parental factors of family structure, responsibilities and closeness influence the decision to attend 4-year colleges will offer high school counselors, teachers and administrators a better understand of how college choice is affected by the Latino family unit (Cabrera & LaNasa, 2000).

**Peer influence.** According to Arnett (2000), emerging adulthood takes place between 18 and 25 years of age and “is a time of life...when the scope of independent exploration of life’s possibilities is greater for most people than it will be at any other period of course” (p. 469). High school students make decisions that have life-long implications. Those students who invest in a college education receive economic and social benefits. Fulgini and Pederson

(2002) demonstrated that Latinos uphold a strong sense of familial duty as they emerge into adulthood. This “duty” may sway Latino high graduates to choose work over a college education. Having peers who plan to attend college significantly related to 4-year college enrollment and degree attainment (Arbona & Nora, 2007). Following Arbona and Nora’s (2007) lead, if peer factors affected college enrollment and degree attainment, they should also affect student academic achievement. Findings in the literature for peer influence on academic achievement are conflicting however. Castillo et al. (2010) found peers to be both helpful and a distraction from success. Johnson (2002) asserted that low achieving Latino students could disparage academic success particularly between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades. Peer pressure is placed on conforming to social behaviors of the group norm. Newman, Lohman, Newman, Myers & Smith (2000) found that the low-achieving students experienced a more difficult time resisting temptations associated with fitting in within high school. The dilemma is that low-income Latino students encounter other children who may not have a sense of possibility (Gandara, 2001), reinforcing for each other a norm of low academic aspirations. The social atmosphere of school can be overwhelming; thus, it is important for adults to help students develop appropriate coping strategies to deal with the pressures of fitting in (Newman et al., 2000).

Peer social capital is defined as, “adolescent’s connections to peers and peer networks that can provide access to tangible forms of support that facilitate the accomplishment of academic goals” (p.8). Gibson et al. (2004) found that support from friends was a predictor of good grades. Latinos who reported feelings of exclusion, particularly in advanced-placement courses where Latino students were a distinct minority, supported one another on a path to college. Students described it as “being like family” (p. 4), and they had a significantly higher rate of graduation than other Latino students who did not have supportive peer networks. Gibson

et al. state, “When students build a sense of trust, respect, and mutual support, it carries over into their classrooms” (p. 4). Increased peer support promotes upward mobility for minority youth who are more likely to apply college if their friends do (Gandara, 1995; Stanton-Salazar, 1997; 2001).

**Secondary school support.** Studies often cite low socioeconomic status (SES) and academic achievement as strong predictors of college attendance, typically defined by parental income and level of education (Cavanagh et al., 2006). Other Studies have shown that access to teachers and guidance counselors is integral in Latinos’ decision to attend college (Ceja, 2001; Gonzalez et al., 2003). Stanton-Salazar (1997) referred to supportive teachers, counselors, and administrators as “supports” in the social development, school success, and status attainment of Latino youth. Stanton-Salazar (1997) introduced six key ideas of successful institutional supports: (a) the provision of various funds of knowledge associated with ascension within the educational system; (b) bridging, or the process of acting as a human bridge to gatekeepers (c) advocacy and related forms of personalized interventions; (d) role modeling; and (e) the provision of emotional and moral support, closely related to the provision of knowledge funds. The sixth key form of institutional support entails the provision of regular, personalized, and sound evaluative feedback, advice, and guidance that incorporate the thoughtful provision of various institutional funds of knowledge. Conchas (2001) proposed that by linking academic rigor with strong supportive teachers, these networks could help Latino students navigate the college process.

Other studies have shown that teachers and guidance counselors can also restrict these students from their access to college knowledge. Studies show that even in today’s information age, high school counselors share little college guidance to low-income minority students

(Venezia & Kirst, 2005). Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch's (1995) found relationships among Mexican American students and teachers to be superficial, transitory, and interwoven with hidden and not-so-hidden forms of hierarchical power and institutionalized inequality. Successful relationships between students and school personnel, when they did occur, were achieved by ignoring the realities of the institutionalized social order. It rested upon Latino youth to develop a "social consciousness" to recognize what it takes to be successful in school, and on their own seeking out the necessary avenues to attain social mobility. Those who were most successful were able to obtain the necessary guidance. Students become active agents in their own creation of school success as they interacted with school structures and cultures.

Stanton-Salazar (2001) found that low-income Latino youth relied heavily on social networks formed at school to access college-going information and strategies to overcome educational barriers. But for working-class Latino students, initiating ties outside the family is not an easy task. Among the contributing factors include feeling of embarrassment, rejection, and the reluctance to reveal one's inadequacies (Ames, 1983; Shapiro, 1983). Studies showed that trusting relationships with teachers and other adults at school have been powerful tools that enhanced Latino students' sense of belonging and academic achievement (Valenzuela, 1999; Gandara, Gibson, & Koyama, 2004). Gandara (2002), Valenzuela (1999), and Yosso (2005) found Latino students could ultimately access social mobility through formal schooling by having access to supportive teachers. The limited access to college-going information and lack of understanding of college choice may disadvantage minority Latino students (Hill, 2008), and these differences in information resources may partially explain the gap in college enrollment among low-income Latino students and White (Perna, 2006).

**Financial aid concerns.** Being concerned or having difficulties affording college can negatively impact Latino students' aspirations or decision to attend college (Cabrera et al., 1993; Longerbeam et al., 2004). Marquez (2006) found that college financial aid information such as scholarships, loans, and grants are not being taken advantage of by many Latino students and their families mainly because they are unaware that they are available. The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute (2005) examined how information was disseminated to Latino students and families and discovered that information was not disseminated in a way that was most effective. The information was only offered in English, it was not current, and it was not actively given to low-income communities who need it the most. In fact, high school students do not learn about financial aid until their junior and senior year in high school (Hossler, Schmidt, & Bouse, 1991), which at times is too late and delays 4-year college enrollment. College choice research indicates that during the pre-disposition phase of ninth graders, many students make the decision not to pursue post-secondary education before they have learned about financial aid options.

The initial disadvantages for Latino families often stem from parents who themselves have no college experience and do not know how to support paying for college (Zarate & Pachon, 2007). Research has shown that Latinos are significantly less likely than other groups to have student debt. In fact, about 22% of young Latino households (those headed by someone younger than 40) have educational loans. The share is nearly twice as high among young White households (42%) and young Black households (40%). This is because, despite growing college enrollment, percentagewise young Latinos are not as likely as other groups to go to college, due to financial concerns. Among those who do, they are more likely to attend community colleges, which generally have lower tuition (PEW, 2016).

**Preparation for college.** College readiness is defined as the academic and practical knowledge needed to be successful in high school education (Cowan Pitre & Pitre, 2009). National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL, 2015) reported that low-income, Hispanic, and African-American students are more likely to need remediation than their wealthier White peers. The lack of academic preparation is a cause of many factors. Statistics revealed that Latino students disproportionately attend low performing K-12 schools. These low performing schools are characterized as having fewer resources, less qualified teachers, and less rigorous coursework (Oakes, 2004). Tinto (1993) pointed out that high levels of academic performance and preparation enable Latino students better access to higher quality colleges that facilitates degree completion. Fry (2004) indicated in a report on Latino degree attainment, “selectivity matters in and of itself, and Latino youth with similar academic preparation are more likely to finish if they attend a more selective college rather than less selective college” (p.5).

Latino students tend to enroll in public schools that have high enrollments of Latino students and the other low-income students, but these schools often have limited resources. Schools with large numbers of poor children are more likely to spend less per pupil (Oakes, 2004). At these low-income schools there is a lack of familiarity with the importance of high school curriculum and how it relates to college readiness among Latino students (Gamez-Vargas & Olivia, 2013), even when students follow the curricular pathway set by the school and district. Many Latino students begin formalized schooling without the economic and social resources that many middle-class students received (Schneider, Martinez, & Owens, 2006). Latino students enter not only K-12, but also enter higher education at a disadvantage.

### **Internal Factors Influencing Latino Pathways to Higher Education**

**Relative functionalism.** Several researchers have investigated the influence of culture as

it relates to higher education. *Relative functionalism* has been defined as way individuals or groups perceive the function of education in comparison to nonacademic pursuits (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). It is through the concept of relative functionalism that the academic achievements of Asian-Americans have been explained. Essentially, education assumes importance when it is viewed as a way of self-improvement. Yet this concept has not been so much applied for Latino youth. Steinberg, Dornbusch, and Brown (1996) found that children across all the races and ethnicities placed an high value on education. However, they concluded it was the home environment and home learning culture that determined academic success. According to Steinberg et. al, factors outside of school affect attitudes, behavior and academic performance more than factors inside of school. The PEW Hispanic Center (2011) reported that 89% of Latino young adults say that a college education is important for success in life. Zarate and Pachon (2006) found that Latino parents overwhelmingly support the notion that their children should pursue college education and find it valuable to their future success.

**Self-appraisal.** Bandura (1986, 1997) stated that self-efficacy describes people's beliefs of control over their lives and includes cognitive, motivational, and emotional responses. Furthermore, students' perception of their self-efficacy is a powerful factor in career choice and development (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 2001). A longitudinal study that examined how academic self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and participation in an after school high school program contributed to the academic achievement of Latino middle school students (Niehaus, Rudasill, & Adelson, 2011) found that self-efficacy was a positive predictor of students' school success and standardized math achievement scores. Similarly, among college freshmen Latinos who demonstrated high self-efficacy during freshman year indicated that males rate themselves high in self-efficacy in the beginning of the year while Latina females rate

themselves low. However, by the end of the year, the ratings of self-efficacy were similar for both males and females and both had performed academically.

Epstein (1989) showed that the impoverished inner-city Hispanics who dropped out of school, but later returned to graduate or earn a G.E.D., were extraordinarily adaptive to their circumstances and demonstrated an internal locus of control. The students recognized they could not control many of their school circumstances, but these students took steps for their own advancement. In fact, these youngsters found it necessary to separate themselves from negative factors such as drug and violence in order to reach academic goals. A common factor among these students was they accepted and embraced a sense of responsibility for their own future compared to many peers who succumbed to the pressures of peers and the challenges of schoolwork.

**Glass ceiling.** The concept of “glass ceiling effects” is viewed as a set of impediments or barriers to career advancement for women and people of color (Baxter and Wright, 2000; Morrison, White, Van Velsor, 1987; Morrison and Von Glinow, 1990). In 1987, the Department of Labor published a report *Workforce 2000* that brought widespread attention to the composition of the American workforce that underrepresented women and people of color.

### **Adversities Faced by Latino Students**

**Socio-economic disparity.** In 2013, Hispanics made up 28% of the more than 45 million poor Americans (U.S. Census). An examination of individual income estimates from 2012 revealed that, while Whites on average made \$57,000 a year, Hispanics made only \$39,000 (U.S. Census, 2013). Living in poverty has tremendous consequences for children. Children raised in poverty grow up in unsafe neighborhoods where even though there may be resources in their neighborhoods, they often times will not be able to use them. Family income not only

contributes to educational ambition among children, but more importantly maintains those aspirations throughout high school and beyond (Kao & Tienda, 1998). In a state where a high percentage of parents of Latino students come from a low socioeconomic status, who have limited educational levels themselves, Latino parents may find it very difficult to advocate for the educational needs of their children.

Bourdieu (1994) asserted that a hierarchical society reproduces inequality, leading to certain socio-demographic groups, such as racial or ethnic minorities, experiencing gaps within society. One result of high inequality is what Luloff and Swanson (1995) called the “disaffected community” in which little social capital is available for advancing in the educational pipeline, for example. Scholars attribute low academic achievement among Latinos to segregation and neglect in a racially stratified society (Bourdieu, 1994; Luloff & Swanson, 1995; Orfield, 1998). Research has indicated that low-income minority students often encounter aesthetically unpleasant and ill-equipped learning environments, defiant peer subcultures such as youth gangs (Anyon, 1997; Orfield, 1998), and school factors such as teacher’s low academic expectations and lack of cultural awareness (Conchas, 2001; Gandara, 2001).

Latino children are growing up in communities where their development is seriously compromised (Trueba, 1998; Vigil, 1988, 1997). They lack the resources required for optimal child development. In these high poverty neighborhoods, there is less access to medical care, and many Latino children have none as parents may not access free clinics around low-income patient neighborhoods. Low-income children have less access to good nutrition as the grocery stores in low-income areas offer less affordable fresh foods. They arrive to school stressed and worried about the types of dysfunctions that happen in the communities afflicted by gangs and violence. Schools and teachers, in particular, are faced with these issues in the classroom as they

try to teach. Thus, the classroom itself may be limited in certain ways because a teacher may deliver instruction differently in low-income areas.

The U.S. Department of Education (1998) launched the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) study that examined child development, school readiness, and early school experiences. The study pointed out that as low-income children enter school doors, they are already far behind their peers. Similarly, Duncan's (2003) study on the effects of poverty pointed out that toddlers as early as 18 months already demonstrate a cognitive gap compared to other children, although this ignores the nature-nurture debate in the favor of assuming nurture is the main or only cause for this. Those not intellectually gifted by natural inheritance might end up more in low-income neighborhoods. Children of low-income households face adversities that their affluent peers do not encounter.

Researchers who have investigated the connection between stressful life events, internalized symptoms of stress, and academic achievement on urban Latino high school students agree that stress can have a negative impact on the educational process (Alva & de los Reyes, 1999). In their study Cervantes, Padilla, & De Snyder, (1990) used The Hispanic Children's Stress Inventory to assess culturally specific psychological stresses. In this unique study, Mexican American students were asked to complete a questionnaire used to assess psychosocial stress, internalized symptoms, and perceived competence. Alva and De Los Reyes (1999) found a strong connection between reported psychosocial stress and a decrease in academic achievement. Hispanic students who experience uncontrollable stressful events, such as difficulty with acculturation, revealed they developed feelings of helplessness that interfered with academic motivation.

With rising costs of tuition for colleges and universities across the country, Latino students who may be eligible and excited about going to college may also find it difficult to attend their desired college as financial resources be maybe limited and required for household living expenses (Zarate & Pachon, 2006). Latino parents, who the literature indicates value a college education for their children, may find themselves financially limited in supporting their children's education, as the cost of college education may be prohibitive.

**Barriers to college.** The social and economic value of attending and completing college has been well documented in the research literature (Hout, 2012; Goodlad, 1975; Nodding, 1995; Oakes, Hunter-Quartz, Ryan, & Lipton, 2000). Scholars from various disciplines—such as counseling, cultural studies, economics, education, leadership and policy studies, psychology, and sociology—have addressed the topic. Turner and Garcia (2005) noted that, “studies point to a labyrinth of historical, cultural, social, bureaucratic, political, and economic barriers to a quality higher education for Latinas/os” (p. 178). These multiple perspectives in research indicate that the common desire to improve college access for Latino youth has created broad and rich conversations on the topic.

In her study of the existing theoretical frameworks on the topic, Gonzalez (2015) set out to establish a conceptual framework that connected the various pieces of literature to formulate “a more coherent image of the subject under study” (p. 321). Gonzalez argued that although scholars or practitioners have yet to agree on one framework, it serves a common interest to define essential pieces and describe how they connect. Gonzalez immediately pointed out that college access barriers mainly pertain to “the more disadvantaged portions of the U.S. Latino community, such as undocumented immigrants, low-income or low-educational-legacy families, or families in poorly resourced communities or schools” (p. 321).

Barriers to college access were clustered into three areas: relational (i.e., family and peers), individual, and systemic. Relational barriers center on the idea that Latino adolescents have relationships of diminished capacity with key persons (e.g., family, friends, community members) who are prepared to assist with college access. Family barriers consisted of low levels of college planning information, overestimation of cost of college, and less awareness regarding steps for college application (Gandara, 2002; Perez, 2010). For Latinos with strong cultural values and family loyalty, their family care obligations could also compete with the drive to go to college (McWhirter, Torres, Salgado, & Valdez, 2007; Sy & Romero, 2008). In addition to family, negative peer pressure—including negative pressure from those who might be engaging in gangs, drug use, early parenthood, or simply dropping out of school to work—can deter from the pursuit of higher education (Gonzalez, 2015).

Individual barriers often focused on the students' academic readiness for college according to levels of English language skills, math proficiency, or study skills (Cabrera et al., 2006). These descriptions do not fit all Latinos, but even those that are high achieving are less likely than similar peers to complete a college application or take more steps toward college eligibility (Gonzalez, 2015). Individual barriers for Latino students also encompass decreases in confidence and motivation, fluctuation in educational aspirations (Gonzalez, Stein, & Huq, 2013), individual experiences of discrimination (Ohrt et al., 2009), and acculturation to Latino versus Anglo norms (Flores, Navarro, & DeWitz, 2008). In sum, this barrier to a student's academic motivation related to proficiency and attitude highlight that individual readiness goes beyond skills to also include environment.

Systemic barriers included macro-level institutional barriers and micro-level outcomes. Examples at the school level include policies and practices such as tracking Latinos into lower

level courses and poor outreach with families (Rios-Aguilar & Kiyama, 2012). Researchers also described the absence of college preparatory curricula, counseling and instructional resources, testing preparation, or college access readiness programs in some schools (Adelman, 2006; Rios-Aguilar & Kiyama, 2012). Community barriers included lower levels of educational outreach, fewer resources, and less support for low-income families (Percy Calaff, 2009; Nunez & Oliva, 2009). Researchers also mentioned state or national barriers, such as the rising cost of college and reduction in the availability of financial aid (Downs et al., 2008; Zarate & Burciaga, 2010) and policies restricting access to education for the undocumented (Flores & Chapa, 2009).

Gonzalez described social cognitive career theory (SCCT; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994) as a new framework to help scholars and practitioners further their work on barriers to college access. SCCT includes individual, relational, and systemic constructs relevant to the study of barriers to college access and provides structure to operationalize the concept of SCCT. The SCCT's contribution is in its focus on the power of human agency, the potential for action that resides within the individual even when their circumstances are challenging (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Other theoretical frameworks that have been used to understand the phenomenon included the opportunity to learn framework (Kimura-Walsh et al., 2009), self-determination theory (Close & Solberg, 2008), and funds of knowledge approach (Rios-Aguilar & Kiyama, 2012). According to Gonzalez, the most frequently mentioned theories related to barriers to college access were the bridging multiple worlds alliance (BMWA) model (Azmitia & Cooper, 2001) and social capital (Bourdieu, 1977). However, Gonzalez argued, these models may not be the most advantageous to researchers and practitioners in their efforts to operationalize constructs.

The present study has used choice theory and college choice framework to examine college-bound students and the influential factors that impact 4-year college commitment. Dr. William Glasser (1998) postulates that choice is based on individual needs in which an individual makes decisions irrelevant of external factors in life. Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) college choice process allows for the opportunity to analyze Latino college choice process including how factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, and generational status may mediate college choice decisions and outcomes.

### **Understanding Arts Education as a Pathway to College**

**Art pathway.** The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) established by Congress in 1965 was a meaningful step in the public acknowledgment of the importance of the arts. In 1994, Congress for the first time identified the arts in federal policy as part of the core school curriculum. The arts can inspire, uplift and even motivate students not reached with traditional methods normally used. Americans' attitude toward arts education has revealed strong public support, with 93% agreeing the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education for children 86% agreed an arts education encourages and assists in the improvement of a child's attitude toward school (Harris, 2005). Burton et al. (1999) found students in a specialized school share the excitement for a focused education and, in particular, arts education. Children in those art curriculums were far superior in creative thinking, self-concept, problem solving, self-expression, risk-taking, and cooperation than those who were not. It is important to note that this type of students may seek the art, not that arts create or foster those traits.

Unfortunately, not all children have equal access to an arts education. The NEA (2008) found only 26% of Latinos ages 18 to 24 received art courses in high school, compared to 59% of Whites. This statistic is not without consequence, as students with art courses are 30% less

likely to drop out of high school and were 29% more likely to apply to college than were non-arts students. In 1998, the majority of California's Latino students attended low-income Title I public schools with fewer resources (Riggs & Serafin, 1998). The prevailing attitude and practice with regards to the use of Title I funds to support arts education has been that arts education is not permissible under guidelines of Title I goals. As a result, arts participation varied greatly across the state, within districts and schools, and even within classrooms. Research has indicated that low-income youth do not have equal access to school art programs and instead are geared toward remedial instruction in reading and math (California Department of Education, 2013).

**Arts student college application and attendance.** The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Resnick et al, 1997) and Elpus (2016) found that, by age 30, students who had pursued an arts education during high school were 55% more likely to attend a 4-year college than their non-art peers. This study suggested the predictive relationship between high school arts education and college attainment. A study by the NEA (2006) found that the arts have a positive impact on the college pathway. Of the 2004 graduating class, 75% of all students applied to at least one postsecondary institution. Among art students who chose at least one arts course as an elective the percentage was slightly higher at 77% applying to at least one school, while only 70% of non-arts-students applied. Furthermore, approximately 73.6% of students in the class of 2004 had attended college past 2 years; among the art students, the portion who attended college past 2 years after high school graduation was 76.40%, while among non-art students, only 67.81% had attended a postsecondary institution for up to 2 years past graduation. In addition, art students were 30% more likely to earn a 4-year college degree than were non-arts students. Results suggested that arts students were more likely than non-arts students to

participate in the college application process and applied to more school than their non-arts peers.

Moreover, art students were not at a significant disadvantage compared to their non-art peers. Arts and non-arts students applied to selective colleges at similar rates; pursued majors in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); and earned bachelor's degrees at similar rates. All of this suggests that there is no "opportunity cost" to pursuing arts coursework in high school at the expense of electing non-required, additional coursework in the STEM areas, in history or social science studies, or in English and literature. In other words, arts courses do not reflect poorly on high school transcripts in the college admission process.

**Implications for arts educators.** According to an NEA (2006) study, there is "no art penalty" relative to college admission. Thus counselors, teachers, and parents who try to restrict students from the elective pursuit of arts coursework in high school, for fear of not creating competitive transcripts, are mistaken. There is no penalty, and those students who would like to pursue art coursework in high school should be encouraged to do so without fear of harming their chances in college admission. Furthermore, high schools should be encouraged to provide a rich arts education experience for all students. Arts education does not decrease students' chance of earning admission to highly selective colleges and may provide an important artistic and emotional outlet for students who are highly motivated academically.

**Arts and student achievement.** The arts contribute to student achievement. Research has shown that what students learn in the arts may help them master other subjects, such as reading, math, or social studies. Students with high arts involvement performed better on standardized achievement tests than students with low arts involvement (UCLA, 2002). Students who took arts classes had higher math and verbal SAT scores than students who did not take art

classes. In other words, the more art classes, the higher math and verbal SAT scores relative to those who had taken no art classes. Notably, students who took 4 years of arts coursework outperformed peers who had a half-year or less of arts coursework by 58 points on the verbal and 38 points on the math portion of the SAT (College Board, 2005).

### **Summary**

This literature review examined a brief history of Mexicans in the United States and the current issues pertaining to how schools are educating minority low-income students in regards to the visual and performing arts. The Latino educational pipeline was also discussed along with information detailing adversities faced by Latino students in terms of pursuing a college education. It is important to include the visual and performing arts education as a pathway to college detailing the inequitable access to minority youth. The literature review also examined the importance of and barriers to Latino parent involvement as a means of promoting greater student achievement through various policies and organizations aimed at parents. The descriptions of nine independent variables were also discussed in this section. Improving Latino 4-year college enrollment is viewed a key way to improve the overall quality of life for the Latino population in California and nationally. Glasser's (1998) Choice Theory offered a model for understanding the choices individuals make when faced with challenges and opportunities.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### Overview of Study Design

This chapter details the quantitative case study methodology that examined Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' experiences in one visual and performing arts high school program with regards to nine independent factors that might explain their decision to apply to a 4-year college. A quantitative approach allowed the researcher to measure and analyze numerical data related to the topic. In this study, a series of different data were collected with the aim of identifying relationships between 4-year college application rates and the independent factors.

The researcher collected quantitative data using the Factors Influencing Pursuit of Higher Education (FIPHE) Questionnaire (Harris, 1998) and Student Demographic Survey. Due to the researcher's employment at the school site, the background information was gathered through school records and the use of a computer-based student information system. This background information is presented under the subheadings Sample Population and Research Design later in this chapter. The nine factors that were examined were identified in the literature-based research tool FIPHE questionnaire. The analyses of this collected data provided a picture of the effects of the independent variables and of a visual and performing arts high school program on Latino students' decision to apply to a 4-year college. The findings of this study could be used to assist in developing a better understanding of how to improve Latino 4-year college application rates.

This study examined nine factors that might affect a person's decision to apply to college and the influence of a visual and performing arts high school program on that decision. The study addressed the following questions:

1. What influence, if any, do the following factors have on the likelihood that Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will apply to a 4-year college: (a) family influence, (b) financial

- aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence?
2. What influence, if any, does the integration of the visual and performing arts high school program have on the *likelihood* that Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will apply to a 4-year college?
  3. What differences, if any, in Latino 4-year college application rates per academy (dance, music, theater, visual arts)?

First the qualifications of the researcher are discussed, followed by the description of the population, research design, data collection, protection of human subjects, and data analyses.

### **Qualifications**

As a researcher of Latino background, a credential teacher and administrator, I have an inherent interest in topic because of the impact it has on students and the possibility for an improvement in their quality of life. I also have a strong interest in issues that impact Latino youth as I serve as the administrator who oversees special education and English Language Learners at my school site. This is an important opportunity for me to discover ways of enhancing college access for disadvantaged Latino youth.

### **Description of Population**

The researcher has selected a case study and will focus in-depth on one visual and performing arts high school in an urban school district. The following information was obtained from the district's website, other site administrators, and the college counselor.

Fame School of Visual and Performing Arts opened as a Pilot School with four academies (dance, music, theater and visual and performing arts). Fame was authorized by the Winston

Unified School District to be operational. The authorization of Fame meant that the school could have autonomy over budget, staffing, governance, curriculum and assessment, and the school calendar. These autonomies allowed the school to operate with greater flexibility to meet the needs of the students under the guise of the school district. Pilot schools were created as models of educational innovation and to serve as research and development sites for effective urban public schools. Pilot schools are to be innovative, research-based, equitable, student-centered school sites that partner with parents and are self-governed. Schools that become Pilot status submit a written proposal to the district with input from staff, students and parents. In 2015 Fame lost its Pilot status and became a comprehensive high school with oversight from the district.

The Fame student population comes from the surrounding neighborhood and 50% of students come from throughout the district. Approximately 330 students enter Fame as freshmen each year. Students attend this school from the surrounding communities within the school district and this includes students from 189 zip codes. Fame was created to focus on promoting the visual and performing arts and the population is 69.3% girls and 30.7% boys. Table 1 gives demographic information for the school and table 2 summarizes demographic information for the district.

Table 1

*Fame School of Visual and Performing Arts Demographic Information*

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Total Student Enrollment | 1,400 |
| Female                   | 69.3% |
| Male                     | 30.7% |

(continued)

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Total Student Enrollment  | 1,400 |
| Black or African American | 7.5%  |
| Hispanic or Latino        | 71.3% |
| White                     | 11.9% |
| Asian                     | 5.4%  |
| Filipino                  | 3.3%  |

Table 2

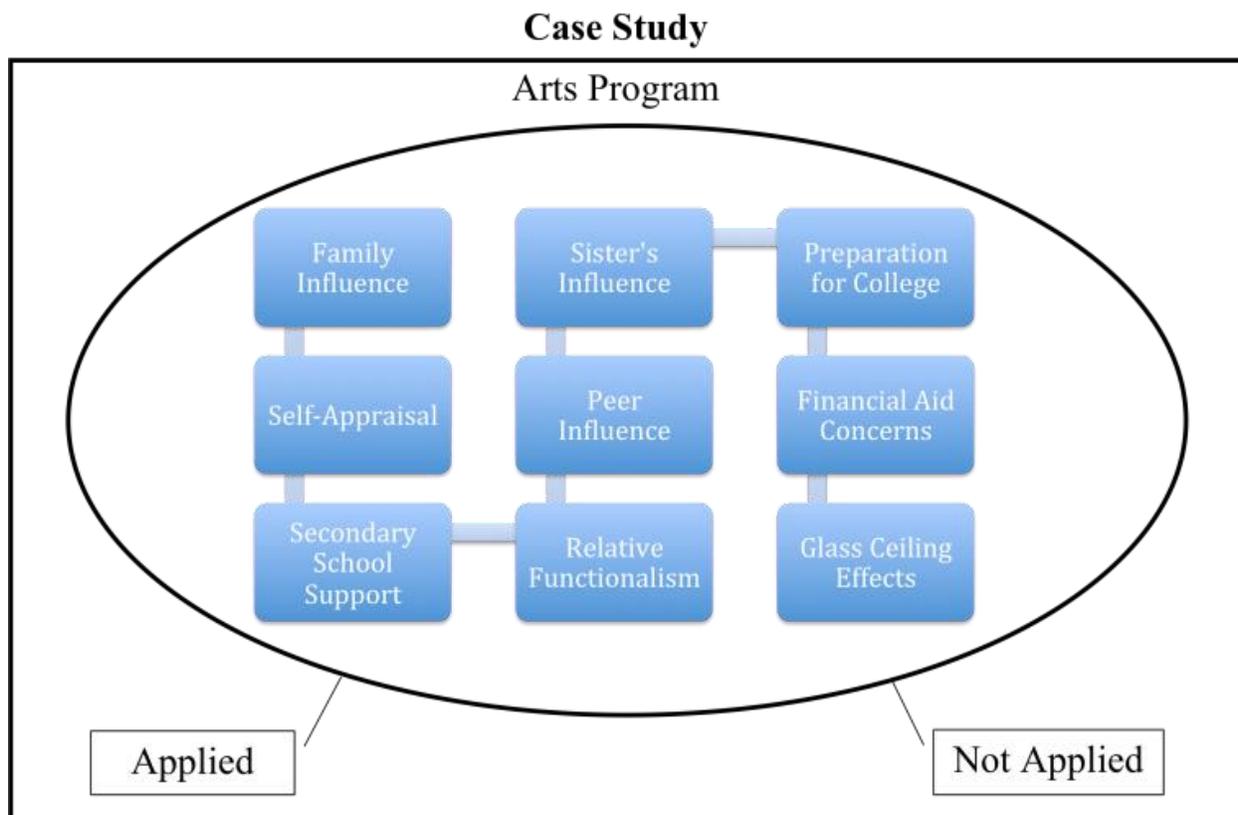
*Winston Unified School District Demographic Information*

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Total Student Enrollment  | 640,000 |
| Female                    | 48.4%   |
| Male                      | 51.6%   |
| Black or African American | 8.4%    |
| Hispanic or Latino        | 74.1%   |
| White                     | 10.5%   |
| Asian                     | 4.2%    |
| Filipino                  | 3.3%    |

Fame offers a curriculum based on project-based learning. The school offers various “art pathways,” or a set of courses that students can take related to their particular art form.

Regardless of the selected pathway, each student without previous experience takes the introductory course in 9<sup>th</sup> or first year at the school. All students then follow the scope and sequence of their pathway. Fame currently offers four pathways also known as academies:

Dance, Music, Theater and Visual Arts. During the 2015-2016 school year, a new broadcast career pathway within the Theater an academy was offered and was in high demand. Each pathway is designed to prepare the students for college courses and careers related to that field.



*Figure 1.* Case study model.

### Research Design

This study was quantitative in nature and utilized a case study research methodology. The goal of the researcher was to establish associations between the variables and the completion or non-completion of 4-year college applications by administering the Factors Influencing Pursuit of Higher Education (FIPHE) a questionnaire and a demographic form to 160 Latino students from Fame Visual and Performing Arts High School located in Winston Unified School

District. The names of the high school and school district are pseudonyms to preserve confidentiality.

In utilizing a case study methodology, the data better articulated the meaning and perspectives of Latino students immersed in a particular experience (Merriam, 1988). Although case study research is most often described as qualitative inquiry (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2009; Miles et al., 2014; Stake, 1995), Merriam (2009) acknowledged that case study research can use both qualitative and quantitative methods, allowing the research to reflect a range of influences. While Yin (1984) noted, “case studies can be based...entirely on quantitative evidence” (p. 25), Harrison, Birks, Franklin and Mills (2017) argued that with the emergence and dominance of positivism in the late 1940s and 1950s, quantitative methods became a popular focus for the social sciences. As a result, surveys, experiments, and statistical methods anchored in quantitative approaches were favored and considered more rigorous than qualitative design (p. 2). However, there is a philosophical division in research approaches between those supporting positivism and quantitative approaches and those aligned with qualitative methods embedded in constructivist and interpretivist paradigms (Harrison et. al, 2017). In this study, quantitative methods allowed objective measurements and numerical analysis of data collected through the FIPHE questionnaire (Harris, 1998) and demographic questionnaires.

Based on the work of Yin (1984), a case study research method is defined as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (also referred to as the “case”) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident (pg.16). This method approach was especially necessary in this study because students themselves experience the confluence of the named variables, and while there is no precedent for a clear separation of the phenomenon (i.e., Latino 4-year college

application rates) and its context (i.e., the experiences of arts education among marginalized students), this study aims to best honor the complexity of the lived experience of the subjects. Stake (1995) would agree that defining a case study research as inclusive of the particularity and complexity of a single case is to understand its activity within important circumstances (p. xi).

### Setting

**Winston Unified School District.** The district selected for this study was Winston Unified School District (WUSD), an urban school district located in the city of Highland, which is one of the oldest cities in the country. WUSD serves more than 640,000 students at over 900 schools and 187 public charter schools. The student demographic data for the district consists of 74.1% Latino, 8.4% Black, 10.5% White, 4.2% Asian, 0.4% and 2.1% Filipino, with 40% of the students qualifying for free or reduced-price meals. Even though performance has improved across many state-level assessments, WUSD students are still underperforming across other state achievement indicators (see table 1). Table 3 summarizes the achievement indicators of WUSD.

Table 3

#### *Summary of WUSD Academic Performance*

| Achievement indicator                                     | 2014 – 2015 | 2015 -2016 |
|---|-------------|------------|
| Graduation  | 74%         | 75%        |
| On track to pass all A-G courses with a grade C or better | 46%         | 48%        |
| Enrolled in at least on AP course                         | 22%         | 25%        |
| Earned a qualifying score of 3 or higher on an AP exam    | 41%         | 38%        |
| Advanced Placement - Passed course with a ‘C’ or Better   | 58%         | 62%        |
| Smarter Balance Assessment (ELA) Met/Exceeds              | 33%         | 39%        |

(continued)

| Achievement indicator   | 2014 – 2015 | 2015 -2016 |
|---|-------------|------------|
| Smarter Balance Assessment (Math) Met/Exceeds                 | 25%         | 29%        |
| California Standards Test (CST) Science Proficient / Advanced | 40%         | 42%        |
| Students with 96% or higher attendance (7 days absent)        | 75%         | 74%        |
| Students with chronic absences (16 days absent)               | 12%         | 16%        |

The **Fame School of Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA)**. Fame is a dual mission high school focusing on both arts and academics. Opening its doors in 2009, it is considered a newer school within the Winston Unified School District. With 1,400 students, it is one of the largest high schools in WUSD. The ethnic composition is 71.3% Hispanic, 7.5% Black, 5.4% Asian, 3.3%, Filipino, and 11.9% White. In addition to serving the surrounding low-income urban community within its jurisdiction, there are also many students who attend Fame as part of an “open enrollment” policy, commuting on permit from across the District’s parameters. These students live in what is considered one of the poorest resourced areas of Los Angeles County, yet their passion for the arts bring these two unique student populations together at Fame.

The Free and Reduced Lunch Program serves 77% of the total school population and the school is designated as a school-wide Title I program. With regards to the poverty level, 73% of the students are considered socioeconomically disadvantaged. Of the 8% population receiving special education and services, 5% are designated as English learners (EL) of which 59% of the EL population has been identified as long-term English learner (LTEL). Additionally, school data has shown that of those who are bilingual, 62% of students come from homes where English

is not the primary language, with Spanish being the primary home language. At home, parental educational level data has indicated that 37% of parents did not complete high school, 31% completed high school, 15% attended college, 12% are college graduates, and 5% attended graduate school. A common interest in an arts education brings together a population whose ethnic, geographic, socio-economic and cultural diversity may influence their likelihood of applying to a 4-year college where lack of resources may otherwise suggest a lower causal relationship.

Fame is located in what is considered the cultural epicenter of Highland. Designed by a famous architect, the campus includes a professional concert hall with a sizable proscenium stage, orchestra pit, and fully equipped sound and lighting booths; a 250-seat black box theatre; and outdoor amphitheater; a professional scene shop; photography and broadcast studios; multiple science and computer labs; specialized spaces equipped for art, music, and theatre classes; and four dance studios. Fame offers four academies with specific coursework to support their aspirations such as music, dance, theater, and visual arts. Students must first complete their A-G coursework followed by the scope and sequence of their selected art major that, ideally, will follow them into their undergrad careers. By offering a unique dual mission, the school seeks to provide an exemplary educational experience to students who have a passion for the arts by merging arts and academics into a single curriculum.

**Academic indicator.** According to measured Achievement Indicators, Fame High School excels in comparison to other high schools in WUSD. The academic achievement data below was determined by district and state performance guidelines. Table 4 summarizes the achievement indicators of Fame High School.

Table 4

*Summary of Fame Academic Performance*

| Achievement indicator   | 2014 - 15 | 2015 - 16 |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Graduation  | 90%       | 94%       |
| On track to pass all A-G courses with a grade C or better?    | 58%       | 62%       |
| Enrolled in at least on AP course?                            | 28%       | 33%       |
| Earned a qualifying score of 3 or higher on an AP exam?       | 37%       | 45%       |
| Advanced Placement - Passed course with a 'C' or Better       | 58%       | 62%       |
| Smarter Balance Assessment (ELA) Met/Exceed                   | 54%       | 61%       |
| Smarter Balance Assessment (Math) Met/Exceed                  | 24%       | 27%       |
| California Standards Test (CST) Science Proficient / Advanced | 46%       | 50%       |
| Students with 96% or higher attendance (7 days absent)        | 75%       | 74%       |
| Students with chronic absences (16 days absent)               | 12%       | 12%       |

**Cultural diversity.** The school is a diverse community that actively seeks to represent the depth of its heritage through participating in more than fifty cultural organizations on campus such as the Black Student Union, various Latino-focused clubs, the Gay and Straight Alliance, a diverse student government, and offering gender-neutral restrooms for its student population.

**Student recognition.** In addition to outstanding cultural awareness within the school, Fame maintains a prestigious reputation for theater, music, visual art and dance across California

and the United States. In 2017, Fame students earned 346 total scholastic awards, setting it apart from other high schools in the entire Western United States. The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards are presented by the nonprofit organization Alliance for Young Artists, whose mission is to identify students with exceptional artistic and literary talent. Fame students earned a total of 66 Gold Key, 118 Silver Key, 162 Honorary Mentions. At the NAACP's Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO), a yearlong achievement program designed to recruit, stimulate, and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among African-American high school students, Fame students earned Gold Medals for Dramatics and Poetry for the second year in a row.

**Theater academy.** Fame theater productions prepare students for success beyond traditional academics. Students dominated in the nationally recognized (2016) August Wilson Competition earning the top three places in the competition. Two Fame students, including one Latino, traveled to New York City where they attended a Broadway show, worked with two of August Wilson's closest collaborators, Director Kenny Leon and Dramaturg Todd Kreidler, and explored Manhattan attractions before making their Broadway stage debuts at the August Wilson Theater along with finalist from all over the country.

Recognized for the third year in a row, the cast and crew of the fall production of *Steel Magnolias* were honored at the CETA conference, which sends out professional adjudicators to review high school theater throughout the state of California every year. A Fame Class of 2013 alumnus was recognized for his remarkable performance in the Academy Award-winning Best Picture of 2016, *Moonlight* while another won the California Educational Theater Association (CETA) High School Theater Festival honors for Best Actress.

**Visual arts academy.** Across the country, Fame is also recognized in the visual arts.

Students' efforts in photography, drawing and digital design represent the top artworks in the nation as chosen by a jury panel of professors, art professionals and artists, awarding five Fame students with the "National Gold Key" at the Scholastic National Level Awards. These students with "National Gold Key" distinction were also invited to show their work at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Locally honored, several Fame students were selected for exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Teen Night. A total of 7 Visual Arts Academy students received a National Scholastic, 4 of which were of Latino origin. Furthermore, a Latino Fame student's artwork was selected for the Art.Write.Now.Tour for the 2015-2016 cycle, the national traveling exhibition of the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. His work will be featured at galleries, museums, and cultural spaces in Florida, Indiana, South Dakota and Nevada. At Fame, honors come at all grades, with a sophomore winning the 2016 local Rotary Club art competition and receiving a cash award with a chance to move onto the city wide round competition. School personnel are incredibly proud of their students' collaborations with one another and their contributions to the art world at large.

**Dance academy.** One notable collaboration came when The American Ballet Theater (ABT) brought its *Make a Ballet Tour* program to Fame. Students worked with ABT's dance and design teaching artists with a culminating show of a student performance. This was a one-week intensive residency program that tutored students in various aspects of ballet and stagecraft including choreography, performance, set and costume design. Having reached approximately 200 students, this residency explored the production of *The Nutcracker*, under the tutelage of noted choreographer Alexei Ratmansky. Additionally, a dance Academy senior student won the Silver award for Hip Hop Dance at the National Young Arts competition in Miami, Florida in addition to a \$5,000 cash prize for their excellency.

**Music academy.** Following in the footsteps of their visual, theater and dance academy peers, the Fame music academy is also offered various collaborative opportunities. One of the Music academy students won the American Composers Forum (ACF) NextNotes High School Competition and traveled to Minneapolis, Minnesota for a mentorship with leading professional composer Carol Barnett, Joshua Clausen, and Joseph Horton. The student was then mentored through the rehearsal and performance of their winning works by professional musicians.

**Academy staff.** In addition to the amazing student body, Fame staff are also well known. One of the Fame Music teachers earned the prestigious Ed Lester Lifetime Achievement Award for his extraordinary career as a musical director. The teacher was honored at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Jerry Herman High School Musical Theater Awards. Fame is also honored with hosting arts masters on our campus. World-renown violinist Moves Pogossian visited Fame for a master class with students in the Symphonic Orchestra.

### **Sample Population**

**Fame Latino students.** Out of all 351 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who were invited to participate in this study, only the 160 students who identified as Latino, Hispanic or of Mexican origin were invited to complete the FIPHE questionnaire (Harris, 1998) and demographic survey. The subjects were selected using a set of purposive sampling methods (Merriam, 1988). By purposely selecting participants for the study, the researcher strived to find candidates who were aware of and willing to reflect on the phenomena being studied (Mores & Richards, 2002), that of their cultural lived experience intersecting with academics and future outcomes. The goal of the researcher was not to randomly select participants, but to focus on a particular homogeneous population that represented a variety of, but particular, Latino experiences. Due to the

nonprobability nature of the sampling, external validity is limited to those who participated in the study.

To gather a list of perspective participants, the researcher contacted the head counselor to obtain a list of all 351 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in the school. The researcher carefully obtained class schedules of all students so that informative packets pertinent to the completion of the study were sent home with each student, including a parent letter describing the data collection protocol (Appendix A) as well as a parent informed consent to sign and return to the researcher (Appendix B). A parent letter was sent home in Spanish (Appendix C) and parent informed consent was sent home in Spanish as requested (see Appendix D). Students were informed through a recruitment letter (Appendix E) that they would not be compensated, that participation was voluntary and that, at any time, and they may exclude themselves from the study. The participants included in the study met the following criteria:

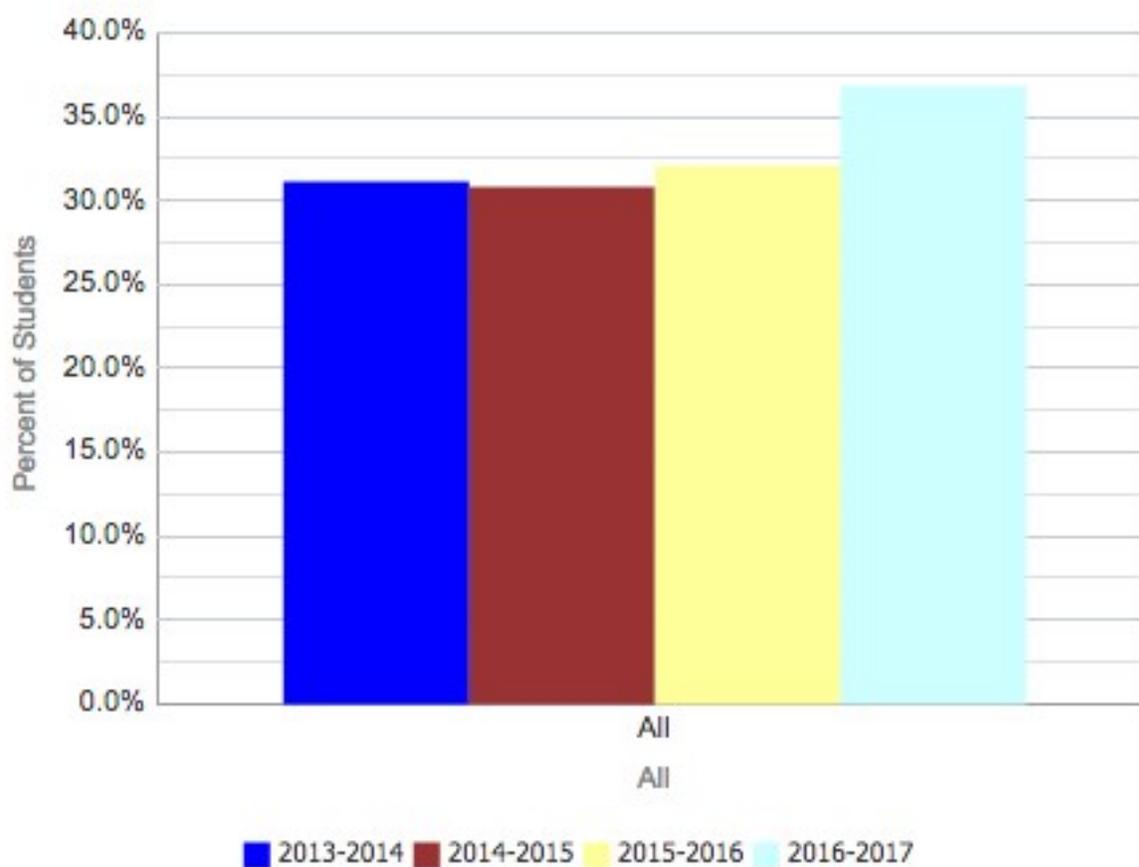
1. Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade student at Fame High School
2. Have a cumulative GPA to meet graduation requirements
3. Enrolled in A-G courses

**Grade point averages.** During the 2016 – 2017 school year, 316 of Fame’s senior class graduated with above a 2.0 GPA. Essentially, 90% of all graduating students met the California State University (CSU) system minimum 2.0 GPA requirement that is the lowest possible GPA to remain eligible for university admissions.

**Advanced placement.** Fame Latino students are underrepresented in the most rigorous course at the school compared to their White peers. With fewer enrollments in the most advanced classes, the Latino students are at a disadvantage when planning towards college admissions. Access to AP courses is such a serious issue in Southern California that the American Civil

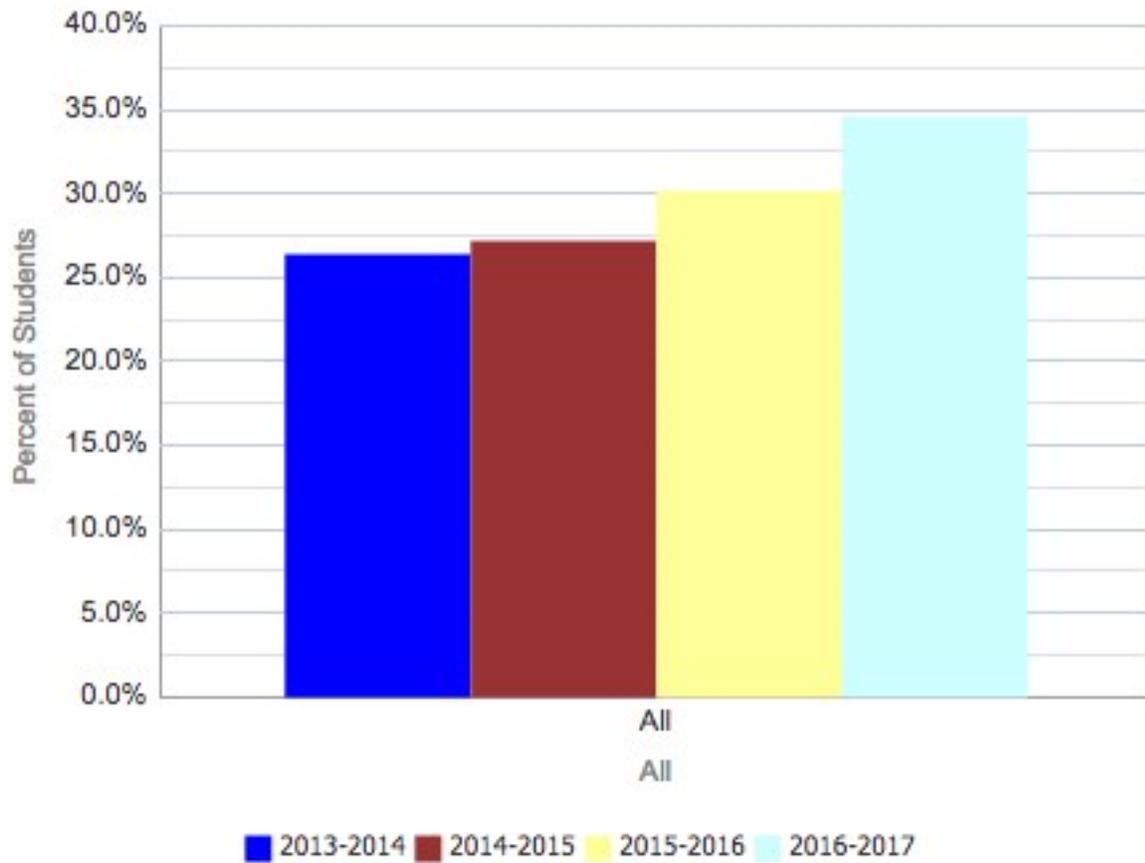
Liberties Union (ACLU) sued the State of California for disparate offerings on behalf of urban high school students (Daniel v. State of California, 1999). The ACLU argued the State's failure to assure equal access to AP courses perpetuates educational inequalities. This violates the Equal Protection Clause and the Education Clause of the California Constitution. For example, the students named in the Davis v. State of California case were all academically qualified to take advanced placement courses and had expressed a desire to participate in the program. But Inglewood High School offered only three AP courses. On the other hand, Beverly Hills High School, which serves a more affluent and predominately White student population, offered 14 different AP subjects and 45 AP classes. The ACLU's lawsuit argued that African American and Latino students, and those from neighborhoods that were equally disadvantaged, were, too, being systematically marginalized from attending California's most prestigious universities. In the pretrial settlement, the California Department of Education agreed to create a minimum number of AP classes in all public schools.

Being mindful of such notorious examples of the disadvantage faced by youth within the public-school system, data reflects that Latino students are underrepresented among AP classes enrollment. During the 2016 – 2017 academic school year, only 36.7% of Latino Students took AP courses compared to 44.2% of White students. Figures 2 - 4 summarizes school-wide AP enrollment data over the past four years and by ethnicity.



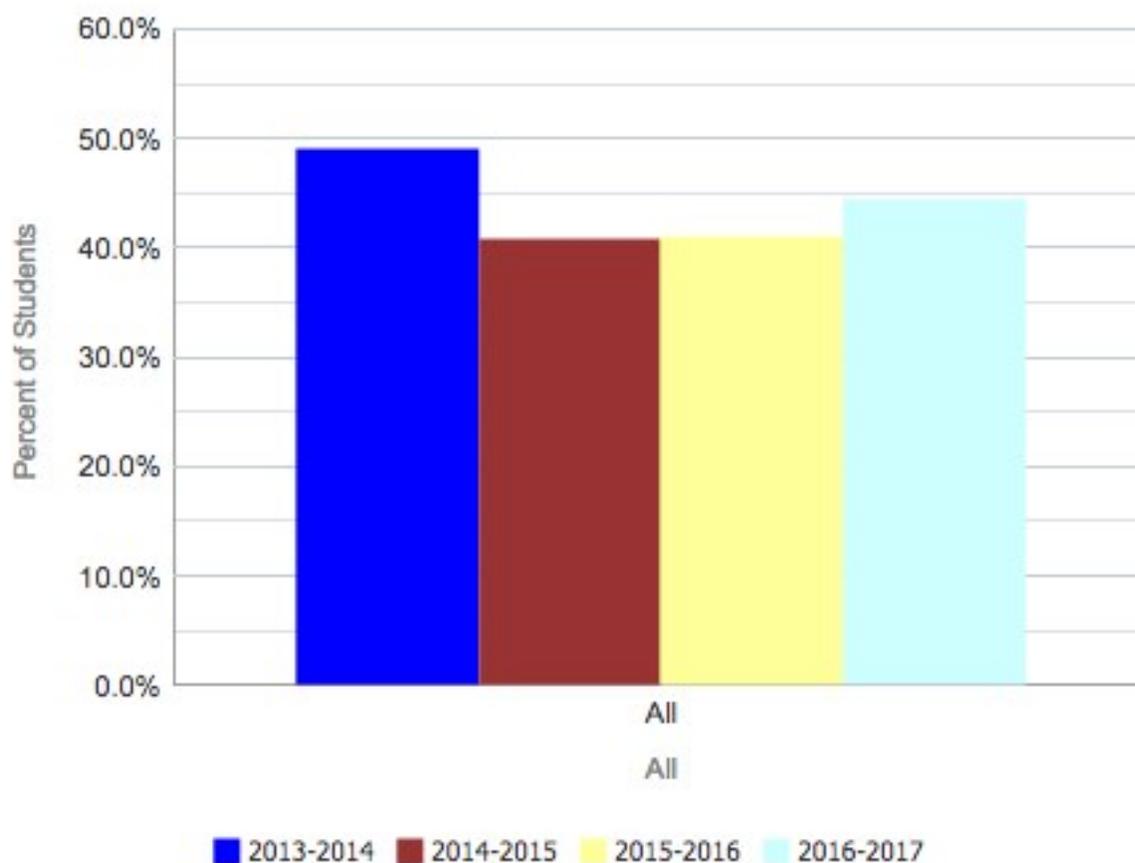
| All ▲▼ | School Year | # Students Enrolled | % Students Enrolled in AP |
|--------|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| All    | 2016-2017   | 1,383               | 36.7%                     |
|        | 2015-2016   | 1,458               | 32.0%                     |
|        | 2014-2015   | 1,536               | 30.8%                     |
|        | 2013-2014   | 1,584               | 31.1%                     |

Figure 2. Fame Advanced Placement Course enrollment data.



| All ▲ ▼ | School Year | # Students Enrolled | % Students Enrolled in AP |
|---------|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| All     | 2016-2017   | 986                 | 34.5%                     |
|         | 2015-2016   | 1,028               | 30.1%                     |
|         | 2014-2015   | 1,054               | 27.1%                     |
|         | 2013-2014   | 1,068               | 26.3%                     |

Figure 3. Latino Student Advanced Placement Course enrollment data.



| All ▲▼ | School Year | # Students Enrolled | % Students Enrolled in AP |
|--------|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| All    | 2016-2017   | 165                 | 44.2%                     |
|        | 2015-2016   | 161                 | 41.0%                     |
|        | 2014-2015   | 170                 | 40.6%                     |
|        | 2013-2014   | 172                 | 48.8%                     |

Figure 4. White Student Advanced Placement Course enrollment data.

**College access.** By traditional criteria and accolades, Fame is a successful high school, yet a huge disparity exists with minority Latino student submitting and being accepted to far less 4-year undergraduate programs when compared to their White and Asian peers. Of the 356 students in the 2016 graduating class, 247 students or 69% were identified as being of Latino

origin, and only 134 students or 31.4% were accepted into a 4-year college. Table 3 summarizes the post-high school data for Fame graduates of Mexican-American descent.

**College readiness.** An analysis of student college readiness data indicated that Latino students have learned to navigate the complex pathways within and outside of the classroom to higher education. Of the 2017 Fame high school graduates, a total of 96% completed A-G coursework with an extraordinarily high percentile of 97% Latinos who fulfilled the A-G courses requirement to attend California's for year public universities. In contrast, 98% of White students met the requirement in the same year.

The Early Assessment Program (EAP) test in English Language Arts and mathematics indicates college readiness for the California State University (CSU). Students take the exam in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Meeting EAP test standards will exempt students from placement exams and will allow students to register for general education courses at the CSU. A total of 348 students were tested, of which 21% indicated college ready, 40% conditionally ready, 25% not yet demonstrating readiness and 14% not demonstrating readiness. Among the Latinos students, a total of 276 were tested, of which 19% demonstrated college readiness, 38% conditionally ready, 29% not yet demonstrating readiness and 14% not demonstrating readiness. A total of 36 students White students were tested, of which 42% indicated college ready, 33% conditionally ready, 14% not yet demonstrating readiness and 11% not demonstrating readiness. Table 5 summarizes the college readiness indicators of Latino students compared to White and table 6 indicates the total number of UC application, admission and enrollment data.

Table 5

*Summary of 2017 College Readiness Indicators of Latino Students Compared to White*

|   | Total | Latino | White |
|---|-------|--------|-------|
| EAP Tested                                      | 348   | 276    | 36    |
| % EAP College Ready                             | 21%   | 19%    | 42%   |
| % EAP Conditionally Ready                       | 40%   | 38%    | 33%   |
| % EAP Not Yet Demonstrating Readiness           | 25%   | 29%    | 14%   |
| % EAP Not Demonstrating Readiness               | 14%   | 14%    | 11%   |
| % A-G Completion                                | 96%   | 97%    | 98%   |
| % Pass AP with a 'C' or Better<br>(2014 – 2015) | 82.5% | 78.6%  | 89.7% |

Table 6

*Summary Fall 2016 UC Application, Admission and Enrollment Data*

|             | Total    | Latino   | White   |
|-------------|----------|----------|---------|
| Application | 117      | 72       | 8       |
| Admission   | 79 (67%) | 45 (62%) | 5 (62%) |
| Enrollment  | 44 (37%) | 28 (38%) |         |

**Unit of analysis.** Understanding how the students' experiences influenced their decision to apply to a 4-year college continues to be a complex phenomenon. It was, therefore, important to clearly identify the unit of analysis, a feature that noted researchers such as Miles,

Huberman, and Saldana refer to as the heart of the study (1994). Yin (1984) recommends using one's initial research questions to determine the unit of analysis or focal point of the case. In this dissertation, the units of analysis were the Latino students themselves. The following independent variables were analyzed: (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence and the integration of the visual and performing arts in the high school instructional program. The goal was to understand how to create new pathways toward higher education by studying the impact of the student's culture and arts education on likely outcomes.

**Boundaries.** According to Harrison et al. (2017), "bounding the case is essential to focusing, framing, and managing data collection and analysis" (p.10). Bounding the case indicates not only who, but also what will and will not be studied. This involves being specific in defining the parameters including the participants, location, process, and timeframe for investigating the case (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2006; Yin, 1984). To define a case, it is essential to identify the central phenomenon that is under investigation. This case study relied on predetermined limits to one school site and the experiences of the Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students within that site. The positionality of the researcher and close relationship to the project guided and influenced the boundaries and themes (Wells et al., 1995). For example, the role of an administrator at the school site influenced the focus of this study and questions of the study.

**Gender and race/ethnicity.** Focal students were selected across gender that represented the greater Latino student senior class. The total Latino senior class included 274 students out of 351 graduates. The total focus group cohort included 119 (74%) females and 41 (26%) males. Females generally outnumbered males at a 3 to 1 ratio for the sample group.

**Class or socioeconomic status.** The indicator of free and reduced lunch program determined the students' socioeconomic status (SES). Students who did not qualify as a low income were classified as middle class. Of the 160 students a total of 35 (22%) did not qualify for free lunch and 125 (78%) students qualify for free or reduced lunch program and were considered low-socioeconomic status.

### **Instrumentation**

**Demographic data.** A demographic questionnaire was added to gather data needed to measure the dependent variables. Specifically, respondents were asked to indicate the *likelihood* the arts influenced their decision of going to college on a scale of zero to ten. Additionally, data on gender, ethnicity, age, father and mother educational information, socioeconomic status, AB 540 status, number of siblings going to college, whether they applied to a 4-year college, accepted into college and majoring in the arts were obtained (Appendix E).

**Quantitative data.** Data was collected through the use of the high school version of the Factors Influencing Pursuit of Higher Education (FIPHE) questionnaire created by Harris (1998). Permission to use the questionnaire for the purpose of this study was obtained from Sandra M. Harris, Ph.D (Appendix F). The FIPHE is a literature-based, researcher-developed instrument designed to gather data on the factors that could potentially affect a person's decision to pursue higher education. The FIPHE consisted of 92 items. The questionnaire measures nine variables: (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence. Items one to 83 use a four-point Likert-type scaling: 4 = *strongly agree*, 3 = *agree*, 2 = *disagree*, 1 = *strongly disagree*. Negatively stated items were reverse coded. Items 84 to 92 were true or false questions: 1 = true, 0 = false (Appendix G).

The following list aligns the nine factors to each question on the questionnaire:

1. Questions 1 through 27, and 49 through 50, assessed the influence of family members on the participant's decision to attend college.
2. Questions 28 through 33 assessed the influence of peers on the participant's decision to attend college.
3. Questions 34 through 42 assessed relative functionalism.
4. Questions 43 through 47 measured glass ceiling.
5. Questions 48, 51-54, and 79-81 measured self-appraisal
6. Questions 55 - 64 assessed perceived locus of control.
7. Questions 65 through 74, 84, and 86-87 measured the level of encouragement from secondary school personnel such as teachers and guidance counselors.
8. Questions 75-78 and 82-84-addressed awareness of the importance of financial aid in pursuing higher education.
9. Questions 85 and 88-92 assessed the participant's general preparation for college.

The FIPHE was pilot tested with five 11<sup>th</sup> grade students to evaluate clarity in understanding the questionnaire statements. The feedback from the student did not result in the need to modify the statement questionnaire.

### **Instrument Content Validity**

The FIPHE questionnaire was completed by 434 undergraduate college students enrolled at two southeastern universities completed the original in the spring of 1997 (Harris, 1998). Results indicate that the questionnaire had a high degree of internal consistency. Reliability estimates for the 10 scales included in the questionnaire ranged from adequate to excellent. Overall, the questionnaire was determined to have satisfactory construct validity for use in

further investigations of the factors that influence individuals to pursue higher education (Harris, 1998).

### **Data Collection and Data Management Procedures**

A survey questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative data. Arrangements were made by the researcher to visit prospective participants in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade Homeroom classes. The researcher informed students of the purpose of the study and that the results may be used to implement interventions that foster increased college application rates among Latino students. Although packets were sent home, the researcher visited each Homeroom classroom twice; once to explain the study and distribute packets, the second time to collect parent informed consent forms. Once the consent forms were signed and received from parents and/or guardians, the students were asked to sign an assent form (Attachment H). The FIPHE questionnaire and demographic form were administered to all students in the Homeroom class. For the purpose of this study, only questionnaires from students who identified themselves as Latino, Hispanic, or of Mexican descent were used in the study. The educational process was protected from unwarranted distractions and interruptions. Students who did not return the questionnaire by the due date were followed-up individually by the researcher. All participants remained confidential.

The researcher used a single-step data collocation procedure to answer the research questions. Data collection occurred between March and April of 2017. At the outset of the data collection process, field notes were produced of student's comments about the questionnaire. A common struggle was with deciding which information to record in the field notes and how to document them. Recording field notes was not always an appropriate action while visiting classes to distribute the questionnaire or when meeting with students one-to-one. On many

occasions, information was recorded in field notes immediately after a conversation with a student or visiting a classroom. Notes recorded were believed to be critical information such as changes in participation or student's refusal to complete the questionnaire. During the data collection process reflection occurred regularly on memos that were shared with dissertation advisor.

Two comprehensive comparison data sets about the 2017 graduating Fame class were gathered. The first data set tracks all graduating seniors, this includes: student demographic information, course patterns, grades, AP enrollment, graduation and college eligibility. Latino students disaggregated the second data set. While the scope of this dissertation study is limited to Latino students, data for all 12<sup>th</sup> grade students was collected for school-wide comparison. All data collected in this study was stored in a password-protected computer in the principal investigator's place of residence. All paper copies (consent documents, survey instrument, assent forms) were stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's residence and only the researcher had access to these files. The data and paper copies will be destroyed 3 years after the study is completed.

### **Protection of Human Subjects**

All participants were informed that participation was voluntary and required student assent (Appendix H). Students were aware of their right not to participate without any penalty for choosing against it. Care was taken by the researcher to assure that this study met all ethical guidelines established by Pepperdine University and WUSD. The researcher complied with the ethical guidelines put forth by Pepperdine University regarding the use of human subjects. The researcher completed the Human Participation Protection Education for Research Teams course that is required to conduct the study. Permission to conduct the study was obtained by the

Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Pepperdine University (Appendix I) as well as the school district (Appendix J) and the school site principal (Appendix K) in February of 2017 prior to conducting the study.

The researcher informed all participants and their parents or guardians of the protocol of data collection, confidentiality, and the storage and security of the materials during and after conducting the study. Because of the nature of some questions, care was taken to protect the emotional safety of each participant. Considering the researcher was an administrator at the school site, employment status was not divulged to the participants and parents. The researcher was identified as a Pepperdine University doctoral student and utilized the maiden last name on the study information sheet, parent informed consent and student assent forms.

Confidentiality was maintained for all participants. The names of the students were not used in any oral or written notes. Instead each student was coded with a number to ensure that no one would be able to trace their responses back to him or her or know they participated in the study. All participants were informed of their right to control any piece of information by simply not answering that question. However, students that did not answer the “ethnicity” question were omitted from the data set as the response to this question pertains to a set of criteria that must be met in order for the participant’s data to be included in this study.

### **Risk and Benefits**

Before participation in this study, subjects were informed about: (a) the purpose of the research, the expected duration of the questionnaire, and the procedures involved; (b) their right to decline to participate and to withdraw once participation began; (c) there were no consequences for declining or withdrawing; (d) reasonable foreseeable factors that may be expected to influence their willingness to participate, such as potential risks, discomfort, or

adverse effects; (e) any prospective research benefits; (f) incentives for participation; and (g) whom to contact for questions about the research and research participants' rights. The researcher also provided the opportunity for prospective participants to ask questions and receive answers before completing the FIPHE questionnaire.

It was not reported that any participant experienced discomfort associated with participation in this study. The benefit to participating in this study was that the perspectives of both college bound and non-college bound Latino students were analyzed and would be shared with school administrators, teachers, counselors, and district leaders, which may lead to the implementation of interventions and/or policies that promote 4-year college enrollment rates among Latino students in Fame School of Visual Arts and the Winston Unified School District.

### **Summary**

This chapter examined the factors that might influence the *likelihood* that 12<sup>th</sup> grade Latino students to apply to college by utilizing methodology that is intuitive to their vulnerabilities at multiple points in the research. This chapter discusses research design, subject selection, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis, while also detailing the preventative measures used to ensure the confidentiality and safety of the youth participants and their parents and/or guardians. This study was designed to study college-bound Latino and noncollege-bound Latino students on a variety of factors related to their *likelihood* to apply to college by measuring causal relationships, if any, between an arts education and college enrollment using quantitative data collected from the FIPHE questionnaire and student demographic form. College applications, or absence thereof, were measured by a question embedded in the demographic form, as the data was collected after the California University 4year college application deadline and acceptance notification date.

## Chapter 4: Data Analyses and Results

### Overview

This chapter will describe the process of data analyses and present the findings of the study as related to each research question or hypothesis. The primary purpose of this quantitative case study was to identify factors that might explain Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' decision to apply to a four-year college from an urban visual and performing arts high school with regard to the influence of nine independent variables, as follows: (a) family influence, (b) self-appraisal, (c) secondary school support, (d) relative functionalism, (e) peer influence, (f) sister's influence, (g) preparation for college, (h) financial aid concerns, (i) glass ceiling effect. The secondary purpose of this study was to measure the influence of an art education on Latino students' likelihood to pursue higher education.

In this chapter, the steps for data analyses are discussed, research filed notes are displayed, descriptive statistics are presented, and the findings for each of the three research questions are given.

### Data Analyses

The researcher used a three-phase data analysis: data preparation, descriptive statistics, and inferential statistics to prepare the data.

**Response rates.** At the time of the study, there were 351 student participants who received the questionnaires. The researcher requested that each participant complete an assent and parent informed consent form. The collected surveys were reviewed for completeness; respondents with more than ten missing values were deleted from the data set. Therefore, three surveys from the Theater academy were omitted. As shown in Table 1, the academies had equal

representation. The majority of respondents were female (73.2%). Respondents were between 16 and 19 years old; the mean age was 17.51 (SD = .55).

Table 7

*Participant Response Rates (N = 157)*

| Variables   | n   | %    |
|-------------|-----|------|
| Academy     |     |      |
| Dance       | 40  | 25.5 |
| Visual Arts | 40  | 25.5 |
| Music       | 40  | 25.5 |
| Theater     | 37  | 23.6 |
| Gender      |     |      |
| Female      | 114 | 72.6 |
| Male        | 41  | 26.1 |

**Data preparation.** Raw data collection was reviewed for potential errors and for consistency. To assure confidentiality, the school and district were assigned pseudonyms, Fame School of Visual and Performing Arts and Winston Unified School District respectively. Each academy was assigned an identifying code number from 1 to 4 and each student in the study was assigned an identifying code number from 1 to 40 per academy. The code number was the identifier used for each participant throughout the study to ensure that no one would be able to trace their responses back to him or her in anyway. All surveys were provided to participants using a paper and pencil format.

The researcher prepared a master list of student names and code numbers that was in a password-protected secured data file. The code number was used to connect the student name to each of the FIPHE and demographic questions. At the beginning of the data analysis, the code number was placed next to each student's name on questionnaire. All participant demographic

information and answers to FIPHE questionnaire were placed into Excel spreadsheets by the researchers. The researcher sent the file to a trained statistician to compute the correlation analyses. The data was entered in SPSS using only their assigned code numbers. The trained statistician analyzed the data collected using the most current version of SPSS. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the data. For each of the nine factors, descriptive statistics provided the frequency, percentage, measures of central tendency, mean, mode and median and standard deviations. Descriptive statistics provided a numerical picture for each factor. The demographic information was placed into tables depicting students' gender, age, father and mother college degree attainment, number of siblings in college, home language, free lunch program, AB540 status, 4-year college application and accepted to 4-year college. The influence of the arts (scale 1 -10) on the decision to apply to college was analyzed in placed into tables.

### **Preliminary Screening Procedures**

**Missing value analysis.** Respondents with more than ten missing values were deleted from the data set. Respondents with less than ten missing values were retained. The pattern of missing-ness was assessed via Little's Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) procedure. The findings indicated that the pattern of missing-ness was MCAR,  $\chi^2(6391) = 6392.912$ ,  $p = .494$ . Therefore, missing values were imputed using the expectation maximization (EM) method (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

**Assessing for normality.** Univariate normality was assessed via skewness and kurtosis indices. Mean or total composites were created. The normality of these composites was assessed using Kline's (2011) criteria. Per Kline (2011), a variable is normally distributed if its skewness index (skewness statistic/standard error) is less than three and if its kurtosis index (kurtosis statistic/standard error) is less than 20. As shown in Table 4, four of the FIPHE scales

were highly skewed (self-appraisal, relative functionalism, glass ceiling effect, and preparation for college) meaning that majority of students rated these items as agree or strongly agree and the data was skewed towards the rating of three or four. As such, these were transformed using a natural log function (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Since the skewness index of these transformed variables fell below four, the transformed variables were used in subsequent inferential procedures (although the untransformed variables' descriptive statistics are reported for ease of interpretation). Table 4 displays the scales in order from most skewed to least skewed.

Table 8

*Skewness and Kurtosis Statistics for the Variables (N = 157)*

| Variables                | Skewness  |       | Kurtosis  |       |
|--------------------------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
|                          | Statistic | Index | Statistic | Index |
| FIPHE scales             |           |       |           |       |
| Self-appraisal           | -.97      | -5.03 | 1.73      | 4.50  |
| Relative functionalism   | -.80      | -4.15 | .69       | 1.79  |
| Glass ceiling effects    | -.70      | -3.59 | .14       | .37   |
| Sister's influence       | -.51      | -2.63 | -.37      | -.96  |
| Family influence         | -.33      | -1.71 | -.29      | -.76  |
| Peer influence           | -.19      | -1.00 | -.51      | -1.32 |
| Secondary school support | -.12      | -.64  | -1.02     | -2.66 |
| Financial aid concerns   | .09       | .48   | -.79      | -2.04 |
| Preparation for college  | .69       | 3.58  | -.28      | -.72  |

Note. SE for skewness statistic = .19. SE for kurtosis statistic = .39.

Note. Arrechiga, E. (2018).

**Screening for Outliers.** To detect univariate outliers, the data consists of an extreme value on one variable. The variables were standardized; cases whose standardized values exceeded the absolute value of 3.29 were deemed to be outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). None of the cases met this criterion; therefore, there were no univariate outliers.

## Descriptive Statistics

**Sample.** As shown in Table 2, most of the respondents' fathers (89.2%) and mothers (81.5%) did not have a college degree. Slightly more than half of the sample had siblings who did not attend college (56.1%) but more than a quarter had one sibling who had attended college (26.1%). Table 3 displays that more than half of the respondents reported they spoke both English and Spanish (54.8%) and (29.9%) noted that they spoke mostly English or English only. Most of the respondents qualified for free lunch (83.4%). Only (3.8%) had AB 540 status as more than half indicated they did not know what their status was (54.8%) and less than half indicated they did not have AB 40 status (40.8%). The majority of students indicated that they had applied to a four-year college (68.8%) but only (58%) noted that they had been accepted.

Table 9

*Frequencies and Percentage for the Demographic Variables (N = 157)*

| Variables                            | n   | %    |
|--------------------------------------|-----|------|
| <b>Father has college degree</b>     |     |      |
| No                                   | 140 | 89.2 |
| Yes                                  | 17  | 10.8 |
| <b>Mother has college degree</b>     |     |      |
| No                                   | 128 | 81.5 |
| Yes                                  | 29  | 18.5 |
| <b>Number of siblings in college</b> |     |      |
| None                                 | 88  | 56.1 |
| One                                  | 41  | 26.1 |
| Two or more                          | 27  | 17.1 |
| <b>Primary language</b>              |     |      |
| English only                         | 35  | 22.3 |
| Mostly English                       | 12  | 7.6  |
| English and Spanish                  | 86  | 54.8 |

(continued)

| Variables                       | n   | %    |
|---------------------------------|-----|------|
| Primary language                |     |      |
| Mostly Spanish                  | 12  | 7.6  |
| Spanish only                    | 9   | 5.7  |
| Receives free lunch             |     |      |
| No                              | 26  | 16.6 |
| Yes                             | 131 | 83.4 |
| AB 540 status                   |     |      |
| No                              | 64  | 40.8 |
| Don't know                      | 86  | 54.8 |
| Yes                             | 6   | 3.8  |
| Applied to four-year college    |     |      |
| No                              | 49  | 31.2 |
| Yes                             | 108 | 68.8 |
| Accepted into four-year college |     |      |
| No                              | 59  | 37.6 |
| Yes                             | 91  | 58   |
| Don't know                      | 7   | 4.5  |

### Description of the Study Variables

**Factors influencing pursuit of higher education (FIPHE) questionnaire.** The FIPHE questionnaire consisted of 92 items. Each question on the FIPHE questionnaire was assigned a numerical score. There were 83 attitudinal items, using a four-point Likert-type scaling with 4 being the highest. There were 17 negatively stated items that had to be reverse coded. There were nine true or false questions which were coded as either true = 1 or false = 0. The 92 items measured nine factors, namely, (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence. The sum of the respondents' responses to the items defining each factor was used to measure the construct in which higher scores suggested higher availability of the factor unless reverse coded.

**Reliability.** The reliability of the scales was assessed via Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha is a measure used to assess the reliability, or internal consistency, of a set of test questions. In other words, the reliability of any given measurement is based on the notion that the items of the instrument measure the same construct. The higher the alpha coefficient, the more the items have a shared covariance and probably measure the same concept. Per Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), a measure is internally consistent and reliable if its alpha is .70 or higher. Given this criterion, all but two of the nine scales were reliable (see table 3). Eight of the nine scales were created by getting the average of the items that measured the scale; as such, the highest possible score was four and the lowest possible score was one. The ninth scale, preparation for college, was created by summing the items (primarily because the items were measured using a binary scale); the highest possible score was six and the lowest possible score was zero.

As shown in Table 3, the highest mean score for the sample was Family Influence ( $M = 2.02$ ,  $SD = .47$ ). The lowest mean score for the sample was Self-Appraisal ( $M = 1.54$ ,  $SD = .40$ ). Given that the highest possible score for the Preparation for College scale was six, the mean score of the sample ( $M = 2.15$ ,  $SD = 1.77$ ) was fairly low. Functions of higher education had the highest alpha at .92; the lowest was financial aid concerns at .52.

Table 10

*Descriptive Statistics for the FIPHE Scales (N = 157)*

| Variables                | a   | Range        | M    | SD   |
|--------------------------|-----|--------------|------|------|
| Relative functionalism   | .92 | 1.00 to 4.00 | 1.68 | 0.63 |
| Sister's influence       | .86 | 1.00 to 4.00 | 2.05 | 1.01 |
| Family influence         | .85 | 1.11 to 3.32 | 2.02 | 0.47 |
| Self-appraisal           | .85 | 1.00 to 3.41 | 1.54 | 0.4  |
| Secondary school support | .81 | 1.00 to 2.90 | 1.73 | 0.51 |
| Glass ceiling effects    | .79 | 1.00 to 4.00 | 1.75 | 0.69 |

(continued)

| Variables               | a   | Range        | M    | SD   |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------|------|------|
| Preparation for college | .70 | .00 to 6.00  | 2.85 | 1.77 |
| Peer influence          | .60 | 1.00 to 3.17 | 1.8  | 0.48 |
| Financial aid concerns  | .52 | 1.00 to 3.00 | 1.81 | 0.51 |

<sup>1</sup> This variable was a total composite. All other variables were mean composites.

### Correlation Between the Variables

The findings in Table 5 reveal that self-appraisal had the strongest correlation with the likelihood of going to college,  $r = .24$ ,  $p = .002$ . This was followed by peer influence,  $r = .24$ ,  $p = .003$ . The scale that was third most correlated to likelihood was relative functionalism,  $r = .23$ ,  $p = .004$ . Financial aid concerns were fourth most correlated with likelihood,  $r = .20$ ,  $p = .013$ .

The last scale that was significantly associated with likelihood was secondary school Support,  $r = .16$ ,  $p = .046$ . Family influence, preparation for college, glass ceiling effects, and sister's influence were all not significantly associated with the likelihood to go to college.

Table 11

*Pearson Correlations between the FIPHE Scales and Likelihood of Going to College (N = 157)*

| FIPHE                    | r with Likelihood |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Self-appraisal           | .24 **            |
| Peer Influence           | .24 **            |
| Relative functionalism   | .23 **            |
| Financial aid concerns   | .20 *             |
| Secondary school support | .16 *             |
| Family influence         | .14               |
| Preparation for college  | .13               |
| Glass ceiling effects    | .03               |
| Sister's influence       | .03               |

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

## Field Notes

The researcher had the opportunity to visit all 12<sup>th</sup> grade Homeroom classes to present to students the research that was to be conducted. The students were also afforded an opportunity to ask the researcher questions. The researcher visited Homeroom classes during the regularly scheduled (15 minutes) times from 9:33 – 9:48 AM. The researcher visited Homeroom classes for a period of two week from March 1<sup>st</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017. A couple minutes at the beginning of class were allowed for the researcher to discuss the project and pass out parental consent forms. The following day, the researcher would return to the Homeroom class to collect parent consent forms and to distribute the questionnaire. Students, who returned the consent forms, were asked to sign a youth assent and completed the questionnaire meanwhile other students continued to work on their regular class assignments. Individual students were followed-up by the researcher to submit parent consent and complete the questionnaire.

The researcher used a single-step data collocation procedure to answer the research questions. At the outset of the data collection process, field notes were produced of student's comments about the questionnaire. A common struggle was with deciding which information to record in the field notes and how to document them. Recording field notes was not always an appropriate action while visiting classes or when meeting with students one-to-one. On many occasions, information was recorded in field notes until immediately after a conversation with a student or visiting a classroom. Field notes were recorded by taking handwritten notes on a legal pad. Notes recorded were believed to be critical information such as changes in participation or student's refusal to complete the questionnaire. During the data collection process, reflection occurred regularly on memos that were shared with dissertation advisor.

## Findings

**Research question #1.** What influence, if any, do the following factors have on the likelihood that Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will apply to a 4-year college: (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence? The first research question sought to determine what influence, if any, the nine factors would have on the likelihood that Latino students would apply to a four-year. To answer this question a hierarchical linear regression procedure was conducted. The predictor variables were entered into each regression model, one at a time, on the basis of the strength of the bivariate correlation coefficients. By doing so, the unique and overall contributions of the predictor variables in accounting for the variation in each of the outcome were measured. The dependent variable is the influence on applying to a 4-year college and the nine factors are the independent variables. Hierarchical Linear Regression helped to determine the variance each of the factors have on the FIPHE score. Predictors were entered into the model consecutively; the order of entry was based on the strength of each predictor's association with likelihood (from the Pearson correlations conducted prior to the regression procedure).

Prior to conducting the regression procedure, the assumptions of multivariate normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were assessed. Per Norusis (1994), the assumption of multivariate normality is fulfilled if the points in the normal probability plot fall towards the diagonal. As shown in (Appendix L) this assumption was met. The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity are met if the scatterplot of the studentized deleted residuals by the standardized predicted values yield a random scatter (Norusis, 1994). As shown in (Appendix M) the plot yielded a random scatter; therefore, the two assumptions were fulfilled.

Multivariate outliers in the x- and y-spaces were detected via Cook's  $D^2$  values. Per Norusis (1994), a case is a multivariate outlier if its  $D^2$  value is two standard deviations above the Cook's  $D^2$  mean. Seven cases had  $D^2$  values above .025 (i.e., .007 + .018) and were deemed to be multivariate outliers. These seven cases were not included in the hierarchical regression procedure.

The findings in Table 6 reveal that self-appraisal positively predicted the likelihood of applying to a 4-year college,  $\beta = .26$ ,  $p = .008$ . Peer influence also positively predicted the likelihood of applying to a four-year college,  $\beta = .29$ ,  $p = .001$ . But Glass Ceiling Effects negatively predicted the likelihood of applying to a four-year college,  $\beta = -.18$ ,  $p = .032$ . Similarly, Sister's Influence negatively predicted the likelihood of applying to a 4-year college,  $\beta = -.20$ ,  $p = .012$ .

Table 12

*Hierarchical Linear Regression Results (Ninth Step) for the Likelihood of Applying to a Four-Year College (N = 150)*

| Variables                | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | $\beta$ | <i>t</i> | $\Delta R^2$ |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|----------|--------------|
| Self-appraisal           | 3.27     | 1.22      | .26     | 2.69 **  | .096 **      |
| Peer influence           | 1.87     | .55       | .29     | 3.41 **  | .051 **      |
| Relative functionalism   | .88      | .78       | .10     | 1.13     | .010         |
| Financial aid concerns   | .94      | .51       | .15     | 1.86     | .013         |
| Secondary school support | -.67     | .56       | -.11    | -1.19    | .006         |
| Family influence         | .36      | .56       | .05     | .64      | .000         |
| Preparation for college  | .40      | .40       | .08     | 1.00     | .003         |
| Glass ceiling effects    | -1.43    | .66       | -.18    | -2.18 *  | .024 *       |
| Sister's influence       | -.63     | .25       | -.20    | -2.54 *  | .035 *       |

Note. Tolerance values ranged from .60 to .90; therefore, multi-collinearity was not a problem. Ninth step overall model  $F(9, 140) = 4.86$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .238$ .

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Research question #2.** What influence, if any, does the integration of the visual and performing arts in the high school instructional program have on the likelihood that Latino students will apply to a 4-year college?

The second research question sought to determine whether integration of the visual and performing arts programs would have an influence on the likelihood that Latino students would apply to a 4-year college. To answer this research question, an independent t-test procedure was conducted. Because the direction of the hypothesis was not specified, the t-value was evaluated at a two-tailed alpha of .05. The findings indicate that the mean likelihood of applying to college ( $M = 4.90$ ,  $SD = 3.14$ ) did differ significantly from zero,  $t(156) = 19.57$ ,  $p < .001$ . Therefore, students in a visual and performing arts high school program are likely to apply to college.

Of the 91 or (57%) of students noted they had been accepted into a 4-year college, 26 or (28%) student indicated they would major in the arts in college. As shown in Table 8, the integration of the visual and performing arts high school program positively influenced the likelihood of Latino students applying to a 4-year college. It did not have a significant influence on college major.

Table 13

*Summary of College Application and Acceptance School-Wide*

|              | n   | %  |
|--------------|-----|----|
| Applied      | 105 | 66 |
| Accepted     | 91  | 57 |
| Major in Art | 26  | 28 |

**Research question #3.** What differences, if any, of Latino 4-year college application rates per academy (dance, music, theater, visual arts)?

The third research question sought to determine whether a particular arts academy would have an influence on the likelihood that Latino students would apply to a four-year college. To answer this research question, a one-way ANOVA procedure was conducted. As shown in Table 9, type of academy had an equal effect on likelihood to apply to a four-year college,  $F(3, 153) = .21, p = .89$

Table 14

*ANOVA Results for Type of Academy and Likelihood to Apply to a Four-Year College (N = 157)*

| Academy | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | df     | <i>F</i> |
|---------|----------|-----------|--------|----------|
| Dance   | 4.94     | 3.34      | 3, 153 | .21      |
| Visual  | 4.83     | 2.99      |        |          |
| Music   | 4.66     | 3.02      |        |          |
| Theater | 5.21     | 3.30      |        |          |

Note. Variances were equal ( $p = .840$ ); as such, no adjustments were needed.

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

As shown in table 10, the self-reported application rate among academy was on average (65.25%). Table 11 shows the acceptance rate varied by academy with music having the highest (70%) and visual the lowest acceptance rate (45%).

Table 15

*Summary of College Application by Academy (N = 157)*

| Academy | n  | %  |
|---------|----|----|
| Music   | 30 | 75 |
| Dance   | 25 | 62 |
| Theater | 25 | 62 |
| Visual  | 25 | 62 |

Table 16

*Summary of College Acceptance by Academy (N = 157)*

| Academy | n  | %  |
|---------|----|----|
| Music   | 28 | 70 |
| Theater | 24 | 60 |
| Dance   | 21 | 52 |
| Visual  | 18 | 45 |

### Summary

The findings revealed self-appraisal and peer influence and were the top two variables that positively predicted the likelihood of applying to a four-year college. Fame Latino students did not perceive the glass ceiling to be threatening their future and likelihood of applying to a 4-year college. Over (80%) of the respondents' mothers and fathers did not have a college degree indicating that parents may not be aware of the demands of college. Slightly more than half (56.1%) of the sample had siblings who did not attend college. Signifying these first-generation college-bound Latino students may not have benefited from encouragement and support of their desires to attend college. The majority of the respondents received free lunches (83.4%) demonstrating that students live in low-income households. Of all 160 respondents (6) had AB 540 status. Indicating that as undocumented students they have the right to attend college in California and pay in-state tuition. Only (22.3%) noted they spoke only English at home. Nonetheless, despite these barriers the majority of students indicated that they had applied to a four-year college (68.8%), but only (58%) noted that they had been accepted into a four-year college.

The visual and performing arts had a positive influence on 4-year college applications. Although the mean likelihood was relatively low, only 4.9 (with the highest score being 10), the arts positively influenced their decision to apply to a 4-year college but did not significantly

influence the participants' decision to major in the arts in college with only 28% majoring in the arts in college. The self-reported application rate among academy was on average (65.25%). The acceptance rate varied with music having the highest acceptance rate at (70%) and visual arts the lowest acceptance rate (45%).

All four academies had an equal influence on the likelihood of applying to college. Due to the non-experimental nature of the study, no causal inferences were drawn. Due to the nonprobability nature of the sampling, conclusions are limited to the study's participants.

Chapter 5 will discuss study findings and conclusions linked to the present literature and emergent themes. Furthermore, Chapter 5 will present recommendations for policy, practice, and further research.

## Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### Summary

**Problem and purpose.** Latino high school graduates enroll into 4-year colleges at disproportionately lower rates compared to their White peers. National data for 2016 showed that of Latinos aged 25 and older, only 16.4% had a bachelor or advanced degree in comparison to 33.7% of White students from a comparable sample pool (U.S. Bureau of the Census). A review of the literature in the area of the Latino educational pipeline suggested that in order to close the achievement gap educators, we need to reexamine college pathways for Latino students beginning at kindergarten and continuing throughout post-secondary education. Before educators can increase the number of Latino college graduates, they must first identify and understand the factors that motivate individuals to pursue higher education. This study measured the influence of a visual and performing arts (VAPA) high school program and nine independent factors that might explain why Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students may or not be motivated to apply to a 4-year college. While curriculums rich in visual and performing arts have been noted for having a positive influence on academic achievement, there is limited research on the influence of a VAPA high school program in relation to Latino students' decision to pursue higher education. This study aimed to quantify insights on probable influences, whether they were positive or negative.

The study addressed the following questions:

1. What influence, if any, do the following factors have on the *likelihood* that Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will apply to a 4-year college: (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal and (i) sister influence?
2. What influence, if any, does the integration of the visual and performing arts high school program have on the *likelihood* that Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will apply to a 4-year college?
3. What differences, if any, of Latino 4-year college application rates per academy (dance, music, theater, visual arts)?

### **Methodology**

This study utilized a quantitative case study design approach at Fame School of Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) located in an urban area of Los Angeles called Highland. The researcher selected this school site because it is located next to major artistic venues and museums that provides for easy access and collaborations with art professionals.

The researcher used Glasser's (1998) Choice Theory and Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) College Choice model as the theoretical frameworks for this study. Choice Theory provided a lens with which to analyze Latino students' decision-making in actively pursuing or not pursuing a college education. This model postulates that decisions can be made by individuals irrelevant of external factors such as parental influence, socioeconomic status, gender, and perceptions of financial aid. In other words, that all individuals are capable of making decisions without regard to the circumstances of their life. Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) College Choice model ranges

from measuring students' early aspirations regarding higher education to, eventually, measuring their decisions to apply or not apply to their institution of choice, and their subsequent enrollment, if admitted.

The researcher selected the Factors Influencing the Pursuit of Higher Education (FIPHE) Questionnaire designed by researcher Sandra Harris (1998) to answer the three research questions proposed throughout this study. Harris developed this instrument to assess factors thought to influence a person's decision to pursue higher education. The survey consisted of nine factors: (a) family influence, (b) financial aid concerns, (c) glass ceiling, (d) peer influence, (e) preparation for college, (f) relative functionalism, (g) secondary school support, (h) self-appraisal, and (i) sister influence. Students were asked to respond to a total of 92 items on the questionnaire that were connected to the nine factors.

To secure the participation of the school, the researcher obtained and documented written permissions from the principal and the school district that oversees VAPA before starting the study. The researcher was intent on receiving consent from all participants, prioritizing the students' safety and confidentiality at every part of the process. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom teachers were consulted for their permission to visit their classrooms, and after obtaining approval from the teachers, the researcher visited the 12<sup>th</sup> grade homerooms to explain the scope and purpose of the study to the students. During these visits, the researcher provided in-person support. The purpose of the study was discussed, and the participants were given an opportunity to ask questions in order to better understand what was being asked of their participation, should they extend it. Lastly, students were asked to take the Factors Influencing Pursuit of Higher Education (FIPHE) Questionnaire and Student Demographic Questionnaire after the submission and recording of both parental and youth consent forms.

All 12<sup>th</sup> grade students were invited to participate, but only students of Latino, Hispanic or Mexican descents were included in the data analyses as it was the experiences of this ethnic population that the study was focused. At the time the data was collected, all participants were in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and expecting to graduate in June 2017. While there was a combination of 262 possible Latino participants, a total of 160 Latino students, (119) girls and (41) boys, responded to the questionnaires. The data collection took place from March – April 2017.

### Findings

Based on the quantitative results, the *likelihood* to pursue college education is most affected by internally (self-appraisal) and externally (peer influence) driven factors. The Hierarchical Linear Regression (HLR) analyses portion of the FIPHE questionnaire indicates that the best predictors of the *likelihood* of pursuing higher education were self-appraisal,  $\beta = .26, p = .008$  and peer influence,  $\beta = .29, p = .001$ . Patterns among the data also revealed that self-appraisal had the most positive correlation with the likelihood of going to college,  $r = .24, p = .002$  followed closely by peer influence,  $r = .24, p = .003$ . Glass ceiling effects  $\beta = -.18, p = .032$  and sister's influence,  $\beta = -.20, p = .012$ , however, negatively predicted the *likelihood* of applying to a four-year college, according to the data.

When the influence of an arts curriculum was measured, the Hierarchical Linear Regression analyses found that the arts positively influenced their decision to apply to a 4-year college but did not significantly influence the participants' choice of major with only 28% selecting the arts as part of their undergraduate focus. In another preliminary single-sample t-test, data revealed a mean score of 4.90 out of 10, which indicated the visual and performing arts influenced the *likelihood* of applying to a 4-year college.

Based on the ANOVA results,  $F(3, 153) = .21, p = .891$ , all academies at the Visual and Performing Arts High School, including dance, music, theater, and visual arts, had a positive effect on the likelihood of applying to college. The self-reported application rate between the academies was an average of 65.25%. The college acceptance rate, however, varied, with the music academy having the highest acceptance rate (70%), and the visual arts academy having the lowest acceptance rate (45%). Due to the non-experimental nature of the study, no causal inferences were drawn. Due to the non-probability nature of the sampling, conclusions are limited to the study's participants.

### Conclusions

Based upon the findings of this study, the following five conclusions were drawn:

**Conclusion 1.** Regarding academic capability, students perceive their own self-appraisal and that of their peers as the factors most affecting their *likelihood* to apply to college. This conclusion is supported by the fact that 92% of participants agreed that they would be good college students; 91% of students noted that they chose their college major because they found it challenging; 91% reported that they would be successful in their future careers; and 73% of respondents indicated they chose their college major because they are already good at it, as is the proven case with VAPA students. At 68%, considering that more than half of the participants reported applying to a 4-year college, these findings indicated that VAPA Latino students believe in themselves and their abilities to be academically successful in their college careers because they are academically successful at VAPA. These findings on self-appraisal suggest that students who wish to be in charge of their lives will also make plans of actions for their future, have a positive attitude to make things happen, and surround themselves with likeminded individuals (Glasser, 1998). This conclusion is further supported by Bandura's (1997) findings

that students who believe in their own abilities to succeed have better control of their achievement in school.

In this case, Bandura's (1997) definition of self-efficacy is defined as, "the conviction that one can successfully execute the behaviors required to produce outcome" (p.79). In other words, self-efficacy refers to the belief that one's capacity to organize will likely lead to actions that will allow an individual to successfully overcome adversity (Bandura, 1986). The VAPA Latino students see college as an attainable goal because the skill sets they acquired at the Fame school were transferable to postsecondary life.

Similar to Glasser and Bandura (1977), Lent, Brown, and Hackett defined academic self-efficacy as the level of confidence that a student feels with regard to his or her ability to successfully complete academic milestones (1994). For example, when a task is successfully completed, a student's confidence increases, along with their perception that they can accomplish a similar task in the future. On the contrary, self-efficacy beliefs are expected to decline when a student fails to accomplish a task. The diminished self-efficacy beliefs can further lead to less desirable behavioral outcomes over time.

Positive peer influence was the second highest predictor as to the likelihood that a senior Latino student at VAPA will apply to college. The data showed that 91% had friends they can talk to about future career goals, 85% had friends they can talk to about their future college experiences, and 80% had friends who understood the demands of college. Glasser (1998) noted that the most important need in a person's life is love and belonging, and when these needs are met, everything else will take care of itself. For the Latino students in this study, peers served as a supportive network where they, otherwise, may be lacking one. Bernard (1993) found that supportive peer relationships could help ameliorate risks of low-income homes, which is an

economic reality for most of the participants in this study. Socio-economically disadvantaged students can increase school engagement and create a positive outlook about school and their scholastic aspirations when emotionally supportive relations are formed.

The inverse is also found to be true. In 2008, Ream and Rumberger focused on predictors of dropout rates among high school students and found that among academically engaged students, organized sports and art activities tended to reduce the likelihood of dropping out. Given Fame's exceptionally high graduation rate of 94% and low dropout rate of .0014%, this study exemplifies these findings as VAPA students are beating the odds.

Assuming that trusting relationships were developed, these bonds were instrumental in creating an environment in which students mutually supported each other to reach their goals together (Gandara, 2002). Gibson et al. (2004) define peer social capital as an "adolescent's connections to peers and peer networks that can provide access to tangible forms of support that facilitate the accomplishment of academic goals" (p.8). They found that students who could turn to their high-achieving friends for help during life challenges could mediate problems, proving that "when students build a sense of trust, respect, and mutual support, it carries over into their classrooms" (p. 4).

It can be said, then, that peer relationships formed at Fame High School have enabled students to support each other toward their higher educational pursuits. Strong bonds formed in the shared pursuit of artistic endeavors built a sense of community that promoted upward mobility for these minority youth, which could be obtained by applying to college, when they otherwise might not be exposed to this educational pipeline. These friendships essentially propelled Fame High School students into artistic and academic success.

**Conclusion 2.** The Latino students had not perceived the glass ceiling effect as a threat to their future or the likelihood of applying to college. According to the data, 82% of respondents indicated that their race did not limit their choice of college major, 76% indicated that their gender did not limit their choice of college major, and 59% reported society did not limit their choice of college major. The Latino students in this study adopted a view that their ethnicity and gender did not restrict their path toward higher education. These findings coincide with Glasser's (1998) notion that the reason an individual makes a decision is because he or she has the ability to choose irrespective of any external factors encountered in life. These findings are timely, as recent political furor over illegal immigration has exacerbated a false impression about Latino minorities. The truth is that most Latino minorities were born here, are working hard, and going to school. Women and minorities face gender, cultural and color-based barriers, but the Fame High School students did not believe these variables would limit their aspirations.

Ethnic minorities in America face discrimination and stereotypes that can undermine their confidence or limit their potential. Whether "negative" or "positive" stereotypes, these are perceptions that minorities must overcome. Even worse is when ethnic minorities come to accept other's negative stereotypes about them even when the facts do not support those biases as truths. Some Latinos have absorbed those negative stereotypes in defiance of the fact. For these reasons, minorities remain vulnerable to the consequences of discrimination, even though they may overcome those harmful biases, across income and education, for example.

**Conclusion 3.** The visual and performing arts had a positive influence on 4-year college applications. While the mean score for the one-sample t-test came in relatively low at 4.9 out of 10, it nonetheless indicated that the arts had a measurable influence on the likelihood that students would apply to a 4-year college. With 69% of participants self-reporting that they

submitted an application to college and 58% receiving an acceptance to college, analyses conclude that the arts had a positive influence on the Latino students' higher education pursuits. This conclusion coincides with a study by the National Endowment for the Arts (2006) who found that the arts have a positive impact on the college pathway. According to the NEA study, learning experiences in the arts can contribute to the development of other academic skills, including reading, language development, and mathematics, especially for minority low-income students. The College Board (2005) also found that students who took 4 years of arts coursework outperformed peers on the SAT who had a half-year or less of arts, which suggests that long-term exposure to an arts curriculum leads to success in areas of academia that tend to have long-term effects.

The arts can inspire, uplift, and even motivate students that are not normally reached via traditional academic methods and standards. Unfortunately, not all children have equal access to an arts education. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) (2008) found only 26% of Latinos ages 18 to 24 received art courses in high school, compared to 59% of White students. This statistic is not without consequence, as students with art courses are, reportedly, 30% less likely to drop out of high school, and were 29% more likely to apply to college than were nonarts students.

In 1998, the majority of California's Latino students attend low-income Title I public schools with fewer resources (Riggs & Serafin). The prevailing attitude and practice with regard to the use of Title I funds to support arts education has been that arts education is not permissible under guidelines of Title I goals. As a result, arts participation varies greatly across the state, within districts and schools, and even within classrooms. Consequently, many low-income Latino youth do not have equal access to school art programs and instead are geared toward

remedial instruction in reading and math (California Department of Education, 2013). Today, a disproportionate amount of Latino students enroll in 2-year community colleges. Even among Latinos who graduated from California's top public high schools, only 46% enrolled in a community college after graduation (Balassone, 2013).

There is a need to expand the visual and performing arts at every level of a child's educational career. Minority and low-income youth should have the same level of access to coursework that will provide their academic career with the most enrichment, irrelevant of income or social status. Fame High School is breaking the norm among schools in an urban area where funding tends to be the most scarce. The majority of the students are Latino and low income, yet they defy the odds with extraordinarily high college application rates and acceptance outcomes. These Latino students shatter perceptions that low income students are destined to fail.

**Conclusion 4.** Across data findings, the four art academies had an equal influence on the likelihood of applying to college based on the ANOVA results,  $F(3, 153) = .21, p = .891$ . All academies had on average equal representation of 62% among the 4-year college application rates. A study by the NEA (2006) indicated there is no "art penalty" relative to college admission as once perceived by many counselors, teachers, and parents who tried to restrict students from arts coursework for fear that such additions would prevent them from creating competitive transcripts. Evidence from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (2016) found that students who would like to pursue art coursework in high school should be encouraged to do so without fear of harming their chances of being accepted. Furthermore, the NEA (2006) found that by age 30, students who had pursued arts education during high school were 55% more likely to attend a 4-year college than their non-art peers. Results from this study

suggest that, in many respects, adolescent arts students achieve significantly more positive developmental outcomes than their peers who do not pursue art coursework in school (Elpus, 2013), and contrary to previous beliefs, these art-based accomplishments translated to successful outcomes in other aspects of academic betterment.

This finding illustrates the influence of a visual and performing arts high school program and the interplay between ethnicity as it relates to how Latino students come to apply to 4-year colleges, how they are supported in choosing to do so and how they are not. Of the 60% that applied to a 4-year college, 58% of those were accepted. The majority of Fame's Latino students are successful despite the many challenges these youngsters face. No matter which art form or creative route each child had selected, it was evident that students were college or career ready.

**Conclusion 5.** The current college-going culture at Fame High School appeared to contribute to higher rates of college acceptance for Latino students than for Latino students throughout the area. This study found that of the Latino students enrolled at Fame High School 68.8% applied to a 4-year college and 58% were accepted. This rate is much higher than that of the surrounding school district. According to data analysis on college enrollment for the school district, 27% in the Class of 2016 enrolled in a 4-year university immediately after high school graduation. A total of 62% of Latino students who graduated from the school district in 2016 enrolled in a two or four-college in the fall immediately after graduation (Favot, 2017). The University of California (UC) fall 2016 acceptance data revealed that a total of 32% of Fame students applied to the prestigious UC system and 22% were admitted. In comparison to three local high schools which had an 8%, 19% and 25% UC acceptance rates. One school being a Magnet school which had 223 students apply of which 25% were accepted. Compared to Fame's 361 students who applied and 22% were accepted.

The following are elements that may have attributed to this rise in college acceptance for these Latino students. Over the past three years, Fame High School's was intentional in creating a college-going culture. Some ways the administration achieved a college-going culture include: (a) funding a full-time college counselor, (b) setting up a table with college planning information at back-to-school, parent conferences, and freshmen orientation events, (c) presented in many ways and forms of communication for parents to receive college-planning materials (d) presented a college-going messages to all students at all levels of academic rigor, (e) college recruiters were invited to present information especially to lower classmen, (f) made time at school-wide events to present a college-going message to the rest of the school, (g) worked with student council to incorporate college going messages into spirit days, and (h) established "college signing day" where seniors pledge to the college they will attend by signing a banner and announcing the college they have selected.

The school emphasizes that a college degree provides students with life options, rather than limitations. According the College Board (2017) a college-going culture helps all students set high academic goals, an appreciation of academics, desire to succeed, and a drive to attend college and become a lifelong learner. These values are especially important for low-achieving students, students from low-income families, underrepresented minorities, and students from families in which no one has attended college before. Fame High School is a Title I school with a predominant Latino student population. The majorities of families do not have college graduate parents, recognizing the needs of its students that Fame have a dedicated counseling office to college resources, with information on scholarships, financial aid, applications, and specific colleges. Students are encouraged to schedule conferences with the college counselor regardless of academic level to monitor future plans.

In addition, advisory teachers lead sessions on college-related issues, such as writing essays, getting recommendations, prepare for test, apply for financial aid and planning for careers. The college counselor facilitates parent workshops providing translation when necessary to engage parents by providing knowledge and debunking myths about available college-related options. An annual college fair is hosted with representatives from a variety of educational institutions which present information about their college, different areas of study, career pathways and employment forecast for graduates. Fame high school celebrates successes, by compiling a graduate directory of alumni and the colleges they attend, announce student college acceptance publicly and post on the school marquee. Fame high school has changed the school culture to where college is perceived as the norm rather than the exception.

### **Recommendations**

Based upon the prior conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

**Recommendation 1.** Teachers should seek out opportunities to build Latino students' self-appraisal and increase peer interactions. Researchers suggest that rote teaching strategies account for much of the poor performance and low educational achievement among many Latino students (Fletcher & Cordona-Morales, 1990; Padron & Waxman, 1993; Waxman, Huang, & Padron, 1995). The rote lecturing controlled by the teacher that is accompanied by a great deal of seatwork tends to prioritize low-level skills and passive instruction with students following directions from higher authority (Haberman, 1991; Stephen, Varble, & Tait, 1993; Waxman, Huang & Padron, 1995). This study reveals that self-appraisal, self-efficacy, and peer interactions have a positive influence on academic motivation, learning, and achievement. To implement an arts-heavy curriculum, teachers must be taught to instruct and manage their classrooms in ways that are, in themselves, creative, that promote bonding relationships among

students which can then positively affect students' attitude toward school, their behavior at school, and their academic achievement overall. Through classroom management techniques such as establishing consistent classroom expectations, creating routines at the beginning of the year, and recognizing desirable student behavior can create a classroom environment conducive to cooperative learning activities (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999). The most important job for an educator is to produce a generation of confident, eloquent, creative thinkers who can understand, effectively reflect, and enjoy the learning process. Inculcating Latino students with the belief that they have the skills to be successful is the best way to increase the likelihood that they will rely on their own strength when facing challenges. Interactive teaching strategies such as instructional conversations that prioritize extended dialogues between students and teachers have produced positive results for Latino students, especially English Language Learners (August & Hakuta, 1998; Tharp, 1995; Duran, Dugan & Weffer, 1997; Christian, 1994). Assessing student knowledge before teaching, modeling skills to be learned, and frequently monitoring student comprehension as they are processing the material being presented all help contribute to student achievement.

It is recommended that teachers incorporate instructional strategies such as cooperative learning, student-led conferences, and hands-on group work that calls for increased peer interaction and incorporates the use of rubrics and reflective writing to build better self-appraisal skills. These strategies are student-centered as the teacher acts best as a facilitator rather than a lecturer (McLaughlin & McLeod 1996; Johnson & Johnson, 1991). Moreover, these strategies have proven sound results among Latino students (Bejarano 1987; Rivera & Zehler, 1991; Calderon, 1991; Christian, 1994; Montes-Alcala, 2000).

These strategies are intended to promote a sense of community in school, which satisfies basic psychological needs for safety, belonging, and competence (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991). When these basic needs are fulfilled, students are more likely to become engaged in school, and, therefore, are further inclined to behave in accordance with the school's values, a phenomenon referred to as "school bonding" (Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992). Low-income Latino students are more likely to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and their school if they are involved in a supportive environment. Students that feel a sense of connectedness, belonging, and community will feel a sense of security through the close relationships they build with their peers. What better place to cultivate those relationships than within the classroom?

**Recommendation 2.** Hiring practices in the educational field should include teachers with a mindset for dispelling glass ceiling ideologies, teachers of color who will play a critical role in ensuring equity within the educational system. The U.S. Department of Education (2016) found that diversity in schools, including racial diversity among teachers, could provide significant benefits to students. While students of color are expected to make up 56% of the student population by 2024, the elementary and secondary educator workforce is still overwhelmingly White. Figures from the data show that the elementary and secondary educator workforce is racially disproportionate, with 82% of staff in public schools reported as White (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). School districts must be intentional in hiring teachers of color in order to address the achievement gap and get more Latino students into college.

Notably, while they are important as relatable role models for minority students, improving teacher diversity can help students of all ethnicities as teachers of color break down negative stereotypes that are harmful to everyone. A diverse workforce is especially powerful

when supplemented by culturally responsive teaching practices that stress an appreciation for diversity (Peregoy & Boyle, 2000; Boyer, 1993; Rivera & Zehler, 1991). These practices are particularly important for low-income minority students who may not have people in their family or social network that can support their academic endeavors in all the ways that were tested in this study (Alvarez, Blume, Cervantes & Thomas, 2009). Grissom & Redding (2016) found that, when compared to their White peers, teachers of color are more likely to (a) have higher expectations of students of color; (b) confront issues of racism; (3) serve as advocates and cultural brokers; and (4) develop more trusting relationships with students, particularly with those whom they share cultural background with.

**Recommendation 3.** Low-income schools should provide opportunities for students to participate in various art programs. VAPA programs provide a great opportunity for peer collaboration, in effect, reaching those students who may not normally work together in academic courses, but are now likely to work together in the art courses. The creation of intergrade level art activities can provide effective ways for student mentoring in which the higher-level students can be hands-on and work with younger lower-level students. This creation of inter-grade level art activities can also uphold the curriculum's integrity at-large because key skills will be shared among the student body as opposed to remaining with a small number of graduating students. Younger mentee students return the following year and can serve as cross-age tutors for students entering the program, in effect, building upon previous excellence and expertise. When encountering challenges, students can help each other by referring to their collective strategies. School-based mentoring has been proven to produce many positive outcomes for youth, such as improved academic performance and quality of class work, as well as an increase to the student's perception of their own scholastic competence (Jucovy, 2002).

It follows, then, that student's academic prognosis betters in accordance with increased agency. If schools allowed students to have a choice in the type of art form in which they can participate, then the benefit is that art programs can provide the vital "hook" students may need to get tuned in and stay tuned in at school. Art programs provide an opportunity to pursue a passion in which the traditional academic courses may not fulfill, and, therefore, can reinforce content that is learned throughout the school day. They can assist a student with processing traditionally academic material. A classroom that includes an arts curriculum can also, however, function differently than a traditional classroom. Art courses may provide more excitement for students through a less academic approach for one that is more fun. An arts education is not, however, less rigorous nor less rewarding.

Fame High School is a success story and highlights the need for more theme schools where students have a dual mission that encourages both traditional and artistic talents. While students at Fame High School feel a sense of community, collaboration and maintain genuine, caring relationships with school personnel, it is everyone's passion for the arts that brings these kids together. This program demonstrates to be an academic environment that benefits Latino students and all students. If society is to adequately educate the next generation of college bound students, we must reconsider the current traditional high school model.

**Recommendation 4.** Urban school districts should utilize Title I funds to support art programs in low-income schools. In 2004, the U.S. Secretary of Education released a letter to schools indicating that Title I money could be used to support art education programs. Despite approval, many school districts are reluctant to use Title I funds to strengthen arts education. Under the new federal education law called the Every Student Succeeds Act, law makers clearly state that Title I funds can be used to enrich arts-based curriculums, specifically listing the arts as

part of a “well-rounded education.” This information, however, has yet to reach the students. Title I has four named goals, to: improve student achievement, increase student engagement, increase parent engagement, and improve school climate and culture. A 2011 survey conducted by Arts for All found that students attending Title I schools in Los Angeles had disproportionately lower access to arts education when compared to their more economically-advantaged peers, but despite evidence demonstrating the ability of arts education to help advance the goals of Title I, low-income Latino students in urban area continue to suffer, diminishing their likelihood towards college admission.

Every student should have access to an arts education. Schools would best serve the futures of their students if they had robust art programs that included dance and theater alongside music and visual arts. Arts education can help transform the learning environment in schools by fostering student engagement, attendance, and the motivation to learn and improve school culture and climate (Walker, Tabone, Weltsek, 2011; Stevenson and Deasy, 2005). These outcomes are leading indicators of student achievement and are also key ingredients for turning around low-performing schools that can have lasting effects in their undergraduate aspirations. As Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said in his letter to school and community leaders, “The arts can help students become tenacious, team-orientated problem solvers who are confident and to think creatively” (The California Alliance for Arts Education, 2014, p.3). As a result, “Arts education remains critical to leveling the playing field of opportunity” (The California Alliance for Arts Education, 2014, p.3).

Setting the bar high, the proven track record of Fame High School’s support of Latino students encourages a reexamination of the ways schools and communities can increase the success of its minority students so that they can continue to perform to their potential after

graduation. The reality is that most school districts do not prioritize the visual and performing arts within their annual budgets, and instead choose to solely emphasize scholastic or remedial courses. This mindset must change if we are to meet the needs of our students. This study highlights a strong need to duplicate art programs such as the VAPA program from Fame High school so that all schools can increase the likelihood of college admissions among their greatly disadvantaged Latino students.

**Recommendation 5.** Schools should be intentional in creating a college-going culture. The most current Bureau of Labor Statistics earnings by education report demonstrate the importance of a college education: a person with a Ph.D. earns an average of \$1,623 a week. A person with a master's degree earns an average of \$1,341 a week. A person with a bachelor's degree earns an average of \$1,137 a week. A person with an associate degree earns an average of \$798 a week. Unfortunately, a person with only a high school diploma earns an average of \$678 a week. More education leads to better prospects for earnings.

A college-going culture builds the expectation of postsecondary education for all students, not just the best students (College Board, 2006). Students who are from low-income households, minorities, and families where no one has attended college before may not see college as the next step after high school. These students are more likely to face college-planning obstacles because of social barriers, less access to information and guidance, less exploration because of low expectations and underestimation of the amount of financial aid available (College Board, 2006). The result is that the education gap in our country increases. High school administrators should dedicate their efforts to closing this gap. Given the current earning trends, the necessity of a college education is evident.

Some ways school administrators can build a college-going culture is to get out of their office and interact with students. Building relationships with students can create a sense of trust motivating students to believe in the school's vision. Teachers can assist by infusing pro-college activities into their lessons and focusing on skills needed to be successful in college such as note taking, study habits, and money management. Administrators can facilitate family meetings in which families who have enrolled their children to college can share their experiences. Getting into to college is only the beginning, having conversations with families and students about what to expect in college is equally important to avoid common pitfalls.

School leaders play a critical role in student achievement and student success. Administrators set the tone by creating traditions and expectations for college after high school. Administrators cannot do it alone, all school staff, parents, and students play a role in echoing the expectation of higher education after high school. Teachers especially can share with students their own pathways to college allowing for students to hear various possibilities to access higher education. Students benefit from the ever-present reminders of college expectations.

### **Methodological Enhancements**

This study was a quantitative assessment. One possible methodological enhancement could be to incorporate qualitative face-to-face interviews with the subjects. Some respondents left questions blank and allocating additional time to interview those students may have provided an opportunity for follow-up questions, providing further data for the researchers. Quantitative research does not provide detailed insights about why people act in certain ways nor does it allow the subjects to discuss their feelings about their actions. Interviews could have encouraged students to expand their responses that may have led to new topic areas that, although were not initially considered, could've allowed researchers to improve their measuring methods.

Furthermore, participants would not be restricted to specific questions on surveys, because in-person, the researcher can provide live follow-up as new information surfaces. Face-to-face interviews can be filled with subtleties and complexities about the research topic that could be missed on questionnaires as trends emerge from individual and collective responses over the course of the data collection.

Another enhancement would have been to make contact with parents directly. Although family influence was not measured as a significant predictor of student's likelihood to apply to college, parental input could help better inform this study in ways not currently predictable. It would allow for more in-depth data collection and comprehensive understanding by allowing for further explanations as to the unique experience of each subject. Telephone, email, or online interviews could all have led to new, emergent information because, due to the working hours of many parents, additional modes of communication would have allowed for extended access to those who were, otherwise, hard to reach during traditional hours.

Although the preliminary testing did not reveal that any student demographic question was imprecise, the student demographic question regarding the mother's and father's years of formal education, however, was not clear. This question could have been more specific, or it could have been eliminated from the questionnaire all together. While useful data was collected, this particular question regarding the level of formal education among student's parents was not necessary to this study. If further research intends on highlighting parental influence on students' likelihood to apply to college, the question should be revised to increase the chances of getting a clearer, more significant finding.

Part of the reason this study chose to not focus on parental influence is because parental involvement tends to decline as students enter high school (Simon, 2001). A common deficit

assumption about Latino parents is they do not contribute to their child's education because they do not participate in school systems in expected ways. Giving parents multiple opportunities to be involved in their child's education may yield increased 4-year college application rates among Latino youth. However, typical parental involvement such as volunteering in the school, being a parent member of school governing organizations, attending parent conferences, and assisting in learning activities at home (Epstein, 1995) may not always be possible for many Latino parents due to demanding or inflexible work schedules or language barriers between parents and schools. Research has shown that minority student's perceptions of their parents' academic expectations of them can be an important aspect of parental influence on academic achievement that can translate to increased motivation to do well in school (Garrett et al., 2010).

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

The academic underachievement of Latino students has been a topic of concern among researchers for decades (Valenzuela, 1999; Gandara, 2001; Ceja, 2004). The findings of this study suggest that students who are immersed in a visual and performing arts high school program, along with the quality of their relationships with their peers and the ability to extend positive self-appraisal promoted academic success for the Fame High School Latino students. These finding, however, have some limitations, and there are several opportunities for further research.

A replication of this study using a larger sample size could produce a greater generalization about the population and yield a more precise representation of the phenomenon. The size of the sample dictates the amount of information collected and therefore, in part, determines the precision or level of confidence in the findings. Increasing the sample size could give a greater ability to detect differences. For example, this study included a disproportionate

representation of girls versus boys. If the sample size is increased to include more representation or equal representation of boys, a clearer analysis can be made between the genders. The larger sample sizes give more reliable results with greater precision to draw more meaningful conclusion about the relationship between the nine factors and the likelihood of college application outcomes. This increases the findings' external validity, or the likelihood that the results are truly indicative of a trend in the population, while also increasing the odds that outliers will be captured. Accounting for outliers gives a more realistic picture of the characteristics of the population by identifying what is likely and what isn't.

Another type of research that could improve findings is including a mixed methodology in which qualitative perspectives of secondary high school personnel are also measured as part of the study, such as those of counselors, teachers and principals. The school environment is shaped by many factors, from the principal's leadership to the teacher's discipline methods, the counselor's policies regarding tracking, and the school's inclusion or exclusion of parents in the decision-making process. Perhaps the most important in determining the school's environment is the quality of the students' relationship with the school's personnel. By soliciting perspectives from secondary school personnel, correlations could be drawn between college admission rates and the school's climate and rules, as well as in relation to teacher's and the district's expectations of students and the consequences for when they are not met. Improving on these factors can lead to increased student motivation, engagement and feeling a bond to the school, all of which improve student success rates. When students find their school environment to be supportive and caring, they are less likely to become involved in behavioral problems (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Battistich & Hom, 1997; Resnick et al., 1997).

Further research could include a study of other types of theme high schools and /or a comparison of two theme high schools. This type of education sometimes incorporates forms of learning linked to a specific focus capitalizing on the advantages of closer relationships among teachers and students (Meier, 1995). Students in these schools tend to have a strong sense of community, are more likely to be thoughtful and reflective, to be self-directed but also accept the authority of those in charge (Osterman, 2000; Battistich, Kim & Solomon, 1995). When students' basic needs such as safety, belonging, autonomy and competency are satisfied they are more likely to be motivated, contribute to the school community and develop social skills and understanding to succeed in the world outside the classroom upon graduation.

Further research on thematic schools could not only inform on building student to teacher, but also peer relationships. It could also provide strategies for making curriculum more relevant and personally meaningful to students. Thematic approach reshapes the high school by rethinking its purpose and structure. It is an alternative to traditional monolithic high schools, dominated by the academic courses of the college preparatory curriculum. The traditional high school has provided very little choice to students except for an array of elective courses of college preparatory curriculum. It does not link the school to the world or the community in the way a theme schools do. Converting large high schools to schools within schools, small learning communities, academies, or schools with "majors" is a mammoth undertaking. Further research on this topic with a focus on the Latino population could provide insight as to whether theme-based schools enhance motivation, engagement, student achievement and most importantly 4-year college application rates.

A follow-up study on Latino parental involvement in high school and the influence that may have on college applications can lead to valuable insights. Parental involvement tends to

decline as students enter high school (Simon, 2001). A common deficit assumption about Latino parents is they do not contribute to their child's education because they do not participate in school systems in expected ways. Giving parents multiple opportunities to be involved in their child's education may yield increased 4-year college application rates among Latino youth. However, typical parental involvement such as volunteering in the school, being a parent member of school governing organizations, attending parent conferences, and assisting in learning activities at home (Epstein, 2010) may not always be possible for many Latino parents due to demanding or inflexible work schedules or language barriers that can exist between parents and schools. Research has shown that minority student's perceptions of their parents' academic expectations of them can be an important aspect of parental influence on academic achievement that can translate to increased motivation to do well in school (Garrett et al., 2010).

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## APPENDIX A

### Parent Letter

Pepperdine University

*Graduate School of Education and Psychology*

#### PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

#### FACTORS LATINOS PERCEIVE AS INFLUENCING THEIR PURSUIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by Doctoral student Eva Lara, M.A. and Dr. Diana Hiatt-Michael, Ed.D at Pepperdine University, because he/she is a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student at Ramon C. Cortines School of Visual and Performing Arts. Participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to allow your child to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to allow your child to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will also be given a copy of this form for you records.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this quantitative case study is to measure factors that might explain Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' decision to apply to college compared to non-college bound Latino students from one Southern California visual and performing arts high school with regard to the influence of nine independent variables: (a) influence of family, (b) influence of peers, (c) perceptions of the functions of higher education, (d) perceived opportunity for success in college, (e) perceived competence in college, (f) perceived locus of control, (g) encouragement from secondary school personnel, (h) importance of financial aid, and (i) general preparation for college. This examination can contribute to the body of information on the Latino student population. The secondary purpose of this study is to measure the influence of an art-themed education on Latino students' likelihood to pursue higher education.

#### STUDY PROCEDURES

If you agree to allow your child to voluntarily to take part in this study, he/she will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which is anticipated to take about 15 minutes. Your child does not

have to answer any questions he/she does want to and may leave it blank and move on to the next question.

### POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks to your child's participation. If your child may feel uncomfortable answering some or all of the questions, he/she does not have to answer any question he/she does not want to.

### POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no anticipated benefits to your child for his/her participation. We hope that this study will help researchers learn more about the perspectives of both college bound and non-college bound Latino students. The findings will be shared with school administrators, teachers, counselors, and district leaders, which may lead to the implementation of interventions and/or policies that promote 4-year college enrollment rates among Latino students in the school district. However, there is no direct benefit to your child for participating in this study.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

We will keep your records for this study confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if we are required to do so by law, we will disclose confidential information about you. Pepperdine University's Human Subject Protection Program (HSPP) may access the data. The HSPP reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in the principal investigator's place of residence. The data collected will be coded and de-identified. There will be no identifiable information obtained in connection with this study. Your child's name, address or other identifiable information will not be collected. Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Each questionnaire will be coded with a number. The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in the researcher's residence for three years after the study has been completed and then destroyed. All hard copies (consent documents, survey instrument, etc.) will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's residence for three years after the study has been completed and then destroyed.

### SUSPECTED NEGLECT OR ABUSE OF CHILDREN

Under California law, the researcher(s) who may also be a mandated reporter will not maintain as confidential, information about known or reasonably suspected incidents of abuse or neglect of a child, dependent adult or elder, including, but not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse or neglect. If any researcher has or is given such information, he or she may be required to report this abuse to the proper authorities.

### PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your child's participation is voluntary. His/her refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. He/she and/or you may withdraw consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your child's participation in this research study.

### ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or only completing the items for which your child feels comfortable.

### INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

You understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries you may have concerning the research herein described. You understand that you may contact Eva Lara at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or at xxxxx@gmail.com or Dr. Diana Hiatt-Michael at xxxxx@pepperdine.edu if you have any other questions or concerns about this research.

### RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or [gpsirb@pepperdine.edu](mailto:gpsirb@pepperdine.edu).

### SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GAURDIAN

You have read the information provided above. You have been given a chance to ask questions. Your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you agree to allow your child to participate in this study. You have been given a copy of this consent form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parent or Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

You have explained the research to the subjects and answered all of his/her questions. In your judgment the participants are knowingly, willingly and intelligently agreeing to participate in this study. S/he has the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study and all of the various components. The subject has also been informed participation is voluntarily and that s/he may discontinue s/he participation in the study at any time, for any reason.

---

Name of Person Obtaining Consent

---

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

---

Date

## APPENDIX B

### Parent Informed Consent

Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

#### PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

#### FACTORS LATINOS PERCEIVE AS INFLUENCING THEIR PURSUIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by Doctoral student Eva Lara, M.A. and Dr. Diana Hiatt-Michael, Ed.D at Pepperdine University, because he/she is a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student at Ramon C. Cortines School of Visual and Performing Arts. Participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to allow your child to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to allow your child to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will also be given a copy of this form for you records.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this quantitative case study is to measure factors that might explain Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' decision to apply to college compared to non-college bound Latino students from one Southern California visual and performing arts high school with regard to the influence of nine independent variables: (a) influence of family, (b) influence of peers, (c) perceptions of the functions of higher education, (d) perceived opportunity for success in college, (e) perceived competence in college, (f) perceived locus of control, (g) encouragement from secondary school personnel, (h) importance of financial aid, and (i) general preparation for college. This examination can contribute to the body of information on the Latino student population. The secondary purpose of this study is to measure the influence of an art-themed education on Latino students' likelihood to pursue higher education.

## STUDY PROCEDURES

If you agree to allow your child to voluntarily to take part in this study, he/she will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which is anticipated to take about 15 minutes. Your child does not have to answer any questions he/she does want to and may leave it blank and move on to the next question.

## POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks to your child's participation. If your child may feel uncomfortable answering some or all of the questions, he/she does not have to answer any question he/she does not want to.

## POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no anticipated benefits to your child for his/her participation. We hope that this study will help researchers learn more about the perspectives of both college bound and non-college bound Latino students. The findings will be shared with school administrators, teachers, counselors, and district leaders, which may lead to the implementation of interventions and/or policies that promote 4-year college enrollment rates among Latino students in the school district. However, there is no direct benefit to your child for participating in this study.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

We will keep your records for this study confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if we are required to do so by law, we will disclose confidential information about you. Pepperdine University's Human Subject Protection Program (HSPP) may access the data. The HSPP reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in the principal investigator's place of residence. The data collected will be coded and de-identified. There will be no identifiable information obtained in connection with this study. Your child's name, address or other identifiable information will not be collected. Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Each questionnaire will be coded with a number. The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in the researcher's residence for three years after the study has been completed and then destroyed. All hard copies (consent documents, survey instrument, etc.) will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's residence for three years after the study has been completed and then destroyed.

## SUSPECTED NEGLECT OR ABUSE OF CHILDREN

Under California law, the researcher(s) who may also be a mandated reporter will not maintain as confidential, information about known or reasonably suspected incidents of abuse or neglect of a child, dependent adult or elder, including, but not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional, and

financial abuse or neglect. If any researcher has or is given such information, he or she may be required to report this abuse to the proper authorities.

### PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your child's participation is voluntary. His/her refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. He/she and/or you may withdraw consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your child's participation in this research study.

### ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or only completing the items for which your child feels comfortable.

### INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

You understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries you may have concerning the research herein described. You understand that you may contact Eva Lara at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or at xxxxx@gmail.com or Dr. Diana Hiatt-Michael at xxxxx@pepperdine.edu if you have any other questions or concerns about this research.

### RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or [gpsirb@pepperdine.edu](mailto:gpsirb@pepperdine.edu).

### SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GAURDIAN

You have read the information provided above. You have been given a chance to ask questions. Your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you agree to allow your child to participate in this study. You have been given a copy of this consent form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parent or Legal Guardian

---

 Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

---

 Date

*SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR*

You have explained the research to the subjects and answered all of his/her questions. In your judgment the participants are knowingly, willingly and intelligently agreeing to participate in this study. S/he has the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study and all of the various components. The subject has also been informed participation is voluntarily and that s/he may discontinue s/he participation in the study at any time, for any reason.

---

 Name of Person Obtaining Consent

---

 Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

---

 Date

## APPENDIX C

## Parent Informed Consent Spanish

Carta Para Los Padres Fecha:

Yo, Eva Lara, empleada del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Los Ángeles y candidata doctoral en Pepperdine University envío esta carta es para informarle de que un proyecto de investigación se lleva a cabo en la escuela de su hijo(a) como parte de una tesis doctoral. Para mi tesis doctoral, estoy enfocando en que afecta la decisión de alumnos Latinos a inscribirse en la universidad. Se invita a su hijo(a) a participar en este proyecto de investigación, si cumple con los siguientes criterios:

1. Es estudiantes del 12 grado.
2. Tiene un promedio de calificaciones para cumplir con los requisitos de graduación de la escuela secundaria.

Los estudiantes que participan en el estudio completarán un cuestionario de 92 preguntas. El cuestionario le tomará aproximadamente 15 minutos para completar y será administrado por un maestro sustituto a través de clase de ciencias sociales. El cuestionario estará compuesto por preguntas que evaluarán (a) influencia de la familia; (b) la influencia de los compañeros; (c) la percepción de la función de la educación superior; (d) las oportunidades percibidas para el éxito en la universidad; (e) la competencia percibida en la universidad; (f) percibe locus de control; (g) el nivel de apoyo por parte del personal secundario; (h) importancia de ayuda financiera; (i) la preparación general para la universidad.

El nombre de su hijo(a) será confidencial y nadie sabrá que su hijo está participando en el estudio. Si en algún momento durante el estudio su hijo(a) quiere retirarse del estudio lo puede ser sin problema. Todos los cuestionarios se mantendrán en un lugar seguro y destruidos al final del estudio.

Los estudiantes que tengan 18 años de edad pueden firmar su propio formulario de consentimiento. Si permite que su hijo participe en el estudio, por favor firme el formulario de consentimiento y devuelvelo al profesor de ciencias sociales de su hijo. Si no desea que su hijo participe en el estudio, usted no necesita hacer nada. Su hijo(a) no ser penalizado por no participar en el estudio.

Si tiene alguna pregunta en cualquier momento durante el estudio, puede comunicarse con la investigadora, Eva Lara al xxx-xxx-xxxx.

Gracias,  
Eva Lara

## APPENDIX D

## Informed Consent Spanish

## Consentimiento de Los Padres Para Participar en la Investigación

Título del Proyecto: Factores que Perciben Alumnos Latinos que Influyen su decision ir a la Universidad

Investigadora: Eva Lara

Tesis Presidente: Dr. Michael Diana

Introducción: Yo, Eva Lara, empleada del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Los Ángeles y candidata doctoral en Pepperdine University envío esta carta es para informarle de que un proyecto de investigación se lleva a cabo en la escuela de su hijo(a) como parte de una tesis doctoral. Para mi tesis doctoral, estoy enfocando en que afecta la decisión de alumnos Latinos a inscribirse en la universidad. Se invita a su hijo(a) a participar en este proyecto de investigación, si cumple con los siguientes criterios:

1. Es estudiantes del 12 grado.
2. Tiene un promedio de calificaciones para cumplir con los requisitos de graduación de la escuela secundaria.

Propósito: Los estudiantes que participan en el estudio completarán un cuestionario de 92 preguntas. El cuestionario le tomará aproximadamente 15 minutos para completar y será administrado por un maestro sustituto a través de clase de ciencias sociales. El cuestionario estará compuesto por preguntas que evaluarán (a) influencia de la familia; (b) la influencia de los compañeros; (c) la percepción de la función de la educación superior; (d) las oportunidades percibidas para el éxito en la universidad; (e) la competencia percibida en la universidad; (f) percibe locus de control; (g) el nivel de apoyo por parte del personal secundario; (h) importancia de ayuda financiera; (i) la preparación general para la universidad.

Procedimientos: Si permite que su hijo(a) participe en el estudio, su hijo(a) va a completar una encuesta de 92 preguntas que se administra a través de la clase de ciencias sociales. El cuestionario le tomará aproximadamente 15 minutos para completarse.

Riesgo / Beneficios:

No se espera que en la participacion en esta investigacion su hijo(a) sentira incomodidad. Los estudiantes no estarán en riesgo de daño físico, psicológico, social y jurídico. El beneficio en la participación en este estudio es que las perspectivas de los estudiantes Latinos serán compartidos con los administradores escolares, maestros, consejeros y líderes de distrito, que pueden conducir intervenciones para la promoción de la matrícula en la universidad de los estudiantes Latinos.

**Compensación:**

Los estudiantes no recibirán compensación alguna por su participación en el estudio.

**Confidencialidad:**

La confidencialidad y el anonimato se mantendrá para todos los participantes. La información de identificación personal será protegida. Cada estudiante se le dará un número para asegurar que las respuestas no serán asociado de ninguna manera que implicará su participación en el estudio. Todos los datos recogidos en este estudio serán mantenidos en un archivador cerrado y en un archivo en la computadora protegido por contraseña. Sólo la investigadora tendrá acceso a estos archivos. Los cuestionarios individuales serán destruidos 3 años después de que se completó el estudio.

**La Participación en este Estudio es Voluntario:**

Si está de acuerdo para permitir que su hijo(a) a participar en el estudio, por favor coloque una marca junto a la afirmación "Doy permiso a mi hijo(a) a participar en el estudio. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta en cualquier momento durante el estudio, póngase en contacto con el investigadora, Eva Lara al xxx-xxx-xxxx.

**Declaración de Consentimiento:**

Por favor, coloque una marca en la línea si se le da permiso a su hijo a participar en este estudio.

\_\_\_\_\_ "Doy permiso a mi hijo(a) a participar en el estudio.

\_\_\_\_\_ "Yo no doy permiso a mi hijo(a) a participar en el estudio.

Su firma en la línea de abajo indica que ha leído y comprendido la información proporcionada anteriormente y si permite que su hijo participe en este estudio. Si no desea que su hijo participe en el estudio, sólo tiene que devolver esta forma sellada en el sobre adjunto. Si permite que su hijo participe en este estudio envía el formulario firmado y sellado en el sobre adjunto al maestro de su hijo.

Nombre de su hijo(a) \_\_\_\_\_

Firma \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E

## Recruitment Letter

Dear Student,

My name is Eva Lara, and I am a doctoral student in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am conducting quantitative case study to measure factors that might explain Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' decision to apply to college compared to non-college bound Latino students from one Southern California visual and performing arts high school with regard to the influence of nine independent variables: (a) influence of family, (b) influence of peers, (c) perceptions of the functions of higher education, (d) perceived opportunity for success in college, (e) perceived competence in college, (f) perceived locus of control, (g) encouragement from secondary school personnel, (h) importance of financial aid, and (i) general preparation for college. This examination can contribute to the body of information on the Latino student population. The secondary purpose of this study is to measure the influence of an art themed education on Latino students' *likelihood* to pursue higher education. If you agree, you are invited to participate in completing a questionnaire. The questionnaire is anticipated to take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your identity as a participant will remain confidential during and after the study. In place of personally identifying information, each student will be given a number to ensure that the responses will not be able to be traced back in any way that will imply participation in the study. A pseudonym is used to protect the confidentiality of the school site.

If you have questions, please contact me at xxxxx@gmail.com or (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

Thank you for your participation,

Eva Lara  
Pepperdine University  
School of Education and Psychology  
Doctoral Student

## APPENDIX F

## Demographic Survey

## Pepperdine University

## Graduate School of Education and Psychology

|   |
|---|
| DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION & ART RELATED QUESTIONS |
|---|

Please complete the following:

1. We would like to know what influence, if any, does the integration of the visual and performing arts in your high school education have on the likelihood of you going to a four-year college? On the scale of 0-10 (10 is highest likelihood). \_\_\_\_\_
2. I am enrolled in the following academy:
  - a) Dance    b) Music    c) Theater    d) Visual Arts
3. Please provide the following information:
 

I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

I am  Female  Male
4. My father has \_\_\_\_\_ years of formal education.
5. My mother has \_\_\_\_\_ years of formal education.
6. My father is a college graduate.
 

Yes

No
7. My mother is a college graduate.
 

Yes

No
8. The number of my brothers and/or sisters who have gone to college is \_\_\_\_\_.

9. I use free/reduced lunch at school.  
 Yes  
 No
10. My ethnicity is: (Check one)  
 White  
 African-American  
 Asian  
 Hispanic (Circle one below if you checked Hispanic)  
 A. Mexican-American (Mexican origin)  
 B. Cuban-American (Cuban origin)  
 C. Puerto Rican-American (Puerto Rican origin)  
 D. Central or South American  
 E. Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
11. I qualify for AB 540 status (non-resident student tuition)?  
 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_
12. My language at home is:  
 English Only  
 Mostly English  
 English/Spanish  
 Mostly Spanish  
 Spanish Only
13. My family qualifies for free and reduced lunch: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
14. I applied to a four-year college: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
15. I have been accepted into a four-year college:  
 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_
16. I will major in the arts in college: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
 If so, Theater \_\_\_\_\_ Dance \_\_\_\_\_ Music \_\_\_\_\_ Visual Art \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time and participation!

## APPENDIX G

## Permission to use FIPHE Questionnaire



## APPENDIX H

## FIPHE Questionnaire

*Factors Influencing Pursuit of Higher Education Questionnaire*

Dr. Sandra M. Harris

## Section 1

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Following is a series of statements that address factors which influence a person's decision to pursue higher education. There are no correct responses; please respond to each item as honestly as possible. Complete the questionnaire by marking the response closest to your agreement or disagreement with each statement. If a statement does not apply to you, leave the item blank. If a statement currently does not apply to you but has applied in the past, answer the statement as you would have in the past.

SA=Strongly Agree

A=Agree

D=Disagree

SD=Strongly Disagree

|   | <u>SA</u> | <u>A</u> | <u>D</u> | <u>SD</u> |
|---|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. My father encourages me to go to college.                                      | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 2. My mother encourages me to go to college.                                      | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 3. My mother is excited about me going to college.                                | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 4. My father is excited about me going to college.                                | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 5. My mother <u>does not</u> stress the importance of having a college education. | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 6. My father stresses the importance of having a college education.               | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 7. My mother tells me about the demands I will face in college.                   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 8. My father <u>does not</u> tell me about the demands I will face in college.    | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 9. I can talk to my mother about my future college experiences.                   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 10. I can talk to my father about my future college experiences.                  | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 11. I can talk to my mother about my career goals for after college.              | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 12. I <u>cannot</u> talk to my father about my career goals for after college.    | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 13. My father expects me to earn good grades in college.                          | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 14. My mother expects me to earn good grades in college.                          | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 15. My father is a good role model for influencing me to go to college.           | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 16. My mother is a good role model for influencing me to go to college.           | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 17. My grandparents try to discourage me from going to college.                   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 18. My sister(s) encourages me to go to college.                                  | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 19. My brother(s) encourages me to go to college.                                 | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 20. My brother is excited about me going to college.                              | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 21. My sister is excited about me going to college.                               | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |

22. My other relatives stress the importance of having a college education. ( a ) ( b ) ( c ) ( d )
23. My grandparents are aware of the demands I will face in college. ( a ) ( b ) ( c ) ( d )
24. My sister is aware of the demands I will face in college ( a ) ( b ) ( c ) ( d )
25. My brother is aware of the demands I will face in college. ( a ) ( b ) ( c ) ( d )
26. My other relatives are not aware of the demands of college. ( a ) ( b ) ( c ) ( d )
27. I can talk to my grandparents about my college educational plans. ( a ) ( b ) ( c ) ( d )
28. My friends don't understand the demands I will face in college. ( a ) ( b ) ( c ) ( d )
29. I will find it easy to make friends in the college setting. ( a ) ( b ) ( c ) ( d )
30. I expect to meet new friends during the time I will be in college. ( a ) ( b ) ( c ) ( d )

---

SA=Strongly Agree      A=Agree      D=Disagree      SD=Strongly Disagree

---

- |   | <u>SA</u> | <u>A</u> | <u>D</u> | <u>SD</u> |
|---|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 31. I <u>can not</u> talk to my friends about my future college experiences.                            | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 32. I <u>can not</u> talk to my friends about my career goals after college.                            | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 33. I <u>do not</u> have a college student friend who I can talk to about my college educational plans. | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 34. Getting a college degree will help me improve my social status.                                     | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 35. Getting a college degree will help me get a better job.   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 36. I can gain a lot of knowledge about this world by getting a college degree.                         | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 37. I can meet professional people by getting a college degree.   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 38. Getting a college degree will make me more successful.  | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 39. College graduates routinely get the best jobs.  | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 40. Getting a college degree is important for my future job opportunities.                              | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 41. Getting a college degree will improve my self-esteem.   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 42. Getting a college degree will improve my self-pride.  | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 43. My race <u>does not</u> limit my choice of college majors.  | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 44. My gender <u>does not</u> limit my choice of college majors.  | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 45. Society limits my choice of college majors.   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 46. College professors <u>cannot</u> limit my choice of college majors.                                 | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 47. The university administrators <u>cannot</u> limit my choice of college majors.                      | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 48. I chose my college major because I am good at it.   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 49. My father influenced my choice of college majors.   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 50. My mother encouraged me to pursue my college major.   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 51. I chose my college major because I like the subject matter.   | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 52. I chose my college major because I find the work challenging.                                       | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 53. I chose my college major because I find the work satisfying.  | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |
| 54. I picked my college major because I find it interesting.  | ( a )     | ( b )    | ( c )    | ( d )     |

55. I can major in any college subject that I want. (a) (b) (c) (d)
56. I have the power to achieve my educational goals. (a) (b) (c) (d)
57. If I become unhappy with my life, I can do something to change it. (a) (b) (c) (d)
58. When bad things happen, I can make the best of the situation. (a) (b) (c) (d)
59. The good things that happen in my life are the result of my working to make them happen. (a) (b) (c) (d)
60. Each person controls his or her own fate. (a) (b) (c) (d)
61. Each person has the power to make life better or worse. (a) (b) (c) (d)
62. I have no control of my future. (a) (b) (c) (d)
63. No matter how hard I work, I won't succeed at anything I do. (a) (b) (c) (d)
64. I can be successful in any college major that I choose. (a) (b) (c) (d)
65. My high school teachers encourage me to go to college. (a) (b) (c) (d)
66. My high school guidance counselor encourages me to go to college. (a) (b) (c) (d)
67. My junior high school teachers did not encourage me to go to college. (a) (b) (c) (d)
68. My junior high school guidance counselor encouraged me to go to college. (a) (b) (c) (d)

SA=Strongly Agree

A=Agree

D=Disagree

SD=Strongly Disagree

- |   | <u>SA</u> | <u>A</u> | <u>D</u> | <u>SD</u> |
|---|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 69. My high school teachers <u>do not</u> talked about the importance of having a college degree.   | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| My high school guidance counselor <u>does not</u> stress the importance of having a college degree. | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| My junior high school guidance counselor stressed the importance of having a college degree.        | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 72. My high school teachers talk about the demands I will face in college.                          | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| My junior high school teachers talked about the demands I will face in college.                     | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 74. My junior high guidance counselor told me of the of college.                                    | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 75. I sometimes worry about paying my college tuition bill.   | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 76. Without financial aid I can still get a college degree.   | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 77. I am knowledgeable of the various types of Financial Aid Programs.                              | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 78. My parents sometimes worry about paying my tuition bill.  | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 79. I think I will be a good college student.   | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 80. I believe that I will be successful in my college major.  | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 81. I feel that I will be successful in my future career.   | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| The availability of financial aid is an important factor in my decision to go to college.           | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |
| 83. I am not likely to need financial aid in the future.  | (a)       | (b)      | (c)      | (d)       |

---

 SECTION 2

Indicate your response to the following items by marking the appropriate response under the True (T) or False (F) Heading.

---

 T-True

 F – False
 

---

|   | <u>T</u> | <u>F</u> |
|---|----------|----------|
| 84. I know where to go to find information on Financial Aid Programs.           | ( a )    | ( b )    |
| 85. I used tutors to help me study in junior high school.                       | ( a )    | ( b )    |
| 86. My high school holds briefings on the college application process.          | ( a )    | ( b )    |
| 87. I attended briefings on the college application process during high school. | ( a )    | ( b )    |
| 88. I took remedial education courses in high school.                           | ( a )    | ( b )    |
| 89. I took remedial education courses in junior high school.                    | ( a )    | ( b )    |
| 90. I am part of a regular study group in high school.                          | ( a )    | ( b )    |
| 91. I will take remedial college courses as a college freshman.                 | ( a )    | ( b )    |
| 92. I was part of a regular study group in junior high school.                  | ( a )    | ( b )    |

---

## APPENDIX I

## Student Assent

Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

## YOUTH ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (AGES 14–17)

## FACTORS LATINOS PERCEIVE AS INFLUENCING THEIR PURSUIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Doctoral Eva Lara, M.A. and Dr. Diana Hiatt-Michael, Ed.D from Pepperdine University. Your participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether to participate.

Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You can decline to participate, even if your parent/legal guardian agrees to allow your participation. You may also decide to discuss it with your family or friends. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will be given a copy of this form.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this quantitative case study is to measure factors that might explain Latino 12<sup>th</sup> grade students' decision to apply to college compared to non-college bound Latino students from one Southern California visual and performing arts high school with regard to the influence of nine independent variables: (a) influence of family, (b) influence of peers, (c) perceptions of the functions of higher education, (d) perceived opportunity for success in college, (e) perceived competence in college, (f) perceived locus of control, (g) encouragement from secondary school personnel, (h) importance of financial aid, and (i) general preparation for college. This examination can contribute to the body of information on the Latino student population. The secondary purpose of this study is to measure the influence of an art-themed education on Latino students' likelihood to pursue higher education.

STUDY PROCEDURES

If you agree to voluntarily take part in this study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which is anticipated to take about 15 minutes. You do not have to answer any questions you don't want to, leave it blank and move on to the next question.

### POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks to your participation. If you may feel uncomfortable answering some or all of the questions, you do not have to answer any question you don't want to.

### POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no anticipated benefits to your participation. We hope that this study will help researchers learn more about the perspectives of both college bound and non-college bound Latino students. The findings will be shared with school administrators, teachers, counselors, and district leaders, which may lead to the implementation of interventions and/or policies that promote 4-year college enrollment rates among Latino students in the school district. However, there is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

We will keep your records for this study confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if we are required to do so by law, we will disclose confidential information about you. Pepperdine University's Human Subject Protection Program (HSPP) may access the data. The HSPP reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in the principal investigator's place of residence. The data collected will be coded and de-identified. There will be no identifiable information obtained in connection with this study. Your name, address or other identifiable information will not be collected. Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Each questionnaire will be coded with a number. The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in the researcher's residence for three years after the study has been completed and then destroyed. All hard copies (consent documents, survey instrument, etc.) will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's residence for three years after the study has been completed and then destroyed.

### SUSPECTED NEGLECT OR ABUSE OF CHILDREN

No information collected will be shared without your permission unless there is something that could be dangerous to you or someone else. If you tell us that someone is or has been hurting you, it may be necessary to tell people who are responsible for protecting children so they can make sure you are safe.

### PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

### ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or completing only the items which you feel comfortable.

### INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact Eva Lara or Diana Hiatt-Michael at [xxxxx@gmail.com](mailto:xxxxx@gmail.com) or [xxxxx@pepperdine.edu](mailto:xxxxx@pepperdine.edu) if you have any other questions or concerns about this research.

### RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or [gpsirb@pepperdine.edu](mailto:gpsirb@pepperdine.edu).

### **SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT (IF PARTICIPANT IS 14 OR OLDER)**

I have read the information provided above. I have been given a chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

### ***SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR***

I have explained the research to the participants and answered all of his/her questions. In my judgment the participants are knowingly, willingly and intelligently agreeing to participate in this study. They have the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study

and all of the various components. They also have been informed participation is voluntarily and that they may discontinue their participation in the study at any time, for any reason.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person Obtaining Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX J

## IRB Approval Notice



Pepperdine University  
24255 Pacific Coast Highway  
Malibu, CA 90263  
TEL: 310-506-4000

## NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: March 03, 2017

Protocol Investigator Name: Lara Eva

Protocol #: 16-10-420

Project Title: Factors Latinos Perceive as Influencing Their Pursuit of Higher Education

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Lara Eva:

Thank you for submitting your application for expedited review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. As the nature of the research met the requirements for expedited review under provision Title 45 CFR 46.110 of the federal Protection of Human Subjects Act, the IRB conducted a formal, but expedited, review of your application materials.

Based upon review, your IRB application has been approved. The IRB approval begins today March 03, 2017, and expires on March 02, 2018.

Your final consent form has been stamped by the IRB to indicate the expiration date of study approval. You can only use copies of the consent that have been stamped with the IRB expiration date to obtain consent from your participants.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for expedited review and will require a submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB. If contact with subjects will extend beyond March 02, 2018, a continuing review must be submitted at least one month prior to the expiration date of study approval to avoid a lapse in approval.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at [community.pepperdine.edu/irb](http://community.pepperdine.edu/irb).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

## APPENDIX K

## District Approval

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**From:** <\_\_\_\_@lausd.net>  
**Date:** February 8, 2017 at 1:58:31 PM PST  
**To:** "Lara, Eva" <\_\_\_\_@lausd.net>  
**Subject:** Proposal 340

Dear Researcher:

I am pleased to inform you that the proposed study #340, "FACTORS LATINOS PERCEIVE AS INFLUENCING THEIR PURSUIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION," was approved by the LAUSD Committee on External Research Review. Once we have verified that IRB approval from your institution, our office will follow with a formal approval letter. You are free to proceed with data collection once you have received the formal approval letter.

Please be aware that this approval is valid for one year's time at which point our office will follow up with the sponsoring institution to learn about the study's progress and findings of interest to the district. You will have the opportunity then to renew approval of the proposal should additional time be required for data collection or if modifications to the original proposal are necessary. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or thoughts. Thanks.

**Ph.D.**

*CERR, School Experience Survey, School Report Card*  
Office of Data and Accountability  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
333 S. Beaudry Ave. 16th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017  
[213-241-5153](tel:213-241-5153)

## APPENDIX L

## Principal Approval

**SCHOOL PERMISSION TEMPLATE**

**Name of School District/School:** Ramon C. Cortines School of Visual and Performing Arts (LAUSD)

**Title of Study:** Factors Latinos Perceive as Influencing Their Pursuit of Higher Education

**Principal Investigator:** Eva Lara

To the Pepperdine University Graduate & Professional School (GPS) IRB,

As a representative of the, I confirm that the school district grants permission for the proposed research to be conducted once IRB approval has been obtained. The research will take place in the Ramon C. Cortines School of Visual and Performing Arts.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)<sup>1</sup>**

This letter confirms that the school district/school has policies and procedures in place as required by the FERPA and the proposed study complies with these policies.

Check one or more of the following as applicable:

Written consent to disclose student information is required.

n/a The research falls under FERPA regulations and Pepperdine University Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) cannot waive written student consent and the research proposal includes plans to adhere to FERPA regulations.

Written consent from the students and/or Parental/Guardians to obtain student information is not required. The school district has entered into use-restriction and data security agreement with the Investigator(s) in accordance with FERPA. The use-restriction and data security agreement must be signed by the Investigator(s) and provided to the Pepperdine University Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) as a condition of approval of the research study.

n/a Written [Signed] Consent from students subjects consenting to participate in research can be walved by the Pepperdine University Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) as outlined in 45 CFR 46.117(c)(1)(2) based upon one or both of the following conditions/legal elements:

<sup>1</sup> <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

The research falls under PPRA regulations and Pepperdine University Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) cannot waive written parental/guardian permission and the research proposal includes plans to adhere to PPRA regulations.

Written consent from the students and/or Parental/Guardians to obtain student information is not required. The school district has entered into use-restriction and data security agreement with the Investigator(s) in accordance with PPRA. The use-restriction and data security agreement must be signed by the Investigator(s) and provided to the Pepperdine University Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) as a condition of approval of the research study.

The research does not fall under PPRA regulations.

Ken Martinez Principal  
Printed Name of School District/School Official Title of School District/School Official

Kj Martiny 2/28/17  
Signature of School District/School Official Date

Statute: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h. Regulations: 34 CFR Part 98.

PPRA applies to the programs and activities of a State educational agency (SEA), local educational agency (LEA), or other recipient of funds under any program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It governs the administration to students of a survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight protected areas:

- political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- sex behavior or attitudes;
- illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or,

## APPENDIX M

Testing the Assumptions of Normality, Linearity, and Homoscedasticity

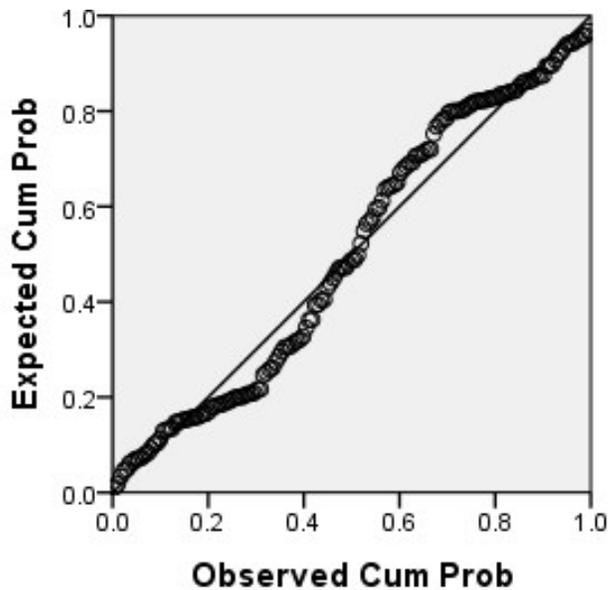


Figure 5. Normal probability plot for the likelihood model.

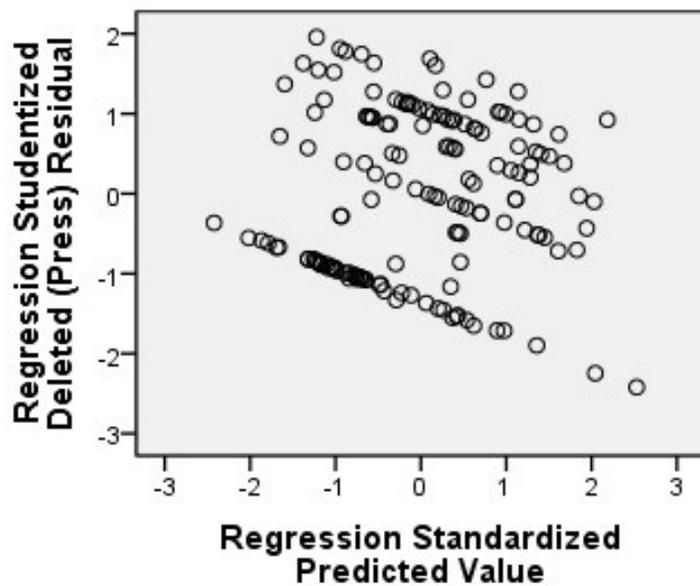


Figure 6. Scatterplot for the likelihood model.