

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: CULTURAL VALUES, ACCULTURATION, AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AS PREDICTORS OF LATINO YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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Most research indicates that extracurricular activities are an important part of children's development with the potential to enhance children's academic achievement, physical growth, and social skills. Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States, and although most Latino children achieve academic success, they are the ethnic group most at risk for school drop-out. Previous research indicated that even when socioeconomic status was controlled, Latino children engaged in fewer extracurricular activities than their white peers. This study examined the extent to which cultural values emphasized in the Latino population, such as collectivism, personalismo, simpatía, and religiosity influenced the extracurricular activities of Latino children. It found that certain values are correlated with corresponding activities, but education of the primary caregiver and acculturation were the strongest predictors of participation in extracurricular activities.

CULTURAL VALUES, ACCULTURATION, AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
AS PREDICTORS OF LATINO YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

By

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Most research indicates that extracurricular activities are an important part of children's development with the potential to enhance children's academic achievement, physical growth, and social skills (Broh, 2002; Coleman, 1961; Eccles, Barber, Stone & Hunt, 2003; Harrison & Narayan, 2003; Marsh, 1992). Latino children are the least likely of the major ethnic groups to participate in – and therefore benefit from – extracurricular activities, and they are the largest minority group in the United States (U.S.) (Brown & Evans, 2002; Lugaila, 2003; Shields & Behrman, 2004). Although Latinos are the ethnic group most at risk for school drop-out and have the highest number of overall risk factors, many Latino children participate in extracurricular activities and achieve academic success (Hernandez, 2004). This study will examine factors beyond socioeconomic status, such as cultural values, acculturation, and involved parenting, which may be related to participation in extracurricular activities.

It has been found that only one quarter of Latino children participate in extracurricular activities, versus almost one half of White children (Lugaila, 2003). One of the most probable reasons that Latinos participate less in extracurricular activities is their lower socioeconomic status (SES), as most activities cost money and take time. However, there are studies indicating that when SES is controlled, Latino children still engage in fewer extracurricular activities than their white peers (Hofferth & Sandberg, 2001). Cultural values emphasized in the Latino population, such as collectivism, personalismo, simpatía, and religiosity may influence decisions that Latino parents make with regards to the activities of their children. Two other

factors to be considered are level of acculturation and involved parenting, because although both are sometimes considered protective factors for children at risk for school failure and multiple forms of high risk behavior, more research is needed on these two factors with respect to Latino parents (Dishion & McMahon, 1998; Epstein, Botvin, Griffin & Diaz, 2001).

Extracurricular activities serve the dual purpose of enhancing the physical and emotional growth of children and adolescents, while simultaneously structuring some of children's after-school time. These benefits have been studied since 1961, when Coleman first examined the correlation between participating in athletics and developing a strong work ethic, respect for authority, and endurance. Since then, multiple studies have been conducted on the link between many different extracurricular activities and positive academic outcomes such as higher grade point average, higher rates of high-school attendance, subsequent enrollment in college, and engagement in less risky behavior (Eccles et al., 2003; Marsh, 1992). Research indicates that different types of activities have different impacts on youth, but most are positive, even when controlling for selection effects such as the probability that youth with few risk factors are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities (Broh, 2002; Harrison & Narayan, 2003). In fact, youth at risk often benefit more from extracurricular activities than other, less disadvantaged youth (Riggs & Greenberg, 2004).

The literature suggests that extracurricular activities are also beneficial for Latino youth, but this area has yet to be widely studied (Davalos, Chavez & Guardiola, 1999; Erkut & Tracy, 2002). Although Latinos are less likely to

participate in extracurricular activities, little is known about what predicts their participation beyond the most probable predictor: socioeconomic status (SES). Many Latino families have a low SES, and the literature indicates that children with a low SES participate in fewer and different kinds of extracurricular activities than children with a high SES (Simpkins, Ripke, Huston & Eccles, 2005).

Beyond socioeconomic status, it appears possible that the cultural values unique to Latino families may contribute toward emphasizing different priorities to their children than non-Latino white Americans. Well known cultural values emphasized in Latino families include collectivism, personalismo, simpatía, and religiosity. Collectivism emphasizes the well-being of the group, and is the opposite of the American value of individualism (Toro, 1996). The value of personalismo is about relationships and connections with individuals outside of the family, and is important in furthering one's social status (Frevert & Miranda, 1998) The value of simpatía is concern about getting along well with others (Triandis, Marin, Lisansky & Betancourt, 1984). Religiosity, although not exclusive to Latino families, is emphasized in more Latino homes than any other ethnic group (Clutter & Nieto, 2000). Latino parents may utilize specific extracurricular activities to teach all of these cultural values to their children, for example, they may encourage their children to play group sports to learn the value of collectivism. Or parents may prefer to teach these values at home, because Latinos traditionally pass on cultural values through family and friends. It is also possible that many Latino families perceive American children as lacking in these Latino cultural values, and thus do not think it desirable for their children to spend extra activity time with their non-Latino peers.

When considering Latino families, and particularly cultural values, it is preferable to include some measure of acculturation in the research design. Acculturation is an approximation of the degree to which an immigrant individual or group takes on the characteristics of the host or dominant group such as language or culture (Frevert & Miranda, 1998). Acculturation is often measured simply through language or immigrant generation, although sometimes through use of more sophisticated scales (Berry, Trimble & Olmedo, 1986). Less acculturated Latino children may be less likely to participate in extracurricular activities because they perceive less access to school activities, and their families may need them to spend more time at home to assist with household tasks and childcare. One can speculate that children in more acculturated families will participate more in extracurricular activities, but this amount may vary with context. For example, highly acculturated, low SES families may lack the time or money to help their children engage in extracurricular activities. Highly acculturated parents may also perceive that participation in extracurricular activities exposes their children to undesirable peer groups, as some research on risky behavior reveals that children with higher levels of acculturation are at risk for problem behaviors (Epstein et al., 2001; Wong, 1999).

A key factor that may protect children from participating in risky behavior or dropping out of school is parent involvement. A popular misconception of Latino parents is that they are less involved in their children's education. Although research has revealed that this is not the case, there is still limited information about how Latino parents engage in their children's education (Drummond & Stipek, 2004). Parent involvement has been shown to be an important protective factor for children.

Parents who are more involved with their children's education at school may encourage them to participate in extracurricular activities.

Purpose

The major objective of this study is to explore some of the possible predictors of Latino youth involvement in extracurricular activities, beyond the factors of socioeconomic status, age, and gender. Specifically, this study will examine the role of cultural values, including collectivism, personalismo, simpatía, and religiosity; acculturation, and involved parenting in predicting youth involvement in extracurricular activities. First the study will examine relationships between cultural values, acculturation, and parent involvement, and engagement in various extracurricular activities. Four types of activities will be addressed: sports, youth groups, fine arts lessons, and religious activities. Then the study will investigate the extent to which Latino cultural values, acculturation, and parental involvement predict each of the four types of extracurricular activities.

This study addresses important gaps in the literature on cultural values. Although there is some research on the relationship between cultural values and Latino parent involvement in the school system, the relationship between cultural values and Latino children's involvement in extracurricular activities has not been studied (Toro, 1996; Triandis et al., 1984). There is also a great deal of research on Latino parent involvement with the school system and its impact on children's academic achievement, but information on the relationship between Latino parent involvement and their children's participation in extracurricular activities is limited (Okagaki & Sternberg, 1993). Engagement of Latino students in extracurricular

activities, their achievement and well-being are more important than ever before because the Latino population is increasing, and the percentage of Latino children in U.S. schools is the highest it has ever been (Fix & Passell, 1994).

Latino families in this sample are primarily Mexican and Mexican-American. This thesis will use the term Latino, as it is preferred by many of Latino descent (Cauce & Domenech-Rodriguez, 2000), but the literature review and discussion will adopt the nomenclature of Latino or Hispanic that was used by the cited authors.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Theory

The combination of ecological and developmental theories in an integrative model constructed by Garcia Coll et al. (1996) will be used for considering the roles of cultural values, acculturation, and involved parenting in the developmental trajectory of Latino children. Typically, research on minority children is limited to race comparisons and focused on negative outcomes that are assumed to be a result of deviation from the dominant mode of parenting and lifestyle—that of the white middle class. The integrated model is a framework based on ecological and developmental theories that includes variables salient solely to minority children, such as racism and segregation, and the cultural adaptations developed by minority parents, communities, or entire groups (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). Specifically, this model posits that an individual's social position (this includes education and social class) influence his or her experience of racism, then segregation, and the physical and social environment. These constructs shape the adaptive culture of the families of children of color and children of immigrants, which include values, religion, and parenting as they adapt to American society. Finally, the adaptive culture along with child characteristics (age and gender) and family characteristics (length of time in the U.S. and employment) contribute to the acquisition of developmental competencies in children.

The integrative model helps clarify the complexities of how immigrant groups adapt their cultural values, and why this can be a process of downward assimilation

for many immigrant Latino families. Latino immigrants do not appear to be assimilating as well as immigrant groups have in the past; in fact many are assimilating downward (Bankston & Zhou, 1997). For example, there is evidence that educational aspirations are high for the first and second generations of Latino families; by the third generation these aspirations start to decline, probably due to the struggles that these families encounter in trying to assimilate and improve their circumstances (Bankston & Zhou, 1997). Classic or straight line assimilation theory posits that as immigrants become more acculturated and become more like the host culture (in terms of language, culture, and many other factors), they will become more successful, typically with each new generation. Landale's discussion (1997) of segmented assimilation asserts that immigrants are only as successful as the specific social class with which they assimilate. Downward assimilation is what happens when an immigrant group assimilates into a section of the host culture that is not experiencing upward mobility, and due to a history of racism and oppression, has become marginalized. The immigrant group then becomes marginalized as well, with each successive generation actually less successful than the former. This process has also been called deculturation (Buriel & De Ment, 1997).

The integrative model posits that variables such as cultural values and acculturation are proximal, or have the potential to directly and indirectly impact child outcomes such as participation in extracurricular activities. This thesis will examine variables at the cultural level, including the roles of cultural values and acculturation. It will also explore the role of a family level variable, involved parenting, in predicting children's participation in extracurricular activities. Specific

theoretical connections between cultural values, acculturation, parental involvement, and extracurricular activities will be detailed in the literature review.

Literature Review

Youth Participation in Extracurricular Activities and Child Well-Being

It is well documented that participation in extracurricular activities is linked with positive developmental outcomes for children and adolescents, in terms of both academic achievement and behavior (Davalos et al., 1999; Fischer, 1992; Larson, 2000). The study of the benefits of extracurricular activities and sports in particular is extensive (Broh, 2002; Brown & Evans, 2002; Coleman, 1961; Erkut & Tracy, 2002). However, it has also been noted that the children who participate in extracurricular activities are probably the youth most likely to have successful outcomes. Research indicates that even when controlling for socioeconomic status and selection effects (for example, grades and test scores), different types of after-school activities are associated with different developmental outcomes, and most are positive (Eccles et al., 2003).

Much of the existing literature on extracurricular activities focuses on the differential impact of certain school-related activities, while other studies examine out-of-school time use in general (Davalos et al., 1999; Hofferth & Sandberg, 2001; Zill, Nord & Loomis, 1995). Select studies include comparisons of extracurricular activities to other types of leisure time. Most studies examine multiple types of extracurricular activity simultaneously; thus this paper will not review the benefits of each type of activity separately, but will detail each study and all of the activities

examined in that particular study . Also, for the purposes of this review, only studies that further the field by controlling for relevant variables such as socioeconomic status or the probability that youth are “joiners,” or studies that include a focus on Latino youth and families will be included.

Latino youth participation in extracurricular activities. Research consistently finds that Latino children of all ages participate less than white youth in extracurricular activities, often grouped as sports, clubs or youth groups, and lessons. In a report written for the Bureau of the Census utilizing data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (2000), it was found that percentages of Hispanics participating in sports, clubs (Scouts, 4-H activities, religious clubs, or Boys and Girls clubs), and lessons (music, dance, language, computers, or religion) were lower than for non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, and Asians (Lugaila, 2003). Among children aged six to eleven, only 21% of Hispanic children participated in sports, clubs and lessons versus 34% of White children. The same was true with older youth, ages twelve to seventeen. Only 28% of Hispanic adolescents participated in sports versus 39% of White adolescents; 23% of Hispanic adolescents were active in clubs as opposed to 37% of White adolescents; and 20% of Hispanic adolescents participated in lessons while 28% of White adolescents took lessons (Lugaila, 2003).

Other non-national studies support these findings. In a diverse sample of 1,755 adolescent youth from California, European Americans reported significantly higher rates of participation in each type of extracurricular activity (except sports) than Hispanic Americans (Brown & Evans, 2002). Specifically, 31% of European American adolescents participated in some form of in-school activities (such as clubs

and student government) as compared to only 23% of their Hispanic American peers. Also it is surprising that twice as many European American students participated in the fine arts and out-of-school activities such as boys and girls clubs than Hispanic American students (51% and 41% versus 26% and 20% respectively). Finally, 53% of European Americans reported spending some time playing sports versus 51% of Latinos (not a significant difference). Although this sample was ethnically and socioeconomically diverse, the authors did not control for socioeconomic status, acculturation, or indicate the distribution of ethnicities in terms of socioeconomic status.

Benefits of sports, fine arts, youth groups, and religious activities. In general, most types of extracurricular activities are beneficial for children and adolescents. In an extensive report written for the United States Department of Health and Human Services in 1995, utilizing data from Monitoring the Future, Longitudinal Study of American Youth, National Education Longitudinal Survey, and High School and Beyond, authors found that teenagers who participated in extracurricular activities were significantly less likely to drop out of school or engage in risky behavior, even after controlling for family characteristics such as socioeconomic status and student grades (Zill et al., 1995). The authors found specifically that students who participated in fine arts programs such as band, orchestra, theater, or choir were less likely than other students to engage in all risky behaviors such as smoking cigarettes, binge drinking, using drugs, getting arrested, and dropping out of school. It was determined that general participation in extracurricular activities was related to less risk behavior except for alcohol consumption. Participation in varsity sports reduced

the likelihood of dropping out of school or smoking cigarettes, but increased the likelihood of binge drinking.

One of the few studies on the impact of religious activities was conducted with data from the National Educational Longitudinal Survey – 1988 on 12,144 youth, diverse in terms of socioeconomic status and race/ethnicity (72% non-Hispanic white, 12% non-Hispanic black, 11% Hispanic, 4% Asian, and 2% Native American). The study had important results even after controlling for multiple socio-demographic variables and variables such as selection effects resulting from the probability that the child is a “joiner” (Gardner, 2004). Gardner found that for all children, participation in religious classes outside of school during the 8th grade was significantly related to the likelihood of graduating from high school on time. For minorities, participating in any religious activity at some point in time (from 8th to 12th grade) was also significantly linked to graduating from high school on time.

Benefits for Latinos and other children at risk. There are very few studies of Latinos and extracurricular activities. Davalos, Chavez, and Guardiola (1999) conducted a study of Mexican-American high school students and found those involved in extracurricular activities (specifically, athletics and other extracurricular activities, but not band) were significantly less likely to drop out of school than those not involved in such activities. The researchers surveyed 2,621 students from three communities of different sizes; dropouts were identified by school staff, randomly sampled, and then matched to enrolled students by gender, ethnicity and grade. The authors also examined the level of Mexican American and White non-Hispanic ethnic identity (low, medium, and high) for Mexican American students, and found that

although the level of Mexican American ethnic identity had no effect on school status, the level of White non-Hispanic ethnic identity was significant. Students indicating medium and high levels of White non-Hispanic ethnic identity were significantly less likely to drop out of school as well as significantly more likely to participate in extracurricular activities.

It is surprising that even in an area as well researched as participation in athletics, there is still limited research on Latino youth and sports as an extracurricular activity. Erkut and Tracy (2002) used data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health to examine subgroups of Latinos (Mexican, Cuban, and Puerto Rican) and explore how their participation in school sports affected their self-esteem. They found that among the 3,011 Mexican/Mexican American students, 831 Puerto Rican students, and 800 Cuban/Cuban American students (mean age 15.10 years), Cuban/Cuban Americans were the least likely overall to participate in school sports. Sports were significantly related to the self-esteem of Mexican/Mexican American boys and girls, Puerto Rican girls, and Cuban boys. The authors also found that school attachment and physical well-being mediated the relationship between sports activities and self-esteem.

Extracurricular activities are beneficial for all children, but appear to provide a protective factor for children at risk for a variety of reasons. In a study of 2,505 primarily African American low-income children utilizing event history analysis, it was found that among youth who had been held back at least one grade, those who participated in extracurricular activities were significantly more likely to remain in high-school longer than those not engaged in extracurricular pursuits (Randolph,

Rose, Fraser & Orthner, 2004). The authors did not define extracurricular activities, but observed that it was striking how few youth participated in them. In another study of 94 migrant Latino children participating in an after-school program in rural Pennsylvania, it was found that those children who benefited the most from the program in terms of making academic progress were acculturated in English, came from poorly functioning families, and had low levels of parent involvement (Riggs & Greenberg, 2004). The authors concluded that children with high levels of acculturation improved more than low acculturated children because they could speak English, and could therefore receive more benefits from the tutoring elements in the program.

Long term effects of extracurricular involvement. Not only are extracurricular activities beneficial to youth while they are participating in them, but research has found significant long term positive effects as well. In a detailed analysis of the long term effects of specific extracurricular activities, Eccles, Barber, Stone, and Hunt (2003) found that participating in most extracurricular activities was positively related to academic achievement, even after controlling for social class, gender, and academic aptitude. The investigators utilized the Michigan Study of Adolescent Life Transitions (MSALT), which followed approximately 1,800 primarily white youth from 6th grade to age 26. They examined pro-social activities (church, volunteer work, and community service), performance activities (band, drama, and dance), sports, school-related activities (government and cheerleading) and academic clubs (debate, chess club, and tutoring). The study examined the effect of participating in extracurricular activities in the 10th grade and found that involvement in pro-social

activities predicted less risky behaviors such as consumption of alcohol, getting drunk, using drugs, or skipping school in the three final waves of data collection (12th grade, 22 years old, and 26 years old). Participation in the performing arts was related to less risky behavior in the 10th and 12th grade, although these students had less of a tendency to drink alcohol prior to the 10th grade. Engaging in school activities and academic clubs was not related to risky behavior, but was predictive of higher GPA, college attendance, and graduate school. Consistent with other studies, the authors found involvement in athletics in the 10th grade to be predictive of more alcohol use in the 12th grade, but not in subsequent data collection waves. Finally, participation in athletics was related to a higher GPA, greater probability of going to college, and having a job at age 24.

Time use in Latino and ethnic family groups. Other studies addressing overall time use have also explored children's participation in extracurricular activities. Hofferth and Sandberg (2001) found that participation in sports was related to academic achievement, while time spent in family meals was associated with fewer behavior problems. Hofferth and Sandberg studied the time diaries of 3,563 children representative of the ethnic and economic distribution of the United States population in 1997. When controlling for a range of socio-demographic variables, they found that White non-Hispanic children spent more time playing and more time in sports than all other ethnic groups. They also found that children in Hispanic families spent the most time doing household chores, while Asian and Black children spent the least time in such activity. In terms of family time, children from Hispanic and Black families spent more time eating than White children. Finally, while Black and

Hispanic children spent less time reading than White children and Asian children, it was found that Black, Hispanic, and Asian children all spent more time studying than White children. These results support the premise that parents allot their children's time according to cultural priorities. Children from Hispanic families spent more time doing household chores, eating as a family, and studying (but not reading, which is an individual pursuit), reflecting the Hispanic values of familism and collectivism, and the immigrant work ethic.

Theoretical Relationships Between Extracurricular Activities and Child Outcomes

In order to understand why parents may or may not involve their children in extracurricular activities, it is important to consider how these activities produce positive outcomes and what parents and children hope to get out of them. There are multiple theories as to why extracurricular activities have a positive impact on youth. Two of the major explanations focus on growth processes and structured time. The growth processes approach considers the experiences that youths have while engaged in extracurricular activities (Larson, 2000). The structured time approach considers both time spent in extracurricular activities and time with parental supervision and monitoring (Osgood & Anderson, 2004; Yin, Katims & Zapata, 1999). Many parents seem to be interested in both of these benefits of extracurricular activities. It follows that parents who utilize extracurricular activities as a means to further the character development of their children will focus on certain activities to achieve their goals.

In theorizing about why Latino children are not participating as much as other ethnic groups in extracurricular activities, it is important to consider the motivation and childrearing goals of their parents. For example, many studies indicate that less

acculturated youth tend to be less at risk for problem behaviors than more acculturated youth (Epstein et al., 2001; Wong, 1999). This outcome may stem from the probability that less acculturated immigrant children are assisting their parents with duties at home and assuming many adult responsibilities, a process that helps these children to mature. In other words immigrant Latino parents may feel that the best place for their child to develop into a responsible adult is at home, while mainstream American parents may utilize resources outside the home to assist them with this process.

Growth processes. Researchers are just beginning to learn about what processes are involved in activities that cause them to have a positive impact on youth. Larson (2000) has suggested that activities are a time when youth experience high levels of concentration and motivation, and are engaged in directing their own development. Larson's theory was further developed in a series of ten focus groups with 55 youth participants (ages 14 to 18) in which youth were asked to describe their growth and learning experiences from extracurricular activities (Dworkin & Lindstrom, 2004). Youth described these activities as helping them to develop initiative, emotional competencies, and social capital. This same series revealed both personal and interpersonal growth experiences for youth participating in after-school and community-based activities. Personal "growth" included experimentation and identity work, development of initiative skills, and emotional regulation. Interpersonal processes involved gaining new peer relationships and understanding, learning group social skills, and forming connections to adults (Dworkin, Larson &

Hansen, 2003). Activities such as community service have been found to be conducive to identity formation for youth (Youniss, McLellan, Su & Yates, 1999).

Research on interpersonal growth processes has also explained how social capital and peer interaction with youth from other cultures are important in contributing to the resilience of Latino youth (Clauss-Ehlers, 2004). In a qualitative study of Puerto Rican youth, the youth specifically identified participation in school, and community-based and religious activities as helping them to acquire social capital (Antrop-Gonzalez, Velez & Garrett, 2005).

Structured time. Reducing or preventing behavior problems and risky behavior may be a matter of filling youth's time with structured and positive activities, as well as adult supervision. In a study of 4,358 eighth grade students of diverse ethnic/racial groups and socioeconomic backgrounds found that unstructured time with friends correlated with problem behavior (Osgood & Anderson, 2004). In another study of 101 adolescents (ages 10 to 19, predominantly white) from single-parent households in central Illinois, unstructured time was linked with negative developmental outcomes (Larson, 2001). Parent supervision has a direct effect on onset and levels of substance abuse (Chilcoate, Anthony & Dishion, 1995). In studies of parenting programs and interventions, increased parental monitoring of children has been shown to prevent or decrease substance abuse (Steinberg, Fletcher & Darling, 1994). For example, parents who choose their children's activities reduce the likelihood that their children will engage in early sexual intercourse; this occurs, however, only in higher socioeconomic neighborhoods, and only if parents control activities both inside and outside the home (Roche et al., 2005).

Although many Latino children come from two parent homes, they may be at greater risk for negative outcomes than non-Latino children because often both of their parents are working and have less ability to structure their children's time. This may be a reason why extracurricular activities have been linked with positive developmental outcomes. The effect of structured time may also simply be physical proximity during traditional risk times. A study of Puerto Rican youth found that just being with family (not friends) on evenings and weekends was negatively associated with delinquent behavior (Pabon, 1998). Another study examined Mexican American youth (mean age 14.6, eighth to the tenth grade) from south central Texas (Yin et al., 1999). Participants were low SES and at risk for academic failure. This study examined unsupervised socialization with friends (hanging out and partying), organized leisure activities (school clubs and youth centers), organized sport activities (at school or in the community, supervised by an adult), activities at home (talking on the phone, watching television and doing chores), and self-directed leisure activities (riding a bike or hunting). Findings revealed that being involved in activities at home was a significant protective factor against the effects of a negative environment.

Predictors of Involvement in Extracurricular Activities

There are a variety of factors that may predict children's involvement in extracurricular activities, including socioeconomic status of the family, age and gender of the child, values of the parents, and level of parental involvement in their children's education. Most parents want their children to retain and express the values of their families. Values can be considered part of the social capital that parents try to give to their children. Many parents recognize that although much of

the process of instilling values in children begins and ends at home, there are other environments in which a child spends time that can reinforce and build upon these values, such as being at school or with peers. When the school day is over, many children engage in extracurricular activities, and the choice of these activities is frequently guided by their parents, according to the values of the parents and the traits they are hoping to instill in their children. In a qualitative study of middle class working families in Michigan, researchers conducted interviews with 23 families of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and found that parents utilize extracurricular activities to help supplement values important to them at home, including responsibility, self-discipline, and respect (Dunn, Kinney & Hofferth, 2003).

Socioeconomic status. The process of utilizing outside resources to further children's development is often limited by the resources of the parent. Time, money, and other resources available all play important roles. Major differences in children's achievements are attributable to parental resources, not simply financial; often differences in parenting attributed to culture are actually socioeconomic. In order to examine this issue, Chin and Phillips (2004) conducted a qualitative study of the summer activities of 90 5th graders from the same school in Southern California representing varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. Findings revealed that although parents' aspirations for their children were similar, the parents were constrained by limited finances, and human, cultural, and social capital, in arranging enriching summer environments and activities for their children. Another study found that lower socioeconomic status is linked with participation in fewer

extracurricular activities over all, and different types of extracurricular activities (Simpkins et al., 2005).

Many Latino families immigrate to the United States with very little education and income. Although most first generation Latino families are two parent households, both parents must often work long hours for low wages, thus off-setting the protective factors that a two parent household usually offers. Many extracurricular activities require money and time, precious commodities in a Latino household. It is difficult to pay for participation in sports leagues (uniforms and basic fees), and more importantly, challenging to transport children to multiple practices and games, when both parents are working long hours. It is also difficult to pay for extracurricular activities such as music, dance, and art lessons.

Family structure and social class are extremely important variables in the study of immigrant families, because although many immigrant children come from intact two-parent families, they are still at risk due to a lower socioeconomic status. It has also been found that even when these factors are controlled there are still differences in achievement outcomes between ethnic groups that may be attributable to cultural values (Rumbaut, 1997).

Gender. Gender plays a large role in the relationship between race/ethnicity and extra curricular activities, and is important to examine because of the interaction between gender and extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activity has been positively associated with school problem behavior for boys (Prelow & Loukas, 2003). Another study found that male varsity athletes were far less likely to engage in most risky behaviors than other students in the study except binge drinking and

teen childbearing, and male participants in music programs were no less likely than other students to be teen parents (Zill et al., 1995). This study also found that the main gender differences appeared to be in the relationship between males in extracurricular activities and teen childbearing: extracurricular activities have been found to function as a protective factor for females, but not for males.

Age. Level of extracurricular activities is known to vary with age for many reasons. As children age they are more able to operate independently of their parents, and typically their level of participation in activities such as sports and clubs increases with age, while time spent taking lessons drops (Lugaila, 2003). For this reason, it is important to differentiate between younger and older children.

Cultural values and religion. Although it is well known that immigrant groups have strong cultural values that influence the way they parent, the direct link between Latino cultural values and extracurricular activities has not been closely examined. Traditional Latino cultural values include collectivism, *simpatía*, and *personalismo*. Collectivism refers to valuing the well-being of the group over the individual versus the mainstream American cultural value emphasizing individualism (Toro, 1996). *Simpatía* is a special quality of being interested in being with others, group cohesiveness, and the avoidance of conflict. *Personalismo* is the quality of getting along well with others, being social and well liked (Triandis et al., 1984). Mainstream American parents emphasize activities to help their children acquire individual social capital, while Latino parents may think it is more appropriate to focus on the child's development as a good person who is concerned with their family and the collective well-being of the group. It has been found that immigrant parents,

and Mexican American parents specifically felt that noncognitive characteristics (motivation, social skills, and practical school skills) were more important than the cognitive characteristics valued by Anglo-American parents, such as problem-solving skills, verbal ability, and creative ability (Okagaki & Sternberg, 1993). This same study revealed that immigrant parents valued conforming to external standards over developing autonomy in contrast to Anglo-American parents, who were the opposite.

Religiosity can be considered a Latino cultural value, because although any ethnic group can be religious, this is a cultural value shared by most Latino families. Although Latino families in the United States (U.S.) are quite heterogeneous and come from all over the world, Hispanics worldwide are 90 percent Roman Catholic (Clutter & Nieto, 2000). The influence of the church on local family and community life is quite strong; often saints' days and other religious holidays are celebrated with elaborate local rituals and processions, and are considered more important than birthdays (Clutter & Nieto, 2000). Due to the increasing popularity of Evangelical Christianity both in the United States and Mexico, 23 percent of Latinos in the U.S. identify as Protestants, and of these, 85 percent are evangelical (Espinosa, Elizondo, & Miranda, 2001). However, the majority of Latinos in the U.S. (70 percent) are Catholic.

Cultural and religious values may explain part of children's choice of extracurricular activities. Latino parents might want their children to engage in sports and youth groups to assist them with learning collectivism, personalismo, and simpatía through learning how to be a good team player and assist the group. Parents interested in developing their children as individuals may be more interested in fine

arts lessons. One would expect religious Latino families to encourage their children to participate in religious activities with their local church or youth group, in an effort to encourage religious affiliation and instill Christian values. The local church is also probably a familiar and trustworthy place for immigrant families to send their children.

However, one could also anticipate that Latino parents who value collectivism over the mainstream American value of individualism might have children that participate less in all extracurricular activities because these parents are more likely to teach their children traditional values at home, as opposed to utilizing outside resources. Contrary to mainstream American parents who often engage their children in sports to help them develop a work ethic, Latino parents may be more likely to develop this ethic in their children through household chores and other family responsibilities.

Acculturation. Very few studies of Latinos and extracurricular activities have included level of acculturation, despite the fact that this is a large part of the risk behavior literature. For this reason, it is very difficult to make a prediction about the relationship between acculturation and extracurricular activities, except to note that there is almost certainly an interaction between acculturation and socioeconomic status.

Classic assimilation theory would predict that higher levels of acculturation would be associated with increased participation in extracurricular activities. However, downward assimilation theory predicts that acculturation is a risk factor for children with lower levels of socioeconomic status. The literature on risk behavior is

mixed as the effect of acculturation seems to be highly context dependent, and that is probably the case with this study. After controlling for socioeconomic status and gender, increased acculturation should be associated with greater participation in extracurricular activities.

One example of the complicated relationship between traditional cultural values and level of acculturation comes from a study of familism conducted by Romero, Robinson, Haydel, Mendoza, and Killen (2004). This study found, in direct contrast to its hypothesis, that higher levels of familism (a traditional Latino cultural value emphasizing the importance of family) were significantly associated with higher levels of household education and acculturation. This study also found higher levels of familism for children speaking English and Spanish, or English alone, than for children who spoke mostly Spanish. There were no significant differences in familism due to language disparities between parent and child.

Parent involvement. It is well documented that parent involvement in children's education can have a positive effect on educational and behavioral outcomes for children (Dishion & McMahon, 1998). Less is known about the link between parent involvement and children's extracurricular activities, although it stands to reason that parents highly involved in their children's education would encourage their children to engage in extracurricular activities. Although there does not seem to be research on the connection between Latino parent involvement and extracurricular activities, it has also been shown that at-risk youth with high maternal involvement and more participation in extracurricular activities had higher levels of math and language achievement (Prelow & Loukas, 2003).

Latino parents are often perceived by educators to be less involved in their children's education, but in actuality they involve themselves in different ways than mainstream American parents (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, Eisner & Hernandez, 2003). There are basic differences in the ways that Latino parents perceive their role in their children's education. One study found that Hispanic parents were more likely to be involved in their children's education at home, when compared to other minority groups (Gao, 2003). It has been found that Latino parents do not believe in teaching their children to read until the children are old enough to understand what they are doing – around the age of five. Until that time, they focus on teaching their children moral values. Many Latino parents believe it is their continued responsibility to teach their child how to be a “good person,” while it is the school's job to teach academics (Gallimore & Goldenburg, 2001).

There may be cultural differences or language barriers that prohibit high levels of parental involvement in school by Latino parents (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991). It has been shown that Latino immigrant parents are often less empowered to be involved with their children's education, particularly when they have low-levels of education (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001) . One attempt to enhance immigrant Latino parents' school involvement through deepening teachers' understanding of the cultural values of individualism and collectivism has been shown to be successful (Trumbull et al., 2003).

Definitions of Variables

Control Variables

Socioeconomic status. Socioeconomic status (SES) is the combination of an individual's (or family's) economic situation with other indicators relevant to that economic situation. Other indicators often include education of parents, employment of parents, occupation, number of children in the family, or family structure. In this paper, SES was comprised of two variables: income to poverty ratio in the family and mother's education, because previous studies indicate that these two variables are most closely associated with other risk factors for immigrant and Latino families (Hernandez, 2004).

Predictor Variables

Cultural values. Cultural values are values that are shared by a specific group, defined by heritage, ancestry, or region. Traditional Latino values that were examined in this study included: collectivism, personalismo, simpatía, and religiosity.

- Collectivism refers to placing the well-being of the group over the individual. It is considered to be the opposite of individualism, a value highly stressed in the mainstream American culture. It is also very closely associated with familism, another important Latin cultural value which will not be tested in this paper.
- Personalismo is the quality of being charming and well liked by others. It is important to the social dynamic of the Latin culture.

- Simpatía is very similar to personalismo, in that it is an important part of being social, but it emphasizes being nice to other people, or being sympathetic toward them. An emphasis on action, helping others, or doing nice things for them is associated with simpatía.
- Religiosity refers to the level of importance placed on organized religion, religious holidays, and religious observation.

Acculturation. Acculturation refers to the degree to which an immigrant or new group has become like the host, original, or majority group; the extent to which the immigrant group has adapted the language, habits or customs of the host group. The acculturation level of immigrants to the United States has often been approximated by the degree to which they speak English, but can also be measured by sophisticated scales designed to capture habits and customs.

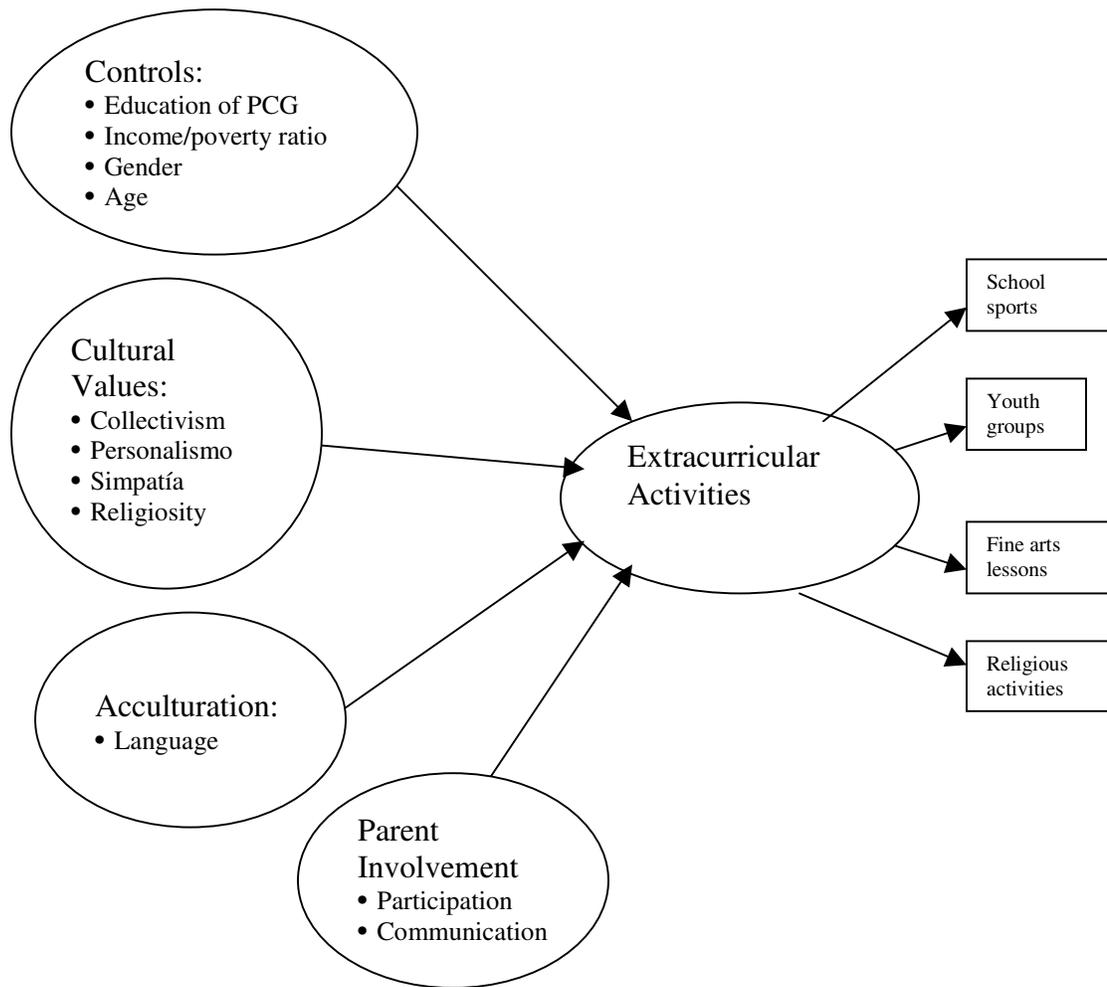
Parent involvement. Parent involvement in children's lives is measured by the degree and manner in which parents interact with their children and control their lives. There are many ways of measuring parent involvement as it is specific to the relevant areas in a child's life. For example, a parent may be very involved in their child's academic choices, but not interfere with that child's choice of peers. This thesis was interested in parent involvement in school – how often the parent attends meetings and events as well as how often parent and child are communicating about academic issues.

Outcome Variables

Extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities are structured or semi-structured activities that children engage in outside of their regular academic school

day. These activities vary, but generally have an adult chaperone present, and do not include hanging out with friends. Extracurricular activities are usually sponsored by the local school, youth group, or church. For the purpose of this thesis, extracurricular activities were classified as sports, fine arts lessons, community or youth groups, and religious activities.

Figure 1. Model



Hypotheses

The major objective of this study is to examine the role of cultural values, acculturation, and involved parenting in predicting the extracurricular activities of

Latino immigrant children. Specifically, the study will examine the extent to which these three variables predict youth participation in sports, fine arts lessons, youth groups, and religious activities.

1. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that place more emphasis on the Latino value of collectivism for their children will have children who are more likely to participate in sports, youth groups, and religious activities.

2. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that place stronger emphasis on the Latino value of personalismo (being popular) will have children who are more likely to participate in sports and youth groups, but less likely to take fine arts lessons.

3. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that emphasize the Latino value of *simpatía* (helping) will have children more likely to participate in religious activities and youth groups.

4. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that are more religious will have children who are more likely to participate in religious activities.

5. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families with higher levels of acculturation will be more likely to be involved in sports and to take fine arts lessons.

6. Families with higher levels of parent involvement (either parent participation or communication) will be more likely to participate in all four extracurricular activities.

Chapter 3: Methods

Sample

The data for this study were drawn from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, Child Development Supplement, Wave II (PSID, CDSII), conducted in the year 2002. The Panel Study of Income Dynamics is a longitudinal study that began in 1968, and in 1997 added the Child Development Supplement (CDS). In 2002, the second wave of the CDS was implemented, and 2,021 families participated, with a response rate of 91%. This study focused on a sub-sample of 210 Latino children between the ages of 5 and 18 who have multiple levels of acculturation as their families are first, second, third or higher generation immigrants. Latino children were determined by the parental report of the child's race (Hispanic).

Measures

Income to poverty ratio, education of the primary caregiver, and gender. The demographic variables used to analyze the impact of family factors on the activities of children and adolescents included the ratio of income to the poverty line and the education of the primary caregiver. The ratio of income to poverty was the ratio of total family income to the official poverty level for a family of a given size. This variable was constructed by dividing the total family income from the previous year by their poverty level from the previous year as determined by the United States Census. Education of the primary caregiver was calculated from the education of the wife or partner if the head of the family was married or living with someone, but if the head was single, divorced, or separated and the primary caregiver then the head's

level of education was used. Education of primary caregiver (years of completed schooling) and ratio of income to needs are continuous variables. Variance caused by gender was also controlled.

Age. Variance caused by age was controlled. The ages of the children in this sample were reported by the primary caregiver at the time of the interview. They were equally distributed and ranged from 5 to 18, but were split into two groups, ages 5 to 11 and 12 to 18. These two age groups encompassed elementary and high school respectively and so choice and level of extracurricular activities varied, but hypotheses for the two age groups are the same. In order to test for a relationship between age group and the effects of cultural values on extracurricular activities interaction variables were created (see results). If the interaction was significant, separate regressions were run for each age group.

Cultural values. First, to assess values, a set of questions asked in the National Opinion Research Center's General Social Survey and included in the PSID-CDS was used to identify trends in parental valuation of independence versus obedience and other values over time (Alwin, 2001, Davis & Smith, 1992). The primary caregiver was asked to list in order of preference which of the following was most important for a child to learn to prepare him or her for life: to obey rules, to be popular, to think for one's self, to work hard or to help others. Parents were asked to do this four times, first asking them what was most important, and then were asked what was second in importance, third in importance, and fourth in importance. The rank assigned each value by the parent (first, second, third, fourth, or fifth) was used as the score (coded first = 1, second = 2, third = 3, and fourth = 4). Parents were not

asked to rank a value fifth, so the value that was not chosen for the rank of first through fourth was assumed to be fifth and assigned the score of 5. A new set of variables was created for each value to reflect their rank, and then another set of variables was created reversing the order of the scores, such that variables ranked as most important received the highest score, and variables not ranked by parents received the lowest score. These variables were then treated as continuous variables.

Second, in order to operationalize Latino cultural values, this thesis utilized the following preferences for children: to be popular, to think for one's self, and to help others. To be popular was used to define personalismo. Not to think for one's self meant to endorse collectivism, and so collectivism was created by reversing the order of the scores assigned to the value of thinking for one's self. Simpatía was defined as the value, "to help others." Although these Latino values have more sophisticated meanings and nuances than the definitions given here, these definitions were used to differentiate between them.

Religiosity was measured by a single question asked of the primary caregiver, "Apart from attending religious services, how important would you say religion is to you?" The answers to this question were categorical, and the variable was treated as a continuous variable. The answers are coded as follows: 1 = not important, 2 = somewhat important, or 3 = very important.

Acculturation. Level of acculturation in the family was determined by the answer to a single question asking the head of the household and the wife what language is spoken with children in the household, and the answer from whoever was determined to be the primary caregiver was utilized. The answers to this question

were categorical, and were coded as follows: 1 = only English, 2 = mostly English, 3 = both equally, 4 = mostly other languages, and 5 = only other languages. The acculturation score was then reversed so that low scores would reflect low levels of acculturation, and high scores would reflect high levels of acculturation. This variable was treated as a continuous measure of the degree to which parents are acculturated; speaking only English meant high acculturation and speaking only other languages meant low acculturation.

Parent involvement. There were two types of parental involvement measures: parental participation in their child's education and communication about school activities with the specific target child. Two measures were used in order to not exclude parents who may be too busy to actively participate in their child's education, but were still interested and communicative about the day to day activities of their child.

Participation in the child's education was measured by an eight-item series of questions drawn from the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS: 88), the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS), and the National Health Examination Survey (NHES). The series asked the primary caregiver how many times they had participated in select school activities in the past 12 months: volunteering in school office, classroom, or library; conferring with the child's teacher; conferring with the school principal; talking informally with the child's teacher; talking informally with the child's principal; attending a school event in which child participated; attending a meeting of the PTA or similar organization; or meeting with the school counselor. Each item was coded from not at all (0) to as many times as the parent reports having

participated. Answers for each item ranged from 0 to 200, and were summed. In order to eliminate outliers, a univariate analysis was conducted, answers were grouped into terciles, and participation was recoded into three variables: low participation, medium participation, and high participation.

Parent communication with their child about school was measured by questions based on a series from the NELS: 88, that asked parents how often they discussed the following three school related items with their children: school activities or events of particular interest, things studied in class, and experiences in school. These answers were coded 1 = never, 2 = once or twice in the past 12 months, 3 = a few times in the past 12 months, 4 = about once a week, 5 = more than once a week, or 6 = every day. Answers for each item were summed. Univariate analysis was also conducted for communication, answers were grouped into terciles, and three variables were created: low communication, medium communication, and high communication.

Extracurricular Activities. Youth extracurricular activities were assessed by two measures. The first measure was a series of questions asked of the primary caregiver (for youth ages 5 to 18) about the child's participation in after-school sports, community, and religious activities, created for the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods. The exact question was, "How often has (CHILD) participated in the following activities in the past 12 months: church club or activity, athletic team, or community center like the YMCA?" The answers were coded 1 = never in the past 12 months, 2 = 1 or 2 times in the past 12 months, 3 = 3 or 4 times in the past 12 months, 4 = once a month, 5 = a few times a month, 6 = once a

week, or 7 = several times a week. These variables were treated either as dichotomous or as a continuous variables, dependent upon the choice of analyses (OLS or logistic, see Analysis section). When treated as dichotomous variables, the answers were re-coded as follows: 1 (never in the past 12 months) = 0, and 2 to 7 (1 time in the past 12 months to several times a week) = 1.

The second measure was a question about fine arts activities, and was drawn from a series designed by Eccles and Simpkins, and asked of the primary caregiver. The exact question was, “Did (CHILD) take lessons, such as music, dance, or drama in the last 12 months?” The answer was coded 1 = yes, and 5 = no. The latter was recoded to 0 = no. As there was no continuous measure of fine arts lessons for youth ages 10 to 17, only logistic regression was conducted for this outcome variable.

Data Analysis

First, correlations between the controls (income to poverty ratio, education of the primary caregiver, age group of child, gender of child) and predictor variables (cultural values, level of acculturation, and parental involvement) and outcome variables (extracurricular activities) were examined to determine the relationships among them.

The categorical dependent variables were transformed into dichotomous, yes or no variables, in order to conduct logistic regressions. Due to the small percentages of children that participated in extracurricular activities, and the limited range of response categories, it was determined that it would be more appropriate statistically to examine the effects of cultural values on whether a child was likely to participate in an extracurricular activity at all, rather than the effects of cultural values on the

overall amount of time spent participating in extracurricular activities. Therefore, logistic regressions were conducted, controlling for the education of the primary caregiver, income to poverty ratio, and gender of the child, then adding in the cultural variables. In the first model, activities were regressed on socioeconomic status (ratio of income to the poverty line; education of the primary caregiver) and age and gender of the child. In the second model the variables for cultural values were included. Most of the hypotheses are based on predictions about relationships between specific cultural values and specific extracurricular activities, so these relationships were examined first, before adding variables that may account for the relationship. Acculturation was added in the third model based on the hypothesis that it will have its own association, and its inclusion may affect the coefficients of the cultural values in the previous model. Finally, in the fourth model, the variables that comprise parent involvement were included, given that, once added, parent involvement may account for variance thought to be contributed by cultural values.

In order to determine if there were differences between the two age groups of children, a set of regressions was run to test for an interaction between age and cultural values with respect to their relationship with extracurricular activities. A dummy variable was created for age, 0 = children ages 5 to 11, and 1 = children ages 12 to 18. The dummy variable was then multiplied by each of the cultural values. The model included the control variables, the independent variables, and the interaction variables. The sample was then divided into two groups: children ages 5 to 11, and ages 12 to 18. If there was a significant interaction between age and any of the cultural values with respect to a dependent variable, then regressions were

conducted on the split sample for that variable. If there were no interactions, the analyses were conducted on the whole sample.

A separate set of exploratory regressions was conducted with only the participants in extracurricular activities in order to examine the relationship between cultural values and only those children who actually participate in extracurricular activities. First, datasets were created for each of the categorical dependent variables which retained only children or youth who participated in the extracurricular activity. Then, the categorical dependent variables were treated as continuous variables in order to conduct ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions. However, it was decided that the results of these regressions would not be utilized given that the hypotheses related to whether or not children participated in extracurricular activities, and not the amount of their participation. Also, OLS regression could only be conducted on three of the dependent variables, the sample sizes for religious activities, sports, and youth groups were small (61, 45, and 27), and there was only one significant relationship.

The standard level of significance ($p < .05$) was used in the analysis. However, because sample sizes were small, associations where the significance level was between .05 and .10 were also examined. These associations were referred to as marginally significant or at the trend level. The regression results that were examined for hypotheses one through four which pertained to cultural values were from the second model. The reason for this was because these hypotheses state that cultural values will be related to extracurricular activities when socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled. The fourth model was used to examine both hypotheses

five and six, and the effects of acculturation and parent involvement on the coefficients for cultural values.

Chapter 4: Results

Descriptive Statistics

Sample

Means and standard deviations were calculated for all variables included in the analysis (see Table 1). The mean income to poverty ratio for the sample was 1.88, which is in the bottom third of income levels in the United States (Khan, 2006). The mean education level of the primary caregiver was 9.4 years. This is very low given that approximately 80% of women in the United States have at least 12 years of education ("Selected social characteristics: 2004," 2004). The mean age of children ages 5 to 11 was 8.8 years old, and mean age of children ages 12 to 18 was 15.15.

These families were very religious, scoring 2.73 on a scale of 1 to 3. Among the other cultural values, *simpatía* was ranked the highest of 3 out of 5 values, with a mean score of 3.31. The second most important value was collectivism, with a mean score of 2.54, and the least important value (of those examined) was *personalismo*, with a mean score of 1.92.

According to the dichotomous scores for activities, children were most likely to be engaged in fine arts lessons, with 33% of children participating in drama, music, or dance. Almost as many children participated in religious activities (32%), however 38% of children ages 5 to 11 participated in religious activities and only 23% of older youth ages 12 to 18 did so. Twenty-three percent of children played a sport. Finally, only 14% of children were in any kind of youth group, either at the local YMCA or a scout group.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Sample.

	Means			Standard Deviations			Sample sizes		
	All	5 to 11	12 to	All	5 to	12 to	All	5 to	12 to
			18		11	18		11	18
Income to poverty ratio	1.88	2.08	1.61	1.50	1.68	1.19	207	118	89
Education of the PCG	9.43	10.35	8.21	4.00	3.72	4.04	206	117	89
Age of the child	11.55	8.85	15.15	3.63	1.75	1.97	210	120	90
Gender (1=male, 2=female)	1.51	1.53	1.49	0.50	0.50	0.50	210	120	90
Importance of religion	2.73	2.69	2.78	0.48	0.52	0.42	210	120	90
Personalismo	1.92	1.74	2.16	1.35	1.19	1.52	210	120	90
Collectivism	2.54	2.48	2.62	1.44	1.49	1.38	210	120	90
Simpatia	3.31	3.33	3.29	1.15	1.15	1.16	210	120	90
Level of acculturation	2.95	3.03	2.84	1.77	1.76	1.78	210	120	90
School participation – high	0.26	0.29	0.21	0.44	0.46	0.41	210	120	90
School communication – high	0.17	0.25	0.07	0.38	0.44	0.25	210	120	90
Fine arts lessons (0=no, 1=yes)	0.33	0.35	0.31	0.47	0.48	0.47	210	120	90
Religious acts. (0=no, 1=yes)	0.32	0.38	0.23	0.47	0.49	0.43	210	120	90
Sports (0=no, 1=yes)	0.23	0.24	0.21	0.42	0.43	0.41	209	120	89
Youth groups (0=no, 1=yes)	0.14	0.15	0.13	0.35	0.36	0.34	210	120	90

Correlations

Correlations between the main variables were examined (see Table 2). For the purposes of correlation, the dichotomous variables for extracurricular activities were used. With the exception of personalismo, the main independent variables of cultural values were not correlated with the dependent variables. However, parents who ranked personalismo as an important value were significantly less likely to have children who participated in religious activities ($-.18, p < .01$), sports ($-.14, p < .05$), and youth groups ($-.19, p < .01$). Acculturation was associated with a significantly greater likelihood of participation in religious activities ($.19, p < .01$), sports ($.17, p < .05$), and youth groups ($.20, p < .01$).

Table 2. Correlations Between Main Variables.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Income to poverty ratio	1.00												
2. Education of the PCG	.46***	1.00											
3. Religiosity	.05	-.06	1.00										
4. Personalismo	-.25***	-.43***	.03	1.00									
5. Collectivism	-.09	-.17*	.09	.35***	1.00								
6. Simpatia	-.03	-.06	-.03	-.01	.33***	1.00							
7. Acculturation	.07	.17*	-.12+	-.28***	-.01	.09	1.00						
8. School participation	.07	.09	.02	-.06	-.18*	-.20**	-.06	1.00					
9. School comm.	.23***	.25***	-.01	-.14*	.09	.16*	.12+	.17*	1.00				
10. Religious activities	.09	.21**	.03	-.18**	.10	.10	.19**	.13*	.18*	1.00			
11. Sports	.14*	.24***	-.003	-.14*	-.05	-.08	.17*	.02	.05	.16*	1.00		
12. Youth groups	.07	.20**	-.02	-.19**	-.04	-.07	.20**	.07	.10	.19**	.46***	1.00	
13. Fine arts lessons	.12+	.13+	-.06	-.02	.06	-.01	.02	.09	.03	.01	.06	.16*	1.00

+p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001;

There were also some significant correlations between cultural values and the control variables. Personalismo was negatively correlated with the income to poverty ratio ($-.25, p<.001$), education of the primary caregiver ($-.43, p<.001$), and acculturation ($-.28, p<.001$). Collectivism was negatively correlated with the education of the primary caregiver ($-.17, p<.05$). Finally, income to poverty ratio and education of the primary caregiver were, not surprisingly, highly correlated ($.46, p<.001$).

Test of Hypotheses

Testing for Interactions

Regressions were conducted to test for interactions between age group and cultural values when regressed on extracurricular activities (see Table 3). The interaction between religiosity and age with respect to sports was significant ($-1.75, p<.05$). Also there were trends indicated for the interactions between age and collectivism ($.51, p<.10$) and religiosity ($1.47, p<.10$) with respect to the dependent variable fine arts lessons. Therefore, sports and lessons were examined separately for each age group.

Table 3. Logistic Regression Testing Interaction Between Cultural Values and Age on Extracurricular Activities.

	Sports	Youth Groups	Lessons	Religious Activities
Variable				
Intercept	-2.62	-2.50	-0.17	-2.04
Income to poverty ratio	0.01	-0.08	0.11	-0.02
Education of PCG	0.15*	0.12	0.06	0.08
Gender of child	-0.58	-0.02	1.02**	0.04
Age group	3.37	3.87	-5.72*	-1.96+
Collectivism	-0.07	0.35	-0.02	0.30*
Personalismo	-0.48	-1.25+	-0.10	-0.52
Simpatía	-0.07	-0.08	-0.15	0.10
Religiosity	0.65	0.25	-0.86*	0.16
Age group (1=ages 12 to 19)				
Collectivism and age	0.42	-0.27	0.51+	-0.12
Personalismo and age	0.52	0.84	0.09	0.36
Simpatía and age	-0.11	-0.41	0.09	0.00
Religiosity and age	-1.75*	-1.06	1.47+	0.38
N	202	203	203	203

+p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001;

Hypotheses

Logistic regressions were conducted to test the hypotheses (see Table 4).

Three of the dependent variables are categorical, and were transformed into dichotomous variables. One of the dependent variables was already dichotomous (fine arts lessons).

Table 4. Logistic Regression of Extracurricular Activities on Cultural Values, Controlling for Family and Child Characteristics.

Variable	Sports				Youth Groups			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Intercept	-2.26**	-1.75	-2.56	-2.52	-3.71***	-1.54	-2.73	-2.83
Income / poverty	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.05	-0.06	-0.07	-0.06	-0.06
Education of PCG	0.15**	0.13*	0.13*	0.13*	0.17*	0.11	0.09	0.09
Gender of child	-0.38	-0.37	-0.34	-0.33	0.15	0.17	0.24	0.24
Ages 5 to 11	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit
Ages 12 to 18	0.12	0.10	0.10	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.08	0.13
Collectivism		0.09	0.06	0.06		0.23	0.19	0.18
Personalismo		-0.13	-0.06	-0.06		-0.68*	-0.61+	-0.59+
Simpatia		-0.15	-0.17	-0.17		-0.27	-0.31	-0.32
Religiosity		0.05	0.13	0.13		-0.10	0.05	0.05
Acculturation			0.19+	0.19+			0.29*	0.30*
School participation				-0.10				0.26
School communication				-0.06				0.25

Variable	Fine Arts Lessons				Religious Activities			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Intercept	-2.76***	-2.17+	-2.11	-2.65+	-1.64*	-2.58+	-3.28*	-3.95*
Income / poverty	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.10	-0.01	-0.03	-0.02	-0.03
Education of PCG	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.10*	0.08	0.07	0.07
Gender of child	0.79*	0.80*	0.80*	0.85**	0.06	0.05	0.10	0.12
Ages 5 to 11	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit	omit
Ages 12 to 18	0.12	0.13	0.13	0.10	-0.59+	-0.61+	-0.62	-0.60+
Collectivism		0.15	0.16	0.20		0.25+	0.23+	0.27*
Personalismo		0.01	0.00	0.00		-0.33*	-0.26	-0.25
Simpatia		-0.09	-0.09	-0.03		0.09	0.07	0.11
Religiosity		-0.30	-0.30	-0.31		0.32	0.38	0.40
Acculturation			-0.01	0.01			0.17+	0.19+
School participation				0.62+				0.87*
School communication				-0.61				0.02

+p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001;

The first hypothesis proposes that when socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that place more emphasis on the Latino value of collectivism (not thinking for one's self) for their children will have children who are more likely to participate in sports, youth groups, and religious activities. This hypothesis was partially supported. Parents who emphasize collectivism for their children have children who are significantly more likely to participate in religious activities. These

children are also more likely to participate in youth groups and fine arts lessons, and slightly more likely to participate in sports; however, none of these relationships is significant. The relationship between collectivism and religious activities was positive and marginally significant (.25, $p < .10$). When acculturation was added to the model the coefficient dropped slightly (.23, $p < .10$), but when school participation and communication were added the coefficient increased to the significant level (.27, $p < .05$).

Even though the effect of collectivism on fine arts lessons was not hypothesized, due to the interaction effect between collectivism and age with respect to fine arts lessons, separate regressions were run for each age group in addition to the regressions conducted with the full sample (see Tables 5 and 6). For children ages 5 to 11, there was an indication that young children whose parents emphasize collectivism participate slightly less in fine arts lessons, although this relationship was not significant. This was the opposite of the relationship for older children (ages 12 to 18). Older youth whose parents valued collectivism participated significantly more in lessons (.48, $p < .05$), even after adding the effects of acculturation and parent involvement with school.

The second hypothesis states that when socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that place stronger emphasis on Latino values such as personalismo (being popular) will have children more likely to participate in sports and youth groups, but less likely to take fine arts lessons. This hypothesis was not supported. The relationship between personalismo and sports was negative (-.13, *ns*), but not significant, and when acculturation was added to the model the coefficient for

collectivism was reduced (-.06, *ns*). Contrary to the hypothesis, personalismo was negatively related to participation in youth groups (-.68, $p < .05$). This relationship was significant, although when acculturation and parent involvement were added to the model, the effect of personalismo was reduced slightly, and only marginally significant (-.59, $p < .10$). Personalismo had no effect on participation in fine arts lessons. Finally, religious activities were negatively related to personalismo, although this was not hypothesized (-.33, $p < .05$). This relationship remained negative, but lost significance when acculturation and parent involvement were added to the model (-.25, *ns*). In summary, families that emphasized personalismo had children who were significantly less likely to participate in youth groups and religious activities, but not when acculturation and parent involvement were added to the model.

Table 5. Regression of Sports & Lessons for Children Ages 5 to 11 on Cultural Values, Controlling for Family and Child Characteristics.

Variable	Sports – Logistic				Lessons - Logistic			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Intercept	-3.19**	-3.82+	-5.25*	-5.26*	-3.26***	-0.40	-0.20	-0.52
Income/poverty	-0.10	-0.16	-0.17	-0.17	0.10	0.13	0.13	0.14
Education of PCG	0.26**	0.25**	0.26**	0.28**	0.09	0.07	0.08	0.09
Gender of child	-0.41	-0.56	-0.47	-0.43	0.92*	1.11*	1.09*	1.14*
Religiosity		0.80	0.89	0.84		-0.89*	-0.89*	-0.87+
Personalismo		-0.44	-0.29	-0.38		-0.08	-0.11	-0.12
Collectivism		-0.07	-0.15	-0.10		-0.02	-0.01	0.01
Simpatía		-0.10	-0.19	-0.14		-0.15	-0.15	-0.11
Acculturation			0.36*	0.35*			-0.07	-0.06
School participation				-0.35				0.01
School communication				-0.68				-0.51

+ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$;

Table 6. Regression of Sports & Lessons for Children Ages 12 to 18 on Cultural Values, Controlling for Family and Child Characteristics.

Variable	Sports – Logistic				Lessons - Logistic			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Intercept	-2.00+	0.52	0.75	0.44	-1.98*	-5.19*	-6.14*	-6.06*
Income/poverty	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.32	-0.07	0.02	0.03	0.04
Education of PCG	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.05
Gender of child	-0.14	-0.32	-0.34	-0.25	0.59	0.85	0.93+	0.95+
Religiosity		-0.97	-1.01	-0.99		0.54	0.71	0.52
Personalismo		-0.02	-0.03	-0.01		-0.03	0.01	0.01
Collectivism		0.39	0.39	0.38		0.48*	0.47*	0.50*
Simpatía		-0.23	-0.23	-0.22		-0.05	-0.06	-0.01
Acculturation			-0.04	-0.03			0.13	0.12
School participation				0.34				1.03+
School communication				0.94				-0.31

+p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001;

The third hypothesis asserts that when socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that emphasize the Latino value of *simpatía* (helping) will have children who are more likely to participate in religious activities and youth groups. This hypothesis was not supported. Families that emphasized the value of helping others had children who were slightly more likely to participate in religious activities (.09, *ns*), but less likely to participate in youth groups (-.27, *ns*), and neither relationship was significant.

Hypothesis four states that when socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that are more religious will have children who are more likely to participate in religious activities. This hypothesis was not supported. There was a positive association between religiosity and religious activities (.32, *ns*), but it was not significant. This means that families that valued religion did have children who

were more likely to participate in religious activities, but not significantly more than other children.

Although no relationship was hypothesized between religiosity and sports and religiosity and fine arts lessons, given the interaction between religiosity and age with respect to sports and fine arts lessons, logistic regressions were also run on the split sample. Younger children from religious families were found to be significantly less likely to participate in fine arts lessons ($-.89, p < .05$), whereas older youth were more likely to participate ($.54, ns$). Younger children from religious families were more likely to participate in sports ($.80, ns$), whereas older youth from religious families were less likely to participate in sports ($-.97, ns$). However, these latter associations were not statistically significant.

The fifth hypothesis proposes that when socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families with higher levels of acculturation will be more likely to be involved in fine arts lessons and sports. This hypothesis was partially supported. The relationship between acculturation and sports indicated a trend toward families with high levels of acculturation being more likely to participate in sports ($.19, p < .10$). There was also a significant relationship between acculturation and youth groups ($.29, p < .05$), and a trend toward greater likelihood of participation in religious activities ($.17, p < .10$), although these relationships were not hypothesized.

The interaction between age and acculturation with respect to sports was not tested, but acculturation was included in the split sample regression models. Younger children in families with higher levels of acculturation were significantly more likely

to participate in sports (.36, $p < .05$), but families with older youth and higher levels of acculturation had a slight negative, though not significant, relationship with sports (- .04, *ns*).

Finally, the sixth hypothesis asserts that families with higher levels of parent involvement (either parent participation or communication) will be more likely to participate in all extracurricular activities. This hypothesis was partially supported. There was evidence of a trend toward parents with high levels of school participation having children who were more likely to participate in fine arts lessons (.62, $p < .10$), but parents with high levels of school communication had children who were less likely to participate in fine arts lessons (-.61, *ns*), although this relationship was not significant. The relationships between both types of parent involvement and fine arts lessons were similar (same direction) with the split sample examination, but a high level of school participation was associated at a trend level (1.03, $p < .10$) for lessons only with older youth. Parents with high levels of school participation were also significantly more likely to have children who participated in religious activities (.87, $p < .05$), but high levels of school communication had a very slight positive relationship with religious activities (.02, *ns*). Parents with high levels of school participation and communication had a slight, but insignificant, likelihood of having children who were less likely to participate in sports (-.10, *ns* and -.06, *ns*, respectively). However, examination of the split sample analysis revealed that high levels of parent involvement were negatively related to participation in sports for younger children, and positively related to participation in sports with older youth, although none of these relationships were significant. Finally, higher levels of parent

participation and communication with school were positively (.26, *ns* and .25, *ns*, respectively), but not significantly related to a probability of participation in youth groups.

Control Results – Income, Education, Gender, and Age

The income to poverty ratio was not significantly related to extracurricular activities in any of the regressions. It had a slight positive relationship with sports and lessons, and a slight negative association with youth groups and religious activities. This means that families with slightly higher income to poverty ratios were more likely to have children playing sports and taking fine arts lessons, and these same families were less likely to have children involved in youth groups and engaging in religious activities. However, none of these relationships were significant, and the coefficient sizes were small.

In contrast, the education of the primary caregiver was significantly associated with most of the dependent variables of extracurricular activities. In families where the primary caregiver had more education, children were significantly more likely to participate in sports, youth groups, and religious activities. For example, families in which the education of the primary caregiver was higher had children significantly more likely to engage in sports (.15, $p < .01$). After adding cultural values, acculturation, and parent involvement to the model, the effects of education were slightly lower, but still significant (.13, $p < .05$). The education of the primary caregiver was positively related to participation in youth groups (.17, $p < .05$), although when cultural values were added to the model, the effect of education lost significance (.11, *ns*), and its effect dropped even more when acculturation and parent

involvement were added (.09, *ns*). Similarly, the education of the primary caregiver was significantly related to participation in religious activities (.10, $p < .05$), but the relationship became insignificant when cultural values were added to the model (.08, *ns*).

Girls were more likely than boys to participate in fine arts lessons (.79, $p < .05$), particularly when the effects of cultural values and parent involvement were added to the model (.85, $p < .01$). Girls were slightly more likely to engage in religious activities and youth groups, and boys were more likely to be involved in sports, but none of these relationships were significant.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Summary of Results

Table 7. Summary of Hypotheses and Results.

Hypotheses	Logistic Regressions
1. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that place more emphasis on the Latino value of collectivism for their children will have children who participate more in sports, youth groups, and religious activities.	Supported for religious activities only (marginally significant)
2. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that place stronger emphasis on the Latino value of personalismo (being popular) will have children with higher levels of participation in sports and youth groups, but less in fine arts lessons.	Not supported, youth groups were negatively and significantly associated
3. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that emphasize the Latino value of simpatía (helping) will have children with higher levels of participation in religious activities and youth groups.	Not supported
4. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families that are more religious will have children with higher levels of participation in religious activities.	Not supported
5. When socioeconomic status, age, and gender are controlled, families with higher levels of acculturation will have higher levels of involvement in fine arts lessons and sports.	Supported for sports only (marginally significant)
6. Families with higher levels of parent involvement (either parent participation or communication) will have overall higher levels of all four extracurricular activities.	Partially supported for school participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine arts lessons marginally significant • Religious activities significant

Most of the hypotheses related to cultural values and specific extracurricular activities were either not supported or only partially supported, possibly because other factors such as acculturation and education of the primary caregiver are more important predictors of participation in extracurricular activities. For example, although acculturation was not related to fine arts lessons as was predicted, it was associated with sports, youth groups, and religious activities. In addition, socioeconomic status was controlled in each of the analyses, and it is important to note that education of the primary caregiver was a strong predictor of participation in sports, youth groups, and religious activities, but the income to poverty ratio was not. Finally, involved parents had children who were more likely to be involved in fine arts lessons and religious activities, but these parents may be more likely to participate in school activities because their children were involved, and not the other way around.

The first hypothesis predicted that parents who prioritized collectivism for their children would have children who were more likely to participate in sports, youth groups, and religious activities, because these are activities that either involve teamwork or encourage one to think of others. This hypothesis was partially supported, as children in these families were slightly more likely to participate in religious activities, although these families were not more religious than other families. It may be that sports and youth groups still require one to think for one's self, even though they are group activities. However, religious activities involve actively allowing a deity figure or power outside of one's self to guide decisions and actions, and so resound more strongly with the value of collectivism. In other words,

parents that value not thinking for one's self may want their children to learn to pray or develop a faith system.

Personalismo was valued by families with significantly lower income to poverty ratios, as well as lower education levels of their primary caregivers, and lower levels of acculturation. It was predicted that parents who valued personalismo would have children more likely to be involved in sports and youth groups, as these are activities that involve playing with other children. It was further predicted that these children would be less likely to be engaged in fine arts lessons, as these might be considered more individual pursuits. Contrary to the hypothesis, these families were less likely to have children engaged in youth groups. These children were also less likely to participate in religious activities, although this was not predicted. When acculturation was added to the models, levels of participation increased slightly, so it is possible that parents who prioritized personalismo had such low levels of acculturation that language barriers kept them from engaging their children in extracurricular activities, even church activities. It is also possible that these children were too busy helping their parents with running the household, and being available for translation.

Although *simpatía* was the most highly ranked of the three values examined, it was not associated with any extracurricular activities. Families in this study were also very religious, but this was not related to religious activities. However, young children in religious families were less likely to take fine arts lessons. This could be because these parents considered fine arts lessons to be developmentally inappropriate for younger children.

As predicted, there was a trend toward families with higher levels of acculturation having children more likely to participate in sports; however, contrary to the hypothesis, acculturation had very little effect on fine arts lessons. It is interesting that younger children in families with higher levels of acculturation were significantly more likely to play sports, but this was not the case for older children. Athletics for young children is very “American.” Although it is still “American” to play sports in high school, far fewer youth make the teams, and so kids who may have been in a children’s soccer league are forced to diversify their interests. Playing sports may be the only option for less acculturated older youth. It is important to note that acculturation seemed to have increased access to all other extracurricular activities, except lessons, as more acculturated families were more likely to have children participating in youth groups and even religious activities. More acculturated families did have primary caregivers with higher levels of education.

It seems logical that families with higher levels of parent involvement would have children who participated more in extracurricular activities. Parents who engaged in high levels of school participation had children who were more likely to be involved in religious activities and fine arts lessons. High levels of parent communication were not significantly related to any of the extracurricular activities. This hypothesis was based on the idea that high levels of involvement might be more important than cultural values for extracurricular activities as these parents would be the type to get their children involved in many types of activities anyway. However, parent involvement did not consistently add to or subtract from cultural values when added to the regression models, indicating that parent involvement has a relationship

with extracurricular activities that is separate from cultural values, and that, possibly, it is children's involvement in extracurricular activities that drives parent participation in schools, and not the other way around.

Socioeconomic status, as has been found in previous research was a strong predictor of participation in extracurricular activities, which is why it was controlled. However, the education of the primary caregiver was the strongest predictor of children's participation in extracurricular activities, not the income to poverty ratio. The education of the primary caregiver was significantly related to a higher likelihood of children participating in all extracurricular activities except for fine arts lessons. The income to poverty ratio was not significantly related to any of the activities.

Overall, cultural values had little impact on the likelihood of participation in particular extracurricular activities, but higher levels of acculturation were related to a greater likelihood of participation in most extracurricular activities. These findings contradict the stereotype that less acculturated Latino children are very social and active in sports. The findings from this thesis suggest that traditional values such as personalismo are linked with low levels of acculturation, and low levels of acculturation are linked with a lower likelihood of participation in extracurricular activities. Furthermore, the education of the primary caregiver was a strong predictor of participation in extracurricular activities; in fact it was the only predictor of children's participation in sports, which suggest that educated parents perceive extracurricular activities as being an important part of their children's development. Parents with low levels of education and acculturation are the least likely to engage their children in extracurricular activities, even in activities with their church or local

youth group, which may be part of the reason that these children are at risk for school failure.

Context with Previous Research

Most of the research on extracurricular activities has been focused on levels of activities and the effects of activities. There has been a limited amount of research on who is likely to participate in activities, although researchers have attempted to control for the effect of “joiners” when examining outcomes. Research on the relationship between parent values and children’s activities has been primarily qualitative, focused on the goals and aspirations that parents at all socioeconomic levels have for their children. This study is unique in its attempt to quantify cultural values and to examine the relationship between these values and children’s participation in extracurricular activities.

This study supports research that has indicated that socioeconomic status is an important predictor of participation in extracurricular activities. It further emphasizes the delineation between income to poverty ratio and education of the primary caregiver (Simpkins et al., 2005). Even though income to poverty ratio was correlated with the education of the primary caregiver, when included in regressions it was not significantly related to any of the extracurricular activities, whereas the education of the primary caregiver was significantly related to most extracurricular activities.

Most of the previous research on acculturation has been in the area of risk and protective factors, and the results have been mixed. Some research has shown higher levels of acculturation to be a risk factor for children and some has shown it to be a

protective factor. This study furthers the idea that less acculturation is definitely linked to more traditional Latino cultural values, but that the protection these values afford children may be offset by the limited access that families with low levels of acculturation have to resources such as extracurricular activities. This study found that certain traditional values such as personalismo, collectivism, and simpatía were highly correlated with each other, but only personalismo had a significant negative correlation with acculturation. This suggests that certain Latino values may be retained and emphasized more than others as families assimilate. For example, if a family lived in a small town in rural Mexico with homogenous values and plenty of local adult supervision, the value of personalismo might be very useful in helping one getting along with others, and being popular would be a desirable trait. However, in a large U.S. city, acculturated parents understand that the desire to be popular could put a young person at risk, as most adults work long hours, and are less available to guide children in their choices. The same parents may be more likely to emphasize other cultural values, such as simpatía and collectivism, which help their children to retain their heritage, and navigate life in the United States. This would be in keeping with previous research that has suggested some Latino values, such as familism, are more likely to be emphasized in more acculturated homes (Romero, Robinson, Haydel, Mendoza & Killen, 2004).

Limitations

There are several possible limitations of this study. The first limitation may have been the sample size. Although there were probably enough subjects to study cultural values, most of the children did not participate in any extracurricular

activities. This problem is often a difficulty when studying extracurricular activities, and one of the reasons that very large databases may be necessary to pursue this line of inquiry.

Another obvious limitation is the possible mismatch of Latino cultural values to those in the survey. The questions in the PSID-CDS were not designed to capture values specific to any particular ethnic group, and have not been widely used in this manner previously. It may be that Latino parents do not think of being popular as the same thing as personalismo, or, “not to think for one’s self,” as collectivism, and, finally, helping others may not be the same as simpatía. This researcher has not seen the translation that is used for this particular scale when the PSID-CDS is conducted in Spanish, and that information may be useful for future research.

Similar to the previous limitation is the possibility that cultural values were not well matched to corresponding extracurricular activities. The theory that parents use their own values to help guide their children in the selection of extracurricular activities is probably valid. However, it is difficult to determine how parents see their values best applied. For example, some parents may want their child to participate in sports in order to learn how to help others and be a team player, and other parents may want their child to participate in religious activities to learn the exact same thing. Again, the values scale in this survey has not yet been used in this manner.

Another limitation related to cultural values is the idea that, although a value may be important to parents, this does not mean that they will use extracurricular activities to teach that particular value. Even though being popular may not be a priority, many parents still encourage their children to participate in activities that

may help them to be well liked, such as athletics or cheerleading. These same parents may want their children to learn to think for themselves, and still not encourage them to sign up for the debate team.

As a final limitation involving the value questions, although asking the parents to rank the values is an excellent way to determine their priorities, it does not measure how important a particular value is to a parent. For example, parents might have a difficult time choosing between thinking for one's self and being helpful to others, and not care at all about whether their child is popular. Forcing parents to rank the values is a good way to get them to choose the most important values, but does not reflect the level of importance of each value or the distance between these levels.

A different type of limitation involved the use of language as a measure of acculturation. Language has frequently been used for this purpose, and this practice is consistent with previous research on immigrant groups. However, language may be less a proxy of acculturation, and more a determinant of access to mainstream goods and services. For example, a family might speak English fluently while retaining and emphasizing a strong sense of Latin heritage, culture, and values, and therefore be able to take advantage of opportunities for activities and services that are available to the mainstream culture. Or the opposite situation could exist in a family with limited English proficiency. This family might not speak English well enough to read about activity programs or even scholarships for Latino children, and the parents might also be too busy working to pay bills to maintain a strong family life and sense of heritage at home. This makes it difficult to use this study to test assimilation theory. For example, if acculturation is a risk factor for children, but access to

mainstream goods and services is a benefit, then language is not a good measure of acculturation. Language as a part of an acculturation scale which includes other items may be a better test for this purpose.

Research Implications

More research on cultural values and acculturation is needed. Although there is research on the cultural values of Latino families in their countries of origin, there is not much that quantifies cultural values in the United States. The few studies conducted have interesting implications, such as the possibility that traditional cultural values are more prominent in households with higher socioeconomic status.

This study implies that acculturation has a significant impact on the likelihood that children will participate in certain extracurricular activities, but does not indicate why. More research needs to be done on the differences between acculturation and access to goods and services. This study only used language as a measure of acculturation, which is appropriate, but to truly delineate between acculturation and language proficiency that enables access to goods and services, more sophisticated acculturation scales should be used when possible. Also, mediating variables, such as children being utilized to assist with childcare and translation in less acculturated households should be examined. It may be that less acculturated families have access to goods and services, but no time to use them.

Program and Policy Implications

This thesis found that traditional Latino values do not play a significant role in the likelihood of children's participation in extracurricular activities, but that the

education of the primary caregiver and level of acculturation are very important. What is needed at the policy level is more programming that addresses these two issues as educators and programmers attempt to engage Latino families in extracurricular activities. Programs might incorporate the use of a Spanish speaker to engage and maintain personal relationships with Latino families. It was found that personalismo was an important value in households with low levels of acculturation and education. For this reason, programming should emphasize and demonstrate the opportunity for Latino children and families to meet other people and establish connections in the United States through their local schools and children's clubs.

Similarly, this study found that it will be important to consider creative and perhaps non-traditional routes for limited English proficiency households to access extracurricular activities. It was unexpected that more acculturated Latinos are the families accessing religious activities and youth groups, given that the traditional cultural values of Latinos should predispose them to these activities. This finding suggests that less acculturated Latinos are not accessing their traditional protective mechanisms, and that targeting Latino families through church and local programs may miss the most vulnerable part of this population.

Policy should recommend that programming targeted at vulnerable populations such as limited English proficiency households does not only recruit from traditional routes of access to these households, such as church and local programs, but that these programs demonstrate success in accessing families that do not necessarily attend church or actively participate in local programming. Policy should support local schools in a focus on mechanisms forengaging parents with low levels

of education from limited English proficiency households, and assist with the development of successful recruitment techniques for drawing children from these homes into extracurricular activities.

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