UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
IRVINE

Examining the Relations between Families, Organized Activities, and the Development of Mexican-origin Adolescents

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Education

by

Perla Ramos Carranza

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Sandra D. Simpkins, Chair
Chancellor's Professor Emerita Deborah Vandell
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2023

DEDICATION

Para
mi familia por estar conmigo desde el comienzo y esa niña de 11 años que nunca pensó llegar hasta aqui. Gracias por todo.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to express my gratitude to my primary advisor Dr. Sandra Simpkins for being there for me throughout this long journey. Thank you for dedicating your time and energy during these past five years to regularly meet with me, share your advice, and provide feedback on my drafts. I also appreciate your support and motivation for me to persist in my pursuit of completing the doctoral program. You played a fundamental role in getting me to the end and I will always be grateful for that. I also wanted to express my gratitude towards my secondary advisor Dr. Deborah Vandell. Thank you for inviting me to be part of your Mott project during my first years in the program. My involvement in that project was foundational for building my interest and knowledge of organized activity research. I appreciate you for being a great mentor throughout these past five years and especially for your support and guidance during my dissertation process. I also wanted to thank Dr. Adriana Villavicencio for being on my dissertation committee and contributing her valuable expertise on qualitative methods and educational research.

I am grateful for my close family, colleagues, mentors, and friends, for providing me with a support system and community during these past five years. Thank you for carrying me to this last stage of my graduate journey. For my family, which includes my parents, brothers, niece, and sister-in-law, thank you for being my greatest source of inspiration and motivation for persisting during this journey. You are the drivers of my passion and dedication for the work I do. To Diane Hsieh, Kayla Puente, Stephanie Soto-Lara, Nestor Tulagan, Glona Lee, Fuko Kiyama, Christy Starr, Zehra Gülseven, Su Jiang, Yangyang Liu, Mark Yu, Julie Nguyen, Lupe Rosas, and Taylor Wycoff, thank you for being the best lab mates that I could possibly have. Thank you for being the lab community that I needed in this journey, for sharing your advice, for reading my endless drafts, for listening to my rants, and for the encouragement to keep going. I will always cherish

the moments we shared, including the lab potlucks and game nights and the conversations about research, theory, life, and everything.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the funding that I received throughout my graduate program. Thank you to the National Science Foundation for providing me with the Graduate Research Fellowship during the last three years of my doctoral program. I would also like to thank Search Institute for providing me with a summer fellowship during my fourth year. I am deeply grateful for the funding that I received as it was a fundamental source of financial support for me to be able to finish my doctoral studies.

VITA

Perla Ramos Carranza

EDUCATION

PhD Education, specialization in Human Development	University of California, Irvine	Expected 2023
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B.A. Psychology (honors), B.S. Human Development (highest honors)	University of California, Davis	2017

AWARDS AND HONORS

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PEER-REVIEVEWED PUBLICATIONS

Ramos Carranza, P., Boat, A., & Hsieh, T. (2023). School discrimination and social-emotional learning among Latinx adolescents: The moderating role of school commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. *Youth and Society*. Online Publication. https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X231170314

Starr, C. R., **Ramos Carranza, P.,** & Simpkins, S. D. (2022). Stability and changes in high school students' STEM career expectations: Variability based on STEM support and parent education. *Journal of Adolescence, 94*(6), 906-919. https://doi.org/10.1002/jad.12067

Ramos Carranza, P., Simpkins, S.D. (2021) Parent and sibling science support for Latinx adolescents. *Social Psychology of Education, 24,* 511–535. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-021-09620-3

Yu, M. V., Soto-Lara, S., Liu, Y., Puente, K., **Ramos Carranza, P.,** Pantano, A., & Simpkins, S. D. (2021). Culturally responsive practices: Insights from a high-quality math afterschool program serving underprivileged Latinx adolescent. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 68,* 323-339. **https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12518**

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

Ramos Carranza, P. (2022, November). Promoting social-emotional learning of Latinx adolescent through DEI institutional practices. *Search Institute Blog*. https://blog.searchinstitute.org/promoting-social-emotional-learning-of-latinx-adolescent-through-dei-institutional-practices

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Tulagan, N.B., Soto-Lara, S., Puente, K., **Ramos Carranza, P.,** Pantano, A., & Simpkins, S.D. (under review). "If I can't help, I find someone who can": Latinx parents' adaptive responses against barriers to math support.

Ramos Carranza, P., & Simpkins, S. D. (under review). Benefits and challenges of adolescents' participation in organized activities for Mexican-origin families.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Ramos Carranza, P., & Simpkins, S. D. (2023, April). *Do high school organized activities support the college preparation of Latinx students?* Poster accepted to present at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence.

Ramos Carranza, P., Boat, A., & Hsieh, T. (2023, March). School discrimination and social-emotional learning among Latinx adolescent: The moderating role of school commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Paper accepted to present at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development.

Tulagan, N., Soto-Lara, S., **Ramos Carranza, P**., Puente, K., Pantano, A., & Simpkins, S.D. (2022, April). *Adaptive strategies against barriers to parents' math support: Leveraging Latinx parents' cultural funds of knowledge*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting.

Ramos Carranza, P., & Simpkins, S. D. (2022, March). *Benefits and challenges of adolescents' participation in organized activities for Mexican-origin families*. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence.

Starr, C. R., **Ramos Carranza, P.,** & Simpkins, S.D. (2022, March). *What kinds of social support relate to persisting and developing an interest in STEM among potential first and continuing generation high school students?* In C. Starr. (Chair), Promoting possibilities for first-gen students: Capitalizing on first generation students' strengths to promote academic and STEM motivation. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence.

Ramos Carranza, P., & Simpkins, S. D. (2021, April). *Science support for Latinx adolescents: A family systems approach*. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, Online Conference.

Hsieh, T., **Ramos Carranza, P**., Yu, M. V., & Simpkins, S. D. (2021, April). *STEM extracurricular activities and adolescents' STEM performance, motivational beliefs, and*

aspirations in high school. Poster presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Online Conference.

Ramos Carranza, P., & Simpkins, S. D. (2021, March). *Examining parent and sibling science-specific support for Latinx adolescents*. Poster presented at biennial meeting for the Society for Research on Adolescence, Online Conference.

Ramos Carranza, P., Ontai,L, Sutter, C., & Estrada, W. (2018, May)**.** *Literature review of the association between parenting and children's food intake and weight in early childhood.* Poster session presented at the annual Association for Psychological Science convention.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Summer Scholars Fellowship **June 2022-September 2022**
Search Institute

- Conceptualized a research study focused on the association between discrimination and socioemotional learning for Latinx adolescent
- Conducted path analyses, moderation analyses, and multi-group modeling using Mplus statistical software
- Drafted a manuscript for academic audience and blog post for practitioner audience based on study findings

Graduate Research Assistant **September 2020-December 2021**
FAMILY Study
School of Education, University of California, Irvine

- Recruited parents to participate in interviews
- Conducted interviews in Spanish with Latinx parents about their math support for their middle-schoolers
- Created recruitment materials and interview transcript with research team

Graduate Research Assistant **September 2019-September 2020**
Mott After-School Research Project
School of Education, University of California, Irvine

- Drafted synthesis paper of implementation characteristic of 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) programs
- Coded reports and evaluations of 21st CCLC programs based on implementation characteristics and outcomes (academic, behavioral, socioemotional, health)
- Conducted searches and screenings of reports and evaluations on 21st CCLC programs

Graduate Research Assistant **September 2018-June 2020**
Math CEO Project
School of Education, University of California, Irvine

- Conducted interviews with middle-school students and their undergraduate mentors about their experience in a math-enrichment after-school program

Staff Research Associate **June 2017-August 2018**
Niños Saños/Healthy Kids Study
Department of Human Ecology, University of California, Davis

- Trained and supervised research assistants
- Managed videotaping and coding schedule
- Analyzed behavioral coding data using The Observer XT and Excel
- Conducted and organized weekly lab meetings

Undergraduate Research Assistant **June 2016-August 2018**
MIND Institute, University of California, Davis
- Coded parenting behavior during a videotaped parent-child interaction
- Discussed inconsistencies in coding and updated guidelines with lab team

Undergraduate Research Assistant **April 2016-June 2017**
Niños Sanos/Healthy Kids Study
Department of Human Ecology, University of California, Davis
- Conducted surveys and videotapings of parent-child interactions with Spanish-speaking families
- Coded parenting behavior on The Observer XT software

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Guest Lecturer **May 2022**
Adolescent Development in Education
Dr. Osman Umarji
University of California, Irvine
- Conducted a 50-minute lecture for 60 undergraduate students on peer relationships in adolescence
- Engaged students in a group discussion about the positive and negative influence of peer relationships

Guest Lecturer **April 2022**
Psychology of Chicanx/Latinx Families
Dr. Kristine Molina
University of California, Irvine
- Conducted an 80-minute lecture for 120 undergraduate students on Latinx family dynamics during the transition to emerging adulthood
- Engaged students to think critically about the influence of culture on Latinx family dynamics

Teaching Assistant **June 2020-August 2020**
Multicultural Education K-12
Dr. Gilberto Conchas
University of California, Irvine
- Engaged in online discussion with undergraduate students on course readings and videos
- Assessed student reflections on course material

Teaching Assistant **March 2020-June 2020**
Foundations of Out-of-School and Summer Learning
Dr. Sandra Simpkins

University of California, Irvine

- Designed course assignments for online instruction on Canvas
- Created course materials (e.g., PowerPoint slides)
- Supported undergraduate students with course assignments

Teaching Assistant **September 2018-March 2020**
Theory and Practice of Reading Interventions
Dr. George Farkas
University of California, Irvine

- Conducted training of undergraduates for tutoring emerging readers
- Supervised undergraduates on their tutoring
- Provided individualized support to undergraduates on their tutoring and course assignments

UNIVERSITY SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

Higher Education Outreach Committee Member **September 2021-June 2022**
DECADE
School of Education, University of California, Irvine

- Collaborated with Orange County after-school programs to provide informational resources to Latinx families
- Developed and organized workshops for Latinx families in English and Spanish on the U.S. educational system and the college preparation process

Mentor **September 2020-June 2022**
DECADE
School of Education, University of California, Irvine

- Mentored incoming Latina doctoral students through their transition into a doctoral program
- Provides advice and resources to support mentees in their graduate experience

Mentor **January 2020-September 2021**
Chican@/Latin@ Staff Association (CLSA) Mentorship Program
University of California, Irvine

- Mentored freshmen and transfer Latina students through their transition to UC Irvine
- Met monthly with mentees to check-in about their academic well-being

Leadership Committee Member **September 2020-August 2021**
DECADE
School of Education, University of California, Irvine

- Coordinated monthly meetings for DECADE, a doctoral student organization focused on advocacy and support among fellow graduate students
- Communicated and collaborated with DECADE faculty advisor to best support the doctoral student body

Mentor **December 2020-June 2021**
Undergraduate Student Support Hub
School of Education, University of California, Irvine

- Mentored an undergraduate senior on their graduate application process
- Organized online socials to support community building among the mentees and mentors of the mentoring program

Mentoring Program Committee Member **September 2019-June 2020**
DECADE
School of Education, University of California, Irvine

- Coordinated a mentoring program for first-year doctoral students
- Facilitated a training workshop for mentors to build strong mentor-mentee relationships

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Examining the Relations between Families, Organized Activities, and the Development of Mexican-origin Adolescents

by

Perla Ramos Carranza

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Irvine, 2023

Professor Sandra Simpkins, Chair

Given that structural and social inequities in the U.S. curtail many developmental opportunities for Latinx adolescents, it is essential to identify and develop supportive infrastructures for Latinx adolescents (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). Families and organized activities have been identified as important developmental contexts for the positive development of adolescents (Mahoney et al, 2009; Simpkins et al., 2015; Vandell et al., 2015). However, further research is needed to understand how the connection between Latinx families and organized activities can support or constrain the positive development of Latinx adolescents. Based on the gaps in the literature, this dissertation aimed to examine the relations between Latinx families, organized activities, and Latinx adolescent development, while considering the heterogeneity in the sociocultural backgrounds of Latinx families. This dissertation specifically focused on families and adolescents of Mexican origin. In Paper 1, we used qualitative interview data to examine Mexican-origin parents' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of participating in organized activities for their families. We also conducted a cross-case analysis to determine whether parents' perceptions varied based on parents' level of enculturation. Findings

revealed that organized activities positively contributed to family relationships and dynamics and reinforced the ethnic cultural socialization from families. However, constraints on family resources and a cultural mismatch between families and organized activities compromised adolescents' continued participation in the activity. Parents who had a higher enculturation to the Mexican ethnic culture were more likely to mention adherence to their ethnic culture as a benefit of organized activities and misalignment with their ethnic culture as a challenge. Expanding from Paper 1, Paper 2 captured the college preparation capital that families and organized activities provided to Mexican-origin adolescents during high school. We also examined how the college preparation capital from organized activities complemented the capital from families and whether the forms of college preparation capital that students reported differed based on their parents' college education. For the method, we qualitatively analyzed retrospective, semi-structured interviews with Mexican-origin college students from a high-ranking, 4-year, public university. The findings show that Mexican-origin families were resourceful in providing different forms of college preparation capital to their adolescents, including aspirational capital grounded in their cultural knowledge, and dominant forms of capital like social capital. Organized activities played a valuable role in complementing the college preparation capital from families with unique forms of navigational and aspirational capital. Lastly, Mexican-origin students with college-educated parents reported receiving more aspirational and social capital from their organized activities compared to students whose parents did not attend college. In the two dissertation papers, we find that cultural socialization and access to skills, knowledge, and resources across families and organized activities shape the developmental opportunities for Mexican-origin adolescents. Moreover, the nature of the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents varied based on sociocultural

factors. Overall, the findings from this dissertation have valuable theoretical, empirical, and practical implications for scholars, families, organized activities, and other key stakeholders that seek to improve the developmental opportunities for Mexican-origin adolescents.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the Dissertation

Although adolescence has been recognized as an age of opportunity, structural and social inequities in the United States curtail many developmental opportunities of racially and ethnically minoritized adolescents (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). Latinx adolescents, specifically, are often enrolled in under-resourced schools, face discrimination within mainstream institutions, and are disproportionately placed in juvenile detention (Conchas, 2001; Lopez, 2003; National Academy of Sciences, 2019; Valenzuela, 1999). Thus, it is not surprising that there are considerable disparities in the educational attainment and health outcomes between Latinx adolescents and their White peers (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). Given these structural and social challenges, it is important to identify and develop supportive infrastructures for the positive development of Latinx adolescents (Erbstein & Fabionar, 2019). Families and organized activities, in particular, are two promising supportive settings for Latinx adolescents.

Although adolescents generally have more autonomy to make choices about their development compared to younger children, families still play an instrumental role in socializing adolescents (Eccles, 1993; National Academy of Sciences, 2019; Simpkins et al., 2015). Parents can influence their adolescents through the values that they instill about what is important for their development. These values are then reflected in parents' supportive behaviors, such as encouraging their adolescents to do well academically. Moreover, families can also influence their adolescents through the resources they provide. A family's economic resources, education, and access to social resources shape adolescents' developmental outcomes (Longmore et al., 2013; Parcel et al., 2010). Overall, families can play a major role in the positive development of adolescents and serve as a protective factor against challenges that adolescents may face.

In recent decades, the literature has increasingly recognized organized out-of-school activities as an important context for positive adolescent development (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Larson, 2000; Mahoney et al., 2009). Organized activities are defined as out-of-school settings that are structured with adult supervision, have regular meetings, and provide opportunities for group interactions with peers (Vandell et al., 2015). Organized activities include extracurricular activities (e.g., sports, music, school clubs) and after-school programs (e.g., 21st Century Community Learning Centers). Organized activities provide opportunities for adolescents to explore their social identities and develop their intrapersonal and interpersonal skills (Dworkin et al., 2003; Fredricks et al., 2002; Larson et al, 2007). Through participating in organized activities, adolescents also develop warm and close relationships with peers and adults. All in all, participation in organized activities is associated with a variety of positive developmental outcomes, including academic, psychological, and socioemotional outcomes (Fredricks & Eccles, 2005; Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012; Mahoney et al, 2009).

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory suggests that families and organized activities are two developmental contexts that shape adolescent development and that influence each other in bi-directional ways (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006). According to this theory, there are three potential pathways through which families and organized activities might be related to each other: 1) families influence adolescents' participation and experiences in organized activities, 2) adolescents' participation and experiences in organized activities influence families, and 3) families and organized activities influence adolescents' development. Though theory suggests these links, some of these pathways have rarely been researched, including the ways organized activities affect families, as well as whether families and organized activities provide complementary support for adolescents' development. To address these gaps in the literature,

this dissertation examined the benefits and challenges that Mexican-origin families experience in organized activities and the complementary support of families and organized activities for adolescents' college preparation.

Aligned with bioecological theory, the theoretical model of Latino youth development suggests the larger sociocultural context shapes adolescent development and the relations among families and organized activities (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006; Raffaelli et al., 2005). According to this model, Latinx families have great within-group variability in terms of their socioeconomic background, immigrant experiences, and cultural orientations and values (Raffaelli et al., 2005; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2013). These differences shape the values and beliefs that Latinx parents have for socializing their adolescents and thus, the values they may hold about organized activities (Halgunseth, 2019). Additionally, the variability in the sociocultural experiences of Latinx families may shape the way in which organized activities affect families as well as the ways in which families and organized activities provide support for adolescents. However, most of the research on family processes related to adolescent's organized activities has been conducted with White middle-class families and a lot of the research that has been conducted with ethnically minoritized populations, such as the Latinx community, has been in comparison to White populations (for a review, see Vandell et al., 2019). Therefore, for this dissertation, we address this gap in the literature by considering the within-group variability of Latinx families in the relations between families, organized activities, and adolescent development.

Given the gaps in the literature, the overarching aim of this two-paper dissertation is to examine the relations between families, organized activities, and development of Mexican-origin adolescents while considering the sociocultural background and experiences of families. Paper 1

of this dissertation examined Mexican-origin parents' perceptions about the benefits and challenges their family experienced with their adolescents' participation in organized activities. Paper 2 captured the ways in which families and organized activities may provide complementary support to prepare Mexican-origin high school students for college. The following section outlines the theoretical frameworks that provide the foundation for this dissertation.

Theoretical Frameworks

Four theoretical frameworks guide this dissertation: Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006), family systems theory (Cox & Paley, 1997, 2003), the patchwork capital framework (Kolluri, 2020), and the model of Latino youth development (Raffaelli et al., 2005). First, the bioecological theory provides a broad understanding of the embedded nature of adolescent development and how multiple contexts, such as families and organized activities, and the larger society and culture shape adolescent development. Second, the family systems theory provides insight into the ways in which adolescents' participation in organized activities might influence families. Third, the patchwork capital framework provides a framework for understanding how developmental contexts like families and organized activities can collectively support the development of Latinx adolescents. Lastly, the model of Latino youth development outlines cultural values and cultural processes that can shape the development of Latinx adolescents. Overall, the bioecological theory, the family systems theory, the patchwork capital framework, and the model of Latino youth development together frame the overarching goal of this dissertation.

According to Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006), adolescents develop within five nested systems that influence their development:

microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. Three systems that are particularly relevant for this dissertation are the microsystem, mesosystem, and macrosystem. The microsystem includes contexts adolescents interact directly with, such as their home, school, or organized activity; and the mesosystem are the connections and processes between two or more contexts in the microsystem. Thus, Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory provides a framework for examining the bi-directional influences between organized activities and families, and how both contexts co-determine adolescent's development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006). Additionally, the theory suggests that sociocultural factors shape the relations between families, organized activities, and adolescent development. Particularly, the macrosystem includes larger societal factors, such as culture and ethnicity, that shape the developmental processes that transpire in the microsystem and mesosystem. Although the bioecological theory provides a helpful framework for this dissertation, the theory is broad and does not delve much into the ways that families, organized activities, and adolescent development may be related and how sociocultural factors may play a role. Thus, three additional theories inform this dissertation: the family systems theory, the patchwork capital framework, and the theoretical model of Latino youth development.

Extending from the broad tenets of bioecological theory, the family systems theory provides insight on how adolescents' participation in organized activities might influence families. Specifically, family systems theory posits that an individual family member's behavior and experiences can influence the whole family (e.g., family routines) and family subsystems, including family relationships (e.g., sibling relationships), parenting of other siblings, and individual family members (e.g., parent stress; Cox & Paley, 1997, 2003). Thus, according to this theory, adolescents' participation in organized activities can influence overall family

dynamics, including family routines and activities that family members share together (e.g., dinner time). Additionally, family systems theory suggests that adolescents' participation in organized activities can shape the activities of other family members (e.g., parent's work), an adolescent's relationship with their parents or siblings, and other family relationships, such as the relationships among parents. All in all, the family systems theory describes specific ways through which adolescents' participation in organized activities might influence families.

A third theory that informs this dissertation is the patchwork capital framework, which is helpful for understanding how families and organized activities may collectively influence the development of Latinx adolescents through support and resources (Kolluri, 2020). Particularly, this framework expands from Bourdieu's (1984) conception of social and cultural capital and Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework to propose a theory that combines both. As defined by Bourdieu (1984), social capital are the relationships that nurture an individuals' cultural capital, which are practices, values, and knowledge that are valued in the mainstream society (e.g., English language). On the other hand, Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework challenges Bourdieu's (1984) mainstream conception of social and cultural capital and highlights the community knowledge and assets that minoritized communities possess (e.g., cultural narratives). The patchwork capital framework takes from both theories to propose that minoritized individuals, such as Latinx adolescents, leverage both dominant forms of social and cultural capital as well as their community knowledge and assets to successfully navigate mainstream institutions, like 4-year colleges. Based on this framework, families and organized activities may provide different types of support and resources to Latinx adolescents. Particularly, Latinx families may provide Latinx adolescents with knowledge and assets from

their ethnic culture, whereas organized activities may complement this support by providing mainstream forms of social and cultural capital.

Lastly, the theoretical model of Latino youth development is a helpful framework for contextualizing this dissertation as it centers the experiences of Latinx adolescents and families (Raffaelli et al., 2005). Specifically, the model highlights important culturally relevant factors and processes that may shape Latinx adolescent development, such as immigrant experiences, the enculturation process, and cultural values and beliefs. For example, according to the model, the cultural process of enculturation, which entails remaining connected to cultural values and practices that are prominent in the Latinx culture, such as familism (i.e., valuing family unity and connectedness) and respeto (i.e., respect for parents and elders), is associated with positive psychosocial outcomes (Knight et al., 2016; Knight et al., 2015; Stein et al., 2014; Valdivieso-Mora et al., 2016). Additionally, the model of Latino youth development also highlights the importance of considering the diversity among the Latinx community (Raffaelli et al., 2005). Particularly, Raffaelli and colleagues (2005) emphasize the need for the developmental literature to consider differences among Latinx families in terms of their immigrant generation, parent education, income, and other sociocultural factors. Overall, the model of Latino youth development provides a helpful framework to identify specific cultural factors relevant to the relations between Latinx families, organized activities, and Latinx adolescent development.

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory, family systems theory, the patchwork capital framework and the theoretical model of Latino youth development together frame the purpose of this dissertation, which is to examine the relations between Latinx families, organized activities, and Latinx adolescent development. Based on the premise from Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory that families and organized activities mutually influence each other and co-determine

adolescent development (i.e., mesosystem), Paper 1 examines how organized activities influence the family system, whereas Paper 2 considers how families and organized activities together support Latinx adolescent development. The family systems theory helps frame Paper 1 by providing a framework for how participation in organized activities may shape family dynamics and relationships. Additionally, the patchwork capital framework is particularly helpful for Paper 2 as it provides insight on the ways that families and organized activities can provide complementary support for Latinx students. Lastly, based on the culturally relevant factors that the model of Latino youth development highlights, Paper 1 and Paper 2 consider how sociocultural factors may differentially shape the relations between Latinx families, organized activities, and Latinx adolescent development.

Importance of Adolescence

Adolescence is the developmental stage between the start of puberty and adulthood that is marked by considerable changes in adolescents' physiology, cognitive abilities, and interpersonal behavior (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). Scholars have identified adolescence as a period with unique developmental opportunities for individuals to thrive (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). During adolescence, adolescents increasingly explore who they are as a person and how they identify within the larger society (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1968). Moreover, adolescents also simultaneously seek a sense of autonomy and independence from others (Fuligni & Tsai, 2015; McElhaney et al., 2009). This increased exploration of the self and desire for autonomy leads adolescents to have more control over their life choices compared to their childhood. Overall, adolescence is an important transitional life stage that provides opportunities for the positive development of adolescents and their successful transition to adulthood.

Although adolescents have increasing autonomy compared to younger children, both families and organized activities play an important role in supporting adolescents' positive development (Soenens et al., 2019). Particularly, parents provide emotional support and resources to help their adolescents develop the skills and knowledge needed for transitioning into adulthood (Simpkins et al., 2015). In fact, parent support and involvement are associated with positive developmental outcomes in education and health, and minimizing negative outcomes, such as contact with the juvenile detention system (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). On the other hand, organized activities can provide opportunities to develop adolescents' leadership and initiative skills at a time that they are increasingly seeking autonomy over their lives (Larson, 2000; Larson et al, 2007). Moreover, organized activities can support adolescents' identity exploration by providing opportunities to explore and reflect on their interests (Dworkin et al., 2003; Fredricks et al., 2002). Participating in organized activities may also provide opportunities and skills that will support adolescent's transition to college and the workforce, such as organizational skills (Dworkin et al., 2003; Kaufman & Gabler, 2004). All in all, families and organized activities can play an instrumental role in providing adolescents with the support, skills, knowledge, and resources that they need to successfully navigate the cognitive, social, and physiological changes associated with the adolescent developmental stage.

Across adolescence, there are two developmental stages that are particularly relevant to consider for this dissertation: early adolescence and late adolescence stages. The stage of early adolescence takes place as adolescents transition out of middle childhood and usually begins with an individual adolescent's pubertal onset (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). Some of the most drastic developmental changes of adolescence, such as the physiological changes associated with puberty, take place during early adolescence (Wigfield et al., 2005). In contrast,

late adolescence is characterized by the transition out of adolescence and into early adulthood that typically occurs as adolescents finish their K-12 education and reach their early 20's (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). Adolescents in this stage begin to think about and prepare for their future as adults, including their possible transition into college and the workforce (Eccles et al., 2003b; Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). This dissertation provides insight into how the influence of families and organized activities on the development of Latinx adolescents transcends across the early adolescence stage and into the transition out of the late adolescence stage. Particularly, Paper 1 examines family benefits and challenges as factors that may encourage or discourage the participation of Latinx adolescents in organized activities during their early adolescence. Additionally, Paper 2 of this dissertation examines how families and organized activities support Latinx adolescents during their late adolescence as they transition into college.

Latinx Adolescents and Families

In the U.S., Latinx families face unique challenges that marginalize them from the opportunities and services that can positively contribute to the development of their adolescents. For example, because Latinx families face high rates of poverty, Latinx adolescents are more likely to live in low-income neighborhoods, where they may attend under-resourced schools and lack access to valuable services, such as health care and organized activities (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). Latinx adolescents and families also often face racism and discrimination within mainstream institutions, such as schools, that prevent them from receiving crucial resources (Conchas, 2001; Lopez, 2002; Valenzuela, 1999). Moreover, Latinx families who are immigrants may additionally face the challenge of acculturating or adapting to mainstream American culture (Umaña-Taylor & Alfaro, 2009; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2013). The

challenges Latinx families face not only impact families, but also adolescents' development (National Academy of Sciences, 2019).

Though there is dire need for structural and institutional changes that address the challenges that Latinx families face, it is important to recognize that despite these adverse experiences, Latinx families leverage their strengths and resources to support the development of their adolescents. Particularly, the literature highlights the strong cultural value system of Latinx families, which includes familism and respeto (Calzada et al., 2010; Halgunseth, 2019; Hernández & Bámaca-Colbert, 2016). Familism emphasizes remaining connected to the family and prioritizing the needs of the family, and respeto refers to the importance of obeying and respecting authority figures and elders. Previous studies suggest that Latinx adolescents with these values experience higher family cohesion and lower family conflict (Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2012; Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2013). Moreover, familism and respeto are associated with positive adolescent development for Latinx adolescents, such as positive socio-emotional and academic outcomes (Corona et al., 2017; Rivas-Drake & Marchland, 2016; Stein et al., 2014; Valdivieso-Mora et al., 2016). In summary, these cultural values of Latinx families are valuable assets for the positive development of Latinx adolescents.

Although scholars have made great strides in the recent decades to highlight the unique experiences of Latinx families and adolescents, there remains a need to conduct more research that describes the development of Latinx adolescents. Particularly, the theoretical model of Latino youth development highlights that there is a lack of research that considers the within-group variability within the Latinx community (Raffaelli et al., 2005). The Latinx community is diverse in terms of their immigrant experiences, socioeconomic background, and cultural orientations (Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2013). In the case of immigration, the experience of

Latinx immigrants in the U.S. varies depending on how long it has been since they migrated to the U.S. (e.g., first generation, second generation), the age at which they migrated (e.g., child, adult), the reasons why they migrated (e.g., economic, political), and where they migrated to (e.g., urban, rural; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014). Some of the studies that have considered the variability in the socioeconomic status of the Latinx population suggest that differences in socioeconomic status lead to differences in parents' socialization goals and the resources they can provide for their children (Harwood et al., 1996; Updegraff et al., 2007). Additionally, the cultural orientations of Latinx parents may lead to differences in their beliefs and behaviors based on whether they enforce the traditional cultural values from their home country (i.e., enculturation) and/or the mainstream American cultural values (i.e., acculturation; Grau et al., 2009; Halgunseth, 2019). Overall, the differences amongst Latinx families in terms of, immigrant experiences, socioeconomic status, and cultural orientations may shape adolescent's participation in organized activities and overall development. However, there is not much research that looks at the within-group variability of Latinx families in the relations between families, organized activities, and adolescent development. Therefore, a goal of this dissertation is to consider the diversity of experiences within the Latinx community.

Of the Latinx subgroups in the U.S., individuals of Mexican origin comprise the largest nationality group in the U.S., representing 62% of the Latinx population (Noe-Bustamante et al., 2019). The Mexican community experiences a unique social position in the U.S. as they have a large immigrant presence, but do not receive the benefit of citizenship compared to other Latinx ethnic groups, such as Cubans and Puerto Ricans (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014). Moreover, given the U.S. acquisition of Mexican territories in 1854 and the U.S. programs to bring in Mexican laborers (e.g., the Bracero program) some Mexicans also have had a longer presence in the U.S.

and have a history of social resistance (e.g., the Chicano Movement in California). Given the unique experience of individuals of Mexican origin in the U.S., the two papers of this dissertation focus on the specific experience of adolescents and families of Mexican origin.

Influence of Organized Activities on Families

The literature has generally focused on how families influence adolescents' participation in organized activities; much less is known about how adolescents' participation in activities influences families. According to Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006) and family systems theory (Cox & Paley, 1997), it is valuable to consider how adolescent's participation in organized activities might influence families. Particularly, participation in organized activities may influence parents, siblings, and family-level dynamics, such as family activities and family routines, in ways that are either beneficial or detrimental for adolescents' development (Vandell et al., 2019).

The literature on the benefits of organized activities has largely focused on the benefits for the adolescents who participate and has not delved into whether adolescents' participation in organized activities may benefit families (Mahoney et al., 2009; Vandell et al., 2019). It is important to consider the benefits of organized activities beyond those for adolescents as benefits for families may be an additional incentive for adolescents to join and consistently attend activities. A few studies in the literature provide some insight into the potential benefits that families may obtain from their adolescents' participation in organized activities. First, parents have mentioned appreciating organized activities for providing a safe space for their adolescents that protects them from dangerous situations (e.g., getting exposed to violence) and risky behaviors (e.g., doing drugs; Barnett & Weber, 2018; Lareau, 2011; Lin et al., 2018; Simpkins et al., 2013). Additionally, there is empirical evidence that families may benefit from adolescents'

increased sense of responsibility that they developed at organized activities (Raffaelli et al., 2018). Lastly, another potential benefit of adolescents' participation in organized activities is that it can provide opportunities for positive social interactions among family members (Larson et al., 2007; Lin et al., 2018). Overall, although the literature is limited, there is some evidence that adolescents' activity participation can be beneficial for family dynamics and relationships.

Although families may experience the aforementioned benefits, they also face challenges as a result of adolescents' participation in organized activities. It is important to investigate the challenges that Latinx students face given that it may interfere with adolescents' participation in organized activities and overall development. According to the literature, a major challenge for participating in organized activities is the monetary cost, which can contribute to a financial burden for families (Bennet et al., 2012; Vandell et al., 2019). Another potential challenge for families is that the time committed to organized activities can interfere with other activities, such as the occupation and household work of other family members (Bean et al., 2014; Lareau & Weininger, 2008). Lastly, a third possible challenge of adolescents' participation in organized activities is that it can contribute to conflict between parents and adolescents if the parent disapproves of the adolescent's participation in the organized activity or if the adolescent perceives that their parent is interfering with their involvement (Larson et al., 2007). In conclusion, the literature suggests that adolescent's participation in organized activities can strain family time, resources, and relationships.

Overall, the literature provides insight into the potential benefits and challenges that families may experience through their adolescents' participation in organized activities. However, the research is limited and has not delved into how sociocultural factors may shape the experience of Latinx families with organized activities. Thus, there is a need for studies to

consider the perspective of Latinx parents, including how their cultural values and orientations may shape the family benefits and challenges they experience.

Complementary Support from Families and Organized Activities

Latinx students face challenges in accessing resources to support their college preparation in their high schools, such as being tracked into remedial courses (Ginder et al., 2018; Lopez, 2003). Thus, it is valuable to understand how developmental settings other than high school classrooms can support the college preparation of Latinx students. Particularly, the literature indicates that families and organized activities are both valuable sources of academic support for adolescents (Mahoney et al., 2009; Simpkins et al., 2015). For example, there is empirical evidence of positive associations between parent's academic support and participation in organized activities with adolescent's academic outcomes, including motivational beliefs and academic achievement (Eccles et al., 2003a; Heath et al., 2022; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2007). Previous literature also suggests that these positive relations extend into early adulthood as support from families and participating in organized activities has been positively associated with college outcomes, including college enrollment and completion (Sandefur et al., 2006; Haghighat & Knifsend, 2019; Shifrer et al, 2016).

Although there is empirical evidence that families and organized activity participation play an important role in the academic development of adolescents, there is limited insight into how this applies to Latinx students' college preparation. According to the patchwork capital framework, to succeed in their college aspirations, Latinx students may need to strategically leverage distinct forms of college preparation capital from their families and organized activities that they may otherwise not be able to access from other sources. For example, Latinx students may access dominant forms of cultural capital (e.g., college knowledge) through their organized

activity participation that they are not able to access in their high school classrooms or through their families. Moreover, Latinx families can uniquely provide adolescents with cultural socialization (e.g., cultural values) that encourages them to persist in their college aspirations, which students may not necessarily be able to access through their high school classrooms or organized activities. Overall, patchwork capital framework suggests that families and organized activities can together provide complementary forms of capital that supports the college preparation of Latinx students.

As one of the main socializers of adolescents' development, families can play an instrumental role in preparing adolescents for college (National Academy of Sciences, 2019; Simpkins et al., 2015). For Latinx students specifically, the literature highlights the role of Latinx parents in providing emotional support to their adolescents during their preparation for college (Percy Calaff, 2009; Ceballo, 2004; Gonzalez et al., 2003; Kimura-Walsh et al., 2009). For example, in a qualitative study, Latinx college students reported that encouragement from their parents was the most important support they received while they prepared for college (Carolan-Silva & Reyes, 2013). Moreover, the literature on the college experience of Latinx students suggests that older siblings and cousins can provide their younger siblings and cousins with information and resources about college (Ceja, 2006; Delgado, 2020; Hines et al., 2019; Patrón, 2020). The information and resources from older siblings and cousins can be especially helpful for those Latinx students who are not able to access this support from their parents. Overall, parents and older siblings and cousins can be a valuable source of support for Latinx students' college preparation.

Organized activities have been recognized for supporting the skill development of adolescents as well as providing opportunities for adolescents to develop positive social

relationships (Durlak et al., 2010; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Hansen et al., 2003). Particularly, the structured nature of these activities provides active learning opportunities for adolescents to develop time management, organizational, and socioemotional skills (Dworkin et al., 2003; Kaufman & Gabler, 2004; Larson, 2000; Larson et al, 2007). According to the higher education literature, these non-cognitive skills are part of the necessary skills for college-ready students (Conley, 2012; Duncheon, 2021). Organized activities can also facilitate students' development of warm and close relationships with social and institutional agents who can provide access to information and resources about college (Carolan-Silva & Reyes, 2013; Horrillo et al., 2021; Percy Calaff, 2009). In a large study on the social networks of Mexican American adolescents, Stanton-Salazar (2001) found that the adolescents who participated in organized activities developed relationships with their high school coaches, such that they became informal counselors who provided academic support and guidance. All in all, there is some indication that organized activities help adolescents develop skills and relationships that can be helpful for college.

Given that Latinx students face challenges in accessing resources and support from their high school classrooms, it is valuable to consider how Latinx adolescents may need to strategically leverage distinct types of support from other developmental settings, such as their families and organized activities, to succeed in their college aspirations. However, although the existing literature provides helpful insight, there are limited studies that have examined how the college preparation capital from families, including parents and siblings, and organized activities for Latinx adolescents may complement each other. It may be particularly helpful to consider how this complementary support from families and organized activities works for high-achieving

Latinx students as this can provide an understanding of what works for preparing Latinx students for college.

Role of Sociocultural Factors

The theoretical model of Latino youth development highlights the need for developmental research to consider culturally relevant factors that apply to the Latinx community as well as to attend to the rich diversity within this community (i.e., within-group differences; Raffaelli et al., 2005). Thus, the model of Latino youth development provides a helpful framework for understanding how sociocultural factors may shape the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Latinx adolescents. Specifically, this dissertation considers how cultural processes, such as enculturation, and social factors, such as parent education, may differentially shape the experience of Mexican-origin adolescents and families with organized activities.

Although there is a dearth of research examining how enculturation, which is the process of remaining connected to one's ethnic culture, may shape the experience of Latinx families with organized activities, there is some empirical evidence that this cultural process informs Mexican-origin parents' perceptions of organized activities. A few qualitative studies have found that Latinx parents who are more enculturated value organized activities that align with their ethnic cultural values (Lin et al., 2018; Simpkins et al., 2013). For example, Lin and colleagues (2018) found that Mexican-origin parents appreciated that organized activities offered opportunities for their adolescents to learn about respeto as it helped with maintaining connection to their family's culture. Essentially, Mexican-origin parents who are more enculturated to their ethnic culture may perceive organized activities that support their ethnic cultural values as beneficial for their family. Alternatively, there is also evidence that parents do not approve of their adolescent's

participation in organized activities that misalign with their ethnic culture. For example, some qualitative studies found that Latinx parents have concerns about organized activities exposing their adolescent to stereotypical views of their culture and conflicting with the amount of time they can spend time with the family (i.e., familism; Ettekal et al., 2020; Simpkins et al., 2013). Overall, there is existing literature suggesting that Mexican-origin parents' perceptions of whether organized activities are beneficial or challenging depends on their enculturation to Mexican ethnic culture.

Another sociocultural factor that might shape the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents is parent education. Parent education can shape the skills, knowledge, and resources that parents can leverage to support their adolescents, which can subsequently shape the support that adolescents access from other sources, like other family members and organized activities (Eccles, 1993, 2005). Particularly, parent education may shape the college preparation capital that both families and organized activities provide for Mexican-origin adolescents as well as the way these supports complement each other. The few studies that have addressed the role of parents' educational background on the college preparation capital from Latinx families suggest there are differences to consider. For example, in families where Latinx parents did not attend high school or college in the U.S., adolescents may rely more on the college knowledge from other family members, such as older siblings and cousins, who have post-secondary experience (Ceja, 2006; Luna & Martinez, 2013). Moreover, some studies convey that organized activities can also be particularly helpful in complementing the support from parents without previous college experience in the U.S. through providing opportunities for developing skills and relationships with social agents (Dworkin et al., 2003; Duncheon, 2021; Hansen et al., 2003). Nevertheless, further research is needed to

understand the extent to which differences in parent education may shape the complementary support from families and organized activities for the college preparation of Mexican-origin adolescents.

Overview of Dissertation Papers

This dissertation is composed of two papers that address the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents. The main theoretical framework that sets the foundation for these two papers is the bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006). Furthermore, based on the model of Latino youth development, the two papers consider the role of culturally specific factors, such as the enculturation process, as well as the cultural diversity within the Mexican-origin community (Raffaelli et al., 2005). Overall, the empirical studies from these papers have important implications for key stakeholders who seek to better serve and support the needs of Latinx families and adolescents, particularly those of Mexican origin.

Paper 1, which is under review at an academic journal, seeks to further understand the processes and mechanisms by which adolescent's organized activity participation may influence Mexican-origin families. Guided by family systems theory (Cox & Paley, 1997) and culturally responsive frameworks (Simpkins et al., 2017), this paper qualitatively examines the perceptions of Mexican-origin parents on the benefits and challenges their family experiences because of their adolescents' participation in organized activities. Moreover, the paper also examines whether parents' perceptions of these benefits and challenges varies based on the parents' level of enculturation to Mexican ethnic culture. This paper provides insight for organized activities on ways to help incentivize adolescents' enrollment and consistent participation in activities and family engagement. Additionally, insight about the challenges that families face can also help

activities effectively address issues of access, retention, and quality for Mexican-origin adolescents. Overall, this paper has important implications for organized activities that seek to be culturally responsive to Mexican-origin adolescents and families.

Paper 2 extends from Paper 1 by focusing on the complementary support that families and organized activities provide for Latinx adolescents. Framed by the patchwork capital framework (Kolluri, 2019) and the community cultural wealth framework (Yosso, 2005), Paper 2 qualitatively examines the perceptions of Mexican-origin college students on the college preparation capital that they received from their families and their organized activity participation in high school. This paper provides insight on the similar and different ways in which families and organized activities supported the college preparation of Mexican-origin adolescents, as well as how the support from these two sources may complement each other. Moreover, this paper also analyzed how Mexican-origin adolescents' perceptions of the college preparation capital they received from families and organized activities varied based on their parents' education. Information from this paper can help find ways to promote the college preparation of Latinx students. Particularly, the findings from this paper can inform stakeholders, such as policy makers, school administrators, and educators, about what works for preparing Latinx students for college. Furthermore, this paper can provide a holistic understanding of what forms of support are available for Latinx high schoolers and what supports they need more access to. Finally, the consideration of parent education provides an understanding of the diversity of experiences among Latinx students in terms of their college preparation.

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CHAPTER 2

Benefits and Challenges of Adolescents' Participation in Organized Activities for Mexican-Origin Families

(Under Review at *Journal of Adolescent Research*)

Abstract

In our study, we aimed to qualitatively understand Mexican-origin parents' perceptions of the benefits and challenges their family experienced due to their adolescents' participation in organized activities and examine whether these benefits and challenges varied depending on the parents' level of enculturation to Mexican culture. We conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews with 34 Mexican-origin parents (mean age = 39.45, 28% U.S. born) and used inductive and deductive approaches in multiple iterative stages of coding to determine the themes from the interviews. Additionally, we conducted a cross-case analysis to compare parents' responses based on their enculturation to Mexican culture. Parents perceived that the benefits of adolescent's participation in organized activities were protection, family bonding, transfer of skills, and reinforcement of family ethnic culture. The challenges parents reported were exposure to risks, constraints on family resources, and family conflict. Parents with a higher enculturation to Mexican culture, more frequently reported family bonding and reinforcement of family ethnic culture as a benefit and family conflict as a challenge of activities compared to parents with a lower enculturation. Findings from our study have implications to help organized activities be culturally responsive to the Mexican-origin families and adolescents they serve.

Keywords: Families, Organized Activities, Mexican-origin, Adolescents, Culturally Responsive

Benefits and Challenges of Adolescents' Participation in Organized Activities for Mexican-Origin Families

Participating in organized activities is associated with a variety of positive developmental outcomes during adolescence, including their psychological well-being and academic performance (Mahoney et al, 2009; Vandell et al., 2015). However, scholars have yet to ask if the benefits (and challenges) associated with organized activities extend beyond those who participate. Ecological theories argue that organized activities should influence adolescents' families through mesosystem processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, 2006; Vandell et al., 2019); yet, research on these connections is scarce. By focusing on the influence of organized activities on adolescents, the current literature is likely underestimating the significance of organized activities. Insight about families' experiences with organized activities can help point out potential benefits as well as unintended challenges for families—both of which have implications for adolescents' activity participation and development.

It is valuable to consider the influence of organized activities on families from the Latinx community, as family unity and cohesion (i.e., familism) are prominent values in the Latinx culture (Halgunseth, 2019; Simpkins et al., 2019). For Latinx families with high familism values, the extent to which organized activities benefit or challenge the family may play an important role in adolescents' activity participation. Understanding the role that Latinx parents' cultural backgrounds can have in their experiences with organized activities can be helpful for activities that strive to be culturally responsive to the communities they serve (Simpkins et al., 2017). This study aims to examine the perceptions of Mexican-origin parents about the benefits and challenges their family experienced through their adolescents' organized activity participation.

Benefits and Challenges of Organized Activities for Families

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory states the microsystem includes contexts individuals directly interact with and the mesosystem includes the connections and processes between two or more microsystems (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Based on bioecological theory, families and organized activities are microsystems that should influence each other in bi-directional ways that shape adolescents' development. Family systems theory extends the broad tenets of bioecological theory by detailing some of the ways adolescents' participation in organized activities might influence families; for instance, the theory argues that the behavior and adjustment of one family member can influence the whole family (e.g., family routines) and also various family subsystems, including family relationships (e.g., adolescent-sibling relationship), parenting of other siblings, and individual family members (e.g., parent stress; Cox & Paley, 1997, 2003; Vandell et al., 2019). When applied to organized activities and families, adolescents' activities could influence other family members (e.g., siblings' activities), an adolescent's relationship with their parents or siblings, and family relationships separate from the adolescent, such as parents' relationship or parent-sibling relationships. Family systems theory also underscores the importance of overall family dynamics; in this case, organized activities might shape the activities families share and time that families spend together. Overall, bioecological and family systems theories highlight the value of considering the influence of organized activities on families (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Cox & Paley, 1997, 2003).

Insight on the potential positive and negative ways adolescents' activity participation influences families has valuable practical implications. Particularly, activities can leverage information about the potential benefits for families to help incentivize adolescents' enrollment and consistent participation as well as support family engagement. Alternatively, knowledge

about the challenges that families face can help activities be culturally responsive and effectively address issues of access, retention, and quality for adolescents, especially for those who come from historically marginalized communities. Although insight on the family benefits and challenges of activities can help activities be responsive to and support the communities they serve, few studies in the organized activity literature have addressed this topic.

The few studies that exist suggest activities can benefit families by (a) providing adolescents a safe place, (b) promoting adolescent skill development, and (c) supporting positive family interactions. First, a commonly reported benefit is that organized activities provide a safe environment for adolescents during the after-school hours and, thereby, giving parents peace of mind. Parents appreciate organized activities for providing supervision that protects adolescents from dangerous situations (e.g., getting exposed to violence) and risky behaviors (e.g., doing drugs; Barnett & Weber, 2018; Lin et al., 2018). Second, activities help promote positive adolescent development, including skills that can influence adolescents' behavior at home. For example, some studies suggest that adolescents' increased sense of responsibility in activities increases their sense of responsibility at home (Larson et al., 2007; Raffaelli et al., 2018). Third, adolescents' activity participation may also contribute to positive interactions among family members, such as parent-adolescent conversations and shared family activities (e.g., attending sport games as a family; Larson et al., 2007; Lin et al., 2018). In sum, the current literature suggests that adolescents' activity participation can benefit individual family members as well as family dynamics and relationships.

There is also empirical evidence from a few studies suggesting families experience some challenges regarding adolescents' activity participation, including (a) constraints on financial and transportation resources, (b) interference with family routines, and (c) family conflict. A major

challenge for families is the investment of family resources, including financial and transportation challenges, that come with adolescents' organized activities (Bennet et al., 2012; Vandell et al., 2019). Adolescent activities can also interfere with family routines, including parents' work obligations, house work, and family time together (Bean et al., 2014; Lareau & Weininger, 2008). Finally, adolescents' participation in organized activities can challenge family relationships. For example, parent-adolescent conflict can ensue when parents disapprove of the adolescents' organized activity (Larson et al., 2007). In conclusion, there is some indication that adolescents' organized activity participation can present challenges to family resources, routines, and relationships.

Overall, the existing literature provides insight into some of the potential benefits and challenges that families may experience. However, the existing research is limited and has not considered how culture and ethnicity might influence these processes as theorized in bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) nor considered many of these processes for Latinx families. Thus, it is important to consider how the cultural values and practices of Mexican-origin families may shape the benefits and challenges they perceive from activities.

Role of Culture in the Experiences of Mexican-Origin Families with Organized Activities

Aligned with the emphasis on culture outlined in the bioecological theory, developmental scholars have argued for the importance of considering the role of culture in organized activities. Williams and Deutsch (2016) proposed that race and ethnicity function as social categories and cultural contexts that influence adolescent's interactions in organized activities. Moreover, adolescents bring cultural expectations from their family ethnic socialization that shapes their experiences within activities and the benefits they derive from participating (Williams & Deutsch, 2016). Simpkins and colleagues (2017) agree with these tenets and argued that

organized activities should strive to be responsive to adolescent's and families' culture to maximize their positive impacts. Through their framework, Simpkins and colleagues (2017) proposed a series of culturally responsive practices for organized activities that included strengthening family-activity connections, centering adolescent and family voice, and incorporating family practices, knowledge, and concerns into the activity programming. Despite the theoretical and practical importance, little research considers how Mexican ethnic culture may shape the experiences of Mexican-origin families with organized activities.

Although Williams and Deutsch (2016) and Simpkins and colleagues (2017) underscore the importance of racial and ethnic culture, they do not address the specific cultural processes of Mexican ethnic culture. The model of Latino youth development provides guidance on the specific cultural processes that shape the development of Latinx adolescents and family processes (Raffaelli et al., 2005). The model posits that an important cultural mechanism to consider in the development of Latinx adolescents is enculturation, which entails remaining connected to cultural values and practices that are prominent in the Latinx culture, such as familism (i.e., valuing family unity and connectedness) and respeto (i.e., respect for parents and elders). The model also highlights that the Latinx community is not a monolithic group and that it is valuable to consider the cultural diversity within the Latinx community. Essentially, the diverse cultural experiences of Latinx adolescents and their families can distinctly shape the adolescents' development. Overall, based on the model of Latino youth development (Raffaelli et al., 2005), Mexican-origin families may experience distinct benefits and challenges from their adolescents' participation in organized activities based on their different cultural orientations.

Previous research suggests that the enculturation of Mexican-origin families, or the degree to which their cultural values and practices align with the Mexican ethnic culture, may

inform their experiences with activities (Cuéllar et al., 1995). Qualitative studies have found that Mexican-origin parents who were more enculturated valued organized activities that aligned with their values of familism and respeto (Lin et al., 2018; Simpkins et al., 2013). Thus, parents who are more enculturated may perceive organized activities that support traditional Mexican cultural values as beneficial for their family. Alternatively, adolescents' participation also has the potential to conflict with parents' Mexican cultural values. For example, some qualitative studies found that Latinx parents expressed concerns about organized activities conflicting with their value of prioritizing spending time with the family (i.e., familism), and their gender role expectations for their daughters of prioritizing home chores (Borden et al., 2006; Perkins et al., 2007). Parents' concerns about cultural misalignments with organized activities may reflect differences in the cultural orientations of parents and their adolescents (i.e., acculturation gaps), which can contribute to family conflict and adolescent maladjustment (Gonzales et al., 2009). All in all, there is some indication that Mexican-origin families who are more enculturated may perceive organized activities as beneficial if they align more with their Mexican ethnic culture or challenging if they perceive cultural misalignments, compared to families who are less enculturated.

Overall, previous literature suggests that enculturation to Mexican ethnic culture shapes the experiences of Mexican-origin families with organized activities. However, the literature has only tangentially addressed how parents' enculturation may inform the different benefits and challenges that Mexican-origin families experience through their adolescents' activities. Given the centrality of culture in the daily lives of Mexican-origin families in the U.S., it is valuable to further explore the role of culture in their experiences. Insight on this topic can inform activities in developing programming and services that are culturally responsive for Mexican-origin

families (Simpkins et al., 2017).

Current Study

Based on the gaps in the literature, this study proposes to leverage the perspectives of Mexican-origin parents to obtain insight on how their adolescents' participation in organized activities shaped their family. It is particularly important to understand more about this topic during adolescence, given that families and organized activities may play an especially consequential role as adolescents go through the physiological, socioemotional, and cognitive changes associated with this stage (National Academy of Sciences, 2019). Through a qualitative approach, we captured the perspectives of Mexican-origin parents on the benefits and challenges that their families experienced in regard to adolescents' activities. Additionally, we considered the sociocultural background of the Mexican-origin families by examining whether parents' perceptions varied depending on their level of enculturation. Insights from this study are valuable for researchers and practitioners who work with organized activities that serve Mexican-origin adolescents and their families and seek to better support this community.

Method

Research Design and Participants

Participants in this study were part of a larger case study about the perceptions of and experiences with organized activities of Mexican-origin adolescents and their parents. The research team of the larger case study recruited adolescents and their parents through purposive sampling from three public middle schools in a large southwestern metropolitan city in the United States. The research team purposely selected these schools to capture the variability among Latinx families in the area and stratified the sample based on the school (i.e., about 30% from each school), adolescents' organized activity participation during the fall (i.e., about 50%

participated in an activity and 50% did not), and gender (i.e., about 50% were girls).

The research team recruited 34 7th grade adolescents and their parents. Half of the adolescents participated in an organized activity (*n* = 17) at recruitment; and most of adolescents who were not initially participating in an activity at recruitment eventually participated in an organized activity at some point during the school year (*n* = 13). In total, 30 (88%) adolescents participated in at least one activity by the end of the school year. Sports was the most common activity (56%), followed by arts (29%), religious activities (23%), and clubs (9%). On average, parents were 39.45 years old, 28% were born in the U.S., and 31% had some college experience or more. The median yearly family income was about $20,000 to $29,999 and most parents were married (70%). Adolescents were, on average, 12.45 years old and about 88% were born in the U.S.

Interview Procedures

This study utilized semi-structured qualitative interviews that the research team from the larger case study conducted in fall and spring of the 2009-2010 school year with the Mexican-origin parents. Interviewers attended training sessions on research ethics and effective interviewing techniques. During data collection, the research team held weekly debriefing sessions to discuss any issues that arose. Spanish speakers from the local community conducted the interviews in Spanish with half of the parents (*n* = 17). Interviewers conducted the interviews in English with the rest of the parents. Members of the research team transcribed the audiotaped interviews verbatim. A second transcriber revised the initial transcription through a secondary check. For interviews in Spanish, transcribers followed a six-step process that included secondary checks of the transcription and of the translation to ensure accuracy of the translation and cultural meaning (Simpkins et al., 2011). For all the interview data, we used pseudonyms to

protect the identity of the participants.

The semi-structured interview script included open-ended questions that were informed by previous literature but also allowed for probing to obtain in-depth responses from parents. The interview started with defining organized activities as activities that have an adult leader and meet at regularly scheduled times. Interviewers asked parents about their general thoughts concerning organized activities, including whether they thought organized activities were helpful or challenging for parents and families. If their adolescent was participating in an organized activity, interviewers also asked questions specific about the activity, such as what parents thought their adolescent was learning or gaining at the activity, whether the adolescent was facing any challenges, and whether the adolescent's participation in the activity was helpful or challenging to the parent/family. Although we analyzed the entire interview transcripts, we drew the majority of the coding from the following questions: Do you think kids' organized activities are helpful for parents or families?, Would you say that [your child]'s participation (was/is) helpful or beneficial to you? If yes, how was it helpful?, What (were/are) some of the challenges in having [your child] involved in [activity]?, and Did you have to make adjustments to your family routine to accommodate [your child's] participation? For the complete interview transcript, please see Appendix 2.1.

We used the enculturation scale from the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (ARMSA-II; Cuéllar et al., 1995) to measure parents' level of enculturation. The enculturation scale included six items, such as "I enjoy reading in Spanish" and "I enjoy watching movies in Spanish" (see Appendix 2.2; alpha = .96; 1 = *not at all*, 3 = *moderately,* 5 = *extremely often or almost always*). We averaged the items to create an overall score that we used to determine whether parents had high or low levels of enculturation.

Coding and Analysis

To answer the first research question about parents' perceptions of the benefits and challenges for the family, we coded the interviews during multiple iterative stages (Saldaña, 2016). We used a qualitative coding software called Nvivo to support the coding process. We applied both deductive and inductive approaches, such that prior literature on families and organized activities as well as new information that emerged from the data informed the coding process (Lin et al., 2018; Simpkins et al., 2013). Thus, although we consulted the existing literature throughout the analysis process, we remained open to new insights from the data. The first author wrote detailed memos that documented her reflective thoughts about the coding process (Saldaña, 2016; Miles et al., 2014).

During the first stage of coding, we developed a preliminary coding framework based on about one-third of the sample (i.e., 12 parents). We determined the codes using both in-vivo (i.e., verbatim words or phrases from transcripts) and descriptive (i.e., words or phrases that summarize a topic) techniques (Saldaña, 2016). The first author shared the initial codes with the larger research team and we discussed any discrepancies until we reached a consensus (Hill et al., 2005). Additionally, we consulted the existing literature and the memos written during the coding process. Overall, we used discussions with the research team, the existing literature, and the written memos to refine the codes in the preliminary coding framework.

In the second stage of coding, we applied the preliminary coding framework to code all parent interviews. We redefined the coding framework based on coding the remaining data, reviewing written memos of the coding process, previous literature, and meetings with the research team. The purpose of this stage was to create a coding framework that captured the unique perspectives of parents about how activities benefit and challenge families. In the third

and final stage of coding, we developed broader themes through continuously consulting the interview data and written memos. The themes were based on the common patterns found across the categories of family benefits and challenges from the second stage of coding.

To address the second research question about how parents' perceptions of the benefits and challenges may vary based on parents' level of enculturation, we conducted a cross-case analysis on the themes from the first research question (Miles et al., 2014). We used parents' responses to the enculturation scale of the ARMSA-II (Cuéllar et al., 1995) to categorize them into two groups: High enculturation (n = 15) included parents whose average response was above the mean (i.e., 3.71), and low enculturation (n = 12) included parents whose average response was below the mean. We did not include seven parents from the initial sample of 34 parents in this part of the analysis because they did not report their level of enculturation. The cross-case analysis consisted of analyzing whether the themes from the first research question were present in each group, determining the frequency of the themes in each group, and analyzing whether the themes manifested differently across the two groups.

Positionality

As researchers, it is important to discuss our role during the research process (Hill et al., 2005). The first author acknowledges that they share a common identity with the target population of this study as they identify as a Mexican American woman. The first author's shared cultural connection with the parents and adolescents of this study serves as an asset for her role in conducting the data analysis of this study. Particularly, it provides her with a unique insight into the potential of Latinx families and organized activities in supporting the positive development of Latinx adolescents. However, the first author also recognizes that they are not part of the local community from which the data derives from. Thus, to account for potential

biases related to the experience of the Mexican-origin families in the study or the role of organized activities in the development of adolescents, the first author consulted with a larger research team throughout the data analysis process. Specifically, the first author discussed any potential biases and assumptions that may influence the analysis process with a research team that was composed of the first author's academic advisor, other graduate students, and post-doctoral scholars from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Results

Benefits and Challenges of Organized Activities for Mexican-Origin Families

This section addresses our first research question about what parents perceive are the family benefits and challenges. Below, we use parent interview excerpts to describe and distinguish between the family benefits and challenges.

Benefits for Families

The family benefits included protection, family bonding, transfer of skills, and reinforcement of family ethnic culture (see Table 2.1).

Protection. Parents mentioned that activities protected adolescents from risky and dangerous situations by providing safety, supervision, and preventing problem behavior (n = 17). In terms of safety, parents said they appreciated knowing where their adolescent was and what they were doing when they were at their activity as opposed to the adolescent being free to roam "the streets." Relatedly, parents suggested that the adult supervision that activities provided was key as parents thought an adolescent who was left unsupervised after school was more likely to be exposed to dangerous situations. Lastly, parents appreciated that organized activities prevented their adolescents from engaging in risky behaviors, such as taking drugs and being involved in gangs. For example, Teresa, a mother in the study, mentioned the following about the benefit of her son participating in an organized activity:

> Well, I think they are great. Right, they are groups that keep the young, the adolescents, busy, right. Out of other things that they shouldn't do. Out of gangs or of the groups, not gangs, they don't have to be gangs, but little groups of boys out there. And for his age, that is probably, maybe they don't do things with bad intent but regardless they are hurting themselves.

Teresa appreciated that activities kept her son occupied and prevented him from engaging in risky behaviors, like being involved in a gang. Overall, Mexican-origin parents in this study perceived that the protection activities provided was helpful for families because it brought relief to parents that their adolescents were safe when they were not able to directly supervise them.

Transfer of Skills. Parents highlighted that another family benefit was adolescents transferring responsibility and socioemotional skills from the activity to the family (n = 12). When talking about adolescents' responsibility, parents thought that adolescents' sense of responsibility they gained at their activity led to an increased willingness and ability to take on more responsibility at home. For example, one of the mothers, Elena, mentioned that her daughter's participation in sports motivated her to be "more committed to her responsibilities," like cleaning her room. This finding aligns with previous studies suggesting the responsibility adolescents learn at organized activities helps them at home (Larson et al., 2007; Raffaelli et al., 2018). Parents also talked about the transfer of socioemotional skills (e.g., emotional regulation), which has been understudied. Silvia, a mother, discussed her daughter learning to control her emotions through her music activity:

> Well, I think that, like how to relate more with other people and also for her how to control her emotions because sometimes when she gets mad, she locks herself in her room and starts playing. And I say that it calms her, it helps her calm down.

Silvia's daughter played her musical instrument to control her emotions when she was upset at home. Parents in the study also mentioned that the socioemotional skills adolescents learned at activities contributed to more cordial interactions with family members as adolescents were "calmer" and "easier to communicate with." Mexican-origin parents in this study felt the sense of responsibility and socioemotional skills that adolescents gained from activities were assets for families that contributed to positive family functioning and relationships.

Family Bonding. Parents mentioned that adolescents' participation created opportunities for family members to spend time together and bond as a family, including shared family activities and conversations (n = 12). For example, parents talked about the benefit of spending time together as a family during activity events. One of the mothers in the study, Ofelia, mentioned the following about their family attending her daughter's track race:

> When she's going to race, we all go and then once she finishes, we go get something and we all come back happy. Talking about who we saw or we saw this kid or the kids that took first place and all of that.

As Ofelia describes, her daughter's track meets provided an opportunity for their family to share a warm and joyful experience. Parents like Ofelia thought adolescents' activities were beneficial because they positively contributed to the family functioning as a whole. Additionally, parents talked about activities providing opportunities for parent-adolescent conversations. These conversations allowed parents to communicate more with their adolescents and learn more about their adolescents' interests and activities. Overall, Mexican-origin parents of this study felt that the shared family activities and conversations were benefits of organized activities and reflect their value of strong family connections and relationships (i.e., familism).

Reinforcement of Family Ethnic Culture. A fourth theme of family benefits was the

reinforcement of family ethnic culture (n = 11). Parents appreciated when activities supported adolescents' connection to their Mexican ethnic culture through exposure to cultural knowledge and values. For example, Silvia appreciated that her daughter's band activity taught Spanish songs because "[her daughter] also needs to learn where her roots come from, her parents' culture." For adolescents who were not involved in activities that integrated Mexican ethnic culture, parents mentioned wanting more opportunities for their adolescent to engage in these types of activities. Norma, a mother in the study, talked about wanting an activity that would teach her daughter to engage in traditional Mexican cultural activities, such as sewing and knitting. Parents also valued when activities reinforced Mexican cultural values, such as respeto. Particularly, Teresa responded the following when asked how her son's activity participation was helping the family: "It has helped us very much that they know how to control their personality. They know that their parents should be respected, that their elders should be respected." Teresa's response denotes her value that her son's religious activity was teaching him to be respectful of his parents and his elders, which aligns with the traditional Mexican cultural value of respeto (Halgunseth, 2019). All in all, parents thought it was beneficial when organized activities served as a context outside the home where adolescents were exposed to cultural knowledge and values congruent with their family ethnic culture.

Challenges for Families

We found that the Mexican-origin parents in our study perceived the following challenges for families from their adolescents' participation in organized activities: constraints on family resources, exposure to risks, and family conflict (see Table 2.2).

Constraints on Family Resources. The challenge that was mentioned most often was constraints on family resources—specifically financial costs, transportation needs, interference

with family routines, and balancing resources across multiple children (*n* = 31). Aligned with previous literature, parents mentioned the financial cost of activities resulted in a burden for families that impeded enrollment and pushed some adolescents to drop out of activities (Simpkins et al., 2013). Moreover, parents in this study expressed difficulties transporting their adolescents when the family only had one car or when the family members who knew how to drive were unavailable. Constraints on family finances and transportation highlight the importance of addressing the accessibility of activities for Mexican-origin families.

When talking about the constraints on family resources, parents also talked about the interference of adolescents' participation on family routines and the difficulty of managing resources across multiple children. For example, parents described that their adolescents' participation in organized activities interfered with their job schedule, family dinner time, and the parents' personal activities, such as going to church. In the following excerpt, Elena and Fernando, a mother and father in the study, describe managing their family schedule:

> It's hard on our schedule because it's once a week, it's hard on the schedule because we have three kids and besides the you know, like right now, taking her to the morning club 7-8 and she can't catch the bus, we have to take her and then we have to drop her off and pick her up for the horseback riding every Tuesday, so she's going Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and you know that's just one of our kids, then we have the other two and that's very challenging time wise for us.

As this excerpt suggests, the time commitment of organized activities represented an overwhelming stress for families to balance with their family routines. Elena and Fernando's experience also conveys that the balance of resources can be particularly challenging for families with multiple children. Parents with multiple children had to seriously consider the resources

they had available, such as money, time, and transportation, for all their children when making decisions about any one of their children's activities. Because of the interference with other family activities and the difficulty of managing resources across multiple children, families had to make challenging decisions about what activities to prioritize, which sometimes meant that adolescents could not attend an activity.

Exposure to Risks. Though some parents felt activities protected adolescents from risks, other parents thought activities exposed them to risks, including physical harm and unfamiliar contexts (*n* = 9). In terms of physical harm, a mother in the study, Luz, was concerned that her son might get injured in wrestling: "I think we always worry about injuries because that is a possibility so is one of the things we always tell him. You know to be careful sometimes they can't do anything about it." Another risk that parents were concerned about was adolescents' potential exposure to places parents were not familiar with and surrounded by people they did not know. For example, Angela, a mother, mentioned the following about not allowing her daughter to go out in their neighborhood: "I don't let her go out here because I think that we don't all know each other [in the US]. And we all know each other there [in Mexico]." In summary, parents had concerns about their adolescents being exposed to risks through organized activities, which led parents to restrict adolescents' participation. In contrast to the literature (Barnett & Weber, 2018; Lin et al., 2018), these findings suggest that some parents are concerned about adolescents' safety at organized activities.

Family Conflict. The final family challenge was family conflict. Parents mentioned that adolescents' activity participation contributed to family tensions due to disagreements about the activity and concerns about behavior problems (*n* = 12). Amelia, a mother in the study, recounted a disagreement she had with her daughter about her participation in a dance activity:

> First, we argued because she said to me 'why, why don't you want me to dance? Why don't you want me to do this?' One day I brought her and paid the fee. We paid for the hour of dance and I stayed there with her watching what they were doing. I did not like the dance, first of all because the dudes and girls were dancing, I say no, I do not like that. And then there was an argument.

As Amelia explains, she did not approve of her daughter participating in dance, which led to an argument with her daughter who did not understand her mother's disapproval. This disagreement seemed to stem from a cultural and generational divide regarding gendered norms, as Amelia disapproved of the dance activity because it involved her daughter dancing with boys. As previous research suggests, some Latinx parents demonstrate concerns about their Latina daughters being exposed to boys outside their family through their participation in organized activities (Borden et al., 2006; Perkins et al., 2007).

Another area of family conflict that parents encountered was adolescent problem behavior. One mother in the study, Maria, expressed concerns that her daughter acted "more like a rebel," "talked back more," and "[did] not do things whenever [Maria] asked her to" after she started participating in softball. As Maria describes, her daughter's increasing disrespect led to a tension with her daughter that made her consider taking her daughter out of softball. This tension contributed to a widening acculturation gap between Maria and her daughter, as Maria was concerned that her daughter's behavior was not aligning with the Mexican ethnic cultural value of respeto. Overall, as shown in the examples of Amelia and Maria, the family conflict that occurred because of the adolescents' activities strained parent-adolescent relationships and ultimately limited adolescents' activity participation.

Differences Based on Parents' Enculturation

For the second research question, we considered whether the family benefits and challenges varied based on parents' enculturation (high enculturation: n = 15 parents and low enculturation: n = 12 parents). In Table 2.3, we provide the frequency of each theme for the two groups. In the text below, we discuss the main differences we found between the groups.

For the family benefits, we found parents in the high enculturation group more frequently reported family bonding and reinforcement of family culture as benefits compared to the low enculturation group. Specifically, over twice as many parents reported family bonding and reinforcement of family culture in the high enculturation group (40% and 47%) compared to parents in the low enculturation group (17% for both themes). These findings suggest that the degree to which the parents in the study aligned with the Mexican ethnic culture was related to the benefits they discussed. In terms of family bonding, parents with higher enculturation more commonly valued activities providing opportunities for family members to spend time together, which aligns with the value of familism that is prominent in Mexican ethnic culture (Halgunseth, 2019). Moreover, parents in the high enculturation group more commonly mentioned valuing organized activities that exposed their adolescents to cultural knowledge about typical Mexican activities (e.g., Spanish music) and cultural values such as respeto (i.e., respect for parents and elders). Essentially, compared to parents with a lower enculturation, parents with a higher enculturation were more likely to discuss the alignment between the activity and Mexican culture as a benefit to families.

For the family challenges, we found that parents with a higher enculturation (47%) reported family conflict as a challenge more than twice as much as parents with lower enculturation (13%). The instances of family conflict that parents with higher enculturation mentioned mostly involved disagreements about differences in parents' and adolescents' cultural

values. For example, Teresa mentioned having a conflict with her son because he refused to attend catechism, a religious activity that aligned with Teresa's high value of religiosity. Overall, the parents' reports of family conflict suggest that the higher prevalence of family conflict as a challenge in the high enculturation group compared to the low enculturation group may stem from the perception that activities contribute to acculturation gaps between parents with high enculturation and their children (Gonzales et al., 2009; Grau et al., 2009).

Discussion

Bioecological systems and family systems theories describe possible ways in which adolescents' participation in organized activities might shape family processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Cox & Paley, 1997). In the case of Mexican-origin adolescents, the model of Latino youth development suggests that it is important to consider culturally specific factors, like enculturation, that capture the diversity among Mexican-origin adolescents that may shape their experiences with organized activities (Raffaelli et al., 2005). The goal of this study was to examine parents' perceptions of the benefits and challenges families experienced through adolescents' organized activity participation while considering whether parents' perspectives differed based on their level of enculturation. The findings have implications for guiding organized activities that seek to address the challenges to adolescents' participation that families face and design activities that are responsive to the cultural values and practices of Mexican-origin families.

In alignment with family systems theory, our findings suggest adolescents' participation in organized activities can alter family relationships and dynamics (Cox & Paley, 1997). Parents mentioned that organized activities helped promote harmonious family relationships through opportunities for family bonding and improvements in adolescents' socioemotional skills. This

finding contributes to the literature by showing that the benefits of organized activities extend beyond the adolescents who attend to the family (Vandell et al., 2019). In addition, our findings indicate adolescents' participation can also contribute to strained family interactions and relationships. Particularly, we found that parents experienced tensions with their adolescents when they disagreed about what activity adolescents should participate in. Overall, our findings expand family systems theory by describing the specific mechanisms through which adolescents' activity participation can alter family subsystems, such as parent-adolescent relationships and overall family interactions.

We also found that adolescent's activity participation can impact family resources. For example, parents felt adolescents' increased sense of responsibility they derived from their activity contributed to family resources because they took on more chores and responsibilities at home. In contrast, parents also felt activities depleted family resources, in terms of time, transportation, and money, especially when considering the needs of multiple children. Having limited resources put many parents in the precarious position to make difficult decisions on which activities for which children to support or deciding between a child's activity or the overall family. This finding exemplifies the complexity of family systems (Cox & Paley, 1997, 2003). Although researchers often focus on one individual or one family subsystem, such as the parent-adolescent subsystem, our study conveys that adolescents' participation in organized activities can affect and be affected by a variety of family members, such as sibling activities shaping parents' decisions about an adolescent's activities. In summary, organized activities have the potential to contribute to as well as diminish family resources in complex ways.

Not only do these findings extend theory and current empirical work, but they also have practical implications for organized activities. For families who highly value family unity, such

as some of the Mexican-origin families in this study, knowing that organized activities can benefit their family relationships can incentivize parent support of adolescents' participation (Lin et al., 2019; Simpkins et al., 2013). Organized activities can leverage this information by being intentional about developing connections with the families they serve. For example, organized activities can host family-focused events, encourage adolescents to have conversations with their family about the activity, and emphasize the family benefits when recruiting adolescents and families. Additionally, knowing the challenges families experience and taking more of a family systems approach can help activity leaders address issues of accessibility. Organized activities could facilitate the involvement of multiple children from one family through incorporating family discounts for activity fees, developing programming across different age groups, or partnering with programs that serve other age groups.

We found that some parent perspectives varied based on their adherence to Mexican ethnic culture or level of enculturation. Particularly, parents were more likely to discuss benefits aligned with traditional cultural values of the Mexican culture if they had higher enculturation (Halgunseth, 2019). For example, parents' belief that opportunities for family bonding were a benefit of organized activities reflects values of family unity and cohesion that align with the value of familism in the Mexican culture. Moreover, some parents also explicitly mentioned that they appreciated activities that reinforced their Mexican culture by exposing adolescents to cultural knowledge and values of their culture. Parents also noted that cultural mismatches between the activity and their family incited parent-adolescent conflict. For example, parents talked about instances of growing acculturation gaps between parents and adolescents in which parents' values did not align with those of their adolescents (Gonzales et al., 2009; Grau et al., 2009). These findings highlight the importance of developing organized activities that are

culturally responsive to the families they serve as these cultural mismatches could impact adolescents' enrollment and continued participation. Organized activities that strive to be culturally responsive should prioritize learning about the families they serve, including their traditions, values, concerns, and ways of doing things (Simpkins et al., 2017).

In alignment with the model of Latino youth development, our findings highlight the value of considering the diversity among Latinx communities (Raffaelli et al., 2005). It is valuable for organized activities to consider the diverse beliefs and values of families who share the same ethnic heritage. To be culturally *responsive*, organized activities need to be responsive to the specific families they serve and not assume that families who share an ethnic heritage have homogenous cultural values and beliefs (Simpkins et al., 2017). As shown in a recent study by Ettekal and colleagues (2020), activities that make assumptions about the culture of Mexican-origin families without consulting them can end up misrepresenting their culture and have negative impacts on adolescents. Centering adolescent and family voices in organized activities can help guard against creating culturally unresponsive activities (Simpkins et al., 2017).

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study provides valuable insights about how adolescents' participation in organized activities may shape Mexican-origin families, there are some limitations to consider. First, most parents in the study had adolescents who participated in an organized activity at some point during the study. Our findings may underrepresent the perspective of families where adolescents do not participate in organized activities. Parents whose adolescents participate in organized activities may have more favorable perceptions about organized activities than parents whose adolescents do not participate. Particularly, families in which adolescents do not participate may experience unique challenges that are not captured in this study. Thus, it is

valuable for future studies to focus on understanding the experiences of families whose adolescents are not involved in organized activities.

Another limitation of this study is that the findings are based only on parents' perspectives. Parent's perspectives are informed by their own values and beliefs, which may not necessarily align with that of their adolescents or other family members (Gonzales et al., 2009; Grau et al., 2009). Although parents emphasized the value of incorporating Mexican culture into activities, Mexican-origin adolescents may not necessarily value this to the same extent, especially if they are more acculturated to the mainstream American culture. Multiple perspectives from families and organized activities can examine issues of triangulation and provide unique insights to strengthen the connections between adolescents, families, and organized activities and ultimately improve the experience of adolescents and families in activities.

Conclusion

This study explored the perspectives of Mexican-origin parents about the family benefits and challenges associated with their adolescents' participation in an organized activity, thereby extending the current literature focused on the benefits for the adolescents who attend. Our work shows that organized activities can promote harmonious family relationships through opportunities for family bonding and the transfer of adolescent improved skills from activities to the home. Additionally, the challenges parents face concerning their adolescents' activity participation, such as constraints on family resources, highlight the importance of organized activities taking a family systems approach when addressing access. Another valuable contribution to the literature is that we found that parents' adherence to Mexican ethnic culture informed some of their perceptions of activities. Lastly, although the families in this study shared

an ethnic heritage, they had different values and beliefs of organized activities based on their cultural orientations. Our study has important implications for organized activities that strive to be culturally responsive to the Mexican-origin families and adolescents they serve. Ultimately, incorporating the perspective of adolescents and families can improve their experience with organized activities and encourage them to continue participating.

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Table 2.1

Benefits for Mexican-origin families from adolescents' participation in organized activities

Theme	Definition of Theme	Sample Excerpts from Parent Interviews
Protection (*n* = 17)	Provides safety and adult supervision that protects adolescents from dangerous and risky situations	"Something extra that they would be learning and that they would be occupied. Like they, it's better that their mind is occupied doing something and not be thinking, perhaps in other things that at [adolescents'] age they think a lot of things that well…Like drugs or whatever else that perturbs them and if they are busy it is better."-**Ofelia, mother, low enculturation** "I think that it's good, because it keeps the kids off the streets and in a safe environment and they are um, they are supervised there, so you know, they have to be, they can't be you know doing things that are against the rules or whatever."-**Bertha, mother, low enculturation**
Transfer of Skills (*n* = 12)	Transfer of responsibility and socioemotional skills from organized activity to family home	"It made him less shy. He can go up to people and talk. And he can go up to an adult and like if we needed him to let them know something, he'll do it. If we need him to go to, hmm, like pay for gas or something, you know, so we can stay. Sometimes I do that because I have to stay with the other kids."-**Rosa, mother, low enculturation.** "You know it all portrays to that you know taking up your equipment afterwards, putting it away. You're responsible for that, same thing here. It applies here at the house. Your clothes, your shoes, your plates, put it away. They learn them here and they practice, they can also practice them."-**Gloria and Eduardo, mother and father, high enculturation**
Family Bonding (*n* = 12)	Opportunities for family members to spend time with each other through shared activities and conversations	"Yeah, because it keeps um, it gives them that little boost of you know like he's being proud of doing something and we're proud of him doing something. We like go see his games and you know. Yeah, it keeps us interested in his life and his goals and what he's doing you know? We, we're interested in what our kids do."-**Aiyana, mother**

		"I think our kids have bonded more where it's not so much that they're going to nitpick so much at each other as far as their sports go but they also encourage one another and they challenge each other to do better."-**Gloria and Eduardo, mother and father, high enculturation**
Reinforcement of Family Ethnic Culture (*n* = 11)	Support adolescents' connection to their Mexican ethnic culture through exposure to cultural knowledge and cultural values	"There are many activities like for example to knit. Well, I don't do it anymore but back then the grandmother would help you knit and sew. My mother-in-law brought those sewing needles for them to knit. And they liked it, but I don't know. But it would be good, if there was a program to teach girls how to knit and sew. To make traditional things."-**Norma, mother, high enculturation** "For me, it's important, because they get to know, like I said, they get to know the culture, they get to know the like the stuff we do, and they probably grow up doing the same thing, or, yeah they, you know they grow up doing the same thing and they know a little bit of the background like that."-**Sofia, mother**

Table 2.2

Challenges for Mexican-origin families from adolescents' participation in organized activities

Theme	Definition of Theme	Sample Excerpts from Parent Interviews
Constraint on Family Resources (*n* = 31)	Requiring the use of resources, such as time, transportation, money, and the English language, for adolescent's participation was challenging for families	"Because we just have one car and sometimes well my husband has to work. I can stay because well I help him. Um, but he, well I am left without a car. So, be it her friend's parents or a neighbor that can give me a ride to take my daughter to the games."-**Evelia, mother** "Yes, we talked to her and we told her that we couldn't anymore. [We told her] not to register anymore in [band] because we couldn't afford the viola. And she said it was ok. But she got sad. Yes, she got-, because she said later "...I wanted to..." and I told her mija we cannot pay for it every month anymore. So, we can't until we are able to buy you a viola. But yes, she got sad because she stopped playing."-**Dulce, mother, high enculturation**
Exposure to Risks (*n* = 9)	Concerns about adolescent being exposed to physical harm and unfamiliar contexts, through their participation in organized activities	"Yes, anything that exposes her to be in the heat is bad for her, well, it gives her headaches. Yeah, that's why she doesn't get involved in sports outdoors because she suffers from headaches. Then, the act of being out a lot in the sun is bad for her."-**Norma, mother, high enculturation** "Well, I don't know, something far from here my house, and that I didn't know too well what it is. Like how is it, where is it, who is there. I saw that club and I liked it because I said maybe I can attend also. But if it was like a place further away and I don't know where it's at or like what people, and well how it is no."-**Ofelia, mother, low enculturation**
Family Conflict (*n* = 12)	Tensions among family members because of disagreements about adolescents' participation and concerns about behavior problems	"Well like my daughter, I tell you I would like her to get into an activity that she liked, and that I liked too. But then we don't agree because I have some likings and she has other likings. I mean, we never agree."-**Jimena, mom, high enculturation** "I mean, I know he likes doing karate, he knows a little bit about it. But, um, I would be a little uncomfortable…. Uh, well see my son's going to be with me for like six

		months. So it'd be six months, yeah. So, um, he's had this bad, really bad attitude. I'm thinking to myself, if I do that, he's going to learn karate and he's already hitting me, you know, in a way that's not right. So that's one of my main reasons right there. So, I mean, I would but uh, but, um, maybe a little no…. not right now. Not karate."- **Gabriela, mother, high enculturation**

Table 2.3

Frequency of Family Benefits and Challenges of Organized Activities in Full Sample and Cultural Orientation Groups

	Full Sample	High Enculturation	Low Enculturation
Benefits for Families			
Protection	50%	33%	58%
Transfer of Skills	35%	40%	25%
Family Bonding	35%	40%	17%
Reinforcement of Family Ethnic Culture	32%	47%	17%
Challenges for Families			
Constraint on Family Resources	91%	100%	92%
Exposure to Risks	26%	27%	25%
Family Conflict	29%	47%	13%
Total Families (N)	34	15	12

Note. The percentages within each cell represent the percentage of participants within each group in the columns (e.g., high enculturation) that mentioned a particular theme of family benefits and challenges (e.g., protection). The *N* for the full sample is larger than the *n* for the two enculturation groups combined because 7 parents from the full sample did not have data on their enculturation.

Appendix 2.1: Paper 1 Interview Transcripts

Fall Interview

Introduction

Thanks for taking the time to talk with me today. We are going to spend a lot of time talking about what [CHILD'S NAME] does after school and what you think about the things [CHILD'S NAME] can do after school. 7th graders do different kinds of things after school. A lot of kids have to do homework and chores after school. Some kids like to read, work on the computer, hang out with friends, or watch TV after school. Other kids like to go to organized activities after school, like being on the school basketball team or going to a program at the YMCA or library. We think it is very interesting that kids like to do different things after school. What I would like to do today is to talk to you about what [CHILD'S NAME] likes do after school and what you think about all these different kinds of things 7th graders can do after school. How does that sound? Again, there are no right or wrong answers. I just want to know what you think about these things. Do you have any questions before we start? Please let me know if you need a break or have questions. OK? Also, remember you don't have to answer a question you don't want to.

Section 1: General Perceptions about Organized Activities

Now let's talk about you and [CHILD'S NAME] specifically. We use the phrase organized activities to describe activities that have an adult leader and meet at regularly scheduled times. For example, schools often have a basketball team, newspaper, dance team, and other clubs. Those are all organized activities. There are also organized activities in the community – like a soccer team and community centers, like the YMCA.

1. What activities are available at [CHILD]'s school and neighborhood?
    a. How did you hear about these activities?
2. What do you think about these kinds of organized activities for kids?
    a. What do/can kids learn or gain from organized activities?
    b. Do you think kids' organized activities are helpful for parents or families?
        i. IF YES, how?
3. Can you describe what you think a good organized activity would look like?
    a. IF THEY HAVE TROUBLE, ASK
        i. What type of things would kids do there?
        ii. Who would you like to run the activity?
        iii. What types of kids would you like to be at the activity?
4. What are some signs that an activity is not a good activity for your child?
5. What kinds of activities do you feel comfortable sending [CHILD] to?
6. What kinds of activities do you feel uncomfortable sending [CHILD] to?
7. Are there activities [CHILD] is not allowed to do? For instance, are there activities you don't want [CHILD] to do because [she/he] is a [girl/boy]?
8. How do you think families should be involved in kids' organized activities?
    a. PROBES: Families attend their kids' sporting events or music recitals. Sometimes they also volunteer to work at events or help out at clubs. What are some examples of how families should be involved ?

Section 2: Teenager's Organized Activities

Ok. We've talked about a lot of different types of organized activities. Let's talk for a little while about the organized activities [CHILD] has done. (He/she) is in 7th grade now. Let's go back to 6th grade for a minute.

1. What organized activities did [CHILD] do during the fall of 6th grade?
    a. PROBE FOR THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES: SPORTS, ART, SCHOOL-BASED, TUTORING, A GROUP AT CHURCH
    b. PROBE TO MAKE SURE IT IS AN ORGANIZED ACTIVITY IF UNCLEAR
2. What organized activities did [CHILD] do in the spring of 6th grade?
3. How about the summer between 6th and 7th grade, what organized activities did [CHILD] do then?
4. Now, that brings us to 7th grade. What organized activities did [CHILD] do last fall?

If they have more than 1 activity, ask about the one they go to most often. Only discuss tutoring and religious education classes if they are not doing another organized activity.

1. Let's talk about [CHILD'S] participation in [ACTIVITY] for a little bit.
    a. UNLESS IT IS OBVIOUS, ASK, What (did/do) kids do there?
    b. (Was/Is) that activity at the school or in the neighborhood?
    c. How often (did/do) they meet?
    d. How long (had/has) [CHILD] been doing that activity?
2. How did you and your child find out about the activity?
3. Whose decision was it for [CHILD] to go to the activity?
4. Did you and [CHILD] talk about (him/her) signing up for the activity?
    a. IF YES, Can you tell me a little about what you discussed?
5. Why (was/is) [CHILD] going to [ACTIVITY]?
6. Why did you choose this one over other activities?
7. Sometimes kids' activities help and sometimes they can make things challenging. Let's first talk about how your child's activity (was/is) helpful.
    a. What is [CHILD] learning or gaining at [ACTIVITY]?
    b. What 'life-lessons' or values (did [CHILD] learn/is [CHILD] learning) at [ACTIVITY]?
    c. Do you think [CHILD] has learned anything about Mexican or American culture in the [ACTIVITY]?
        i. IF THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND, ASK THEM ABOUT Mexican/American culture, holidays, traditions; Spanish/English language
            1. IF YES: What did [CHILD] learn?
8. Would you say that [CHILD]'s participation (was/is) helpful or beneficial to you?
    a. IF YES: How (was/is) it helpful?
9. (Did/Does) it make things easier for your family?
    a. IF YES, How so?
10. Now, let's talk about some of the challenges. In your opinion, what (were/are) some of the challenges in having [CHILD] involved in [ACTIVITY]?
    a. How (did/do) you manage to overcome these challenges?
11. Did you have to make adjustments to your family routine to accommodate [CHILD]' participation?
    a. Can you tell me a little about that?

12. Did [CHILD] ever struggle with [ACITIVTY] or want to quit?
    a. Can you tell me about it?
        i. IF NOT INCLUDED IN ANSWER:
        ii. Why did they want to quit?
        iii. What did you tell them?

Spring Interview

Section 1: Activity that was discussed in the fall

In [the fall], you talked to us about [CHILD]'s participation in [ACTIVITY]. I'd like to talk to you about that for a little bit. Does that sound OK? Alright.

1. Why does [CHILD] like to keep going to [ACTIVITY]?
2. Can you tell me about some of the biggest changes you have seen in [CHILD] because of [ACTIVITY]?
3. Many teens tell us that they learned skills or things in the activity that help them at school or at home. These could be things like [CHILD] is more confident about (himself/herself) and that helps (him/her) in other places. Or [CHILD] may have learned to be organized or responsible at [ACTIVITY] and that helps (him/her) with (his/her) schoolwork. What has [CHILD] learned in [ACTIVITY] that has helped (him/her) in other places like at school or at home?
4. Has [ACTIVITY] been helpful to you, your relationship with your child or your family?
    a. IF YES, can you tell me about one way it has been most helpful?
5. What are some of the challenges or struggles you or your child have faced concerning [ACTIVITY]?
    a. IF CHALLENGES, can you tell me about it?
    b. IF NO CHALLENGES, what has helped to make this so easy?
6. Sometimes teens can't go to an activity because they have to do something else or want to do other things. How often has that happened to [CHILD]?
    a. What happened or why did [CHILD] have to miss the activity?
7. Is [CHILD] still going to [ACTIVITY]?
    a. IF YES, SKIP THESE QUESTIONS
    b. IF NO, CONTINUE
        i. When did [CHILD] stop going to [ACTIVITY]?
        ii. Why did [CHILD] stop going?
        iii. Whose decision was it to quit?
        iv. What is [CHILD] doing instead of going to [ACTIVITY]?
        v. Do you think [CHILD] would join [ACTIVITY] again? Why?/Why not?

Section 2: New Activity

If they have more than 1 activity, ask about the one they go to most often. Only discuss tutoring and religious education classes if they are not doing another organized activity.

Signing Up

1. What do kids do there?
2. How often do they meet?
3. How long has [CHILD] been doing that activity?

4. How did you and your child hear about the activity?
5. Whose decision was it for [CHILD] to go to the activity?
6. Did you and [CHILD] talk about him/her signing up for the activity?
    a. IF YES, Can you tell me a little about what you discussed?
    b. IF NO, why not?
7. Did you talk with your (spouse/partner) about [CHILD] signing up for the activity?
    a. IF YES, Can you tell me a little about what you discussed?
        i. Were you both in agreement about the activity?
    b. IF NO, why not?
8. Why is [CHILD] going to [ACTIVITY]?
9. Why did you choose this one over other activities?

What they have learned

Sometimes kids' activities help and sometimes they interfere with family.

1. What is [CHILD] learning or gaining at [ACTIVITY]?
2. What 'life-lessons' or values is [CHILD] learning at [ACTIVITY]?
3. Can you tell me about some of the biggest changes you have seen in [CHILD] because of [ACTIVITY]?
4. Many teens tell us that they learned skills or things in the activity that help them at school or at home. These could be things like [CHILD] is more confident about (himself/herself) and that helps (him/her) in other places. Or [CHILD] may have learned to be organized or responsible at [ACTIVITY] and that helps (him/her) with (his/her) schoolwork. What has [CHILD] learned in [ACTIVITY] that has helped (him/her) in other places like at school or at home?

Benefits and challenges

1. Has [ACTIVITY] been helpful to you, your relationship with your child or your family?
    a. IF YES, can you tell me about one way it has been most helpful?
2. What are some of the challenges or struggles you or your child have faced concerning [ACTIVITY]?
    a. IF CHALLENGES, can you tell me about it?
    b. IF NO CHALLENGES, what has helped to make this so easy?
3. Did you have to make adjustments to your family routine to accommodate [your child]' participation?
    a. Can you tell me a little about that?

Section 3: Parents' Childhood Activities and Values

Childhood activities

1. Think back to when you were a young teenager, like your (son/daughter). What did you usually do after school?
2. What kind of organized activities did you do after school?
    a. What did you like about those activities?
    b. What did you dislike about the activities?
3. How did the activities you did after school as a child influence your own life?

4. How do your experiences in activities as a child shape what your child does today or the decisions you make about what your child does?

Values

1. I'd like to talk about values for a few minutes. Values are things that are important to you. They are things you believe in and feel strongly about. What values are important for you?
    a. PROBES
        i. Being close to family
        ii. Getting a good education
        iii. Religion
        iv. Mexican customs and traditions
        v. Respecting adults or elders
2. Have any of these values changed in the last few years?
    a. IF NO, what has helped to maintain these values?
    b. IF YES, how have they changed?
3. Sometimes we find that (spouses/partners) share some values but see other values differently. Which ones do you and your (spouse/partner) both agree on?
    a. PROBES:
        i. Whether boys and girls should be allowed to do the same things
        ii. Whether you keep up with Mexican traditions
4. Which ones do you think differently about?
5. What values do you or other family members teach your kids?
6. Who teaches these values?
7. How do they teach them?

Appendix 2.2: Enculturation Scale

Measured on a 1 to 5 Likert scale (1 = *Not at all*, 5 = *Extremely often or almost always*).

Mexican-oriented Enculturation Items

1. I speak Spanish.
2. I enjoy speaking Spanish.
3. I enjoy watching TV in Spanish.
4. I enjoy watching movies in Spanish.
5. I enjoy reading (e.g., books) in Spanish.
6. I think in Spanish.

CHAPTER 3

College Preparation Capital from Families and Organized Activities for Mexican-origin Adolescents

Abstract

This study qualitatively captured the perceptions of Mexican-origin college students on the college preparation capital they received from their families and organized activities during high school. We also examined how the college preparation capital from organized activities complemented that of families and whether the perception of students varied based on their parents' college education. We conducted retrospective, semi-structured qualitative interviews with 24 Mexican-origin students enrolled in a high-ranking, 4-year, public university. We conducted a thematic analysis using inductive and deductive approaches to determine the forms of college preparation capital that students received. Then, we conducted a person-level analysis where we examined the similarities and differences in the college preparation capital that students received across their families and organized activities. Lastly, we conducted a cross-case analysis where we compared the themes of college preparation capital across two participant groups based on their parents' college education. Students mentioned receiving aspirational capital, navigational capital, and social capital from both their families and organized activities and material resources from their families only. Students more commonly reported receiving aspirational capital from their families and navigational capital from their organized activities. Furthermore, students received different forms of aspirational capital and navigational capital from families and organized activities that complemented each other. Students whose parents were college-educated more frequently reported receiving aspirational capital and social capital from their organized activities compared to students whose parents did

not attend college. This study has valuable implications for institutional agents, organized activities, school administrators, and policymakers who seek to improve their support of the college preparation of Latinx students.

Keywords: College Preparation, Families, Organized Activities, Mexican-origin, Adolescents

College Preparation Capital from Families and Organized Activities for Mexican-origin Adolescents

During high school, Latinx students face considerable challenges to their college preparation, such as being tracked into remedial courses and experiencing discrimination from institutional agents (e.g., teachers, counselors; Lopez, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999). Given these social and structural barriers at schools, it is important to understand the multiple sources of support that Latinx students can leverage outside of the formal school context for their college preparation. It is particularly important to understand the experiences of Latinx adolescents given that they continue to experience lower college completion rates compared to their White peers despite their increasing college enrollment rates in the last decades (Excelencia in Education, 2016, 2020; Ginder et al., 2018). According to the literature, families and organized activities (e.g., after-school programs, extracurricular activities) are valuable developmental contexts for promoting the positive development of adolescents (Mahoney et al., 2009; National Academy of Sciences, 2019; Simpkins et al., 2015; Vandell et al., 2015). However, based on the limited studies, it is not clear how families and organized activities may collectively support the college preparation of students, particularly from the Latinx community. Thus, in our qualitative retrospective study we examined the perspectives of Latinx college students, specifically those of Mexican origin, on the role that their families and high school organized activities played in their preparation for college. This study particularly focuses on the unique perspective of Mexican-origin students who were enrolled in a high-ranking, 4-year, public university.

Patchwork Capital and Community Cultural Wealth

Social and cultural capital has been widely used in educational literature to explain disparities in college access, preparation, and persistence (Dika & Singh, 2002). Social capital

refers to the relationships that provide an individual with access to cultural capital, which are cultural dispositions that individuals possess, such as practices, values, and knowledge (Bourdieu, 1986). According to this framework, students who have access to social connections that provide cultural capital that is valued in mainstream institutions, such as information and resources about college, have an academic advantage over students who do not have access to such capital. Thus, higher education scholars highlight that social and cultural capital is instrumental for preparing students for college (Gonzalez et al., 2003; Ortiz et al., 2012; Strayhorn, 2010). However, some scholars argue that this mainstream conceptualization of social and cultural capital frames the educational experiences of racially and ethnically minoritized communities, such as the Latinx community, in a deficit lens (Carales & Lopez, 2020; Stanton-Salazar, 1997; Yosso, 2005). Particularly, this framework suggests that communities who are marginalized by race, ethnicity, and/or social class lack access to the social and cultural capital that is rewarded in mainstream institutions; but does not acknowledge the strengths and resources that these communities possess that support their persistence in the institutions that marginalize them. Thus, to provide a more thorough understanding of what forms of capital can be helpful for the college preparation of Mexican-origin students, the patchwork capital framework and the community cultural wealth framework inform this paper.

Patchwork capital framework is a recently proposed theory that posits that the assets that students from minoritized backgrounds leverage from their communities as well as mainstream forms of cultural and social capital are both important factors for students' postsecondary success (Kolluri, 2020). According to the patchwork capital framework, minoritized students are resourceful in adapting to the challenges they face in their education by taking a patchwork approach in which they use both dominant forms of social and cultural capital as well as their

community knowledge and assets to persist in higher education. This framework outlines that minoritized students' process of assembling their patchwork capital is complex and tenuous as students figure out how to do so while educational institutions limit their access to dominant forms of capital and discourage their use of community resources and knowledge. Based on this framework, families and organized activities might help Mexican-origin students succeed in their pursuit of college by providing complementary forms of capital. Particularly, families may be more likely to provide community knowledge and resources for the college preparation of Mexican-origin students, whereas organized activities may complement this by providing access to dominant forms of social and cultural capital. Overall, the patchwork capital framework highlights that Mexican-origin students may need to access different forms of capital from different sources but does not delve into the types of capital that can be helpful for the college preparation of Mexican-origin students.

Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework outlines forms of capital that students from marginalized communities can leverage to persist in their education despite the oppression and discrimination they face. Specifically, Yosso (2005) defines community cultural wealth as cultural knowledge, skills, abilities, and social contacts that includes different forms of capital, such as aspirational capital, navigational capital, and social capital. Aspirational capital refers to the ability to maintain aspirations for the future despite the challenges one may face. For example, students may access aspirational capital through their family's aspirations for them to succeed in their pursuit of higher education (Acevedo & Solorzano, 2021; Luna & Martinez, 2013). Navigational capital refers to the skills, abilities, and knowledge that is helpful to navigate mainstream institutions, such as 4-year colleges. Particularly, non-cognitive skills, such as organizational and socioemotional skills, and knowledge about the cultural and procedural norms

in higher education institutions can be fundamental for students' ability to navigate college (Conley, 2012; Duncheon, 2021). Social capital, as Yosso (2005) defines, entails a social network of peers and adults that can provide instrumental and emotional support to navigate mainstream institutions. For example, students' social connections in their schools, families, and communities may help them complete their college applications. Empirical studies suggest that these forms of community cultural wealth support the college education of Latinx students (Liou et al., 2009; Luna & Martinez, 2013; Samuelson & Litzler, 2016). In order to understand the role of families and high school organized activities in the college preparation of Mexican-origin students, we use both the patchwork capital framework and the community cultural wealth framework to inform this study.

Role of Families and Organized Activities in the College Preparation of Mexican-origin Students

The literature indicates that families and organized activities are both valuable sources of academic support for adolescents (Mahoney et al., 2009; Simpkins et al., 2015). There is evidence of the positive association between parent's academic support and participation in organized activities with adolescent's academic outcomes, including motivational beliefs and academic achievement (Eccles et al., 2003; Heath et al., 2018; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2007). Previous literature also suggests that these positive relations extend into early adulthood as support from families and participating in organized activities has been positively associated with college outcomes, including college enrollment and completion (Sandefur et al., 2006; Haghighat & Knifsend, 2019; Shifrer et al, 2016). Although there is limited research on the role of families and organized activities in the college preparation of Mexican-origin students, the

existing literature suggests that these two developmental contexts are valuable in supporting Mexican-origin students in their pursuit of college.

As one of the main socializers of adolescents' development, families can play an instrumental role in preparing adolescents for college (National Academy of Sciences, 2019; Simpkins et al., 2015). For Mexican-origin students specifically, the literature highlights the role of Latinx parents in providing aspirational capital to their adolescents (Percy Calaff, 2009; Ceballo, 2004; Gonzalez et al., 2003; Kimura-Walsh et al., 2009). Particularly, Mexican immigrant parents use consejos (i.e., cultural narratives) about the sacrifices they made to immigrate and the struggles they face in the U.S. to encourage their children to persist in their education (Auerbach, 2006; Luna & Martinez, 2013; Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; Hines et al., 2019). In addition to these cultural messages, Mexican-origin families also indirectly support their children's education through instilling the ethnic cultural value of familism. For example, some Latinx students have reported wanting to persist in their education because they want to make their family proud and contribute to the family well-being (Carolan-Silva & Reyes, 2013; Ceja, 2004; Luna & Martinez, 2013). Overall, the literature suggests that Mexican-origin parents play a valuable role in helping their adolescents prepare for college through providing aspirational capital.

Previous literature suggest that families can also be helpful in providing navigational capital for Latinx students' college preparation. Specifically, there is empirical evidence that family members who previously attended college, such as older siblings and cousins, can play a valuable role in providing information and resources about college to Latinx students (Ceja, 2006; Delgado, 2020; Hines et al., 2019; Patrón, 2020). Navigational capital from older siblings and cousins can be particularly helpful for Latinx students whose parents may not be familiar

with the U.S. education system and may not have access to information and resources about college (Kimura-Walsh et al., 2009; Stanton-Salazar, 2001). In a study conducted by Gonzalez and colleagues (2003), most of the Latina college students in the study mentioned that they were not able to access information and resources about college through their parents, but some students were able to access this information through their older siblings. Essentially, older siblings and cousins can be an instrumental source of college preparation capital for Mexican-origin students, particularly with providing navigational capital. However, it is essential to consider sources of college preparation capital outside of the family context that can complement the support from families, such as organized activities.

Organized activities have been recognized for supporting adolescents in developing various skills that can support students' successful transition from high school to college (Durlak et al., 2010; Hansen et al., 2003; Mahoney et al., 2009). According to the higher education literature, non-cognitive skills, such as organizational and socioemotional skills are part of the necessary skills for college-ready students (Conley, 2012; Duncheon, 2021). The literature on organized activities suggests that the structured nature of these activities provides active learning opportunities for adolescents to develop intrapersonal skills, such as time management and organizational skills (Dworkin et al., 2003; Kaufman & Gabler, 2004). Moreover, studies have found that organized activities provide opportunities to develop adolescents' socioemotional skills, such as teamwork and leadership skills (Larson, 2000; Larson et al, 2007). Thus, organized activities can support students' navigational capital through developing skills that can facilitate students' transition to college. However, there are only limited studies that consider whether the skill-building from participating in organized activities supports the college

preparation of Latinx students, particularly those of Mexican-origin; thus, there is a need for studies to explore this.

In addition to providing opportunities for skill development, organized activities can also provide structured opportunities for adolescents to develop relationships that can support their preparation for college (Dworkin et al., 2003; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Hansen et al., 2003). Specifically, organized activities can facilitate students' development of warm and close relationships with social and institutional agents through continuous interactions in an activity that is enjoyable for both the adolescent and social agent (Carolan-Silva & Reyes, 2013; Horrillo et al., 2021; Percy Calaff, 2009; Stanton-Salazar, 2001). As higher education scholars suggest, close relationships with social and institutional agents can be instrumental for low-income immigrant Latinx adolescents to build their social capital and access information and resources about college (Stanton-Salazar, 1995, 1997). In a large study on the social networks of Mexican American adolescents, Stanton-Salazar (2001) found that the adolescents who participated in organized activities were able to build trust and rapport with activity staff through regular interactions in activities. As a result, coaches of high school sport activities became additional, informal counselors who provided academic support and guidance. Alternatively, the Mexican American students who did not participate in organized activities faced barriers in building close relationships with institutional agents as the bureaucratic nature of the classroom context did not prioritize the development of close relationships between students and staff. Although the literature suggests that organized activities may offer opportunities to build the social and navigational capital of adolescents, research on whether and how these adolescent-staff relationships in organized activities support the preparation for college of Mexican-origin adolescents is limited.

Overall, the existing literature provides some insight about the ways in which families and organized activities may support the college preparation of Mexican-origin adolescents. Particularly, based on the literature, families may be especially helpful in providing aspirational capital through their cultural knowledge and values, whereas organized activities may be more helpful in providing navigational capital in the form of skill development. Additionally, Mexican-origin adolescents who have older siblings or cousins with previous college experience or who can form close relationships with institutional agents in organized activities may be able to access navigational capital in the form of information and knowledge about college. However, given the limited studies, there is a need for more research that considers how the support from families and organized activities may complement each other. Aligned with the patchwork capital theory, it is important to consider how the support from both sources may be connected as Mexican-origin adolescents may need to strategically leverage distinct types of support from each source to succeed in higher education (Kolluri, 2020). Insight about the complementary support from families and organized activities can provide a holistic understanding of what forms of support are available and what forms of support work for preparing Mexican-origin students for college. It is particularly valuable to consider the perspective of Mexican-origin students who are enrolled in college as they succeeded in their pursuit of higher education despite the social and structural challenges they face.

Differences Based on Parent Education

Although the Latinx community is vastly diverse in terms of their sociocultural background and characteristics, most research with Latinx adolescents has not addressed their within-group diversity (Raffaelli et al., 2005). According to the model of Latino youth development, it is important to consider differences in sociocultural factors that may distinctly

shape the development of Latinx adolescents (Raffaelli et al., 2005). A sociocultural factor that is relevant to consider in the context of the college preparation of Mexican-origin students is parent education. According to parent socialization models, parents' previous educational experiences shape parents' skills, values, and knowledge, which then shapes the support they provide (Eccles, 1993, 2005). Essentially, in alignment with the patchwork capital framework, Mexican-origin students with parents who did not previously attend college may seek mainstream forms of college preparation capital (e.g., navigational capital) from other sources, such as organized activities, to complement the support that their parents provide. Alternatively, students with parents who previously attended college may be able to access mainstream forms of college preparation capital from their parents and may not necessarily need to access such capital from other sources, such as organized activities. Thus, students with parents who did not attend college may need to rely more on organized activities to access college preparation capital compared to students with college-educated parents. In summary, Mexican-origin parents' previous educational experiences may uniquely shape the types of college preparation capital that Mexican-origin adolescents leverage from their families and their organized activities.

Despite the limited research, there is some insight on how differences based on Mexican-origin parents' education may shape the role that families and organized activities play in the college preparation of Mexican-origin students. For example, studies convey that students who come from families where their parents do not have previous college experience in the U.S., may rely more on institutional agents for college preparation support (Ceja, 2006; Luna & Martinez, 2013). For these students, participating in organized activities can be particularly helpful in complementing the support from parents without previous college experience in the U.S. through providing opportunities for developing skills and relationships with social agents who can

provide information about college (Dworkin et al., 2003; Duncheon, 2021; Hansen et al., 2003). On the other hand, as the higher education literature has rarely considered differences in the parent education of Mexican-origin parents, it is not clear how the college preparation of Mexican-origin students with college-educated parents may differ from that of students whose parents did not attend college. Therefore, further research is needed to understand the extent to which differences in parent education may shape the complementary role of families and organized activities in the college preparation of Mexican-origin adolescents.

Current Study

To address the gaps in the literature, we conducted a retrospective, qualitative analysis of Mexican-origin students' perspectives about the role that their families and high school organized activities had in their college preparation. The main goal of our study was to capture the different ways in which Mexican-origin families and organized activities helped Mexican-origin students prepare for college, including how these two sources may have complemented each other. Additionally, we also aimed to understand how the experience of Mexican-origin students varied based on their parents' previous college experience. This study particularly focuses on Mexican-origin students who were enrolled in a high-ranking, 4-year, public university. The perspective of this highly select group of students provides valuable insight about what support and resources are helpful for Mexican-origin students to successfully get into college. Information from this study can be especially valuable for stakeholders who seek to improve Latinx students' possibilities of obtaining a college education. We list the four research questions of this study below:

1. What are Mexican-origin students' perceptions on the forms of college preparation capital they received from their families?

2. What are Mexican-origin students' perceptions on the forms of college preparation capital they received from their organized activity participation during high school?
3. How does the college preparation capital from organized activities complement the college preparation capital from families?
4. How do students' perceptions of the role that their families and organized activities had in their college preparation vary based on their parents' education?

Method

Research Design and Participants

We recruited participants for this study from a high-ranking, 4-year public university in Southern California that is a Hispanic-Serving Institution. The study sample consisted of 24 undergraduate students who identified as being of Mexican origin (see Table 3.1). Most participants identified as being female (67%), and the remaining participants identified as being male. Over half of the participants were in the second year of their college studies (i.e., sophomore year; $n = 13$), whereas the remaining participants were in the first (i.e., freshman, $n = 9$) or third year (i.e., junior year; $n = 2$) of their college studies. Three students reported that they were community college transfers. Participants reported majoring in a variety of disciplines, with the most common majors being biological sciences, mathematics, and psychology. Over 60% of participants ($n = 16$) reported that their parents' highest level of education was a high school degree or less, whereas the remaining participants reported that their parents received at least some college education or more. All participants reported participating in at least one organized activity during high school. The types of organized activities included sports (e.g., cross country), academic clubs (e.g., Academic Decathlon), arts (e.g., dance), leadership (e.g., student government), volunteer clubs (e.g., Key Club), and religious activities. The most commonly reported organized activities were sports (75%) and academic clubs (42%).

We used purposive sampling to recruit participants into our study, which means that we selected participants into our study based on whether they followed specific criteria (Miles et al., 2014). The following was the inclusion criteria that we used to select participants into our study: 1) identified as Mexican, Mexican American, Chicana/o/e/x and/or of Mexican nationality/origin, 2) attended high school in the U.S. for at least three years, and 3) were pursuing to obtain their first bachelor's degree. To recruit participants, we shared flyers with information on the study with student and campus organizations, and instructors and staff from various departments so that they could distribute the flyers to undergraduate students. We distributed flyers through email, social media, as well as posted throughout the university campus.

Procedures

Procedures for this study included obtaining consent from the undergraduate students to participate in the study. Participants completed a semi-structured qualitative interview and a short demographic survey. The IRB approved the procedures conducted for this study. We compensated participants for their participation in the study with a small monetary sum (a gift card for $10). All study procedures took place during the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 academic years.

Semi-structured Interview

We conducted a single semi-structured qualitative interview with each participant virtually using the Zoom video conference software. The first author and an undergraduate research assistant completed the interviews, which usually lasted from 45 minutes-60 minutes. We audio recorded the interviews using the Zoom option for recording. We used an artificial intelligence (AI) transcribing service called Temi for an initial transcription of the interviews.

The first author and two undergraduate students conducted secondary checks of the transcription, in which we revised the transcriptions from Temi for accuracy.

The interview protocol included 19 open-ended questions. The first three questions of the interview (i.e., Warm-up section) were meant to build rapport and develop trust with the participants before starting the questions related to the study. The remaining questions aimed to understand the college preparation capital that students received during high school, including any potential support they received from their high school, family, and organized activities for preparing for college. For the purposes of this study, we focused our analysis on the questions pertaining to students' families and organized activity participation. First, we asked students to talk about the role that their family played in their K-12 education and the support they received from their family for preparing for college (e.g., Do you think your family helped you with preparing for college? If so, how?). In terms of students' organized activity participation, we first defined organized activities for the students: "Organized activities are defined as activities that have at least one adult leader, meet at regularly scheduled times, and are in groups with other youth." Then, we asked the students questions about whether they believed that their organized activity participation in high school supported their college preparation (e.g., How, if at all, did participating in [organized activities] help you prepare for college?). We also asked students to compare and contrast the support they received from their families and organized activities (e.g., "How would you compare and contrast the college support you received from your family with the support that you received from your [organized activity]?). For more details on the interview protocol, please see Appendix 3.1.

Demographic Survey

Students filled out a short survey that included six questions about demographic information (see Appendix 3.2). The survey included questions about students' gender, race/ethnicity, college major, college year, and parents' highest level of education. The purpose of these questions was to contextualize students' responses about their high school experience and college preparation, including how their experiences might be connected to their demographic background.

Coding and Analysis Plan

To analyze the first and second research questions of this study about Mexican-origin students' perceptions of the ways in which their families and organized activities supported their college preparation, we conducted a thematic analysis on the transcribed interviews. Particularly, the first author analyzed the interviews through multiple iterative stages of coding using both inductive and deductive approaches (Saldaña, 2016). For the inductive approach, we coded the patterns that reappeared in the data from the students' responses, whereas for the deductive approach, we used previous literature on the socialization from families and organized activities to refine our coding (Carolan-Silva & Reyes, 2013; Dworkin et al., 2003; Larson et al., 2007; Luna & Martinez, 2013). We used a qualitative software called Nvivo to support the coding process. During the coding process, the first author wrote detailed memos that documented her reflections about the coding process, patterns in the data at each stage of coding, and major changes to the coding framework (Miles et al., 2014). The goal of the thematic analysis was to develop a coding framework that captured the themes of students' responses regarding the college preparation capital they received.

During the first stage of coding, we conducted a preliminary analysis based on a subsample of interviews from about one-half of the sample (12 students). We used both in-vivo

(i.e., words and phrases that are verbatim from students' interview responses) and descriptive techniques (i.e., words or phrases that summarize a topic) to name the codes (Saldaña, 2016). The first author discussed the coding process of this stage with a research team, which included the first author's academic advisor, post-doctoral scholars, and other graduate students. Specifically, we discussed discrepancies in the coding with the goal of reaching a consensus for the coding framework. The reflective memos that the first author wrote during the coding process and previous literature also informed the codes. At the end of this stage, we developed a preliminary coding framework that informed the remaining stages of coding.

For the second stage of coding, the first author coded the remaining interviews using the preliminary coding framework. The goal of this second stage of coding was to develop a coding framework that accurately represented the perspective of the entire sample of Mexican-origin students about the college preparation capital they received from their families and organized activities. We redefined the coding framework to reflect students' responses as we coded more interviews. The first author also consulted with the research team about potential changes to the coding framework and issues about defining and distinguishing between codes. In sum, we finalized the coding framework while using the students' responses from the interviews, reviewing the written memos about the coding process, discussing with the research team, and consulting previous literature. For the final stage of coding, we grouped the broader categories that we determined in the second stage of coding into themes that reflected common features between the categories. Interview data, written memos, and previous literature, particularly the conceptualization of capital from Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework, informed this stage.

To answer the third research question of this study, which was about understanding the ways in which the college preparation capital from organized activities complemented that of families, we conducted a person-level analysis with the data. Particularly, we analyzed the themes and categories of college preparation capital from the first and second research questions across each of the participating students. Additionally, we further analyzed students' responses to an interview question that asked them to compare and contrast the support they received from their families and organized activities (i.e., "How would you compare and contrast the college support you received from your family with the support that you received from your [organized activity]?). We examined the similarities and differences across each participant in terms of the college preparation capital they received, and we determined the most commonly reported combinations of college preparation capital that students received across their families and organized activities. From this person-level analysis, we identified the patterns that best represented how the students received complementary forms of college preparation capital from their organized activities and families.

Lastly, to address the fourth research question about how Mexican-origin students' perceptions of the college preparation capital they received from families and organized activities varied based on their parents' education, we conducted a cross-case analysis (Miles et al., 2014). Specifically, we compared the themes of college preparation capital that we found through the first and second research questions across two participant groups based on students' reports of their parents' highest level of education. One group included students who reported that their parents' highest level of education was high school, middle school, or elementary school (n = 16) and the other group included students who reported that their parents were college graduates or had attended college for some time (n = 7). One student from the initial

sample of 24 was not included in this part of the analysis because they did not report their parents' highest level of education. For the cross-case analysis, we conducted a comparison of the similarities and differences across the two parent education groups in terms of the college preparation capital they reported receiving from their families and organized activities. Particularly, we considered the frequency for each theme of college preparation capital in each group, and whether the themes manifested differently across the two groups.

Positionality

It is important to acknowledge our positionality as researchers and discuss how our experiences, perspectives, and biases may function during the research process (Goldberg & Allen, 2015; Hill et al., 2005). The author is a first-generation immigrant who was born in Mexico but raised in California and identifies as a Mexican American woman. She acknowledges the strong appreciation that she has for the role that her family played in her pursuit of a college education in the U.S. Moreover, although she was not involved in organized activities growing up, as an undergrad student, she volunteered as staff in after-school programs that made her realize the value of organized activities in the positive development of adolescents. Her shared cultural identity with the Mexican-origin students of this study and the value she places on the role of families and organized activities on the positive development of adolescents is an asset for conducting the data analysis of this study. Particularly, her lived experiences growing up in the U.S. as a Mexican American woman from an immigrant family provides her with unique insight into the potential role of Mexican-origin families and organized activities in supporting the college preparation of Mexican-origin adolescents. However, the first author also acknowledges that she may hold certain biases or thoughts related to the importance of families and organized activities in the college preparation of Mexican-origin adolescents. Therefore, to

account for potential biases and assumptions during the data collection and analyses process, she consulted with a research team composed of her academic advisor, graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars from diverse backgrounds.

Results

Research Question 1: College Preparation Capital from Families

For the first research question of this study, we examined the perceptions of the Mexican-origin students about what role their families played in their college preparation. We found that students' responses aligned with the forms of capital outlined in Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework. Specifically, students mentioned accessing the following forms of community cultural wealth from their families: aspirational capital, navigational capital, and social capital. Although not included in the community cultural wealth framework, students also mentioned material resources as a valuable form of capital that their families provided to support their college preparation. In this section, we outline each theme of college preparation capital and the categories that emerged across some themes. To provide a thorough understanding of each theme and category, we use interview excerpts from the interviews we conducted with the college students (see Table 3.2). We used pseudonyms for all interview data.

Aspirational Capital

Most of the students in the study mentioned that their family provided support that aligned with the definition of aspirational capital from Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework (n = 23). As defined by Yosso (2005), aspirational capital is the ability to maintain aspirations for the future despite the challenges one may face. Students in this study described different ways in which their parents, siblings, cousins, and other family members directly and indirectly motivated them to persist in their pursuit of higher education. Three

categories that emerged from this theme of aspirational capital were emotional support, cultural socialization, and modeling. Below, we describe how each of these categories exemplifies the aspirational capital that families provided for the Mexican-origin students of this study.

Emotional Support. The most common form of aspirational capital that students mentioned their family provided is emotional support. Students mentioned that their family members, particularly their parents, provided emotional support through verbal encouragement and reassurance that students would succeed in their aspirations of obtaining a college education. For example, in the following excerpt, Erick, a sophomore male student majoring in Mathematics, describes his parents' encouragement to obtain a college education:

> They [parents] definitely encouraged me to go to college. Um, especially cause like they saw both me and my brother, the drive that we had and they told us, they would constantly remind us like, you know, we have potential to do a lot and be a part of something that would be fulfilling to us and be rewarding to the world you know, and stuff like that. So like they really did motivate us, like to keep pushing forward and like pursuing a college career.

As Erick explains, the encouraging words from his parents about the social value of attending college and his potential to do so, motivated him to continue in his pursuit of obtaining a career in college. Emotional support was especially helpful for students who had doubts about their ability to get accepted into college or persist in their college education. For example, in the following excerpt, Belinda, a freshman female student majoring in Public Health Sciences, explains how her mother's emotional support calmed her doubts about attending college: "I had doubts like, oh, maybe I'm not meant for this. Or like, I'm not ready to live outside of home. And she would always tell me like, oh, you could do it. Like you're capable, I know you are."

For Belinda, her mother's reassurance of her ability to succeed in college encouraged her to continue pursuing a college education despite her own uncertainty about it. Overall, for the Mexican-origin college students of this study, emotional support from their families was essential for their college preparation as it motivated and encouraged them to persist in their goal of attending college despite the challenges they faced.

Cultural Socialization. The second category of aspirational capital that we found in this study is cultural socialization. Specifically, we found that family cultural stories, narratives, and values related to the immigrant experience in the U.S. promoted students' aspirations to obtain a college education. Particularly, as students mentioned, the challenges that their parents faced in their education and assimilation to the U.S. influenced their aspirations to attend college. In the following excerpt, Yarely, a sophomore female student majoring in Mathematics, explained how the social and economic challenges that her parents faced as immigrants in the U.S. motivated her to pursue a career in college:

> Both of my parents didn't finish elementary school. So even like coming into the [United States], it was like super hard for my dad to find a job. Um, and my mom was like still unemployed. And like kind of seeing like the way that we like had to live growing up, it made me want to be able to like support my own family if I were to have one. Um, so college was just seen as a way for me to like gain skills and get a degree that could get me a good job.

As Yarely explains, the challenges that her parents faced in obtaining a "good job" showed her the value of obtaining a college degree. Thus, because Yarely did not want to face the same challenges her parents faced, she felt motivated to pursue a career through attending college. Similarly, other students mentioned that they aspired to attend college because they felt it aligned

with their parents' pursuit of a "better life" as immigrants in the U.S.. Erick, in particular, talked about wanting to "give back to his parents" for the sacrifices they made in immigrating to the U.S. by succeeding in getting a college education. Both Yarely and Erick felt that their responsibility as children of immigrants was to pursue something "better" than what their parents had to experience, and they viewed college as a way to accomplish this. Thus, for children of immigrants like Yarely and Erick, their aspirations to pursue a college education were fundamentally tied to their parents' experience as immigrants in the U.S. and reflected a strong value of education and family unity. In summary, through their cultural socialization, the Mexican-origin families of this study motivated their adolescents to persist in their college education.

Modeling. Another form of aspirational capital from their family that students mentioned is modeling. As students explained, they saw their family members who attended college as a model for what path to take after high school. Essentially, students felt motivated to pursue a college education because they wanted to follow in the steps of family members who had gone to college. For example, Christopher, a sophomore male student majoring in Political Science, explained how his father's example influenced his preparation for college during high school:

> There's also some precedent because from a, um, familial precedent, because my father also went to [4-year university]. And so, I figured that might as well just follow the family tradition. And so, I worked much of my life to get myself into [4-year university] by working hard, getting myself involved, and it paid off.

As Christopher describes, his work and dedication to get into college was inspired by following the "family precedent" of his father, who had previously attended college. In other words, for Christopher, the example that his father set for him encouraged him to persist in his pursuit of

getting a college education. In another example, Olivia, a freshman female student majoring in Education Sciences, mentioned wanting to follow the example of her older siblings: "My siblings went to, um, pretty high ranked universities. And so I felt like I needed to do that as well, like for my parents to be like proud of me and also like to have the same success as they did." As Olivia explains, she felt motivated to pursue a college education given the success of her siblings in getting into "high ranked universities." All in all, through setting a precedent of attending college, families indirectly supported the college aspirations and persistence of the Mexican-origin college students in this study.

Navigational Capital

The second theme that represents the college preparation capital that the Mexican-origin students of this study received from their families is navigational capital (n = 16). Based on Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework, navigational capital includes the skills, abilities, and knowledge that are helpful to navigate higher education institutions. Students mentioned that family members who had experience attending college, particularly their older siblings, provided college knowledge that supported their preparation for college. In the section below we describe examples of the college knowledge that families provided.

College Knowledge. Across the sample, students mentioned receiving college knowledge from their family members, especially their older siblings, about applying to college, filling out the FAFSA application, choosing a college, choosing a major, and accessing affordable textbooks**.** Jessica, a freshman female student majoring in Anthropology, described the following about her older sister sharing college knowledge with her:

> Um, so my sister who was a year older than me, who was already in college while I was a senior, explained to me, um, some of the things that she would find necessary. Or she

> would help me with some of the questions I have for like my [college application] essays, or, um, I guess what to expect as well, or I would ask her how our classes, um, is this all different, that kind of stuff. And she would answer them and I would kind of get an understanding of how college or a university would be like.

As Jessica's sister was already in college when Jessica was applying to college, she was able to provide insight to Jessica about writing college application essays and how classes were in college. The college knowledge that Jessica's sister provided helped Jessica with getting into college as well as getting an idea of how college life was and thus, contributed to Jessica's college preparation. In summary, the navigational capital, especially the college knowledge, that family members provided to the Mexican-origin college students of this study facilitated the students' ability to navigate the college application process as well as their transition to college.

Social Capital

A third theme of family college preparation capital that emerged from students' responses is social capital (n = 7). Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework defines social capital as a social network of peers and adults that can provide instrumental support to navigate mainstream institutions. In this study, students mentioned that their parents were helpful in building their social capital network through connecting them to social agents and resources that could support their college preparation. As described by students, some parents were intentional about building relationships with institutional agents, like counselors and teachers, who could provide individualized support for the students' college preparation. Josefina, a freshman female student majoring in Mathematics, recounted the following about her mother building a relationship with her high school counselors: "My mom worked at the new school that I ended up attending. So she was able to talk to like the counselors and then I think that's probably why I

was able to get more help from them." According to Josefina, she received "more help" from her counselors when she was applying for college because of the connection that her mother had made with them. Other students also explained that their parents supported their college preparation by transferring them to high schools with more resources and/or encouraging their enrollment in college preparation programs. In the following excerpt, Vanessa, a sophomore female student majoring in Psychology, described the role that her mother played in her enrollment in a college preparation program:

> I didn't know what AVID was before, but my mom had heard from a friend of hers whose daughter was in it, but before. She was a year older than me. So my mom's friend's daughter was in it and she told me about it and like what the whole program was and how they helped like students get into college and all that. And when my mom heard about it, um, she told me to look into it, to enroll in it in the class and that's how I ended up finding AVID.

As Vanessa explains, her mom provided that initial connection for Vanessa to get enrolled in AVID, a college preparation program focused on getting first-generation students into college. For Vanessa, this connection that her mom provided contributed to her college preparation because her AVID teacher ended up being a key institutional agent for providing information on the college application process. Essentially, parents like those of Josefina and Vanessa played a key role in promoting the college preparation of students by connecting them to institutional agents who could provide more direct forms of college preparation capital, such as college knowledge. Overall, these parents were intentional and strategic about building a social capital network that would help their adolescents get into and succeed in college.

Material Resources

Although not necessarily outlined in the community cultural wealth framework, we found that several students mentioned material resources as a form of support for their college preparation (*n* = 19). Specifically, the Mexican-origin students of this study appreciated the financial support and transportation that their families, especially their parents, provided to support their college preparation. In terms of financial support, students expressed that they valued this support from their families because it provided them with an opportunity to get a college education and facilitated their ability to navigate college. For example, parents helped students by paying for a private high school education, college application fees, college tuition fees, and school materials (e.g., laptop). Some parents also provided students with a savings account that students used for paying for academic (e.g., tuition) and living (e.g., housing) expenses while in college. Additionally, students also appreciated that their parents provided transportation to locations and programs that supported their college preparation. In the following excerpt, Elizabeth, a freshman female student majoring in Political Science, explains how helpful her parents' transportation was for her college preparation:

> One thing that I am grateful for is like, when I did sign up for that one college tour, like they took me and it was a good four-to-five-hour drive or like a three-to-four hour drive. Um, so they took me, um, and that was like one of the first times that I was like really exposed to college because it was more of a, like an in-depth tour. Um, whereas in other tours it was kind of just like very surface level.

Essentially, Elizabeth appreciated her parents for providing transportation to a college tour that was hours away in driving distance because this tour was helpful for her to get insight into how college works. Other students also mentioned that their parents' transportation to college preparatory programs, organized activities, and testing sites for ACT and SAT tests supported

their college preparation. All in all, as seen in the examples we describe, the financial support and transportation that families provided was instrumental in helping the Mexican-origin students of this study access resources that could facilitate their admission and transition to college.

Research Question 2: College Preparation Capital from Organized Activities

In this section, we address the findings of the second research question of the study about Mexican-origin students' perceptions of the college preparation capital they received from their high school organized activities. In alignment with Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework, we found that students perceived the following forms of college preparation capital from their high school organized activities: aspirational capital, navigational capital, and social capital (see Table 3.3). We use excerpts from the student interviews to describe and distinguish between the themes of college preparation capital below.

Aspirational Capital

One of the themes of college preparation capital from organized activities that we found is aspirational capital (i.e., the ability to maintain college aspirations despite facing challenges). Students mentioned that participating in organized activities during high school helped them with persisting in their pursuit of a college education. Particularly, the two categories of aspirational capital that students talked about were emotional support and wellness support. Below, we describe these two categories in detail.

Emotional Support. A form of aspirational capital that students mentioned receiving through their participation in organized activities during high school is emotional support. Specifically, students appreciated the staff and peers from their organized activities for providing comfort and reassurance as they were applying to college. Some students felt comfortable

sharing about the challenges they faced while applying to college with their peers and staff, which helped alleviate the stress of the experience for them. For example, Angel, a sophomore male student majoring in Criminology, mentioned that he appreciated the director of his student leadership club, whom he described as his "best friend," for "just listening" to him talk about his struggle of deciding which college to attend. Other students found comfort in their organized activity providing a space where they could find other peers who were going through the college application process at the same time as them. Belinda mentioned that she appreciated the conversations she had with her peers at her organized activity about their college application process because it made her feel "less stressed about it" that she was not the only one struggling with the process. For Belinda, having that shared experience of struggle with her peers alleviated her concerns about the college application process. Overall, the relationships that the Mexican-origin students of this study built with the staff and peers at their organized activities played an important role in their college preparation as the emotional support from these relationships helped students with persisting in their aspirations for a college education.

Wellness Support. Another form of aspirational capital that students mentioned accessing through their participation in organized activities is wellness support. Students explained that their participation in organized activities helped them persist in college as it taught them the importance of prioritizing mental health and developing hobbies for their well-being. In terms of hobbies, students emphasized the importance of being engaged in activities outside of academics "so you don't get burnt out as quick." Anthony, a male sophomore student majoring in Biological Sciences, described that participating in sport activities during high school encouraged him to remain physically active in college, which he believed allowed him to "take care of himself." As Anthony explained, through his organized activity participation in high

school, he learned that “it’s really important to take care of yourself first before going to school” because otherwise “you won’t be able to focus in school.” Essentially, his participation in sport organized activities taught Anthony the importance of engaging in physical activities for his academic and emotional well-being. Anthony felt that prioritizing his well-being through physical activity would prevent him from struggling academically in college. Other students also mentioned that participating in organized activities supported their wellness through teaching them about the value of mental health. For example, Santiago, a male freshman student majoring in Biological Sciences, mentioned that his involvement in a church group during high school taught him to have a “good mentality” in terms of taking breaks and “[checking] himself in not doing too much.” As Santiago mentions, he feels that this mentality helped with prioritizing what he cares about in college. As the examples from Anthony and Santiago suggest, their participation in organized activities during high school contributed to their ability to persist in college as it provided them with tools to prioritize their physical and emotional well-being.

Navigational Capital

All the students in the study mentioned that their high school organized activities provided forms of navigational capital that supported their college preparation (n = 24). As Yosso (2005) defines in the community cultural wealth framework, navigational capital includes the skills, abilities, and knowledge that are helpful to navigate higher education. Particularly, according to the Mexican-origin college students of this study, participating in high school organized activities contributed to their non-cognitive skill development and college knowledge, both of which are competencies that are highlighted in the higher education literature as being instrumental for succeeding in college (Conley, 2012; Duncheon, 2021). In this section, we outline the two forms of navigational capital that Mexican-origin students reported receiving

from their high school organized activity participation: non-cognitive skill development and college knowledge.

Non-Cognitive Skill Development. The most common form of navigational capital that students mentioned accessing through their organized activity participation was non-cognitive skill development. Specifically, students mentioned that their participation in organized activities during high school supported the development of interpersonal (e.g., teamwork, communication, leadership) and intrapersonal (e.g., time management, responsibility) skills that they found helpful in college. In terms of interpersonal skills, students explained that the opportunities that organized activities provided to socialize and work with peers and adults allowed them to become "more open and work with people better." These enhanced social skills were then helpful in college as it facilitated students' engagement in academic and social activities. Students also mentioned that their involvement in multiple organized activities in high school helped them develop their ability to manage their schedule. Anabel mentioned that her practice with managing her schedule during high school with multiple organized activities was useful for "managing when are [her] finals, when are [her] midterms…overall planning and scheduling courses" in college. Other students in the study mentioned that their sense of commitment to their organized activities in high school helped develop their sense of responsibility in ways that benefited them in college. Elizabeth mentioned the following about how her sense of responsibility for her organized activities helped her in college:

> I guess one big thing that I haven't talked about is like responsibility, like, um, in like tennis or in band and mock trial, like you have to show up, like, you have to be responsible, you have to get your work done, you have to practice because you know

> you're part of a team. So I guess that kinda carried on a little bit, like being responsible and like, for me, like going to lectures or like doing my homework or stuff like that.

As Elizabeth explains, her sense of responsibility to her organized activity teams in high school transferred to her sense of responsibility for her academic commitments in college. Overall, the Mexican-origin students in this study found the non-cognitive skills they developed in their high school organized activities as helpful for their academic pursuits and social interactions in college.

College Knowledge. A second form of navigational capital that students mentioned accessing through their high school organized activity participation is college knowledge. Specifically, students mentioned that staff and peers at their organized activities provided helpful information and guidance related to the college application process, college choice, financial aid, and college life. In the following excerpt, Alicia, a sophomore female student majoring in History, recounts how her mock trial coaches helped her with her college application process: "My mock trial coaches were my biggest influence in deciding like where to apply. And, um, they were really like the ones that helped me make the final decisions on where to apply." In another example, Karina, a female freshman student majoring in Mathematics, mentioned the following about how her coach from her poetry club supported her preparation for college:

> I would definitely say my poetry coach, I guess like the staff person who was there to like watch over the poetry club because he definitely helped me with my [college] essays. He definitely helped me like how to choose, um, like what school is better or what's the better route for me to go be a teacher.

For both Alicia and Karina, the staff in their organized activities played a key role in their college application process as they helped them with writing the college application essays,

choosing what colleges to apply to, and choosing what college to attend. Alicia's mock trial coach and Karina's poetry coach were essentially institutional agents who facilitated their students' admission and transition to college. Other students also talked about the benefits of being able to converse with peers who were applying to college at the same time as them and senior peers who had already gone through the experience of applying to college. All in all, the social connections with institutional agents and peers that the Mexican-origin students of the study accessed through their high school organized activity participation supported students' college preparation by developing their college knowledge.

Social Capital

The third theme of college preparation capital from organized activities that we found is social capital (i.e., social network of peers and adults that can provide instrumental support to navigate mainstream institutions; $n = 7$). Students valued organized activities for providing opportunities to build their social network with institutional agents and peers who could serve as a resource for their college preparation. For example, Christopher recounted that although the organized activities that he participated in were not able to directly help him with applying to college, they gave him "resources on where to look for people [he] could reach out" to. Thus, Christopher's organized activities helped with providing a social connection with institutional agents who could support his college preparation. Other students also mentioned that the social connections they built with peers through their participation in organized activities helped with forming a social network of peers to reach out to in college. In the following excerpt, Santiago describes the social network that he built in college with the peers he met at his organized activities:

> Um, some of the people I met in those, uh, clubs, uh, are a connection in college, so like, uh, I'm not necessarily friends with them, but like in classes I recognize them. So it's like, we've learned to like, kinda like sit together and like be a support system, not exactly friends, but like be a good support system in that class.

As Santiago explains, the connections that he made with peers through his high school organized activities transcended into college. Particularly, although Santiago did not necessarily consider these peers as friends, he felt that he could rely on them as a "support system" for his college classes. Thus, Santiago's participation in organized activities helped him build a social network of peers that could support his college preparation. In summary, the social connections that the Mexican-origin students of this study built with institutional agents and peers through their organized activity participation turned into social capital that positively contributed to the students' college preparation.

Research Question 3: College Preparation Capital from Families and Organized Activities

For the first and second research questions of this study, we found that families and organized activities provided similar and distinct forms of college preparation capital to the Mexican-origin students of this study. The goal of the third research question was to understand how the college preparation capital from organized activities complemented the college preparation capital from families (see Table 3.4 and Figure 3.1). We found four themes that represent the most prominent patterns of college preparation capital from families and organized activities: *aspirational capital from families and navigational capital from organized activities, aspirational capital from families and organized activities, navigational capital from families and organized activities,* and *material resources from families and navigational capital from*

organized activities (see Table 3.5). In this section, we describe how each of these patterns exemplify the complementary support from organized activities and families.

Aspirational Capital from Families and Navigational Capital from Organized Activities

Across students, we found that out of 24 students, 23 of them mentioned that they received at least one form of aspirational capital from their family and at least one form of navigational capital from their participation in organized activities. When we asked students to compare and contrast the role that their families and organized activities played in their college preparation, several students mentioned that they relied more on obtaining aspirational capital from their families and navigational capital from their organized activity participation. For example, Karina mentioned the following when comparing the role that her poetry coach played in her college preparation compared to her mother and brother:

> I feel like my poetry coach helped me more academically or more like trying to find resources online in order to help me, while my family was more emotional support. Whether like you got this, I believe in you, like, if you ever need help, you can come to me. And also just motivation from my mom, from my brother also, like you can come to me like, if you need help in like, knowing something about college, you know, it's more like not academic from my family side.

Based on Karina's experience and that of many of the Mexican-origin students in this study, Mexican-origin families played a prominent role in motivating and encouraging their adolescents to persist in their aspirations for a college education and organized activities complemented this support by providing adolescents with skills and knowledge that would help them navigate college. Essentially, Mexican-origin students leveraged dominant forms of college preparation

capital, such as college knowledge and non-cognitive skills, from their organized activities to complement the aspirational capital they received from their families.

Aspirational Capital from Families and Organized Activities

Although students mentioned aspirational capital as a prominent form of college preparation capital from their families, 15 students mentioned receiving aspirational capital from both their families and organized activities (See Table 3.5). As students explained, the aspirational capital they accessed from their organized activities was distinct from that of their families. For example, modeling and cultural socialization were distinct forms of aspirational capital that students accessed only from their families and not their organized activities. Additionally, students reported receiving wellness support as a form of aspirational capital from their organized activities and not their families. Modeling and cultural socialization were unique forms of aspirational capital from families as they were based on students' desire to follow the example of their family members who attended college and make their family proud (i.e., familism). On the other hand, the wellness support that students accessed through their organized activity participation was uniquely different from the modeling and cultural socialization that families provided as it focused on supporting students' persistence through promoting their physical and mental well-being. Lastly, students mentioned receiving emotional support as a form of aspirational capital from both their families and organized activities. However, as students described, the emotional support they received from their organized activities was different to the emotional support they received from their families. In the following excerpt, Josefina, compares the emotional support she received from her family to that of the academic clubs she was involved in:

> I would say that the only difference was that in National Honor Society and Key Club versus my family, I had other peers that were going through like the same thing as me, so they could probably understand my experience more than, um, my family.

Essentially, students like Josefina valued the emotional support they received from their peers at their organized activities, compared to that of their families, because their peers were going through the process of preparing for college at the same time as them. Thus, as Josefina mentions, peers in her organized activities could understand more of her experience preparing for college than her family. Overall, for students, it was valuable to access different forms of aspirational capital from their families and organized activities as it provided a holistic and well-rounded support for them to persist in their college aspirations.

Navigational Capital from Families and Organized Activities

Although navigational capital was a prominent form of college preparation capital from organized activities, 16 students mentioned receiving navigational capital from both their organized activities and families (See Table 3.5). In fact, students described that they received college knowledge about college applications and college life from both their families and organized activities. On the other hand, students mentioned non-cognitive skill development as a form of navigational capital from their participation in organized activities and not their families. Erick, a sophomore male student majoring in Mathematics, mentioned the following when comparing the role that their family played in their college preparation compared to the organized activities he participated in:

> I think the support I received from my family was a lot more direct, like, um, you know, like I was able to really like talk about college more directly and like all the different aspects about it. And I think with the programs, it was more just like indirectly were like

> it helped me just develop my character. And, um, just helped me develop, like, my skills, helped me develop my, even like my personality. Um, and like really like embracing my like extroverted and like communicative nature. And, um, with my parents, it was like while those skills and like those attributes did develop at home and like, through my childhood, like once the college application time came that was the time that I talked to them about college more seriously, more directly.

As Erick describes, while he was preparing for college during high school, he felt that comparatively his family played a bigger role in providing college knowledge, and that his organized activities played a bigger role in developing helpful skills for college. Moreover, as Erick mentions, although families might have played an instrumental role in supporting students' non-cognitive skill development in their early childhood, for the Mexican-origin students of this study, organized activities were particularly helpful in developing their non-cognitive skills while they were in high school. Overall, this finding demonstrates the valuable role of organized activities in complementing the navigational capital from Mexican-origin families.

Material Resources from Families and Navigational Capital from Organized Activities

We also found that 19 students mentioned receiving material resources from families and navigational capital from organized activities. Particularly, as students explained, they felt that the material resources in the form of transportation and financial support that they received from their families was instrumental for accessing the navigational capital that they accessed through their organized activity participation. When we asked Alejandra, a female sophomore student majoring in Mechanical Engineering, to compare the role of her family and organized activities in her college preparation, she mentioned the following:

> I got like skills from those extracurriculars. But then my parents also provided me the very fact that I was there to do all these like extracurriculars was because that they were able to provide that for me by taking me there every day. Um, so I think both of them were very helpful in terms of like skills and stuff outside of like the actual like applying process and stuff like that. But they were able to prepare me, one, my parents just by being there, like providing me just this gateway to like these extracurriculars. I think I might almost say like they were more helpful cause they put me there in the first place. But like, um, yeah, I think they, uh, extracurriculars did provide me like certain like people skills and communication skills that are helpful here in college, but then also like making sure, like asking questions and knowing who to ask and stuff like that.

As Alejandra explains, the transportation that her parents provided was a "gateway" for her to be able to develop socioemotional skills during her high school organized activities that would be helpful in college. Essentially, according to Alejandra, she would not have been able to access the navigational capital from her organized activities if it were not for the transportation that her parents provided. Thus, for the Mexican-origin students in this study, the material resources that their parents provided facilitated their access to navigational capital from their organized activities that supported their ability to navigate college.

Research Question 4: Differences based on Parents' College Education

For the fourth research question of this study, we examined whether the college preparation capital from families and organized activities for the Mexican-origin students of this study varied based on their parents' educational background. Specifically, we conducted a cross-case analysis in which we analyzed the differences between two groups of students: 1) students with parents whose highest level of education was elementary school, middle school, or high

school (n = 16) and 2) students with parents whose highest level of education was attending college for at least some time (n = 7). In Table 3.6, we provide the frequency of each theme of college preparation capital from families and organized activities for the two groups. In this section, we discuss the main differences we found between the two parent education groups.

For the themes of college preparation capital from families, we found that students with parents who had some college education reported receiving more social capital from their families compared to students with parents who did not get a college education. Particularly, 57% of the students in the group with parents with some college education mentioned that their families provided social capital as a college preparation capital, whereas this theme was only reported by 6% of the students in the group with parents who had a high school education or less. As students mentioned, the social capital that they received from their families involved their parents being intentional about connecting them to institutional agents and resources, such as college preparation programs, that could support their college preparation. Thus, the differences we found suggest that parents who previously attended college were more intentional than parents without a college education about building their adolescent's social network. Essentially, parents who had some experience with college had some insight about the skills and resources that are valued in higher education institutions and thus, were intentional about supporting their students' college preparation through strengthening their social capital. On the other hand, parents without a college education likely faced more challenges with building their students' social capital, such as not having access to knowledge about what skills and resources are valued in higher education institutions. Overall, these findings show how differences in parent education can shape the access to social capital that Mexican-origin students can leverage for their college preparation.

Another difference that we found in our cross-case analysis is that students who had parents with some college education mentioned accessing more aspirational capital and social capital from organized activities than students who had parents with no college education. Specifically, all the students in the group where parents had some college education mentioned accessing aspirational capital from their organized activity participation whereas only 31% of students mentioned this in the group where parents had no college education. Additionally, 57% of the students with parents who had some college education mentioned that their organized activity participation supported their social capital, whereas only 18% of students whose parents had no college education mentioned this support from their organized activities. Both aspirational capital and social capital were supports that relied on the social connections that adolescents made with peers and staff in their organized activities. Particularly, students who were able to build close relationships with their peers or staff were more likely to access aspirational capital and social capital from their organized activities. Thus, it is possible that students whose parents had previous college experience were more intentional about building social connections during their organized activities because they knew about the importance of doing so from their parents. On the other hand, students whose parents did not go to college may have not necessarily perceived the social connections they had in their organized activities as resources for their college preparation. In summary, these differences across the parent education groups suggest that parent education can create inequities in the college preparation capital that the Mexican-origin students access from their high school organized activities.

Discussion

Latinx students face considerable challenges in their high school classrooms, such as being tracked into remedial courses, that compromise their college preparation (Lopez, 2003;

Valenzuela, 1999). Thus, despite their increasing college enrollment rates in the last decades, Latinx adolescents continue to experience lower college completion rates compared to their White peers (Excelencia in Education, 2016, 2020; Ginder et al., 2018). To address these disparities, it is valuable to consider developmental contexts outside the formal school context that can support the college preparation of Latinx students. Framed by the patchwork capital framework (Kolluri, 2020) and the community cultural wealth framework (Yosso, 2005), this study aimed to examine the role of families and organized activities in the college preparation of Latinx college students, particularly those of Mexican origin. Specifically, we examined the forms of college preparation capital that Mexican-origin students accessed from their families and organized activities, how the college preparation capital from these two sources complemented each other, and how the college preparation capital differed based on parent's education. As this study focuses on Mexican-origin students who were academically successful in high school and were enrolled in a high-ranking, public university, findings from this study can provide valuable insight to stakeholders about what works for preparing Latinx students for college, what forms of capital are available for Latinx high schoolers, and what supports they need more access to.

College Preparation Capital from Families

Following Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework, we found that Mexican-origin families provided Mexican-origin students with aspirational capital, navigational capital, and social capital. In terms of aspirational capital, the Mexican-origin students expressed that the emotional support and cultural socialization their family provided supported their ability to persist in their pursuit of a college education. This finding aligns with previous research that suggests that Latinx parents commonly use encouragement and cultural narratives (i.e., consejos)

to motivate their children in their education (Auerbach, 2006; Ceja, 2004; Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; Luna & Martinez, 2013). Additionally, we also found evidence that adds to the emerging literature that highlights the role of older siblings in providing navigational capital in families where parents did not obtain a college education (Delgado, 2020; Gonzalez et al., 2003; Hines et al., 2019). Specifically, in our study, we found that older siblings who previously attended college provided college knowledge to their younger siblings that helped them with navigating the college application process and the transition to college. Lastly, although rarely discussed in the higher education literature, we found that the Mexican-origin families in this study provided social capital that helped their adolescents prepare for college. Parents were strategic in connecting their adolescents to institutional agents (e.g., counselors, teachers) and resources (e.g., college preparation programs) that could provide individualized support for their college applications. Thus, despite the social and structural challenges that Mexican-origin families face, the families in our study provided different forms of college preparation capital to their adolescents, including dominant forms of capital like navigational and social capital (Lopez, 2003; National Academy of Sciences, 2019; Valenzuela, 1999). Overall, as evidenced by our study, Mexican-origin families are resourceful in leveraging different forms of capital to support the college preparation of their adolescents.

Another form of college preparation capital that Mexican-origin students mentioned receiving from their families is material resources. The research on the higher education experiences of Latinx students has generally discussed material resources, particularly financial resources, as constraints in the college aspirations of Latinx students and not necessarily as assets (Nuñez & Kim, 2012; Zarate & Fabienke, 2007). In fact, Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework does not include material resources as a form of capital that students from

marginalized populations can leverage for their educational pursuits. However, in our study, Mexican-origin students valued the transportation and financial support that their parents provided to help them pursue a college education. Several students mentioned that they would not have been able to attend and persist in college if it were not for the transportation and financial support that their parents provided. Thus, contrary to most of the research focused on the college experience of Latinx students, we found that material resources were an asset for the college preparation of Mexican-origin students. The research on the college experiences of Latinx students has generally focused on families from low-income backgrounds, which may explain why material resources are rarely discussed as assets for the college aspirations of Latinx students (Auerbach, 2006; Carolan-Silva & Reyes, 2013; Ceja, 2004). In contrast, the students in our study came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Essentially, these findings call for higher education scholars to consider how the diverse socioeconomic backgrounds of Latinx families may shape their experiences with college (Raffaelli et al., 2005). Importantly, theoretical frameworks in the higher education field, such as Yosso's (2004) community cultural wealth framework, should address the within-group diversity of marginalized populations.

College Preparation Capital from Organized Activities

As a contribution to the higher education literature, we found evidence in this study that the developmental benefits from high school organized activities transcend into college to benefit the college preparation of Mexican-origin students. Specifically, Mexican-origin students valued their organized activities for providing aspirational capital that supported their college preparation. The organized activity literature highlights that the opportunity to build relationships with peers and adults is a valuable aspect of organized activities for promoting positive adolescent development (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Mahoney et al., 2009; Vandell et al., 2015).

However, the higher education literature has rarely considered how the emotional support from social relationships in organized activities can contribute positively to the college preparation of students. As we found in our study, the emotional support that Mexican-origin students received from the peers and staff in their organized activities encouraged them to persist in their pursuit of college. Additionally, students perceived wellness support as another form of aspirational capital that contributed to their college preparation. Although wellness support has been rarely discussed in the literature as a benefit of organized activities, the Mexican-origin students in our study valued that their participation in high school organized activities taught them to prioritize their physical and mental well-being. Given that students' physical and mental health is a concern for their persistence in college (Lipson et al., 2018; Pedrelli et al., 2015), the finding that participating in organized activities can contribute to students' ability to prioritize their wellness is a valuable contribution to the higher education literature. Overall, our study expands from the higher education literature by demonstrating that participating in high school organized activities can be an important source of aspirational capital that helps Mexican-origin students persist in their college aspirations despite the challenges they may face.

In alignment with Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework, we also found evidence that participating in high school organized activities can provide Mexican-origin students with access to navigational capital that can support their college preparation. Specifically, the Mexican-origin students of this study valued their high school organized activities for developing their non-cognitive skills and providing college knowledge that contributed to their preparation for college (Conley, 2012; Duncheon, 2021). Through the guided and structured nature of organized activities and the social connections that students developed with their peers and staff in their organized activities, students were able to develop their

interpersonal and intrapersonal skills (e.g., responsibility, communication) and obtain guidance on the college application process and college life (Carolan-Silva & Reyes, 2013; Horrillo et al., 2021; Larson, 2007; Stanton-Salazar, 2001). For the Mexican-origin students in this study, participating in organized activities played a key role in providing them with the skills and knowledge they needed to succeed and persist in college. As students described, the non-cognitive skills and college knowledge that they developed through their participation in organized activities helped them with navigating their academic pursuits and social interactions in college. Importantly, high school organized activities can be a helpful source of navigational capital for Mexican-origin students who may otherwise face challenges in accessing such capital from other sources.

Complementary Role of Families and Organized Activities

As our study findings suggest, both families and organized activities provided similar and distinct forms of college preparation capital that complemented each other. Particularly, we found the aspirational capital from families was commonly complemented with navigational capital from organized activities. In alignment with the patchwork capital framework, these findings indicate that Mexican-origin students take a patchwork approach in leveraging different forms of college preparation capital from their families and organized activities (Kolluri, 2020). Specifically, our findings suggest that Mexican-origin students who may not have access to navigational capital from their families may turn to organized activities for this form of college preparation capital. Essentially, the navigational capital from organized activities may be especially valuable for Mexican-origin students whose families are constrained from accessing mainstream forms of college preparation capital due to social and structural barriers (Lopez, 2003; Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Valenzuela, 1999). Thus, as evidenced by these findings, the

patchwork approach to obtaining college preparation capital is instrumental for Mexican-origin students to be able to succeed in their college aspirations. In summary, this study exemplifies how Mexican-origin students from a high-ranking public university had to strategically leverage different forms of college preparation capital from different sources to succeed in their pursuit of college.

Although students in our study seemed to rely more on their families for providing aspirational capital and their organized activities for navigational capital, several students reported receiving aspirational capital and navigational capital from both their families and organized activities. Specifically, students reported receiving different forms of navigational capital and aspirational capital from their organized activities compared to their families. For example, we found that organized activities, compared to families, were especially valuable in developing students' intrapersonal and interpersonal skills for their successful transition to college (Conley, 2012; Duncheon, 2021). Moreover, students mentioned that they especially appreciated the aspirational capital from their organized activities because compared to the capital from their families, they were able to obtain support for their physical and mental well-being and share the simultaneous experience of applying to college with their activity peers. Thus, in alignment with the patchwork capital framework, these findings exemplify how complex and nuanced is the process for Mexican-origin students to obtain different forms of college preparation capital that can help them get into a highly select college, such as the high-ranking public university that the students in this study were enrolled in (Kolluri, 2020). Additionally, these findings show that participating in high school organized activities can provide Mexican-origin students unique forms of navigational and aspirational capital that students may not be able to readily access from their families. Importantly, these findings

highlight the need for stakeholders to develop a holistic support system where marginalized students can leverage different forms of college preparation capital from various sources, including their families, organized activities, schools, and other developmental contexts. A holistic support system for the college preparation of students can address disparities in college access and retention that negatively impact the academic pursuits of Mexican-origin students (Excelencia in Education, 2016, 2020; Ginder et al., 2018).

Differences based on Parent Education

We found considerable differences in the college preparation capital that Mexican-origin students received from their families and organized activities based on their parents' education. Although we expected that students whose parents did not attend college would rely more on organized activities to access college preparation capital compared to students with college-educated parents, our findings reflected the opposite. Particularly, we found that students whose parents had previous college experience more frequently reported aspirational capital and social capital from their organized activities than students whose parents did not attend college. It is possible that parents with college education may transmit knowledge and resources to their adolescents that can uniquely shape their ability to gain college preparation capital from their organized activities (Davis-Kean et al., 2019; Eccles, 1993, 2005). For example, college-educated parents may speak to their adolescents about the benefits of building social connections in their organized activities, which may lead the adolescent to build close relationships with organized activity staff that could contribute to their social capital and aspirational capital (Dworkin et al., 2003; Hansen et al., 2003). Thus, differences in parents' education can contribute to inequities in the extent to which Mexican-origin students obtain college preparation capital from their organized activities. To address these inequities, it is valuable for organized

activities to learn more about the students and families they serve, including information on their needs and sociocultural backgrounds (Simpkins et al., 2017). Organized activities can use this information to ensure that they provide equitable access to college preparation capital for *all* students regardless of their parents' education.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study provides valuable insights about the college preparation capital that families and organized activities provide for Mexican-origin students, there are some limitations to consider. First, our study was a retrospective study, meaning that students reflected on their experiences in high school while already in college. Although retrospective studies with college students can help them reflect deeply about their past experiences, there are concerns about a lack of accuracy in students' reminiscing of past events. For example, during their recollection of past events, students may have focused on the most prominent ways that their families and organized activities supported their college preparation and not necessarily remembered *all* the different ways that families and organized activities supported them. Hence, our study may have not captured the full extent of the college preparation capital that families and organized activities provided for Mexican-origin students during highs school. Future studies can address this limitation by conducting longitudinal studies that can follow students' transition from high school to college.

Another limitation of this study is that it focused on a select group of students who were academically successful in high school and attended a high-ranking public university. While having this select sample in our study allowed us to understand the support that Mexican-origin students leverage to successfully get to college, we did not capture the experience of students who did not attend college after high school or who had other college pathways (e.g., attended

community college). The college preparation capital that is available for students who did not attend college after high school may look different than what we found in our study. Specifically, students who did not attend college after high school may have faced more challenges in accessing college preparation capital. Moreover, these students may have valued accessing forms of college preparation capital that we did not capture in our study. Thus, it is valuable for future work to focus on a representative sample of Mexican-origin students who took diverse paths after high school. Insight from a diverse sample of Mexican-origin students can help researchers and key stakeholders further understand how to improve Mexican-origin students' access to college preparation capital that can help them succeed in their college aspirations.

Lastly, a third limitation of the study is that we did not consider differences based on the type of organized activity that students were involved in. The organized activity literature suggests that the affordances that adolescents can gain from organized activities vary based on the type of organized activity that the adolescent participates in (Mahoney et al., 2009; Vandell et al., 2015). The Mexican-origin students of this study were involved in different types of organized activities, including sports, arts, academic clubs, religious activities, and volunteering organizations, and most students were involved in more than one type of activity. It is possible that students accessed different forms of college preparation capital based on the type of activity or activities they were involved in. Additionally, some types of activities may be more beneficial for the college preparation of Mexican-origin students compared to others. Thus, it is important for future studies to consider how differences in the types of organized activities that Mexican-origin students are involved in during high school may differentially shape the college preparation capital they can access.

Conclusion

This study examined Mexican-origin students' perspectives, specifically those who attended a high-ranking public university, on the college preparation capital they received during high school from their families and organized activities. Overall, our study findings make valuable contributions to the higher education and organized activity literature. First, our findings highlight that despite the social and structural challenges Mexican-origin families face, they are resourceful in providing different forms of college preparation capital to their adolescents, including dominant forms of college preparation capital like social capital. As another contribution to the literature, we found evidence that the skills, knowledge, and social relationships that adolescents gain from organized activities can transcend into college to benefit their ability to persist in college. Additionally, organized activities played a key role in complementing the college preparation capital from Mexican-origin families by providing unique forms of navigational (e.g., non-cognitive skill development) and aspirational capital (e.g., wellness support). These findings highlight that participating in organized activities can provide Mexican-origin students with a well-rounded support system that facilitates their transition to college. Lastly, we found that Mexican-origin students without college-educated parents faced considerable disparities in accessing college preparation capital from organized activities. This finding emphasizes the value of considering the within-group differences among Latinx populations and the need for organized activities to implement initiatives that can improve their support of first-generation students. All in all, our study hopes to inform stakeholders, such as policymakers, institutional agents, families, organized activities, and school administrators, who seek to improve their support of the college preparation of Latinx students.

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Table 3.1

Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Year in College	College Major	Parent's Highest Level of Education	Organized Activities
Elizabeth	Female	Freshman	Political Science	High School	Band, Choir, Tennis, Mock Trial, Academic Decathlon
Anabel	Female	Freshman	International Studies	High School	Speech and Debate Club, Teen Court Club, Key Club, Wrestling, Cross Country, Track and Field
Jessica	Female	Freshman	Anthropology	High School	Tennis, Swimming, College Preparation Programs
Selena	Female	Freshman	Psychology	High School	Math and Science Club, Elevate your Game
Belinda	Female	Freshman	Public Health Sciences	Elementary School	Planned Parenthood Club
Alejandra	Female	Sophomore	Mechanical Engineering	Some College	Cross Country, Science Olympiad, Science Bowl, Creek Project
Vanessa	Female	Sophomore	Psychology	Middle School	Water Polo, Church Youth Group
Olivia	Female	Freshman	Education Sciences	Middle School	Dance, Leadership
Josefina	Female	Freshman	Mathematics	College Graduate	Flag Football, Softball, National Honors Society, Key Club
Karina	Female	Freshman	Mathematics	Elementary School	Poetry Club, Cheerleading
Yarely	Female	Sophomore	Mathematics	Elementary School	Academic Decathlon, Women's Academic Success Club, Woodwork Club, Church Youth Group
Erick	Male	Sophomore	Mathematics	High School	Student Government, Soccer, Christian Athletes Club
Angel	Male	Sophomore	Criminology	Trade School	Student Government, National Honors Society, Mock Trial, Speech and Debate
Alicia	Female	Sophomore	History	High School	Student Government, Mock Trial, Cross Country, Soccer, Softball, National Honors Society

Veronica	Female	Sophomore	Psychology	Some high school	California Scholarship Federation, Cross Country, Track
Pilar	Female	Sophomore	Education Sciences	High School	Softball, Cross Country
Christopher	Male	Sophomore	Political Science	College graduate	Student Government, Photography Club, Theater Club, Social Justice Club
Amanda	Female	Sophomore	Biological Sciences	Some college	National Honors Society, Leadership, Calculus Club, Bible Club, Softball, Cross Country, Cancer Club
Anthony	Male	Sophomore	Biology	N/A	Cross Country, Wrestling, Swimming, National Honor Society
Pedro	Male	Freshman	Biological Sciences	Highschool	Interact Club, Track and Field, Karaoke Club
Santiago	Male	Freshman	Biological Science	College Graduate	Track and Field, Church Youth Group, Key Club, French Club
Kimberly	Female	Freshman	Biology	High School	Softball, Key Club, Latinos Unidos
Fernando	Male	Junior	Criminology	Some College	Track, Cross Country, Church Club, Mariachi Club
Salvador	Male	Junior	Chicano/Latino Studies	High School	Basketball, Bros Club

Table 3.2

College Preparation Capital from Families

Form of Capital	Categories	Example Quote from Students
Aspirational Capital (*n* = 23) *Family members directly and indirectly motivated students to persist in their pursuit of higher education*	**Emotional Support** *Family provided verbal encouragement and reassurance that students would succeed in their college aspirations*	"I definitely think my dad had a big impact on my encouragement of going, uh, to college. Um, I don't recall him ever stating a specific college, but I just know that it was just college in general. Yeah, he was the main person."-*Pilar, Female, Education Sciences*
	Cultural Socialization *Parents used family cultural stories, narratives, and values related to the immigrant experience in the U.S. to motivate students to continue their pursuit of a college education*	"I come from a first generation, Mexican family, both my parents are immigrants. Um, you know, they constantly tell us like they came here to provide us a better life. So like I have an older brother, he's three years older and then we kind of like both told ourselves l we have to work hard because like we were given this opportunity because the sacrifices of our family. And so it's like a good part of it is giving back to our parents, like achieving because they've sacrificed a lot. A good way to do it is by like achieving, um, a lot through, um, academics in high school and then going to a good university.-*Erick, Male, Mathematics*
	Modeling *Family members who previously attended college served as a model that encouraged students to follow in their path*	"But I think I was excited about going to college after seeing my cousin. She wants to be an attorney as well. And so she's obviously like older than me…. There was a book specifically, her textbook and I started reading it one day, like cause we were doing homework together and I started reading her book and I was like, this is so cool. And I was like, it's cool cause in college you get to study like what you want, which like you can't really do in high school…. So that in a way gave me a push."-*Angel, Male, Criminology*
Navigational Capital (*n* = 16) *Family members provided students with information that helped them navigate the*	**College Knowledge** *Family members shared knowledge on college applications, financial aid,*	"And I guess like during like, yeah, like my senior year, I would mostly like ask my siblings about like what college is like and well, they went to a different college, but I would still ask them what it's like and how different it was."-*Selena, Female, Psychology*

process of preparing for college	*college choice, choosing a major, etc.*	
Social Capital (*n* = 7) *Parents helped students build a social network through connecting them to social agents and resources that could support their college preparation*		"My mom would help me a lot as well, like she'd be a good advocate in terms of like, I remember when I was like elementary school, I think she's the one that found out about the AVID program through like another friend. So, you know, she would try to do her best and help me out in that way."-*Anthony, Male, Biology*
Material Resources (*n* = 19) *Families provided students financial support and transportation to support their college preparation*		"The main resource was transportation. Like I said, when my dad wasn't working, he would always take me to where I wanted to. And if he wasn't there, I feel like it would've been way harder. Like I have had to take the bus places, like when he was working. And it's way harder like that would've discouraged me more from going."-*Belinda, Female, Public Health Sciences*

Table 3.3

College Preparation Capital from Organized Activities

Form of Capital	Categories	Example Quote from Students
Navigational Capital (*n* = 24) *Participating in organized activities helped students develop skills and knowledge that were helpful for navigating college*	**Non-Cognitive Skill Development** *Organized activities supported the development of students' interpersonal (e.g., teamwork) and intrapersonal (e.g., time management) skills that were helpful in college*	"My leadership positions in academic decathlon and the women's club, I think definitely helps me a lot um, in terms of being able to like in general, be social, but also like, uh, publicly speak. Um, and I do think that's helping in college maybe in like, not that big of a way, but like I did get like a job with like the housing community with housing office. Um, and I do think that's definitely benefited me in that sense."-*Yarely, Female, Mathematics*
	College Knowledge *Staff and peers in organized activities shared knowledge on college applications, financial aid, college choice, college life, etc.*	"My swimming coach, I think he majored in psychology. And so he would tell us about some of his experiences in college and what kind of to expect and like, um, don't get distracted too much in college and get more involved like in, besides studying, because like, um, I guess, um, they would, uh, you would say they like only talk about like academics, but he would say like, oh, get more involved in college and like internships, explore more because, obviously it won't be boring for you and it would be more implemented in your mind as well as look good in your like resume and stuff."-*Jessica, Female, Anthropology*
Aspirational Capital (*n* = 15) *Participating in organized activities helped students persist in their pursuit of college*	***Emotional Support*** *Staff and peers in organized activities provided comfort and reassurance during the college application process that motivated students to continue with their college aspirations*	I talked to my poetry coach, like not every day, but I definitely keep him updated with what's going on. I went to visit him last week as well, and we were just talking about college the whole time and he's definitely, I feel like he is definitely proud of me. He's like 'I can't believe you're like doing this. Like I can't believe you want to actually continue poetry as well.' And since he was like the first person, I told that I got admitted here to [4-year college] um, I definitely keep in touch with him, like about college and about my mental struggles cause he's the other person who knows a lot about my trauma. I feel like he's very easy to talk to once, like, you know, he's gonna help you put into words or be able to express it."-*Karina, Female, Mathematics*

	Wellness Support *Through participating in organized activities students learned to prioritize their physical and emotional well-being in a way that helps them with persisting in their college aspirations*	"Cross country, I still do it to this day, but, um, I was trying to think now cause I don't participate in playing instruments anymore, but my leisure time is like for running and stuff like that. But um, I still, you know, I don't wanna finish the extra mile, sometimes my coaches, uh, you know, advice kicks in and then if I wasn't thinking about him during the day I'm thinking about it during the run and then it reminds me of it could be a little reminder itself like his words and then I end thinking about it for school, if that makes sense."-*Fernando, Male, Criminology*
Social Capital (*n* = 7) *Organized activities provided students with opportunities to build their social network with institutional agents and peers who could serve as a resource for their college preparation*		"The most helpful thing, they had a career fair. The fellow speakers were people, like I remember there was a physician assistant and registered nurse and they just talked about their journey through college. Like the registered nurse she had actually gone to my high school that they brought her to talk and she just said, I couldn't do my major cause it was too hard. So she switched to another major and then eventually still ended up on the same path. So that was helpful. Like the speakers, I like speakers cause they all have different experiences and they show you like, even though something didn't work out, I ended up reaching my goal anyway. Like that was helpful."- *Belinda, Female, Public Health Sciences*

Table 3.4

College Preparation Capital from Families and Organized Activities Across Participants

	Family Capital				Organized Activity Capital		
Pseudonym	**Aspirational Capital**	**Navigational Capital**	**Social Capital**	**Material Resources**	**Aspirational Capital**	**Navigational Capital**	**Social Capital**
Elizabeth							
Anabel							
Jessica							
Selena							
Belinda							
Alejandra							
Vanessa							
Olivia							
Josefina							
Karina							
Yarely							
Erick							
Angel							
Alicia							
Veronica							
Pilar							
Christopher							
Amanda							
Anthony							
Pedro							
Santiago							
Kimberly							
Fernando							
Salvador							

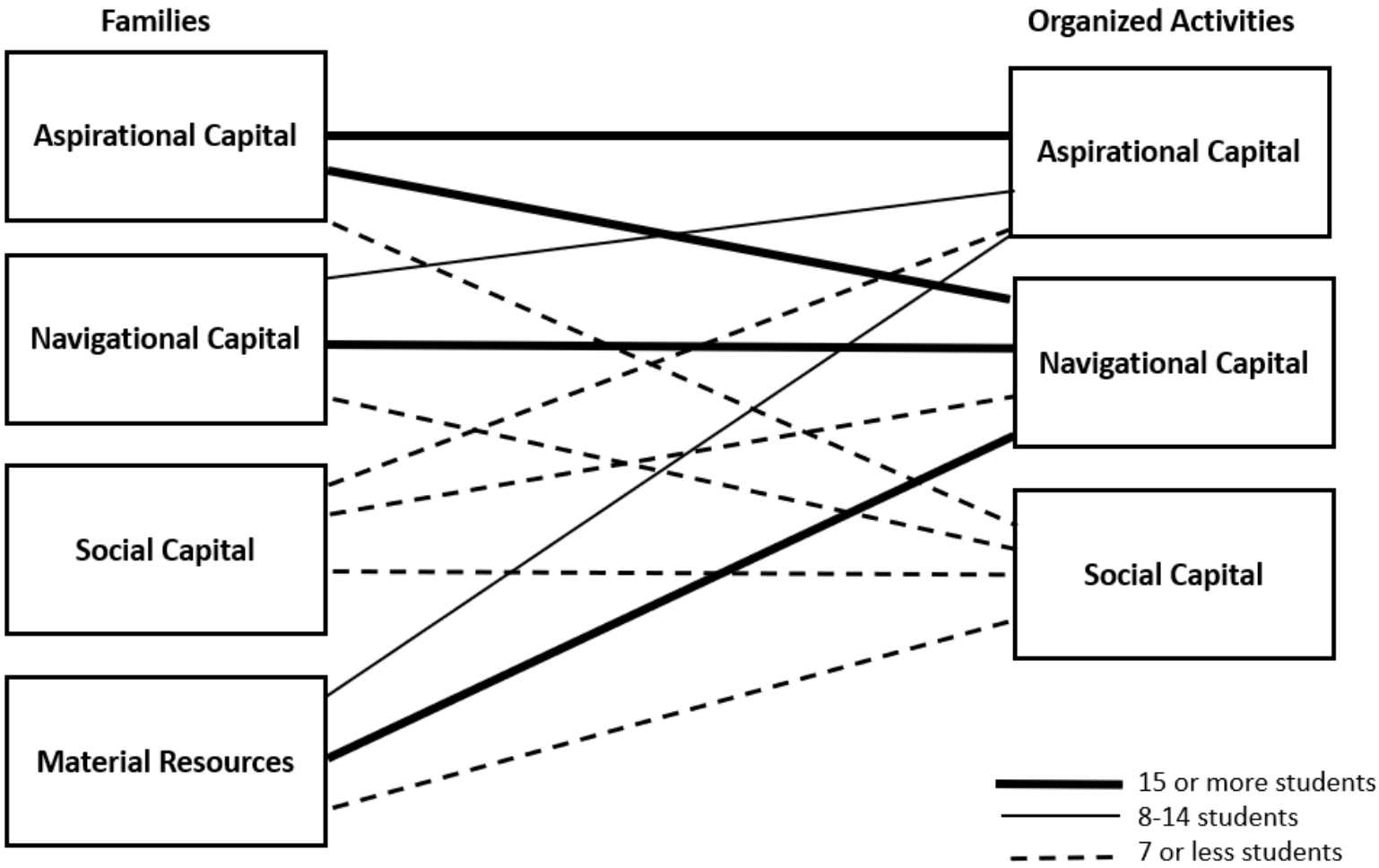

Figure 3.1. Model of complementary college preparation capital from families and organized activities

Table 3.5

Patterns of Complementary Forms of College Preparation Capital from Families and Organized Activities

Pattern	Description	Example Quote from Students
Aspirational Capital from Families and Navigational Capital from Organized Activities (*n* = 24)	Students mentioned commonly relying on obtaining aspirational capital from their families and accessing navigational capital from their organized activities	"I would say different because my parents were, or my family's more like emotional. And then I think like the events that I was involved with those are more like social events. I got to socialize, I think. And more like time commitment. I did mention previously how I had set times, I have to be here at this time. Whereas my family just, yeah, mostly emotional, encouraging me to, you know, don't give up, you may get like a bad grade on the test, but you know, keep going, do better on the next test and things like that. So yeah, they were different in that way."-*Anthony, Male, Biology*
Aspirational Capital from Families and Organized Activities (*n* = 15)	Students mentioned receiving different forms of aspirational capital from their families (e.g., modeling, cultural socialization) compared to their organized activities (e.g., wellness support)	"I think in, like the dancing team and like the school activities, they all, well, since they were all like my peers, we were kind of like on the same page. So we all understood what we were going through, um, like going into college, like all the seniors in high school that were like the same year as me, we were all like going through the same AP classes, like the application process. And they kind of just understood that. Um, so we all supported each other and as with my family, they, I guess I said it earlier, like they didn't, um, understand any of that. So they kind of just, they did give me a little bit of freedom to like go on my own path, but also through college. So, um, with their expectations, they weren't very like open to different options, still like supported, um, yeah, me going to college."-*Olivia, Female, Education Sciences*

Navigational Capital from Families and Organized Activities (*n* = 16)	Students mentioned receiving college knowledge from both their families and organized activities but only non-cognitive skill development from their organized activity participation	"Um, I would say they had more information obviously than, well, my family provided, I guess that would be the major difference and actually, um, because I would ask my sister for help in my FAFSA, but she wouldn't, um, know some of the terms or information about it. So I would obviously go to my [activity staff] for more elaboration and more sense into what was happening or what to put and stuff."-*Jessica, Female, Anthropology*
Material Resources from Families and Navigational Capital from Organized Activities (*n* = 19)	Students mentioned that the material resources that they obtained from their families in the form of financial support and transportation were helpful for accessing navigational capital from their organized activities	"My mom was a very big supporter for me, like in, I would say this in high school as well. Like she would always drive me to places that I needed to go for high school specifically, like volunteering since I knew that getting, like having a decent amount of volunteering hours when applying to college is like a pretty good thing to have. So because of that, like I would tell my mom, like whenever I wanted to volunteer somewhere, granted I volunteered also just cause I like helping out with the community to be honest, but I would tell my mom that because if not, she would not take me anywhere. Like, she would be like, okay, like if it's for college or like, if you, if this is like gonna benefit you, like then yes, like we can like, I'll take you. But like I would still have to beg her, but eventually she would say yes."-*Anabel, Sophomore, International Studies*

Table 3.6

Frequency of College Preparation Capital from Families and Organized Activities for Full Sample and Parent Education Groups

	Full Sample	High School or Less	Some College or More
College Preparation Capital from Families			
Aspirational Capital	95%	88%	100%
Navigational Capital	70%	69%	71%
Social Capital	22%	6%	57%
Material Resources	78%	67%	100%
College Preparation Capital from Organized Activities			
Aspirational Capital	52%	31%	100%
Navigational Capital	95%	88%	100%
Social Capital	30%	19%	57%
Total Families (N)	24	16	7

Note. The percentages within each cell represent the percentage of participants within each group in the columns (e.g., some college or more) that mentioned a particular theme of college preparation capital (e.g., aspirational capital). The *N* for the full sample is larger than the *n* for the two parent education groups combined because one student from the full sample did not have data on their parent education.

Appendix 3.1: Paper 2 Interview Transcript

Introduction

Thank you for taking some time to talk to me today. During this interview, I will be asking several questions about your experiences in high school, including your thoughts about college. We will also be talking about the role that your family, high school, and organized activities might have had in preparing you for college. Everything you say during the interview will be kept confidential and we will not report to anyone what you individually say. Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You don't have to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable and you can stop this interview at any time if you decide you no longer want to participate. Do you have any questions before we start with the interview?

Warm-Up

These first questions are to get to know you a little bit more as a student.

1. Can you describe yourself as a student in high school?
2. What were your academic interests in high school?
3. What were your extracurricular interests in high school?

Section 1: General questions about college

Now, I wanted to talk a little bit about your thoughts about college as you were growing up.

1. When did you start thinking about the possibility of going to college?
2. Why did you become interested in going to college?

Section 2: General support to prepare for college

These next questions are more about the general support you received as you were preparing for college.

1. Who helped you the most during high school as you were preparing for college? How did they help you?
    a. Did they encourage you to go to college? If so, how?
    b. Did you have conversations with them about going to college? If so, what were the conversations about?
    c. Did they provide any resources to prepare you for college?
2. Did you face any challenges as you were preparing for college? If so, what were they?
    a. Did someone help you with these challenges? If so, how did they help you?

Section 3: Support from high school

For these next questions, I want to know more about your high school and the role that they might have played in preparing you for college

1. Do you think that your high school prepared you for going to college? If so, how?
    a. Did you get help from your teachers? Counselors? Peers?

    b. Did your high school provide access to college preparatory courses or programs? Were you enrolled in them?
2. Did you learn something in high school that is currently helping you in college? If so, what?
3. Is there anything that you wish your high school had done to help you more with preparing for college? If so, what?

Section 4: Support from families

Next, I wanted to talk more about your family and the role that they played in your education, including your preparation for college.

1. Can you talk a little bit about your family and the role they played in your high school education?
2. Do you think your family helped you prepare for college? If so, how?
    a. Did your family encourage or discourage you to go to college? If so, how?
    b. Did you have conversations with your family about going to college? If so, what were they about?
    c. Did your family provide any resources to help you prepare for college?
3. How, if at all, does your family currently support you now that you are in college?
4. Was there support you needed to prepare for college that your family could not provide?

Section 5: Support from organized activities

So, this is the last section of the interview. Next questions will be more about your experience in organized activities during high school and how they were helpful for you. Organized activities are defined as activities that have at least one adult leader, meet at regularly scheduled times and are in groups with other adolescent. These include being involved in sports teams, arts programs (e.g., dance, music), school clubs, after-school programs, and community center programs (e.g., Boys & Girls Club). Do you understand this definition of organized activities?

1. What organized activities were you involved in during high school? Why did you get involved in those organized activities?
2. What did you learn while being involved in those organized activities?
3. How, if at all, did participating in [name the organized activities] help you prepare for college?
    a. Did you learn something in the organized activities that helped you with preparing for college? If so, what?
    b. Did you have conversations with your peers who participated in [name the organized activities] about college? With staff or other adults who were involved? If so, what were the conversations about?
4. How, if at all, did participating in [name of organized activity] currently support you in college?
5. How would you compare and contrast the college support you received from your family with the support that you received from your [organized activity]?

6. Is there anything that you wish the organized activity would have helped you more with? If so, what?

Those are all my questions. Is there anything else I should have asked you or is there anything else you would like to share about this topic?

All right, thank you so much for all your answers and your time.

Appendix 3.2: Paper 2 Demographic Survey

1. What is your gender?
    a. Female
    b. Male
    c. Non-binary
    d. Other:
    e. Prefer not to say

2. What is your race/ethnicity?

3. What is/are your college major(s)?

4. What year are you in college (e.g., first year, second year)?

5. What is your parents' highest level of education?

CHAPTER 4

Overall Discussion of Dissertation

Given the structural and social challenges that Latinx adolescents face in their development, it is important to identify and develop supportive infrastructures for their positive development (Erbstein & Fabionar, 2019; National Academy of Sciences, 2019). In particular, the developmental literature has identified families and organized activities as promising developmental contexts for the positive development of adolescents (Mahoney et al., 2009; Simpkins et al., 2015; Vandell et al., 2015). According to Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory, it is important to understand how the relations among families and organized activities mutually influence each other to shape adolescent development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). However, there is a scarcity of literature examining how the relations between organized activities and families may influence Latinx adolescent development. Further insight into these relations can help us understand how the connection or lack thereof between Latinx families and organized activities can support or constrain the positive development of Latinx adolescents and how organized activities can improve their support of Latinx families to maximize the developmental benefits for Latinx adolescents. Thus, the purpose of this two-paper dissertation was to examine the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Latinx adolescents, particularly those of Mexican-origin. Specifically, Paper 1 of this dissertation sought to understand how Mexican-origin adolescents' participation in organized activities contributes to benefits and challenges for their families, and Paper 2 examines the role that families and organized activities play in the college preparation of Mexican-origin adolescents.

The bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) also highlights that sociocultural factors, such as culture and ethnicity, shape the relations between families, organized activities, and adolescent development. Extending from the bioecological theory, the

model of Latino youth development (Raffaelli et al., 2005), outlines culturally relevant factors that are specific to the experience of Latinx adolescents and families, such as enculturation processes and cultural values like familism. This model also emphasizes the value of considering the within-group differences among Latinx populations in terms of sociocultural factors. Following the model of Latino youth development, this dissertation considered how sociocultural factors and within-group diversity of the Latinx community shaped the relations between families, organized activities, and Latinx adolescent development. Particularly, given the unique social position of individuals of Mexican origin in the U.S., the two dissertation papers capture the perspective of adolescents and families from this specific Latinx subgroup. Thus, in Paper 1, we examined how parents' enculturation to their Mexican ethnic culture may differentially shape the experience of Mexican-origin families with organized activities and in Paper 2, we considered how differences in parents' education may shape the college preparation capital that Mexican-origin students received from their families and high school organized activities.

For this chapter, we discuss three key findings across the two dissertation papers (see Figure 4.1 for a conceptual model). First, we discuss the different pathways through which the skills, resources, and knowledge across families and organized activities shape the development of Mexican-origin adolescents. Second, we explain how the alignment or misalignment between the ethnic cultural socialization across families and organized activities has implications for the development of Mexican-origin adolescents. Third, we discuss how differences in the sociocultural backgrounds of Mexican-origin families differentially shape their experience with organized activities and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents. Across each key finding, we discuss the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications for key stakeholders, including academic researchers, families, and organized activities.

Skill Development, Knowledge, and Resources across Families and Organized Activities

Across the two dissertation papers, we found evidence of how the benefits that students gained from their participation in organized activities transcended into their family and educational contexts. Specifically, we found that the non-cognitive skills, the relationships with peers and staff, and the knowledge that Mexican-origin adolescents developed through their organized activity participation contributed positively to their family dynamics and relationships and their ability to navigate their academic pursuits and social interactions in college. This finding aligns with the tenets from bioecological theory, which suggests that the developmental contexts an individual directly interacts with (i.e., microsystem) mutually influence each other to shape the individual's development (i.e., mesosystem; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). However, the bioecological theory is broad and does not delve much into the ways in which microsystems, like families and organized activities, may influence each other through the mesosystem. Thus, the findings from this dissertation extend from bioecological theory to provide further insight and detail into how a microsystem like organized activities can influence families and other developmental contexts. Particularly, through the mesosystem, the skills, knowledge, and resources that adolescents gain in one microsystem, such as an organized activity, can transfer into another microsystem, such as families, to benefit the social interactions and relationships that an adolescent has in that microsystem (Larson et al., 2007; Lin et al., 2018; Raffaelli et al., 2018). Overall, this finding has important implications for the developmental and organized activity literature as it shows the extent to which the benefits of organized activities can transfer across developmental contexts.

The findings from the two dissertation papers also indicate that the skills, knowledge, and resources that Mexican-origin adolescents access from their families shape the extent to which

adolescents benefit from gaining skills, knowledge, and resources in organized activities. First, we found that constraints on family resources, such as time, transportation, and money, was a barrier for Mexican-origin adolescents' ability to access skills, knowledge, and resources from their organized activities that could benefit their development. Additionally, we found that Mexican-origin adolescents especially valued that organized activities provided skills, knowledge, and resources for their college preparation that were different from what they received from their families. These findings exemplify another potential pathway through which families and organized activities mutually influence each other to shape adolescent development. Particularly, the balance between the potential costs to family resources and the potential skills, knowledge, and resources that families can gain from organized activities can determine whether an adolescent participates in organized activities and the extent to which adolescents benefit from their participation (Lin et al., 2022; Simpkins et al., 2019; Vandell et al., 2019). If a family feels that the gains from participating in organized activities are higher than the potential costs to the family, then they will be more likely to support their adolescent's involvement in organized activities. On the other hand, if a family feels that the potential costs to the family resources are higher than the potential gains, then they will be less likely to support their adolescents' involvement in organized activities. Overall, these findings are a valuable contribution to the literature as they extend from the bioecological theory to exemplify a complex and nuanced process by which the skills, knowledge, and resources across microsystems can shape adolescent development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

We also found that families and organized activities have the potential to collectively support the development of Mexican-origin adolescents through providing complementary forms of skills, knowledge, and resources. Specifically, we found that families and organized activities

provide Mexican-origin adolescents with complementary forms of college preparation capital to support their ability to persist in their pursuit of a college education. Compared to organized activities, families were especially valuable in using verbal encouragement and material resources to support their adolescents in their college preparation. Moreover, compared to families, organized activities played a particularly prominent role in supporting Mexican-origin students' non-cognitive skill development and wellness support for their college preparation. These findings contribute to the higher education literature and extend from the patchwork capital framework (Kolluri, 2020) by providing further insight into the complex process by which Mexican-origin adolescents leverage different forms of capital from families and organized activities to prepare for college (Carolan-Silva & Reyes, 2013; Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Yosso, 2005). Additionally, these findings contribute to the developmental literature as they extend from the bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) to show how two microsystems like organized activities and families can collectively influence adolescent development. Importantly, we find evidence of the collective power of families and organized activities in building a holistic support system for promoting developmental opportunities for Mexican-origin adolescents.

Ethnic Cultural Socialization across Families and Organized Activities

Findings from the two dissertation papers show that ethnic cultural socialization shapes the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents. In alignment with the model of Latino youth development (Raffaelli et al., 2005) and previous literature, we found evidence across the two papers that families and organized activities support the positive development of Mexican-origin adolescents through the transmission of ethnic cultural values (e.g., familism, respeto), and cultural knowledge (i.e.,

consejos; Auerbach, 2006; Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; Halgunseth, 2019). However, we also found evidence of a cultural mismatch between family cultural socialization and the socialization in organized activities. For example, Mexican-origin students mentioned that cultural socialization from their families played a prominent role in their college preparation but did not perceive such a support from their organized activities. A cultural mismatch between the families and organized activities can contribute to tension in the relationship between parents and their adolescents, compromise adolescents' connection to their ethnic culture, and widen the acculturation gap between parents and adolescents (Gonzales et al., 2009; Grau et al., 2009; Williams & Deutsch, 2016). Thus, given the potential developmental benefits of reinforcing Mexican-origin students' ethnic cultural values, beliefs, and knowledge and the potential detriments of a cultural mismatch, it is valuable for organized activities to find ways to strengthen the connection between their activities and the ethnic culture of the adolescents they serve. Specifically, to maximize the developmental benefits that Mexican-origin adolescents can obtain from their organized activity participation, it is important to develop organized activities that are culturally responsive to the families and communities they serve (Simpkins et al., 2017).

The insight that we gained from the two dissertation papers can guide organized activities that seek to implement culturally responsive activities that support the development of Mexican-origin adolescents. Following a culturally responsive approach, organized activities should leverage the cultural assets from Mexican-origin families, including their cultural values, knowledge, and traditions to inform their programming (Simpkins et al., 2017). As we found across the two dissertation papers, the cultural value of familism plays a prominent role in supporting the positive development of Mexican-origin adolescents, including their college preparation. Based on this knowledge, organized activities can incorporate practices that align

with the value of familism, such as organizing family events, facilitating the involvement of multiple children from one family through family discounts, and emphasizing the family benefits when recruiting adolescents. In this dissertation, we also found that the transmission of cultural narratives, such as family stories, helped adolescents persist in their developmental pursuits, such as their preparation for college. Thus, organized activities can implement activities where adolescents are encouraged to share cultural knowledge and stories from their family. Through encouraging students' connection to their family cultural narratives and knowledge in their programming, organized activities can promote adolescents' engagement and interest in their activities (García & Gaddes, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Ngo, 2017). Essentially, through a culturally responsive approach that incorporates family cultural values and knowledge, organized activities can maximize the academic, socioemotional, and relational benefits that Mexican-origin adolescents and families can gain from their participation.

Differences in the Sociocultural Backgrounds of Mexican-origin Families

Although the Mexican-origin families from both dissertation papers shared an ethnic heritage, we found differences in the experience of Mexican-origin adolescents and families with organized activities based on sociocultural factors. Specifically, differences in sociocultural factors among Mexican-origin families, such as enculturation and parent education, contributed to differences in what parents value from organized activities, the benefits adolescents and families accessed from organized activities, and the challenges adolescents and families faced for participating in organized activities. In alignment with the model of Latino youth development, this dissertation demonstrates the importance of examining how the within-group diversity among Latinx families differentially shapes the development of Latinx adolescents (Raffaelli et al., 2005). However, most of the existing literature on the organized activity and educational

experiences of Latinx adolescents does not address the diverse sociocultural backgrounds among the Latinx community (Carolan-Silva & Reyes, 2013; Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012; Luna & Martinez, 2013; Williams & Deutsch, 2016). In fact, prominent theoretical frameworks that framed this dissertation, such as the bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) and the community cultural wealth framework (Yosso, 2005), do not discuss *how* the within-group diversity among those who share an ethnic heritage may shape their development and educational experiences. Thus, although these dissertation findings were valuable in supporting the model of Latino youth development (Raffaelli et al., 2005), there remains a need for the literature to further address how the diversity of sociocultural factors among Latinx families, including immigrant generation, socioeconomic status, and parent education, differentially shape the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Latinx adolescents.

It is also valuable to discuss the practical implications for organized activities of serving Mexican-origin adolescents and families from diverse sociocultural backgrounds. Importantly, organized activities should not assume that families who share an ethnic heritage, such as the Mexican-origin families from this dissertation, also share a homogenous sociocultural background (Williams & Deutsch, 2016). As we found in this dissertation, Mexican-origin families hold different beliefs about organized activities and experience distinct benefits and challenges depending on their sociocultural backgrounds. Organized activities that fall into assumptions and stereotypes about Latinx communities can misrepresent the culture of the adolescents and families they serve, which can be harmful for adolescents and families and can compromise their continued participation in the activity (Ettekal et al., 2020). Thus, organized activities that seek to become culturally responsive, should center the voices of the *specific* communities they serve (Simpkins et al., 2017). Particularly, organized activities should strive to

learn about the adolescents and families they serve, including their values, traditions, concerns, and ways of doing things. Through centering adolescent and family voices, organized activities can avoid developing activities that are culturally unresponsive and instead develop activities alongside families that support the developmental needs of Mexican-origin adolescents.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this dissertation provided valuable contributions to the literature about the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents, there are limitations to consider. First, it is important to discuss the limitations of using qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews in both dissertation papers. Particularly, because of the qualitative nature of the analyses, we cannot make conclusions about the temporal precedence of the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents or about the strength of these relations. Additionally, due to the open-ended nature of the interview questions, it is possible that parents and adolescents responded based on what was more salient for them at the moment and did not necessarily share the full extent of their perspectives. Thus, we cannot be certain that we fully captured the perspective of parents on the family benefits and challenges of participating in organized activities or the perspective of adolescents on the college preparation capital they received from their families and organized activities. Nevertheless, the rich insight that we obtained from this dissertation can be used to conduct quantitative studies that provide further insight on the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents. For example, a longitudinal, quantitative study can provide insight into the extent to which these relations may change or evolve across the adolescent developmental stage.

Another limitation to consider is that this dissertation did not examine adolescent gender as a relevant sociocultural factor that could shape the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents. There is empirical evidence that Latinx parents socialize their girls and boys differently in both their academics and their organized activity participation (Ovink, 2013; Perkins et al., 2007). Moreover, previous research shows that there are gender differences in the types of activities that adolescents participate in as well as the benefits that adolescents obtain from their participation (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Kaufman & Gabler, 2004). Thus, it is possible that the gender of Mexican-origin adolescents contributes to differences in parents' perceptions of the family benefits and challenges of organized activities or adolescents' perceptions of the college preparation capital they received from their families and organized activities. Overall, future work should examine the extent to which adolescent gender and gender socialization across families and organized activities can shape the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents.

A third limitation of this dissertation is that we did not examine differences in the characteristics and features of the organized activities that adolescents participated in. Particularly, we did not consider the type of organized activity, the breadth of activities (i.e., number of activities), or dosage (i.e., amount of time involved in activity) in adolescents' participation (Vandell et al., 2015). According to the organized activity literature, these three features of organized activity participation shape the extent to which adolescents may benefit from their organized activities (Mahoney et al., 2009). In this dissertation, the type, dosage, and breadth of activities varied across the Mexican-origin adolescents. Thus, it is possible that the perceptions of Mexican-origin parents and adolescents about organized activities varied

depending on the type, dosage, and breadth of the adolescents' participation in activities. Thus, it is important for future studies to consider how characteristics and features of adolescents' organized activity participation can differentially shape the relations between families, organized activities, and Mexican-origin adolescent development.

Lastly, a fourth limitation of this dissertation is the selection bias in sampling the participants. Specifically, most of the adolescents across both papers were involved in at least one organized activity. Thus, because the sample is over-representing the experience of adolescents and families who were involved in organized activities, the dissertation findings may reflect a more favorable perception of organized activities. Adolescents and families who are not involved in organized activities may face unique challenges to their involvement that are not reflected in this dissertation (Heath et al., 2022; Simpkins et al., 2011; Simpkins et al., 2013). It is important for future work in the organized activity literature to center the experience of adolescents and families who are not involved in organized activities as those may be the populations who may benefit more from the developmental benefits of organized activities.

Conclusion

Mainly guided by the bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) and the model of Latino youth development (Raffaelli et al., 2005), this two-paper dissertation examined the relations between families, organized activities, and the development of Mexican-origin adolescents while considering the role of sociocultural factors. First, we found multiple pathways through which the skills, resources, and knowledge that were available across families and organized activities shaped the development of Mexican-origin adolescents, including their family relationships and college preparation. Moreover, we found evidence of misalignment in the cultural socialization that Mexican-origin adolescents were exposed to in their organized

activities compared to their families that has practical implications for organized activities that seek to maximize the developmental benefits for Mexican-origin adolescents. Additionally, in support of the model of Latino youth development, we found that the perspectives of Mexican-origin parents and adolescents varied depending on their diverse sociocultural backgrounds, which emphasizes the importance of considering the within-group diversity among Latinx communities. Overall, this dissertation shows that through building a strong connection and relationship with families, organized activities have the potential of creating a support system alongside families that provides Mexican-origin adolescents with the tools they need to succeed in their social, emotional, and academic pursuits.

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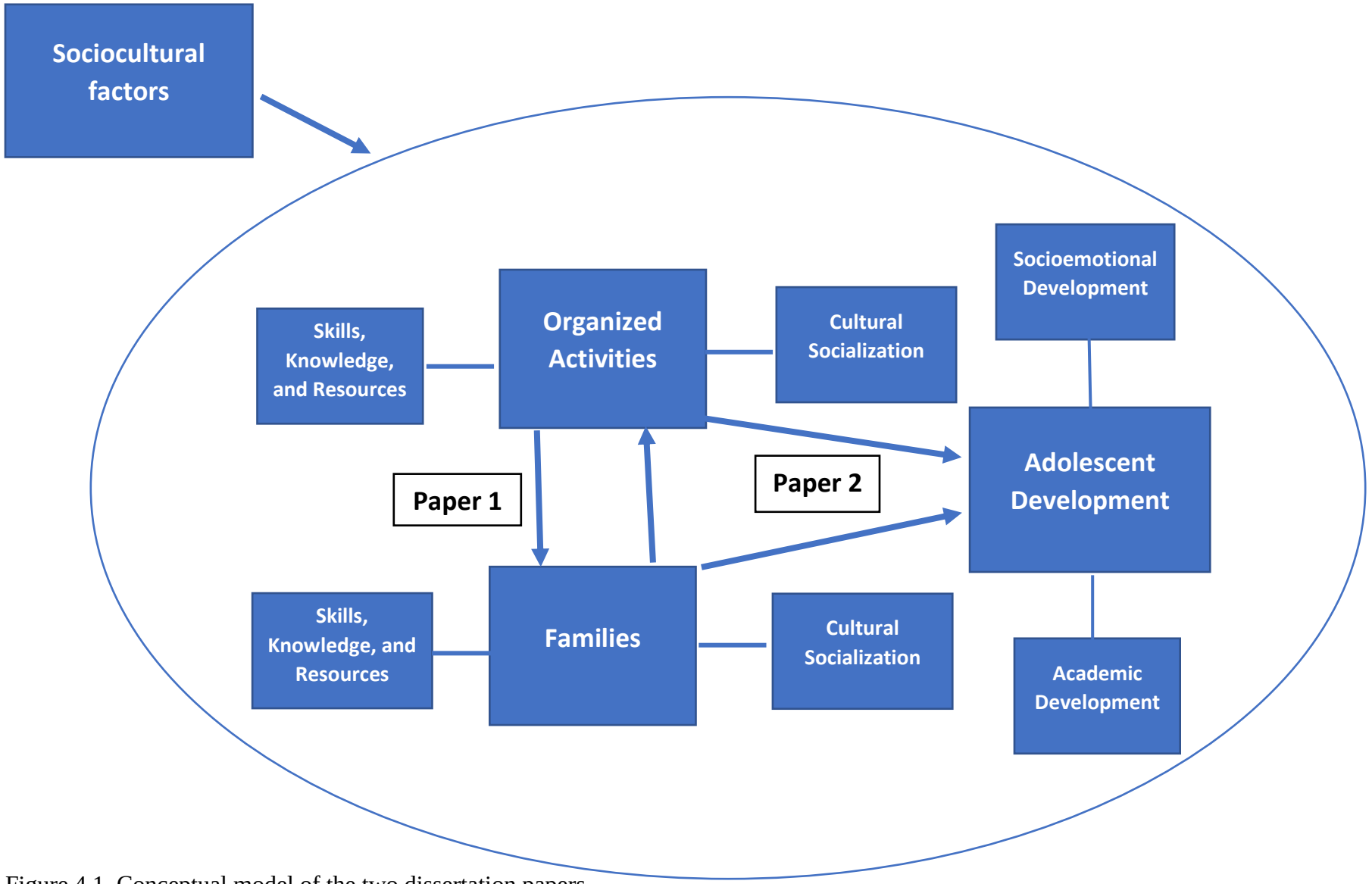

Figure 4.1. Conceptual model of the two dissertation papers.