


From the Fields to College: An Analysis of College Aspirations among Latino Farm Workers

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**Abstract**

Access to resources that help shape aspirations to go to college is not as readily available to all students; the exposure to these resources is dependent on an individual’s social location and characteristics. According to Bourdieu (1993), the knowledge attained in primary and secondary educational institutions is an important indicator of educational achievement. This study applied Bourdieu’s social capital theory to examine the decisions of Latino students and non-students to pursue a post-secondary education, specifically those with farm working backgrounds. The researcher conducted seven in-depth interviews and found that although all participants identified a support network, only those who had been involved in a structured college-preparation program attended a four-year university. Furthermore, participants who did not attend college cited other reasons for choosing not to enroll, including financial reasons, pressure to work, and gender expectations.

**Introduction**

Traditionally, education is viewed as the most efficient approach to move up the socio-economic ladder (Neelsen 1975); thus, a significant amount of importance is attached to educational success. In the United States, an individual’s merit, drive, and hard work are emphasized to explain accumulated wealth. However, an individual’s race, class, and gender grant certain members of society more opportunities and resources than others (Collins 1999; E. Ramirez 2012). The privileges granted, tied to social and cultural norms, manifest into social inequalities (McIntosh 1997), including access to institutions of higher education. For example, Latinos/as are the largest minority population in the United States (Camacho 2011); yet, Latinos/as remain underrepresented in universities throughout the nation. In 2011, 13.9% of Latino/as had earned college degrees, in contrast to 30.3% of Whites, 52.4% of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and 19.8% of Blacks (US Census Bureau 2012). Past research has emphasized educational success across all racial and ethnic groups, but little
attention has been given to the experiences of Latino/a students, particularly those with farm working backgrounds.

Latinos/as from farm working backgrounds often have the lowest educational attainment than any other subcategory within the Latino/a community (Huang 2003). They are often less likely to continue with higher education, and those who are foreign born are more likely to drop out of school (Fry 2005). This research investigates the contributing factors that help shape college aspirations among Latino/a farm workers. For the purposes of this research the terms Latino/Latina and Chicano/Chicana are used to identify people of Mexican descent. Specifically, this study focuses on Latinos/as who have an employment history in farm labor and graduated from a California public high school. The researcher chose this sample group because individuals with a farm working background often come from the most marginalized and exploited communities in the United States.

The purpose of this study is to examine the social factors that affect the motivation of Latinos/as from farm working backgrounds and their decisions on whether or not they pursue higher education. This research focused on the question: what factors are associated with the development of academic aspirations among Chicano/Latino college and non-college students with farm working backgrounds?

**Literature Review**

Various theories attempt to explain Chicanos/as’ choices about post-secondary education. The themes that repeatedly emerge throughout the literature include: 1) influence of an individual’s socio-economic status, 2) racial and cultural differences that can impede and/or support an individual’s path towards a post-secondary education, 3) institutional academic support, 4) the encouragement and support from family, counselors, teachers and/or significant others, and 5) personal educational aspirations (Maimer 2003; Marin and Marin 1991; Mullen, Goyette, and Soares 2003; E. Ramirez 2012; Sutton Trust 2012). Although the literature presents these themes in a variety of contexts, this research primarily focuses on their application to Chicanos/as with farm working backgrounds and their pursuit of higher education.

Past research has focused on how social and cultural capital has contributed to the levels of educational attainment across populations. For example, Pierre Bourdieu’s (1993) social and cultural capital theory explains how individuals succeed in educational institutions. According to Bourdieu, the knowledge attained prior to entering an institution of higher education is an important indicator of educational achievement. Social capital is defined as the resources available to an individual based on group membership, relationships, or networks of influence and support (Bourdieu 1993). Bourdieu (1993) defined cultural capital as the accumulation of different forms of knowledge, skills, education, or advantage which gives a person higher status in society, including high expectations and aspirations.

Racial minorities, with the exception of some Asian-American groups, have the highest percentages of people living in poverty (Macartney, Bishaw, and Fontenot 2013), and are less likely to have access to social and cultural capital that benefit them while deciding to go to college (Maimer 2003). Research has found a significant relationship between socio-economic backgrounds and overall educational attainment. Research findings reported by the Sutton Trust (2012) found a strong correlation between individuals’ socio-economic status and university attendance. Individuals from a high socio-economic status are twice more likely to attend a university than individuals who come from a low socio-economic status (Sutton Trust 2012). Because Latinos/as, have the lowest per capita income and educational attainment (US Census 2012) they are less likely to have access to the same social and cultural capital that benefit those from higher socio-economic backgrounds (Maimer 2003).

In addition, several studies have emphasized the importance of accumulating cultural and social capital throughout a student’s educational career. For example, Stolzenberg (1994) argues that the aspiration to obtain a higher educational degree is not sufficient for college graduates to continue with their schooling. Although Stolzenberg (1994) focused on students who had already graduated college, he found that educational aspirations were not shaped after their post-secondary education; rather they were developed during their undergraduate experiences. Stolzenberg argues that, “the aspirations for post collegiate schooling either develop or are revised in college” (1067); his research suggests that social and cultural capital evolves in their college career. Similarly, the amount of exposure to academic resources throughout students’ primary and secondary education shapes their social and cultural capital (E. Ramirez 2011). Moreover, although Latinos/as may obtain social and cultural capital prior to attending a post-secondary educational institution, their relations are not necessarily all beneficial in a post-secondary educational institution. They face unique challenges because their social capital is valued according to their race, gender, and class (Collins 2003).

Furthermore, social and cultural capital along intersecting factors of race, gender, and class mediate the academic aspirations of all students, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds, such as migrant farm working students who face extraordinary barriers and deserve substantial interventions. Elvia Ramirez (2012) argues that for a Latino/a the chances of going on to a post-secondary educational institution depend on interconnected factors. Although “race, class, and gender [alone] may be salient in an individual’s experience and/or consciousness, all three forms of inequality are structured into society and impinge on women and men of all racial and ethnic and class backgrounds” (E. Ramirez 2012, 4). An individual
may be significantly at a greater disadvantage because of the different social statuses they possess for being part of a particular social class, race, or gender. For example, a farm worker Latina is paid a lower wage than other female workers with less exhaustive and labor intensive occupations. Moreover, a Latina agricultural laborer also assumes a “second shift” (e.g., cleaning, cooking, and nurturing) upon arriving home because of patriarchal gender roles (Hochschild and Machung 1989). Similar double standards exist for Latinas in higher education, which might present unique challenges to them along the theme of conflicting values—personal achievement and familial expectations.

Familismo is embodied by strong feeling of loyalty, responsibility, and solidarity within the Latino family unit (Marin and Marin 1991). This strong feeling of loyalty, responsibility, and solidarity within the Latino family unit can often seem as a hardship for students contemplating attending colleges further away from home. According to this perspective, Latinos focus on the betterment of the family, which in turn limits their social capital because they are not readily exposed to beneficial relationships that are available outside of their family ties (Marin and Marin 1991). While students strongly connect to their families and obtain various forms of cultural capital from their parents, this capital is not equally valued or advantageous in all parts of life, such as higher education.

Nevertheless, prior research continues to support the basic concepts of social and cultural capital theory as a means to explain educational attainment. For example, Sewell and Shah (1967) showed through a multivariate analysis that highly educated parents are positively and significantly related to parental encouragement, college plans, college attendance, and college graduation. In a different study, Sewell and Shah (1968) found that a significant other (e.g., parent, sibling) could influence the educational and occupational attainment of an individual. Sewell and Shah (1968) argued that the influence of a significant other was important to educational attainment levels. Higher educational and occupational aspirations translated to higher levels of educational attainment. The findings placed a great deal of importance on the cultural capital parents possessed and subsequently passed on to their children. Furthermore, the social capital that parents possess is also an overbearing factor on whether or not the student will continue with his or her education.

Additionally, Mullen, Goyette, and Soares (2003) found that individuals with highly educated parents are more likely to enter and gain entry to postgraduate programs compared to those with lower education levels. This study indicated that the number of years completed in school by an individual’s parents influenced their choices in graduate school attendance (Mullen Goyette, and Soares 2003). In addition, Mullen, Goyette, and Soares (2003) found that an individual’s family income also influenced whether or not an individual would pursue higher education, particularly graduate school. Mare (1980) found similar results when he analyzed social backgrounds and schooling continuation decisions. Mare (1980) found that educational attainment and success is not random; rather, it is strongly related to family origins. This observation supports Bourdieu’s theoretical analyses of social and cultural capital, i.e., parents who possess more cultural and social capital are more likely to pass that information along to their children. Mare’s (1980) research supports the claim that a student’s social and cultural capital influences whether or not an individual will aspire to pursue a post-baccalaureate degree. Similarly, parents’ education levels influence recent high school graduates’ college choices.

Even when not taking social class and educational background into account, other factors are at play that affect a student’s ability to accept and retain knowledge. McKnight and Chandler (2012) argue that the curriculum in the classroom is often one-sided and skewed because current classroom practices “tend to marginalize or completely exclude the voices of the ‘other’ by way of privileging and socially reproducing the patriarchal, white normative perception of the world” (75). By presenting exclusive information in the classroom, a student may feel disconnected from the educational system. This disconnect can result in an unattractive social location (educational system) and, thus lower their educational aspirations. In addition to the lack of representation within the curriculum, researchers have found that spending time at school increases the opportunity to gain cultural and social capital. Robertson and Wölfe (1983) found in a longitudinal study that students who spent more time at school were also the students who achieved higher levels of education. The individuals who spent more time at school were able to expand their social and cultural capital. The social and cultural capital students obtained at school would increase the likelihood of students continuing with their education and were less likely to have a delay or interruption in their education.

In an effort to challenge the unequal representation of Latinos/as in higher education, federally funded programs such as the Upward Bound (UB) Program have been established (Maimer 2003). This program’s goal is to help students who come from a low-income family or who will be first generation college students succeed in precollege performance and ultimately in their higher educational pursuits (US Department of Education 2012). Maimer (2003) found in a cross-sectional study that first generation, low-income students enrolled in the Upward Bound program graduated from high school and were enrolled in institutions of higher education at a higher rate than the students not enrolled in UB. In addition, Maimer (2003) concluded that UB exposed students to cultural and social capital opportunities that the general population would not have access to, such as participation in summer residential programs at college campuses and exposure to university campuses. Maimer (2003) reported that the cultural capital transmitted by UB was important to the participants’
educational outcomes; however, social capital is particularly enhanced with parental discussions and involvement. This places a greater emphasis on parental involvement in a student’s educational career, yet this assumption makes the broad generalization that all parents possess the same social capital. Further, it does not elaborate the kind of parental support being offered, e.g., affective and/or academic. Programs that closely reflect the students’ needs are more effective in structuring academic success.

The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) was created in 1972 by the US Department of Education to increase college enrollment and to ensure first year completion of undergraduate students in post-secondary educational institutions (Migrant Students Foundation 2012). CAMP staff carries out this objective by providing counseling, tutoring, skills workshops, financial aid stipends, health services, and housing assistance to eligible students during their first year of college (US Department of Education 2009). Adrian Ramirez (2012) found in a longitudinal study on CAMP students, that migrant students in the CSU system persisted at a higher rate in the first and second year of college than students who were not in the CAMP program. In addition, Adrian Ramirez (2012) found that CAMP “created a positive learning environment where migrant students felt a strong sense of community” (10). The CAMP program allowed migrant students to accumulate social and cultural capital from the staff and past CAMP participants that helped make new CAMP participants’ transition from a high school environment to a post-secondary educational institution. This notion of social support to foster educational aspirations is not supported by all; the education system in the United States continues to be informed by the ideology of hard work and merit. Although merit, drive, and hard work influence an individual’s success in not only education, but in all competitive areas, social factors also contribute to this success (Tierney 2007). Moreover, the unequal possession of social and cultural capital among different groups of people mediates their academic success.

This section explored literature about the influence of an individual’s socio-economic status, racial, and cultural differences that can impede or support an individual’s path towards a post-secondary education; institutional academic support; the encouragement and help of a family, counselors, teachers and/or a significant other; and personal educational aspirations. All of these factors can lead to frustration, low self-perception, reduced motivation, and eventually diminished college aspirations. Thus, understanding how high school graduates from farm labor backgrounds differ in aspirations and decisions to pursue higher education is important. This knowledge can help inform and guide constructive interventions that can increase the academic success of some of the most marginalized students in the nation.

Methods

This study utilized a qualitative approach to analyze data collected using in-depth interviews. Data for this study were collected from April 16, 2013 to May 15, 2013. This study conducted seven in-depth interviews lasting between twenty to thirty minutes each. All of the interviewees identified as Chicano/a or Latino/a, and had worked in agriculture. The sample frame for the study included two cohorts: The first cohort (Cohort A) identified as college students ranging from 18 to 25 years of age, who were currently attending Sacramento State. The Sacramento State student interviewees were undergraduates and had graduated from a California public high school. The second cohort (Cohort B) consisted of individuals who had graduated high school or had earned their GED but were not attending college, and were also between the ages of 18 and 25. This study used a purposive sampling method and several respondents were selected by a snowball sampling technique. The interviews remained flexible enough to capture the true experiences of the interviewees. The qualitative interviews intended to contextualize students’ experiences and search for an in-depth personal analysis of experiences that a quantitative research method could otherwise exclude and deem not important.

An advantage of using a qualitative technique was the ability to capture detailed experiences not captured by surveys. A qualitative method and a semi-structured interview guide allowed participants to elaborate on their responses. On the other hand, this method brings about disadvantages, such as getting an accurate account from the size of the sample group. The size of the sample was small, and participants were chosen using a snowball sampling technique. Therefore, results could not be generalized.

The study focused on the five factors discussed in the literature reviewed. These include: 1) an individual’s sense of ethnicity and their experiences with racism, 2) their experiences as self-identified farm workers, 3) their K-12 educational experiences related to college-bound courses and academic support, 4) support from close relationships, and 5) their personal educational aspirations. Questions focused on a respondent’s educational and occupational experiences, family’s level of participation in their education, and their motives behind their educational choices after graduating from high school (Please see Appendix A for semi-structured interview guideline).

Results

The following are the results of the interviews conducted in this research. The semi-structured interview concentrated on five variables/themes associated with Chicanos/as with farm working backgrounds and their decision to pursue a post-secondary education.
Experiences with Racism

Out of seven interviews, six participants said they had experienced racism at school. Two out of the seven recalled being called racial slurs, including “beaner” and “wetback.” More specifically, all six participants felt they implicitly experienced racism. Three of the men interviewed stated they were discouraged to continue a higher education because many teachers labeled them “at-risk” or as “cholos” (gang affiliated). For example, one student from cohort A stated that he felt, “very discriminated against in Coalinga because [he was seen] as a rebel or a cholo.” Another student said that a teacher told him, “you ain’t gonna graduate. You’re gonna turn into a freakin’ gang member and you’re [going to spend your] life locked up.”

Moreover, all the participants said that they did not feel represented in the curriculum. For example, one student told a story about his world history class:

My teacher in high school was German... When we got to the section on US history, she began to start talking about Christopher Columbus and she only mentioned the good things that he did and what good contributions the pilgrims made. But after the class I asked her, “...weren’t the pilgrims a part of the reason why the Native Americans got killed?” and she asked me where I learned that. I told her, “there is a library near my house and I go there and I learn about these things.” Then I asked her “why are we not learning about these things?” and she told me, “it is not in the curriculum... it’s not relevant.”

Three students from cohort A felt that teachers and counselors held “lower expectations” for Latino/a students. Although some interviewees did not mention experiencing racism while in school, they did implicitly describe racist situations in which the white students were treated better. One student mentioned that her counselor continued to place her in “lower division classes,” until teachers would test her individually to move her to an upper level course.

Socio-economic status and occupational background

When participants were asked questions regarding occupational background all participants stated that they worked in agricultural jobs at a very young age (as early as the age of seven). Some participants continued to work in agricultural labor in the summer when they were not enrolled in college courses. For example, two students had worked during the summer of 2012 in packing houses and in the fields. One student said, “we would pack up the boxes, [that needed to be] delivered to the big city like San Francisco [or] Berkeley.” All participants reported agricultural labor as being difficult.

Although, none of the participants felt pressured to work full-time during their K-12 experience, four out of seven of the respondents occasionally would miss school to work. All students who missed school identified as male, and both male participants from cohort B remember missing school in order to work at restaurants.

Educational background and academic support

Three out of the four interviewees from cohort A reported participating in honors, college-preparation, and/or college-bound programs while in high school and the fourth participated in a Student Support Services program (SSS) at community college. Two participants from cohort A participated in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement (MESA), Educational Talent Search (ETS) and/or Advancement Placement (AP) classes in high school. Another interviewee participated in the Gifted & Talented Education (GATE) program and an Upward Bound (UB) program their first year in high school and the last stated to not have received any information about 4-year universities until attending a community college. For example, one student mentioned that she had been a part of several programs in her first year of high school and had the opportunity to attend college courses prior to enrolling: “In the summer, [I] took classes at UC Davis, [and] my sophomore year I took classes at Woodland Community College.”

Out of the three interviewees from cohort B, none reported to have participated in any college-preparation programs while in high school. All reported that they had not been exposed nor informed about these types of programs while attending high school.

Encouragement and Support (i.e. family, counselors, and/or teachers)

All seven participants identified at least one individual that encouraged them to pursue a college degree. All students from cohort A, with the exception of one who did not receive mentorship until enrolling into a community college, identified at least one high school counselor or teacher that assisted them with questions regarding college. All students received mentorship from an individual (counselor or teacher) associated with structured programs including AVID, UB, AP courses, and SSS. Furthermore, two out of the four students had support from siblings and/or uncles who had previously earned college degrees. Although all individuals in cohort B identified a teacher or counselor who encouraged them, none of the counselors nor teachers were involved in a structured college-bound program. Furthermore, both men interviewed as part of cohort B mentioned that although they received encouragement from school-related staff, they felt more pressure to work than go to school upon graduation. The woman interviewed did not identify pressure to work as a factor, but did mention that she felt pressure to stay home because she was the only woman in the family and feared to leave her mother alone with all the household responsibilities.

Aspirations to go to college

Although not all participants were currently enrolled in an institution of higher education, they all felt that getting an education was important for many reasons, including elevating the Chicano/a community and preparing for future
generations. Furthermore, none of the participants explicitly mentioned income (for themselves) as a motivation to continue to go to college. Rather, four out of seven participants mentioned that pursuing a higher education was important to their personal growth and the advancement of their communities. For example, one student said,

*I must be an open-minded individual in order to share this information with my family. It is important to get an education, but do it right. What good is it to get a degree and not know anything else outside my discipline. I need to grasp as much information as I can in order to educate not only myself, but others.*

**Discussion**

Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher had two questions: 1) Are Latinos/as with farm working backgrounds who have had parental involvement in their primary and secondary education more likely to continue with higher education? 2) Are Latinos/as with farm working backgrounds that are enrolled college-bound programs more likely to continue with higher education? Past research has focused on how parental involvement shapes students aspirations (Hanson 2002; Hosler and Stage 1992). Moreover, the current study found that encouragement and support (provided by family, counselors, and/or teachers) along with enrollment in college bound programs, have a profound effect on college aspirations among Chicanos/as with farm working backgrounds.

Ceja (2006) notes that Latinos experience low four-year university attendance rates and are also more likely to be first generation college students. The amount of social capital parents could pass on to the students; thus, is limited (Ceja 2006). For example, six of the seven participants reported having parents who had a high school diploma, GED or lower than high school education. Mare (1980) found that family background is an important indicator of an individual's educational outcome. In another study, Sewell and Shah (1967) state that highly educated parents are positively and significantly related to parental encouragement, college plans, college attendance, and college graduation. Moreover, most participants in the current study described parental involvement, as well as receiving support from siblings and/or uncles who had previously obtained a college degree. While most respondents shared that their parents were willing to help them through school, their “parents lacked a formal understanding of the college choice process” which impeded the amount of help they could offer their child (Ceja 2006, 101). This lack of formal understanding is challenged by some interviewees when they state the reason their parents were not involved in their education was not “because they were bad parents but because they were always busy working trying to make enough money to pay for the house and trying to keep food on the table.” In this case, social class was a major factor in parental involvement among Latinos with farm working backgrounds.

Conversely, Robertshaw and Wölfe (1983) attribute students achieving higher levels of education to the amount of time students spent in school. Although an individual may spend a longer amount of time in school, it this does not necessarily mean that the knowledge acquired is beneficial to a student’s self-identity and college aspirations. All seven respondents reported not being able to relate to the curriculum presented in the classroom. The students’ detachment from the curriculum is consistent with McKnight and Chandler’s (2012) findings in which they state that classroom curriculum is reproducing “the patriarchal, white normative perception of the world” by marginalizing or completely excluding the voices of the other (75). Some interviewees reported hearing information relevant to their life only when they had a Latino/a teacher, while another interviewee reported hearing more information presented in the classroom that was relevant to their life only after he had transferred to the university. McKnight and Chandler’s (2012) study illuminates the gaps between the one-sided curriculums taught in the public educational system and the large and growing diverse population of the US.

In an effort to try to close the educational gap amongst the different races and ethnicities, some programs have been established (US Department of Education 2013). All seven participants in this study identified at least one individual that encouraged them to pursue a college degree; however, only interviewees from cohort A reported that the individuals encouraging them to continue with higher education were part of a structured college preparatory program. Maimer (2003) found that individuals enrolled in college preparatory programs (such as Upward Bound) were more likely to be exposed to social and cultural opportunities than that of the general population. Coincidently, although six of the seven participants reported being involved in some sort of school related group (e.g., organization, club, program, or sport) only four of those interviewees continued on to an institution of higher education. The four interviewees who are attending an institution of higher education shared a commonality: participation in a college preparatory program prior to entering California State University, Sacramento. The findings reiterate the importance of college bound programs that have been highlighted in past research (Maimer 2003; Myers and Schrim 1999; Perna 2002) and the importance of continual funding of programs that assist individuals who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Elvia Ramirez (2012) argues that for a Latino/a, the chances of going on to a post-secondary educational institution depend on interconnected factors, such as race, class, and gender. The current study found intersecting factors in participants’ decisions to continue with higher education. Four of the seven respondents reported not being taken seriously because of their race. One
respondent stated: “I would ask a question and they would ignore me ... [but if a person of another race] would ask the same question they would answer their question but not mine.” Five of the seven respondents attributed socio-economic status (SES) as an obstacle in their educational career. Four of the former respondents reported having to miss school in order to work, while all five reported having to miss either high school or continuing with higher education because they felt they had to help their struggling families.

This strong sense of family unity or familismo (Marin and Marin 1990) can be problematic. Marin and Marin (1990) describe the strong feeling of loyalty, responsibility, and solidarity within the Latino family unit as causing discrepancies in Latino/a students’ educational aspirations. One respondent reported not wanting to continue with higher education because she was “the only girl [and] was not going to leave [her] mother alone!” Others reported having to take care of younger siblings instead of taking college courses during high school, and one interviewee reported abandoning his educational aspirations because he became the head of the household soon after graduating from high school. These overbearing factors are at times out of the students’ control, but students and their families are still often blamed. Students are often, by no choice of their own, born into unequal social conditions created by unequal social relations (i.e., race, class, gender) and deal with their situations in the best way they can.

College bound programs and student support services were shown to be a factor in determining whether an individual continued on with higher education. However, these programs are often limited in space, only allowing a certain number of students into the program while turning away others. These programs also tend to enroll participants based on academic performance, which is problematic for it is through these college bound and college preparatory programs that participants often gain the social and cultural capital needed to succeed in institutions of higher education (Maimer 2003).

**Limitations**

This study consisted of a small and non-representative sample of Latinos/as. All of whom identified as being Mexican or Mexican American and had some history of laboring in agriculture. The participants for the study consisted of seven individuals who were separated into two different cohorts. Four of the seven were CSU Sacramento undergraduates whereas the remaining three participants were from the perimeters of Fresno County, which is located in central California. Due to time constraints, the researcher was unable to obtain the same amount of participants from the Fresno County cohort as the researcher did for the Sacramento State undergraduate cohort. The data collected is not generalizable to all Latinos/as with farm working backgrounds. The goal of this study was to identify factors as to why Latinos/as with farm working backgrounds decide to continue with higher education rather than focusing on Latinos/as in general. In addition, because the researcher has his own biases and opinions, the data being presented can be skewed or misrepresented.

Although this study sheds light on some of the factors that help shape the college aspirations of Latinos/as with farm working backgrounds, more research on this subject is needed. Future research would benefit from examining other variables such as gender and how it intersects with other factors to shape academic experiences and successes. Also, a comparison between family members (i.e., siblings), particularly between family members who pursued a college degree and those who did not could potentially provide a more comprehensive understanding of college aspirations. Furthermore, future studies should also focus on the way social structures impede the college aspirations among Latinos/as with farm working backgrounds.
References


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**Appendix**

**DEMOGRAPHICS (Please check those that apply):**

1. How do you self-identify?
   - (1) ______ Hispanic/Latino
   - (2) ______ Black or African American
   - (3) ______ Asian
   - (4) ______ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
   - (5) ______ American-Indian or Alaska Native
   - (6) ______ White
   - (7) Other ________________________________

2. What is your gender? (1) ________ Male  (2) ________ Female

3. What best describes your mother’s education?
   - (1) ______ Less than high school
   - (2) ______ High school
   - (3) ______ Associate/Junior College
   - (4) ______ Bachelors
   - (5) ______ Graduate

4. What best describes your father’s education?
   - (1) ______ Less than high school
   - (2) ______ High school
   - (3) ______ Associate/Junior College
   - (4) ______ Bachelors
   - (5) ______ Graduate

5. What best describes your families’ income when you were growing up?
   - (1) ______ below $20,000
   - (2) ______ $20,000 -- $30,000
   - (3) ______ $30,000 -- $40,000
   - (4) ______ $40,000 -- $60,000
   - (5) ______ $60,000 -- $90,000
   - (6) ______ above $90,000
6. Do you consider your parent’s occupation an agricultural job?
   ______ Yes ______ No

7. Did your family immigrate to the United States after the 1950’s?
   ______ Yes ______ No

If yes, what best describes your generational status?
(1) ______ Born outside of the United States
(2) ______ First-generation
(3) ______ Second-generation
(4) ______ Third-generation
(5) ______ Other

(Cohort A: Sacramento State Students)

RACE (IV):
1. Did you ever experience racism in school?
2. Have you ever been discouraged from participating or completing something because of your race?

GENDER (IV):
3. Did you ever have to take care of your siblings or other individuals at a young age?
4. Were you ever discouraged from continuing school because of your gender?

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND (IV):
5. Did you have all the necessary school materials growing up?
6. What was the ethnic demographic of your high school?
7. Did you find the curriculum being presented at school relevant to your life? (i.e., your history, culture?)
8. What were your feelings regarding the school environment? (Did you ever feel that you were not wanted?)
9. Did you believe everyone was treated the same in school?
10. Were you involved in any organization or programs during your high school educational life?
11. Did you ever take any college courses while you were in high school?
12. Where you involved in any college bound programs?

OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND (IV):
1. Are you currently employed? If so, where? If not, why not?
   a. at what age did you begin to work?
2. Have you ever worked in the agricultural business?
   a. If so, when was last time you worked in the agricultural business?
3. Where you at any moment the head of the house hold? (The only person at home paying the bills?)
4. Did you ever have to miss school in order to work?

ASPIRATIONS TO GO TO COLLEGE (DV)
1. Were there any individuals that encouraged you to continue with higher education?
2. If so, who and how did they motivate you?
3. Can you remember the moment you decided to continue with your higher education?
4. How important is higher education to you?

(Cohort B: General Population)

RACE (IV):
1. Did you ever experience racism in school?
2. Have you ever been discouraged from participating or completing something because of your race?

GENDER (IV):
3. Did you ever have to take care of your siblings or other individuals at a young age?
4. Were you ever discouraged from continuing school because of your gender?

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND (IV):
1. Did you have all the necessary school materials growing up?
2. What was the ethnic demographic of your high school?
3. Did you find the curriculum being presented at school relevant to your life? (i.e., your history, culture?)
4. What were your feelings regarding the school environment? (Did you ever feel that you were not wanted?)
5. Did you believe everyone was treated the same in school?
6. Were you involved in any organization or programs during your high school educational life?
7. Did you ever take any college courses while you were in high school?
8. Where you involved in any college bound programs?

OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND (IV):
1. Are you currently employed? If so, where? If not, why not?
2. At what age did you begin to work?
3. Have you ever worked in the agricultural business?
4. If so, when was last time you worked in the agricultural business?
5. Where you at any moment the head of the house hold? (The only person at home paying the bills?)
6. Did you ever have to miss school in order to work?

ASPIRATIONS TO GO TO COLLEGE (DV):
1. Were there any individuals that encouraged you to continue with higher education?
2. If so, who and how did they motivate you?
3. Did you consider pursuing higher-education? Why/why not?
4. How important is higher education to you?
5. Were you ever discouraged from continuing school because of your gender?

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND (IV):
1. Did you have all the necessary school materials growing up?
2. What was the ethnic demographic of your high school?
3. Did you find the curriculum being presented at school relevant to your life? (i.e., your history, culture?)
4. What were your feelings regarding the school environment? (Did you ever feel that you were not wanted?)
5. Did you believe everyone was treated the same in school?
6. Were you involved in any organization or programs during your high school educational life?
7. Did you ever take any college courses while you were in high school?
8. Where you involved in any college bound programs?