SOCIAL COGNITIVE PREDICTORS OF
MEXICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS'
ACADEMIC AND LIFE SATISFACTION

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A Dissertation
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the Faculty of the Graduate School
at the University of Missouri

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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

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By

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

SOCIAL COGNITIVE PREDICTORS OF
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presented by Lizette Ojeda,
a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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DEDICATION

Pursuing a Ph.D. and completing a dissertation is something that I never would have imagined possible 10 years ago. This achievement is a remarkable highlight of my career that brings great satisfaction to both my professional and personal life.

I dedicate my dissertation to my loving sister, Marissa Ojeda, and to all the other Mexican American college students who have ever struggled in their college journey. To you, I wish you happiness, confidence in your ability to succeed in college, high expectations for your endeavors, progress toward your goals, satisfaction with your academic experiences, and most importantly, satisfaction with your life. You are the strength and purpose of my work.

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"Todo lo puedo en Cristo que me fortalece."
~ Filipenses 4:13

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ABSTRACT

This study used Lent's (2004) social cognitive model of well-being to examine the academic and life satisfaction of 460 Mexican American college students. A model demonstrated that positive affect, acculturation, college self-efficacy, college outcome expectations, and academic goals predicted academic satisfaction and life satisfaction. Specifically, positive affect had a significant positive relation to all variables measured in the model. Further, acculturation predicted college self-efficacy, college outcome expectations, and academic goals but not academic satisfaction. In addition, college self-efficacy predicted college outcome expectations, academic goals, academic satisfaction, and life satisfaction. College outcome expectations predicted academic satisfaction but not academic goals. Academic goals predicated academic satisfaction and life satisfaction while academic satisfaction predicted life satisfaction. Implications of the study and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Social Cognitive Predictors of Mexican American College Students'

Academic and Life Satisfaction

It was projected that in the year 2025 Latinos would become the largest U.S. group of People of Color. However this projection has occurred much sooner than expected and Latinos currently comprise 15% of the total U.S. population. By the year 2050 1 of every 4 individuals living in the U.S. will be Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Latinos of Mexican origin are the largest Latino subgroup, comprising of 69% of the total Latino population in the U.S. Given that Latinos comprise a substantial percentage of the U.S. population, continue to grow rapidly, and that the U.S. is the 5th largest Latino country in the world, it is of essence to address the psychological needs of this population.

U.S. Latinos of Mexican origin aged 20 to 24 years comprise 10% of the Mexican population. This age group would traditionally include Mexican American college students. However, Latinos represent only 7% of 4-year institution college students which is much lower in comparison to 26% of White students and 17% of African American students (NCES, 2003). In addition, only 6% of Mexican Americans obtain a bachelor's degree and are less likely to graduate from college compared to other Latino subgroups such as Puerto Ricans and Cubans. Certainly, the needs of Mexican American college students should be addressed given their underrepresentation in higher education. Thus, one purpose of this study was to identify factors that influence the academic satisfaction of Mexican American college students.

As People of Color, Mexican American college students experience unique academic, social, and personal challenges not faced by White college students (Gloria & Robinson Kurpius, 1996). One factor that can ameliorate psychological distress among Mexican Americans is high academic self-efficacy (Solberg & Villareal, 1997). Self-efficacy beliefs refer to "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). The belief in the ability to perform a valued task increases well-being (Sheldon & Kasser, 1998). It predicts academic persistence for Latino college students (Gloria et al., 2005), academic satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005), and personal adjustment (Solberg et al., 1993). College self-efficacy is negatively correlated with physical, financial, academic, and psychological stress, but positively correlated with social support and academic integration (Gore, Leuwerke, & Turley, 2006). Given the noted importance of self-efficacy on the academic achievement and mental health of Latino students, an additional purpose of this study was to examine the influence of academic self-efficacy on Mexican American college students' academic satisfaction and life satisfaction.

One major theory that is used to examine the role of self-efficacy on the academic and career development of Mexican Americans is Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Based on Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, SCCT essentially posits that person factors, which consist of an individual's predisposed biological attributes (e.g., gender, ethnicity) and background contextual factors (e.g., social support, environment) affect learning experiences. In turn, these learning experiences influence self-efficacy and outcome expectations.

Lent (2004) developed a theory of well-being based on some of the basic principles of SCCT, personality theories, and other theories of well-being. The social cognitive theory of well-being was chosen as the theoretical framework for this study because of its applicability to career *and* well-being. This framework unites cognitive, behavioral, social, and personality variables to determine normative well-being. Specifically, Lent (2004) suggested that (a) personal control beliefs, (b) outcome expectations, and (c) goals are cognitive contributors to well-being that are viewed as either relatively stable, trait-like or as relatively dynamic context-specific terms. A trait-like perspective includes variables such as generalized self-efficacy beliefs (personal control beliefs), dispositional optimism (outcome expectations), and achievement motives (goals). On the other hand, context-specific terms includes variables such as task-specific self-efficacy (personal control beliefs), learned optimism (outcome expectations), and personal strivings (goals). Behavioral variables that influence well-being may consist of task involvement and/or goal-relevant skills (Lent, 2004). Lent also suggested that social contributors to well-being consist of environmental supports and resources. Furthermore, he stated that personality factors influence domain-specific and overall life satisfaction.

Lent's (2004) model of well-being suggests that life satisfaction is influenced by three variables: domain-specific satisfaction, goal directed-activity and progress, and personality traits and affective dispositions. While domain-specific satisfaction is hypothesized to affect overall life satisfaction, this variable is hypothesized to be influenced by goal directed-activity and progress, personality traits and affective

dispositions, self-efficacy, environmental support and resources, outcome expectations, and goals. Goal directed-activity and progress is posited to be influenced by self-efficacy environment supports and resources, and outcome expectations. Outcome expectations are proposed to be influenced by both self-efficacy and environmental supports and resources. In turn, environmental supports and resources are hypothesized to be influenced by personality traits and affective dispositions. In essence, the path model of social cognitive well-being is initiated with personality traits and affective dispositions and concludes with life satisfaction (see Figure 1).

Given that Lent's (2004) integrative framework of well-being is based primarily on an individualistic society, he emphasized the importance of cultural considerations of the model in its use with culturally diverse populations. Because Latinos tend to emphasize collectivism more than individualism compared to the mainstream culture (Triandis, 1989), an additional purpose for selecting this integrative theory of well-being is to examine its applicability to an underrepresented ethnic group in the well-being literature, namely, Mexican Americans.

This study was the first to test Lent's (2004) social cognitive theory of well-being with a sample of Mexican Americans. The main purpose of the current study was to examine social cognitive predictors of academic satisfaction and life satisfaction with a sample of Mexican American college students. The specific factors that were tested within the social cognitive model of well-being included a) positive affect (affective dispositions), b) acculturation (environmental supports and resources), c) college self-efficacy (self-efficacy beliefs), d) college outcome expectations (outcome expectations),

e) academic goals (participation in goal-directed activity), f) academic satisfaction (domain-specific satisfaction), and g) life satisfaction (overall life satisfaction).

The affective disposition variable of positive affect was chosen given its relation to self-efficacy, job satisfaction, academic satisfaction, and life satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000). In essence, positive affect reflects feelings of enthusiasm, activeness, alertness, pleasure, high concentration, and energy (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Positive affect may also help with goal progress (King, Hicks, Krull, Del Gaiso, 2006) and in turn lead to domain-specific and life satisfaction.

The environmental resource variable of acculturation was chosen to examine how one facet of culture plays a role in the academic life of Mexican American college students. In addition, given that higher education institutions in the U.S. are Westernized, we examined how orientation to the Mexican and/or mainstream culture played a role on navigating such mainstream institutions. Acculturation was also a chosen variable in response to a call for future research to contribute to the limited research on the relation between acculturation and well-being (Sam, 2000).

Furthermore, the variables of college self-efficacy, academic goals, and college outcome expectations were chosen because they are academic constructs that influence academic satisfaction. Self efficacy predicts students' goals (Hackett, Betz, Casas, & Rocha-Singh, 1992), academic satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005), and personal adjustment (Solberg et al., 1993). College self-efficacy is negatively correlated with academic and psychological stress, while positively correlated with academic integration (Gore et al., 2006). Further research demonstrates that students of color at universities

where their ethnicity is represented have higher self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and educational goals than student of color at predominantly White institutions (Lent et al., 2003). However, less is known about the role of these factors on academic satisfaction and life satisfaction among Latinos attending a predominantly Latino institution.

Life satisfaction was chosen as the variable to examine the construct of overall life satisfaction to obtain a global perspective of Mexican American college students' level of happiness. Diener and his colleagues (1995a) suggested that the role of culture on life satisfaction should be noted because people's perceptions of what makes them happy vary by culture and depend on culture (Diener, 1984). While the "good life" is influenced by both internal and external factors, cultural components, such as norms, attitudes and beliefs about oneself and others (Triandis, 1996) may override such influence (Suh, Diener, Oishi, & Triandis, 1998). Differences in how cultures perceive their self-enhancement and the extent to which a cultural group is willing to make sacrifices for the group may indicate the discrepancies in happiness among different cultures (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). Much of the research on culture and happiness has focused on cross-cultural comparisons and is one criticism of the subjective well-being literature (Benet-Martínez & Karakitapoglu-Aygun, 2003).

One particular culture whose happiness should receive increased attention is the Latino culture because they are the largest ethnic group of Color in the US and continue to grow exponentially. Among the limited research, it is suggested that Mexican Americans are happier than the mainstream culture because of lower rates of mental

health disorders (Vega , Kolody, Aguilar-Gaxiola, Alderete, Catalano, & Caraveo-Anduaga, 1998), belonging to a highly supportive culture (Marín & Marín, 1991), and the power of familismo (Weaver, 2003). However, others suggest that Mexican American women were less happy than White women while Mexican American men were just as happy as White men (Weaver, 2003). A study on the life satisfaction of Mexican American youth concluded that students perceived their family to be the most important contributor to their life satisfaction (Edwards & López, 2006). In addition, enculturation, but not acculturation, was related to life satisfaction. Furthermore, worrying about, and pessimistic perceptions of race-relations among Latino high school students was negatively related to life satisfaction (Brown, Wallace, & Williams, 2001). In addition, Latino students had lower life satisfaction than their White peers. In contrast however, Crocker and Major (1989) concluded that the well-being of stigmatized group members is just as high as that of non-stigmatized group members. Given these contradictory findings and the minimal research that has been conducted to date, further research on the well-being of Mexican Americans is needed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine social cognitive predictors of academic satisfaction and life satisfaction among Mexican American college students using Lent's (2004) integrative model of well-being as the framework. The following hypotheses were proposed (see Figure 1):

H1. Positive affect will predict enculturation, acculturation, college self-efficacy, academic satisfaction, and life satisfaction.

H2. Acculturation will predict college self-efficacy, college outcome expectations, academic goals, and academic satisfaction.

H3. College self-efficacy will predict college outcome expectations, academic goals, and academic satisfaction.

H4. College outcome expectations will predict academic goals and academic satisfaction.

H5. Academic goals will predict academic and life satisfaction.

H6. Academic satisfaction will predict life satisfaction.

Methods

Participants

A total of 460 (57.5%, n = 264 female; 42.5%, n = 195 male) Mexican American college students attending a Hispanic-serving institution near the Texas–México border participated in the study. College standing consisted of 20.4% (n = 93) first year students, 38.6% (n = 176) sophomores, 21.3% (n = 92) juniors, and 19.7% (n = 90) seniors. Students' self-reported GPA ranged from 0.5 to 4.0 (*M* = 2.92, *SD* = 0.51) based on a 4.0 scale. Students ranged in age from 17 to 50 years (*M* = 21.53, *SD* = 4.44). Most participants aspired toward a Master's Degree (40.2%, n = 185), followed by a Doctoral Degree (28%, n = 129), a Bachelor's Degree (22.6%, 104), and Professional Degree (9.1%, n = 42). Regarding educational expectations, most participants expected to obtain a Bachelor's Degree (41.8%, n = 192), followed by a Master's Degree (34.2%, n = 157), a Doctoral Degree (16.8%, n = 77), a Professional Degree (7%, n = 32), and 3 years of college (0.2%, n = 1). The mean level of generation was 2.56 (SD = 1.20). Specifically, generation level consisted of 19.1% (n = 87) 1st generation (México born), 38% (n = 173)

2nd generation (U.S.-born), 20% (n = 91) 3rd generation (parents U.S. born), 13.8% (n =

63) 4th generation (grandparents U.S. born), and 9% (n = 41) 5th generation (great

grandparents U.S. born). Relationship status included 66.2% (n = 303) single, 22.7% (n =

104) partnered, 9.6% (n = 44) married, 0.4% (n = 2) separated, and 1.1% (n = 5) divorced.

Most participants reported their socioeconomic status as middle class (46.4%, n = 211),

followed by working class (38.9%, n = 177), upper-middle class (13.6%, n = 62), and

upper class (0.9%, n = 4). (See Table 1 for sample descriptives.)

Instruments

    Demographic Questionnaire. A demographic questionnaire included items

related to race/ethnicity, gender, generation level, college standing, college GPA,

relationship status, and social class. (see Appendix C.)

    Academic Goals. Academic goals was assessed using a 7-item scale developed by

Lent and his colleagues (2005). Participants indicated how much progress they are

making toward a variety of academic goals (e.g., "learning and understanding the

material in each of your courses") on a scale from 1 (*no progress at all*) to 5 (*excellent

progress*). Mean scores were obtained to determine level of academic goals with high

scores indicating perceived effectiveness in working toward goals. Studies using this

measure have reported coefficient alphas of.84 to .90 (Lent et al., 2005; Lent et al.,

2007). The alpha score for the current study was .89. Construct validity has been

determined through the scale's correlation with self-efficacy, outcome expectations,

environmental support, and academic satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005). (see Appendix D.)

Academic Satisfaction. Academic satisfaction was assessed using a 7-item scale developed by Lent and his colleagues (2005). Participants indicated the degree to which they felt satisfied with various aspects of their academic experience (e.g., "I enjoy the level of intellectual stimulation in my courses."). Responses were obtained along a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Mean scores were obtained to determine level of academic satisfaction with high scores indicating satisfaction with one's academic life. Studies using this measure have reported coefficient alphas of.80 to .90 (Lent et al., 2005). The alpha score for the current study was .86. Construct validity has been determined through the scale's correlation with academic persistence and life satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005). (see Appendix E.)

Life Satisfaction. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) was used to evaluate participants' overall life satisfaction. This scale consists of 5 items (e.g. "If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.") which were measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), with high scores indicating more satisfaction with life. Mean scores were obtained to determine level of life satisfaction. Coefficient of alpha estimates of internal consistency range from .72 to .87 (Diener et al., 1985; Utsey et al., 2002). The alpha score for the current study was .88. Convergent validity of the SWLS has been supported by significant positive correlations with measures of subjective well-being (Diener et al., 1985). The SWLS has also shown discriminant validity from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988). (see Appendix F.)

Acculturation. The Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans – II

(ARSMA-II; Cuéllar et al., 1995) is a 30-item scale that measures orientation to Mexican

and White cultures. The ARSMA-II contains two subscales, the Mexican Orientation

Subscale (MOS; 17 items) and the Anglo Orientation Subscale (AOS; 13 items). A bilinear

model was used so that orientation to both cultures can be measured independent of

each other. Each subscale of the ARSMA measures two dimensions of acculturation,

behaviors and affect. Sample MOS items include, "I speak Spanish" and "I like to identify

myself as a Mexican American." Sample AOS items include, "I associate with Anglos"

and "My thinking is done in the English language." Participants responded to items on a

5-point scale, ranging from 1 (*not at all)* to 5 (*extremely often or almost always*). Item

responses were averaged to obtain a subscale mean. High scores on the MOS or AOS

subscales represent a strong orientation toward the Mexican or Anglo cultures,

respectively. Studies using the ARSMA have reported coefficient alphas ranging from .87

to .91 for the MOS, and .79 to .83 for the AOS (Cuéllar et al., 1995; Cuéllar & Roberts,

1997; Lessenger, 1997). The alpha score for the current study was .89 for the MOS and

.62 for the AOS. Concurrent validity has been supported by correlations with a different

acculturation measure (Stephenson, 2000) and by correlations between the ARSMA-II

and the original ARSMA scale (Cuéllar et al., 1995). (see Appendix G).

College Self-Efficacy. The College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CSEI; Solberg et al.,

1993) is a 20-item measure that assesses student's perceived ability to perform college-

related tasks. Questions begin with "How confident are you that you could successfully

complete the following tasks…" In this study, responses were measured on a Likert-type,

9-point scale ranging from 0 (*not at all confident*) to 8 (*very confident*). Mean scores were obtained to determine level of college self-efficacy. High scores indicate high levels of college self-efficacy. Studies using the CSEI have reported coefficient alphas of .93. (Solberg et al., 1993) and .92 (DeWitz & Walsh, 2002). The alpha score for the current study was .90. Construct validity has been determined using principal components analysis for all items (Solberg et al., 1993). Concurrent validity has been demonstrated through correlations with academic performance and persistence (Gore et al., 2006). (see Appendix H).

College Outcome Expectations. The College Outcome Expectation Questionnaire (COE; Flores, 2000) is a 19-item measure of anticipated outcomes for receiving a college education. Participants responded to items on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 10 (*strongly agree*). A sample item includes "A college education will give me the kind of lifestyle that I want." Mean scores were obtained to determine level of college outcome expectations with high scores indicated high expectations. Internal consistency has been found to be .94 in a study on Mexican American high school students (Flores et al., in press). The alpha score for the current study was .90. Divergent validity estimates indicated that COE scores were not related to age, generation level, or social class while convergent validity was supported via positive correlation with college self-efficacy and college interests (Robitschek & Flores, 2007). (see Appendix I).

Positive Affect. The Positive affect (PA) measure used in this study is a subscale from the Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988). The 10-item measure assesses the degree to which individuals experience positive feelings.

Participants rated terms such as "excited, strong, proud" on a Likert-type, 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*very slightly or not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). Mean scores were obtained to determine level of positive affect. High scores indicate high levels of positive affect. Studies using the PA scale of the PANAS have reported coefficient alphas ranging from .86 to .93 (Watson et al., 1988). The alpha score for the current study was .87. Construct validity has been demonstrated through negative correlations with distress and psychopathology (Watson et al., 1988). The alpha score for the current study was .88. (see Appendix J).

Procedure

Once permission was granted from the Institutional Review Board from the researching institution and data collection site, professors in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences were solicited via e-mail to provide the researcher with permission to distribute surveys to their students during class time. (see Appendix A.) During the first week of the spring semester, the researcher attended the classes of which permission was granted by professors to introduce the study to students and provide them with the informed consent. (see Appendix B.) Most all students participated in the study and completed the surveys within 30 minutes. Students were given snacks as incentives for participation.

<center>Results</center>

Preliminary Analyses

Data screening. Several steps were taken to screen for the accuracy and quality of the data. The Missing Value Analysis program from SPSS 15.0 was used to assess

missing values. First, variables with missing values were chosen for examination by reviewing the survey hardcopies. The values on the surveys were compared to the values entered in the data file. This revealed that some of the missing values were due to erroneous data entry. Next, cases with any missing values on an entire scale were automatically deleted (n = 1). There were no cases that had more than 3 missing values in each of the scales of interest. Each scale had less than 10% missing values. Given that missing data were demonstrated at random, values for the missing data were imputed using the expectation maximization (EM) method, which "forms a missing data correlation matrix by assuming the shape of a distribution for the partially missing data and basing inferences about missing values on the likelihood under that distribution" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p. 68).

Data were also screened by running descriptive statistics and examining the range of values on all variables. This process revealed some erroneous data entry. Given this, the values in the data set were compared to the values on the hardcopy surveys. That is, any case in the data set that had a value beyond the allowable range for a given variable was reviewed in its entirety to identify any erroneous data entry.

Statistical assumptions. The data were checked to assess if the statistical assumptions were met for outliers, multivariate normality, linearity, and multicollinearity. Outliers were identified by examining the standardized Z-scores of each scale score. There were 15 cases that had Z-scores in excess of $\pm$ 3.29 *SD,* indicating that these cases were outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Thus, these cases were deleted. Multivariate normality was tested by conducting descriptive statistics to

examine skewness and kurtosis. Values ≥ 2 for skewness or kurtosis indicate a violation of multivariate normality. None of the variables indicated violation of multivariate normality.

Linearity was tested by inspection of bivariate scatterplots and no violation was indicated given the oval-shaped depiction of plots (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Assumptions of multicollinearity were tested by using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values. Specifically, VIF values greater than 10 and Tolerance values below .10 indicate collinearity in the data (Field, 2005). Based on these criteria, no collinearity among the variables of interest was indicated. After the data screening, 460 cases out of 475 remained for further analyses.

Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, observed ranges, reliability coefficients, and correlations for each of the measured variables are presented for the sample in Table 2.

The majority of participants expressed having positive affect quite a bit or extremely. Participants reported very often or extremely often adherence to the Mexican (31.3%) and mainstream (35%) culture about the same, although these scores were slightly higher for acculturation. Possible scores on the college self-efficacy measure ranged from 0 (not at all confident) to 8 (very confident) with 69.4% of participants scoring ≥ 6. Possible scores on the college outcome expectations measure ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 10 (*strongly agree*) with 86.5% of participants scoring ≥ 8. Half of the participants (50.2%) indicated making good progress or excellent progress towards reaching their academic goals. Regarding academic satisfaction, 71.8%

of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their academic

lives. However, less than half of participants (41.5%) agreed or strongly agreed about

being satisfied with their lives.

Path Analysis

      Goodness of fit. A path analysis was conducted using EQS 6.1 (Bentler & Wu,

1995) (see Figure 1). Specifically, the EQS robust maximum likelihood (ML) procedure,

which produces accurate estimates of population parameters, was used to test the

model fit because of its validity with medium sample size and its frequent choice of

estimation method when assumptions are not violated (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). As

shown in Table 3, the fit of the data to the model was assessed by the following robust

fit indices: chi-square (χ^2), comparative fit index (CFI), and root-mean-square error of

approximation (RMSEA). In addition, the ML fit indices were used for the goodness-of-fit

index (GFI) and standardized root-mean-squared residual (SRMR). Good fit is

determined by a nonsignificant χ^2, CFI and GFI scores $\geq$ .90, and RMSEA and SRMR

scores $\leq$ .05 (Loehlin, 1998). While χ^2 is the original fit index for structural models, its

validity has been questioned because it is likely to produce a significant χ^2 with large

sample sizes and with models with numerous variables (Tanaka, 1993). Given that this

study has a relatively large sample size of 460 and there are 8 variables in the model,

the χ^2(7, N = 460) = 47.15, p < .01, which suggests a lack of good model fit, is interpreted

with caution. Other indices of model fit, namely, the CFI and GFI values, were .94 and

.97, respectively, indicating good model fit. The RMSEA value was .11 (90% confidence

interval = .08 to .14) which did not meet criteria for good model fit. The SRMR score was

.04, indicating good model fit. These values meet the aforementioned recommended criteria for model acceptance (Loehlin, 1998).

Direct, indirect, and total effects. Three types of effects were examined, namely, direct, indirect, and total effects. A direct effect implies that a variable is directly related to another variable while an indirect effect is the relation of one variable to another via a mediating variable. The addition of the direct and indirect effects results in the total effect.

As hypothesized, positive affect predicted enculturation (.126), Anglo cultural orientation (.294), college self-efficacy (.490), and life satisfaction (.115). Positive affect had an indirect effect on college outcome expectations (.244), academic goals (.250), academic satisfaction (.211), and life satisfaction (.095) via college self-efficacy. In addition, positive affect had an indirect effect on college self-efficacy (.048) via acculturation. The total effect of positive affect on the examined path variables are as follows: enculturation .126, acculturation .294, college self-efficacy .538, college outcome expectations .244, academic goals .250, academic satisfaction .326, and life satisfaction .230.

The hypothesis that acculturation would predict college self-efficacy, college outcome expectations, academic goals, and academic satisfaction was partially supported. Only college self-efficacy (.145) and college outcome expectations (.164) were predicted by acculturation. In addition, acculturation had an indirect effect on college outcome expectations (.051), academic goals (.070), and academic satisfaction (.076) via college self-efficacy. The total effect of acculturation on the examined path

variables are as follows: college self-efficacy .145, college outcome expectations .215, academic goals .055, academic satisfaction .072, and life satisfaction .021.

As expected, college self-efficacy predicted college outcome expectations (.352) and academic goals (.483). Further, college self-efficacy had an indirect effect on academic goals (-.000), academic satisfaction (.260) and life satisfaction (.135) via academic goals. The total effect of college self-efficacy on the examined path variables are as follows: college outcome expectations .352, academic goals .483, academic satisfaction .382, and life satisfaction .135.

College outcome expectations predicted academic satisfaction (.165) but not academic goals. In addition, college outcome expectations had no indirect effect on any variables. The total effect for college outcome expectations on academic satisfaction was .164.

Academic goals predicted academic satisfaction (.419) and life satisfaction (.122). Academic goals also had an indirect effect on life satisfaction (.083) via its relation to academic satisfaction. The total effect for academic goals on academic satisfaction and life satisfaction was .419 and .205, respectively.

Finally, the hypothesis that academic satisfaction would predict life satisfaction (.198) was supported. (See Figure 2 and Table 4 for the structural coefficients of the model.)

The path analysis demonstrated that: (a) 2% of the variance in enculturation was accounted for by positive affect; (b) 9% of the variance in acculturation was accounted for by positive affect; (c) 31% of the variance in college self-efficacy was accounted for

by positive affect, enculturation, and acculturation; (d) 19% of the variance in college outcome expectations was accounted for by enculturation, acculturation, and college self-efficacy; (e) 23% of the variance in academic goals was accounted for by enculturation, acculturation, college self-efficacy, and college outcome expectations; (f) 37% of the variance for academic satisfaction was accounted for by positive affect, enculturation, acculturation, college self-efficacy, college outcome expectations, and academic goals; (g) and 12% of the variance in life satisfaction was accounted for by positive affect, academic goals, and academic satisfaction.

Discussion

This study was the first to test the validity of Lent's (2004) social cognitive model of well-being with a sample of Mexican Americans. The following variables were included to test the model in its entirety: positive affect (personality traits and affective dispositions), enculturation and acculturation (environmental supports and resources), college self-efficacy (self-efficacy expectations), college outcome expectations (outcome expectations), academic goals (participation in/progress at goal-directed activity), academic satisfaction (domain-specific satisfaction), and life satisfaction (overall life satisfaction). The primary purpose of the study was to determine if the social cognitive model of well-being is a viable theory for use with Mexican American college students. In general, findings support the validity of the model for this sample.

Positive affect assessed the personality traits and affective dispositions component of the social cognitive model of well-being (Lent, 2004). As hypothesized, positive affect predicted enculturation, acculturation, college self-efficacy, academic

satisfaction, and life satisfaction. That is, high levels of positive feelings was related to orientation to both the Mexican and mainstream culture, perceived ability to perform well in college, and satisfaction with both academic life and life in general. In addition, positive affect had an indirect effect on college outcome expectations, academic goals, academic satisfaction, and life satisfaction via college self-efficacy. In other words, when students felt confident about their ability to succeed in college, the experience of positive feelings was related to high expectations for receiving a college education, progress toward reaching academic goals, and satisfaction with their academic career and life in general.   Previous research supports the importance of positive affect on the influence of environmental supports and resources, self-efficacy, and life satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005b). As in the present study, Lent and his colleagues (2005b) found that positive affect indirectly influenced outcome expectations, goal progress, and academic satisfaction via self-efficacy. The relation between positive affect and the outcome variables demonstrates the importance of feeling enthusiastic, alert, energetic, and engaged. Given the significance of positive affect on outcome variables, counseling center personnel should develop treatment plans and interventions that help Latino students develop more positive attitudes and feelings.

Acculturation assessed the environmental supports and resources component of the social cognitive model of well-being (Lent, 2004). The hypothesis that acculturation would predict college self-efficacy, college outcome expectations, academic goals, and academic satisfaction was partially supported. Only college self-efficacy and college outcome expectations were significant direct predictors. That is, being oriented to the

mainstream culture was associated with beliefs about performing well in college and high expectations for receiving a college education. In addition, acculturation had an indirect effect on college outcome expectations, academic goals, and life satisfaction via college self-efficacy. This indicates that being oriented to the mainstream culture is related to high expectations for obtaining a college education, perceived progress toward academic goals, and satisfaction with one's academic career when perceived college performance was high.

Despite acculturation having a positive influence on the aforementioned academic variables, it did not predict satisfaction with academic life. This finding is similar to that of previous research on Mexican American youth, which found that acculturation did not significantly predict life satisfaction (Edwards & López, 2006). However, they found that enculturation had a positive effect on life satisfaction. Among Mexican American high school boys, orientation toward the mainstream culture predicted nontraditional career self-efficacy (Flores, Navarro, Smith, & Ploszaj, 2006a). In addition, acculturated Latinas had high female-dominated career self-efficacy (Rivera, Chen, Flores, Blumberg, & Ponterotto, 2007). A study on Mexican American middle school students demonstrated that acculturation did not significantly predict math/science goal intentions (Navarro et al., 2007). In contrast, research conducted on Mexican American high school students found that acculturation predicted educational goals (Flores et al., 2006b).

Previous research supports the importance of considering environmental supports and resources in the social cognitive model of well-being. For instance, Lent

and his colleagues (2007) found that environmental supports and resources as measured by social support was positively related to self-efficacy, outcome expectations, goal progress, and academic satisfaction. In contrast to previous findings (Lent et al., 2005b; 2007), we did not find a significant link between environmental supports and resources (acculturation) and academic satisfaction. This may be due to having used a culture-related variable to assess environmental supports and resources while Lent et al. (2007) used an academic-related variable. However, this is challenged given that acculturation directly influenced college self-efficacy and college outcome expectations and indirectly influenced academic goals. Perhaps being familiar with the mainstream culture helps Mexican American students to feel more confident in their ability to navigate the college system. In addition, given that the mainstream culture tends to be goal oriented and future oriented, it makes sense that students who are oriented towards the mainstream culture would indicate progress toward their academic goals and have high expectations for pursuing a college education when self-efficacy is high.

Our study indicated that acculturation positively influenced college outcomes. This indicates the importance of Latino students' familiarity with the attitudes, values, practices, and beliefs of the mainstream culture on navigating higher education. Thus, academic and counseling personnel may want to provide workshops that teach certain mainstream cultural traits that may help Latino students with positive academic outcomes. One possible trait is goal setting because learning how to set goals may help students expect more from their college education and increase progress made toward

their academic goals. This suggestion is not meant to devalue orientation toward the Mexican culture, but to acknowledge that success in Western institutions of higher education may require obtaining Western cultural skills.

College self-efficacy assessed the self-efficacy expectations component of the social cognitive model of well-being (Lent, 2004). As expected, college self-efficacy was related to college outcome expectations and academic goals. This indicates that perceived ability to perform well in college was associated with high expectations for pursuing a college education and progress toward reaching academic goals. Further, college self-efficacy had an indirect effect on academic satisfaction and life satisfaction via academic goals. That is, when participants believed that they were making progress toward their academic goals, feeling confident about their ability to perform well in college increased their academic and life satisfaction. These findings are supported by previous research conducted on samples of predominantly White and African American engineering students (DeWitz & Walsh, 2002; Lent et al., 2005a; 2005b; 2007). In addition, Mexican American middle school students indicated that math/science self-efficacy influenced their math/science outcome expectations and math/science goal intentions (Navarro et al., 2007). Furthermore, Latino high school students with high career decision-making self-efficacy had more positive career outcome expectations (Gushue, 2006). A study on another underserved population, namely, rural Appalachian high school students, found that students who felt confident in their ability to complete task pertaining to attending college, vocational/technical training, and/or finding employment also had high vocational/educational expectations (Ali & Saunders, 2006).

Current and previous findings demonstrate the importance of feeling confident about one's ability to perform well academically. Students who believe that they can succeed in college expect more from their college endeavors, believe that they are achieving their academic goals, and be more satisfied with their academic and personal life. Given the significance of self-efficacy on outcome variables, academic personnel should establish programs that help boost students' confidence in their academic ability. For instance, a summer program geared toward helping students transition from high school to college may help in preparing them to navigate college and thus have a better college experience.

College outcome expectations assessed the outcome expectations component of the social cognitive model of well-being (Lent, 2004). College outcome expectations predicted academic satisfaction but not academic goals. This means that when expectations for pursuing a college education were high participants were more satisfied with their academic life. However, having high expectations for a college degree did not influence perceived progress made toward reaching academic goals. A study on Mexican American middle school students indicated that math/science outcome expectations influenced math/science goal intentions (Navarro et al., 2007). The finding that college outcome expectations influenced academic satisfaction contradicts that of Lent and his colleagues (2007), who concluded that outcome expectations for receiving a bachelor's of science degree in education did not explain unique variance in academic satisfaction. Nonetheless, they warned against prematurely assuming that outcome expectations is an unimportant contributor to academic

satisfaction and recommended that alternate measures of outcome expectations be utilized in future research to further understand its influence on academic satisfaction.

The findings of the present study demonstrate the importance of outcome expectations to academic satisfaction. However, as in previous research conducted on samples of predominantly White and African American students (Lent et al., 2005a; 2005b; 2007), our study concluded that college outcome expectations did not significantly influence progress made on academic goals. This finding demonstrates that it is possible for students to have high expectations for pursuing a college education yet still perceive a lack of progress toward reaching their academic goals. Perhaps students know what they expect from going to college but are unfamiliar with the goals that should be met to meet their expectations. Therefore, academic personnel should offer workshops on goal setting. Providing workshops on problem-solving and coping may also help students deal with barriers to their academic goals.

Academic goals assessed the participation in/progress at goal-directed activity component of the social cognitive model of well-being (Lent, 2004). As hypothesized, academic goals predicted academic satisfaction and life satisfaction. That is, perceived progress toward reaching academic goals helped students feel more satisfied with their academic career and with their life. Academic goals also predicted life satisfaction via its relation to academic satisfaction. Previous research supports our finding that goal progress is influential of academic satisfaction and indirectly influential of life satisfaction via academic satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005b; 2007). It makes sense that perceived progress toward academic goals would increase satisfaction with academic

life and in turn with life in general. Perhaps those who believed that they were accomplishing their goals provided them with a sense of satisfaction in the area that they are succeeding in as well as a personal sense of satisfaction. Thus, as mentioned previously, these findings demonstrate the importance of students learning how to obtain their goals and to be able to overcome barriers to their goals so that they may in turn have a higher sense of academic and life satisfaction.

Academic satisfaction assessed the domain-specific satisfaction component of the social cognitive model of well-being (Lent, 2004). As expected, the hypothesis that academic satisfaction would predict life satisfaction was confirmed. This indicates that students' satisfaction with their academic life plays a significant role on their satisfaction with their life in general. Previous research supports our finding that academic satisfaction is influential of life satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005b). It makes sense that feeling satisfied in one area of one's life would lead to satisfaction with one's life overall. The influence of academic satisfaction on life satisfaction also demonstrates the degree to which academic life is important in helping students feel that their life is fulfilled and satisfying. Given this information, academic personnel should attempt to help students feel more satisfied with their academic life by helping them to increase their level of happiness, by helping them identify their expectations for obtaining a college education, and by helping them learn how to achieve their academic goals.

In essence, this study demonstrated that the social cognitive model of well-being (Lent, 2004) is a viable model for use with Mexican American college students. It demonstrates that satisfaction with life is influenced by satisfaction with academic life,

demonstration of positive feelings, and achievement of academic goals. Indeed, findings demonstrate that the model is helpful in understanding factors that influence the domain-specific variable of academic satisfaction and the overall satisfaction variable of life satisfaction.

Limitations

The limitations of this study should be noted. First, the university from which participants were recruited has a student population that is predominantly of Mexican descent. This implies daily exposure to the Mexican culture. Therefore, future research should replicate this study in less Mexican-populated regions and universities. In addition, given the unique experience of people of Mexican descent such as immigration history, generalizability of the results to other Latino subgroups should be done with caution.

Caveats with the measures used should also be noted. To better understand participants' affective dispositions, a scale of negative affect is suggested for inclusion in future studies. Also, given that cultural differences exist in the conception and expression of happiness, the Western-normed instrument used to measure positive affect in this study may not be the most appropriate for this population. As in previous studies (Flores et al., 2006b; Ojeda et al., 2008), the alpha coefficient for the Anglo Orientation Scale (acculturation) of the ARSMA-II is relatively low. Researchers may want to utilize measures with more adequate internal reliability to measure this particular construct. It should also be noted that this study focused only on hedonic outcomes, namely, happiness and life satisfaction. Thus, future research should also

assess for eudaimonic well-being. Furthermore, this study was correlational in nature and thus cannot imply causation. Researchers may assess for causal links between the variables by applying a longitudinal methodology.

Future Research

There are several directions for future research. Given that this is the first study to apply Lent's (2004) social cognitive model of well-being with a Latino population, more studies are needed to assess the applicability of the model with this population. One suggestion is to conduct a longitudinal study, assessing students' academic and life satisfaction as they advance through college. This may help to determine if differences in satisfaction level increase or decrease as college standing progresses. Within the domain of academic satisfaction, research should be extended to other students aside from those enrolled in a four-year university (e.g., middle school, junior high, high school, community college, vocational/technical programs). Other domains of satisfaction should also be studied such as relationship and job satisfaction. There are a multitude of opportunities to understand within group differences among Latinos in relation to their domain-specific and life satisfaction. Subgroup Latino populations to study include immigrants, migrants, elders, and special populations (e.g., substance abusers). Such studies could help contribute to the minimal research on well-being among Latino populations.

Summary

This study was the first to test the applicability of Lent's (2004) social cognitive model of well-being with Mexican American college students. In general, findings

support the validity of the model for use with this population. Specifically, positive affect had a significant positive relation to all variables measure in the model, including enculturation, acculturation, college self-efficacy, college outcome expectations, academic goals, academic satisfaction, and life satisfaction. Further, acculturation predicted college self-efficacy, college outcome expectations, and academic goals but not academic satisfaction. In addition, college self-efficacy predicted college outcome expectations, academic goals, academic satisfaction, and life satisfaction. College outcome expectations predicted academic satisfaction but not academic goals. Academic goals predicated academic satisfaction and life satisfaction while academic satisfaction predicted life satisfaction.

These findings demonstrate the importance of positive feelings on the cultural orientation, college experiences, and well-being of Mexican American college students. More specifically, findings demonstrate that feeling positive helps students feel connected to both the Mexican and Anglo culture, feel confident about their ability to perform well in college, have high expectations for receiving a college education, perceive progress made toward their academic goals, which in turn helps students feel satisfied with their academic life and life in general.

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Table 1.
Descriptives of the Sample.

	N	%
Gender		
Female	264	57.5
Male	195	42.5
College Level		
Freshmen	93	20.4
Sophomores	176	38.6
Juniors	92	21.3
Seniors	90	19.7
Educational Aspirations		
Bachelor's Degree	104	22.6
Master's Degree	185	40.2
Doctoral Degree	129	28.0
Professional Degree	42	9.1
Educational Expectations		
3yrs of College	1	0.2
Bachelor's Degree	192	41.8
Master's Degree	157	34.2
Doctoral Degree	77	16.8
Professional Degree	32	7
Generation Level		
1st generation	87	9.1
2nd generation	173	38
3rd generation	91	20
4th generation	63	13.8
5th generation	41	9
Relationship Status		
Single	303	66.2
Partnered	104	22.7
Married	44	9.6
Separated	2	0.4
Divorced	5	1.1
Socioeconomic Status		
Working Class	177	38.9
Middle Class	211	46.4
Upper-Middle Class	62	13.6
Upper Class	4	0.9

Note. *N* = 460.

Table 2.

Means, Standard Deviations, Ranges, Reliability Coefficients, and Correlations among Measured Variables

Variable	M	SD	Range	α	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. Positive Affect	4.30	.55	2.30-5	.87	--							
2. Enculturation	3.70	.75	1.76-5	.89	.13**	--						
3. Acculturation	3.81	.40	2.46-5	.62	.30**	-.02	--					
4. Self-Efficacy	6.23	1.00	3.23-8	.90	.54**	.11*	.29**	--				
5. Expectations	8.92	1.00	5.26-10	.90	.40**	.09	.27**	.41**	--			
6. Goals	3.89	.64	1.57-5	.89	.36**	.01	.13**	.47**	.16**	--		
7. Acad. Satisfaction	4.21	.57	2.29-5	.86	.39**	.06	.16**	.45**	.30**	.54**	--	
8. Life Satisfaction	5.18	1.27	1.40-7	.88	.26**	.06	-.00	.32**	.18**	.28**	.32**	--

Note. Self-Efficacy = College Self-Efficacy, Expectations = College Outcome Expectations, Goals = Academic Goals, Acad. Satisfaction = Academic Satisfaction. *N* = 460.

* *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01.

Table 3.

Summary of Model-Fit Statistics

χ^2	*df*	GFI	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	90% CI for RMSEA
47.15**	7	.97	.94	.04	.11	(.08, .14)

Note. df = degrees of freedom; CI = confidence interval
** *p* < .01

Table 4.
Path Coefficients for Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Effects Variable	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	Total Effects
Positive Affect			
Enculturation	.126*	--	.126
Acculturation	.294*	--	.294
College Self-Efficacy	.490*	.048*	.538
College Outcome Expectations	--	.244*	.244
Academic Goals	--	.250*	.250
Academic Satisfaction	.115*	.211*	.326
Life Satisfaction	.135*	.095*	.230
Enculturation			
College Self-Efficacy	.046	--	.046
College Outcome Expectations	.052	.016	.068
Academic Goals	-.042	.022	-.020
Academic Satisfaction	.010	.009	.019
Life Satisfaction	--	.001	.001
Acculturation			
College Self-Efficacy	.145*	--	.145
College Outcome Expectations	.164*	.051*	.215
Academic Goals	-.015	.070*	.055
Academic Satisfaction	-.004	.076*	.072
Life Satisfaction	--	.021	.021
College Self-Efficacy			
Outcome Expectations	.352*	--	.352
Academic Goals	.483*	-.000*	.483
Academic Satisfaction	.122	.260*	.382
Life Satisfaction	--	.135*	.135
College Outcome Expectations			
Academic Goals	-.001	--	-.001
Academic Satisfaction	.165*	-.001	.164
Life Satisfaction	--	.032	.032
Academic Goals			
Academic Satisfaction	.419*	--	.419
Life Satisfaction	.122*	.083*	.205
Academic Satisfaction			
Life Satisfaction	.198*	--	.198

Note. Dashes indicate that no direct or indirect route was possible in the path
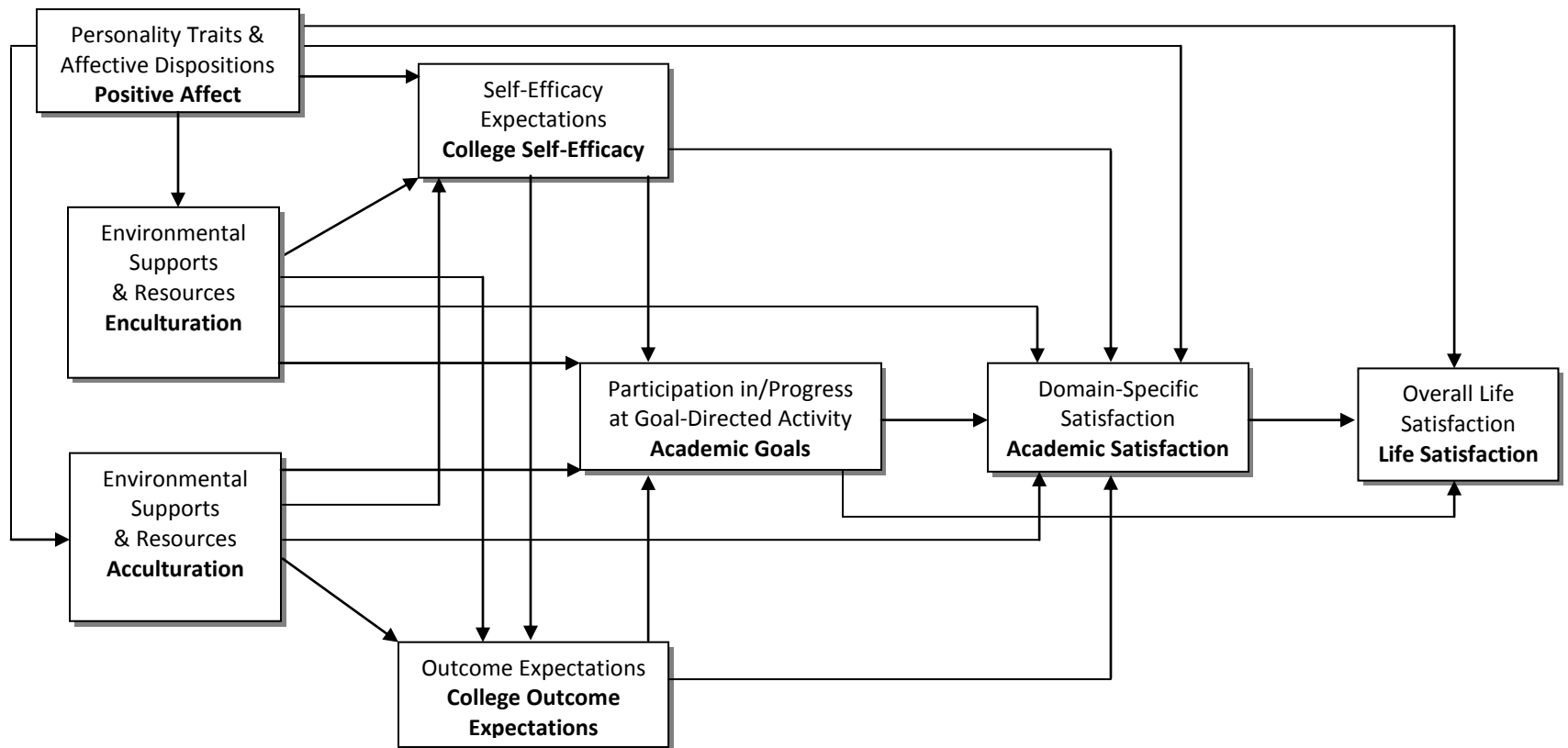analysis.
* *p* < .05.

Figure 1. Proposed Model of Social Cognitive Theory of Well-Being (Lent, 2004).
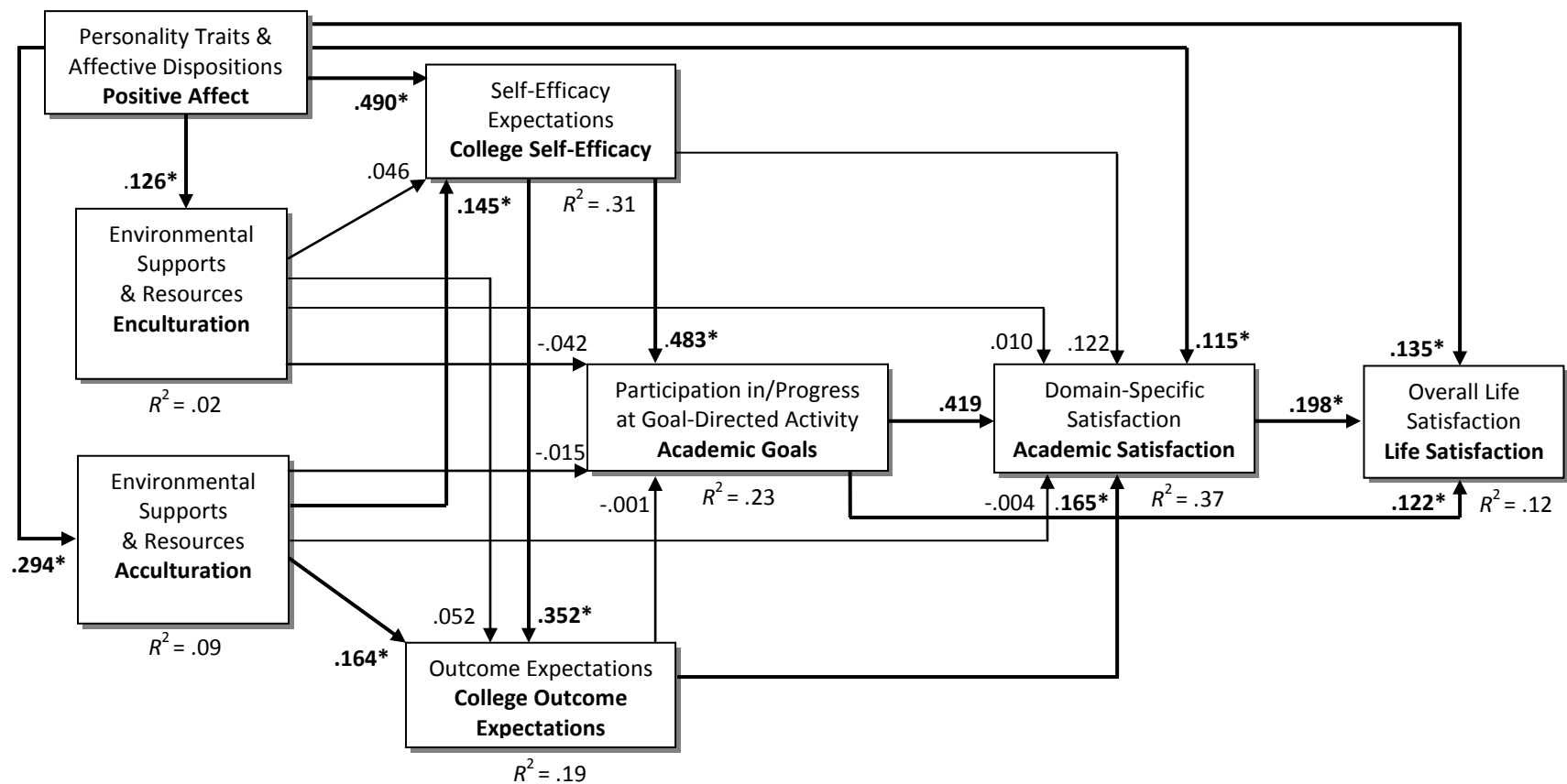
Figure 2. Tested Model of Social Cognitive Theory of Well-Being (Lent, 2004).
Significant paths are depicted in bold.
* *p* < .05.

Appendix A

Extended Literature Review

People go to college for a variety of reasons, including motives to expand career

opportunities, personal development, humanitarian service, and personal drives (Cote &

Levine, 1997). Among People of Color, motives for pursuing a college degree are more

likely to be influenced by social class and cultural factors, indicating a college experience

that is different from that of the mainstream culture (Phinney, Dennis, & Osorio, 2006).

More specifically, many Latino parents who did not have the privilege of pursuing higher

education caution their children about the struggles they are likely to face (e.g., financial

difficulties) without a solid education, and therefore encourage their children to attend

college (López, 2001). This debunks the myth that Latinos do not value education

despite their low educational status. Instead, it may serve as a more specific class and

cultural motive for Latinos' pursuit of higher education; to diminish the effects of

poverty (López, 2001). As a collectivistic culture, Latinos are also motivated to attend

college to help their family financially, a reason that is more important for Latinos than

Whites (Phinney et al., 2006).

As People of Color, Mexican American college students experience unique

academic, social, and personal challenges not faced by White college students (Gloria &

Robinson Kurpius, 1996). As such, transition to college life may be stressful for Mexican

Americans because they tend to come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and are

more likely to be 1st generation college students (Arbona & Novy, 1991). Financial and

academic difficulties are expressed more by Mexican American college students than

other Latino subgroups as barriers to their education (Arbona & Novy, 1991). Given their

financial difficulties, it is not uncommon for Latinos to hold full-time jobs to afford their

education and at the same time provide for their family financially. The multiple roles

that Latino students must fulfill add an additional layer of distress for them and in turn

may hinder their academic success and mental health. The many barriers Latino

students face may contribute to their lack of certainty in obtaining a college degree

despite their intended desire to achieve academically (Flores, Navarro, & DeWitz, 2008).

Nonetheless, research suggests that educational aspirations are the most important

predictors of college persistence (Cardoza, 1991). This may indicate that Latinos are

academically resilient to barriers when their aspirations are high (Cabrera & Padilla,

2004).

Given the low academic achievement among Latinos, they may be forced to

navigate the educational pipeline without the guidance of their parents if they are 1st

generation college students and thus may experience additional academic stress. Latino

college students who experience stress have diminished academic adjustment (Alvan,

Belgrave, & Zea, 1996). However, this may be buffered by providing Latinos with

emotional support (Alvan et al., 1996). The importance of social support is also

exemplified by the positive influence that friends have on minimizing racism-related

stress (Alvan et al., 1996). In addition, Latino college students who perceived the

campus climate as unwelcoming of diversity experienced difficulty with academic

adjustment and feeling belonged to the campus (Hurtado, Carter, & Spuler, 1996).

Higher Latino ethnic identity is associated with negative perceptions of the university

environment and decreased academic persistence (Castillo et al., 2006). In addition, university comfort, social support, and self-beliefs are predictive of academic persistence for Latino college students (Gloria, Castellanos, López, & Rosales, 2005).

Indeed, the unique experiences of Latinos in college are influenced by a variety of social, cultural, and psychological factors. Given that Latinos face many challenges in higher education as People of Color, it is important that additional research be conducted to help understand the factors that help Latinos succeed in college and feel satisfied with their academic life.

Well-Being

The literature on Latinos' mental health has focused on negative and dysfunctional states. More research is conducted on psychological dysfunction than on well-being. For instance, research suggests that Mexican Americans experience more depressive symptoms than Whites (Roberts, 1994) and that social support and self-efficacy decreases psychological distress (Solberg & Villareal, 1997). In addition, an unachieved ethnic identity is related to depression (St. Louis & Liem, 2005). Indeed, a shift to understanding positive forms of psychological functioning of Latinos is needed to identify the strengths of this growing population.

Ryan and Deci (2001, p. 142) identified well-being as the "optimal psychological functioning and experience." Noteworthy, well-being does not indicate an absence of psychological dysfunction (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The literature on well-being identifies two distinct yet overlapping perspectives on what it means to be well psychologically. One philosophy is that of hedonic well-being which suggests that well-being is

determined by happiness. This view is founded on Aristippus, an ancient Greek philosopher's belief that life's goal is to experience maximal pleasure. Hedonic well-being has been studied mainly through measures of subjective well-being (SWB; Diener & Lucas, 1999). The second philosophy of well-being consists of eudaimonic well-being, which argues that well-being is not determined by level of happiness, but by actualization of human potential (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Eudaimonic well-being is rooted in Aristotle's belief that true happiness is found in virtuous existence. The eudaimonic theory of well-being argues that even though some activities or events may trigger happiness, not all pleasurable instances promote well-being. Ryff's (1995) theory of psychological well-being represents the eudaimonic perspective.

Both Diener's subjective well-being and Ryff's psychological well-being models have helped to advance the understanding of positive human functioning. However, much debate arises between both paradigms of well-being. While Ryff and her colleague (1998) argued that subjective well-being is an unsound indicator of mental wellness, Diener and colleagues (1998) criticized the psychological well-being model for imposing its values on what it means to be well for people as opposed to allowing people to tell researchers what makes them feel happy.

One goal of the current study was to understand factors that contribute to the life satisfaction of Mexican American college students. Thus, for the purposes of this study, the widely utilized construct of subjective well-being was examined because it is a clearly defined, empirically-derived and validated approach to measuring well-being (Diener et al., 1999).

Subjective Well-Being

Subjective well-being (SWB) includes the cognitive judgments and affective

reactions that make people happy and live the "good life." The goal of SWB is to

understand how and why people are satisfied with and feel positive about their lives, as

well as what leads to pleasant emotional experiences (Diener, 1984). Subjective well-

being consists of three components: life satisfaction, positive affect, and the absence of

negative affect (SWB; Diener & Lucas, 1999). These three components are commonly

referred to as indicators of happiness.

The literature on happiness has identified several factors that lead to happiness.

Liberal gender role attitudes (Mokgatlhe & Schoeman, 1998), higher income in

economically disadvantaged societies, and the ability to relate well with others (Myers,

1999) are related to life satisfaction, which is a global self-report assessment of an

individual's happiness with their life as a whole. In Diener and Diener's (1995b) review

of the happiness literature, they concluded that four inner characteristics, self-esteem,

personal control, optimism, and extraversion, are important for happiness. Their review

also demonstrated that work satisfaction, religiosity, and goal orientation are predictors

of happiness. This review however, is based primarily on Whites, perhaps because of the

minimal happiness research that takes into consideration cultural issues. Culture

however should be noted because people's perceptions of what makes them happy vary

by culture (Diener & Diener, 1995a) and *depend* on culture (Diener, 1984). Although the

good life is influenced by both internal and external factors, cultural components, such

as norms, attitudes and beliefs about oneself and others (Triandis, 1996) may override

such influence (Suh, Diener, Oishi, & Triandis, 1998). Differences in how cultures perceive their self-enhancement and the extent to which a cultural group is willing to make sacrifices for the sake of the group may also be indicators of the discrepancies in happiness among different cultures (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003).

Another criticism of the SWB literature and culture is its focus on cross-cultural comparisons (Benet-Martínez & Karakitapoglu-Aygun, 2003). For instance, comparisons between Japanese and Americans concluded that SWB was related to pride and achievement among Americans whereas acceptance and interpersonal harmony was predictive of SWB for Japanese (Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000). Furthermore, Diener and Diener (1995a) suggested that in collectivistic societies (e.g., Latinos), personal self-esteem is less related to life satisfaction compared to individualistic cultures (e.g., Whites). Diener, Diener, and Diener (1995) reported that individualistic cultures have greater SWB than collectivistic cultures, and suggested that Latino cultures tend to emphasize positive feelings (Diener et al., 2000).

One particular culture whose happiness should receive increased attention is the Latino culture because they are the largest group of People of Color in the US and continue to grow exponentially. Among the limited research, it is suggested that Mexican Americans are happier than the mainstream culture because of lower rates of mental health disorders (Vega et al., 1998), belonging to a highly supportive culture (Marín & Marín, 1991), and the power of familismo (Weaver, 2003). However, other research suggested that Mexican American women were less happy than White women while Mexican American men were just as happy as White men (Weaver, 2003). A study

on the life satisfaction of Mexican American youth found that students believed their

family to be the most important contributor to their life satisfaction (Edwards & López,

2006). In addition, enculturation, but not acculturation, was related to life satisfaction.

Furthermore, worrying about and pessimistic perceptions of race-relations among

Latino high school students was negatively related to life satisfaction (Brown et al.,

2001). In addition, Latino students had lower levels of life satisfaction than their White

peers. In contrast however, Crocker and Major (1989) concluded that the well-being of

stigmatized groups is just as high as that of non-stigmatized groups. Given these

contradictory findings and the minimal research that has been conducted, further

research on the happiness of Mexican Americans is needed.

A Social Cognitive Model of Well-Being

Lent (2004) proposed a framework that unites cognitive, behavioral, social, and

personality variables to determine normative well-being. He proposed that self

regulated factors may influence subjective well-being in addition to personality. The

following section includes a review of factors that fall into each of the variables (i.e.,

cognitive, behavioral, and social) that contribute to well-being as proposed by Lent.

Cognitive Contributors to Well-Being

Personal Control Beliefs. Trait-like control beliefs are one's beliefs about his or

her ability to control life events (Thompson, 2002). This includes perceived control, locus

of control, generalized self-efficacy beliefs, perceived competence, and environmental

mastery percepts. On the other hand, context-specific perspectives of personal control

beliefs reflect one's perceived ability to successfully perform particular tasks (Bandura,

1986). Self-efficacy beliefs refer to "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize

and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances"

(Bandura, 1986, p. 391). This includes task-specific self-efficacy, which is one's belief in

the ability to perform a specific task necessary to succeed within a given domain,

situation-specific self-efficacy, and coping efficacy, which is the perceived ability to cope

with domain-specific obstacles (Lent & Brown, 2006). Bandura (1997) suggested that

self-efficacy is acquired through personal performance accomplishments, vicarious

learning, social persuasion, and physiological and affective states. It is suggested that

the belief in the ability to perform a valued task increases well-being (Sheldon & Kasser,

1998).

   Outcome Expectations. Trait-like outcome expectations are one's beliefs about

the future regardless of intentional efforts to promote positive and avoid negative

outcomes. This includes dispositional optimism and pessimism (Carver & Scheier, 2002).

On the other hand, context-specific perspectives of outcome expectations reflect one's

beliefs about the future based on intentional efforts to promote positive and avoid

negative outcomes. This includes situation-specific outcome expectations and learned

optimism. Bandura (1986) suggested that outcome expectations exist in social (e.g.,

benefits to one's family), material (e.g., financial stability), and self-evaluative (e.g., self-

approval) forms. Lent (2004) suggested that outcome expectations can promote well-

being by encouraging goal pursuits, regardless of barriers. Outcome expectations can be

derived through direct (e.g., experiences with similar past outcomes) or indirect (e.g.,

witnessing outcomes in other people) learning experiences (Lent & Brown, 1996). It is

suggested that men and women have similar levels of outcome expectations (Hackett et al., 1992).

Goals. Context-specific goals reflect one's determination to achieve an intended outcome (Bandura, 1986). This includes intentions to perform particular behavior, personal strivings, and personal projects. On the other hand, trait-like goals are one's determination to achieve an intended outcome based on values or motives. This includes higher order motive or need dispositions such as affiliation and achievement motives. Social cognitive career theory (SCCT; Lent et al., 1994) is focused on two types of goals: a) choice goals, which refers to the type of activity domain one aspires to pursue, and b) performance goals, which consists of the level or quality of performance toward, which one wishes to acquire within a given domain. It is suggested that perceived progress towards one's goals influences well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Goals are particularly influential of well-being if they are (a) personally meaningful (Brunstein, 1993); (b) in sync with personal values or motives (Brunstein, Schultheiss, & Grassmann, 1998); (c) based on intrinsic motives (Sheldon & Kasser, 1998); (d) challenging yet realistically attainable (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002); and (e) directed at approach versus avoidance behaviors (Elliot & Sheldon, 1997). In addition, Lent (2004) noted that the type of goals that may or may not promote domain-specific satisfaction and life satisfaction may be influenced by culture.

Behavioral Contributors to Well-Being

It is suggested that well-being is enhanced when an individual is involved in and succeeds at activities that are of personal value (Oishi, Diener, Suh, & Lucas, 1999). Such

behavioral variables that influence well-being may consist of task involvement and/or

goal-relevant skills (Lent, 2004). For instance goals pursued and goal progress mediated

the relation between social and self-regulatory skills, and subjective well-being (Sheldon

& Kasser, 1998). Problem-solving skills have also been determined to influence well-

being (Heppner & Lee, 2002). In addition, research has concluded that Asian Americans

who pursue goals, interdependent we have high your well-being then those who pursue

goals independently, while the opposite was true for Whites (Oishi & Diener, 2001).

Specifically, Asian Americans who pursued their goals for the sake of their family and

friends and to meet the expectations of others demonstrated high levels of well-being.

On the other hand, Whites who pursued their goals for their own leisure had high well-

being.

Social Contributors to Well-Being

Social variables such as positive relations with others (Ryff & Singer, 2002), the

need for relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000), social connectedness (Lee & Robbins, 1998),

social support (Brunstein, 1993), and attachment (Ryan & Deci, 2001) have

demonstrated a positive affect on well-being. It is also suggested that social variables

influence the pursuit and attainment of personal goals (Cantor & Sanderson, 1999) and

that when social variables are congruent with one's goals, they promote life satisfaction

(Diener & Fujita, 1995). Environmental supports and resources, which are social and

material support for achievement of one's goals (Lent et al., 1994), are related to job

satisfaction (Cantor & Sanderson, 1999) and academic satisfaction and goal progress

(Lent et al., 2007). On the other hand, a lack of social support or the presence of barriers may impede satisfaction (Lent & Brown, 2006).

Personality Contributors to Well-Being

Research has demonstrated that personality factors are a major contributor to well-being measured as work and life satisfaction (Diener, 1984). For instance, the Big Five personality factors of extraversion, neuroticism, and conscientiousness have been found to correlate with job satisfaction (Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002). In addition, job satisfaction was positively related to positive affect and negatively related to negative affect (Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000). In a meta-analysis conducted by DeNeve and Cooper (1998), 137 personality traits were correlated with subjective well-being. They found that the most influential personality traits of SWB were repressive defensiveness, trust, emotional stability, locus of control–chance, desire for control, hardiness, positive affectivity, private collective self-esteem, and tension. Regarding gender-related personality traits, Native American women with more traditional gender role personality traits reported higher levels of depression, lower self-esteem, and lower life satisfaction than androgynous women (Napholz, 1995).

A Path Model of Social Cognitive Well-Being

Now that the central components of the social cognitive model of well-being have been introduced, its basic causal paths will be discussed moving backward, from right to left, beginning with overall life satisfaction and ending with personality variables (see Figure 1).

The model suggests that overall life satisfaction is positively influenced by three variables, namely, domain-specific satisfaction, goal-directed activity and progress, and personality traits and affective dispositions. While domain-specific satisfaction is hypothesized to positively affect overall life satisfaction, this variable is positively influenced by five variables, including goal directed-activity and progress, personality traits and affective dispositions, self-efficacy, environmental support and resources, outcome expectations, and goals. Goal-directed activity and progress are suggested to be positively influenced by three variables, consisting of self-efficacy environment supports and resources, and outcome expectations. It is proposed that outcome expectations are positively influenced by both self-efficacy and environmental supports and resources. In turn, environmental support and resources are purported to be positively influenced by personality traits and affective dispositions. In essence, the path model of social cognitive well-being is initiated with personality traits and dispositional affect and concludes with overall life satisfaction.

Lent (2004) also suggests a bidirectional affect in that global life satisfaction will positively influence domain-specific satisfaction. In addition, he suggested that goal progress will reciprocally and positively influence self efficacy and outcome expectations. Furthermore, moderation effects may also be determined. For instance, it is suggested that the influence of goal progress on overall life satisfaction is mediated by domain-specific satisfaction.

Given that Lent's (2004) integrative framework of well-being is based primarily on an individualistic society, he emphasized the importance of cultural considerations of

the model in its use with marginalized populations. Considering that Latinos place more

emphasis on collectivism than individualism in comparison to the mainstream culture

(Triandis, 1989), an additional purpose for having selected this integrative theory of

well-being is to examine its applicability to an ethnic group that has been

underrepresented in the well-being literature, namely, Mexican Americans.

The remainder of this literature review will introduce the specific factors

predictive of life satisfaction that will be examined pertaining to each of the variables

discussed in Lent's (2004) social cognitive model of well-being.

Positive Affect

The affective disposition variable of positive affect was chosen to test the model

given its relation to self-efficacy, job satisfaction, academic satisfaction, and life

satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000). In essence, positive affect

reflects feelings of enthusiasm, activeness, alertness, pleasure, high concentration, and

being energetic (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Gender differences have been found,

with males reporting more positive affect than females (Ayyash-Abdo & Alamuddin,

2007). It is suggested that positive affect may also help with goal progress (King, Hicks,

Krull, Del Gaiso, 2006), which in turn may lead to domain-specific and life satisfaction.

This may be because the experience of positive mood may motivate people to prepare

for and pursue goals, which in turn leads to satisfaction and success (Lyubomirsky, King,

& Diener, 2005).

Minimal research has been conducted on the positive affect of Latinos. Among

the existing studies, positive affect was related to hope, life satisfaction, perceived

support from friends, but not perceived support from family among Mexican American

youth (Edwards, Ong, & López, 2007). Further research has concluded that less

acculturated Latinos demonstrated more positive affect than more acculturation

pregnant Latinas (Nguyen, Clark, & Ruiz, 2007). Specifically, less acculturated Latinas

expressed feeling good, happy, and enjoyment of life. Bilingualism was related to

positive affect among elder Latinos (Tran, 1994) while another study found that Spanish-

speaking Latinos experienced less positive affect than English-speaking Latinos,

regardless of immigration status (Golding, Aseshensel, & Hough, 1991). While research

suggests that Mexican Americans experience less positive affect than Whites (Golding et

al., 1991), most research on this variable continues to be conducted with White

samples.

Acculturation

Acculturation is an interactive, developmental, and multidimensional process,

that can be observed in attitudes, values, and behaviors (Cuéllar, Arnold, & Maldonado,

1995), which occurs when one cultural group, usually the marginalized group (e.g.,

Mexicans), comes into continuous contact with another cultural group which is typically

the majority group (e.g., Whites) (Berry, 1989). Berry (1989) proposed four acculturation

strategies: a) *assimilation* occurs when a member of a particular cultural group seeks to

identify with a different cultural group other than his or her own; b) *separation* results

when a member of a particular cultural group prefers to maintain onto his or her culture

and not interact with other cultures; c) *integration*, also conceptualized as biculturalism,

happens when an individual desires to integrate one's own culture and other culture(s);

and d) *marginalization* refers to the lack of interest in maintaining one's own culture and interacting with other cultures.

The current study takes a bidirectional approach to measuring both orientation to the Mexican culture and to the Anglo culture because it allows an individual to have a sense of belonging in and ability to navigate within one's cultural group and the mainstream culture without having to pick one over the other (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). It has been suggested that the ability to navigate between both cultures is positively related to well-being (Phinney et al., 2001) and negatively related to distress (Miranda & Umhoefer, 1998). LaFromboise and her colleagues (1993) suggested that to effectively manage being bicultural, an individual should do the following with both their culture of origin and the mainstream culture: a) acquire knowledge of cultural beliefs and values; b) have positive attitudes toward dual cultures; c) have bicultural efficacy; d) communicate effectively; e) develop role repertoire; and f) a sense of groundedness.

Bicultural Latinos have reported higher scores on quality of life, positive affect, psychological adjustment (Lang, Muñoz, Bernal, & Sorensen, 1982), social interest, and lower scores on depression (Miranda & Umhoefer, 1998) than Latino who scored high or low on acculturation (Devos, 2006). It is suggested that bicultural Latinos' well-being is higher than Latinos high or low on acculturation because of their ability to effectively function and navigate between two distinct cultures (Lang et al., 1982). For individuals who undergo the acculturation process, the key to their well-being may be dictated by their competence in their dual cultures (LaFromboise et al., 1993).

Valentine (2001) found that a higher sense of self-worth among Latino college students was related to greater assimilation into the mainstream culture. He suggested that Latinos may sacrifice their ethnic identity for the sake of feeling socially connected to the mainstream culture. This suggests that Latinos must bury their culture if they want to be mentally well. However, Cuéllar and Roberts (1997) suggested that acculturation level itself is not what determines mental health status, but more so the experiences related to one's acculturation level.

College Self-Efficacy

College self-efficacy is the degree to which students feel confident in their ability to perform various college-related tasks (Solberg et al., 1993). Self efficacy has been found to be predictive of students' goals (Hackett et al., 1992), academic satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005), and personal adjustment (Solberg et al., 1993). College self-efficacy is also negatively correlated with physical, financial, academic, and psychological stress, while positively correlated with social support and academic integration (Gore et al., 2006). Students who persisted in higher education for at least two years demonstrated higher self-efficacy than students who have dropped out of college (Gore et al., 2006). This finding demonstrates the importance of academic self-efficacy in college decision-making and persistence. Interestingly, Gore and his colleagues (2006) found that college self-efficacy was only related to academic performance and academic persistence when self-efficacy was assessed at the end of the first semester. In contrast, Flores and her colleagues (in press) concluded that college self-efficacy was not related to the educational aspirations and educational expectations of Mexican American high school

students. Research has demonstrated that students of color who attended a university where their ethnicity is represented have higher self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and educational goals than student of color who attend predominantly White institutions (Lent et al., 2003). In addition, career-related self-efficacy was positively related to career-related outcome expectations among Latino college students (Gushue, 2006). It is suggested that men and women have similar academic self-efficacy (Lent et al., 2003). Research also suggests that Mexican American college students have lower academic self-efficacy than Whites (Hackett et al., 1992).

College Outcome Expectations

Outcome expectations refer to the expected results of engaging in particular behaviors (Lent & Brown, 1996). Bandura (1986) suggested that the presence of positive outcome expectations was important for goal progress, regardless of high self-efficacy. The majority of research that has examined outcome expectations has been in the realm of career development. Career outcome expectations have been found to be predicted by social support, academic self-efficacy, perceptions of barriers, and perception of parents' pro-educational behaviors among rural high school students (Wettersten et al., 2005). Research has also demonstrated that written persuasive messages enhanced college students' career decision-making outcome expectations (Tansley, Jome, Haase, & Martens, 2007). Students were more likely to explore career options if they had high career outcome expectations (Betz & Voyten, 1997). Among Mexican American students in particular, outcome expectations were related to career outcomes (Flores & O'Brien,

2002). In addition, career outcome expectations were positively correlated to the ethnic identity of Latino high school students (Gushue, 2006).

Outcome expectations in conjunction with self-efficacy were predictive of African American college students' interest in math and intentions to enroll in math courses (Gainor & Lent, 1998). In addition, among international students, including students from Latin America, expectations for positive future career outcomes were diminished when they expressed concerns about their competence in social, academic, and career contexts (Reynolds & Constantine, 2007).

College outcome expectations have been demonstrated to correlate with prior performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and emotional arousal among African American college students (Gainor & Lent, 1998). Among rural high school students, college outcome expectations were diminished among students who aspired to gain full-time employment after high school (Ali & Saunders, 2006). African American high school students who reported a lack of trust toward the intentions and actions of Whites and the institutions of the dominant culture, and did not highly value the outcomes of education had lower educational outcome expectations (Irving & Hudley, 2005).

While much research supports the influence of outcome expectations on academic and career-related variables, studies have also demonstrated a lack of significance between these variables. For instance, Among African American high school students, outcome expectations did not influence interest in environmental science (Quimby, Wolfson, & Seyala, 2007). In addition, acculturation was not significantly

related to college outcome expectations among Mexican American high school student (Flores et al., in press). Flores and her colleagues' study also did not find a relation between college self-efficacy and college outcome expectations or to educational goal expectations and aspirations.

Academic Goals

Goal progress has been found to be predicted by self-efficacy and environmental supports among college students (Lent et al., 2007). Unfortunately, Latinos have reported the lowest college aspirations among ethnically diverse high school students (Mau & Bikos, 2000). In addition, college students of Color reported perceiving their ethnicity as a barrier to attaining their educational goals (Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001). Furthermore, adherence to the Anglo culture has been found to be predictive of the educational goals of Mexican American high school students (Flores, Ojeda, Huang, Gee, Lee, 2006b). Similarly, Mexican American high school students' generation level positively influenced their educational aspirations (Zhou, 2001).

Math/science goals were predictive of enrollment and persistence in math/science majors (Lent et al., 2000). Similar results have also been found among a sample of Mexican American middle school students in that math/science goal intentions were predicted by math/science self-efficacy, interests, outcome expectations, and acculturation (Navarro, Flores, & Worthington, 2007).

Research has demonstrated no gender differences in the academic goals in the domain of engineering among culturally diverse college students (Lent et al., 2005). In addition, in their examination of career aspirations for urban high school students,

Kenny and his colleagues (2001) did not find gender differences. More specifically, no gender differences were found on Mexican American high school students' educational aspirations (Ojeda & Flores, 2008).

The influence of perceived barriers on academic goals has been contradictory. For instance, research has demonstrated that the educational plans of Mexican American girls were not influenced by perceived educational barriers (McWhirter, Hackett, & Bandalos, 1998). However, among Mexican American high school boys and girls, their educational aspirations were negatively influenced by perceptions of educational barriers (Ojeda & Flores, 2008).

A strong influence of family on the educational aspirations of Latino students has been demonstrated. For instance, aspirations to pursue higher education among rural gifted and talented students of color were influenced by high parental education levels (McWhirter, Larson, & Daniels, 1996). Among Mexican American high school students in particular, perceived parental expectations were related to high educational aspirations (Ramos & Sanchez, 1995). More specifically Mexican American girls' educational plans increased when they perceived having a supportive father (McWhirter et al., 1998). Furthermore, Latino parents with high educational aspirations for themselves tended to have children with high levels of interest in college, while parents with minimal educational aspirations had children with similarly low or unidentified aspirations (Behnke, Piercy, & Diversi, 2004).

Academic Satisfaction

Among the domains of satisfaction, job satisfaction, which is satisfaction derived from one's work (Fritzsche & Parrish, 2005), has received the most attention. On the other hand academic satisfaction, which is satisfaction with one's academic role (Lent & Brown, 2006), has received less attention. Nonetheless, job and academic satisfaction are seen as overlapping (Lent, 2004) in that adjustment in each has similar causal determinants (Lent & Brown, 2006).

Of the research that has examined academic satisfaction through a social cognitive lens, findings have demonstrated that academic satisfaction is predicted by social support (Warr, 1999), positive affect, self efficacy, perceived goal progress, and environmental supports (Lent et al., 2007) and that academic satisfaction in turn influences life satisfaction (Lent et al., 2005). Similarly, research has concluded that satisfaction with various components of the college experience (i.e., compensation, social life, working conditions, recognition, and quality of education) is influenced by three forms of self-efficacy (college, social, general), with college self-efficacy being the strongest predictor (DeWitz & Walsh, 2002).

Dissatisfaction with academic life is related to student perceptions of unfair treatment from their instructors (Danielson, 1998) and sexual harassment among college women (Huerta, Cortina, Pang, Torges, & Magley, 2006). Furthermore, students who have positive attitudes toward learning demonstrate academic satisfaction (Walberg & Greenberg, 1997). Among college women in particular, academic satisfaction was positively correlated with academic performance and negatively correlated with academic disengagement (Huerta et al., 2006). Students who learned

socialization tactics in adjusting to university life tended to be satisfied with their

academic life (Bogler & Somech, 2002).

APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Dear Professor,

Hello, I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri and am working on my dissertation under the guidance of Dr. Lisa Flores. I am very dedicated in assisting Latino students to succeed in college. Thus, the focus of my dissertation is on the academic and life satisfaction of Latino college students. Unfortunately, there is an under representation of Latino college students in Missouri and thus, I would like to collect data at UTPA.

I am writing to request your assistance in collecting data for my dissertation by allowing me to collect data from your classes. It would take approximately 30 minutes of your class time for students to complete the survey.

Participation is completely voluntary for students. It is hoped that the results of this study will generate a more comprehensive understanding of the Latino college student experience and improve current Latino student retention practices.

This study has been approved by Dean Van Reidhead and is currently pending approval by the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board (IRB).

If you have any questions about the research, please do not hesitate to contact me at (573) 529-3799, my advisor Dr. Lisa Flores at (573) 884-9724, or the IRB at (573) 882-9585.

Thank you for your cooperation; it is greatly appreciated!

Lizette Ojeda, M.A.
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology
University of Missouri-Columbia
LizetteOjeda@mizzou.edu
(573) 529-3799

APPENDIX C
CONSENT FORM

Dear UTPA College Student,

Hi, my name is Lizette Ojeda and I am a doctoral candidate in Counseling Psychology at the University of Missouri-Columbia. I am in the process of collecting data for my dissertation, advised by Dr. Lisa Flores. I am interested in understanding the college experience of Latinos. Thus, I am inviting you to participate and asking for your assistance in my dissertation by completing a survey.

The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study. Your participation will involve filling out some questionnaires that will take about 30 minutes to complete.

In addition, your participation in this study could provide much needed information to helping professionals who are interested in enhancing the educational development of Latino students. It is my hope that through this research professionals will be better prepared to help students like you in your college experience.

This study poses no foreseeable risks to your physical or psychological well-being. Your participation is solicited although strictly voluntary. Even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. For the results to truly represent the current situation of students from your university, it is important to fully complete the survey. However, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are uncomfortable.

Several steps will be taken to protect your identity in this study. You will not be asked any identifying information on the survey. The completed survey will be kept in a secure location. The results of this participation will be confidential. The data will be summarized and reported only in group form.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact me at LizetteOjeda@mizzou.edu or my advisor Dr. Lisa Flores at FloresL@missouri.edu. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact the Campus Institutional Review Board at the University of Missouri-Columbia at (573) 882-9585.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this research project!

Sincerely,

Lizette Ojeda, M.A.
Doctoral Candidate, Counseling Psychology
University of Missouri-Columbia

APPENDIX D
DEMOGRAPHIC FORM

Sex: a. male   b. female   **Age:** _____

Race/Ethnicity:
 a. Hispanic (please specify):
        Mexican American ____
        South American   ____
        Spanish American ____
        Puerto Rican   ____
        Cuban American   ____
        Central American ____
 b. White (non-Hispanic) ____
 c. African American   ____
 d. Biracial/Multiracial (specify) _____
 e. Other (specify) _____

If you are Hispanic, circle the generation that best applies to you. Circle only one.
   a. **1st generation** (you were born in Mexico or other country)
   b. **2nd generation** (you were born in the USA, either parent born in Mexico or other country)
   c. **3rd generation** (you were born in the USA, both parents born in the USA and all grandparents born in Mexico or other country)
   d. **4th generation** (you and your parents both born in USA and at least one grandparent born in Mexico or other country with remainder born in USA)
   e. **5th generation** (you, your parents, and all your grandparents born in USA)

Your relationship status:
        a. single
        b. partnered
        c. married
        d. divorced
        e. separated

Your college GPA: _____

College level:
a. freshman   b. sophomore   c. junior   d. senior

How would you identify your social class?
   a. working class   c.   upper-middle class
   b. b. middle class   d.   upper class

APPENDIX E
POSITIVE AFFECT SCALE

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then circle the appropriate answer next to that word. Indicate to what extent you have felt this way in general.

Use the following scale to record your answers.

(1) = Very slightly   (2) = A little   (3) = Moderately   (4) = Quite a bit   (5) = Extremely
     or not at all

1. Interested
2. Excited
3. Strong
4. Enthusiastic
5. Proud
6. Alert
7. Inspired
8. Determined
9. Attentive
10. Active

APPENDIX F
ACCULTURATION RATING SCALE FOR MEXICAN AMERICANS (ARSMA-II)

NOTE: If your country of origin is not Mexico, substitute your country where Mexico or Mexican is stated. For example, if your country of origin is Columbia insert Columbia where Mexico is stated and Columbian where Mexican is stated.

Not at all	Very little or not very often	Moderately	Much or very often	Extremely often or almost Always
1	2	3	4	5

1. I speak Spanish.
2. I speak English.
3. I enjoy speaking Spanish.
4. I associate with Anglos.
5. I associate with Mexicans and/or Mexican Americans.
6. I enjoy listening to Spanish language music.
7. I enjoy listening to English language music.
8. I enjoy Spanish language TV.
9. I enjoy English language TV.
10. I enjoy English language movies.
11. I enjoy Spanish language movies.
12. I enjoy reading books in English.
13. I enjoy reading books in Spanish.
14. I write letters in Spanish.
15. I write letters in English.
16. My thinking is done in the English language.
17. My thinking is done in the Spanish language.
18. My contact with Mexico has been…..
19. My contact with the USA has been…..
20. My father identifies or identified himself as 'Mexicano'.
21. My mother identifies or identified herself as 'Mexicana'.
22. My friends, while I was growing up, were of Mexican origin.
23. My friends, while I was growing up, were of White origin.
24. My family cooks Mexican foods.
25. My friends now are of White origin.
26. My friends now are of Mexican origin.
27. I like to identify myself as a Anglo.
28. I like to identify myself as a Mexican American.
29. I like to identify myself as a Mexican.
30. I like to identify myself as an American.

APPENDIX G

COLLEGE SELF-EFFICACY INVENTORY

How confident are you that you could successfully complete the following tasks as a college student?

Totally Unconfident				Undecided				Totally Confident
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

1. Make new friends at college.
2. Talk to your professors/instructors.
3. Take good class notes.
4. Divide chores with others you live with.
5. Research a term paper.
6. Join an intramural sports team.
7. Understand your textbooks.
8. Get a date if you want one.
9. Ask a professor or instructor a question outside of class.
10. Get along with others you live with.
11. Write a course paper.
12. Work on a group project.
13. Socialize with others you live with.
14. Do well on your exams.
15. Talk with a school academic and support (e.g., advising) staff.
16. Manage your time effectively.
17. Use the library.
18. Join a student organization.
19. Ask questions in a class.
20. Divide space in your residence.
21. Participate in class discussions.
22. Keep up to date with your school work.

APPENDIX H
COLLEGE OUTCOME EXPECTATIONS SCALE

Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree			Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

1. A college education will allow me to obtain a well-paying job.
2. A college education will allow me to obtain a job I like doing.
3. With a college education, I will be respected by others.
4. A college education will allow me to get a job where I can use my talents and creativity.
5. A college education will leave me enough time to have things like a family, friends, and leisure time.
6. A college education will give me the kind of lifestyle that I want.
7. With a college education, I will be better able to achieve my career goals.
8. A college education will increase my career opportunities.
9. If I get a college education, then my family will be pleased.
10. If I get a college education, then I will be better able to achieve my future goals in life.
11. A college education will increase my knowledge base.
12. If I get a college education, then I will be able to pursue the career of my choice.
13. If I get a college education, then I will do well in life.
14. A college education will give me the opportunity to meet new people.
15. If I get a college education, then I will learn what I need to know to make good decisions in my life.
16. A college education will give me the time to explore different career interests in my college courses.
17. A college education will give me an opportunity to make several friends.
18. If I get a college education, then I will be better prepared for life.
19. If I get a college education, then it will cause problems in my family.

APPENDIX I
ACADEMIC GOALS SCALE

How much progress do you think you are making toward each of the following goals at this point in time?

Good	Excellent	Fair Progress	A Little Progress	No Progress at All
1	2	3	4	5

1. Excelling at your academic major.
2. Completing all course assignments effectively.
3. Studying effectively for all of your exams.
4. Remaining enrolled in your academic major.
5. Completing academic requirements of your major satisfactorily.
6. Achieving / maintaining high grades in all of your courses.
7. Learning and understanding the material in each of your courses.

APPENDIX J
ACADEMIC SATISFACTION SCALE

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

1. I feel satisfied with the decision to major in my intended field.
2. I am comfortable with the educational atmosphere in my major field.
3. For the most part, I am enjoying my coursework.
4. I am generally satisfied with my academic life.
5. I enjoy the level of intellectual stimulation in my courses.
6. I feel enthusiastic about the subject matter in my intended major.
7. I like how much I have been learning in my classes.

APPENDIX K
SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent
3. I am satisfied with my life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

VITA

Lizette Ojeda was born May 11, 1981 in Chicago, Illinois to José and Angelita Ojeda and was raised in Houston, Texas with her younger sister, Marissa Ojeda. She graduated from San Jacinto College with an Associate of Arts degree in Sociology and from the University of Houston with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. She received a Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Missouri and is currently pursuing the Doctor of Philosophy degree in this program. She completed her pre-doctoral internship at the University of California, Irvine Counseling Center. In Fall 2009, she joined the Counseling Psychology program at Texas A&M University as a tenure-track Assistant Professor.