LATINO CULTURAL VALUES, ACCULTURATION, CULTURAL FIT, PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND ACADEMIC PERSISTENCE OF MEXICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Rocio Rosales Meza
Dr. Kevin Cokley, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of cultural variables, such as Latino cultural values, cultural fit, Anglo-oriented and Mexican-oriented acculturation, on the perceptions of psychological well-being and persistence of 440 Mexican American college students. Two simultaneous regression analyses indicated that congruence of personal values and university values and positive perceptions of the university environment significantly predicted students’ positive psychological well-being. The regression model accounted for 40% of the variance in psychological well-being. The second regression analysis indicated that high adherence to Latino cultural values, positive perceptions of the university, and positive psychological functioning predicted 30% of the variance in students’ persistence decisions. Educational, institutional, and counseling implications are discussed which focus on acknowledging Mexican American students’ culture as a strength in their educational experiences.