

High School Counselors' Support and Latina/o Students' Career Development

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Abstract

The current study examined the impact of high school counselors' support of Latina/o students' career development outcomes. We used a quantitative, predictive design to explore Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations.

Perceptions of investment, accessibility, positive regard, appraisal, and expectations from school counselors did not impact Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy or outcome expectations. In addition to a discussion regarding the importance of these findings, implications for school counselors and researchers are offered.

Keywords: Latina/o students, school counselors, vocational outcome expectations

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Despite attempts by educational institutions to increase college and career awareness of the fast growing Latina/o population in the United States (U. S. Census Bureau, 2012), the achievement gap between these students and their peers remains in measures such as grades, test scores, high school completion rates, and college attainment (American Council on Education, 2012). Researchers indicated that this gap may be due to unique individual, interpersonal, and institutional challenges that affect Latina/o students' career and college readiness, including low expectations from high school counselors (Mallott, 2010), access to minimal college information (Martinez, Cortez, & Saenz, 2013), low family support (Vela, Lu, Veliz, Johnson, & Castro, 2014), and negative experiences in non-advanced placement (AP) coursework (Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010). Although researchers uncovered Latina/o students' perceptions of these factors, minimal attention has been given to potential effects of these perceptions on students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations.

Vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations have been shown to have an effect on individuals' confidence to pursue their desired career vocations (McWhirter, Rasheed, & Crothers, 2000). Given the relationship among career interests, career goals, self-efficacy, and outcome expectations (Roger & Creed, 2011), the importance of Latina/o students' perceptions of high school counselors' support on their vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations cannot be underestimated. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to augment current literature regarding the relationship, if any, between Latina/o students' perceptions of high school counselors' support and the students' career development outcomes.

Vocational Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy, individuals' beliefs regarding their abilities to perform specific tasks (Bandura, 1997), has potential to influence numerous outcomes, including career paths and persistence in the face of adversity (Soresi, Nota, & Lent, 2004). As related to career development, vocational self-efficacy refers to students' beliefs in their ability to accomplish career tasks, such as career exploration and career preparation, which is further related to career interests, career decision-making self-efficacy, and career goals (McWhirter et al., 2000). Amenable to influence from various focused interventions, vocational self-efficacy has been shown to increase as a result of targeted career curricula (Doren, Lombardi, Clark, & Lindstrom, 2013) and other high school career education (McWhirter et al., 2000). While this research demonstrates significant results relative to the effect of career education on students' self-efficacy, no study found to date investigates the impact of school counselors' support on self-efficacy.

Vocational Outcome Expectations

Outcome expectations refer to individual beliefs regarding consequences of specific actions and have potential to influence engagement in behaviors targeted at enhancing desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Related to career development, vocational outcome expectations focus on individual expectations about finding employment and career satisfaction (McWhirter et al., 2000). Similar to vocational self-efficacy, research on students' vocational outcome expectations demonstrated a positive relationship between family support and vocational outcome expectations (Isik, 2013), as well as a positive, indirect relationship between perceived social status and vocational outcome expectations through self-efficacy (Metheny & McWhirter, 2013).

These studies demonstrate the potential influence of family support and stature on vocational outcome expectations, which can influence future career behaviors. As a result, it is important to explore how high school counselors influence this important career development outcome.

High School Counselors' Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of professional school counselors include helping students with personal, social, and career development (DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013). High school counselors also can promote social justice in order to eliminate systemic challenges that traditionally impede students from achieving academic success (Barrett, Lester, & Durham, 2011). Because of their role within the academic environment, school counselors are in a unique position to influence students' future vocational success and to advocate for social justice endeavors and efforts.

School counselors' ability to promote social justice exists at several levels and can be applied to various groups. Social justice begins at the student-level and involves helping students become aware of oppressive practices in order to improve their individual empowerment (Barrett et al., 2011). Cavazos, Holt, and Flamez (2012), outlined effects of narrative therapy on student perceptions. Results of the study, which involved increasing student awareness on the effects of tracking and low expectations on academic goals and self-efficacy, suggested that narrative therapy can help Latina/o students overcome systemic challenges to postsecondary education. While social justice at the student-level involves change in an individual's self-perception, social justice at the school-level moves beyond the counselor-student relationship to elicit change (Barrett et al., 2011). In demonstrating this potential, Ohrt, Lambie, and Ieva

(2009) investigated the potential influence of high school counselors on increasing awareness of potential postsecondary educational programs that can increase student success. Drawing from this study, the authors suggested that high school counselors can provide informational sessions to help students learn about the importance and requirements of advanced placement (AP) coursework.

Although social justice initiatives on a school-level have potential to elicit change beyond the student or student-counselor relationship, the opportunity to bring about change expands to what Barrett et al. (2011) defined as broader systems social justice. This level of social justice focuses on policies that impede or oppress students and often includes attempts to change structural policies that unfairly disadvantage specific populations from accessing equal opportunities for success. Related to Latina/o high school students, this could indicate that school counselors identify ways to change policies that impede access and equity to challenging coursework or college information (Villalba, Akos, Keeter, & Ames, 2007).

Factors Affecting Latina/o Students' Experiences With School Counselors

The American School Counseling Association (2012) outlined the availability of social justice initiatives for the equal treatment of and equal opportunities for students of various cultural characteristics in their guidelines for ethical practice. While specific suggestions for empowering Latina/o students were not provided, Villalba et al. (2007) argued that the provision of high expectations directed toward Latina/o students and support to pursue postsecondary education was associated with increased performance and opportunities for success. These factors were further accompanied by an increase in student's perceived satisfaction with their school counselors. In supporting this view,

Vela-Gude and her colleagues (2009) interviewed Latina/o college students regarding their experiences with high school counselors. Results of their study indicated that students engaged in various advanced targeted programs perceived positive expectations and investment from their high school counselors. Additionally, Jodry, Robles-Pina, and Nichter (2004) examined the experiences of Hispanic high school students to determine the impact that school counselors had on communicating high expectations. Results of their study supported the potential impact of high school counselor's expectations on students and their outcome expectations. One student shared the following response about counselor support: "I'll be the first in my family to graduate from high school. College, I didn't think about it really until the counselor said I should" (p. 28).

Despite increasing identification of the importance of encouragement and high expectations on student's self-perceptions and career outlook, several studies revealed a lack of students' perceived expectations set forth by their school counselors (Malott, 2010; Vela-Gude et al., 2009). Two separate studies uncovered various Latina/o students who reported experiencing low expectations from school counselors. Specifically, Vela-Gude et al. (2009) reported that the majority of Latina/o students interviewed within their study perceived that counselors had low expectations of them. Malott (2010) also revealed similar responses among individuals of Mexican descent in their interactions with their high school counselors. Specifically, some students described low expectations and insufficient attention from school counselors.

Purpose of the Study

Scholarly articles related to Latina/o students' perceptions of support from high school counselors are numerous (e.g., Malott, 2010; Vela-Gude et al., 2009). However, few researchers examined the impact of school counselors' support on Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations. The lack of research related to the predictive nature of school counselors' support and career development remains unknown. This presents a problem given that some Latina/o students reported negative experiences and low expectations from high school counselors (Malott, 2010; Vela-Gude et al., 2009). Therefore, the purpose of this quantitative study is to examine the predictive nature of school counselors' support on Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Professional school counselors may find this information useful when strategizing how to help Latina/o students improve vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations. In an effort to address the dearth of literature regarding high school counselors' support and students' career perceptions, two research questions were developed as the basis of the study:

1. To what extent do factors of counselor support (i.e., positive regard, investment, expectations, accessibility, and appraisal) predict Latina/o students' vocational outcome expectations?
2. To what extent do factors of counselor support (i.e., positive regard, investment, expectations, accessibility, and appraisal) predict Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy?

Method

Participants

Students from a local community college and university were recruited for participation in this study due to the schools' large Hispanic-student population. While both Hispanic and non-Hispanic individuals were included in data collection, only participants who self-identified as Hispanic, Mexican, or Mexican American were included in data analysis. Data from the remainder of students who self-identified their ethnic background as other (i.e., African American, Anglo, or Filipino) were removed, leaving a final sample of 122 participants. This sample was composed of 34 males (28%) and 88 females (72%) with the majority of participants self-identifying as Latina/o (45%), followed by Mexican American (40%), and finally Mexican (11%). A total of 71 students (58%) reported being enrolled in one or more AP course during their senior year in high school, while 51 students (42%) did not enroll in any AP course.

Instruments

Teacher Support Scale-Revised (TSSR; McWhirter, 1996). The TSSR is an unpublished measure that traditionally measures students' perceptions of teacher support in academic activities (McWhirter, 1996). Given the desire to address high school counselor support as opposed to teacher support, all references to "teachers" in the TSSR were replaced with "school counselors" with the author's permission. The revised 25-item scale contained various statements which participants were instructed to evaluate on a five point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly agree* (5) to *strongly disagree* (1). In turn, scores on five subscales relative to students' perceptions of high school counselors were obtained. These subscales consist of (a) investment, (b)

positive regard, (c) expectations, (d) accessibility, and (e) appraisal. Within this scale, investment is best described as students' perceptions of their teachers' commitment of time and energy into their future success, while positive regard refers to students' perceptions of their teachers' approval and acceptance. Expectations, addresses students' perception of high school counselors' positive beliefs about their potential for academic success, while accessibility relates to the extent to which a student perceives high school counselors are available to provide information, guidance, and support (Metheny, McWhirter, & O'Neil, 2008). Finally, appraisal refers to students' perceptions of high school counselors' evaluation of their work (McWhirter, 1996).

Vela, Zamarripa, Balkin, Smith, and Johnson (2014) used this scale to measure perceptions of school counselor support and found evidence of strong reliability for each subscale: accessible ($\alpha = .81$), expectations ($\alpha = .82$), positive regard ($\alpha = .90$), investment ($\alpha = .92$), and appraisal ($\alpha = .87$). In the current study, Cronbach's alpha for each subscale were strong: accessible ($\alpha = .80$), expectations ($\alpha = .87$), positive regard ($\alpha = .86$), investment ($\alpha = .93$), and appraisal ($\alpha = .87$).

Vocational Skills Self-Efficacy (McWhirter et al., 2000). The Vocational Skills Self-Efficacy Scale (VSSE) measures participants' confidence in their ability to perform well on specific tasks. Sample items include: "complete a job application correctly," "describe the basic interpersonal skills required for most jobs," and "state my career goals." Participants are asked to respond on a nine-point scale ranging from *complete confidence* (9) to *no confidence at all* (1). The mean score of these responses is used to represent vocational skills self-efficacy with higher scores reflective of higher vocational self-efficacy. McWhirter et al. (2000) found a reliability coefficient of .97. Ali and

Saunders (2006) also found evidence of strong reliability with .93. For the current study, Cronbach's alpha was .95.

Vocational Outcome Expectations (VOE; McWhirter et al., 2000). The VOE is a 12-item scale that measures participants' perceptions of their ability to accomplish their career aspirations. Sample items of the VOE include: "I will be successful in my chosen career/occupation" and "My talents and skills will be used in my career/occupation." Participants respond on a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly agree* (4) to *strongly disagree* (1). The mean score is used to represent vocational outcome expectations with higher scores reflective of higher outcome expectations. Isik (2013) highlighted a reliability coefficient alpha of .83. For the current study, Cronbach's alpha was .96.

Procedures

Prior to initiating data collection, approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board at a university in the southwestern United States. Once approval was obtained, participants were recruited from the targeted universities. Individuals approached for participation in the study were provided an informed consent form, identifying the voluntary nature of participation, which they were asked to read and sign. Individuals who completed and returned the informed consent form were provided a survey packet that included (a) a demographic form, (b) the TSSR (McWhirter, 1996), (c) VSSE (McWhirter et al., 2000), and (d) VOE (McWhirter et al., 2000).

Once participant packets were collected, an a priori power analysis was conducted to identify the necessary sample size for a multiple regression to ensure statistical significance. Multiple regression was identified as the appropriate statistical

analysis method given its role in predicting a continuous variable based on other variables (Dimitrov, 2013). With a moderate effect size of $f^2 = .25$, (Cohen, 1988), an alpha level of .05, and adequate power ($1-\beta = .80$; Cohen, 1988), a sample size of 55 was necessary. Therefore, it was determined that the sample size was adequate to provide significant results.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze data and determine relationships among independent and dependent variables, predictor variables of (a) investment, (b) accessibility, (c) expectations, (d) positive regard, and (e) appraisal from high school counselors were used. Vocational outcome expectations and vocational self-efficacy were used as criterion variables. Statistical significance of the model was determined by evaluating the F test. Practical significance of the model was determined by evaluating R^2 . Cohen (1992) recommended using f^2 to determine effect size with the following effect size interpretations: small = .02, medium = .15, and large = .35. These values are then converted to R^2 with the following interpretations: small = .02, medium = .13, and large = .26. Statistical significance of each predictor variable was then determined by a t -test and beta weights.

Results

Descriptive statistics, including Pearson R correlation coefficients, computed with an alpha level of .05, are included in (see tables in Appendix). The current study involved the completion of two separate analyses. In the initial analysis, we used a multiple regression analysis to predict the degree to which investment, accessibility, expectations, positive regard, and appraisal from school counselors predicted

vocational skills self-efficacy. Vocational skills self-efficacy scores were normally distributed. Scatterplots were analyzed, and no curvilinear relationships between the criterion variable and predictor variables were evident. There was no statistically significant relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion variable, $F(5, 117) = .67, p = .65$. A small effect size was noted with approximately 3% of the variance accounted for in the model, $R^2 = .028$.

In the second analysis, we used multiple regression analysis to predict the degree to which investment, accessibility, expectations, positive regard, and appraisal from school counselors predicted vocational outcome expectations. Vocational outcome expectation scores were normally distributed. Scatterplots were analyzed, and no curvilinear relationships between the criterion variable and predictor variables were evident. There was no statistically significant relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion variable, $F(5, 117) = 1.02, p = .41$. A small effect size was noted with approximately 4% of the variance accounted for in the model, $R^2 = .042$.

Discussion

While no significant relationship and only small practical relationship were identified between the predictor variables and criterion variables, results of the study are not without importance. According to Perepiczka and Balkin (2010), non-significant results should be reported when (a) insight can be gained about the population of study and (b) the research provides an understanding of the lack of relationship between predictor and criterion variables. Findings from this study not only provide valuable insight about the current level of perceived support from high school counselors among the Latina/o population in a small rural Texas community but also offer valuable insight

into the identified lack of relationship between perceived support and vocational outcome expectations and vocational skills self-efficacy.

Perceived High School Counselor Support

Results of the study indicate that although students' perceptions of support varied among the Latina/o population, the individual variables established to compose the concept of high school counselor support were similar. Correlations among investment, accessibility, expectations, positive regard, and appraisal were high and ranged from .87 between investment and accessibility as well as accessibility and positive regard to 1.0 between investment and expectations. These correlations demonstrate that students who view high school counselors as demonstrating high levels of investment, positive regard, accessibility, expectations, or appraisal were also likely to view their high school counselors as demonstrating high levels of other variables. In addition to demonstrating high correlations between all individual variables established as contributing to counselor support, the results of this study demonstrate an overwhelming perception by Latina/o students of high counselor expectations. These overall scores on the TSSR contrast with previous studies which indicated low levels of perceived expectations on the part of high school counselors (i.e., Malott, 2010; Vela-Gude et al., 2009). The contrast between previous identified levels of perceived high school counselor support among high school students and the results of this study focusing on perceived high school counselor support among first-year college students provide various possibilities for future study.

Lack of Significant Relationship

The lack of an identified significant relationship and only small practical

relationship between the variables associated with high school counselors' support and students' vocational self-efficacy, as well as the relationship between support and vocational outcome expectations, provide important insight into the complexity of diverse student needs. While all students in the study identified as Latina/o, Fontefrancesco (2012) pointed out that variations among individuals in a particular subculture may be more pronounced than similarities of being in that subculture. As a result of this potential, there is the possibility that although individuals in the sample population were similar based on their Latina/o heritage, the diversity of other contributing factors (e.g., acculturation) might have made them a significantly heterogeneous group. The heterogeneity of other potential contributing factors have been evidenced in previous studies which demonstrated Latina/o students exhibiting traits not generally associated with their cultural grouping.

Ali and Menke (2014) revealed that unlike previous research, findings from their study indicated higher rates of self-efficacy among Latina/o students than Caucasian students. These findings coupled with current findings demonstrate the variability of Latina/o students' experiences and the potential for various contributing factors to increase levels of self-efficacy. Similar findings in other cultural groups have been reported. Specifically, Flynn, Duncan, and Evenson (2013) noted that career development processes involved three interactional processes: introspective, relational, and contextual. The absence of this multidimensional focus and significant results further demonstrates the need to address multiple individual factors when addressing vocational development. Beyond the effects of individual differences among the student population, Tilson and Simonsen (2013) noted that individual factors specific to

personnel working with students also have a significant impact on vocational outcomes of various students. Aspects of the personnel including their knowledge, skills, and personal attributes were noted as having effects on desired outcomes. While counselor support serves as one aspect of vocational self-efficacy and vocational outcome expectations, various other elements, not accounted for in the current study, may also influence overall self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Parental involvement, teacher involvement, and community involvement, among various other individual and institutional factors, may also influence career development outcomes. Because this study attempted to investigate the role of counselors on Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations, these other factors were not considered. Therefore, results of the study may highlight the multidimensionality of Latina/o students' experience in vocational self-efficacy and vocational outcome expectations.

Implications for School Counseling

Based on this study's findings, there are several implications for school counselors. These implications include (a) an increased need for services to reflect the diversity of individual student needs, (b) the multidimensionality of a single student's needs, and (c) the need to measure student success through multiple modes. While students in this study shared the primary cultural characteristic of being of Latina/o heritage, their perceptions of high school counselor support and the impact of that support on their vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations varied. Ojeda, Flores, and Navarro (2011) identified significant variability regarding various vocational and social aspects of students within the same Latina/o culture educational experience based on aspects of enculturation and acculturation. The findings of Ojeda et al. (2011)

mirror the results of the current study, highlighting the variability within cultural characteristics and the inability to develop interventions based on a single cultural characteristic, thereby enhancing the central elements of the ASCA (2012) model. The development of interventions for specific cultural groups should be avoided. Instead, interventions should be targeted on the needs of individual students. Beyond the complexity within groups, the results of this study coupled with the research of Conchas (2001) and Ojeda et al. demonstrate the multidimensionality of individual experience by noting the multiple facets of student experience which can affect desired outcomes. Therefore, school counselors cannot just concentrate on one area of support, while neglecting other areas of high school students' experience that may be important in obtaining desired outcomes.

Implications for Research

This study's findings and limitations indicate that future research should be conducted to investigate factors that influence Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations. First, given the lack of statistical and practical significance, researchers could expand predictors of Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations. The current study examined the impact of one interpersonal factor (i.e., support from school counselors) on Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Researchers should use an ecological framework (Byrd & McKinney, 2012) and multidimensional approach (Flynn et al., 2013) to investigate how individual, interpersonal, and institutional factors influence Latina/o students' career development. Important factors to explore include teacher support, parental support, community involvement, school climate, and college-culture. Second,

personal interviews need to be conducted with Latina/o students to explore experiences with high school counselors. In-depth interviews could provide valuable insight into Latina/o students' perceptions of high school counselors' expectations, investment, accessibility, appraisal, and positive regard. Additionally, researchers should explore Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations in different settings. For students who pursue other career and educational paths, including community college, technical school, or apprenticeships, it is important to determine differences in levels of vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Finally, researchers should examine variability among Latina/o students with regard to career development, vocational self-efficacy, and outcome expectations. The following factors within the Latina/o culture could be explored: acculturation, enculturation, cultural values, socioeconomic status, and language background.

Limitations

There were several limitations that must be taken into consideration. First, because this study relied on cross-sectional data, no cause and effect inferences can be made. Multiple regression focuses on predictive relationships and not cause and effect (Dimitrov, 2013). Second, we did not use random assignment due to time constraints and scheduling concerns. Using random selection of classrooms on a college campus would have been difficult. Third, first-year college students were recruited to reflect on their experiences with high school counselors. Given that these students were successful as evidenced by enrollment in college, participants might have had different experiences with high school counselors compared with students who pursued other educational or career paths. These first-year college students also

provided retrospective perceptions of their experiences with high school counselors. Future research should explore current high school students' perceptions of school counselor support. Fourth, there were several limitations with the instrument. The TSSR (McWhirter, 1996) measures students' perceptions of support from all teachers. This instrument does not measure students' perceptions of specific individuals, forcing students to generalize their experiences with school personnel (McWhirter, 1996; Metheny et al., 2008). This instrument does not measure students' positive or negative experiences with multiple high school counselors (Vela, Zamarripa, Balkin, Johnson, & Smith, 2014). Finally, participants in the current study attended a Hispanic serving institution with over 90% Hispanic population, which might limit generalizability to similar areas.

Conclusion

We addressed the need to examine the relationship between high school counselors' support on Latina/o students' career development outcomes. Although we did not find statistically and practically significant relationships, insight about the role of school counselors on Latina/o students' vocational development was gained. Findings from the current study illustrated that Latina/o students' had positive perceptions of high school counselors (i.e., expectations). These findings also provide evidence of heterogeneity among Latina/o students as well as the need to examine within-group differences among this growing population. Additional research is recommended to identify other predictor variables for Latina/o students' vocational self-efficacy and outcome expectations given the relationship with desired career paths. Identification of influential variables leading Latina/o students' toward higher vocational self-efficacy and

positive outcome expectations will be significant. In summary, school counselors must continue to explore ways to help Latina/o students' improve career development outcomes.

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Appendix

Tables of Statistical Data

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations between Measured Variables

Variable	M	SD	N	1	2	3	4	5	6
VOE	3.47	.69	123	--	-.10	-.07	-.09	-.10	-.07
Investment	3.90	.82	123		--	.87	1.0	.99	.98
Accessibility	3.83	.93	123			--	.91	.87	.92
Expectations	3.90	.81	123				--	.98	.99
Positive Regard	3.90	.82					123	--	.97
Appraisal	3.84	.84	123						

Note. N=122. VOE=Vocational Outcome Expectations

Table 2

Multiple Regression Results for Vocational Outcome Expectations

Variable	B	SEB	β	t	p	sr2	rs
Investment	-1.40	1.07	-1.66	-1.31	.19	.01	.24
Accessibility	-.26	-.36	-.36	-.345	.24	.01	.13
Expectations	1.21	1.42	1.42	1.11	.27	.01	.15
Positive Regard	-.01	-.02	-.02	-.02	.98	.00	.26
Appraisal	.40	.49	.49	.60	.55	.003	.12

Note. The squared semipartial correlation coefficient (sr2) represents the unique amount of variance.

Table 3*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations between Measured Variables*

Variable	M	SD	N	1	2	3	4	5	6
VSSE	4.0	.80	123	--	.05	.10	.07	.06	.06
Investment	3.90	.82	123		--	.87	.99	.99	.98
Accessibility	3.83	.93	123			--	.91	.87	.92
Expectations	3.90	.81	123				--	.98	.99
Positive Regard	3.90	.82	123					--	.97
Appraisal	3.84	.84	123						--

Note. N=123. VSSE= Vocational Skills Self-Efficacy

Table 4*Multiple Regression Results for Vocational Skills Self-Efficacy*

Variable	B	SEB	β	t	p	sr²	rs
Investment	-1.25	1.25	-1.28	-1.00	.31	.008	.08
Accessibility	.10	.26	.12	.41	.69	.001	.37
Expectations	1.27	1.28	1.29	1.00	.32	.008	.15
Positive Regard	.49	.73	.51	.68	.50	.004	.11
Appraisal	-.54	.78	-.57	-.69	.49	.004	.13

Note. The squared semipartial correlation coefficient (sr²) represents the unique amount of variance.

Biographical Statements

Dr. Javier Cavazos Vela is an assistant professor in the counseling and guidance program at The University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley. His research interests include students' perceptions of support from school counselors as well as positive psychology. He has co-authored 31 peer-reviewed publications on topics related to student success, resiliency, positive psychology, and school counseling.

Dr. Brandé Flamez is a professor at Lamar University in the Department of Counseling and Special Populations. She has presented over a 100 times nationally and internationally and has authored or co-authored over thirty book chapters and articles. She is the co-author of the assessment textbook *Counseling Assessment and Evaluation: Fundamentals of Applied Practice* and *Diagnosing and Treating Children and Adolescents: A Guide for Mental Health Professionals*. Her research interests include: investigating clinical outcomes and counseling children and adolescents in schools and counseling programs, marriage and family, and multiculturalism.

Dr. Ashley A. Clark is a recent graduate from Walden University's counselor education and supervision program. She currently works as a vocational rehabilitation counselor with the Virginia Division of Rehabilitative Services working specifically with clients with serious mental illnesses. Dr. Clark's research interests include the complexities of multicultural issues in the counseling field.