

5-2018

Hispanic Male Self-efficacy and Its Effect on Persistence

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HISPANIC MALE SELF-EFFICACY AND ITS EFFECT ON PERSISTENCE

A Dissertation

by

JENNIFER MENDOZA CULBERTSON

Submitted to the Graduate College of
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May 2018

Major Subject: Educational Leadership

HISPANIC MALE SELF-EFFICACY AND ITS EFFECT ON PERSISTENCE

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ABSTRACT

Mendoza Culbertson, Jennifer, Hispanic Male Self-Efficacy and its Effect on Persistence. Doctor of Education (Ed.D.), May, 2018, 166 pp., 13 tables, 2 figures, references, 168 titles.

The Hispanic male population has experienced a decline in four-year college enrollment rates and bachelor degree completion within the past ten years. To address this issue, this study focused on Hispanic male college freshman students, self-efficacy, and persistence in a South Texas four-year higher education institution. The study utilized an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach. For the quantitative analysis, an efficacy survey, College Self-Efficacy Inventory, of Hispanic male students enrolled in mandatory freshman courses was analyzed. A logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine what amount of the total variance in persistence may be accounted for by self-efficacy. Qualitative data was collected through group and individual interviews with persistent students and non-persistent students. Themes that emerged from the qualitative data analysis explained the experiences of the students during their first year of college and the contributing factors that led to persistence or non-persistence decisions. The results of the quantitative analysis concluded that there was no significant amount of variance in persistence of students accounted for by self-efficacy. The qualitative themes that emerged from the student groups were family influences, campus relationships, student connections and resources, and living environment.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my dissertation to my children, Nicholas, Alessandro, and Marcelo, who provided me the inspiration for this study; my husband, Ian, for providing me the support and encouragement to complete my doctoral studies; my mother, Marianela, and my aunt, Irma, who has helped carve out the person I am today; and to Ken and Linda who have been there every time I needed them. I love you all.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Shirley J. Mills for her time, patience, and inspiration she has provided to me year after year. You ignited the spark for research in me. I will forever be grateful. I would also like to thank Dr. Karen Watt for the amazing guidance and opportunities she provided inside and outside of the classroom walls. Sharing my research and findings with others was exhilarating and I want to do more! I am deeply thankful for my dissertation committee: Dr. Federico Guerra, Dr. Ralph Carlson and Dr. Hilda Silva; their expertise and input have been stellar and instrumental to my research.

I would also like to thank the hundreds of freshmen students who participated in the study, especially the seven men who were brave enough to tell their stories in order to help other students in the future achieve their education dreams.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Recent reports found that minority populations in higher education institutions are increasing in two-year and four-year higher education institutions around the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). However, the same cannot be said regarding Hispanic male students. The minority growth towards matriculation into an educational institution that has been experienced is positive, but the growth has been creating issues of retention, attrition, and persistence (Tinto, 2012; ACT, 2012; Meling, Kupczynski, Mundy & Green, 2012; Niu & Tienda, 2006; Raab & Adam, 2005). College retention and graduation rates have always been important. Nevertheless, emphasis has taken center stage as school ranking systems and new initiatives, such as the White House's College Scorecard, have taken flight to monitor and improve persistence and graduation rates (Morse, Brooks, & Mason, 2016; The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2015). Research on persistence to graduation has attempted to identify what creates a successful student in higher education. In Texas, several issues have been raised with empirical research in regards to minority college expectations and student aspirations (Frost, 2007; Salinas & Llanes, 2003; Weiher, Hughes, Kaplan & Howard, 2006). All of these contributions to higher education research have delved into the realm of trying to understand what makes a college minority student successful and have attempted to identify predictors of student persistence and attrition.

The identification of predictors of college success or failure has become a pressing issue in the Hispanic college population. Although the Hispanic population does acknowledge that a college education is important, college completion rates are at an extreme low (Campbell & Mislevy, 2013; Ishitani, 2006; Schneider, Martinez & Ownes, 2006; Brown & Patten, 2014). The National Center for Education Statistics' *Statistical Portrait of Hispanics in the United States* (2012) reported that only 13.9% of Hispanics hold an education credential compared to Whites (32.6%), Blacks (18.8%), Asians (50.9%) and others that are not of Hispanic origin (25.1%).

Research exists depicting excellent strides in increasing the number of Hispanic students in higher education institutions (Fry & Taylor, 2013; Brown & Patten, 2014). Hispanic students are gaining access to higher education and have aspirations to continue their education beyond a high school diploma. However, the National Center for Education Statistics (2013) reported a recent steady decrease of college completion among Hispanic males. If the Hispanic male student is left neglected and continues the pattern of dropping out of college, undereducated males may produce consequences that could jeopardize the potential growth of the economy in the United States (Wimer & Bloom, 2014).

The past twenty years have produced percentage-point gender gaps among Hispanic college completers. The Pew Research Center reported that Hispanic male college enrollment has experienced a sharp decline in the past twenty years (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014). The National Center for Education Statistics also reported a decline in the *Digest of Educational Statistics* (2013). The National Center for Education Statistics (2013) stated that within the 2005 entering freshman class, 31.4 % of female Hispanic students completed a bachelor's degree in four years versus 24.8% of Hispanic males; a 6.6 percentage-point gap among the genders. The

same report stated six-year college graduation rates decreased and reported a slightly higher gender gap of 7.8 percentage points. The 2004 entering freshman class had 53.4% female Hispanic students and only 45.6% of male Hispanic students completed an undergraduate degree program (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). It is clear the gender gap is growing and Hispanic males are being left behind.

The growing absence of Hispanic males enrolled in higher education institutions has prompted the federal government to take action. In 2014, President Barack Obama created a federal task force, *My Brother's Keeper*, to improve education trends and increase the number of male minority college students (The White House, 2014). Likewise, the state of Texas, especially in areas with a high concentration of Hispanic students, has experienced this effect and are also taking action to correct and support Hispanic males (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). In 2010, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB, 2010) designed specific goals that targeted the Hispanic male population. The education objectives and initiatives of the *Closing the Gaps* (THECB, 2010) plan focused on increasing Hispanic male college-going and college completion rates. In 2015, Texas launched the *60X30 TX Plan* and included specific goals for male Hispanic and African American students (THECB, 2015). On a national and state level, programs have been implemented to tackle the decline of males in higher education institutions; nevertheless, the numbers continued to decline. The continued decrease of Hispanic males completing a college degree has become a silent epidemic that needs to be dissected and addressed in academic research (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Various models have emerged to meet and resolve the silent epidemic.

Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure (1975, 1987 & 1993) began the dialog to explain why students dropped out of higher education institutions. The theoretical framework broke

ground to explain student attrition and the multi-dimensional, three-phase process students experience throughout their first year of college. Tinto (1993) stated that pre-entry attributes, preliminary and reassessed goals, social systems, institutional experiences and personal integration were important and contributed to the success of a college student. Furthermore, Tinto (1993) stated that external communities also influenced a student's decision to persist or drop out of college. Since Tinto's research, there has been a plethora of research produced that have explored college students, their college experience, and specific factors that contribute to retention and attrition. Research has also branched off to include a focus on minority students (Tinto, 2012; ACT, 2012; Meling, Kupczynski, Mundy & Green, 2012; Niu & Tienda, 2006; Raab & Adam, 2005). One specific area of research concerning college students and persistence has involved the social-cognitive theory of self-efficacy.

According to Bandura (1993), self-efficacy is a self-regulatory process that includes a person's belief about their skills and capabilities to accomplish goals, motivation, and drives towards success. Since the 1980's, self-efficacy among college students has been explored and has provided evidence that links self-efficacy with college persistence (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura & Wood, 1989; Cabrera, Lee, Swail, & Williams, 2005; Caprara, Pastorelli, & Bandura, 1992; Chwalisz, Altmaier & Russell, 1992; Solberg & Villarreal, 1997; Zajacora, Lynch, & Espenshade, 2005). Recent research has continued to support correlations between self-efficacy and student retention (Brewer & Yucedag-Ozcan, 2015; Raelin, Bailey, Hamann, Pendleton, Reisberg & Whitman, 2014). However, self-efficacy among Hispanic college students and persistence was not explored until the 1990's (Solberg, 1991) and gender studies pertaining to the Hispanic student population did not come to fruition until ten years later (Hutchison-Green, Follman & Bodner, 2008; Lopez, 2013).

College self-efficacy was also introduced to include three subscales that have been found to predict student persistence: course efficacy, social efficacy, and roommate efficacy (Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993). Course efficacy refers to a student's ability to believe they possess skills that will produce college course success. The belief of ability transfers to completing the skill or action, such as studying for exams, participating in class, and forming a positive relationship with a professor (Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993). Social efficacy is also similar in concept and refers to a student's ability to believe they possess skills that will lead to successful interpersonal relationships. A student's social efficacy belief also transfers to a student completing the skill or action to form and develop relationships, such as making new friends and joining student organizations (Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993). Roommate efficacy refers to the beliefs and abilities pertaining to roommate relationships, such as socializing and developing a cooperative relationship with roommates (Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993). Research involving the three efficacy subscales and the Hispanic male student population is lacking and needs to be addressed (Lopez, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

The U.S. Department of Education reported on degrees conferred by race and ethnicity (as cited in Fry & Lopez, 2012) and found that 71% of the White population held a bachelor's degree and 65% held an associate's degree. The report also found that 10% of the Black population had a bachelor's degree and 13% had an associate's degree. The Hispanic population was found to have only 9% with a bachelor's degree and 13% with an associate's degree. Based on the data reported, there is a 62% percentage-point gap between Whites who hold a bachelor's degree and Hispanics obtaining the same credential.

Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Education (2016) reported that in 2013, 66% of Hispanics matriculated to college the year after they graduated high school. The National Center for Education Statistics (2010) also conferred that a larger number of Hispanic students are making the transition from secondary schools to college, but they are not completing a college degree. Persistence in a four-year institution among Hispanic students has not been experienced as compared with other demographic groups. Based on the statistics (U.S. Department of Education, 2010) and population demographics (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010), a major problem is evident; once these students arrive in a four-year higher education institution, they often do not complete a bachelor's degree plan. The dwindling numbers of students persisting among Hispanic college students has led to the diminutive 14% of the Hispanic population that possess a bachelor's degree (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Demographic statistics have shown that there has been a steady increase in Hispanic college enrollment numbers and matriculation immediately after high school; however, total enrollment still remains low at universities (Fry & Lopez, 2012). What is startling is the influx of Hispanic student enrollment in Hispanic-serving higher education institutions (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014b). Out of all post-secondary institutions nationwide, Hispanic-serving institutions make up only 11% of all higher education institutions; yet, Hispanic-serving institutions enroll 59% of all Hispanic college students in the United States (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014b).

According to Torres and Zerquera (2012), the number of Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) will continue to rise due to the Hispanic population growth. Within the past ten years, an increase of 60 percent in the number of HSIs has been experienced in the United States (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014a). In Texas, there are currently 68 Hispanic-serving

institutions, systems, and districts (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014b) with an additional 48 institutions identified as emerging Hispanic-serving institutions (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014a). With a potential number of 161 HSIs in the near future, it is vital for research to focus on Hispanic student retention, attrition, persistence and completion in higher education institutions in Texas.

Even more startling is a gender enrollment swing that has gradually made its presence known on college campuses around the United States (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). According to a report published by the Pew Research Center (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014), undergraduate Hispanic women are outpacing Hispanic men in college enrollment numbers.

In longitudinal data published by Lopez et al. (2014) it was revealed that in 1994, 52% of all Hispanic female high school graduates and 52% of all Hispanic male high school graduates enrolled in college immediately after graduation. Almost twenty years later, the authors found a growing disparity among the Hispanic gender groups. Lopez et al. (2014) found that in 2012, 76% Hispanic females enrolled in college while only 62% Hispanic males enrolled right after high school; this is a 13 percentage-point gap. With low undergraduate matriculation college enrollment numbers prevailing in the Hispanic male community, research is needed to detect and identify reasons why Hispanic males are not matriculating, persisting, and graduating from college.

There have been various studies that have focused on the post-secondary challenges of Hispanic male students. Researchers found that the male Hispanic student population experienced socio-cultural factors, family support, workforce entry needs, and peer relationship adversities (Solorzao, Villapando & Osegura, 2005; Wimer & Bloom, 2014, Saenz & Ponjuan,

2009). However, self-efficacy has not been abundantly explored among Hispanic male college students emphasizing one-year persistence in college.

The present study focused on undergraduate Hispanic male college students in a four-year Hispanic-serving institution. This study explored the gap of high attrition rates associated with the group (Fry & Lopez, 2012; Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2014). This study also examined student persistence of entering freshman Hispanic males in relation to their self-efficacy throughout a one-year period attending a four-year Hispanic-serving higher education institution in South Texas.

Need for the Study

There is copious amount of literature available for African American students attending a historically black college or university pertaining to college retention and attrition (Laird, Bridges, Morelon-Quainoo, Williams & Holmes, 2007). However, the research is lacking involving Hispanic students, especially the male population (Crisp, 2011). Other studies have explored self-efficacy among Hispanic students, but have not honed in on the Hispanic male student population attending a Hispanic-serving four-year higher education institution (Bembennutty, 2010; Frost, 2009; Lopez, 2014; Solberg, 1993; Torres & Solberg, 2001; Whiting, 2009;).

Recently, a study addressing bicultural self-efficacy, student achievement, and persistence of Mexican American undergraduate college students attending a two-year institution was conducted (Kirk, 2013). The researcher emphasized bicultural self-efficacy as the confidence a person possesses to be productive and successful without compromising cultural identity (Kirk, 2013). In the study, Kirk (2013) did not find a significant difference between bicultural self-efficacy and persistence but provided evidence that bicultural self-efficacy plays a

role in student persistence in college. Kirk (2013) also found that student grade point averages were a significant predictor of persistence and suggested that Hispanic students who enrolled and were involved in college-success programs were more likely to persist and succeed in college.

Kirk (2013) emphasized minority students and self-efficacy in a Hispanic-serving higher education institution. However, to add to the body of self-efficacy knowledge, this research study specifically explored self-efficacy and persistence of first-year Hispanic male students attending a South Texas four-year Hispanic-serving institution. The first year of college is an important period that determines degree completion success (Schreiner, Louis & Nelson, 2012). The research concerning gender, self-efficacy and Hispanic students attending a four-year Hispanic-serving institution was deficient and must be expanded to open innovative possibilities of academic and support services that could be implemented in higher education institutions to address and increase college student persistence in an institution with a Hispanic dominate population. The present study addressed these pertinent issues regarding Hispanic male students' matriculation and persistence to completion of a bachelor's degree.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was two-fold. The quantitative component of the study examined the influence of self-efficacy on entering freshman Hispanic male students and their persistence in a Hispanic-serving four-year higher education institution located in South Texas. The qualitative component of the study explored the self-efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent male Hispanic students during the first year of college in the same selected four-year institution. Figure One and Figure Two are graphic organizers that are visual representations of the study for the quantitative and qualitative portions of this study.

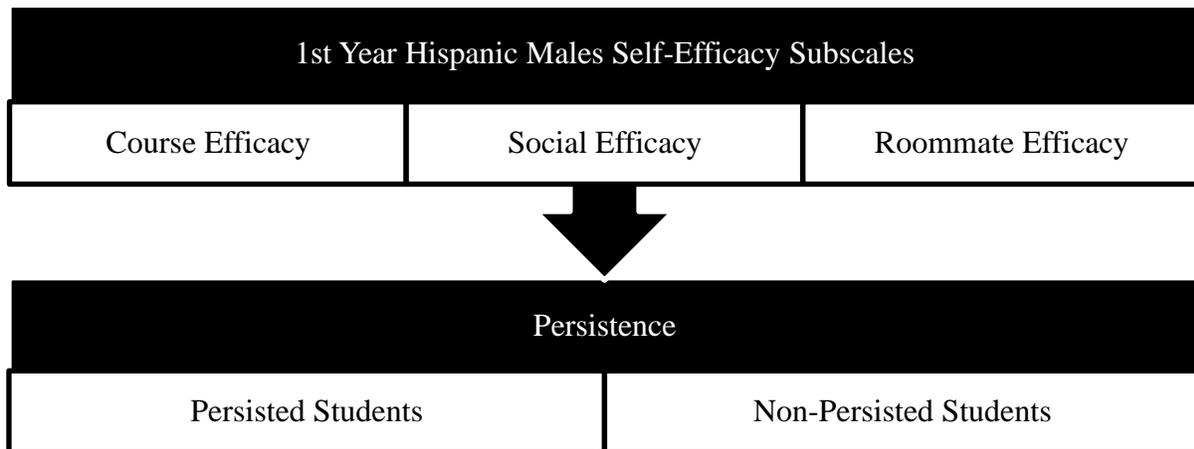


Figure 1. Quantitative Component – Visual representation of the quantitative component of the study.

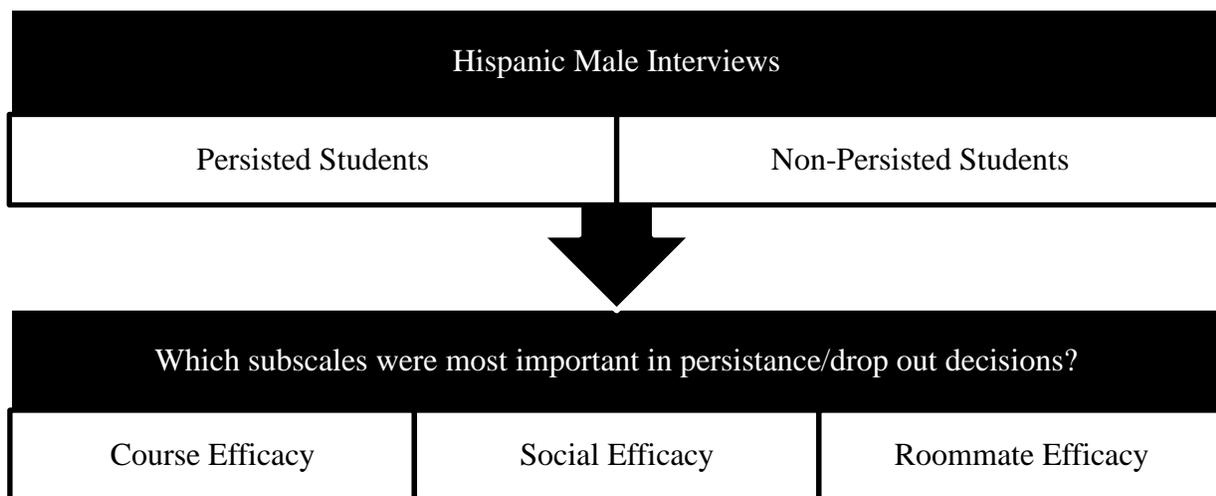


Figure 2. Qualitative Component – Visual representation of the qualitative component of the study.

Research Question, Hypothesis, and Overarching Statement

Research Question for Quantitative Component

- RQ1: What amount of the total variance in Hispanic-male first-year college students' persistence may be accounted for by self-efficacy?

Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis that was tested stated:

- H_01 : Hispanic-male first-year college students' persistence is not a function of self-efficacy.

Research Overarching Qualitative Component Statement

- Explore the self-efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent male Hispanic students during the first year of college.
 - What are the characteristics of persistent and non-persistent first year male Hispanic college students?
 - What are the social efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent first year male Hispanic college students?
 - What are the roommate characteristics of persistent/non-persistent first-year male Hispanic college students?
 - What are the course efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent first-year male Hispanic college students?

Methodology

According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), data collected using a mixed methods approach “can describe, in rich detail, phenomena as they are situated and embedded in local

contexts” (p. 20). For the investigation, the researcher used an explanatory sequential mixed method (Creswell & Clark, 2011) design. The first phase of the explanatory sequential design was chosen in order to provide quantitative data collection involving multiple sources of information to provide an in-depth interpretation of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The second phase of the explanatory sequential mixed methods approach provided qualitative narrative to complement meaning to numerical results (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

This explanatory sequential mixed method design was chosen to investigate self-efficacy and student persistence over one year among entering freshman Hispanic male students in a Hispanic-serving institution in South Texas. This approach was also chosen because the quantitative data collected at the beginning of the collection process utilizing male Hispanic college students served as a guide to the second phase of collection using qualitative methods to provide an in-depth investigation of the phenomenon pertaining to the student population.

For the quantitative analysis, an efficacy survey, College Self-Efficacy Inventory, of Hispanic students enrolled in mandatory freshman courses was analyzed (Appendix D). The instrument has been utilized in various other studies exploring self-efficacy and college students (Solberg & Villarreal, 1997; Vuong & Brown-Welty, 2010; Brady-Amoon & Fuertes, 2011). This instrument was selected because the quantitative component of the study was intended to investigate the self-efficacy levels among successfully retained Hispanic male students that persisted and Hispanic male students that dropped out of college at the selected Hispanic-serving four-year institution.

The quantitative study sample was based on the fall 2015 freshman cohort of the selected Hispanic-serving institution located in South Texas. A total of 266 male Hispanic freshman students were used for this study. The researcher requested participation from students enrolled

in college freshman courses. The fall 2015 freshman cohort at the selected higher education institution was composed of 5,820 entering freshmen. The student population included 2,807 males. The study sample included 9.4% of the male Hispanic freshman student population of the higher education institution (CBM001 and student file, Office of Strategic Analysis and Institutional Reporting (SAIR), STU, TX, 2015).

The study sampled the population using cluster sampling (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003). A random selection of clusters among the English (ENG) 1301, Learning Framework (UNIV) 1301, and History (HIST) 1301 courses were selected to participate. Permission was granted by the University College Dean, three academic department chairs, and teaching faculty to distribute the surveys to selected classes. A total of twenty-five individual classes were utilized for survey collection.

For the qualitative analysis of the study, one focus group interview and three individual interviews were conducted utilizing a semi-structured format (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) that focused on the male Hispanic student population. This particular approach was applied to provide an in-depth investigation stemming from the undergraduate Hispanic male students' perceptive of self-efficacy and student persistence at the institution. The focus group interview utilized participants who were selected based purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2013) and volunteer interest during the quantitative data collection process. The group was composed of male students who persisted over one year of college. The three individual interviews were composed of non-persisted male students via snowball sampling (Gay & Airasian, 2003) who withdrew from the higher education institution.

Definition of Terms

The terms used by the researcher have a special meaning and are defined in this subsection of the proposal.

Course Efficacy

Course efficacy is a student's ability to believe they possess and can perform/complete a skill or skills effectively leading to college course success, such as asking questions in class, speaking to a professor, studying for exams, and seeking assistance to understand course material (Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993).

Hispanic

The term Hispanic refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or Spanish culture or origin regardless of race (Ennis, Rios-Vargas & Albert, 2011).

Hispanic-Serving Institution (HIS)

The United States federal government defines a Hispanic-serving institution as an institution of higher education that has more than twenty-five percent of all undergraduate students identified as Hispanic (Higher Education Act, 2013).

Persistence

Persistence, as defined by Komives, Woodward, and Associates (2011), is an individual's ability to persist and not depart from a higher education institution before they attain a degree from the institution. However, in this study, persistence will be defined as a student's persistence of their first year of college from the fall semester to the following fall semester.

Roommate Efficacy

Roommate efficacy is a student's ability to believe they possess and can perform/complete a skill or skills effectively leading to successful roommate relationships, such as getting along with a roommate or roommates, socialize with a roommate or roommates and divide chores with a roommate or roommates (Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993).

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy theory is defined as a "students' beliefs in their efficacy to regulate their own learning and to master academic activities to determine their aspirations, level of motivation, and academic accomplishments" (Bandura, 1993, p. 117). Self-efficacy is a self-regulatory process that encompasses a person's beliefs about their personal capabilities and transcends to goals, motivation, and drives for success. With self-efficacy, people exercise their level of function over various situations in their lives. Self-efficacy "influence(s) how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave" (Bandura, 1993, p. 118).

Social Efficacy

Social efficacy is a student's ability to believe they possess and can perform/complete a skill or skills effectively leading to successful interpersonal relationships, such as obtaining a date, join a student organization, and make new friends (Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993).

Significance of the Study

There is limited research that specifically combines self-efficacy and persistence of Hispanic male students' experiences in a Hispanic-serving four-year institution. The number of Hispanic-serving institutions is expected to increase due of the growing population of Hispanics (Santiago & Andrade, 2010; Torres & Zerquera, 2012). In addition to the growth of Hispanic-

serving institutions, Hispanics experienced a recent milestone by surpassing Whites with college enrollment the fall semester after high school graduation (Fry & Taylor, 2013). Nevertheless, there still remains a low retention and completion rate of Hispanic students in colleges and universities (Santiago, 2009).

This study was needed to inform educational leaders about how and why Hispanic male students persist in postsecondary education after their first year. Research must be conducted on the alarming trend of decline within undergraduate male Hispanics to explore how the Hispanic-serving institutional environment may affect a male Hispanic student's self-efficacy levels and their persistence in college.

The study was also needed to provide guidelines that emphasize student self-efficacy with undergraduate Hispanic male college students. If positive self-efficacy of male Hispanic students can be identified and understood, then methods, approaches, and post-secondary institutional interventions can be developed in the future to assist students (Tinto, 2005). In the discussion section of this study, possibilities of new academic and support services are discussed that may be implemented in higher education institutions to address first-year students, Hispanic efficacy and increase college student persistence in an institution with a Hispanic dominate population. With such programs in place that specifically target this silent epidemic with first-year minority students, students would graduate with their credentials to produce a workforce with great earning potential (Alarcon & Edwards, 2013).

Delimitation of the Study

This study confined itself with data collection via surveys and focus group interviews with only undergraduate Hispanic male students from the selected Hispanic-serving four-year institution in South Texas.

Limitations of the Study

The design of the research study was an explanatory sequential mixed method (Creswell & Clark, 2011) approach with data and analysis that requires all subjects and participants to be members of the selected institution. The major limitation of this study was that the results of the study cannot be generalized to the male Hispanic college population. No other college students other than the students at the selected higher education institution were utilized for this study. The results can only be applied to the Hispanic male population attending the selected four-year Hispanic-institution in South Texas (Creswell, 2007). Generalization may not be possible, but the results of the study may be transferable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 1994) to other four-year Hispanic-serving institutions.

The other limitation of the study was that participants of the quantitative and qualitative components of the study were volunteers. Gay and Airasian (2009) stated that people who volunteer tend to strive for a higher level of achievement and may jeopardize the internal validity of the sample. During the focus groups, the researcher was cognizant of the sensitive needs of the Hispanic male students that persisted and students that dropped out.

Assumptions

The assumptions of this investigation were that the quantitative participants were honest in their responses to the questions on the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (Solberg, Hale, Villarreal & Kavanagh, 1993) and the qualitative participants were honest in their responses to the questions that were addressed during the focus group interviews. The assumptions were presumed to be true but were not actually verified in the study (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

Summary

The introduction section of this study detailed the following: statement of the problem; purpose of the study; research questions; definition of terms; significance of the study; and, limitations of the study. The study investigated the persistence of undergraduate entering freshman Hispanic male students in relation to their self-efficacy throughout a one-year period attending a Hispanic-serving four-year institution in South Texas. The study was needed because of the growing rate of Hispanics, the rise of enrollment figures in higher education, and the continuous low percentages of completion among male Hispanics compared to female Hispanics and other minority groups in the nation. The primary goal for government and higher education should be the completion of college programs regardless of race, gender, or income to intellectually and financially enrich the community.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this review of literature, pertinent research was compiled that was relevant to this study. The chapter will discuss higher education research trends in retention and theoretical framework used to explain why college students quit college before obtaining their degree. To explore this phenomenon, Tinto and Cullen (1973) began the discussion of student retention with a report compiled for the U.S. Office of Education concerning higher education dropouts. The initial report expanded into a theoretical explanation of student characteristics that experience attrition and the responsibility of a higher education institution's need to address academic retention issues (Tinto, 1975). The current study will use Tinto's revised (1993) Model of Institutional Departure as a basis for understanding why students drop out of college. The review of literature will also examine research concerning higher education and retention theoretical framework; Hispanic-serving institutions; Hispanic students in higher education; Hispanics and Texas higher education retention/persistence; Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program and institutions of higher education, males, females, and higher education retention/persistence; residential status and retention and self-efficacy and retention.

Higher Education and Retention Theoretical Framework

For decades, higher education institutions and education researchers have attempted to figure out what institutions can do to help students come to college and then stay to graduate. This conundrum is not just an American college problem; it is a global challenge as well

(O’Keeffe, 2013). Research in raising retention rates of students in higher education institutions has expanded over forty years (Tinto, 2005). Although institutions have developed and implemented interventions to avoid student attrition, attrition rates still exist, especially within college minority populations (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012; Supiano, 2011).

Tinto and Cullen (1973) began the conversation of explaining why students drop out of higher education institutions with contract work conducted for the Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Evaluation under the U.S. Office of Education. Soon after, the most profound theoretical framework attempting to explain student attrition was developed with Tinto’s (1975, 1987 & 1993) Model of Institutional Departure. Tinto was the first researcher who attempted to explain, in theory, why students leave and urged higher education leaders to change institutional policy to raise student retention rates. In this model (see Figure 3), Tinto (1993) explained that college students go through a three-phase process throughout their first year at a higher education institution.

Tinto (1993) stated that if a student did not successfully pass the three phases in the model during the first year of college, the student was at serious risk of attrition. The three phases included separation, transition, and incorporation. The separation phase entailed that the student must separate from the group they were formerly associated with to be able to transition into the academic collegiate environment. Once the student accomplishes separation, they could transition (transition phase) into their new environment and be incorporated academically and socially (incorporation phase) into the college setting.

Tinto (1993) further explained that pre-entry attributes, preliminary and reassessed goals, social systems, institutional experiences, and personal integration are all important elements contributing to the success of a college student. External communities, such as family and/or

work, also influenced a student's decision to stay enrolled or drop out of a higher education institution (Tinto, 1993).

With Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure, the question of how higher educational institutions can help student retention grow became a complex and dynamic phenomenon that varied depending on the student population and the institution. Although the first Model of Institutional Departure was based on Tinto's (1975) available student population, White middle-class students, the model can be used with minority groups when taken into account the experiences of diverse individuals.

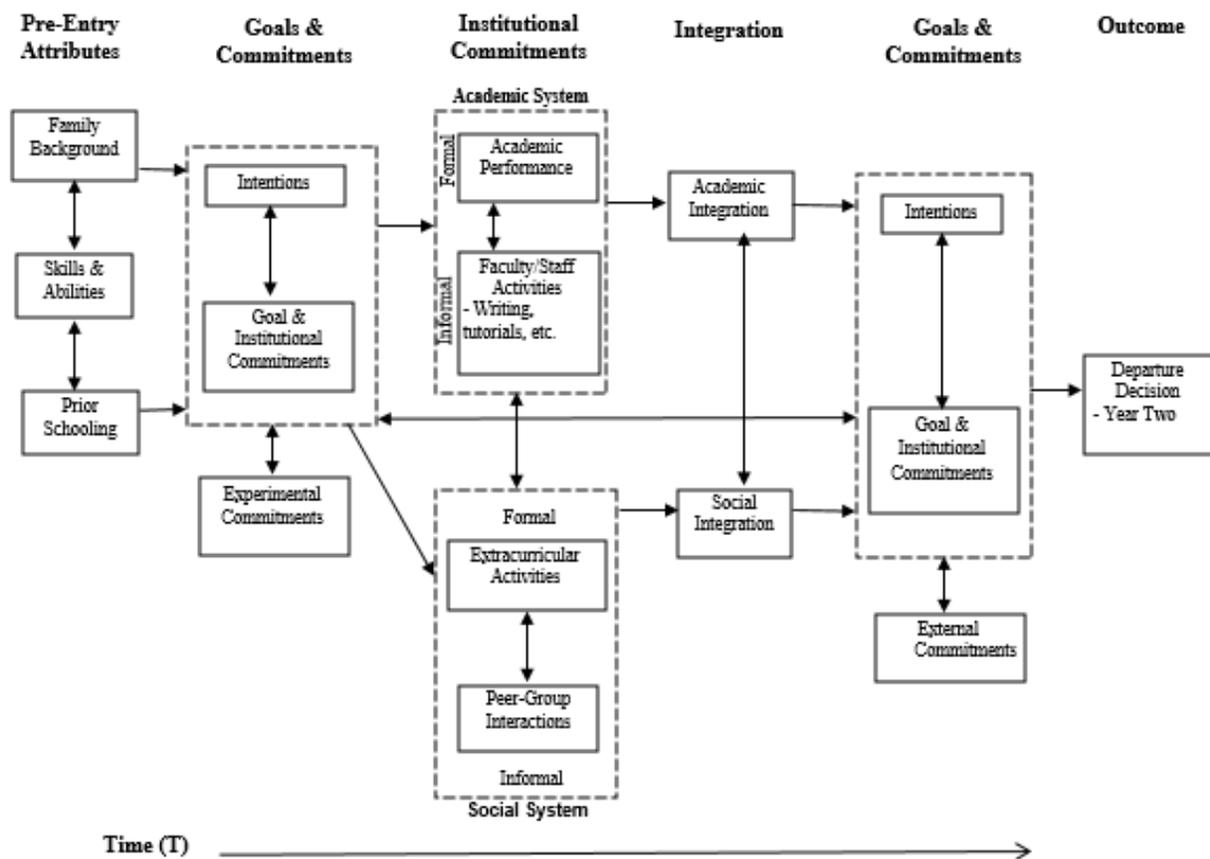


Figure 3. Tinto's (1993) Model of Institutional Departure. *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (2nd ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 114.

Recent studies have utilized the model to explore diverse persistence and retention topics on Hispanic student populations. Such studies include the investigation of Hispanic college student retention in mathematics (Pena-Park, 2012) and other developmental courses in college (Crisp & Nora, 2009). Other studies have also used the model with emphasis on self-efficacy and minority groups, such as Crisp, Nora, and Taggart's (2009) study on STEM degree programs and Concannon and Barrow's (2009) study on engineering students. Investigations on teacher student relationships (Barnett, 2011) among Hispanic students and faculty have also validated Tinto's (1993) model used with the Hispanic college student population.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions

In 1992, the federal government formally recognized Hispanic-serving institutions during the George H. W. Bush administration (Calderon Galdeano, Flores, & Moder, 2012). Hispanic-serving intuitions were defined as a two-year or four-year higher education institution that is accredited, degree granting, not-for-profit college with an enrollment percentage of at least 25 percent full-time Hispanic students (Santiago, 2006; Santiago, 2007). Although recognized in 1992, federal funding for Hispanic-serving institutions was not appropriated until 1995 (Higher Education Act, 2013). Reauthorization came up in 1998 and Congressman Ruben Hinojosa assisted with the movement of Hispanic-serving institutions to function under Title V of the U.S. Higher Education Act (Calderon Galdeano et al., 2012).

Out of all post-secondary institutions nationwide, Hispanic-serving institutions made up only 11% of all higher education institutions (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014b). However, Hispanic-serving institutions enrolled 59% of all Hispanic college students (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014b). According to Torres and Zerquera (2012), the number of Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) continued to rise due to the Hispanic college population growth. Evidence of

the growth is supported by the 60 percent increase in the past ten years of HSIs that was identified by a report from Excelencia in Education (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014a).

In Texas, there are currently 68 Hispanic-serving institutions, systems, and districts (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014b). The number makes up 16 percent of all HSIs in the United States. In 2013, 48 additional Texas higher education institutions were identified as emerging Hispanic-serving institutions due to institutional Hispanic enrollment presently between 15 and 24 percent (Calderon Galdeano & Santiago, 2014a). Texas is the second state with the highest number of emerging institutions (Galdeano & Santiago, 2014a). With a potential number of 161 HSIs in Texas in the near future, it is vital for research to focus on Hispanic student retention, attrition, and completion rates in higher education institutions.

Hispanic Students in Higher Education

The growth of HSIs in the U.S. and the state of Texas was a result of two facts: lower Hispanic high school dropout rates and Hispanic college enrollment immediately after high school graduation (Fry & Taylor, 2013). According to the Pew Hispanic Research Center (Fry & Taylor, 2013) the high school dropout rate in the United States among Hispanics was at an all-time low in 2011 (14%) and seven out of ten Hispanic high school graduates were enrolling in a higher education institution in the Fall of 2012 (Fry & Taylor, 2013). According to Fry and Taylor (2013), for the first time in history the number of Hispanic students enrolled in higher education (69%) exceeded the number of White high school graduates by two percentage points (67%). Although gains have been noted with Hispanic students entering college, they are still least likely to obtain a bachelor's degree than any other ethnic group with only 13.9% of Hispanics holding the education credential (Brown & Patten, 2014).

The National Center for Education Statistics (2010) stated that a larger number of Hispanic students are making the transition from secondary schools to postsecondary institutions, but they are not completing a college degree. The Hispanic completion rate (11%) was the lowest compared to the overall population rate (27%), the White rate (33%), and the Black rate (17%) of the same age group composed of people between the ages of 25 and 29 years old (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). These alarming reports indicated a clear problem: once Hispanic students arrived and enrolled in college, they were not retained, and did not complete a bachelor's degree plan.

Higher education institutions are still seen as ivory towers by ethnic groups, especially Hispanics, despite their understanding of the importance of education (Campbell & Mislavy, 2013; Ishitani, 2006; Schneider, Martinez & Ownes, 2006). Federal efforts, such as the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), and state initiatives, such as Texas' Closing the Gaps (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2006) and the 60X30 TX (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2015) campaigns have increased Hispanic college enrollment; however, Hispanic student college graduation rates are at an extreme low (Brown & Patten, 2014). Clearly, there is a problem and government agencies have organized a collective vision to strategize and address the urgent issue; however, the dilemma still exists.

Hispanics and Texas Higher Education Retention/Persistence

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), the Hispanic people were major players in the makeup of the Texas population (37.6%). However, the Hispanic population in Texas reflected the educational demographics that had been experienced at a national level. The U.S. Census 2013 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013) found that only 20.3% of Hispanics over the age of 25 years old in Texas hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

Due to this quandary, research was conducted in various areas that spotlighted higher education minority retention trends and interventions in Texas (ACT, 2012; Meling, Kupczynski, Mundy, & Green, 2012, Niu & Tienda, 2006; Raab & Adam, 2005). The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board also made an attempt to offer guidance in raising retention rates by producing a manual for higher education institutions specifically targeting retention strategies to be used by institutional administrators (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2004). The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board suggested the important of an institution-wide retention program and guidelines on the operation of financial aid programs, recruitment and admissions strategies, academic services proposals, curriculum and instruction approaches, student services efforts that may be incorporated to assist the retaining of college students.

A study conducted by Frost (2007) involved college expectations of Texas students immediately after high school and provided insight regarding Hispanic student college aspirations. Frost (2007) found that “greater proportions of minority students... (was associated) with higher levels of students’ expectations to graduate with a four-year college degree” (p. 59). In addition, Frost (2007) also found that the “negative relationship between the proportion of minority students and educational expectations is reversed when schools with similar kinds of students, socioeconomic levels, and scholarship achievement are compared” (p. 60). Frost (2007) stated that great proportions of minority students within an educational institution influence the educational expectations of students positively. This was especially the case in institutions that were dense with Hispanic populations. Such high proportions of Hispanic students can be found in Texas’ Hispanic-serving institutions located in South Texas. Research was needed to investigate if students in dense minority populations in high schools

with high levels of expectations had self-efficacy and were retained in a Hispanic-serving institution.

There have been studies that have involved student participants attending the selected South Texas Hispanic-serving institution for the study. The research pertained to identifying skills of successfully retained students (Salinas & Llanes, 2003), prior college course work attempted (Hinojosa & Salinas, 2012), and preparatory programs, such as AVID (Huerta, Watt, & Reyes, 2013; Watt, Butcher, & Ramirez, 2013), that impacted student retention. More recently, Kirk (2013) explored student persistence at a two-year college in South Texas that participated in a higher education course that utilized high engagement strategies developed by the AVID program. The study found that cultural identity of minority students was important for the maintaining and strengthening of self-efficacy and Hispanic-serving institutions must provide networks, resources, and programs to target special populations.

These studies explored students in highly dense minority populations. This study attempted to add to the body of knowledge pertaining to Hispanic students in Texas. The study explored specifically self-efficacy and persistence of first-year male Hispanic students attending a South Texas four-year Hispanic-serving institution.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program and Institutions of Higher Education

According to the United States Department of Education (U.S. Department of Education, 2015), DACA is the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA). In 2015, President Obama signed into action the DACA program that allowed undocumented immigrant children, who met certain immigration and education guidelines, a deferred immigration action grace period of two years. Submittal and approval of a DACA immigration application was required to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to gain DACA status. Once

an undocumented immigrant child obtained DACA status, the risk of deportation from federal immigration agencies and law enforcement officials was non-existent and prohibited. The program did not allow students to work in the United States; however, educational access in higher education institutions was widened and lawfully permitted (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

In some states, such as Texas, DACA was extended to assist with financial assistance to pay for college (SB 1528, 2005). DACA students were provided the opportunity to apply for state-based grants with eligibility based on family income. In September 2017, President Trump ended the DACA Program (Shear & Hirschfeld Davis, 2017). As of the date of this study, there have been no alternatives or options for DACA students to extend or renew their immigration status in the United States.

Males, Females and Higher Education Retention/Persistence

Historically, the number of Hispanic students enrolled in college was one of the lowest recorded numbers of all demographic groups in the nation (U.S. Census, 2010). In addition to low overall enrollment numbers, there was a silent epidemic that has been overlooked in higher education Hispanic gender research (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). A gender swing had gradually made its presence within the past few decades among student college populations around the United States (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). According to a report published by the Pew Research Center (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014), Hispanic females were outpacing Hispanic males in college enrollment percentages.

Lopez and González-Barrera (2014) stated that in 1994, 52% of all Hispanic female high school graduates and 52% of all Hispanic male high school graduates enrolled in college immediately after graduation. Almost twenty years later, there had been a growing disparity

among the Hispanic gender groups. In 2012, 76% Hispanic females enrolled in college while only 62% Hispanic males enrolled right after high school; a 13 percentage-point gap (Lopez & González- Barrera, 2014).

The widening of the Hispanic gender gap has recently caught the attention of the local, state, and federal governments. With the 2009 Closing the Gaps Progress Report (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2009), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) began taking note of the gap among minority gender groups. In 2010, the THECB rewrote the Hispanic population higher education participation goals to include specifically Hispanic males as an emphasized target in its strategies and initiatives (THECB, 2010). In 2015, the *60X30 TX* state plan continued to include goals that targeted males (THECB, 2015). As the minority gender gap grew in Texas and around the United States, the federal government also acted by means of enacting policy to address the problem on a national level.

On February 27, 2014, President Barack Obama signed into action a federal task force to join public and private entities to address the obstacles faced by young men of color that might obstruct them from reaching their full potential. The presidential initiative, *My Brother's Keeper*, was “an interagency effort to improve measurably the expected educational and life outcomes for, and address the persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color” (The White House, 2014, p. 1). The focus of the plan was to create more opportunities to help guide young men of color by assessing federal policies, regulations, and programs; incentives to adopt strategies and programs; and work with various constituents to “assess (on an) ongoing basis, critical indicators of life outcomes for boys and young men of color in absolute and relative terms” (The White House, 2014, p. 1)

Prior to Texas's and President Obama's efforts, various researchers explored the trend and stated that the vanishing Hispanic male in higher education was attributed to high Hispanic male high school dropout rates, immediate entry into the workforce, and generally experienced higher rates of attrition if they did enroll in a post-secondary education institution (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Solorzao, Villapando, & Oseguera, 2005; Yosso & Solorzano, 2006). Saenz and Ponjuan (2009) added that socio-cultural factors, the workforce, and peers contributed to the widening of the gap among Hispanic male college students.

Retention, attrition, and persistence were research themes pertaining to Hispanic students attending higher education. Some areas of research that focused on Hispanic students and gender groups included studies regarding access to college information (Kimura-Walsh, Yamaura, Griffin & Allen, 2010), mentoring programs (Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010; Putsche, Storrs, Lewis, & Haylett, 2008; Whiting, 2009), socio-cultural factors (Lopez, 2013; Riegle-Crumb, 2010; Saenz, Bukoski, Lu, & Rodriguez, 2013; Shiu, 2008), and self-efficacy (Hutchison-Green, Follman, & Bodner, 2008).

Research efforts in gender investigations focused on Hispanic female students attending higher education and Hispanic males in community colleges (Arbona, 2016; Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010; Hutchison-Green, Follman, & Bodner, 2008; Kimura-Walsh, Yamaura et al., 2010; Lopez, 2013; Putsche et al., 2008; Riegle-Crumb, 2010; Saenz, Bukoski, Lu, & Rodriguez, 2013; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Shiu, 2008; Solorzao et al., 2005; Whiting, 2009; Yosso & Solorzano, 2006). Studies were lacking with a focus pertaining on Hispanic males in a four-year Hispanic-serving institution. To expand this underserved area, the present study spotlighted undergraduate Hispanic males and self-efficacy in a four-year Hispanic-serving institution of higher education dominated by a Hispanic population in South Texas.

Residential Status and Retention

Shushok, and Manz (2012) stated that a college student's academic and social transition takes place in and out of the classroom. Deep growth and development manifest at many levels when classroom learning infuses with out-of-classroom experiences. Gerdes and Malinckrodt (1994) found that "personal adjustment and integration into the social fabric of campus life play a role at least as important as academic factors in student retention" (p. 286). Additionally, Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, Andreas, Lyons, & Strange (1991) stated that a positive environmental college culture was a great contributor of academic pursuits and successful academic transitions.

The residential status of a college student is a major component of the environmental culture of a higher education institution. There is an abundance of research concerning college students, academic performance, persistence and residential status. The results of empirical studies have provided evidence of the importance of a student's residential status in terms of academic success (Inman & Pascarella, 1998; Jamelske, 2009) and social integration (Kaya, 2004; Long, 2014). College residential settings are a crucial environmental factor with student learning and success (Strange & Banning, 2001). Formulation of student goals and commitments organically grow and develop with contributions from residential settings.

Student residential studies have linked Tinto's theory of student departure (1993) with freshman social integration and persistence (Kurotsuchi Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, & Brown Leonard, 2007; Campbell & Fugua, 2009; Soria & Taylor, 2016; Skuhill, 2003). In addition, research has been conducted to analyze students exclusively who live on campus during their higher education journey.

Pike, Schroder, and Berry (1997) found that living on campus provided students with socio-emotional advantages by introducing and integrating them into the college environment.

Kuh (2001) stated that residential campuses had stronger cultures than commuter campuses, thus allowing an environment where intrapersonal feelings of belonging flourished among college students.

Other research provided evidence that living on campus predicted persistence and improved academic performance among college freshmen students (Walsh & Kurpius, 2015; Lopez Turley & Wodtke, 2010; Bozick, 2007; Pascarella, Bohr, Nora, Zusman & Inman, 1993; Jamelske, 2009). Supplementary studies found the same positive persistence results with minority students living on campus (Lopez Turley & Woodtke, 2010).

Conversely, Skahill (2003) investigated commuter college students and compared their experiences with students who lived on campus. The results found that commuter students were less likely to persist in college. Skahill found that a commuter student's college experience was quite different than a residential student, especially in their first year of college. He explained that residential students had more opportunities to engage in social and academic experiences that allowed them to develop and attain their academic and social goals, such as making new friends, utilizing academic resources, and communicating with faculty. Skahill (2003) elaborated that commuter students were more likely to drop out of school when obstacles manifested because of an existing social network outside of school and a physical home was within reach. In contrast, residential students were more compelled to work through problems to avoid relocation back home.

Various studies have also found commuter students lacking a sense of belonging with their higher education institution (Manely Lima, 2014) and a lower rate of persistence (Ishitani & Reid, 2015). Moreover, commuter students were traditionally faced with a varied number of non-academic commitments, such as work and family, which impact their college experiences

(Burlison, 2015). A lack of sense of belonging and a myriad of other important commitments that stem beyond the academia sphere were prevalent with many commuter students.

Self-Efficacy and Retention

There are many student behaviors and academic skills that scholars have investigated in attempting to identify the major predictors of student retention (Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010; Kahn & Nauta, 2007, Salinas & Llanes, 2003). One such behavior that has researched in research was self-efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura & Wood, 1989; Cabrera et al., 2005; Caprara et al., 1992; Chwalisz et al., 1992; Solberg & Villarreal 1997; Zajacora et al., 2005). This section will explore the self-efficacy theory, its effect on student learning, college retention, and persistence.

Bandura's Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1993) defined self-efficacy theory as the “students’ beliefs in their efficacy to regulate their own learning and to master academic activities to determine their aspirations, level of motivation, and academic accomplishments” (Bandura, 1993, p. 117). Self-efficacy was a self-regulatory process that encompassed a person’s beliefs about their personal capabilities and transcended to goals, motivation, and drives for success. With self-efficacy, people exercised their level of function in their lives. Self-efficacy “influence(s) how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave” (Bandura, 1993, p. 118). There were four major processes in self-efficacy identified by Bandura (1993): cognitive, motivational, affective, and the selection process.

Cognitive Process. In the cognitive process, people set personal goals by way of their perceived self-appraisal of capabilities (Bandura, 1991). People who had a high sense of self-efficacy thought positive and had successful futures. This, in turn, led them to more positive self-

guidance, performance, and goals. Hence, a person who had low self-efficacy and great academic skills could perform poorly. Bandura (1993) added, “it requires a strong sense of efficacy to remain task oriented in the face of pressing situational demands and failures” (p. 120). To support this concept, Collins (1982) conducted a study that involved children and mathematical skills at different levels. The investigation found that positive math attitudes were correlated to positive self-efficacy; not by natural ability. Students who had high self-efficacy levels always outperformed students with low self-efficacy at every test administration in the study.

The cognitive process also addressed how people interpreted their ability. According to Bandura (1993), some people interpreted ability by their perceived intellect. If their perceived intellect and self-efficacy was low, then low performance occurred; they believed that their failure was attributed to lack of intelligence and not because of lack of effort. Bandura (1993) stated that some people interpreted their ability by their own personal improvement. For example, if a child had high self-efficacy, they believed they did have the ability to learn more and become more resilient. This belief of improvement relied on the time and effort an individual invested to advance. If the individual chose to invest time and effort, they followed through with endeavors to improve themselves (Bandura, 1993).

The cognitive processes also affected a student’s ability to respond to a situation with an approximate emotional response. Bandura and Wood (1989) stated that self-efficacy influenced how people perceived the extent that they could control their environment, situation, and circumstances regardless of ability (Bandura & Wood, 1989). People with low self-efficacy viewed any effort to change their environment as useless; they did little to change. This was the case even if there were many opportunities presented before them that changed their lives in a

positive manner. On the other hand, people with high self-efficacy perceived that they did have the power to change their lives, situations, and environments. These types of people tried to find a way to find outlets and develop solutions towards opportunities. Once more, it was a student's internal understanding of personal commitment with time and effort that they could improve his/her life (Bandura, 1993).

Motivational Process. The next process in self-efficacy was the motivational process (Bandura, 1993). The motivational process was where the self-regulation of motivation was a product of one's self-beliefs (Bandura, 1991). "Self-efficacy beliefs contribute to motivation in several ways: They determine the goals people set for themselves, how much effort they expend, how long they persevere in the face of difficulties, and their resilience to failures" (Bandura, 1993, p. 131).

There were three forms of cognitive motivators: casual attributions, expectancy-value theory, and cognized goals (Bandura, 1993). Casual attributions explained how people perceived their failures. People with high self-efficacy believed they had failed because of lack of effort. People with low self-efficacy believed they had failed because of low ability (Bandura, 1993).

In the motivational process, the expectancy-value theory explained that motivation was generated by the person's expectant outcome of the behavior. To support this concept in college retention, Kahn and Nauta (2007) found a predictor of successful academic retention with self-motivators developed intrinsically by students. Kahn and Nauta (2007) found that a student's first year success was influenced by his/her beliefs about the consequences of not persisting in college. In the study, the student's belief of the consequences prompted their drive to graduate from college. Students who feared the consequences did graduate the majority of the time.

The final cognitive motivator came in the form of cognized goals. Cognized goals were assembled with the self-influence process; they were not created through direct action (Locke & Latham, 1990). This theory stated that the motivation of self was conspired by setting challenging goals, incentives, and reflection of goals along the way. The self-satisfaction of achieving goals was the driving force for setting challenges. In their study, Cabrera et al., (2005) described elements that were important in predicting Hispanics completing a higher education program and that could be attributed to cognized goals. Cabera et al (2005) investigated course-taking patterns and Hispanic students that challenged themselves in high school with college preparatory curriculum. In the study, the researchers found that the experience and success with high challenges boosted the students' academic confidence in higher education (Cabrera et al., 2005). The high school cognized goals and the successful experiences led students to form new cognized goals for higher education.

Affective Process. The next self-efficacy process discussed in this section pertained to the affective process. In this process, stress and depression were directly affected by a person's perceived capabilities (Bandura, 1993). This theory stated that the higher the self-efficacy, the better coping mechanisms an individual utilized and executed when faced with stress and depression. An individual coped by focusing on solutions to problems, rather than emotions that heightened stress levels (Chwalisz et al., 1990). Students with high self-efficacy found ways to deal with the academic stresses and persevere (Solberg & Villarreal, 1997). Students with high levels of self-efficacy could even alter how stress was experienced.

Bandura (1993) added that "perceived self-efficacy to control thought processes is a key factor in regulating thought produced stress and depression. Students who have a low sense of efficacy to manage academic demands are especially vulnerable to achievement anxiety"

(Bandura, 1993, p. 133). When comparing both stress and self-efficacy, Zajacova, Lynch, and Espenshae (2005) found that stress did affect academic success, but self-efficacy was a more consistent predictor determining a student's success in college.

Selection Process. Finally, Bandura (1993) stated that “people are partly the product of their environment” (p. 135). The self-efficacy of a person can be a deciding factor as to the selection of the activities and environments they choose based on the perceived coping abilities they possess. “People avoid activities and situations they believe exceed their coping capabilities” (Bandura, 1993, p. 135). The selection process established how students met other people, their interests they developed, and the networks they were introduced to that can played an important role with life outcomes.

Self-Efficacy and College Retention

Key factors to college retention and degree completion success encompassed many variables, but the research and theory supported that student self-efficacy was an important element to student learning and overall success (Bandura, 1993). Bandura (1993) stated that the higher the self-efficacy, the higher the student's perception were to learn more and perform better academically. Research also found that there were strong correlations between high levels of self-efficacy and college persistence (De Witz & Walsh, 2002; Torres & Solberg, 2001). However, students needed to learn how to hone in their self-efficacy through self-regulation. Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) stated that self-regulation needed to be learned and students who learned how to self-regulate performed better academically. Academic success of college students assisted in the retention rates of higher education institutions.

The research regarding high self-efficacy and learning the self-regulation process found that students that had high self-efficacy not only performed better academically, but were also

more social and popular (Caprara et al., 1992). These research findings supported the idea that students who were engaged in school learned to persist academically and socially (Ream & Rumberger, 2008).

Ream and Rumberger (2008) also found that high levels of school engagement promoted positive expectations and prevented dropouts at the high school level. If students were not actively engaged and chose to socialize with dropouts, they formed anti-scholastic identities and were more likely to drop out as well. Although the Ream and Rumberger (2008) study pertained to high school students, the findings could be applied to higher education students. Multon et al. (1991) found that across all school levels (primary, secondary, and post-secondary) self-efficacy contributed to student persistence.

Hispanic Student Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy among Hispanic populations has been investigated since the 1980's; however, the focus on Hispanic students enrolled in higher education institutions was more recent (Crowder, 1982; Garcia & Martinez, 1984; Gonzalez & Gonzalez, 1990; Holloway, Gorman & Fuller, 1987; Sabogal, Oero, Eliseo & Marin, 1989). It was not until the early 1990's that research began to investigate Hispanic college students and the role that self-efficacy played on student retention and persistence (Solberg, 1991).

There has been empirical literature conducted with the two variables: self-efficacy and Hispanic college students. One such study by Torres and Solberg (2001) explored four constructs (Torres & Solberg, 2001). The study targeted self-efficacy, stress, social integration, and family support. The findings for the Torres and Solberg (2001) research concluded that high levels of self-efficacy were attributed to stronger persistence rates and positive intentions in college.

Another study (Whiting, 2009) found that self-efficacy, willingness to sacrifice, internal locus of control, self-awareness, academic self-confidence, and racial pride were all characteristics identified as strong predictors of success in black and Hispanic males. According to Whiting (2009), self-efficacy was an important characteristic of successful students of color. Bembennutty (2010) also found that college students with high levels of self-efficacy developed motivation, self-regulation learning skills, and learned how to delay gratification. The existing research regarding self-efficacy and Hispanic students have depicted a strong relationship between self-efficacy and persistence to graduation.

Gender and Self-Efficacy

Evidence supporting that self-efficacy differences among gender groups have been found to exist. Hutchison-Green et al. (2008) found that male and female engineering students perceive their self-efficacy differently. The males in the study attributed positive self-efficacy influenced by their perceived academic superiority over classmates. In contrast, the women gained positive self-efficacy by developing relationships and obtaining knowledge of others with the same ability.

More differences that Hutchison-Green et al. (2008) found between the genders included that men were more likely to remember positive experiences and females were more likely to remember negative experiences. When asked about nonverbal behavior influences and self-efficacy, males reported that they were not affected by nonverbals of people, while females did report being affected by the nonverbals of those around them.

Hutchison et al. (2008) found that the same students differed when asked about how their self-efficacy was affected with the multitasking that college students encounter. Females perceived that they could not multi-task as well as their peers, thus lowering their self-efficacy.

Men did not perceive multi-tasking as a possible problem and their self-efficacy remained unchanged.

Lopez (2013) conducted a study among Hispanic students and focused on the gender differences among self-efficacy levels. Lopez gathered data on two separate occasions throughout one college academic year and explored if self-efficacy levels changed among the gender groups. The first data collection period took place in the fall semester and the second data collection period took place at the end of the spring semester. Lopez found that during the first part of the academic year, male participants rated themselves with high self-efficacy levels and females rated themselves with low levels. However, when participants were rated at the end of the school year, self-reported self-efficacy rates were similar among the genders. Lopez (2013) attributed the results to males overestimating and females underestimating their abilities in college. Lopez stated that “males report a decrease in self-efficacy over the course of the first year of college attendance... [due to] Latino males hav[ing] been found to experience more difficulty with academic and social integration” (2013, p. 100). The sample was conducted in a White-dominated college campus and the Hispanic students may have experienced negative experiences due to their minority status on campus. However, the results of Lopez’s (2013) study stimulated interest to investigate if the same results might be found among Hispanic males in a Hispanic-serving institution where the Hispanic ethnicity group was the majority.

Collective School Efficacy

Collective school efficacy can be a major contributor to positive student self-efficacy and retention results. Bandura (1993) stated that the “faculties’ belief in their collective institutional efficacy contribute significantly to their school’s level of academic achievement” (p. 140). Bandura (1993) continued to emphasize collective school efficacy by stating that “schools staff

members who collectively judge themselves capable of promoting academic success imbue their schools with a positive atmosphere for development” (p. 141).

Reason, Terenzini, and Domingo (2006) found that teacher and institutional engagement promoted student success. The study also found that students who felt they were supported by faculty and staff with academic and non-academic activities reported greater academic improvements. Faculty were more affable to “pitch in” their efforts for retention when the institution viewed student’s first-year experience crucial. Based on the empirical research and with a positive school efficacy culture, students thrived academically and were guided to academic and college completion success. Additionally, several studies investigated how active engagement practices and high expectations made a difference in Hispanic college populations. Frost (2007) investigated student college expectations and how those expectations differed in schools with a heavy minority population. Frost (2007) found that students that came from high schools with a heavier minority population and engagement level did have a higher expectation of college aspirations and expectations to complete college. The Frost study (2007) included Hispanic students, but the colleges the students matriculated during the research were predominately higher education institutions where Whites were the majority. Research regarding minority students attending colleges and universities dense in numbers of ethnically diverse students was small.

There was an abundance of literature available for African American students attending a historically black college or university, but the research was lacking for Hispanic students attending a Hispanic-serving institution (Crisp, 2011; Laird, Bridges, Morelon-Quainoo, Williams & Holmes, 2007). The research concerning self-efficacy and male Hispanic students attending a four-year Hispanic-serving institution was deficient. Research is needed to explore

how the Hispanic-serving institutional environment, including perceived teacher and institutional engagement, may affect a male Hispanic student's self-efficacy levels.

Summary

Although Hispanics are the fastest growing population, their educational attainment is not flourishing (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Traditionally, Hispanics are among the lowest participative group in higher education institutions (Fry & Taylor, 2013; National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). Although the number of Hispanic college students is on the rise, the number of Hispanic students receiving a bachelor's degree has not increased (Brown & Patten, 2014). Among the Hispanic population, Hispanic females are outnumbering and outperforming males in college completion rates (Lopez & González- Barrera, 2014; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). This alarming fact takes the issue to a more significant problem, as Hispanic-serving institutions are growing by large percentages every year.

Research regarding Hispanic college students and retention has been collected; however, studies regarding self-efficacy, retention, and undergraduate Hispanic males in Hispanic-serving higher education institutions are scarce (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura & Wood, 1989; Cabrera et al., 2005; Caprara et al., 1992; Chwalisz, Altmaier & Russell, 1992; Solberg, & Villarreal 1997; Zajacora, Lynch, & Espenshade, 2005). With Hispanic-serving institutions as a vital educational pipeline that supplies educated people to a minority group demographically on the rise, it is imperative to conduct research to identify and explore the dynamics of Hispanic students to meet with the demand of tomorrow's educated workforce.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

This research study investigated self-efficacy and the persistence of undergraduate Hispanic male college students attending a four-year Hispanic-serving higher education institution in South Texas from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016. The primary goal of this study was to examine fall-to-fall persistence of entering freshman Hispanic male students in relation to their self-efficacy throughout a one-year period. This chapter includes details of the study's the research design, quantitative research design, quantitative research questions and hypotheses, quantitative sampling strategies, quantitative data collection procedures, quantitative instrumentation, quantitative analysis procedures, qualitative research design, qualitative research overarching statement, qualitative participants, qualitative data collection procedures, qualitative data analysis and procedures, qualitative instrumentation, research bias, delimitations, limitations, and assumptions of the study. A summary will be provided at the end of the chapter.

Research Design

For this investigation, an explanatory sequential mixed methods (Creswell & Clark, 2011) design was utilized. The explanatory sequential mixed methods study was used to provide detailed data collection involving multiple sources of information to provide an in-depth interpretation of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). This study was utilized to highlight self-efficacy and student persistence over a one-year period among entering freshman Hispanic male students in a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) in South Texas.

The design began with data collection utilizing a survey of self-efficacy (Appendix D) and student volunteers in various freshman courses for the quantitative data collection phase. The study then proceeded to the statistical analysis of the self-efficacy student survey data. Utilizing the results of the quantitative data analysis as a guide, the researcher intended to conduct two focus group interviews; persistent males and non-persistent males. However, non-persistent males were not forthcoming and the study had to use a snowball sampling procedure to entice three males to come forward and participate. This created a change of the protocol. Instead, the research conducted one focus group interview with persistent students and three individual interviews with non-persistent students to collect qualitative data on male Hispanic students. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), data collected using a mixed methods approach “can describe, in rich detail, phenomena as they are situated and embedded in local contexts” (p. 20). The design approach provided narrative to complement meaning to numerical results giving depth and bread.

Quantitative Research Design

The quantitative data component of the present study was analyzed with logistic regression. Logistic regression is used when the variables to be analyzed are dichotomous, nominal, or ordinal in value (Menard, 2010). In this study, the dependent variable of persistence is a dichotomous, nominal value. The independent ordinal variable of the study will be the self-reported student efficacy that will be measured with the College Self-Efficacy Inventory survey (Appendix D).

The null hypothesis for the present study was tested with a F distribution at the .05 level of significance. The study assessed if persistence is a function of self-efficacy among entering

freshman male Hispanic students in a Hispanic-serving institution in South Texas. The null hypothesis presented a prediction that persistence was not a function of self-efficacy.

The dependent variable was student persistence in college from the Fall 2015 semester to the following Fall 2016 semester. The independent variables were the self-reported student self-efficacy that was measured utilizing the College Self-Efficacy Inventory survey established by Solberg, Hale, Villarreal and Kavanagh (1993). In their instrument development, Soldberg et al. measured universal college student issues because “much of the episodic experiences at college... are expected (for the student) to play a role in college adjustment” (Solberg, et al., 1993, p. 84). The survey tool consisted of 22 items related to self-efficacy including three sub-scales; course efficacy, social efficacy, and roommate efficacy (Solberg, Hale, Villarreal, & Kavanagh, 1993).

Surveys were utilized as the tool of measurement for the quantitative component of the study to collect data regarding people’s perceptions of a specific topic (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). In this study, the topics of interest were self-efficacy among undergraduate Hispanic male populations at a four-year higher education institution.

Quantitative Research Question and Hypotheses

The following research question and null hypothesis guided the quantitative data component of the investigation:

Research Question for Quantitative Component

- RQ1: What amount of the total variance in Hispanic-male first-year college students’ persistence may be accounted for by self-efficacy?

Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis that was tested stated:

- H₀₁: Hispanic-male first-year college students' persistence is not a function of self-efficacy.

Quantitative Sampling Strategies

The higher education institution in this study was identified as a Hispanic-serving institution by the federal government (*Stats at a Glance*, n.d.). According to the Office of Strategic Analysis and Institutional Reporting Division of Operations and Chief of Staff at the selected institution, a total of 28,584 students were reported as enrolled in the Fall 2015 semester with 24,937 of the students classified as undergraduates (Fall 2015 Enrollment in Perspective, n.d.). The student population at the institution included 88.8% Hispanic students, of which 43% were male students (Fall 2015 Enrollment in Perspective, n.d.).

During the Fall 2015 semester, 4,181 students were classified as first-year freshman students (Entering Freshmen Profile Fall 2015, n.d.). The Fall 2015 freshman population also reflected a similar demographic profile to the general student population with 92.2% Hispanic students, of which 45.3% were males (Entering Freshmen Profile Fall 2015, n.d.). 96.7% of entering freshman students were between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five years old. Approximately 66.8% of the fall 2015 freshman cohort were from the same county as the educational institution and 83.5% of all freshman received some type of need-based state and/or federal financial aid award, such as the Pell Grant and Texas Grant (Entering Freshmen Profile Fall 2015, n.d.). Nearly 30% of the fall 2015 freshman class attempted fifteen or more college credit hours, 61.4% attempted twelve to fourteen hours, and 9.6% took less than twelve credit hours (Entering Freshmen Profile Fall 2015, n.d.). According to the U.S. Department of Education's 2014-2015 Federal Student Aid Handbook (2014) a college student is designated as

a full-time student when enrolled in twelve or more college credit hours in an institution of higher education.

The one-year retention rate at the selected institution, following the cohort of students entering the Fall of 2008, was 74.3% . After the second year, the retention rate dropped to 62.6% (*Stats at a Glance*, 2014). Although the retention rate of the university was close to the state's first-year retention rate average of 74.8% for the fall 2008 cohort (THECB, Online Accountability System, n.d.), there is a great disparity regarding graduation rates. The fall 2008 cohort at the selected university had a four-year graduation rate of 17.1%, a five-year graduation rate of 33.9%, and a six-year graduation rate of 42.7% (*Stats at a Glance*, 2014). The state's average percentage of four-year baccalaureate graduation rates were 27.6% for four years and 51.8% for six years for the fall 2008 cohort (THECB, Online Accountability System, n.d.).

Upon the researcher's request, the Executive Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness for the selected higher education institution reported that the 2008 cohort experienced a 71.5% retention rate among male students and a 76.6% retention rate among female students (Office of Institutional Research & Effectiveness, 2015). The four-year and six-year graduation date among the same cohort differed between the genders. The males experienced a 12.2% four-year graduation rate and females almost doubled the rate at 21% (Office of Institutional Research & Effectiveness, 2015). The six-year graduation rate included males with a 37% rate and females with a 47.3% rate (Office of Institutional Research & Effectiveness, 2015).

The data regarding the selected institution provides evidence that male Hispanic students are entering college, but they are not completing a four-year college degree compared to other

minority and gender groups. The researcher selected the institution based on the needs of raising retention and persistence among the institution's male student population.

The sample for the quantitative portion of the study was drawn from the population of the entering freshman class beginning the fall of 2015 semester. The sample was selected by using participants enrolled in three university freshman courses: ENG 1301, UNIV 1301, and HIST 1301 (*Welcome to the class of 2018, n.d.*).

The study sampled the population via cluster sampling (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003). A random selection of clusters among the ENG 1301, UNIV 1301, and HIST 1301 courses were selected to participate. Permission was granted with the three department chairs to distribute the surveys to selected classes. The duplication of participants was a great possibility due to the courses targeted in the cluster pool; however, the survey tool did ask the participant to refrain from participating more than once and return materials to the researcher. A total of twenty-five individual classes were utilized for survey collection with 599 (N=599) surveys completed. The present study utilized 228 (n=228) male Hispanic surveys that met all demographic parameters and needs for the investigation.

Quantitative Data Collection Procedures

Permission was obtained by the University College Dean and with the faculty chairs of the Department of Writing and Language Studies, and the Department of History to disseminate surveys in the ENG 1301, UNIV 1301, and HIST 1301 freshman courses (Appendix A). A one-page description of the study was provided to the faculty chairs by the researcher to assist with granting permission. After faculty chair consent, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the selected higher education institution also granted permission. Once the IRB permission was obtained, the researcher presented the one-page description of the project to the faculty to assist

with obtaining access to students in classrooms. The selected higher education institution had two campus sites separated by 64 miles. The researcher collaborated with faculty and collected data from both sites to ensure equal student representation with both campus locations.

Before disseminating the survey, the researcher conducted a pilot test of the College Self-Efficacy Inventory survey and demographic information questions with five volunteers. On average, the survey in the pilot study took less than five minutes to complete. The same time results were experienced during the data collection process as subjects completed the survey tool. During the data collection process, the researcher presented the information in every classroom and gave a brief description of the study. After the purpose of the study was explained, students were given the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the voluntary participation of the study. Students who wished to participate in the study completed an informed consent form (Appendix AA).

After the completion of consent form, the students who volunteered completed the survey. Proceeding the survey questions, the survey tool requested student permission to acquire their student ID to follow up with subjects' persistence status for the following Fall 2016 semester. The students were informed that the student ID was only be used to retrieve retention information and not be used for any other purpose other than for research purposes.

During the quantitative data collection phase, a total of 599 (N=599) surveys were collected. Only 228 (n=228) were utilized in the sample due to the necessity to have each case meet the study's specific demographic parameters. The raw data and the scoring of the survey instrument provided by the entering freshman Hispanic male participants was entered with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) statistical software for data analyses. The results of the quantitative data are discussed in chapter four of this study.

Quantitative Instrumentation

Students were asked to fill out a survey containing two parts. The first part of the survey consisted of the College Self-Efficacy Inventory consisting of 22 items related to self-efficacy (Solberg, Hale, Villarreal, & Kavanagh, 1993). The researcher obtained permission by Solberg to use the instrument in the study (Appendix B & C). The survey asked items that pertained to how confident students were in asking questions in class, completing term papers, and preparing for exams. The survey responses were formatted as 9-point Likert-scale responses (from 0 = Not Confident to 8 = Extremely Confident) that indicated how confident the student felt towards the items on the survey. The second part of the survey asked for demographic information: gender, ethnicity, college classification status (freshman, sophomore, etc.), age, and housing status (on-campus dormitories/apartments versus off-campus housing). Finally, participants completed a permission form that was added to the end of the survey, giving voluntary permission for the researcher to contact them during the 2016-2017 academic school year to participate in the qualitative component (Appendix D).

The College Self-Efficacy Inventory has had a series of tests to measure reliability and validity with Hispanic college students (Barry & Finney, 2009; Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993). Solberg, Obrien, Villarreal et al. (2009) tested the three subscales in the instrument. The three subscales were course efficacy, social efficacy, and roommate efficacy. Solberg, et al (1993) stated that "reliability was established for internal consistency using coefficient alpha. Coefficient alpha estimates were .93 for the total... instrument" (Solberg, et al., 1993, p. 89). The three subscales of the instrument, that included course efficacy, social efficacy, and roommate efficacy, each had a coefficient alpha of .88 independently (Solberg, et al., 1993).

Convergent and discriminate validity was established by using a correlation matrix consisting of the three College Self-Efficacy Inventory subscales, Brief Symptom Inventory, a multicultural stress instrument, two different measures of social support, and one acculturation measure “to an exploratory principal components analysis” (Solberg, et al., 1993, p. 91). The validity of the College Self-Efficacy Inventory measurement tool was further supported by a psychometric investigation conducted by Barry and Finney (2009).

Quantitative Analysis Procedures

The data was collected using the procedures described in this section and were analyzed using a logistical regression analysis. The survey items were merged into categorical variables based on the three sub-scales of social efficacy, roommate efficacy, and course efficacy (Barry & Finney, 2009). The null hypothesis for the study was tested with an F distribution at the .05 level of significance.

Qualitative Research Design

For the qualitative analysis of the study, one focus group interview and three individual interviews were conducted utilizing a semi-structured approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The participants of the interviews came from the pool of volunteers who gave permission to the researcher to obtain their contact information at the end of the quantitative survey tool and through snowball sampling (Gay & Airasian, 2003). The purpose for the qualitative component of the study was to provide an investigation rich in depth and breadth stemming from the students’ perceptive of self-efficacy and student retention. Utilizing the results of the quantitative component of the study as a guide, the qualitative component attempted to provide detailed data collection and analysis involving multiple sources of information to provide a holistic interpretation of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Qualitative Research Overarching Statement

Phase two of the research study was a qualitative component that concentrated on persistent and non-persistent Hispanic male students who attended the Hispanic-serving four-year institution during the Fall 2015 semester. The following overarching research statement and questions guided the qualitative component of the investigation:

- Explore the self-efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent male Hispanic students during the first year of college.
 - What are the characteristics of persistent and non-persistent first year male Hispanic college students?
 - What are the social efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent first year male Hispanic college students?
 - What are the roommate characteristics of persistent/non-persistent first-year male Hispanic college students?
 - What are the course efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent first-year male Hispanic college students?

Qualitative Participants

For the interviews, participants were first selected based on volunteer interest during the quantitative collection process. The participants of the interviews did have the opportunity to volunteer at the end of the quantitative survey tool (Appendix D). Upon completion of the Self-Efficacy College Inventory questions, all student participants were asked if they would like to volunteer to participate in focus group interviews and provide contact information for the researcher to use the following 2016-2017 academic school year. Once all surveys were

collected, the researcher utilized only male Hispanic students who opted to volunteer and randomly select potential interviewees for the second phase of data collection.

Initially, the use of a purposeful selection process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) was to be utilized for the focus group interviews. In addition, the study had called for at least ten individuals participating voluntarily in two focus groups; five persistent students and five non-persistent students. The number of individuals was set at ten to provide a “maximum variation... to fully describe multiple perspectives about the case” (Creswell, 2007, p. 129). Of the 228 students, 93 participants volunteered to participate in the focus group interview during the Fall 2015 semester. This included persistent students and non-persistent students. However, when the researcher contacted all 92 Hispanic males via an email message (Appendix I & J), only four persisted male Hispanic students at the institution responded to the interview invitation.

For this reason, the researcher utilized snowball sampling to obtain interview participants for the second group of students composed of non-persistent students. According to Gay and Airasian (2003), snowball sampling is used when a sample from the population may be difficult to collect that fit the required parameters for participation. In snowball sampling, the researcher uses one or two participants to identify other participants needed.

Participation from both groups were needed and vital to the study to investigate Hispanic male college students who persisted with their college studies and who dropped out at the Hispanic-serving four-year institution to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Stake, 2006).

Qualitative Data Collection Procedures

Ninety-two (92) students provided contact information during the quantitative portion of the study. (sixty-four persistent students and twenty-eight non-persistent students) Out of the 92

students who were enrolled Fall 2015 and agreed to interview, only sixty-four students persisted to the Fall 2016 semester. Twenty-eight students who agreed to interview dropped out before the Fall 2016 semester. The students indicated that they were interested in volunteering for the second portion of the study and wrote an email address allowing the researcher permission to contact them a year after their participation in the classroom survey (Appendix D). The researcher emailed all ninety-two students individually an interview invitation asking for their participation in the focus group interviews (Appendix I & J).

A total of seven individuals were interviewed in the study to provide a multi-faceted account of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007, p. 129). Four persistent students replied to the interview invitation email. All four students participated in the student focus group interview that took place Spring 2017. The four Hispanic males were registered and enrolled in college courses during the semester they were interviewed. Two student participants were music majors, one student was a double major in music and education, and one student was a criminal justice major. The focus group interview for the persistent students took place at the university's Student Union building in the evening and was based on the convenience and preference of the students' school and personal schedule. The group interview was fifty-five minutes in length.

Because the candidates who dropped out of school were difficult to identify and recruit, the intended focus group interview did not happen. Three individual and personal interviews were conducted during the Summer and Fall 2017 semesters. The work and personal schedule of each participant did not allow the researcher to conduct the focus group interview.

During the course of the initial recruitment procedure utilizing the original quantitative participants, there were no non-persistent students who responded to the email invitation sent by

the researcher seeking volunteers for the focus group interviews. As a result, snowball sampling was required to obtain non-persistent interview participants.

Persistent students assisted the researcher in the identification of possible non-persisted subjects that fit the demographic parameters of the investigated student population. Once identified, the researcher communicated with the non-persistent candidates via the contact person who provided their name. Based on the non-persistent students' schedules, three interviews were conducted during various days of the week and at different times of the day. The location of the interviews took place at a local public library. Interview times varied from thirty-five minutes to sixty-five minutes.

At the beginning of each interview, each participant was given a consent-to-participate form that described the purpose of the study, the interview procedures, the confidentiality of the responses, the risks associated with the study, the benefits of participation, and the right to withdraw from the interview and the study at any time without penalty (Creswell, 2007). Once the raw qualitative data was collected from all interviews, a CITI certified transcriptionist transcribed it, (self).

Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures

After the transcription process, the data was analyzed with the NVivo software program. Raw data were prepared and organized for data analysis on the software program. After organization, the data was explored and tagged with codes that emerged from the topic. After coding, the data was reduced into segments and names were assigned for each segment. The segments were then further reduced into categories that were identified based on the codes and segments of the data and the frequency that developed within the data. After the categorization process, a categorical aggregation analyses (Creswell, 2007) was utilized to establish

relationships among the categories and formulate broad themes based on the emerging information and material among and across the two groups.

Qualitative Instrumentation

The researcher used an interview protocol (Appendix G, Appendix H) for the qualitative data collection segment. Prior to the collection and analyses of the quantitative data, an interview protocol was developed for both groups (Appendix E, Appendix F). The interview protocol for the persistent students is described in Appendix E and the interview protocol for the non-persistent students is described in Appendix F. The protocols included a set of open-ended questions in keeping with a semi-structured interview arrangement (Creswell, 2013). Knox and Burkard (2009) stated that semi-structured interviews permit flexibility during the interview process to ensure each participant's perspective of the phenomenon with the allowance of further probing that may deviate from the original pre-determined interview questions.

However, the study utilized an explanatory sequential mixed methods model that allowed the researcher to modify the qualitative interview protocols based on the findings of the quantitative analysis (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The quantitative results served as a guide to provide an in-depth and more accurate interview approach to the second phase of data collection pertaining to the student population under investigation. Thus, a second interview protocol was developed for the two interview groups (Appendix G, Appendix H). The revised interview protocol for the persistent students is described in Appendix G and the revised interview protocol for the non-persistent students is described in Appendix H.

Resubmission of the revised interview protocols was submitted to the institution's IRB committee for approval. Once re-authorization was received, the researcher proceeded with the study.

Researcher Bias

Creswell (2007) stated that bias can intervene unintentionally in the data collection and analyses of a research study. However, the researcher will not purposefully intervene in the process of the investigation or intentionally reflect any feeling of emotional reaction to student enrollment status. O'Loughlin (2000) noted that male and female speakers have different communication styles. The distinct communication styles are also present during interviews and can affect an interviewee's responses and may vary depending on the gender of the interviewer. O'Loughlin (2000) stated that there was not a consistent gender difference between female and male interviewers to form a gender pattern. She also discussed that all of the interviewers, both male and female, adopted the same collaborative and cooperative communication style regardless of their own gender (O'Loughlin, 2000). In addition, Hollander (2004) stated that disclosure of information during focus group interviews relating to sensitive topics can be increased by setting the tone of the interview prior to beginning the session to create a supportive environment, expressing confidentiality of the responses, and utilizing a familiar interview site.

Furthermore, when interviewing men, Holstein and Gubrium (2005) stated that the interview process threatens the masculine self due to the surrender of control to the interviewer and the sensitive topics discussed. The interview protocol included strategies to decrease subjects' perceptions of risks and increase the level of disclosure. The researcher exhibited a strong collaborative, supportive communication style during the focus group interviews.

The researcher utilized several methods to enhance objectivity and validity during the study. Triangulation was employed by comparing the qualitative data with the quantitative results of the self-efficacy survey and the persistence status of the student. Triangulation is defined as using different sources of data to corroborate the validity of collected data to answer the research questions (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

Delimitation of the Study

This study confined itself with data collection via surveys and interviews with only undergraduate Hispanic male students from the selected Hispanic-serving four-year institution in South Texas.

Limitations of the Study

The design of the research study was an explanatory sequential mixed methods (Creswell & Clark, 2011) design and required all subjects and participants to be members of the selected institution. The major limitation of this study was that the results cannot be generalized to the undergraduate Hispanic male college population. The quantitative and qualitative results may not be generalized at any other higher education institution because no other college students other than the students at the selected higher education institution were utilized for this study (Creswell, 2007). The results can only be applied to the undergraduate Hispanic male population attending the selected four-year Hispanic-institution in South Texas. Generalization may not be possible, but the results of the study may be transferable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 1994) to other four-year Hispanic-serving institutions.

The other limitation was that the qualitative participants were composed of volunteers who were willing to participate for an extensive period of time. People who volunteer tend to strive for a higher level of achievement and therefore, may jeopardize the internal validity of the

sample (Gay & Airasian, 2009; Knox & Burkard, 2009). The researcher was cognizant of the feeling of failure that some students may exhibit and that they may want to embellish or refrain from providing honest answers. The researcher was sensitive to the needs of the students who persistent to their second year of college and students who did not persist.

Assumptions

The assumptions of this investigation were that the quantitative participants were honest in their responses to the questions on the College Self-Efficacy Inventory and the qualitative participants were honest in their responses to the questions that were addressed to them during the interviews. The assumptions were presumed to be true, but were not actually verified in the study (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

Summary

This chapter presented the study's methodology. The methodology for the study included a great deal of quantitative and qualitative procedures. The explanation for the use of the explanatory sequential mixed methods (Creswell & Clark, 2011) was discussed. The chapter also discussed the sampling techniques used for both components of the investigation and the data analyses applications used in the study for the research questions, hypothesis, and the overarching statement.

The data needed for both components of the study were collected over a span of time. The longitudinal data regarding student persistence rates were vital to compose a clear, in-depth picture of freshman Hispanic male students, their self-efficacy levels, and their persistence over a one-year period. The steps and measures taken during the investigation were composed to ensure a valid and reliable data group for analysis.

CHAPTER IV

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to address the research question that focused on the quantitative portion of the mixed methods study. The research question posed in the study was:

RQ1: What amount of the total variance in Hispanic-male first-year college students' persistence may be accounted for by self-efficacy?

The null hypothesis posed for the research question was:

H₀₁: Hispanic-male first-year college students' persistence is not a function of self-efficacy.

Chapter four discusses the descriptive statistics and the results of the study. A summary of the chapter is included at the end of the chapter.

Descriptive Statistics

A total of twenty-five classrooms were visited during the Fall 2015 semester. After data was collected, a total of 599 (N=599) surveys were obtained by the researcher. Within the accumulated surveys, 333 surveys were completed by female participants and were excluded from the study. There were fourteen male participants who completed the survey, but did not provide student identification numbers and were omitted from the data analysis. The identification numbers for the students were needed to obtain the retention data at the institution the following academic school year. Another twelve surveys were rejected because the demographic information on the survey was not completed. Twelve more surveys were omitted

because the male participants responded on their surveys that they were not Hispanic or of Hispanic origin. Table 1 depicts the surveys collected and the general demographic information of the participants dictating the inclusion or omission of the samples in the study. The total number of participant surveys that were complete produced a sample size of 228; 9.4% of the targeted population at the higher education institution.

Table 1

Surveys Collected

Demographic Information of Participant	Number of Surveys
Hispanic Male Freshman Students	228
Males Not of Hispanic Origin	12
Males with no ID on Survey	14
Female Completed Surveys	333
No Demographic Data Available	12
Total Collected	599

The sample also found that 87.3% of the participants were full time students (Table 2) and 38.2% were employed (Table 3).

Table 2

Sample Population and Fall 2015 Enrollment Status

	Student Enrollment Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Part-Time	22	9.6	10.0	10.0
	Full-Time	199	87.3	90.0	100.0
	Total	221	96.9	100.0	
Missing	System	7	3.1		
Total		228	100.0		

Table 3

Sample Population and Employment Status

	Student Employed	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	87	38.2	38.8	38.8
	No	137	60.1	61.2	100.0
	Total	224	98.2	100.0	
Missing	System	4	1.8		
Total		228	100.0		

The students that indicated employment, 61.8% reported working more than twenty hours a week in the workforce (Table 4).

Table 4
Sample Population and Employment Hours per Week

	Employed and Number of Hours Worked Per Week	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	.4	1.1	1.1
	2	3	1.3	3.4	4.5
	3	2	.9	2.2	6.7
	5	3	1.3	3.4	10.1
	6	2	.9	2.2	12.4
	10	5	2.2	5.6	18.0
	12	3	1.3	3.4	21.3
	13	1	.4	1.1	22.5
	15	5	2.2	5.6	28.1
	16	2	.9	2.2	30.3
	17	2	.9	2.2	32.6
	18	1	.4	1.1	33.7
	19	4	1.8	4.5	38.2
	20	12	5.3	13.5	51.7
	21	1	.4	1.1	52.8
	24	1	.4	1.1	53.9
	25	11	4.8	12.4	66.3
	26	1	.4	1.1	67.4
	30	11	4.8	12.4	79.8
	33	1	.4	1.1	80.9
	34	1	.4	1.1	82.0
	35	3	1.3	3.4	85.4
	38	1	.4	1.1	86.5
	40	6	2.6	6.7	93.3
	44	1	.4	1.1	94.4
	52	1	.4	1.1	95.5
	60	4	1.8	4.5	100.0
	Total	89	39.0	100.0	
Missing	System	139	61.0		
Total		228	100.0		

Most of the students were between the ages of 18 to 24 years old and represented 98.2% of the sample (Table 5). In addition, 93.3% of students reported that they lived off campus (Table 6).

Table 5

Sample Population and Age

	Age Range of Student	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-24 years old	220	96.5	98.2	98.2
	25-33 years old	2	.9	.9	99.1
	34+ years old	2	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	224	98.2	100.0	
Missing	System	4	1.8		
Total		228	100.0		

Table 6

Sample Population and Housing Status

	Student Housing Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	On-Campus	15	6.6	6.7	6.7
	Off-Campus	209	91.7	93.3	100.0
	Total	224	98.2	100.0	
Missing	System	4	1.8		
Total		228	100.0		

Table 7 depicts the various locations students stated living in the Fall 2015 semester, such as living at home with a family member, on their own at their own home or apartment, or the university's on-campus housing facilities.

Table 7

Sample Population and Reported Living Location

Student Reported Living Location	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13	5.7	5.7	5.7
Apartment	3	1.3	1.3	7.0
At Home	7	3.1	3.1	10.1
At Home with Aunt	1	.4	.4	10.5
At Home with Brother and Sister-in-Law	1	.4	.4	11.0
At Home with Brothers	1	.4	.4	11.4
At home with Grandmother	1	.4	.4	11.8
At Home with Grandparents	5	2.2	2.2	14.0
At Home with Mom	1	.4	.4	14.5
At Home with Parents	149	65.3	65.3	79.8
At Home with Sisters	1	.4	.4	80.3
At Home with Uncles	1	.4	.4	80.7
Friends House	1	.4	.4	81.1
Hidalgo, TX	1	.4	.4	81.6
Home	2	.9	.9	82.5
Live on Same Property as Parents but Live Separately	1	.4	.4	82.9
My Own Home	1	.4	.4	83.3
Off Campus	1	.4	.4	83.8
Off Campus Apartment	25	10.9	10.9	94.7
Off campus Apartment with Sister	1	.4	.4	95.2
Off Campus Home	1	.4	.4	95.6
On Campus	1	.4	.4	96.1
On Campus Dorms	7	3.1	3.1	99.1
Own Home	1	.4	.4	99.6
With a Friend	1	.4	.4	100.0
Total	228	100.0	100.0	

The complete sample population obtained found that 73.2% of the Hispanic male student participants persisted from Fall 2015 to the following Fall 2016 semester (Table 8).

Table 8
Sample Population and Persistence from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016

Enrollment Status from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Drop Out	61	26.8	26.8	26.8
	Persisted	167	73.2	73.2	100.0
	Total	228	100.0	100.0	

Descriptive statistics were found for the dependent variable (student persistence from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016) and the independent variable with the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CSEI) scores (Table 9). The CSEI scores were measured using the 22-item survey instrument (Appendix D). Data from all study participants that matched the criteria of the investigated population (n= 228) were aggregated.

The guiding hypothesis was tested for this study using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to conduct quantitative data analysis. Once all raw data was entered, the CSEI survey instrument items were grouped into categorical variables using the three college efficacy sub-scales before analysis was completed; academic efficacy, social efficacy, and roommate efficacy (Solberg, Hale, Villarreal, & Kavanagh, 1993).

Once aggregated, six more surveys were thrown out for inconsistencies. The means (M) and the standard deviations (SD) for each of the CSEI subscale scores as a function of the independent variable were also included for the sample. Table 9 depicts course efficacy sub-scale results.

Table 9

Course Efficacy

			Std.
Retention	Mean	N	Deviation
Drop Out	5.67	61	1.00
Persisted	5.77	163	.95
Total	5.74	224	.96

Table 10 depicts the social efficacy results found in the data.

Table 10

Social Efficacy

			Std.
Retention	Mean	N	Deviation
Drop Out	5.33	60	1.08
Persisted	5.33	164	1.18
Total	5.33	224	1.15

Table 11 describes the component of roommate efficacy.

Table 11

Roommate Efficacy

			Std.
Retention	Mean	N	Deviation
Drop Out	6.30	60	1.04
Persisted	6.13	165	1.11
Total	6.17	225	1.09

Results

The driving research question for this portion of the study questioned amount of the total variance in Hispanic-male first-year college students' persistence may be accounted for by self-efficacy. The null hypothesis stated that Hispanic-male first-year college students' persistence is not a function of self-efficacy. Therefore, persistence may not be associated with self-efficacy among Hispanic-male college freshman students at the selected Hispanic-serving higher education institution.

To test the null hypothesis and to determine if the amount of variance in persistence was accounted for by self-efficacy, a logistic regression analysis was conducted. During the analysis, confirmatory and exploratory analysis were conducted simultaneously (Tukey, 1977). The results of the analysis concluded that there was no significant amount of variance in persistence of students accounted for by self-efficacy. Course efficacy did not predict any variance in persistence (Exp. B = 1.031, $p > .05$). Roommate efficacy did not predict any variance in persistence (Exp. B = 0.944, $p > .05$). Social efficacy did not account for or explain any variance in persistence (Exp. B = 0.994, $p > .05$). Results of the logistic analysis is displayed in Table 12 and 13.

Table 12.

The Observed and the Predicted Frequencies for Persisted and Drop Out Students by Logistic Regression with the Cutoff of .500.

Observed			Predicted		
			Retention		Percentage
			Drop Out	Persisted	Correct
Step 1	Retention	Drop Out	0	59	0
		Persisted	0	162	73.3
Overall Percentage					100.0

Table 13.

Logistic Regression Analysis of 221 Hispanic-Male Freshman Students and CSEI Scores.

Predictor	β	S.E.	Wald	df	<u>P</u>	Exp(β)
Course-Efficacy	.030	.023	1.76	1	.18	1.03
Roommate-Efficacy	-.058	.044	1.73	1	.19	.94
Social-Efficacy	-.006	.019	.12	1	.72	.94
Constant	1.20	1.06	1.30	1	.25	3.33
Test			X ²	Df	<u>P</u>	
Step			2.75	3	.43	
Block			2.75	3	.43	
Model			2.75	3	.43	

For descriptive purposes, the researcher identified patterns in the data. Students that persisted were found to have a higher frequency of certain survey items. For example, students that persisted exhibited greater frequency of self-reported high scores on questions that asked the following:

1. Getting along with others they live with
2. Socializing with others they lived with
3. The use of the library
4. Keeping up with their school work

The researcher also found that students who persisted did not score any of the survey items low and all items on the instrument were scored a six or higher on a one-to-eight Likert-scale.

On the other hand, students that did not persist demonstrated higher frequency scores with survey items that asked the following:

1. Getting along with others they live with
2. Working on group projects
3. Socializing with others they lived with
4. Doing well in exams

Dropout students also scored a socialization question (joining an intramural sports team) extremely low.

The observations described above should not be interpreted any further, since uncertainty has not been reduced by statistical testing, but are descriptive of the responses produced in the sample. The patterns identified by the researcher were taken into consideration in the study and incorporated in the qualitative portion of the study.

Summary

In this chapter, the data collected during the quantitative portion of the study was analyzed utilizing logistic regression. The analysis did not find statistical significance in the results and determined that persistence was not a function of self-efficacy. Due to the findings of the data analysis, the data failed to reject the null hypothesis.

However, the self-efficacy frequencies patterns observed among students who persisted and students that did not persist in various college self-efficacy survey items raised questions for further investigation. The explanatory sequential design that was utilized in the study provided the opportunity to examine the predictive power of self-efficacy on persisting students and non-persisting students and results were taken into consideration to develop more tailored questions

for the qualitative interview protocol. The manifestations of the organic development of the qualitative interview protocol are explored in the next chapter.

The following chapter discusses the results found in the qualitative portion of the study. The themes are discussed based on the data collected and analyzed from the various focus group interviews conducted. The qualitative research overarching statement and its four accompanying questions are also discussed and further assessed.

CHAPTER V

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

This chapter addresses the qualitative research overarching statement: Explore the self-efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent male Hispanic students during the first year of college. Persistent students and non-persistent students were interviewed for this study; a total of seven individuals participated to provide a multi-faceted account of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007, p. 129).

Four persistent students replied to interview invitations via email. All four students participated in the student focus group interview. This took place during the Spring 2017 semester. The four Hispanic males were registered and enrolled in college courses during the semester they were interviewed. Two student participants were music majors, one student was a double major in music and education, and one student was a criminal justice major. The focus group interview with the persistent students took place at the university's Student Union building in the evening and was based on the convenience and preference of the students' school and personal schedules. The group interview was fifty-five minutes in length.

Because the candidates who dropped out of school were difficult to identify and recruit, the intended focus group interview did not happen. Instead, three individual and personal interviews were conducted during the Summer and Fall 2017 semesters. The work and personal schedule of each participant did not allow the researcher to conduct the focus group interview. The individuals seemed reticent to expose themselves to others.

During the course of the initial recruitment procedure utilizing the original quantitative participants, there were no non-persistent students who responded to the email invitation sent by the researcher seeking volunteers for the focus group interviews. As a result, snowball sampling was required to obtain non-persistent interview participants. Persistent students in the study assisted the researcher in the identification of possible non-persistent subjects that fit the demographic parameters of the investigated student population. Once identified, the researcher communicated with the non-persistent candidates via the contact person who provided their name. Based on the non-persistent students' schedules, three interviews were conducted during various days of the week and at different times of the day. The location of the interviews took place at a local public library. Interview times varied from thirty-five minutes to sixty-five minutes.

After all interviews were conducted, the data were analyzed with the NVivo software program. Raw data was prepared and organized for data analysis on the software program. After coding, categories were identified that developed within the data. After the categorization process, a categorical aggregation analysis (Creswell, 2007) was utilized to establish relationships among the categories and formulate broad themes based on the emerging information and material within the two groups.

The themes that emerged from the student groups were family influences, campus relationships, student connections and resources, and living environment.

Candidate Description

Each male Hispanic candidate was given a pseudonym to protect their identity and that of their parents and their family. All participants were enrolled at the selected institution as entering freshmen during the Fall 2015 semester.

Persisting Candidate #1

Alessandro was a double major in Music and in Education. He matriculated into college the semester immediately following high school graduation. He was living at home with his mother, father, and multiple siblings. He was a full-time student and was articulate throughout the interview. He exhibited self-confidence and was involved in multiple student organizations.

Persisting Candidate #2

Marcelo was a Music major. He matriculated into college the semester immediately following high school graduation. He was living at home with his mother and father; his parents did not hold a high school diploma and dropped out in middle school. He did not indicate if he had any siblings during the interview. He was a full-time student and did not initially exhibit self-confidence. He was involved in multiple student organizations.

Persisting Candidate #3

Josiah was a Criminal Justice Major with a minor in Military Science. He matriculated into college the semester immediately following high school graduation. He was living at home with his mother and father; there was no mention of siblings. He was a full-time student and was involved in multiple student organizations. Josiah appeared to be extremely reserved the first few moments of the group interview. Josiah's nonverbal language seemed to indicate a young man that lacked self-confidence. However, once he saw the other participants sharing information, his self-confidence was stronger.

Persisting Candidate #4

Nicholas was a music major. He matriculated into college the semester immediately following high school graduation. He was living at home with his mother and father; there was no mention of siblings. Nicholas was the most reserved student in the focus group interview.

Although he did participate and answered all questions during the process, his answers were abbreviated when compared to the other participants.

Non-Persisting Candidate #1

Juan dropped out of the higher education institution immediately following the first semester of college. He was living with his father and stepmother, but quickly moved out to an apartment with a roommate. Juan never wanted to attend a four-year higher education institution; that dream was his father's. He believed that had he started at the local community college first, he might have been successful. He is currently working full time and plans to return to the local community college to pursue an associate's degree. He is currently living with his girlfriend and his infant son.

Non-Persisting Candidate #2

Gonzalo dropped out of the higher education institution after two semesters enrolled in college. Gonzalo did not like the university life, although he was a member of two extra-curricular organizations; the pep band and the Baptist Student Association. He is currently employed as a diesel mechanic as an apprentice. He is currently living with his father, mother, and five other siblings. One female sibling is a teacher with a bachelor's degree and another female sibling is currently in nursing school. He plans to return to the local community college in the near future and major in kinesiology. He would like to one day be a coach at a high school; an activity that he enjoyed as a former charter school student.

Non-Persisting Candidate #3

Antonio dropped out of the higher education institution after one academic year. He is currently attending the local community college and is pursuing an associate's degree of applied science with emphasis on automotive technology. He lives with his parents. Antonio admitted

that he felt overwhelmed with university life during his first year of college and stopped attending classes.

Theme #1 – Family Influences

Emerging from the interviews was the theme of *family influences*. All students provided insights that immediate family members were a vital factor in identifying and choosing their academic decisions. The male students self-identified various types of socio-economic and education backgrounds; however, the family unit and family expectations were a considerable influence.

Persistent Students

The students in this group discussed their families and described the dynamics of their home life. Three students expressed the poverty experiences faced by their families. These experiences created family encouragement to continue their educational aspirations. These three candidates had both a mother and a father living in the home. Alessandro was a first-generation college student and described his parents as a powerful force of inspiration.

I don't want to disappoint my parents. Um, my dad got, like, he almost got a college education. My mom didn't get really any college education at all so I kind of just want to. I don't want to, they're always, like, pushing on me, like, 'oh you should graduate from college, graduate from college' and I kind of just don't want to let them down and I just kind of want to make sure that they, that they see that I'm not going to be, like, um, a disappointment to them or anything. That's probably the most important thing in my in my mind coming to classes and stuff like that. (Alessandro)

Another student, Josiah, shared during the interview that his family would motivate him and his pursuit of his academic goals. The boost of morale that he received was a great motivator for him.

I would have to say my family. They always encourage me to keep coming and not only that but, every time I come, um, I always, I change other people's lives and I guess that has also given me purpose to come every day to class. (Josiah)

In addition to family members, Marcelo included his envisioned future family and extended family members from his former high school band program as a powerful drive to continue.

Uh, for me, I think... there's three people, like, three set of people, I guess, that, like, influence me to keep going. Like, my parents. They... they didn't finish Middle School, um, we've had... tough moments in our lives... I think it's just pushing me to help them and help my future family... and for my band directors from high school that push me, like, all my teachers... They all push me, they all kept saying that there was potential in me and that at the end, like, I'm still here. I'm still trying to graduate. (Marcelo)

Common statements, that included the obstacles and financial troubles experienced within their family, emphasized the theme of *family influences*. For example, Alessandro stated that his family of four had to move from place to place throughout his childhood. After some time, his family settled into a small apartment designed for a family of two. He stated, "You don't want to have your kids go through that and you want to help out your parents so they don't have to continue going through that in the future." He saw education as an escape from poverty.

Marcelo also identified himself as a *DACA* student. *DACA*, as described in Chapter 2, is the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (*DACA*). In the United States,

undocumented immigrant children who obtained DACA status did not run the risk of deportation from federal immigration agencies and law enforcement officials. The program did not allow students to work in the United States; however, educational access in higher education institutions was widened and lawfully permitted (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). The expressed uncertainty of Marcelo's concern for his own future family and others in the same situation stemmed because of his DACA status at the time of the interview. He stated, "I want to graduate and I want to keep studying for, uh, people who are undocumented and I think that, like, not that it's not possible, because it is, um, I mean, I did it... I'm under... the DACA program and it's just... I want to succeed for the people that think that it is not possible." He stressed that his successes are shared successes for everyone who has supported him and undocumented immigrants going through the same obstacles he has faced.

Overall, the *family influences* theme emerged from the persistent students' interview in a variety of ways. Nuclear family units, extended family (non-blood related) and future family aspirations were common motives for the students to continue to pursue their college education. The students indicated that the motivation and encouragement received from their families supported the opportunity for academic studies to take center stage in their lives.

Non-persistent Students

The males that did not continue their education at the higher education institution did have family influences that were present; however, feelings of pressure and false expectations were voiced and had a negative impact on their college experiences. Juan stated "I think it was it was being forced on me that I, I felt like I was just, like, no." He continued to explain:

It's just my, my family, personally. Well, like, my dad was like, you know, like while he was drive... I know, I understand he was driving me, you know, to go to college. But, I,

uh, I don't know. I guess I kind of just felt forced upon and so I, eh, in a sense I didn't want to, uh. So, I just kind of, like, just, I just told him, 'Well I am an adult you know. I'm going to do what I'm going to do.' Um, so I took a year off. (Juan)

The feelings of pressure and false expectations in a four-year institution were tremendous to Juan. He stated that he has presently set new goals for himself and his new family; he has an infant son. His present family status has been a great motivator to reevaluate what he wants in his life, career, and his newly defined education goals. Juan stated:

I gain(ed) patience. I, like, I have my son. He's five months old now... I've gained a lot of patience and a lot of, uh, and drive. I feel like I, uh, like more... Like, like, it's crazy. Like, I've never felt that before. Like, you know, and everybody says all when you when you have a kid you'll understand. Yeah, it's, it's exactly that. So, I feel a lot more driven now. (Juan)

Antonio also voiced a similar environment where his parents were not supportive of his music education college major. He added that his parents wanted him to major in something he could "get a job" when he graduated from college. He elaborated:

My parents were a little closed-minded about me going into, um, into the education field, the music education field... They really didn't like the fact that I was a music major. So, um, they'd often, my mother would often give me a hard time, um, um, before I would go to school. And it was, and it was almost an everyday thing where, um, we'd wake up. You know, it was super early in the morning. And then, we'd argue, or, you know, something would happen. And then I would just have a bad day. Pretty much every day. (Antonio)

Gonzalo shared that his parents were encouraging him to continue college, but there was also a need to assist his family and his own finances. He added:

My parents, when I started going to college, my dad stop working ‘cuz of an injury that he had. So, yeah, my sister is actually a teacher at IDEA. So, that was the only income that was only coming in (for a family of eight). I felt like, I shouldn’t be asking them for money. So, I started, I got a little job... just to not ask them for money... I can at least help out and not ask them for money and do for myself and if they need anything, I’m there for them also. (Gonzalo)

The non-persistent participants were reflective of their education decisions throughout the interview. They articulated the strength of past and present family influences and how family remains to be a key element that spearheads their decisions for the future.

Theme #2 – Campus Relationships

The second theme that emerged involved *campus relationships* with students and faculty members. During the interviews with the persistent students, the student and faculty relationships that students developed in various circumstances surfaced as a contributing factor to continue their education. Some of the relationships began in the classroom with courses the students were enrolled in the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters. Other relationships began with the involvement students had with campus organizations. The non-persistent students voiced a lack of formalizing relationships with students or faculty members and fostered interpersonal distance with others. A sense of belonging and a connection to the institution never reached fruition with the non-persisted student.

Persistent Students

Socialization opportunities seized by the persistent students in their first year of college revealed that they were able to meet other students with similar interests and recognized faculty members that took the role of club sponsor and mentor. The students disclosed that they made

the conscious decision to embark on new experiences with classmates, friends, and student organizations. Josiah stated:

My first semester, I was, like, I said, just a student. Went to class and went home. I didn't know anybody. I was just by myself. But, when I finally joined an organization, that's when I gained a lot of friends. Then, they help me to get to know my professors even more... So, I still kept those friendships and, um, they, they help me study with whatever we need to. So, they have like significantly help me with my college with my two years here. (Josiah)

The students agreed that joining student organizations helped them integrate with the student body. Nicholas stated:

I still am a part of the pep band as I was last year. I'm in band, I played in the orchestra for a couple semesters, I'm also in the Jazz Band and I'm a part of our band fraternity here on campus, Kappa Kappa Psi. We are a service fraternity... We also have, like, I guess a big strain on brotherhood. It's like, you know, just, like, unity between one another. (Nicholas)

The involvement of major-specific organizations helped the students hone in on a college major and focused their attention to excelling in class (Alessandro). Alessandro expressed:

I'm also in the pep band... and, I mean, it really, I met all these people and they were all really cool and it was awesome and now I'm a music major and I'm really enjoying it... I rushed Kappa Sigma which is a (band honors) fraternity here and I didn't go well, unfortunately. But, I mean, I tried and I also met some new people. I met some new friends and it just help me, like, a little bit. More busy with school this semester as a whole, so, it was pretty cool. (Alessandro)

Faculty relationships also resonated on various occasions throughout the interview with comments that emphasized the importance of the relationship in and outside the classroom walls. Students often felt “like they (faculty members) were the only people that could potentially... help... see things a little bit better” (Alessandro). Students agreed that the professors assisted with the acculturation and acclimation of the college environment.

Some of the professors would take an informal role as a mentor with the students when facing personal problems and other obstacles that did not pertain to academics. Alessandro stated that the faculty “were really... the only people I'd reach out to when it came to my problems” (Alessandro). Josiah added:

I would reach out to my professors and telling, telling them my situation, even though I knew that they didn't have a solution, because it was my own problem. Like, it was just me being lazy. But, I would reach out to them and telling them what can I do, like, more so I can succeed in ‘your class.’ (Josiah)

Another student specified that one of his faculty professors was looked upon as a family member. The faculty relationship grew into a mentor/mentee relationship that flourished during his freshman year of college. Seeking guidance from someone he saw as a role model, he would share personal obstacles he experienced and would pursue his advice. Marcelo added:

I think my applied professor help me out a lot. Like, my trombone... professor. Like, he, he help me out with a lot of classes, a lot of personal problems. So, they're basically, like, like, family after a while and they can help you out and stuff. So he helped me out. (Marcelo)

The student and faculty relationships adopted during the first year of college allowed the persistent students the opportunity to make connections to the institution. The comrade

atmosphere experienced solidified their social and academic integration into the college environment.

Non-persistent Students

The students disclosed that they did not feel as if they were a part of the university's student body mainly because they did not invest the time and energy into social endeavors. Juan stated that he did not attempt to make friends that shared academic interests or make connections with faculty he encountered. He stated that he would "just do my own thing". Juan also stated:

It all comes down to me, like, personally. I, I feel, like, you know, the school can, you know, put up fliers and all that stuff, letting you know what's know what's going on. It's got to be, like, it's your personal. Like, wanting to go out and do that stuff... I feel like it, it's more your personal drive to want to, like, go, find out like what's going on. What going on over there and, like, I said, I had no interest in it. (Juan)

Juan spoke of the time he did feel part of the school and the student body. He stated the student orientation experience and the first few days of school were positive.

When I went to orientation and the first couple of days of class, I like, I liked the experience. I liked that everybody, you know, the teachers, they, they don't, you know, treat you like a kid... that's what I've noticed.

However, soon after the first weeks of school, he started to feel isolated in class and identified that he did not link up with any faculty members. He did not feel comfortable asking faculty for assistance and felt that "they didn't care" if he was present or absent in class. His perceived feeling of disconnect with the school and faculty members fed into his lack of sense of belonging with the institution.

Antonio stated he joined the school's pep band, participated in school activities, and did make new friends; however, he did not have a positive experience with the faculty members. In fact, he reported that a major reason he did not continue college is that he believed the music faculty did not prioritize class time.

For the most part, a lot of the staff would, um, cancel classes, um, mostly for personal reasons, whether it was, they had some kind of, um, some kind of event to play at our concert that it was scheduled during, either class times or other preparatory times, that we had for our, um, you know, competitions, concerts, um, things like that... it made me feel like, that they still had a little bit of unprofessionalism in their lives... they still have this mentality that they're still in college, or that they are still able to compete, or something like that, you know, on their students' time. (Antonio)

Gonzalo stated that he had no problem forming relationships with student or staff, but he never talked to faculty about academic concerns. He added, "I would get along with professors, but not in the way, like, to ask them for help. I don't know why I never asked them for help."

The lack of student and faculty relationships the non-persistent students experienced during their first year of college created an environment not conducive to institutional integration. The males expressed the awareness of the situation; however, they did not work towards means to make academic and personal changes to connect with students, faculty, or the institution.

Theme #3 –Student Connections and Resources

The interview participants were cognizant of their academic and personal strengths, but they also communicated the understanding of their academic and personal weaknesses. The

approaches and decisions made from each individual played a significant role in the level of success experienced with their academic courses.

Persistent Students

The students described the various resources they utilized to combat their perceived academic and personal weaknesses. For example, one student expressed their dislike for reading and stated, “I hate reading textbooks” (Josiah). However, he added that he would force himself to read by placing himself in the library to produce a learning environment for himself. Marcelo stated that his weakness was history, but he would form study dates with classmates because he “like(d)... working as a team.” To combat weaknesses, the students identified and utilized study tactics throughout their first year of college.

Connecting to on-campus student resources with tutorial services was vital to the success of completing course requirements. Josiah stated:

I suck at math and I knew from the start that I, I'm going to, I'm going to need to get a tutor because I can't stand math. Like, so, I'll use that resource. They told me it was free so I was, like, might as well just get my money's worth. So, I went to go do that and it did help. (Josiah)

The use of the buildings, in conjunction with the on-campus student resources provided by the university, assisted each student academically in their first year of college. The students explained that the various locations and strategies they acquired throughout the school year added to their self-perceived adjustment to the academia environment. Nicholas would do all of his homework in the music building because “I’ve just grown to be really comfortable there and I guess it’s just a good place for me.” He felt at ease and comfortable with the facility and resources available to him.

Non-persistent Students

The non-persistent students weighed in on their decisions as college freshmen and stated they were cognizant of their academic and personal weaknesses, but did not act on improving or reaching out to resources to seek assistance.

Juan stated that he was well aware of his indolence towards his academic commitments; however, he would not rectify his behavior and at times “just didn’t feel the, the need to show up (to his classes).” He also stated that the class schedule he chose for his first semester of college was poorly constructed due to his weak decision-making skills and “last minute” scheduling. He stated that his course schedule involved a defragmented timetable taking classes during the day and at night.

I chose them in such a weird times. Like, one was at, like, I think, I had a eight o’clock class and then I came back at, like, twelve and then, uh, and then after twelve, I had a seven o’clock class. So, I kept going. Yeah, cuz there was nothing open. Like, I waited ‘till, like, the last minute to register and so I would go home, then I’d be, like, ugh, I got to go back to class, like. (Juan)

Juan stated that he was well aware of resources for students, but never inquired or set out for support services. He added that he “just kind of lost that sight of school, you know. Like, I was, I was having fun doing other things. So, I was try to live life already.” Juan did utilize the recreation center:

I went to campus for a couple days. Uh, the most I did was hit the rec and, ha, I’ll play basketball there with some, you know other students. But, but, uh, that, that was the one thing that I did and then, after that, I hadn’t hit it again. (Juan)

Juan was not aware of the activity period the selected institution incorporated within the course scheduling on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the noon hour, “I didn't even know but, like I said, I, I didn't even try... Yeah, I didn't reach out, you know, trying to find out what fun stuff for whatever was going on, you know, so.” His lack of knowledge with the targeted social and academic integration programs and services offered at the higher education institution promoted his feelings of disassociation.

Antonio and Gonzalo stated that their academic weaknesses were procrastination and time management. The academic work was not difficult; it was the self-discipline they had difficulties with during their first year of college. Antonio added:

It was very demanding, um, as far as time commitment goes, where, where rehearsals were scheduled every Thursday. And then, the games we would play at were scheduled every Thursday and Saturday. I was busy Monday through Saturday and then Sunday, I would either work. Or if I wasn't at work, I was sleeping all day.

Gonzalo added that his transition from high school to college was really difficult. He was dependent on high school instructors and staff members to remind him to assignments, opportunities to re-test or re-do assignments, and turn in assignments late. He stated that high school “babied you” and it did not prepare him for the transition. He quickly realized the academic college environment and expectations were different. He stated:

I did one year of college and I, um, just left. Yeah. Since it was way different from my high school. My high school was, um, constantly reminders, reminders. In college, um, nobody reminds you of anything. I mean, I am a very huge procrastinator. I fell behind and, um, in a couple of my classes and, um, I got financially suspended... I got suspended I got bumped out... I, um, I believe this is not for me. (Gonzalo)

Gonzalo added that he did participate in study groups, he took advantage of campus tutoring; however, he stated that “it wasn’t enough, I should have done more about it.” During his first year of college, he knew what he needed to do and did know how to seek help, but he did not follow through and ended up failing various classes.

The non-persistent students did not reach out to the services and support systems embedded in the higher education institution system. In some instances, the lack of awareness of such programs was discussed. The participants shared that individual inactions resulted in the drop out decisions they made.

Theme #4 – Living Environment

The *living environment* of the participants during their first year of college was a theme that reverberated within the data. The students disclosed that they all lived off campus; however, the people who they lived with varied.

Persistent Students

All of the students shared one commonality; their housing status involved living with their parents. The students shared that their living arrangement and proximity to the school assisted with monetary and transportation issues. Alessandro stated, “I don’t have to be paying any bills or anything, so it’s, it’s definitely something that is convenient”.

The students also described that their commute to school was no more than twenty minutes from their homes. During the first year, transportation was provided by their parents and eased the financial burden of the students’ finances. Josiah added, “I was never late to class because I was, I was super close. So, it was pretty easy for me.” Two students were able to purchase a vehicle and gained some independence during the school year.

The students did highlight that the convenience of living at home was a disadvantage to the development of their independence. They communicated that they did not feel like they were experiencing the full college experience. Alessandro added:

I think that me living here with my parents kind of was kind of a detriment because I felt, like, it was, like, I, like, too comfortable. I guess, like, that's the way I see it. Like, I was too, I was too much in a comfort zone and it was a lot easier to just, like, sometimes not show up to class. You know things like that. Because, I mean everything is just here. I guess was it was a little different but, it is very convenient to just be here with my friends.
(Alessandro)

The living environment for the students presented advantages and disadvantages to their college experience. The advantages were fiscal and living with their parents provided daily support and encouragement. The disadvantages included feeling “a little too comfortable (at) times at home (Nicholas). The students felt that their independence as college students was curbed.

Non-persistent Students

The growing accumulation of financial responsibilities due to the *living environment* was a theme that was repeated with the non-persistent students. Juan reported that he “just wanted to get out of the house” and had to find employment to meet the financial responsibilities of the apartment he shared with a roommate friend. He added that he “started focusing more on trying to get my rent. Trying to... get money to do fun stuff” and he lost sight of school responsibilities. Reflecting on his decisions, he stated that he “shouldn’t have gotten the apartment.”

Juan communicated that if he did not have the financial burden of the lifestyle he had chosen, his present educational status would be different. He further stated:

I shouldn't have gotten the, I shouldn't have gotten the apartment. It was another thing my dad was letting me live there, you know, for free. But, I just felt like I had to get out because my dad had just, like you know, there was a lot of things going on with my family and stuff... So, I, I was, like, I was trying to get out of the house, you know, so I think that was my, my big mistake was, you know, trying to become independent. Before I was, you know, before I started going to school and getting, like. If I had gotten my school situated and then got, got like an apartment, then I feel like I would have been able to manage a lot more but I didn't even try. Like I said, I didn't even try to get school situated. I already had the apartment, you know. I was, like, you know, what whatever. So, I just backed out. (Juan)

The living environment of the non-persistent students quickly changed the priorities and financial responsibilities of their lives. Out of necessity, they deviated from their academic pursuits and “paying the rent” (Juan) or assisting the family (Gonzalo) took top priority. Gonzalo’s stated that his home environment create “a lot of distractions” that took him away from focusing on his academic progress.

The first-year experiences of the persistent and non-persistent students discussed in the interviews shaped the themes that linked to their individual decisions to persist or drop out of college. The interpersonal and intrapersonal obstacles were also contributing factors to academic choices leading to college persistence decisions.

Summary

An explanatory sequential mixed method design (Creswell & Clark, 2011) was chosen to investigate self-efficacy and student persistence over one year among entering freshman Hispanic male students in a Hispanic-serving institution in South Texas. An explanatory

sequential mixed methods approach provided narrative to complement meaning to numerical results found by allowing the researcher to engage in collecting quantitative data, analyze data and review results to modify the qualitative instrument accordingly. The method design allowed detailed data collection involving multiple sources of information to provide an in-depth interpretation of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

The qualitative data found four themes among the participants: family influences, campus relationships, student connections and resources, and living environment. Discussion and findings of the quantitative and qualitative research are provided in Chapter VI. Implications for policy and recommendations for further research are also presented.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

This study focused on undergraduate Hispanic male freshmen college students in a four-year Hispanic-serving institution. This study explored the gap of high attrition rates associated with that group (Fry & Lopez, 2012; Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2014). The study also examined student persistence of entering freshman Hispanic males in relation to their self-efficacy throughout a one-year period attending a four-year Hispanic-serving higher education institution in South Texas.

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was two-fold. The quantitative component of the study examined the influence of self-efficacy on entering freshman Hispanic male students and their persistence in a Hispanic-serving four-year higher education institution located in South Texas. The qualitative component of the study explored the self-efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent male Hispanic students during the first year of college in the same selected four-year institution. The study addressed the following research question for the quantitative component and the following overarching statement for the qualitative component.

Research Question for Quantitative Component

- What amount of the total variance in Hispanic-male first-year college students' persistence may be accounted for by self-efficacy?

Research Overarching Qualitative Component Statement

- Explore the self-efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent male Hispanic students during the first year of college.

Summary

Research has depicted a rise in the number of Hispanics students in higher education institutions (Fry & Taylor, 2013; Brown & Patten, 2014). However, Hispanics are not completing an undergraduate degree at the same rate of other ethnic groups (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Hispanic males are a group that has experienced an especially low completion rate (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014).

The phenomenon involving Hispanic males and dismal undergraduate completion rates have sparked tremendous interest at the federal and state government levels (The White House, 2014; THECB, 2010; THECB, 2015) and in academia (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). A plethora of self-efficacy research has been conducted since the 1980's (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura & Wood, 1989; Cabrera, Lee, Swail, & Williams, 2005; Solberg & Villarreal, 1997; Brewer & Yucedag-Ozcan, 2015; Raelin, Bailey, Hamann, Pendleton, Reisberg & Whitman, 2014). Research utilizing various investigation lenses have been conducted, but self-efficacy research involving male minority students and persistence is fairly new (Hutchison-Green, Follman & Bodner, 2008; Lopez, 2013).

The present study utilized the concept of college self-efficacy and the three subscales founded by Solberg, et al. (1993): course efficacy, social efficacy, and roommate efficacy. The methodology utilized for the study was an explanatory sequential mixed methods design (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Due to the mixed methods approach and processes chosen for the study, data collection over a two-year period was required for the completion of the study.

The quantitative data collection used the survey tool associated with the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (Solber, et al., 1993). The College Self-Efficacy Inventory has had a series of tests to measure reliability and validity with Hispanic college students (Barry & Finney, 2009; Solberg, O'Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993). Solberg, Obrien, Villarreal et al. (2009) tested the three subscales in the instrument. Solberg, et al (1993) stated "reliability was established for internal consistency using coefficient alpha. Coefficient alpha estimates were .93 for the total... instrument" (Solberg, et al., 1993, p. 89). The three subscales of the instrument, that included course efficacy, social efficacy, and roommate efficacy, each had a coefficient alpha of .88 independently (Solberg, et al., 1993).

Convergent and discriminate validity was established by using a correlation matrix consisting of the three College Self-Efficacy Inventory subscales, Brief Symptom Inventory, a multicultural stress instrument, two different measures of social support, and one acculturation measure "to an exploratory principal components analysis" (Solberg, et al., 1993, p. 91). The validity of the College Self-Efficacy Inventory measurement tool was further supported by a psychometric investigation conducted by Barry and Finney (2009).

The quantitative data collection process involved a total of twenty-five classrooms that were visited during the Fall 2015 semester at the selected higher education institution. Quantitative data was analyzed utilizing SPSS software to investigate the amount of total variance in persistence and how much may be accounted for by self-efficacy via logistic regression analysis.

The qualitative study employed interviews. Two Hispanic male groups were interviewed and analyzed; one group consisted of a focus group interview with persistent student participants and the other group consisted of individual interviews with non-persisted student participants.

The explanatory sequential mixed methods (Creswell & Clark, 2011) design of the study allowed the modification of the interview protocol for both groups (Appendix G, Appendix H). After the preparation and coding of the qualitative raw data with NVivo software, analysis of the data produced four themes: family influences, campus relationships, student connections and resources, and living environment.

Quantitative Conclusions

The null hypothesis for the present study stated that persistence was not a function of self-efficacy. The results failed to reject the null hypothesis; the results of the analysis concluded that there was no significant amount of variance in persistence of students accounted for by self-efficacy. Course efficacy did not predict any variance in persistence (Exp. B = 1.031, $p > .05$). Roommate efficacy did not predict any variance in persistence (Exp. B = 0.944, $p > .05$). Social efficacy did not predict any variance in persistence (Exp. B = 0.994, $p > .05$).

The data of this study suggest that male Hispanic students at the selected higher education institution are not responding to college persistence in the same manner as students in other research studies. The results were in contrast to previous studies involving college self-efficacy and minority groups (Walsh & Kurpius, 2015). There was one study that produced similar findings at another institution utilizing a sample population of first-generation and non-first-generation college students and gender groups; however, the study did not examine minority groups specifically (Shepherd, 2016).

Course Efficacy

In the present study, the sample did not predict any variance in persistence (Exp. B = 1.031, $p > .05$) and did not respond to course efficacy when compared to previous studies (Torres & Solberg, 2001; Hutchison et al., 2008). The researcher believes that the sample did not

respond to course efficacy because of the sample population was composed of all male Hispanic students. Previous studies did not focus on ethnicity in particular among male students. Previous research found that male students do tend to overestimate their self-efficacy levels (Lopez, 2013) and may be supportive of this study's findings.

Roommate Efficacy

The researcher believes that the roommate efficacy findings produced results that did not respond to roommate efficacy (Exp. B = 0.944, $p > .05$) because of the high number of non-residential students enrolled at the higher education institution (Skahill, 2003; Manely Lima, 2014). The residential demographics of the selected institution's freshman class indicate a predominate commuter student among the total population. Walsh and Robinson Kurpius (2015) indicated that residential status of a student during the first year of college could play a significant role with persistence. Traditional higher education institutions have stronger residency programs that allow more opportunities for a student to integrate into the college transition. Most major universities require first-year students to live on campus one full academic school year. This is not the case at this university.

Social Efficacy

The researcher believes that the study results did not respond to social efficacy (Exp. B = 0.994, $p > .05$) because these students do not embrace the institution's culture or that of a traditional higher education institution's culture (Reason, Terenzini & Domingo, 2006; Frost, 2007). These students live at home and miss the interactions and social activities. The institution is unique in that students are not forced to live on campus their first year. This element may indicate that students attending the selected institution may have a unique cultural dynamic that produces an intriguing question for future research.

Qualitative Conclusions

The overarching statement for the qualitative study explored the self-efficacy characteristics of persistent/non-persistent male Hispanic students during the first year of college. The themes found were family influences, campus relationships, student connections and resources, and living environment.

Family Influences

The family support network, especially with the nuclear family present, was a strong binding foundation for student success. The absence of the family support resulted in the negative academic outcomes and drop out decisions for the non-persistent students. Kirk (2013) found that “family played an integral role in establishing networks for success” (p. 97). Family provided encouragement to the students and the motivation to continue their education. He also stated that students that received the positive stimulation from their families would reciprocate with academic success. This study also found that the successes the persistent students achieved were shared successes with their families (Palmer, Davis & Maramba, 2011; Hernandez, 2016; Moreno, 2014). For the non-persistent students that were interviewed, there was a conflict with what the student wanted and what the family wanted. When that conflict existed, there was a clash in the relationship that fed into the negative experiences for the student.

Campus Relationships

The importance of student and faculty relationships surfaced as a crucial element of persistence decisions for students. Student connections to the higher educational institution are important for social and academic integration during the first year of college (Tinto, 2012). The student and faculty relationships that the persistent students made in various contexts added to their sense of belonging during their first year of college. This finding supports Strayhorn

(2012) and his research conclusions that sense of belonging was integral with academic success. The students who persisted engaged in social and academic experiences that allowed them to develop and solidified their academic goals. They participated with student clubs and organizations, made new friends who shared goals and interests, and found the means to communicate personal and academic obstacles with faculty.

The non-persistent students shared an absence of belonging to the institution; they did not feel part of the student body and were not motivated to pursue such endeavors. The negative relationships with the faculty added to their perception of not belonging. This observation corresponds with Reason, Terenzini, and Domingo's (2006) study regarding teacher engagement and student success. The more of a positive relationship a student has with their teachers, the more a student can potentially thrive academically. In addition, teachers can provide the academic and personal guidance to assist a student with a student's college completion success.

Student Connections and Resources

The students were aware of their academic strengths and weaknesses. The study presented the various approaches utilized by persisted and non-persistent students that laid groundwork for their academic outcomes. The persistent students persevered through their challenges and found strategies to absorb and understand academic material. The students found outlets and developed solutions towards opportunities (Bandura, 1993). Persistent students used group strategies (study groups and tutoring services provided by the university) and individual strategies (studying in a campus facility) to produce a conducive learning environment. Students learned how to self-regulate and performed better academically; thus, persisting with their academic goals (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1986).

The non-persistent students did not make full use of the services, facilities or established internal support systems of the university. In some instances, lack of knowledge played a role with the untapped use of such services. Kimura-Wlash, Yamaura, Grffin & Allen (2009) affirmed the importance of access to college information among Hispanic students. The lack of knowledge regarding the college information and support systems offered in a higher education institution does not support college success (Kirk, 2013).

Living Environment

The qualitative findings support previous research regarding the impact residential status has on first-year experiences, academic performance, and persistence (Walsh, Robinson Kurpius, 2015; Lopez Turley & Woodtke, 2010). Studies have found that the housing status of students influence a college student's incorporation of a college setting during their first year of college (Pike, Schroeder, & Berry, 1997).

In this study, all qualitative participants lived off campus and is reflective of the general student population enrolled in the selected higher education institution. The students revealed what Skahill (2003) found in his studies; a commuter student's college experience was quite different than a residential student, especially in their first year of college. Commuter students face obstacles to the connection and resources of the institution. The non-persistent students in this study found that student relationships, faculty relationships, facilities, and academic resources were difficult to incorporate into their daily lives due to their reserved time on campus.

The persistent students' analysis did provide evidence regarding students living with parents off campus as a potential advantage. Grayson (1997) also found the same in his study with students having a high rate of student involvement due to the financial advantage of the housing setting and parental presence. The non-persistent students deviated from their academic

goals due to the financial responsibilities they faced with living expenses and family responsibilities.

Furthermore, the non-persistent students living on their own off campus had strong feelings of disconnection with campus life. This supports Skahill's (2003) findings that commuter students were more likely to drop out of school when obstacles manifested because of an existing social network outside of school and a physical home was within reach. The disconnection accentuated the students' lacking a sense of belonging with their higher education institution (Manely Lima, 2014) and was demonstrated with their drop out decisions (Ishitani & Reid, 2015). Overall, the non-persistent students faced a varied number of non-academic commitments, such as work and family, that impacted their college experiences and decisions to continue their education (Burlison, 2015).

The qualitative findings correlate with previous findings as Bandera stated that negative experiences and failures hinder the ability for a student to remain task-oriented, positive, and perform at a maximum level (1993). In addition, the self-efficacy of a student can be impaired and cultivate an impression of not being able to control their environment (Bandura & Wood, 1989). The coping mechanisms of the individual are impeded and alter the way stress is experienced (Solberg & Villarreal, 1997).

Furthermore, the persistent students were able to make the transition to the college environment. The non-persistent students did not make a successful transition because they did not fully separate from their previous associations or gave effort to incorporate themselves into the academic collegiate environment (Tinto, 1993).

Implications for Practitioners

Tinto's Model of Institutional Departure (1975, 1987 & 1993) allowed open discussion and an attempt to explain why students dropped out of higher education institutions. A major component of the model attributed a student's integration of a college environment as a major factor towards deciding whether to persist or drop out after the first year of college. Tinto (1993) stated that social systems, institutional experiences and personal integration were important and contributed to the success of a college student.

The qualitative results of this study indicated that the integration of a student in the college environment was essential to persistence decisions. The student challenges were varied, but the approaches to overcome such obstacles were integral to the results and outcomes (Bandura, 1993). The students who experienced persistence were connected by a student, faculty member, or other university-associated entity that provided a bond to the campus. The non-persisted students created disconnect that led to dissociation with the school. Higher education institutions must seize the opportunity to provide the supportive backdrop to students that is vital, especially during the first year of college, for total student integration to occur (Tinto, 2012).

Implications for Policy

The qualitative results of this study found the importance of the college community. The policies of higher education institutions must reflect a community environment that provides not only an academic learning atmosphere, but creates targeted goals and strategies to meet the socio-emotional needs of college students. Institutional engagement creates a positive school climate and culture that transcends into the student body (Bandura, 1993). Higher education institutions should create policies to imbed into their school culture acceptance, appreciation, and

recognition of students asking for assistance. A positive outlook within the campus culture regarding social adjustment, academic support and community involvement have attributed to the enhancement of college student success rates (Halcrow & Iiams, 2001; Ciscell, Foley, Luther, Howe, Gjsedal, 2016).

The study also found that student and faculty relationships in and out of the classroom environment is also vital with student persistence decisions (Tinto, 1993). The deep connections students have with the institution is rooted in the experiences of these relationships. Negative experiences can have detrimental drop out consequences, especially with faculty (Reason, Terenzini & Domingo, 2006). Institutional policies that include faculty engagement strategies must be developed and executed with the support of the institution to encourage faculty and student positive relationships (Kirk, 2013).

Moreover, Tinto (1993) stated that external communities also influenced a student's decision to persist or drop out of college. The study revealed the family influence as a significant contributing factor to a student's decision to persist in college. Higher education institution policies and budgets must address the necessary inclusion of family to bring awareness to the college environment, student needs, and career opportunities to a demographic that still continues to have a high rate of first-generation college students (U.S. Census, 2010). The recruitment and retention strategies developed by Hispanic-serving institutions must emphasize more family inclusion-oriented activities and events.

The study found that the residential status of a student play a huge role in a student's college experience. Residential students spend more time on campus and allow for more engagement and incorporation into the college setting (Pike, Schroder, & Berry, 1997). In a commuter campus setting, free time on campus is reduced and the student must make self-

motivated efforts to seek and pursue engagement outside of classroom time (Skahill, 2003). Housing policies should reflect on-campus housing requirements for first-year students.

Off campus employment and work schedules were other contributing factors that impacted most of the qualitative participants and their drop out decisions. The institution must implement more on-campus employment opportunities for students. On-campus employment, such as the federal Work/Study Program, has been reported to positively influence college student persistence and should be offered to help meet the monetary needs of more students (Scott-Clayton & Yang, 2017). The need to earn money and the student's integration of the university environment would be further developed in the process.

Implications for Research

There is a need for more research in this area involving male Hispanic students enrolled in Hispanic-serving higher education institutions. The study of self-efficacy and persistence did not result in the support of the current research. Additional extensive and longitudinal research should be conducted to find out why this particular target population did not emulate historical research findings in general college student populations concerning self-efficacy and persistence (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura & Wood, 1989; Cabrera, Lee, Swail, & Williams, 2005; Caprara, Pastorelli, & Bandura, 1992; Chwalisz, Altmaier & Russell, 1992; Multon, Brown & Lent, 1991; Ream & Rumberger, 2008; Solberg, & Villarreal 1997; Zajacora, Lynch, & Espenshade, 2005; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1986).

A suggestion to modify the College Self-Efficacy Inventory (Solberg, Hale, Villarreal, & Kavanagh, 1993) or create a new measurement tool tailored to the social-economic demographic profile of the area and incorporating the unique characteristics of a Hispanic-serving institution is highly recommended. The selected higher education institution's student population did have a

majority of students living off campus during their freshman year of college and a large portion were living with their parents. Questions regarding off campus living situations, and perhaps related to family relationships, are highly proposed.

A study giving a stronger voice to the non-persistent students is highly recommended. The researcher found that the non-persistent students were difficult to identify and undertake the role of a volunteer for the qualitative portion of the study. These are the stories that must be told; the non-persistent students should be heard, for they will give more insight to preventive strategies education practitioners could utilize at higher education institutions. In addition, the researcher for the present study was female. Another study is suggested that could investigate if differences may occur if a male researcher interviewed the male students.

It would be in the best interest of Hispanic-serving institutions, academic professionals, and government agencies to identify further what makes a Hispanic male college student successful. With the findings of the study, there was a contribution to the body of knowledge. However, much more must be done to assist in the development and implementation of Hispanic student college programming and gender-focused interventions in higher education institutions to assist the target student population towards the attainment of an undergraduate college degree.

Recommendations

Educational institutions have an understanding that a sense of belonging is extremely important in a learning environment (Strayhorn, 2012). The selected higher education institution must pair students and a sense of belonging with social programming and interventions targeted towards Hispanic male college students to fight the declining numbers of completed credentials (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009).

The higher education institution has developed academic programs that promote and develop self-efficacy, academic success, and student persistence, such as student orientations, first-year seminars, and learning communities and have experienced successful academic results. However, other higher education institutions have developed focused programs involving peer-learning, groups, and other special services for targeted purposes (Hatch & Bohlig, 2015; Jung, 2016). The Office of Student Success must provide funding and resources to further develop hybrids of learning programs to target Hispanic males. Along with the development and execution of targeted programs, feedback and tracking of self-efficacy levels, student experiences, and persistence should be documented and analyzed to improve and strengthen the programs for future students at the selected institution.

Data and reports for faculty members is highly recommended to boost knowledge and awareness of the university student's socio-economic, academic, cultural background and academic ethnic-group trends. The information may provide a better understanding of the student body and unique individual circumstances surrounding the area, such as DACA students.

Moreover, the selected higher education institution has a high level of commuter students and the impact of their residential status on their first-year experiences is affected. This important institution demographic of the male Hispanic student must be taken into account and an on-campus housing requirements should be implemented for first-year college students.

Hispanic male students, and all other students, must be woven into the fabric of the higher educational institution setting. Research has provided evidence in regards to the benefit of on-campus housing (Skahill, 2003). With targeted programs, faculty involvement and on-campus housing, the university would be able to assist students with connecting to other

students, faculty members, facilities, and resources to guide them towards academic goal completion (Shushok & Manz, 2012; Gerdes & Malinckrodt, 1994; Strange & Banning, 2001).

Lastly, as a mother of four Hispanic males, I believe that we all must do more to help this particular population. This silent epidemic is quietly finding itself across the United States; including my own family. My oldest son graduated in the top 10% of his high school graduating class and matriculated to college the academic year immediately following graduation. In high school, he challenged himself with Advanced Placement courses, participated in student organizations, such as the National Honor Society, and observed his educator mother assist students pursue their academic dreams to attend colleges and university across America. During the Fall of 2014, he attended orientation and registered for all the “right” courses. He chose to live at the campus dormitory and set his intended major before his first day of college. Three of his high school friends also started the same semester; a fear of being alone was not present. After one and a half years of college, he dropped out and returned home. I found that he did not separate from his previous associations and made few friends at the institution. He also did not join any student organizations that may have given him opportunities to transition and integrate to college life. I now have a firm understanding and knowledge that connections to the college and the relationships with students and faculty are essential. That vital knowledge will be passed down to my other sons in an attempt to be preventative. However, I also understand that the innate academic and personal drive of their individual pursuits will be the ultimate drive for the completion of their academic goals.

Summary

In chapter six, a summary of the study, quantitative conclusions, qualitative conclusions, practitioner implications, and recommendations for further research was presented. Although the

quantitative portion of the study did not produce significant differences in self-efficacy and persistence, further research must be conducted to investigate why the sample did not produce results that complemented previously conducted research. In the qualitative portion of the study, the results revealed a more descriptive picture of the first-year experiences of persistent students and non-persistent students. The study found that the living situation and the relationships students had with their families, fellow students, and faculty members were integral in persistence decisions. These two elements should be center stage with targeted higher education programs and services. With further research and implementation of such programs, the disappearing Hispanic male college student in the United States may begin to bring great gains to college population retention numbers and degree completion.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

Dr. Colin Charlton

Associate Professor
English
ARHU 211
The University of Texas – Pan American
1201 W. University Drive
Edinburg, TX 78539

August 10, 2015

Dear Dr. Charlton:

I am a student attending the University of Texas-Pan American's Educational Leadership Doctorate Program and am interested in conducting research regarding freshmen Hispanic male college students, persistence, and self-efficacy throughout their first year in college. I would like to ask for permission to ask for volunteers who fit the target population related to my study in the English (ENG) 1301 freshmen courses enrolled during the Fall 2015 semester. I will also be seeking participation from other freshmen courses, such as the Learning Framework (UNIV) 1301 and History (HIST) 1301 courses. The results of the study will assist the modifications and improvements of current academic and social support services offered to Hispanic students from the university to meet needs that will be most effective in student success. This knowledge will help garner an understanding of Hispanic self-efficacy and student persistence in college and how the university can better contribute to the success of student degree completion.

If granted permission, this study will take place during the latter part of the Fall 2015 semester. All assessments will investigate if self-efficacy affects Hispanic male students' persistence in the first year of college. A copy of the final research paper will be delivered to the University's Office of Research as well as your department for future review.

I would like to schedule an appointment with you to further discuss the study and ask for your permission to work with the English Department faculty. Please contact me via email at jmendoza2@broncs.utpa.edu or phone at 956-279-7206 with a date and time that would be convenient for you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson

Dr. Jonikka Charlton
Interim Vice-President
University College Deans Office
STAC 2106
The University of Texas – Pan American
1201 W. University Drive
Edinburg, TX 78539

August 10, 2015

Dear Dr. Charlton:

I am a student attending the University of Texas-Pan American's Educational Leadership Doctorate Program and am interested in conducting research regarding freshmen Hispanic male college students, persistence, and self-efficacy throughout their first year in college. I would like to ask for permission to ask for volunteers who fit the target population related to my study in the Learning Framework (UNIV) 1301 freshmen courses enrolled during the Fall 2015 semester. I will also be seeking participation from other freshmen courses, such as the English (ENG) 1301 and History (HIST) 1301 courses. The results of the study will assist the modifications and improvements of current academic and social support services offered to Hispanic students from the university to meet needs that will be most effective in student success. This knowledge will help garner an understanding of Hispanic self-efficacy and student persistence in college and how the university can better contribute to the success of student degree completion.

If granted permission, this study will take place during the latter part of the Fall 2015 semester. All assessments will investigate if self-efficacy affects Hispanic male students' persistence in the first year of college. A copy of the final research paper will be delivered to the University's Office of Research as well as your department for future review.

I would like to schedule an appointment with you to further discuss the study and ask for your permission to work with the University College faculty. Please contact me via email at jmendoza2@broncs.utpa.edu or phone at 956-279-7206 with a date and time that would be convenient for you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson

Dr. Gregory Gilson
Associate Professor
History and Philosophy
ARHU 341D
The University of Texas – Pan American
1201 W. University Drive
Edinburg, TX 78539

August 10, 2015

Dear Dr. Gilson:

I am a student attending the University of Texas-Pan American's Educational Leadership Doctorate Program and am interested in conducting research regarding freshmen Hispanic male college students, persistence, and self-efficacy throughout their first year in college. I would like to ask for permission to ask for volunteers who fit the target population related to my study in the History (HIST) 1301 courses enrolled during the Fall 2015 semester. I will also be seeking participation from other freshmen courses, such as the Learning Framework (UNIV) 1301 and English (ENG) 1301 courses. The results of the study will assist the modifications and improvements of current academic and social support services offered to Hispanic students from the university to meet needs that will be most effective in student success. This knowledge will help garner an understanding of Hispanic self-efficacy and student persistence in college and how the university can better contribute to the success of student degree completion.

If granted permission, this study will take place during the latter part of the Fall 2015 semester. All assessments will investigate if self-efficacy affects Hispanic male students' persistence in the first year of college. A copy of the final research paper will be delivered to the University's Office of Research as well as your department for future review.

I would like to schedule an appointment with you to further discuss the study and ask for your permission to work with the History faculty. Please contact me via email at jmendoza2@broncs.utpa.edu or phone at 956-279-7206 with a date and time that would be convenient for you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

From: Jennifer Mendoza

Date: Monday, June 30, 2014 at 1:25 PM

To: Scott Solberg

Subject: Request permission to use College Self-Efficacy Inventory for Doctoral Dissertation

Dr. Solberg,

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Jennifer Mendoza and I am a doctoral student attending the University of Texas-Pan American in Edinburg, Texas. I am contacting you regarding the College Self-Efficacy Inventory instrument tool. I was researching instruments to measure self-efficacy and persistence for Hispanic college students in a Hispanic-serving institution for my doctoral dissertation topic. I would like to utilize the College Self-Efficacy Inventory for my study. I am currently ready to begin writing my dissertation proposal and I would like to ask your permission to use the College-Self-Efficacy Inventory in the proposal. I will give you full credit and share my results from my research with you.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at jmendoza2@broncs.utpa.edu or via phone at (956) 279-7206.

Thank you for your time and kind attention to my request.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mendoza

APPENIDX C

APPENDIX C

Re: Request permission to use College Self-Efficacy Inventory for Doctoral Dissertation

From: Solberg, V. Scott

Mon 6/30/2014 12:42 PM

To: Jennifer Mendoza

...

Jennifer, good luck with your research, yes you have permission.

Regards,

Scott

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

Demographic Survey

This survey should only take 10 minutes for you to fill out. Before you begin, please answer the following questions:

1. Please select the UTRGV campus location you attend:

- Brownsville
- Edinburg

2. What is your college classification at The University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

3. Are you a part-time student or full-time student?

- Part-time Student (Student enrolled in less than 12 college credit hours)
- Full-time Student (Student enrolled in 12 college credit hours or more)

4. What is your age? Please check one:

- Up to 17 years old
- 18 – 24 years old
- 25 – 33 years old
- 34+ years old

5. Gender:

- Male
- Female

6. Are you Hispanic or of Hispanic origin? Yes No

7. Are you employed? Yes No

8. If you are employed, how many hours a week do you work? _____

10. Do you live in on-campus dormitories or on-campus apartments? Yes No

11. Where do you live? (Ex. At home with parents, at off-campus apartment, etc.)

College Self Efficacy Inventory

This section of the questionnaire seeks information regarding your degree of confidence in completing tasks associated with being a student at your college. You will be asked to respond to a series of statements by marking the number which best represents your present attitude or opinion. Remember this is not a test and there is no right or wrong answers. The answer categories range from:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 0- totally unconfident | 5-somewhat confident |
| 1- very unconfident | 6-confident |
| 2- unconfident | 7-very confident |
| 3- somewhat unconfident | 8-totally confident |
| 4- undecided | |

Using the scale provided please mark the number which best represents the degree to which you feel confident performing the following tasks:

1. Making new friends at college	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
2. Talk to your professors/instructors	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
3. Take good class notes	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
4. Divide chores with others you live with	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
5. Research a term paper	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
6. Join an intramural sports team	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
7. Understand your textbooks	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
8. Get a date when you want one	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9. Ask a professor or instructor a question outside of class	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
10. Get along with others you live with	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
11. Write a course paper	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
12. Work on a group project	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
13. Socialize with others you live with	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
14. Do well on your exams	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
15. Talk with a school academic and support (advising) staff	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
16. Manage your time effectively	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

17. Use the library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
18. Join a student organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
19. Ask a question in class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
20. Divide space in your residence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
21. Participate in class discussions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
22. Keep up to date with your school work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

The study involves comparing the self-efficacy of a college student and persistence for the Fall 2016 semester. The researcher would like to ask for your student ID number to track your persistence at this college. **With your permission**, please fill in the box below with your student ID number. Your student ID number will not be used for any other purpose other than tracking your persistence to complete the Fall 2015 semester and enroll in the Fall 2016 semester. After the study is concluded, the student data will be shredded and expunged.

Student ID Number:

Final Question

The researcher is in need of volunteers for interviews for the research study. The interviews will be asking participants questions regarding their first-year college experiences. If you would like to volunteer for the interviews, please fill out the following contact information. The interviews will take place at the college during the day. If you choose to participate, the researcher will contact you in the Fall 2016 semester to schedule an interview. Thank you for your assistance!

Student Name:

Student Email:

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX E

Interview Protocol for Persisted Male Hispanic Students

Time of Interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Brief description of research study and the interview process:

The purpose of the study is to explore Hispanic college students with a focus on male students attending a four-year Hispanic-serving higher education institution in South Texas. The primary goal of this study is to examine self-efficacy of entering freshman Hispanic students and its influence on persistence throughout one academic school year.

I will be asking questions to begin an open dialog about your student experiences here at this higher education institution.

I want to define some key terms for you before we begin so that you may understand their meaning.

The term persistence is defined as an individual's ability to persist and not depart from a higher education institution before they attain a degree from the institution (Komives, et al.,

Probe: Do you participate in class discussions regularly?

Probe: Have you managed time effectively?

Probe: Do you think you take good class notes?

Probe: Do you know how to conduct research for a term paper?

Probe: Do you understand your textbooks?

Probe: Are you able to keep up to date with your schoolwork?

3. If you are still faced with an obstacle, how are you working your way to overcome it?

Probe: Would you consult a friend in class?

Probe: Would you consult a friend in the same college, but not in your class?

Probe: Would you consult a member of the university staff?

Probe: Would you consult your faculty professor?

4. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a student?

5. What do you think helps other students stay in college?

6. Do you believe that living on-campus/off-campus helps or hurts a student with college adjustment?

Probe: If you live on-campus, do you divide chores with others you live with?

Probe: If you live on-campus, do you get along with others you live with?

Probe: If you live off-campus, do you divide chores with others you live with?

Probe: If you live off-campus, do you get along with others you live with?

7. Do you socialize at college?

Probe: Have you made new friends at college?

Probe: Have you joined a student organization?

<p>Probe: Have you joined an intramural sports team?</p> <p>Probe: Do you think that you can get a date when you want one?</p> <p>Probe: Do you socialize with others you live with?</p>	
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Thank you for your assistance and participation in this study. Your responses will assist in the completion of this study. With this information, we will learn more about male Hispanic college students and how to help them complete college with a baccalaureate degree.

Sample Interview Protocol (Creswell, 2013)

APPENDIX F

APPENDIX F

Interview Protocol for Drop-Out Male Hispanic Students

Time of Interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

My name is Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson. I am doctoral candidate at the University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley. I am conducting research for the completion of my doctoral degree in educational leadership.

Thank you for your participation in this focus group. Please know that your participation is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the group at any time. The focus group is expected to last not more than one hour. Before we begin, please know that all information and statements made by you and the other focus group participants should be kept confidential and not shared with anyone after we conclude the interview. To assist in the data collection process, I will be

recording the session with a tape recorder. Names will not be marked on the recordings and I will destroy all recordings three years after the completion of the study.

You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this research project. If you are not 18 years old, please let me know before we begin.

Brief description of research study and the interview process:

The purpose of the study is to explore Hispanic college students with a focus on male students attending a four-year Hispanic-serving higher education institution in South Texas. The primary goal of this study is to examine self-efficacy of entering freshman Hispanic students and its influence on persistence throughout one academic school year.

I will be asking questions to begin an open dialog about your student experiences here at this higher education institution.

I want to define some key terms for you before we begin so that you may understand their meaning.

The term persistence is defined as an individual's ability to persist and not depart from a higher education institution before they attain a degree from the institution (Komives, et al., 2011). However, in this study, persistence will be defined as a student's persistence of their first year of college.

Self-efficacy theory is defined as a "students' beliefs in their efficacy to regulate their own learning and to master academic activities to determine their aspirations, level of motivation, and academic accomplishments" (Bandura, 1993, p. 117). Self-efficacy is a self-regulatory process that encompasses a person's beliefs about their personal capabilities and

<p>Probe: Were you able to keep up to date with your schoolwork?</p> <p>Probe: Did you consult a friend in class?</p> <p>Probe: Did you consult a friend in the same college, but not in your class?</p> <p>Probe: Did you consult a member of the university staff?</p> <p>Probe: Did you consult your faculty professor?</p> <p>3. What are or were your strengths and weaknesses as a student?</p> <p>4. What do you think helps other students stay in college?</p> <p>5. What do you think leads other students to drop out of college?</p>	
---	--

6. Do you believe that living on-campus/off-campus helps or hurts a student with college adjustment?

Probe: If you lived on-campus, did you divide chores with others you live with?

Probe: If you lived on-campus, did you get along with others you live with?

Probe: If you lived off-campus, did you divide chores with others you lived with?

Probe: If you lived off-campus, did you get along with others you lived with?

7. Did you socialize at college?

Probe: Did you make new friends at college?

Probe: Did you join a student organization?

Probe: Did you join an intramural sports team?

<p>Probe: Did you think that you can get a date when you wanted one?</p> <p>Probe: Did you socialize with others you lived with?</p>	
--	--

Thank you for your assistance and participation in this study. Your responses will assist in the completion of this study. With this information, we will learn more about male Hispanic college students and how to help them complete college with a baccalaureate degree.

Sample Interview Protocol (Creswell, 2013)

APPENDIX G

APPENDIX G

Interview Protocol for Persisted Male Hispanic Students

Time of Interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Brief description of research study and the interview process:

“Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Texas- Rio Grande Valley. I want to thank each one of you for attending and volunteering with this focus group interview.”

“The purpose of the study is to explore Hispanic college students with a focus on male students attending a four-year Hispanic-serving higher education institution in South Texas. The primary goal of this study is to examine self-efficacy of entering freshman Hispanic students and its influence on persistence throughout one academic school year.”

“I have invited you here today to ask you questions and begin an open dialog about your student experiences here at this higher education institution. The focus group interview is expected to last no more than 50 minutes. Your participation is completely voluntary and you all information, statements, or any other information shared in this group will not be shared with

Probe: Were you able to keep up to date with your schoolwork?

Probe: Did you do well on exams?

Probe: Did you consult a friend, a faculty professor, or university staff?

Probe: Did you use outside classroom resources, such as the library?

4. Discuss your living situation last year as an entering freshman. Did you live on-campus or off-campus? With family or roommates?

5. What kinds of challenges did you face with your living situation, if any?

6. Discuss the social activities you are involved with last year as an entering freshman and this year.

7. Discuss or explain what you think helps other students stay in college?

<p>8. Is there anything anyone would like to add to the discussion before we close?</p>	
---	--

“Thank you for your assistance and participation in this study. Your responses will assist in the completion of this study. With this information, we will learn more about male Hispanic college students and how to help them complete college with a baccalaureate degree.”

Sample Interview Protocol (Creswell, 2013)

APPENDIX H

APPENIDX H

Interview Protocol for Drop-Out Male Hispanic Students

Time of Interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewee: _____

Brief description of research study and the interview process:

“Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Texas- Rio Grande Valley. I want to thank each one of you for attending and volunteering with this focus group interview.”

“The purpose of the study is to explore Hispanic college students with a focus on male students attending a four-year Hispanic-serving higher education institution in South Texas. The primary goal of this study is to examine self-efficacy of entering freshman Hispanic students and its influence on persistence throughout one academic school year.”

“I have invited you here today to ask you questions and begin an open dialog about your first-year student experiences at a higher education institution. The focus group interview is expected to last no more than 50 minutes. Your participation is completely voluntary and you all information, statements, or any other information shared in this group will not be shared with anyone outside of the group and will be kept confidential. At any time, you are free to withdraw from the interview and can choose not to answer questions.”

“Before we begin, I would like to ask everyone to sign the provided consent form and audio release form. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate. If you are under the age of 18, please let me know before we begin.”

“Thank you. And now, let us begin.”

“First, I would like to go around the room and have everyone introduce themselves.”

Interview Protocol Items:	Field Notes:
<p>8. Discuss a little bit about your experience in college. Talk about some experiences you had last year.</p> <p>9. Please tell me what or who do you think contributed the most in making your decision to drop out of college at this institution?</p> <p>10. What do you think were your strengths and weaknesses as a student with academic work?</p>	

Probe: Were you able to keep up to date with your schoolwork?

Probe: Did you do well on exams?

Probe: Did you consult a friend, a faculty professor, or university staff?

Probe: Did you use outside classroom resources, such as the library?

11. Discuss your living situation last year as an entering freshman. Did you live on-campus or off-campus? With family or roommates?

12. What kind of challenges did you face with your living situation, if any?

13. Discuss the social activities you were involved in when you were enrolled.

14. Discuss or explain what you think helps other students stay in college?

1. Do you know anyone who dropped out and why they dropped out?

<p>2. Is there anything anyone would like to add to the discussion before we close?</p>	
---	--

“Thank you for your assistance and participation in this study. Your responses will assist in the completion of this study. With this information, we will learn more about male Hispanic college students and how to help them complete college with a baccalaureate degree.”

Sample Interview Protocol (Creswell, 2013)

APPENDIX I

APPENDIX I

Hello,

Please allow me to reintroduce myself. My name is Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson and I am an Educational Leadership doctoral student at UTRGV. You participated in my survey in the Fall of 2015 during one of your courses and on the survey I asked for you to provide an email address and if you would be interested in participating in a focus group interview.

A year and a half later, it is time to proceed with my study. I am writing in hopes that you are still interested in participating. If you are still interested, I am only asking for one hour of your time on Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Please reply to this email if you would like to participate and I will be more than happy to provide you more information.

Thank you for your time and I hope that this email finds you well!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson

UTRGV Educational Leadership Doctoral Student

APPENDIX J

APPENDIX J

Hello,

Please allow me to reintroduce myself. My name is Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson and I am an Educational Leadership doctoral student at UTRGV. You participated in my survey at UTRGV in the Fall of 2015 during one of your courses and on the survey I asked for you to provide an email address and if you would be interested in participating in a focus group interview.

A year and a half later, it is time to proceed with my study. I am writing in hopes that you are still interested in participating. If you are still interested, I am only asking for one hour of your time on Wednesday, May 10, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Please reply to this email if you would like to participate and I will be more than happy to provide you more information.

Thank you for your time and I hope that this email finds you well!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Mendoza-Culbertson

UTRGV Educational Leadership Doctoral Student

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jennifer Mendoza Culbertson received her Doctor of Education degree from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in 2018. She received her Master Degree in Educational Administration (2011) and her Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication - Journalism (1994) from the University of Texas-Pan American. Mrs. Mendoza Culbertson has over 20 years of experience in various capacities within higher education and public schools working at the University of Texas-Pan American's Career Placement Services Office, South Texas College, and in the Edinburg Consolidated Independent School District as a Financial Aid Officer, Communication Instructor, Dual Enrollment Instructor, and Assistant Principal. Currently, she serves as the Director of the Robert Vela T-STEM Early College High School. For contact information email jennifer.m.culbertson@gmail.com.