The Relationship between a Sense of School Belonging and Internalizing, Externalizing, and School Problems in Adolescent Immigrants

by

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Abstract

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Research suggests that Latino adolescents, both native and foreign born, are at increased risk for the development of school, behavioral, and psychological problems. It also identifies a variety of factors associated with both risk and resilience in this population. There is, however, a scarcity of research that specifically examines risk and resiliency in recent Latino immigrant adolescents who have unique circumstances that may affect their functioning. This study was conducted to address this gap in the research literature by investigating the relationship between a sense of school belonging and internalizing, externalizing, and school problems in adolescent immigrants. Participants included 78 Latino adolescent immigrants between the ages of 11 and 18 who completed a number of instruments to assess their level of connectedness to their schools; internalizing, externalizing, and school problems; and overall psychological adjustment. One teacher for each student also completed a measure of academic effectiveness. Results showed that participants who reported a higher sense of school belonging indicated lower levels of depressive symptoms and higher overall psychological adjustment. Significant relationships

between school belonging and anxiety symptoms, school/academic problems, and externalizing behaviors were not found. These findings have implications for school psychologists and other school mental health staff who are in a position to support youngsters in need and to foster a supportive and inclusive school environment for immigrant children.

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Finally, my dissertation would not have been possible without the amazing young students who served as participants in this study. I especially thank them for sharing their experiences with me, and hope that one day research like this will help other immigrant students have better experiences in school and beyond.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

In recent years the school-aged immigrant population in the United States has increased significantly with 10% of school-aged children and adolescents in this country being foreign born, and 20% being children of immigrants (Birman, Weinstein, Chan, & Beehler, 2007). Although the United States welcomes immigrants from all over the globe, 55% of immigrant school children are born in Latin America (Capps et al., 2005, as cited in Blanco-Vega, Castro-Olivo, & Merrell, 2008). Unfortunately, this immigrant population is likely to live in poverty and possesses many psychological risk factors (Garrison, Roy, & Azar, 1999; Crean, 2004). Further, adolescent immigrants have their own unique risk factors as adolescence is a period of human development characterized by an increased risk for the development of depression and other psychopathologies such as substance abuse and suicide (Wenar & Kerig, 2006). Given this population's heightened risk for psychological and behavioral problems and Latino immigrants' tendency to avoid seeking mental health services (Jaycox et al., 2002), it is critical to identify factors associated with resilience in this population in places such as schools where this population can be accessed. For these reasons, this dissertation focused on the protective role of a sense of school belonging on Latino adolescent immigrants.

Latino culture is characterized by a strong emphasis on family bonds and one's role within the family (Garrison et al., 1999). Even during adolescence, a period in American culture where independence is highly sought after, Latino youth continue to value their role within the family system (Garrison et al., 1999). Thus, being a part of a larger group seems to be of high importance to Latino adolescents and may have implications for their sense of membership in their school.

As noted earlier, Latino immigrants are likely to live in poverty (Crean, 2004) as do nearly a quarter of immigrant families in the United States. This increases their risk for gang involvement, drug abuse, and death (Dalaker, 1999; National Research Council, 1993, as cited in Crean, 2004). Poverty is also associated with poor educational outcomes and this association is particularly strong in foreign born compared to native born youth (Plunkett et al., 2007; Pong & Hao, 2007, as cited in Henry, Merten, Plunkett, & Sands, 2008). Latinos over age 25 who are born in the United States have an 87.5% high school graduation rate while those born abroad only have a 67.2% graduation rate (Henry et al., 2008).

The immigration experience itself presents a variety of challenges and stressors. Immigrants often suffer violence and trauma in their home countries and may experience trauma during the actual migration process (Garisson et al., 1999). When immigrants leave their home nations, they typically leave behind family, friends, and social support networks. These support networks are unlikely to exist in their new country. Another particularly significant stressor is the frequent separation of family units for extended periods of time (Gaytan, Carhill, & Suarez-Orozco, 2007). These variables can have a negative impact on the well-being of any newcomer, but are particularly distressing for children and adolescents (Garrison et al., 1999). Immigrant youngsters also face the added stress of attending school in a new country while adapting to a foreign culture. In addition to not speaking, reading, or writing English, they arrive midway through their school career and may have limited schooling and/or interrupted education (Birman et al., 2007; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). These stressors put immigrant youth at risk, and this group has demonstrated an increased incidence of psychological disorders and high-risk behaviors (Birman et al., 2007).

There are several studies that detail risk in this population. Gaytan et al. (2007) reported that, in a sample of 385 immigrant children who participated in the Longitudinal Student Adaptation Study (LISA), a staggering 85% were separated from at least one parent during the migration process and 49% were separated from both parents. Gaytan et al. (2007) found that "children who underwent separations reported significantly more depressive symptoms than those that did not" (p. 10).

Jaycox et al. (2002) conducted a study to determine levels of violence exposure in immigrant children and the extent to which these children suffered from symptoms of PTSD and depression as well as the patterns of violence related to these symptoms. In a sample of 1,004 non-refugee third to eight grade immigrant students, Jaycox et al. (2002) found that higher levels of violence exposure, PTSD, and depressive symptoms existed in non-refugee immigrant children compared to the general population.

Alva and de los Reyes (1999) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between psychosocial stress, internalizing symptoms, and academic achievement of Latino adolescents. The authors found that Latino adolescents who suffer from psychosocial stress are at risk of developing internalizing symptoms as well as having poor grades. Patel and Kull (2011) found that adolescent immigrants are at high risk for the development of internalizing problems that may be overlooked by school staff. In addition, Carvajal, Romero, and Coyle (2002) conducted a study to examine behavioral and protective factors in Latino and Non-Latino White adolescents. The most significant finding was that Latinos reported significantly lower levels of academic orientation, which is associated with risk behavior and delinquency (Carvajal et al., 2002, p.188). These studies underscore the need for ongoing research that explores protective factors that may ameliorate risk in this vulnerable population.

Length of time in the United States also has implications for risk and resilience in Latino immigrant populations. Martinez, McClure, Eddy, and Wilson (2011) examined the relationship between length of time in the United States and the social, behavioral, and emotional adjustment of Latino immigrant youth. Their findings indicated that recency of immigration was associated with higher levels of internalizing problems and stress in adolescents. However, length of residency in the U.S. was positively correlated with behavioral problems and lower GPAs. In other words, recent immigrants actually experienced lower levels of academic and externalizing behavioral problems than did immigrants who had been in this country longer. These findings suggest that length of time in the United States has implications for both risk and resilience in Latino adolescents**.**

While Latino immigrant adolescents are clearly a vulnerable population, there are factors that have been found to serve as buffers against maladjustment. A study of first year immigrants and their parents, Levitt, Lane, and Levitt (2005) found that social support helped to reduce stress and improve adjustment. DeGarmo and Martinez (2006) found that social support in Latino adolescents was related to higher levels of academic achievement. While family support had the largest effect, the combination of family, school, and peer support yielded the largest benefit. In addition, Crean (2004) found that social support correlated positively with school performance in a sample of Latino adolescent middle school students. Social support was also negatively related and social conflict was positively related to mental health symptoms. These research findings suggest that social support networks could facilitate adaptation in Latino immigrant adolescents (Levitt et al., 2005). Because children spend so much time in school, school could serve as an ideal source of social support, and thus school belonging research with Latino immigrant adolescents is important.

School belonging refers to feelings of fitting in and belonging with others at school, the impression that others recognize one's abilities in school, and the feeling of an overall connectedness with the larger school community (Pittman & Richmond, 2007). There are a number of studies that detail the benefits of a sense of belonging and connectedness to one's school with diverse populations but few involve immigrant students.

In a sample of college freshman Pittman and Richmond (2007) found that delinquency was a predictor of a poor commitment to school. In addition, low levels of school bonding were predictive of future delinquency in boys, and a poor relationship with teachers was predictive of delinquency in girls. Battistich and Hom (1997) examined the relationship between a sense of school community and problem behaviors in fifth and sixth graders and found that higher levels of a sense of school community were associated with lower levels of substance use and delinquent behavior.

School belonging is also associated with lower levels of internalizing problems. MacMahon et al. (2008) found that school belonging had an inverse relationship with depression in disabled minority youngsters. Anderman (2002) reported that school belonging was negatively correlated with social rejection and depression in a diverse sample of students.

High levels of school belonging are also associated with improved academic outcomes. Sanchez, Colon, and Esparza (2005) found that higher levels of school belonging were associated with better academic outcomes including academic motivation, effort, and attendance in a sample of urban Latino high school students. This study demonstrated that school belonging plays an important role for urban Latino students. Walton and Cohen's (2011) demonstrated that an intervention to increase a sense of school belonging in African American college students was effective in increasing their self-reported GPAs as well as their health and well-being. In a

sample of Latino and African American students, MacMahon et al. (2008) reported that school belonging was associated with increased academic self efficacy. Goodnow and Grady (1993) examined the relationship between a sense of school belonging, students' perception of their friends' values, and academic motivation in a sample of ethnically diverse urban adolescent students. High levels of school belonging were associated with higher levels of motivation and academic engagement. This effect was greater for Latinos than for African Americans highlighting the need for further research with this population.

While there is limited research available involving the role of school belonging with immigrant students, Kia-Keating and Ellis (2007) conducted a study where they examined the role of school belonging in African refugee children. The authors found that while increased levels of school membership were not associated with levels of PTSD, they were associated with lower levels of depression and higher levels of self-efficacy in children with moderate to low levels of adversity (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007). In another study, Perez et al. (2009) did not examine school belonging as a construct, but conducted a study that focused on factors associated with academic resilience in undocumented Latino students. They found that high risk students involved in extracurricular activities had higher levels of academic achievement. In a pilot study that I conducted during the 2010-2011 school year with recent immigrant middle school students from Latin America, I found a marginally significant inverse relationship between internalizing problems and a sense of school belonging.

It is evident that Latino adolescent immigrants are at increased risk for the development of internalizing disorders, externalizing problems, and academic problems. Research has demonstrated that, amongst other things, psychological difficulties are associated with ills such as poor school performance, poor interpersonal relationships, and adult psychopathology (Wenar

& Kerig, 2006). There is, however, a scarcity of research that specifically examines risk and resiliency in Latino immigrant adolescents and thus a lack of information regarding positive developmental outcomes among members of this population (Umaña-Taylor, 2009). Given the increasing number of immigrant youths in our nation's public school system and their demonstrated risk, research in this area is warranted. The research literature and my pilot study demonstrate that having a strong sense of school belonging is associated with lower levels of school problems, improved academic outcomes, and lower levels of internalizing and externalizing problems. These relationships have, nevertheless, not been sufficiently explored in immigrant children.

The purpose of my dissertation was to address the gap in the research literature mentioned above by investigating how a sense of school belong relates to internalizing behavior, externalizing behavior, and school problems in Latino adolescent immigrants to answer the following questions:

1. The following two research questions examined the relationship between a sense of school belonging and school/academic problems in Latino adolescent immigrants.
    a. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and self-report of school/academic problems?
    b. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and teacher reports of academic effectiveness?
2. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and internalizing symptoms in this population?
3. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and externalizing symptoms in this population?

4. The following four research questions examine the relationship between length of time in the United States and study outcome variables in this population:
    a. Is there a relationship between length of time in the United States and self-report of school/academic problems in this population?
    b. Is there a relationship between length of time in the United States and teacher reports of academic effectiveness in this population?
    c. Is there a relationship between length of time in the United States and internalizing problems in this population?
    d. Is there a relationship between length of time in the United States and externalizing problems in this population?
5. If the answers to questions 4a-d are affirmative, are these relationships moderated by a sense of school belonging?
6. Are these relationships mediated by other demographic variables?

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Latino adolescents are a growing at-risk population in this nation's school systems (Birman, 2007; Garrison, 1999; Gaytan et al., 2007), and it is necessary to identify factors associated with resilience in this population. This chapter provides an overview of the literature pertaining to Latino adolescent immigrant characteristics, factors associated with risk and resilience in this population, and the role of sense of school belonging as a protective variable.

The first section describes the unique characteristics associated with Latino adolescent immigrants by focusing on demographic characteristics and distinct aspects of Latino culture. Then the chapter details the immigration experience and risk-factors.

The second section of the chapter looks at risk and resilience research with Latino immigrant populations. It reviews studies that link the risk factors detailed in the first section of the chapter with internalizing, externalizing, and school problems of Latino immigrant adolescents. Specifically, the literature shows how factors unique to the immigration experience, acculturation, and length of time in the United States are linked to the development of psychological and school problems in the Latino population. This section then reviews literature detailing factors that serve as buffers against development of problems.

The third section discusses the construct of school belonging. It defines the construct and details how it is measured before outlining the research literature that describes its relationship to school, internalizing, and externalizing problems in diverse populations. Finally, the third section discusses available literature that describes the relationship of school belonging to internalizing, externalizing, and school problems in immigrant groups.

Unique Characteristics Associated with Latino Immigrant Youth

Because the proposed study involved Latino adolescent immigrants, it is important to describe this population and its unique factors. Ten percent of school-aged children in this country are foreign born, and 20% are children of immigrants (Birman et al., 2007). Fifty-five percent of these immigrant children were born in Latin America (Capps et al., 2005 as cited in Blanco-Vega et al., 2008).

Adolescence. The developmental period of adolescence has several definitions in the research literature, but it is generally described as the period beginning with puberty and ending around the age of 19, although some experts believe adolescence may end as late as the age of 24 (Burt, Resnick, & Novick, 1998). This period of human development is critical because it represents the stage when individuals transition from childhood to adulthood. It is characterized by hormonal and body changes, increased demands and expectations by society, increased importance of peer relationships, heightened awareness of body image, increased cognitive functioning, and a changing role in the family (Wenar & Kerig, 2006). The latter involves negotiating the need for autonomy and independence with the expectations of parents. While most individuals get through adolescence without significant difficulty, "moodiness, self-deprecation, and depression reach peak in adolescence; and other psychopathologies also show a sharp rise, including suicide, schizophrenia, alcohol and drug abuse, and eating disorders" (Wenar & Kerig, 2006, p. 360). This description of adolescence is quite broad and applies to many American ethnic/racial groups, but the developmental tasks of Latino adolescence are nonetheless uniquely influenced by the nature of their culture.

Adolescence in the Latino culture. When discussing adolescence in any group, it is important to consider the culture from which individuals come and its potential impact on their development. Latinos come from collectivist societies, and one of the most important aspects of

their culture is *familisim* or the strong emphasis on family, extended family, and strong family bonds (Garrison et al., 1999). *Personalism* is another important aspect of Latino culture and "refers to the importance of establishing meaningful personal relationships within Latino families, as well as with others outside of the family" (Garrison et al., 1999, p. 203). There is an age and gender hierarchy in Latino culture. Elders are respected and men are seen as heads and protectors of their families, while women are seen as caregivers and are responsible for rearing and disciplining children. In addition, corporal punishment is considered acceptable and could lead youth to act out in other settings (Garcia-Preto, 1996). Immigration can, however, disrupt these traditional family roles. Garrison et al. (1999) noted that role reversals include women becoming primary bread winners and children and adolescents becoming interpreters and navigators of service delivery systems for their parents.

Familism and *personalism* are two aspects of Latino culture that play an important role in differentiating Latino adolescents from that the majority group and other minority groups. Specifically, while adolescence is a period characterized by the desire for increased independence (Wenar & Kerig, 2006),

> the importance of maintaining strong family bonds is generally thought to far outweigh the need (for adolescents) to establish their own personal independence. Accordingly, young adults in a Latino family are much more likely than those in an Anglo American family to live with their parents until they are married. (Garrison et al., p. 203)

Thus, being a part of larger group seems to be of high importance to Latino adolescents and may have implications for the role of their sense of school membership.

Acculturation also plays an important role in Latino adolescent functioning. Acculturation is the process by which one's culture is altered by contact between two independent cultural groups that ultimately leads to assimilation (Smokowski, Chapman, &

Bacallao, 2007). There seems to be a curvilinear relationship between acculturation and mental health with individuals with either low or high levels of acculturation experiencing more mental health problems, and those who are bicultural fairing best (Blanco-Vega et al., 2008).

Poverty and Education. Latino immigrant populations tend to be economically disadvantaged and are likely to reside in violent and impoverished neighborhoods (Henry et al., 2008). Specifically, nearly a quarter of immigrant families in the United States are impoverished, which increases their risk for gang involvement, drug abuse, and death (Dalaker,1999; National Research Council, 1993, as cited in Crean, 2004). Poverty is associated with poor educational outcomes, and this association is particularly strong in foreign born youth compared to native born youth (Plunkett et al., 2007; Pong & Hao, 2007, as cited in Henry et al., 2008).

According the U.S. Department of Education (2005), Latinos have a 26% high school dropout rate, which is the highest among all ethnic groups in the United States (As cited in Sanchez et al., 2007). This dropout rate becomes even more staggering when you examine the difference between native and foreign born Latinos. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Latinos over age 25 who are born in the United States have an 87.5% high school graduation rate while those born abroad only have a 67.2% graduation rate (as cited in Henry et al., 2008, p. 581). These high drop-out rates are likely precipitated by the academic trajectory of immigrant youth. "In recent longitudinal studies of immigrants youths' academic pathways through middle and high school, over 50% had below average or failing grades, or declined in academic performance over time" (Hagelskamp, Suárez-Orozco, & Hughes, 2010, p.720).

Immigration experience. The Latino immigration experience varies depending on country of origin with groups from certain countries experiencing higher levels of violence

exposure, trauma, and stress in their home countries (Garrison et al., 1999). In addition, immigrants often experience trauma during the actual immigration process. Latino immigrants migrate to this country for a variety of reasons. Some migrate because of political turmoil in their native lands. For others, civil war and violence in the home countries are motivations for migration (Garrison et al., 1999). Increased educational opportunities are also a motivating factor. Nevertheless, the most common reasons immigrants report that they chose to come to the United States is because they seek financial and work opportunities that do not exist in their homelands (Hagelskamp et al., 2010).

When newcomers arrive from Latin America, their financial difficulties, however, tend to persist, with Latinos making up a disproportionate percentage of this nation's impoverished (Crean, 2004; Dalaker, 1999; Garrison et al., 1999). Garrison et al. (1999) described how immigrants often experience additional stress when they arrive in their new country if they do not have legal status, have difficulty finding work, and have family role reversals. They noted that these social role reversals include children becoming interpreters and navigators of service delivery systems for their parents. Also, children typically acculturate more quickly than their parents leading to additional familial stress.

When immigrants leave their home nations, they typically leave behind family, friends, and social support networks. These support networks are unlikely to exist in their new country. A particularly significant stressor is the frequent separation of family units for extended periods of time (Gayan, et al., 2007). These variables can have a negative impact on the well-being of any newcomer, but are particularly distressing for children and adolescents (Garrison et al., 1999).

Immigrant youngsters also face the added stress of attending school in a new country. In addition to not speaking, reading, or writing English, they arrive midway through their school careers and may have limited schooling and/or interrupted education (Birman et al., 2007; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). U.S. culture is vastly different from their culture, and immigrant youngsters do not have the friendships that native U.S. children and adolescents have often cultivated for years. These factors may explain, at least in part, well-documented poor educational outcomes associated with this population (Birman et al., 2007; Gayan et al., 2007; Henry et al., 2008).

An immigrant's legal U.S. residency status can be another source of considerable stress for children and adolescents. If a youngster comes from an undocumented family, there may be the added difficulty of caregivers acquiring employment. This can increase the likelihood that the family will live in poverty. In addition, undocumented adolescents are faced with the reality that they have limited post-secondary educational and employment opportunities (Aborna et al., 2010; Cervantes, Mejia, & Mena, 2010). Further, fear of deportation and criminal repercussions can lead to stress, anxiety, and mistrust of others (Garrison et al., 1999).

Latino immigrants clearly have a significant amount of life stressors. These stressors put them at risk and have demonstrated increased risk for psychological disorders and high-risk behaviors (Birman et al., 2007). Unfortunately, these stressors put Latino children and adolescents, both immigrant and non-immigrant, at particular risk for violence exposure, teenage pregnancy, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, behavior problems, substance abuse, and suicide attempts (Garrison et al., 1999).

Risk and Resilience Research

Internalizing, externalizing, and school problems in immigrant adolescents. As mentioned earlier, separation from a parent during the immigration process can have deleterious effects on immigrant children. Separation typically occurs when, during the immigration process, individual family members migrate at different times. It is not unusual for children to be separated from one or both parents for years (Gaytan, et al., 2007). Gaytan et al. (2007) reported that, in a sample of 385 immigrant children who participated in the Longitudinal Student Adaptation Study (LISA), a staggering 85% were separated from at least one parent during the migration process, and 49% were separated from both parents. "These separations had a significant effect on mental health; children who underwent separations reported significantly more depressive symptoms than those that did not" (Gaytan et al., 2007, p. 10). In addition, these children were often left with other caregivers in their home countries with whom they developed strong attachments and, as a result, the children suffered another separation when they migrated to the United States (Gaytan et al., 2007) without these caregivers. When families are reunited, immigrant children and adolescents may have to join existing family units and family systems.

Research suggests that immigrant children have high levels of violence exposure before, during, and post-immigration that is associated with PTSD and depression. Jaycox et al. (2002) conducted a study to determine levels of violence exposure in immigrant children and the extent to which these children suffered from symptoms of PTSD and depression as well as the patterns of violence related to their symptoms. The participants were 1,004 non-refugee, third to eighth grade immigrant students who participated in the Mental Health for Immigrants Project (MHIP) in Southern California and were enrolled in a participating school. Their home languages were

Spanish, Korean, West Armenian, or Russian, and they had immigrated to the Unites States less than three years prior to participation. More than half of the sample was from Mexico, Central America, or South America. The remaining participants were from Korea, Russia, or Armenia (Jaycox et al., 2002).

According to Jaycox et al. (2002), the children had significant exposure to violence, both recently and earlier in their lives, and violence exposure was correlated with symptoms of depression and PTSD, all of which were higher in the sample than in the general population. There was a positive correlation between PTSD and depressive symptoms. The authors also reported that, while older children had higher levels of violence exposure than younger children, age did not influence rates of PSTD or depressive symptoms. PTSD symptoms were most associated with victimization and witnessing violence in the past year as well as to lifetime exposure to violence. Depressive symptoms were associated with being female and having violent victimization within the past year (Jaycox et al., 2002).

These results suggest that high levels of violence exposure, PTSD, and depressive symptoms exist in non-refugee immigrant children compared to the general population. The authors also noted that immigrants may be less likely to seek mental health services and that parents may not be aware of their children's violence exposure.

While the previous study simply demonstrated the prevalence of depressive and PTSD symptoms children in immigrant children, Hovey and King (1996) conducted a study to investigate the relationship of acculturation stress, depression, and suicidal ideation in Latino first and second generation immigrants. The sample was a group of 70 (40 female and 30 male) Latino California high school students in a bilingual program. Eighty-nine percent of the students were first generation immigrants, and the remainder was second generation immigrants.

Country of origin was reported for first generation immigrant participants as follows: 54 were of Mexican descent, 3 of Central American descent, 2 of South American descent, and 2 of Spanish descent. Seventy-five percent of the total participants' SESs fell in the low range.

Hovey and King (1996) administered measures to assess level of acculturation, acculturation stress, family functioning, expectations for the future, depression, and suicidal ideation. The staggering results indicated that approximately 25% of the sample reported suicidal ideation and critical levels of depressive symptoms. Acculturation stress was positively correlated with both suicidal ideation and depressive symptoms. The results also suggested that positive family relationships and positive outlook about the future were associated with lower levels of acculturation stress. Results of first and second generation immigrants did not differ. Such high levels of negative psychological symptoms in this population, as cited here, demonstrate how critical the need is to conduct resilience research with Latino immigrant youth.

Carvajal et al. (2002) conducted a study to examine behavioral and protective factors in Latino and Non-Latino White adolescents. The authors sampled 1,119 participants from middle schools in a large urban school district in Northern California. In addition to demographic data, the authors collected information about the participants' acculturation, health risk behaviors, health behavior, and both negative and positive mental health indicators. According to the authors, the final sample yielded a nearly even split between males and females. Carvajal et al. (2002) reported that 705 of participants were Latino and 414 were Non-Latino Whites. Further, the mean age of participants was 12. Of the Latino participants, 12% reported being first generation, 40% second generation, 26% third generation, and 21% fourth generation or more (p. 188). In addition, there was a statistically significant relationship between ethnicity and social class with Non-Latino SES being higher than Latino SES.

Carvajal et al. (2002) found no SES, gender, or ethnicity differences in drinking behavior. There was no effect of gender or ethnicity in cigarette or drug use, but there was a negative effect for SES and drug/cigarette use. SES was also negatively related to fighting behavior. Whites reported being more physically active and reported using sunscreen more regularly. Surprisingly, there was no effect for SES or ethnicity on mental health indicators, but girls were more likely to report depressive symptoms. The most significant finding in this study was that Latinos reported significantly lower levels of academic orientation, which is associated with risk behavior and delinquency (Carvajal et al., 2002, p.188).

Cespedes and Huey (2008) conducted a study to explore why Latino youths report high levels of depression compared to their non-Latino peers. They sought to determine whether the acculturation disparity between adolescents and their parents and gender role belief disparities between parents and children contributed to depressive symptoms (Cespedes & Huey, 2008). The authors reported that the study participants were 130 Latino high school students from a Los Angeles high school who ranged in age from 13-18 years. The majority of the Latino participants identified themselves as either of Mexican or Central American descent, and all were either the children of immigrant parents or immigrants themselves. The major findings of this study were that the perceived acculturation discrepancy between the students and their parents was not associated with family dysfunction or depression; however, gender role belief disparities between parents and children was associated with both family dysfunction and depression.

Smokowski and Bacallao (2007) conducted a study to examine acculturation risk factors and cultural assets and how they influence adolescent mental health. The authors recruited a sample of 323 adolescents in North Carolina. Ninety-seven percent of the participants were immigrants with an average age of 15 and an average length of residency in the United States of

4.77 years. Approximately half of the sample was female. The youngsters were from Mexico (66%), Central America (13%), and South America (21%) and were primarily of low SES. This sample was unique in that the authors managed to obtain participants from metropolitan, suburban, and rural residences.

Smokowski and Bacallao's (2007) results indicated that conflict between parents and adolescents regarding perceived discrimination were risk factors for internalizing problems. They also found that high involvement in the Latino culture had an inverse relationship with internalizing symptoms and aggression. Finally, length of time in the United States was positively correlated with humiliation, aggression, and school bonding. Although length of time in the United States seems to be associated with increased risk for humiliation and aggression, there is promise in the positive correlation between school bonding and length of time in the United States. The benefits of a sense of school belonging are discussed later in this paper.

Even though Latino youth are at increased risk for exposure to stressful life events (Birman et al., 2007; Garrison et al., 1999; Gaytan et al., 2007), they are, nevertheless, underrepresented in the research literature. To augment the research literature, Alva and de los Reyes (1999) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between psychosocial stress, internalized symptoms, and academic achievement of Latino adolescents. The authors recruited 171 ninth graders from a public high school in Los Angeles, California. There was an approximate even split between males and females. The participants ranged from 14 to 16 years of age. Thirty-three percent of the participants indicated that they were born in the United States, 26% reported that they were born in Mexico, 20% in El Salvador, 8% in Guatemala, 2% in Nicaragua, and 5% in another Latin American country (p. 346). The researchers administered

each participant measures of psychosocial stress, internalizing symptoms (including depression and anxiety), perceived competence, and academic achievement.

Alva and de los Reyes (1999) computed the correlations among all the aforementioned variables. The results indicated that psychosocial stress was positively correlated with symptoms of anxiety and depression and negatively correlated with perceived competence in cognitive, social, and global domains. Further, there existed a negative correlation between psychosocial stress and academic functioning. The authors had developed the hypothesis, based on their review of existing literature with non-Latino populations, that perceived competence would moderate the effects of psychosocial stress. Unfortunately, perceived competence did not moderate the negative effects of psychosocial stressors on academic outcomes and internalizing symptoms in this sample of Latino adolescents (p. 353). This study's results emphasize that Latino adolescents who suffer psychosocial stress are at risk of developing internalizing symptoms as well as having poor grades. It also underscores the need for ongoing research that explores protective factors that may ameliorate risk in this vulnerable population.

Patel and Kull (2011) recognized the need to learn more about the adjustment of adolescent immigrants. They conducted a study to assess psychological symptoms in recent adolescent immigrants. They utilized a sample of students from two public high schools for immigrants who were eligible to enroll if they have been in the country for less than three years. Approximately half of the sample was male and the other half female. The participants were in grades 9-12 and represented 61 countries. Twenty-eight percent were from the Caribbean, 28% from Latin America, 21% from East Asia, 11% from South Asia, 6% from Europe, and 6% from the Middle East. The mean time since immigration was reported as 4 years.

Patel and Kull (2011) asked students to complete a demographic questionnaire and both students and teachers completed the Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment (ASEBA) to measure the following psychological and behavioral adjustment problems: Affective problems, Anxiety problems, Somatic problems, and ADHD problems. The researchers found that the participants and their teachers reported symptoms higher than the norm across all domains except ADHD. In addition, students reported higher levels of difficulties in all domains than did their teachers. These findings indicate that adolescent immigrants are at high risk for the development of internalizing problems and these problems may be overlooked by school staff.

Martinez et al. (2011) also sought to learn more about the adjustment of Latino immigrants. They conducted a study to examine the relationship between length of time in the United States and the social, behavioral, and emotional adjustment. The authors utilized a sample of 217 families from the Adolescent Latino Acculturation Study based in Oregon, which has experienced a recent wave of immigration (Martinez et al., 2011). Inclusionary criteria for adolescent participants were being born abroad and being fluent in English or Spanish. Ninety-four percent of participants were natives of Mexico, with the remaining coming from Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

Participants in Martinez et al.'s (2011) study completed measures to assess aspects of social, behavioral, and emotional adjustment. The findings indicated that recency of immigration was associated with higher levels of internalizing problems and stress in adolescents. However, length of residency in the U.S. was positively correlated with behavioral problems and lower GPAs. In other words, recent immigrants actually experience lower levels of academic and externalizing behavioral problems than did immigrants who had been in this

country longer. These findings suggest that length of time in the United States has implications for both risk and resilience in Latino adolescents**.**

Resiliency in Latino adolescents. "Resilience theory, though it is concerned with risk exposure among adolescents, is focused on strengths rather than deficits. It focuses on understanding healthy development in spite of risk exposure" (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005, p. 399). It is evident that the immigration experience presents many challenges that put immigrants and their children at risk for numerous psychological and school problems. Thus, it is critical that researchers look beyond risk factors that are associated with negative psychological symptoms and toward identifying variables that may be protective. There is an emerging body of resiliency research that identifies factors that may serve as buffers for the immigrant population.

For example, Levitt, Lane, and Levitt (2005) conducted a study to assess the stress related to immigration in a group of first-year immigrant children and their parents, and to determine if their psychological adjustment was impacted by the level of stress that they experienced and the levels of social support to which they had access. Furthermore, they compared the results of parents and children and participants from different countries of origin. The authors utilized a subsample of participants from a larger child immigration adjustment study by selecting students who had been in the country for less than one year and also included these children's parents in the study. The child participants ranged in age from 7-18 and were newly arrived immigrant students from Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, Haiti, and the West Indies in public elementary, middle, and high schools in Miami-Dade County.

Levitt et al. (2005) reported that both parents and children experienced significant post-immigration stress; however, children experienced considerably more stress than did their

parents. They found that stress was clearly associated with poor psychological adjustment in both children and parents. Nevertheless, social support helped to reduce stress and improve adjustment. This research is valuable in demonstrating that, while recent immigrants experience significant levels of stress, it can be mediated by strong social support networks and could facilitate adaptation in this population (Levitt et al., 2005). Because children spend so much time in school, school could serve as an ideal source of social support.

Latino immigrants are at risk for poor academic outcomes for a variety of complex reasons. Henry et al. (2008) attempted to elucidate how certain variables may influence academic outcomes and how some may serve as buffers. Specifically, they explored how neighborhood, parenting, and adolescent variables influenced academic achievement. They utilized a final sample of 502 Latino adolescents from immigrant families that they recruited from a Los Angeles high school. The youngsters had a mean age of 14.81 and 58% were girls, 42% were boys. Thirty-eight percent of participants were foreign born, and 62% were born in the United States. The authors collected information from measures assessing GPA, parenting factors, perceived neighborhood risk, and adolescent variables (motivation, gender, and native country), along with structural neighborhood adversity. The latter information came from census data.

Henry et al. (2008) found that structural neighborhood adversity was not associated with GPA; however, participants' perception of their neighborhood was. Children who thought their mothers had high aspirations for their education had higher GPA's. In addition, children's motivation was associated with higher GPAs and mediated the relationship between parental monitoring of adolescents and GPA (p. 579). These findings indicate that many of the factors that influence academic outcomes in adolescents exist outside of school, such as family and neighborhood. Because these variables are typically more difficult to manipulate, it is critical to

find buffers in other settings, such as schools, when looking to mitigate the deleterious consequences associated with risk factors.

Smokowski, Chapman, and Bacallao (2007) examined the relationship between acculturation risk and protective factors and the mental health of Latino immigrant adolescents. The authors used a sample of 100 adolescents from a previous violence and suicide prevention study for their research. The sample included 100 foreign-born Latino adolescents with a 4-year mean amount of time residing in the United States. They ranged in age from 12 to 18. Sixty-three percent were Mexican, 22% South American, 14% Central American, and 1% Caribbean. The genders were approximately evenly split, and participants came from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Participants completed measures of English language use, involvement in Latino and non-Latino culture, perceived discrimination, familism, and parent-adolescent conflict.

The relevant findings of Smokowski et al. (2007) were that perceived discrimination and parent-adolescent conflict were predictive of internalizing, externalizing, and total problems. In addition, familism was protective against the development of these problems. These findings suggest that, when developing prevention programs and interventions for Latino immigrant adolescents, it is important to consider the role of social support, such as the parent-adolescent relationship, and discrimination. The authors suggested that their results can be generalized to institutions, such as schools, which can strive to be sensitive to the role of discrimination and take measures to combat it. Further, school personnel can collaborate with families and consider social support options within schools.

DeGarmo and Martinez (2006) examined the relationship between discriminatory experiences and academic achievement in Latino adolescents. They noted how Latinos are deeply rooted in their families, and thus based their research on the theoretical framework that social support systems that extend beyond the family may play a critical role to buffer the

negative effects of stress. Their final sample consisted of 278 participants in grades 6-12. The sample was drawn from a group of youngsters attending a youth summit in Oregon. Seventy-four percent of the participants self-identified as being Latino (largely of Mexican descent), 7% indicated they belonged to another racial/ethnic group, 14% reported that they were multiracial, and 5% did not report their ethnic background (p. 270).

DeGarmo and Martinez (2006) administered measures to assess academic well-being, including items to identify perceived discrimination and social support. Social support instruments measured both parental and school support. Additionally, they used three markers to control for the variables of SES and level of acculturation. When controlling for SES and acculturation variables, social support, when independent of discrimination, was significantly related to higher levels of academic well-being (p. 272). In addition, the results indicated that perceived discrimination was associated with poor academic achievement; however, higher levels of social support served as a buffer. With regard to type of social support, DeGarmo and Martinez (2006) reported that parental support had a larger affect on academic well-being relative to school and peer support. Nevertheless, the combined score of all three types of support was more significant than any one type of social support, including family. These findings highlight that, while families may play a critical role in the academic well-being of Latino students, extended support systems such as schools may do so as well.

Crean (2004) investigated the relationship between social support, social conflict, major life stressors, adaptive coping strategies, and school performance in Latino middle school adolescents. He cited risk factors such as poverty and poor academic outcomes such as high drop-out rates to emphasize the need for exploration of resiliency factors. Crean (2004) indicated that the study participants were derived from a larger school-based services project and

were students at a large urban middle school in the southwestern United States. The final sample consisted of 304 Latino middle school students with a mean age of 12.4. The majority of the sample, 88.8 %, was of Mexican descent and the remainder identified as Other Latino. Instruments measuring the following variables were administered to the youngsters: social support, social conflict, environmental stressors, coping strategies, peer ratings of sociability and leadership, adolescent mental health, and school performance data.

Crean (2004) reported that environmental stressors correlated positively with negative psychological symptoms and negatively with school performance. Social support and adaptive coping skills correlated positively with school performance. Social support was negatively related to poor mental health symptoms and social conflict was positively related to them. Adaptive coping skills served as mediating variable for the latter two (Crean, 2004). These findings emphasize the benefits of social support as a buffer for negative psychological symptoms as well as poor academic outcomes.

It is evident that experiencing social support is beneficial to adolescents. Blanco-Vega et al. (2008) pointed out that "schools have been found to be one of the most important cultural gates for all students, including immigrants" (p.55-56). The authors suggested that immigrant student experiences of levels of support and school belonging when entering schools in the United States will predict better outcomes for this population. Nevertheless, the authors emphasized that that there is a scarcity of research investigating the relationship between school belonging and academic and social success with immigrant Latino youngsters.

School Belonging

It is evident from the review above that the experience of immigrant adolescents is quite trying and leaves them at increased risk for the development of psychological and school problems. In addition, adolescence is a critical time period in human development. During this

period there is also increased risk for the development of psychological and academic difficulties. Consequently, adolescent immigrants are a doubly at-risk population and warrant research that examines the nature of this risk and explores protective factors such as school belonging.

Definition of school belonging. School belonging includes feelings of fitting in and belonging with others at school, the impression that others recognize one's abilities in school, and the feeling of an overall connectedness with the larger school community (Pittman & Richmond, 2007). Motivational psychologists purport that the need for belonging/relatedness is one of three basic psychological needs necessary for human development (Osterman, 2000). Baumeister and Leary (1995) (as cited in Anderman, 2002) described the construct of belonging as an innate drive that humans have to form positive social relationships with one another.

Anderman (2002) concluded that, when deprived of feeling a sense of belonging, individuals suffer deleterious psychological outcomes. "When an individual's need for belonging is met, positive outcomes occur. Within schools, a perceived sense of school belonging is related to enhanced motivation, achievement, and attitudes toward school" (p. 796).

Relationship of school belonging to internalizing, externalizing, and school problems in diverse populations. There is a wealth of research demonstrating that a sense of school belonging is associated with resilience in non-immigrant populations. Specifically, Pittman and Richmond (2007) examined the role of school belonging on academic and psychological functioning in late adolescents. They sampled 18 and 19 year-old college freshman from a local state university. The final sample included 226 participants who were approximately evenly split by gender. They were 60% Caucasian, 22% African American, 10% Hispanic, and 8% Asian (p. 274). The authors administered measures to assess demographic data, including SES, school

belonging, relationship with parents and friends, academic success and work orientation, self-worth and perceived scholastic competence, and problem behaviors.

Pittman and Richmond's (2007) significant findings were that levels of sense of school belonging were comparable across ethnic groups. Freshman college students with higher reported levels of school belonging exhibited higher academic performance, felt more academically competent, had an increased sense of self-worth, and trended toward lower levels of internalizing and externalizing problems (p. 283). Lower levels of parental education were associated with lower levels of school belonging as well as with lower grades and increased internalizing problems. Nevertheless, parent education did not alter the moderating effects of school belonging. This finding is notable because Latino students, as noted earlier, are often of lower SES and have less well educated parents than their non-minority peers (Birman et al., 2007; Crean, 2004).

Liljeberg et al. (2011) examined the bidirectional relationship between poor school bonding and delinquency over time. The authors conducted a longitudinal study in Sweden where they followed eighth grade participants for 18 months. The participants were 14 when data were first collected and 16 at final data collection. Eighty-one percent of the original sample was available at second data collection (n = 1,007). The participants completed a measure of delinquency and school bonding at the beginning and end of the study. The findings were that delinquency was a predictor of a poor commitment to school for both genders. It was also a predictor of a poor attachment to school in female participants. In addition, low levels of school bonding were predictive of future delinquency in boys and a poor relationship with teachers was predictive of delinquency in girls. Overall, these findings demonstrate that various dimensions of school belonging may be protective against future externalizing problems.

Battistich and Hom (1997) examined the relationship between a sense of school community and problem behaviors in 1,434 fifth and sixth graders from six school districts across the United States. The districts represented the West Coast, Southwest, South, Southeast, and Northeast. The diverse sample was comprised of 49% White, 21% Hispanic, 20% African American, 8% Asian, and 2% other ethnic group participants. Students' sense of school community was measured using a 38-item scale; their self-reported cigarette, marijuana, and alcohol use was measured using individual questions; and 10 delinquent behaviors were measured on a Likert scale.

When controlling for student and school variables, Battistich and Hom (1997) found that higher levels of school community were associated with lower levels of substance use and delinquent behavior. These findings further support the protective nature of school belonging against externalizing behavior.

Sanchez et al. (2005) conducted a study to examine the function of the school belonging and gender on academic outcomes in urban Latino youngsters. They collected data from a sample of 143 urban Latino twelfth grade high school students in the Midwest. Specifically, their sample consisted of mostly Mexican-American (42%) and Puerto Rican-American (39%) students. Remaining participants were other Latino (9%) or biethnic Latino (6%). The gender split of participants was approximately equal, and 85% of participants were classified as low SES based on their eligibility for free and reduced lunch.

Sanchez et al.'s (2005) participants completed measures assessing motivation, sense of belonging, educational aspirations and expectations, academic effort, and academic achievement. The authors found that, while females outperformed their male counterparts academically, there was no gender difference in level of school belonging. Further, they found that higher levels of

school belonging were associated with better academic outcomes including academic motivation, effort, and attendance (Sanchez et al., 2005). This study demonstrated that school belonging plays an important role in urban Latino students.

Walton and Cohen (2011) conducted an intervention designed to increase the sense of school belonging in college students. The authors indicated that they expected that the intervention would be particularly beneficial to African American college students relative to their Caucasian counterparts because they have been historically "stereotyped and socially marginalized" in academic settings (p.1447). They utilized a sample of 49 African American and 43 Caucasian college students. They asked students to complete surveys every day to assess their psychological responses to adversity, school belonging, health, and well-being. Their transcripts were also reviewed. The participants were placed into either an intervention group or a control group, and variables were measured post-intervention. The intervention involved reducing the participants' psychological threat perception through attitude change strategies designed to frame "social adversity as common and transient" (p. 1447). The goal of the intervention was for participants to generate messages of this notion independently and ultimately increase their sense of school belonging.

The outcomes of Walton and Cohen's (2011) study suggested that their intervention produced benefits for African American students because it increased their GPAs compared to that of the control group and also improved their health and well-being as evidenced by participants' self-report measures. These findings suggest that improving minority students' sense of belonging can result in both academic and health benefits and that these benefits are more salient than for non-minority youth.

MacMahon, Parnes, Keys, and Viola (2008) conducted a study with a group of low-income, predominantly African-American and Latino youngsters with disabilities. They examined how school stressors and resources and school belonging related to academic outcomes and internalizing problems, specifically anxiety and depression, in this under-researched population. They utilized a sample of 136 students from a school for disabled youngsters. Eighty-two percent of the participants were African American, 12% Latino, 2% Caucasian, and 4% unknown disabled students. The type and severity of the students' disabilities varied. The median age of participants was 17-years-old.

MacMahon et al. (2008) utilized measures to assess school belonging, school stressors and social resources, academic self-efficacy, school satisfaction, anxiety, and depression. The authors found that school belonging was associated with "higher levels of academic self-efficacy and school satisfaction, and lower rates of depression" (p. 394). School belonging, however, was not significantly correlated with anxiety. These findings emphasize the importance of the role of school belonging as a buffer against school and internalizing problems in minority populations extended to disabled youngsters.

McMahon, Wernsman, and Rose (2009) conducted a study to examine the relationship between school belonging and classroom environment and academic self-efficacy. They utilized an ethnically diverse sample of fourth and fifth graders from two urban California schools. Participants were African American, Latino, Caucasian, Chinese, Filipino, and Asian-American. The researchers measured the aforementioned variables in the children at both schools.

McMahon et al. (2009) found a significant correlation between classroom environment and participants' sense of school belonging. In addition, results suggested that school belonging played an important role in academic outcomes. Specifically, school belonging was associated

with higher levels of self-efficacy, particularly in language arts. Further, school belonging played a greater role in academic outcomes than did classroom environment.

Anderman (2002) conducted a study to examine the relationship between school belonging and social rejection, depression, and school problems. He utilized a sample of students from another large study that consisted of over 20, 000 students in 132 schools. While nearly half of these students were Caucasian, the remainder was ethnically diverse. Fourteen percent of the total sample identified themselves as Hispanic, 15% African American, 1.5% Native American, 5.6 Asian-Pacific Islander, and 6.3 non-White Other. Approximately half of the sample was male and half was female. School settings ranged from urban to rural.

Anderman's (2002) findings indicated that school belonging was negatively correlated with social rejection and depression. This makes school belonging an important protective variable. Interestingly, aggregated school belonging was a better predictor of poor outcomes than individual school belonging. This suggests that when other students in a school feel high levels of belonging, students who do not feel this connectedness have even poorer outcomes than those in schools where most students do not feel high belonging (Anderman, 2002).

Vaquera (2009) compared the relationship between friendship, educational engagement, and school belonging in Latino and White adolescents. She utilized a sample from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. Her sample included 6,366 Mexicans, 1,132 Cubans, 1,330 Puerto Ricans, 4,446 Central/South Americans, and 46,592 White adolescents. Participants were asked to select their 10 best friends and then note if they had a best friend and whether that friend attended their school or not. They also completed a measure of academic engagement problems and school belonging.

Significant findings in Vaquera (2009) included that adolescents who had a best friend had lower levels of academic engagement problems and higher levels of school belonging. If a student's best friend attended his school, he had higher levels of school belonging. Otherwise, he did not. Unfortunately, Hispanics in this study were more likely to be friendless or to not have a best friend who attended their school. There were differences between levels of school belonging for Hispanics from different regions, and some groups felt even higher levels of school belonging than their White counterparts.

Goodnow and Grady (1993) examined the relationship between a sense of school belonging, students' perception of their friends' values, and academic motivation in urban adolescent students. They utilized a diverse sample from two junior high schools in a mid-sized northeastern city with a large working class Hispanic and African-American population. In one school, 198 students participated. One hundred and four students were male, 87 female, and 7 did not report their sex. Eighty-nine were African-American/Black, 66 Caucasian, 32 Hispanic, 2 Asian, and 9 did not report their ethnicity. The mean age of participants was 13.8. In the second school, 103 students participated, 54 were male, 43 female, and 6 did not report their sex. Seventy-seven were Hispanic, 16 were Caucasian, 7 were African-American/Black, 1 was Asian, and 2 did not indicate their ethnic affiliation. The mean age of participants was 13.11. The participants completed a measure of school belonging, friends' values, motivation, and effort/persistence.

According to the results of Goodnow and Grady (1993), many urban adolescents have a poor sense of school belonging and commensurate academic motivation. On the other hand, high levels of school belonging were associated with higher levels of motivation and academic engagement. The relationship between school belonging and friends' values with academic

motivation and expectancy for success was greater for females than for males and for Hispanics than for African-Americans. The latter point is most relevant to this dissertation as it suggests that school belonging may have a stronger effect for Latinos than for other groups.

Relationship of school belonging to psychological and school problems in immigrants. There are few articles that researched the effects of school belonging in immigrant children. While Perez et al. (2009) did not examine school belonging as a construct, the findings of their study that focused on factors associated with academic resilience in undocumented Latino students support the benefit of school involvement. The authors identified undocumented students as a high risk group and then sampled 110 of them from high schools and colleges. The mean age of participants was 19.97, 62% were female and 48% were male, and they averaged about 13 years of residency in the United States.

Perez et al.'s (2009) participants were asked open ended and Likert style questions to ascertain information about their demographic background, academic achievement, risk, and protective factors. Some risk factors included having high work hours and low parental education level. Protective factors included bilingualism and valuing school. The result relevant to this dissertation was that high risk students involved in extracurricular activities had higher levels of academic achievement. In other words, involvement in these activities was a protective factor that promoted academic resilience. It is likely that students involved in extracurricular activities feel a sense of belonging to their schools, and thus these results offer preliminary support for the benefit of immigrant youth feeling a connection to their school. A limitation of this study, however, was the lack of use of standardized measures.

Kia-Keating and Ellis (2007) conducted a study where they examined the role of school belonging in African refugee children. Specifically, they sought to determine whether increased

levels of a sense of school membership were associated with lower levels of PTSD and depression along with higher levels of self-efficacy. Further, they explored whether a sense of school membership served as a protective moderating variable against the development of negative mental health symptoms in children who had experienced significant adversity (p. 31). The final sample consisted of 76 Somali refugee adolescents between the ages of 12 and 19. Forty-one were male and 35 were female. In addition, they had resided in the United States for an average of 6.4 years. The authors reported that 55% had immigrated to this country as a family unit and all were presently residing with family. Inclusionary criteria included being in the country for at least a year and understanding enough English to provide content/assent.

Kia-Keating and Ellis (2007) gave participants measures to assess exposure to adversities, mental health and psychological adjustment, and school belonging. The authors found that while increased levels of school membership were not associated with levels of PTSD, they were associated with lower levels of depression and higher levels of self-efficacy (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007). School membership, however, did not serve as a buffer in children with significant adversity. Nevertheless, this paper demonstrates the potentially critical role that a positive sense of school belonging can play in the well-being of immigrant children, including those with moderate to low levels of adversity.

Assessment of school belonging. While there are several instruments that measure school belonging, The Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale (PSSMS) is the most frequently cited in school belonging research literature. This instrument comes in English and Spanish and consists of an 18-item, 5-point Likert Scale measuring a student's feelings of being accepted, included, respected, and supported by others in the school setting (Goodenow, 1993). According to Goodenow (1993), internal consistency ranges from .71 to .88 on the English

version of this measure and was .77 on the Spanish version. "The construct validity of the scale is supported by findings of group differences consistent with theoretically grounded predictions based on recentness pupil enrollment, student social status, school motivation, and school location" (Hagborg, 1998, p. 185).

Pilot Study for the Proposed Dissertation

To better understand the relationship between a sense of school belonging and internalizing and school problems in adolescent immigrants, the researcher conducted the pilot study during the 2010-2011 school year to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and school problems in recent Latino adolescent immigrants?
2. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and internalizing symptoms in this population?

Based on the reviewed literature, the following hypothesis were made: (a) there would be a negative correlation between a sense of school belonging and internalizing problems, (b) there would be a negative correlation between a sense of school belonging and school problems.

Participants were recruited from a public middle school in a mid-size New England city. Twenty-eight students participated in the study but 1 was eliminated from data analysis when the classroom teacher informed the researcher that he was a newcomer with virtually no literacy skills in his native Spanish or English. Consequently, a total of 27 students (68% of those solicited) were included in the study. Students ranged in age from 12-15 (M = 13.30; SD = .87). Just over a quarter (25.9%) were male (n = 7) and 74.1% were female (n = 20). Over half (51.9%) were in grade 7 (n = 14) and 48.1% were in grade 8 (n = 13). Participants' countries of origin included Guatemala (37 %, n = 10), Dominican Republic (22.2 %, n = 6), Honduras (11.1

%, *n* = 6), Colombia (7.4%, *n* = 2), Costa Rica (3.7 %, *n* = 1), Ecuador (3.7 %, *n* = 1), El Salvador (3.7 %, *n* = 1), Mexico (3.7 %, *n* = 1), Peru (3.7 %, *n* = 1) and Puerto Rico (3.7 %, *n* = 1). Their length of time in the United States ranged from 3-36 months (*M* = 17.63 months; *SD* = 1.01).

The Internalizing Problems and School Problems scales from the Behavior Assessment System for Children, Second Edition Adolescent Self-Report of Personality - Spanish (BASC-2; Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004) were used to measure students' symptoms of internalizing problems such as depression, anxiety, and somatic symptoms. The BASC-2 also measured students' school problems such as attitude toward school, attention problems, and sensation seeking.

The reliability data of the BASC-2 Self-Report reported in the technical manual (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004) indicates a median internal consistency.90 and test-retest reliability .82. In terms of validity, evidence of intercorrelations of scales and composites was obtained by the developers using factor analysis with a median score of .43. Content validity came from parents, teachers, psychologists, and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000) and other similar instruments. This measure did not have predictive validity. The manual indicated that concurrent validity was established by children with preexisting diagnosis exhibiting clear BASC-2 profiles. Finally, the manual indicated that the BASC-2 correlates highly with other similar measures such as Achenbach and Rescorla's (2001) ASEBA and the Conners' Rating Scale-Revised (CRS-R; Conners, 1997).

The Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale - Spanish (Goodenow, 1993) was used to measure a sense of school belonging. This instrument consists of an 18-item, 5-point

Likert Scale measuring a student's feelings of being accepted, included, respected, and supported by others in the school setting (Goodenow, 1993). According to Goodenow (1993), internal consistency ranges from .71 to .88 on the English version of this measure and was .77 on the Spanish version.

The participants completed a brief questionnaire to attain demographic data. Participants were asked their age, type of class program (ESL, Bilingual class, or mainstreaming), country of origin, grade, sex, and length of time in the United States.

Participants were recruited from a public middle school in a mid-sized New England city. Criteria for inclusion consisted of being a recent immigrant from Latin America or the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, having immigrated to the Unites States within the past 8 years, and being in grades 6-8. Bilingual informational flyers and parental permission slips were distributed to students in the middle school's bilingual education classes. Participants were offered a $5 Dunkin Donuts gift card for their participation. Students who returned signed permission slips were provided additional information about the study and then asked to provide both oral and written assent. Approximately 40 students were solicited and those who agreed were included in the study.

Participants were adminstered a short bilingual demographic questionaire, the BASC-2 SRP Spanish, and the Psychological Sence of School Membership Scale Spanish in a classroom in their school during the school day. They were offered the choice to complete the measures in English or Spanish but all chose Spanish. Upon completion of study protocols, participants were given the $5 gift card to Dunkin Donuts with a thank you message. Upon scoring the protocols, the researcher informed school mental health professionals of students with clinically significant

scores of internalizing symptoms on the BASC-2 so that they could be referred for treatment in or out of school.

Two-Tailed Pearson's *r* coefficients were calculated at the $p < .05$ significance level to determine the significance of the relationship between internalizing problems and school belonging as well as school problems and school belonging.

The School Problems subscale of the BASC is standardized with a mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10. In the pilot sample, School Problems had a mean *T* score of 45.33 with a standard deviation of 7.42. Scores that fall between 41 and 59 are considered average and do not represent cause for concern. The PSSMS Belonging Score had a mean of 3.75 with a standard deviation of .48. While the PSSMS Belonging scale has no norms, the sample mean score was comparable to those reported in the instrument development studies by Goodenow (1993) and Hagborg (1994), and indicates that the sample's school belonging scores were within normal limits. The Pearson's *r* correlation between these two variables yielded a correlation coefficient of $r(25) = 0.03$. This was very small and not significant at the $p < .05$ level with a *p*-value of 0.88. Thus, the participants' sense of school belonging was not associated with school problems in the study sample.

Internalizing Problems had a mean *T* score of 49.56 with a standard deviation 6.72. Scores between 41 and 59 on this instrument, which has a mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10, are considered average. (See Appendix A, Table 3). The Pearson *r* correlation between internalizing problems and school belonging yielded a correlation coefficient of -.35, which was not significant at the $p < .05$ level of significance but represented a medium effect size. The *p*-value was at the margin of significance ($p = .072$). This suggests that there was an inverse

relationship between feeling a sense of school belonging and having internalizing problems in the study sample.

Although the findings of this study were not statistically significant, there was an inverse relationship between internalizing problems and a sense of school belonging that was at the margin of significance in this recent Latino adolescent immigrant sample. Because this was a small sample (n = 27), this finding suggests that a larger sample may offer the power to demonstrate a significant relationship between these two variables. As for the second study hypothesis, there was no significant relationship between school problems and school belonging. The correlation was very small. This is inconsistent with previous research findings with a variety of populations that found a relationship between these variables (Anderman, 2002; McMahon et al., 2008; Pittman & Richmond, 2007; Sanchez et al., 2005). It is, again, possible that the small sample did not have the power to detect this relationship. Consequently, further research with a larger sample is warranted. In addition, expansion of the study to include externalizing problems as a variable is supported by the literature (Martinez et al., 2011; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2007).

Rationale and Hypothesis

The literature review and pilot study results suggest that adolescent Latino immigrants are at increased risk for the development of internalizing disorders such as depression and PTSD, externalizing problems, and academic problems. They also suggest that these problems may be attributable to previous violence exposure, acculturation stress, maladaptive family relationships, poor self-concept, a lack of social support, and recency of immigration. Research has demonstrated that, amongst other things, psychological difficulties are associated with ills such

as poor school performance, poor interpersonal relationships, and adult psychopathology (Wenar & Kerig, 2006).

There is, however, a scarcity of research that specifically examines risk and resiliency in Latino immigrant adolescents who have unique circumstances that may impact their functioning. Consequently, there is a lack of information regarding positive developmental outcomes among this population (Umaña-Taylor, 2009). Given the increasing number of immigrant youths in our nation's public school system and their demonstrated risk, research in this area is warranted. The research literature and my pilot study have demonstrated that having a strong sense of school belonging is associated with lower levels of school problems, improved academic outcomes, and lower levels of internalizing and externalizing problems. These relationships have, nevertheless, not been sufficiently explored in immigrant children.

Purpose

The purpose of my dissertation was to address the gap in the research literature mentioned above by investigating how a sense of school belonging relates to internalizing behavior, externalizing behavior, and school problems in Latino adolescent immigrants to address the following questions:

1. The following two research questions examine the relationship between a sense of school belonging and school/academic problems in Latino adolescent immigrants.
    a. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and self-report of school/academic problems?
    b. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and teacher reports of academic effectiveness?

2. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and internalizing symptoms in this population?
3. Is there a relationship between a sense of school belonging and externalizing symptoms in this population?
4. The following four research questions examine the relationship between length of time in the United States and study outcome variables in this population:
    a. Is there a relationship between length of time in the United States and self-report of school/academic problems in this population?
    b. Is there a relationship between length of time in the United States and teacher reports of academic effectiveness in this population?
    c. Is there a relationship between length of time in the United States and internalizing problems in this population?
    d. Is there a relationship between length of time in the United States and externalizing problems in this population?
5. If the answers to questions 4a-d are affirmative, are these relationships moderated by sense of school belonging?
6. Are these relationships mediated by other demographic variables?

Hypothesis

Based on the reviewed literature and data from the pilot study, the following hypotheses were advanced:

HO1: There will be a negative correlation between sense of school belonging scores and school/academic problem scores.

HO2: There will be a positive correlation between sense of school belonging scores and teacher ratings of student academic effectiveness.

HO3: There will be a negative correlation between sense of school belonging scores and internalizing problems scores.

HO4: There will be a negative correlation between sense of school belonging scores and externalizing problems scores.

HO5: Length of time in the United States will be positively correlated with school/academic problem scores.

HO6: There will be a negative correlation between length of time in the United States and teacher ratings of student academic effectiveness.

HO7: Length of time in the United States will be negatively correlated with internalizing problems scores.

HO8: Length of time in the United States will be positively correlated with externalizing problems scores.

HO9: Higher school belonging scores will moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and self-report of school/academic problems. Higher belonging scores are expected to result in lower self-report school/academic problems scores.

H10: Higher school belonging scores will moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and teacher-report of student academic effectiveness. Higher membership scores are expected to result in higher teacher report of student academic effectiveness.

H11: Higher school belonging scores will moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and internalizing problems. Higher school belonging scores are expected to result in lower internalizing problems scores.

HO12: Higher school belonging scores will moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and externalizing problems. Higher school belonging scores are expected to result in lower externalizing problems scores.

Chapter III

Method

This chapter explains the methodology that this study used to investigate how a sense of school belonging relates to internalizing behavior, externalizing behavior, and school/academic problems in Latino adolescent immigrants. This chapter describes participants and their selection, as well as details the measures, procedure, and data analysis.

Participant Selection and Characteristics of Respondents

Recruitment and selection. Once I received approval for the study from the Institutional Review Board of the City University of New York Graduate Center, I contacted principals and superintendents (or their designees) of a middle school in an urban New England and a high school in a suburban Long Island school district with substantial Latino immigrant populations and apprised them of the study purpose and goals. I obtained written permission from the superintendent and/or designee to solicit participants. To ensure an adequate sample of immigrant Latino adolescents, I chose two school districts with large populations of Latino students. Thus, the schools selected have relatively large Latino populations compared to public schools from national census data and census data for the schools in the counties where the sample schools are located (US Census Bureau, 2012). Nationally, Latinos comprise 22% of the public school population. Latinos in the New England school's county comprise 19% of the total school enrollment and 17% of the enrollment in the Long Island school's county. As detailed below, the schools that participated in my study had substantially higher percentages of Latino enrollment.

The most recent data available indicated that the New England school district has a total student enrollment of 14,887 students. Forty percent of the students are eligible for free or

reduced lunch, and 14.6% are English Language Learners. The ethnic/racial breakdown of the district is as follows: .1% Native American, 6.8% Asian, 21.8% African American, 30.3% Hispanic, and 41.1% White. The most recent data available from the Long Island school district indicated that the district has a total student enrollment of 2,917 students. Forty-four percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunch, and 11% are English Language Learners. The ethnic/racial breakdown is as follows: 0% Native American, 7% Asian, 22% African American, 31% White, and 39% Hispanic.

I recruited student participants for my study from ESL and Spanish bilingual education classes that contained between 6 and 25 students. Criteria for inclusion were being an immigrant born in Latin America or the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, being in grades 6-12, and being between the ages of 11 and 18. My literature review revealed that there is little research on immigrant populations and this population is at risk for psychological, behavioral, and academic problems. I selected Latino immigrants because my literature review indicated that this subgroup represents the largest immigrant population in public school. I selected this grade range because adolescents are my target population and these grades contain students at that stage of development. Adolescence is generally described as the period beginning with puberty, from around 10-11 in the United States, and ending anywhere from 17-24 (Burt, Resnick, & Novick, 1998; Wenar & Kerig, 2006). I decided to recruit from ESL and bilingual education classes because these classes were more likely to contain immigrant students than mainstream monolingual classes.

I visited bilingual education and ESL classes during non-instructional time that was mutually agreed upon with the school principal and classroom teacher. During this time, I distributed informational fliers written in both English and Spanish (Appendix A), and described

the study to potential participants (see script Appendix B). Potential participants were each offered a $5 Dunkin Donuts gift cards for their participation. Bilingual parental consent forms (Appendix C) and optional information sheets for parents who preferred to provide oral consent (Appendix D) were distributed to the students at this time. Information sheets include the same information that is outlined in the consent form and were an IRB safeguard intended to protect the identities of potentially undocumented immigrant parents and students. No parents chose the latter option to provide informed consent.

Interested students returned signed consent forms to a designated person in their school. One to two weeks following my initial visit to the classrooms, I or a designated faculty member, returned to redistribute informational fliers and consent forms until I recruited enough participants.

I provided students who returned signed consent forms with additional written information about the study and then asked them to provide both oral and written assent (Appendix E). At this time, they learned more details about the nature of the study and were reminded that their participation was strictly voluntary and that they could discontinue at any time. Those who agreed and met the aforementioned criteria were included in the research study. In order to achieve a medium effect size at the $p < .05$ level of significance, I needed the participation of at least 67 students (Cohen, 1992). A total of 79 adolescents returned consent forms and offered assent to participate. One dropped out of high school prior to completing study, resulting in a final sample of 78 students.

Participant descriptive information. The participants were asked to complete a brief questionnaire to obtain demographic data. The questionnaire asked for each participant's name, school, age, contact information, type of class program (ESL, Bilingual class, or mainstreaming),

country of origin, grade, gender, whether or not they receive free or reduced lunch, and length of time residing in the United States, post immigration. They were also asked how difficult their migration trip was on a 4-point Likert scale. In addition, the questionnaire asked if they are happier living in the United States than in their home country with a yes or no response (Appendix F).

Demographics. Table 1 presents a summary of participants on the basis of demographic variables. Readers will note that School A, the New England middle school, provided the majority of participants. There were about an equal number of male and female participants. The mean age of participants was 14.15 years (*SD* = 2.18). At the time of data collection, the largest number of respondents were in 8th grade, followed by the 7th and 9th grades. Almost the entire sample received free or reduced lunch (*n* = 76, 97%), and the majority was in Bilingual education (*n* = 43, 55%).

Most participants were from Guatemala, El Salvador, or Honduras. Each of the remaining countries of origin represented less than 8% of the total sample. In addition, approximately 5% of participants (*n* = 4) identified in the table as *Other*, and were born in a non-Latin American country, including the United States, but moved to a Latin American country prior to the age of 3 and recently migrated to the United States. These individuals were included in the analysis because they self-identified as immigrants and, aside from country of birth, likely had similar experiences. Most individuals indicated that they had immigrated less than two years ago (*n* = 48, 62%).

Table 1

Demographic Information for Participants

Variable	*n*	*%*	*Cum. %*
School			
A	54	69.23	69.23
B	24	30.77	100.00
Gender			
F	40	51.28	51.28
M	38	48.72	100.00
Country of Origin			
Chile	1	1.28	1.28
Colombia	4	5.13	6.41
Dominican Republic	6	7.69	14.10
Ecuador	4	5.13	19.23
El Salvador	16	20.51	39.74
Guatemala	24	30.77	70.51
Honduras	11	14.10	84.62
Mexico	3	3.85	88.46
Other	4	5.13	93.59
Peru	2	2.56	96.15
Puerto Rico	3	3.85	100.00
Immigrated Less Than Two Years Ago			
No	30	38.46	38.46
Yes	48	61.54	100.00
Educational Program			
Bilingual	43	55.13	55.13
ESL	25	32.05	87.18
Mainstream	10	12.82	100.00
Free/Reduced Lunch			
No	2	2.56	2.56
Yes	76	97.44	100.00

Immigration information. Table 2 presents descriptive information concerning participants' age at immigration, length of time in the United States, difficulty of migration experience, and whether or not they are happier living in the US versus their country of origin. Participants' mean age at immigration to the United States was 12.05 (*SD* = 2.77). For participants who immigrated less than two years ago, I recorded the exact number of months that

they had lived in the United States. For participants who had lived in the United States for more than two years (*n* = 30, 38%), I multiplied the number of full years that they had resided here by 12 to get their numbers of months in residence. Readers will note that length of time residing in the United States varied considerably, with the total number of months spent in the United States ranging from only 1 month to a total of 192 months (16 years). The mean number of months spent in the US was found to be 26.44 (*SD* = 30.21).

Participants rated the difficulty of their migration experience on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (*Not Difficult*) to 4 (*Very Difficult*). Table 2 shows that in general, participants reported that their migration experience was not difficult. Specifically, 88% of the sample (*n* = 66) gave the experience a rating of 1 or 2. Participants were also asked whether they are happier in the US as compared with their native country. Most respondents (*n* = 55, 72%) indicated that they are happier living in the US, while a minority indicated that they are not (*n* = 21, 28%).

Table 2

Immigration Information for Participants

Variable	*M*	*SD*	Range
Age at Immigration	12.05	2.77	2.00-18.00
Number of Months in the United States	26.44	30.21	1.00-192.00
Difficulty of Migration Trip	1.68	.89	1.00-4.00
Happier in the United States[a]	1.72	.45	1.00-2.00

[a]*No=1, Yes=2*

Instruments and Measures

Individuals who agreed to participate in this study were asked to complete the following measures:

Linguistic Acculturation Scale. The participants completed an 8-item scale that I developed, in consultation with my dissertation committee, to assess their level of linguistic acculturation. Acculturation is the process by which one's culture is altered by contact with members of another independent cultural group that ultimately leads to assimilation (Smokowski et al., 2007). Assimilation refers to giving up one's cultural identity and adopting that of a dominant culture (Smokowski et al., 2007). Research shows that language is an important indicator of acculturation in that an immigrant's increased level of proficiency in the language of her new home increases her adaptability and sense of emotional belonging (Miglietta & Tartaglia, 2009). In her study of Asian American college students, half of whom were born abroad, Kang (2006) found that when compared to other domains of acculturation, language competence was the best measure of acculturation.

This scale asked the participants to choose what language they use when engaging in a variety of behaviors in several contexts. They were asked "what language do you use to…a) think, b) speak at home, c) speak in the community, d) talk with friends in person, e) talk with friends on the phone, e) communicate with friends on the internet, f) watch TV, and g) listen to the music/the radio?" For each item, they were provided 5 response choices ranging from *mostly English* to *mostly Spanish* (see Appendix G for the scale). Each item was scored from 1-5 and a total language acculturation score, with possible scores ranging from 8-40, was computed. Higher scores on this measure indicated higher English language usage.

School Belonging - Self-Report. This dissertation used the Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale - Spanish (PSSMS; Goodenow, 1993) to measure participants' sense of school belonging. This instrument consists of an 18-item, 5-point Likert scale measuring a student's feelings of being accepted, included, respected, and supported by others in the school

setting (Goodenow, 1993). Scores range from 1 to 5 with higher scores representing a greater sense of school belonging.

To establish reliability and validity for this scale, Goodenow (1993) administered his measure to a total of 755 adolescent students in three middle schools. One school was predominantly White and suburban, and one was an ethnically diverse school with similarly represented numbers of White, Black, and Hispanic students. The third school was comprised of predominately Hispanic students. Hispanic students with limited English proficiency completed the Spanish language version of the instrument. Items were removed if they reduced internal consistency or had low variability. Once the final items were selected they were administered to the group of suburban students again. The mean score in the first study with suburban students was 3.86 with a standard deviation of .72, and the second study mean was 3.84 (*SD* = .72). According to Goodenow (1993), the scores from the two urban schools did not differ significantly and produced mean scores of 3.11 (*SD* = .71), and a mean of 3.09 (*SD* = .61), respectively. Overall, the internal consistency ranged from .71 to .88 on the English version of this measure and was .77 on the Spanish version. "The construct validity of the scale is supported by findings of group differences consistent with theoretically grounded predictions based on recentness of pupil enrollment, student social status, school motivation, and school location" (Hagborg, 1998, p.185).

Shortly after the scale's development, Hagborg (1994) extended its use to high school students. His studies further supported the psychometric properties of this measure. In his first study, Hagborg utilized a sample of 50 eighth grade students. The mean PSSMS score was 3.54 (*SD* = .69) and a test-retest reliability coefficient of *r(48)* = .78. There was a moderate correlation between participants' PSSMS scores and scores on the Self Perception Profile for

Children (SPPC). As part of this study, Hagborg also measured the PSSMS of students receiving school-based counseling to address a variety of issues including low self-esteem and poor relationships. He found that these students had low PSSMS scores.

In his second study, Hagborg (1994) utilized a sample of students, grades 5-12, from middle and a high school. Both schools' internal consistency alpha scores were .88. The median PSSMS scores were 3.39 for middle schoolers and 3.28 for high schoolers. Female students reported significantly higher PSSMS scores than males. There was no statistically significant difference between school membership scores in the upper and lower grades. The author reported that he conducted a principal-components factor analysis. He found that "Belonging" was a central factor encompassing 11 of the 18 items on the scale. He also identified two other 2 other factors: Acceptance and Rejection. Hagborg (1994) reported that middle school students with higher PSSMS scores had higher grades and endorsed a more favorable school climate on the Quality of School Life (QSL) scale. High school students with higher PSSMS scores had higher grades, spent more time on their homework, and had higher scores on both domains of the Self Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA).

More recently, You et al. (2011) and Schochet et al. (2011) examined the psychometric properties of the PSMSS in Australian high school students and also found that this instrument possesses three distinct factors. According to You et al. (2011) these factors are Caring Relations, Acceptance, and Rejection. The authors suggested that further research and consideration be given to viewing school belonging, as measured by the PSSMS, as a multidimensional construct. Nevertheless, Shochet et al. (2011), who also examined the impact of school belonging on negative affect in adolescents, found that although each of the aforementioned factors provided distinct information, all three were predictive of negative affect

in both girls and boys. Thus, although the PSSMS may be comprised of multiple factors, it continues to have utility in measuring school belonging as a unidimensional construct. Thus, the dissertation used a total belonging score.

Conners Clinical Index Self Report- Spanish. This dissertation utilized individual domain scores from the Conners Clinical Index Self Report- Spanish (CI-SR) (Conners, 2009) to measure students' internalizing, externalizing, and school problems.

The CI is a 24-item scale designed as a screening tool for children aged 8-18 that was created by using the strongest items in each domain from the Conners Comprehensive Behavior Rating Scales (CBRS) (Conners, 2009). According to its developer, the CBRS is designed to assess an array of behavioral, social, academic, and emotional problems in children ages 8-18. Response options for each item include *Not at all true/*0*, Just a little true/*1*, Pretty much true/*2*,* and *Very much true/*3. For the purposes of this study, internalizing problems were measured by the Mood Disorders and Anxiety Disorders scales and analyzed as two separate variables. Externalizing problems were measured by the Disruptive Behavior Disorders scale, and school/academic problems were measured by the Learning and Language Disorders scale. *T* scores were obtained for each individual scale based on combined gender norms.

Conners (2009) reported that the items in each of these CI-SR subdomains (i.e., scales) are the 5 items from the CBRS that are most likely to differentiate individuals from the general population with or at risk for the named disorders. Items 7 and 19, which inquire about self-injurious ideation and access to weapons, were omitted when presenting this measure to participants in order to assuage participating school districts' concerns over the administration of controversial measures/items. The omission of these two items did not prevent calculation of a total score in each domain.

According to Conners (2009), more than 7,000 assessments were collected from a sample representative of the US population as of the 2000 US Census with regard to race/ethnicity, gender, geography, and parental level of education during the development of the Conners CBRS and *CI*. There were 3,400 assessments in the normative study (Conners, 2009). Sitarenios et al. (unknown) reported that samples from both the general population and clinical population were used in the normative study for CBRS- Self Report (CBRS-SR)/CI-SR. The mean participant age of the general population was 12.6; 605 participants were male and 649 female. Seven hundred thirty eight participants were White, 203 were Black, 171 Hispanic, and 61 Asian. In the clinical sample, the mean age was also 12.6; 298 participants were male and 258 were female. Three hundred ninety two participants were White, 72 were Black, and 48 were Hispanic.

Sparrow, Rzepa, and Pitkanen (2010) detailed the psychometric properties of the CBRS and CI normative study. They reported that the mean internal consistency of CI-SR was .76, test-retest reliability was .82, and the mean inter-rater reliability was .55 parent to child and .48 teacher to child. Discriminant function analysis was conducted to determine the discriminative validity of the CBRS in comparing the target clinical samples to the general population and was 78%. To determine convergent and divergent validity, the CBRS-SR was compared to a number of established measures. For example, the Major Depressive Episode scale had a .38 correlation with the BASC-2 Depression index, .71 with the ASEBA Anxious/Depressed Index, and .55 with the CDI Total Score. The Defiant/Aggressive Behaviors scale had a .60 correlation with the ASEBA Aggressive Behavior Scale.

According to the technical manual (Conners 2009), the Spanish translation of the CBRS was first completed by Spanish speaking staff members at the publisher's office. This was then

reviewed by an expert bilingual psychologist/university professor to ensure that items were intelligible and culturally appropriate. The translated items were subsequently sent to independent Spanish speaking psychologists to translate the items back into English. These translations were compared with the original English version. The reliability of the CBRS-SR and *CI-SR* Spanish were .91 and .80 respectively.

BASC-2 Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BESS)-Student Form-Spanish. To assess overall personal adjustment, this dissertation used the BASC-2 BESS Student Form. The BESS is a universal screening system designed to measure behavioral and emotional strengths and weaknesses in children and adolescents (Kamphaus & Reynolds, 2007). The self-report student form is a 30-item scale for children in grades 3 through 12 and yields a total *T*-score, with higher scores indicating lower levels of adjustment. According to the developers, the strongest items from each of the domains of the original BASC-2 pool of items were selected from items during the development of the original and lengthier BASC-2, with 29 out of the 30 being found on the BASC-2 (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2004). Response options for each item are on a 4-point Likert scale and include *Never*, *Sometimes*, *Often*, and *Almost Always.*

Kamphaus and Reynolds (2007) used recent census information to collect normative data from a sample representative of current US racial/ethnic, gender, and social-economic groups. They also conducted a number of reliability and validity studies on this measure and reported that the median split-half reliability of the BESS student form is .92 and the test-retest reliability is .80. To determine convergent and divergent validity, the BESS was compared to a number of established measures. For example, correlation coefficients between the BESS and BASC-2 were as follows, .84 for Internalizing Problems, .69 for School Problems, .78 for Personal Adjustment, .86 Emotional Symptoms, and .74 Inattention/Hyperactivity. When compared to the

ASEBA Youth Self-Report, correlations were .77 for the Total Problems scale, .69 for the Internalizing scale, and .66 for the externalizing scale.

According to the manual (Kamphaus & Reynolds, 2007), the Spanish translation of BESS items was completed and reviewed by bilingual psychologists around the country. They purport to have used language that was understandable by Spanish-speaking populations of varying backgrounds. To examine the psychometric properties of the Spanish-language version, 115 student report forms were completed during BASC-2 standardization and yielded a reliability estimate of .86.

I added the BESS to this dissertation after I had collected all the other data and determined that there were few significant relationships. I believed that the BESS, a general measure of overall adjustment, might be able to detect relationships between study variables in this adolescent immigrant sample that have been demonstrated in the research with other populations (MacMahon et al., 2008; Pittman & Richmond, 2007; Sanchez, Colon, & Esparza, 2005)**.** My expectations were that higher BESS scores, which are indicative of higher levels of maladjustment, would be associated with lower levels school belonging, lower teacher reports of academic effectiveness, and higher reports of internalizing, externalizing, and school problems. I also expected that BESS scores would be negatively correlated with length of time in the US.

Student Academic Effectiveness– Teacher Report. One of each participant's teachers answered a brief 2-item questionnaire for each student that I created to assess the participants' level of academic effectiveness. Teacher reports were utilized rather than grades or standardized achievement scores because many of the students were recent immigrants without recent assessments. Further, given the students' diverse sets of educational backgrounds and English proficiencies, it was not appropriate to assess them on actual test scores but rather on effort and

performance relative to their individual ability levels. Teachers' responses to the two items were on a 4-point Likert scale. After consulting with two middle and high school teachers on phrasing that would elicit the targeted constructs of student effort and working up to their potential, I created the items for this questionnaire in consultation with two faculty members from the CUNY Graduate Center (Appendix H). Teachers were asked to respond *Never, Sometimes, Usually,* or *Always* to the following two statements: "The student exerts age-appropriate effort" and "The student works up to his/her ability." I sat with each teacher while he or she completed the items. The teacher was asked to explain why she selected the answer that she did. This process was intended to avoid bias in the teacher's responses.

Interviews. At the conclusion of my data collection, I interviewed one participant with a high sense of school belonging (PSSMS) score and one participant with a low sense of school belonging score on the PSSMS. I utilized a script (Appendix I) that I adapted from the items on the PSSMS to ask participants questions about their individual responses. The script asked for participants to provide specific examples of instances or experiences related to their answers. For instance, if a participant responded *False* on the PSSMS to the statement "Other students here like the way I am", he was asked, "You indicated that students here don't like you the way you are. Tell me about something that happened that made you feel this way?"

Procedure

I utilized a separate key document to (Appendix J) to protect the privacy of participants. It was void of any identifying information and included areas to note demographic data responses and scores from all instruments. Upon receipt of consent forms, each student was assigned a randomly generated identification number. A master list with the names and identification numbers was also be generated and kept in a separate location.

The study took place during regular school hours or during the first hour before the start of the day or after dismissal. Adolescent participants were permitted to complete forms in a group or individually. Upon completion of the forms, participants were each given the $5 gift card to Dunkin Donuts with a thank you message.

I met with teachers individually while they completed the aforementioned questionnaires for each of their students. Teachers were selected to participate if at the time of data collection, they taught a participating student one or more subjects. For students in bilingual or ESL programs, I made an effort to solicit participation from one of their bilingual or ESL teachers. For mainstreamed students, I solicited participation of teachers of an academic course. While respondents were completing their questionnaires, I asked them to explain why they selected their responses as a means to avoid bias. Specifically, I asked them to explain the reasoning behind rating a student as they did and, at times to offer me examples of behavior the student has engaged in to support the response choice.

A total of five middle school and four high school teachers participated in this study, with some respondents completing many more forms than others. The majority of questionnaires were filled out by 1 female middle school Bilingual English Language Arts/ESL teacher who completed questionnaires for 45 students. In addition, a female middle school English Language Arts teacher completed 4 questionnaires, another female English Language Arts teacher completed 1, a female science teacher completed 2, and a male social studies teacher completed 2. At the high school level, 3 ESL teachers completed 3, 10, and 10 questionnaires respectively, while a male foreign language teacher completed 1. Thus, 3 teachers completed questionnaires on 65 (83%) of the 78 participants. Teachers who completed 10 or more questionaires were offered a $25 American Express or Visa gift card for their participation.

I returned to the respondents' schools several weeks after my initial visit and adminstered to all participants, with the exception of three who had moved, the BESS during regular school hours. Respondents were permitted to complete forms in a group or individually.

Once I scored protocols, I transferred all data to the corresponding key document prior to data analysis. This key document included no identifying information. Protocols and consent forms were kept in a locked file cabinet. All electronic data were encrypted. As per APA guidelines, I will keep data, protocols, and consent forms for 5 years after the completion of this study. At that time I will destroy them.

Data Analysis

As reported above, I conducted descriptive statistics on all data including frequencies, means, and standard deviations of all personal demographic data including gender, country of origin, type of educational program, free/reduced lunch status, and length of time in the United States. I also ran descriptive statistics on the responses to the two questions on the demographic questionnaire regarding happiness and difficulty of migration trip, as well as responses to self-report school/academic problems, internalizing problems (depression and anxiety), and externalizing problems, and the global adjustment score.

The teacher report measure of academic effectiveness included two items. I conducted a reliability analysis on the two teacher scores in order to determine the level of internal consistency reliability as well as the appropriateness of combining these two measures into a single score. I did the same for the eight items of the linguistic acculturation scale. I also ran descriptive statistics on these data.

I conducted independent *t*-tests to determine what differences existed among study variables at School A and B, and between male and female students. I then calculated Pearson

correlations to determine the strength and direction of the relationships among all of my independent and dependent variables. Finally, regression analysis was used when appropriate to test possible moderating and/or mediating effects of study variables.

CHAPTER IV:

Results

The primary aim of this study was to examine the relationship between a sense of school belonging and internalizing, externalizing, and school problems in adolescent immigrants. This chapter details the descriptive statistics for study variables as well as the results pertaining to the hypotheses of this dissertation study.

Descriptive and Reliability Statistics for Study Variables

Linguistic acculturation. Table 3 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the linguistic acculturation measure that I devised for this study. The 8 items of this measure were coded as follows: Responses of *only Spanish* were coded 1, of *more Spanish than English* were coded 2, *Both equally* was coded 3, the response of *more English than Spanish* was coded 4, and *only English* was coded 5.

The majority of participants indicated they used only Spanish or more Spanish than English with respect to acculturation items 1 (to think), 2 (to speak at home), and 5 (to talk to friends on the phone). On item 3 (to speak in the community), about 33% indicated they use *Both Equally*. On item 4 (to talk with friends in person), approximately 50% of respondents reported that they use only Spanish or more Spanish than English. On item 6 (to communicate with friends on the internet), the most frequent response was *Both equally*, at just over 33%. This was also true for item 7 (to watch TV), where close to 39% of participants reported *Both equally*, as well as item 8 (to listen to the radio/music) where 37% of responded *Both equally*. Thus, participants tended to use Spanish predominately in more personal contexts and to use English and Spanish equally in more public domains.

A reliability analysis was conducted on the eight acculturation items in order to determine the level of internal consistency reliability as well as the appropriateness of combining

these eight items into a single score. This analysis found a Cronbach's alpha of .84, indicating that a high reliability was present. Based on these results, the eight items were combined into a single composite score calculated as their sum. The resulting linguistic acculturation measure yielded scores that can range from 8 to 40, with higher scores indicating greater use of English and therefore greater linguistic acculturation. The current sample had a mean score of 21.31 (*SD* = 6.60), indicating that the typical respondent had a moderate degree of English usage and linguistic acculturation, because the mean is almost at the midpoint of possible scores.

Table 3

Participants' Language Usage in Various Contexts

Language Used	Context															
	Think		Home		Community		Friends in Person		Friends on Phone		Friends on Internet		Watch TV		Listen to Music	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
1.Only Spanish	24	32	31	40	19	24	22	29	29	38	19	25	8	10	4	5
2.More Spanish than English	24	32	29	37	13	16	17	21	14	18	13	17	7	9	8	10
3.Both Equally	20	27	17	22	26	33	19	25	19	25	26	34	30	39	29	37
4.More English than Spanish	6	8	0	0	10	13	7	9	6	8	9	12	14	18	19	24
5.Only English	1	1	1	1	10	13	12	16	9	12	10	13	18	23	18	23

Note: Percentages are based on the number of participants who answered the item. Percentages are rounded to the nearest percent.

Student Academic Effectiveness – Teacher Ratings. Table 4 represents the descriptive statistics for the two teacher report items. The table shows that the items were scored on a 4-point scale. Teachers rated the majority of students as *usually* or *always* exerting age-appropriate effort and working up to their abilities, 69.23% and 78.21% respectively. In addition, a reliability analysis was conducted on the two teacher scores to determine the level of internal consistency reliability as well as the appropriateness of combining these two measures into a single score. This analysis found a Cronbach's alpha of .90, indicating good reliability. Based on these results, the two items were combined into a single composite score calculated as the sum of these two items with a possible score range of 2 - 8 for the two items combined, with higher scores indicating greater academic effectiveness. Responses yielded mean score of 6.09 (*SD* = 1.62). These results indicate that, according to his or her teacher, the typical student participant was exerting age-appropriate effort and working up to his or her potential.

Table 4

Teacher Ratings of Students' Academic Effectiveness

Frequency Rating	Item			
	Exerts Age-Appropriate Effort		Works Up to Ability	
	n	% of sample	*n*	% of sample
1. Never	5	6.41	1	1.28
2. Sometimes	19	24.36	16	20.51
3. Usually	29	37.18	32	41.03
4. Always	25	32.05	29	37.18

Note: $N = 78$.

School belonging and clinical self-ratings. Table 5 presents a descriptive summary of the following study variables: the Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale - Spanish

(PSSMS); the Conners Clinical Index Self Report- Spanish (CI-SR) Mood Disorders, Anxiety, Disruptive Behavior, and Learning and Language Disorders scales; and the BASC-2 Behavior and Emotional Screening System-Student Form Spanish (BESS). The PSSMS Belonging scale has no norms, but the sample mean score of 3.96 is comparable to those reported in the instrument development studies by Goodenow (1993) and Hagborg (1994). Thus, the results suggest that study participants felt mostly connected to their schools.

For both the Conners Clinical Index Self Report- Spanish (CI-SR) scales and the BASC-2 BESS-Spanish, *T*-scores above 60 are considered elevated and indicative of a potential problem. Table 5 shows that participants averaged scores below 60 on all CI-SR and BESS scales, indicating that participants' scores were within the normal range for mood disorders, anxiety, disruptive behavior, language learning, and overall personal adjustment.

Table 5 also presents the results of the reliability analyses conducted on the items for each scale to determine the level of internal consistency. With the exception of Learning and Language Disorders scale, Cronbach's alpha was close to or greater than .70 for all measures, indicating acceptable reliability for use in research. Reliability, however, was found to be lower for the Learning and Language Disorders scale.

Table 5

Psychometric Properties of Measures of School Belonging and Internalizing, School/Academic Problems, Externalizing Problems, and Overall Adjustment

					Range	
Variable	*n*	*M*	*SD*	α	Potential	Actual
PSSMS Belonging	78	3.96	.61	.74	1.00-5.00	2.00-4.88
Mood Disorders	78	52.40	11.46	.67	1.00-100.00	42.00-90.00
Anxiety	78	50.32	9.18	.67	1.00-100.00	40.00-76.00
Disruptive Behavior	78	49.82	10.99	.70	1.00-100.00	42.00-90.00
Learning Lang. Dis.	78	52.91	10.88	.59	1.00-100.00	39.00-88.00
BESS[a]	75	46.64	8.02	.70	1.00-100.00	30.00-64.00

Note. [a]*Three respondents moved before BESS administration.*

Tests for Sample Differences

To determine whether there are any mean differences between participants' scores on study measures in the two sample schools, I conducted a series of independent-samples *t*-tests on these seven measures and school attended. In addition to the *t*-tests, I also conducted Levene's test for the equality of variances to determine whether the assumption of equal variances was violated in these data. If this assumption was violated, an alternate version of the *t*-test was conducted, which did not incorporate this assumption. Table 6 shows that participants' scores in the two schools did not differ on any measure.

Table 6

Independent Samples t-tests by School

Category	Levene's Test		School A	School B	*t*-Test	
	F (*df*)	*p*	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	*t* (*df*)	*p*
Academic Effectiv.	.14 (1, 76)	.71	5.93 (1.60)	6.46 (1.64)	1.35 (76)	.18
Learning Lang. Dis.	.86 (1, 76)	.36	54.24 (11.64)	49.92 (8.39)	1.64 (76)	.11
Mood Disorders	.36 (1, 76)	.55	53.35 (11.39)	50.25 (11.54)	1.11 (76)	.27
Anxiety	4.40 (1, 76)	.04	51.37 (9.72)	47.96 (7.48)	1.69 (56.65)	.10
Disruptive Behav.	3.76 (1, 76)	.06	48.85 (9.82)	46.42 (2.70)	1.17 (76)	.25
Linguistic Acc.	.11 (1, 71)	.75	21.64 (6.57)	20.63 (6.74)	.62 (71)	.54
BESS	.36 (1, 73)	.55	47.71 (7.63)	44.38 (8.52)	1.70 (73)	.09

Because gender is often a significant factor in any research, I conducted a series of independent-sample *t*-tests on these same measures based on gender. Table 7 summarizes these results. The table shows that there was a higher mean teacher report score for females as compared to males, indicating that according to their teachers, the females worked up to their potential and engaged in age-appropriate efforts more than did males. In addition, males had significantly higher disruptive behavior scores compared with females. Further, females had significantly higher anxiety levels than males. There were no other gender differences.

Table 7

Independent Samples t-tests by Gender

Category	Levene's Test		Female	Male	*t*-Test	
	F (*df*)	*p*	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	t (*df*)	*p*
Academic Effectiv.	.70 (1, 76)	.41	6.55 (1.47)	5.61 (1.65)	2.67 (76)	.01
Learning Lang. Dis.	.05 (1, 76)	.82	52.18 (10.76)	53.68 (11.09)	.61 (76)	.54
Mood Disorders	.10 (1, 76)	.75	53.20 (10.30)	51.55 (12.64)	.63 (76)	.53
Anxiety	.07 (1, 76)	.80	52.15 (8.80)	48.40 (9.30)	1.83 (76)	.07
Disruptive Behav.	16.51 (1, 76)	.001	46.90 (6.70)	52.90 (13.60)	2.45 (53.35)	.02
Linguistic Acc.	11.65 (1, 71)	.001	21.41 (7.81)	21.20 (5.08)	-.14 (64.09)	.89
BESS	2.10 (1, 73)	.15	46.95 (8.89)	46.34 (7.19)	.32 (73)	.75

Correlations

A series of correlations were conducted between all independent and dependent variables, including demographic variables. Table 8 depicts the results.

Table 8

Pearson's Correlations between all Independent and Dependent Variables

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. PSSMS Belonging	1												
2. Months in the US	.047	1											
3. Academic Effectiv.	-.016	.023	1										
4. Learning Lang. Dis.	.069	-.148	-.331**	1									
5. Mood Disorders	-.224*	-.131	-.056	.443***	1								
6. Anxiety	-.041	-.137	-.053	.577***	.620***	1							
7. Disrupt. Behav.	.045	.140	-.204	.258*	.450***	.368**	1						
8. BESS	-.453***	-.179	-.276*	.562***	.561***	.588***	.223	1					
9. Linguistic Acc.	.066	.498***	-.075	-.014	-.027	.006	.056	-.063	1				
10. Age	-.127	.294**	.040	-.107	-.046	-.146	.144	-.028	.034	1			
11. Grade	-.063	.459***	.030	-.120	-.108	-.155	.142	-.097	.127	.906***	1		
12. Imm. Age	-.106	-.693***	.022	.029	.037	-.015	-.040	.123	-.447**	.474***	.262*	1	
13. Female	-.102	.012	.293**	-.070	.072	.206	-.275*	.038	.016	-.156	-.084	-.150	1

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Correlational hypothesis testing. Hypothesis 1 stated that sense of school belonging would be negatively related to school problems. This hypothesis not supported. Table 8 shows that the correlation between PSSMS school belonging scores and Learning and Language Disorders scores was not significant ($r = .069$, $p > .05$).

Hypothesis 2 stated that PSSMS sense of school belonging would be positively related to teacher ratings of student academic effectiveness. This hypothesis was not supported and Table 8 shows that the correlation between school belonging (PSSMS) and teacher report scores was not significant ($r = -.016$, $p > .05$).

Hypothesis 3 stated that sense of PSSMS school belonging would be negatively related to internalizing problems. This hypothesis was partially supported. Table 9 shows a significant correlation between school belonging and Mood Disorders scores ($r = -.224$, $p<.05$), however the relationship between PSSMS school belonging and Anxiety Disorders scores was not significant ($r = -.041$, $p>.05$).

Hypothesis 4 stated that there would be a negative correlation between PSSMS sense of school belonging and externalizing problems scores. This hypothesis was not supported and Table 8 shows that the correlation between PSSMS school belonging and Disruptive Behavior Disorders scores was not significant ($r = .045$, $p > .05$).

Hypothesis 5 stated that length of time in the United States would be positively related to school problems. This hypothesis was not supported and Table 8 shows that the correlation between number of months in the US and the Learning and Language Disorders scale was not significant ($r = .047$, $p > .05$).

Hypothesis 6 stated that there would be a significant negative correlation between length of time in the United States and teacher ratings of student academic effectiveness. As shown in Table 9, this hypothesis was not supported (r = .023, p > .05).

Hypothesis 7 stated that length of time in the United States would be negatively correlated with internalizing problems scores. This hypothesis was not supported as the correlations between number of months in the US and Mood Disorders (r = -.131, p > .05) and Anxiety Disorders scores (r = -.137, p > .05) were not significant. Nevertheless, a small effect size for all three correlations was indicated.

Hypothesis 8 stated that length of time in the United States would be positively related to externalizing problems. This hypothesis was not supported and Table 8 shows that the correlation between number of months in the US and the Disruptive Behavior Disorder scale was not significant (r = .140, p > .05).

Other significant correlations. In addition to significant correlations reported as part of the hypothesis testing, Table 8 shows that BESS scores correlated negatively with school belonging, positively with all three CI disorders scores, and negatively with teacher ratings of academic effectiveness. Thus, students whose BESS scores showed better overall adjustment (i.e., a lower scores) also had a greater sense of school belonging, better academic effectiveness, and fewer depression, anxiety, and aggression problems. These correlations support the expectations that I had when I added this instrument and add validity evidence for the BESS as a measure of overall adjustment.

Table 8 also shows that the longer students had been in the United States and the younger they were when they immigrated, the more linguistically acculturated they were. These relationships provide some validity for the linguistic acculturation scale that I developed.

Also of interest is the significant negative correlation between teacher ratings of student academic effectiveness and the learning and language disorders scale (school problems). This indicates a relationship between teacher and student reports of academic difficulties.

Moderation and Mediation

Moderation. Hypothesis 9 stated that higher school belonging scores would moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and self-report of school/academic problems. Higher belonging scores were expected to result in lower self-report school/academic problems scores. Because the relationship between length of time in the United States and self-report of school/academic problems was not significant ($r = .047$, $p > .05$), no tests of moderation were conducted.

Hypothesis 10 stated that school belonging scores would moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and teacher report of student academic effectiveness. Higher belonging scores were expected to result in higher teacher report of student academic effectiveness. Because the relationship between length of time in the United States and teacher report of student academic effectiveness was not significant ($r = .023$, $p > .05$), no tests of moderation were conducted.

Hypothesis 11 stated that sense of school belonging would moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and internalizing problems. Higher school belonging scores were expected to result in lower internalizing problems scores. Because the relationship between length of time in the United States and internalizing problems was not significant ($r = -.131$, $p>.05$, $r = -.137$, $p > .05$, and $r = .179$, $p > .05$), no tests of moderation were conducted.

Hypothesis 12 stated that higher school belonging scores would moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and externalizing problems. Higher school belonging scores

were expected to result in lower externalizing problems scores. Because the relationship between length of time in the United States and externalizing problems was not significant (r = .140, p > .05), no tests of moderation were conducted.

Mediation. A series of additional analyses were proposed to test for the mediating effects of demographic variables (specifically focusing on gender, age, and length of time in the United States) on the relationships between PSSMS belonging score, number of months in the US, and outcome measures. Because no significant relationships were found between these variables, tests of mediation were not conducted here.

Summary of Findings Related to Study's Hypotheses

Table 9 summarizes this study's hypotheses and indicates which were supported by the research findings. As detailed in Table 9, 11 of the 12 hypothesis were not supported while 1 was partially supported.

Table 9

Overview of Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Study Hypothesis	Supported/ Not Supported
H01	There will be a negative correlation between sense of school belonging scores and school/academic problem scores.	Not Supported
H02	There will be a positive correlation between sense of school belonging scores and teacher ratings of student academic effectiveness.	Not Supported
H03	There will be a negative correlation between sense of school belonging scores and internalizing problems scores.	Partially Supported
H04	There will be a negative correlation between sense of school belonging scores and externalizing problems scores.	Not Supported
H05	Length of time in the United States will be positively correlated with school/academic scores.	Not Supported
H06	There will be a negative correlation between length of time in the United States and teacher ratings of student academic effectiveness.	Not Supported
H07	Length of time in the United States will be negatively correlated with internalizing problems scores.	Not Supported
H08	Length of time in the United States will be positively correlated with externalizing problems scores.	Not Supported
H09	Higher school belonging scores will moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and self-report of school problems. Higher belonging scores are expected to result in lower self-report school/academic problems.	Not Supported
H10	Higher school belonging scores will moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and teacher-report of student academic effectiveness. Higher membership scores are expected to result in higher teacher report of student academic effectiveness.	Not Supported
H11	Higher school belonging scores will moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and internalizing problems. Higher school belonging scores are expected to result in lower internalizing problems scores.	Not Supported
H13	Higher school belonging scores will moderate the effects of length of time in the United States and internalizing problems. Higher school membership scores are expected to result in lower internalizing problems scores.	Not Supported

Interviews

I interviewed two participants, one with a high and one with a low PSSMS school belonging score, to obtain qualitative information about how their experiences have influenced their perception of connectedness to their schools. Both interviews were conducted in Spanish, took place in the participants' school, and lasted between 20 and 25 minutes (see Appendix K for the transcript).

Respondent A. Respondent A is a 13 year-old female 8th grade student. She was born in El Salvador and immigrated to the United States 15 months ago. She had one of the highest PSSMS scores of all other participants at her school.

During her interview, respondent A discussed a number of factors related to her experiences and relationships with other students that impacted her sense of belonging. For example, she stated that she feels a sense of membership to her school because there are students from many different countries and backgrounds who are accepted. She went on to say that she feels that she can be herself in her school because there are others like her and added that other students enjoy spending time with her and tell her she is "nice and fun". She reported that an example of what makes her feel like a part of her school is when the bilingual education students work collaboratively on school projects with mainstreamed students. She also noted that she is involved in a few extracurricular activities including tumbling and an after school math program. Most salient, however, was her response about why she did not wish to attend a different school. She stated that "there are many Hispanic children here and we treat each other like brothers and sisters…like family".

Respondent A also cited several acts of kindness and recognition on the part of her teachers that make her feel good about her school. She recounted that when she first arrived in the United States she was scared and did not speak English. Her teacher made her feel welcome

by taking time to talk to her, reassure her, and help her learn English. She also shared that when she first arrived to the US, she did not have heavy enough clothing for the weather and arrived at school not dressed warmly enough. A faculty member found her a warm sweater and showed her around the building. “They treated me very well”.

In school and class, she indicated that, “even though we are Hispanic” she believes she receives the same respect and support as the other students and is “almost always” recognized for a job well done. Her teachers congratulate her when she does well and recognize her interest in learning. When asked to give an example of a time when someone recognized that she was good at something, she explained that when she gets a good grade, her teachers notice and encourage her by telling her that she can be something great in the future. She also reported that she feels like other people take her opinions seriously because when she participates in class and answers questions, teachers and peers pay attention and, if she is struggling with instructional material, her teachers help her. When asked to describe teachers who make her feel respected, she said that her bilingual teachers show an interest in her learning, they respect her like all of the other students in the school, and don’t look down on her or her peers.

Respondent A also described specific characteristics about her teachers and school community at large that impacted her sense of school membership. Specifically, she reported that she feels accepted because her teachers also speak Spanish and support her in both her academic and social development. She reported that she is proud to belong to her school because there are many Latino children and teachers in the school. She said she feels proud because others recognize that they (Latino students) are intelligent, they are respected, treated like the other students and do not experience racism. When asked to describe a teacher that she feels she can talk to if she had a problem, she named one of her bilingual teachers. She stated that this

teacher always checks in with her students to make sure that they are feeling well, helps them find solutions to their problems, and gives good advice. When asked why she believes that her teachers are interested in her, she stated "because they try to teach us, explain that in order to be something, we must learn, and that we can be something. They also tell us that we should be proud of our Hispanic heritage and will have many opportunities".

Respondent B. Respondent B is a 14 year-old 8th grade male student. He was born in Ecuador and then immigrated to Spain when he was 6 months old. He immigrated from Spain to the United States 14 months ago. He had one of the lowest PSSMS scores of all other participants at his school. Nevertheless, he detailed attributes of his school experiences that were both positive and negative.

During his interview, respondent B discussed a number of social factors related to his sense of school membership. Favorable experiences and perceptions that he detailed included, as with respondent A, interacting with mainstreamed students. Specifically, he reported that he feels accepted in his school when he has a chance to converse with "American students" in his physical education class and when he plays soccer after school with them on the school's team. On the other hand, when asked to give an example of time that he didn't feel like a part of his school, he said that he doesn't participate in many school activities and other students are sometimes picked to play on teams before him in his physical education class.

Respondent B also described a number of differences that he has identified between him and other students in the school that reduce his sense of connectedness. When asked to discuss how he feels different from other students in his school, he stated that when he walks in the hallways there is no one to talk to because he does not know them but they know each other. Since he reported on the PSSMS that he would rather be in a different school, I asked him what

his ideal school would look like. He stated that it would be like the schools in Spain where he knew more people and there were more students who spoke Spanish. Most salient, however, were the differences that he described between him and his peers within the bilingual program. He indicated that he feels that he cannot be himself in school and feels like his peers do not like the way he is because of cultural differences between his Spanish background and their Latino background. Specifically, he reported that in Spain he could go to school dressed how he wanted and people there speak Castellano or Catelan, but in this school they speak Latino Spanish and there are some things he doesn't understand. He gave an additional example that his peers listen to *reggaeton* music (Latin reggae) and he listens to electronic music "sometimes they make fun of me".

With regard to his experiences with school faculty, he reported both positive and negative factors that contribute to his sense of belonging. He reported that his teachers notice when he does something well and cited an example of when his teacher praised him for doing well on a project. He also stated that he feels like his teacher recognizes that he can do a good job because when he does not exert effort, she brings this to his attention and tells him that he can do better. He also cited an example of feeling like his teachers show an interest in him when they ask him to share information about Spain. On a personal level, he reported that he could turn to one of his bilingual teachers, the same one respondent A cited, if he had a problem because she always shows concern for students. Along the same vein, he reported that his teachers make him feel respected by occasionally asking how he feels and if he is okay. When asked why he thinks his teachers have an interest him he said "because they are Hispanic and want us to have a better future".

Respondent B also discussed some negative experiences with school faculty that have inhibited his sense of school belonging. When asked to describe an instance where he did not feel like his opinion was taken seriously, he recounted a time when he asked a teacher a question and she did not respond to him but answered another student's question. When asked to describe an incident where he felt like he was not respected as much as the other students in the school, he reported that at lunch time the bilingual class is always called last to go up and get their lunch so they have less time to eat and do not always have their first choice of meal options.

Chapter V

Discussion

This chapter presents the key findings of the present research obtained through statistical analyses outlined in the previous chapter. Further, it details the implications of these findings, limitations of the current study, as well as recommended directions for further research related to this topic.

Key Findings

The goal of this study was to examine the relationship between a sense of school belonging and internalizing, externalizing, and school problems in adolescent immigrants from Latin America and Spanish-speaking Caribbean.

The present research illustrated that there was a significant and negative relationship between a sense of school belonging and symptoms of mood disorders in these Latino adolescent immigrant participants. There was, however, no meaningful relationship between school belonging and anxiety symptoms. In other words, with regard to internalizing problems, participants who reported higher levels of connectedness to their school reported fewer symptoms associated with mood disorders but there was no relationship between school belonging and anxiety symptoms. Both of these findings are consistent with previous research. For instance, Anderman (2002) found that school belonging was negatively correlated with depression in a diverse sample. In addition, MacMahon et al. (2008) found that while higher levels of school belonging were associated with lower levels of depression in his sample of disabled students, school belonging was not associated with anxiety. My findings, thus, have implications that are both encouraging and disappointing. It is quite promising that there was a negative relationship between school belonging and symptoms of mood disorders because this

implies that increasing young immigrants' sense of membership to their school could potentially protect against mood disorder symptoms, such as depression. On the other hand, in a population with a documented risk for a variety of psychological maladies (Birman et al., 2007), it is disappointing that a relationship with anxiety was not found here. This implies that when working with adolescent immigrants at risk for, or experiencing anxiety symptoms, interventions other than increasing a sense of school belonging should be considered.

With regard to externalizing and school problems, a sense of school belonging was not statistically related to either of these variables in the study population. This is contrary to my hypothesis and results of previous research. In a number studies with diverse populations, connectedness to one's school has been associated with lower levels of delinquency and behavior problems, as well as increased academic performance (Battistich & Hom, 1997; Liljeberg et al., 2011; Sanchez et al., 2005; Walton & Cohen, 2011). There are a number of reasons that the aforementioned hypothesized relationships may not have been supported by the present study. For starters, this study only included 78 participants, a sample size which may not have had sufficient power to detect statistically significant relationships between all variables. In addition, these results were derived from self-report measures, and respondents, while assured confidentiality during consent/assent procedures, may have been reluctant to honestly answer questions for fear they would be judged by the researcher or that results would somehow be shared with their peers or teachers. Moreover, the two subscales of the Conners CI, which were used to assess self-report of academic and externalizing problems, are designed to detect the presence of symptoms associated with DSM disorders. Perhaps, the hypothesized relationships between school belonging and school and externalizing problems would have been detected for externalizing symptoms that are not so extreme. It is also possible that this instrument simply

does not have strong validity with this population. Although the items of the CI were carefully translated from English to Spanish by the authors, the choice of words may not reflect the way the adolescents in this population, who are from a different background and culture, conceptualize their lives. Further, although nine teachers in total completed the questionnaire that I developed to measure teacher reports of academic effectiveness, three of them completed 83% of the questionnaires. Ideally, each teacher should have rated a similar number of students, or multiple teachers should have rated every student. This, however, was not feasible in this study because some teachers were more willing to participate than were others. Consequently, the results were highly dependent on these teachers who could have had different perspectives concerning the student participants than did other teachers of these students.

In addition to the above possibilities as explanations for why the hypothesized relationships were null, it could be that this study population was simply different than ones used in other research in that the current sample was comprised entirely of immigrants. Adolescent immigrants have an established risk for a number of psychological and behavioral problems supported by research (Birman et al., 2007). Nevertheless, the experiences that may contribute to this population's risk are markedly different than those of most non-immigrant demographic groups in the United States, with which previous studies were conducted. Participants of this study largely reported that their migration trip was not difficult. This is inconsistent with information the researcher received thorough casual conversations with faculty members in the participating schools. It is possible that, having nothing to compare it to, participants did not deem their immigration trip to be any more stressful than that of others or merely did not want to share that it was stressful with the researcher. In fact, staff members reported that many of the students are undocumented immigrants who had very difficult journeys to the US, which

included violence exposure, grueling environmental conditions, personal assault (both physical and sexual), and loss of loved ones. Staff members also revealed that, as found in previous literature (Gaytan et al., 2007), most respondents had been separated from one or more parents before and/or after immigration and suffered interrupted education. In short, there are a number of factors unique to adolescent immigrants that may have influenced the results of this study. As a result, it also possible that in this population a sense of school belonging alone is insufficient to protect against externalizing and school problems.

Supplemental analyses conducted on study variables indicated that participants' overall levels of adjustment, as measured by the BESS, were negatively correlated with a sense of school belonging. Thus, participants who indicated that they felt a strong membership to their schools reported higher levels of overall psychological adjustment. This is consistent with previous research which shows that school belonging is a protective factor against psychological ills (Anderman, 2002; MacMahon et al., 2008; Walton & Cohen's, 2011). This finding is promising because it suggests that a higher sense of school belonging may protect against overall maladjustment and, hopefully, against the development of psychological and behavioral disorders. With regard to the BESS, respondents who showed better adjustment also had better academic effectiveness, and fewer depression, anxiety, and aggression problems. These findings add validity evidence for the BESS as a measure of overall adjustment with diverse populations. It is also feasible that this instrument has more validity than the CI for use with adolescent immigrants and uses language more in line with the way these young people think. Perhaps more of my hypotheses may have been supported with use of a different instrument. Consequently, additional research investigating my study hypotheses is recommended.

With regard to participant interviews, both respondents reported that they felt that there was an adult they could speak to if they had a problem in school and cited that having teachers who spoke Spanish and were Latino increased their positive responses to PSSMS items. Having teachers who expressed interest and care towards them was also very important to respondents. This suggests that characteristics of faculty members are important factors in students' level of school connectedness.

In addition, both respondents reported that they enjoyed spending time with non-immigrant students in their schools and that these activities increased their sense of membership to their schools. Nevertheless, access to students with similar characteristics was also quite important to respondents' level of connectedness to their school. For example, the respondent who felt a high level of belonging cited a diverse student body and Latino and Spanish speaking peers factors contributing to her positive responses on the PSMSS. On the other hand, the respondent with a lower belonging score indicated that his identification with Spanish versus Latin American culture made him feel like he does not always fit in with his peers. Consequently, it is important for practitioners to remember that Latino students are not a homogeneous population and their unique backgrounds may affect their functioning and perceptions across a variety of domains. Finally, the respondent who did not feel as connected to his school shared that his bilingual class is treated differently at times than other children in the school and cited an example of consistently being called last for lunch. This respondent's account illustrates that schools should be cognizant that even subtle differences in the ways the students are treated do not go unnoticed and can have a powerful impact on how connected children and adolescents feel to their schools.

Implications for School Psychologists

There are few studies that investigated the relationship between a sense of school belonging and internalizing, externalizing, and school problems in adolescent immigrants. This study provides some preliminary evidence regarding the benefits of increased perception of connectedness to one's school in Latino adolescent immigrants. Although a number of my hypotheses were not supported, my results did show that adolescent immigrants who reported higher levels of connectedness to their schools have lower reports of depressive symptoms and overall maladjustment. In addition, interview data revealed that faculty and student diversity, as well opportunities to engage with non-immigrant students, contribute to higher levels of connectedness. Perceptions of being treated differently, however, hindered a sense of belonging.

Given the growing number of immigrant children attending US schools, the psychological risk factors that they possess, and their tendency not to seek outside mental health services due to cultural barriers and immigration status (Garrison et al., 1999), school psychologists, with their expertise in psychology and in education, are in the unique position to target and support newcomers from other countries. They can influence school leadership to recruit and hire culturally and linguistically diverse faculty members and celebrate diversity amongst the existing student body. Because having connections with peers of similar backgrounds was identified via participant interviews as a factor that increased a sense of belonging, psychologists can encourage schools to strengthen their ESL, dual-language, and bilingual programs, as well as to develop culturally-based clubs for students to join. There is also research that supports the protective role of connectedness to ones culture. For example, Martinez et al. (2011) found that immigrant youth actually exhibit lower levels of academic and behavioral problems when they first arrive in the United States and are presumably more connected to their home culture. Further, acculturation is believed to have a curvilinear

relationship with mental health with individuals with either low or high levels of acculturation experiencing more mental health problems, and those who are bicultural fairing best (Blanco-Vega et al., 2008). Therefore, schools should be careful not to rush immigrant children to assimilate and abandon their home culture, because involvement in home cultures may actual make these youngsters more psychologically resilient.

Although being around others who are similar to them is important to adolescent immigrants, interviews revealed that respondents enjoyed engaging with non-immigrant students very much. Thus, efforts should be made to have an inclusionary culture within schools with meaningful mainstreaming opportunities, both curricular and extracurricular. In order to help staff members and students treat immigrant students with dignity, respect, and warmth, school psychologists should make efforts to learn about the cultures of students who attend their schools and encourage schools to offer professional development workshops on cultural diversity to all faculty. Developmentally appropriate workshops should also be offered to all students as a means to foster a sense of inclusion, not mere tolerance, in school settings.

While my findings did not support my hypotheses or results of previous research indicating that school belonging is negatively associated with school problems, externalizing behaviors, or anxiety, immigrant adolescents have demonstrated risk in these areas (Birman et al., 2007). Thus, school psychologists must consider alternative means to support immigrant youth who may be struggling with these issues. For example, families should be included in school interventions whenever possible since family bonds are at the cornerstone of Latino culture. In addition, social support, including that from family, has been shown to serve as a buffer against academic and mental health difficulties in Latino populations (Crean, 2004; DeGarmo & Martinez, 2006; Levitt et al., 2005). Therefore, school psychologists and other

school faculty should ensure that immigrant children have social support from as many sources as possible.

They, along with other school mental health staff and administrators, should attempt to establish relationships within the community to foster trust and to find culturally and linguistically diverse therapists who are trained in evidence-based practices so that they may refer children and families for support in instances where problems are too serious to be addressed in schools. Nevertheless, because immigrants are often reluctant to seek mental health services for a variety of complex reasons (Garrison et al., 1999), school psychologists may find themselves as some of the few people in a position to help an immigrant child in need. They should, thus, develop and employ evidence-based and culturally appropriate practices for working with immigrant youth.

Limitations of the Present Study and Suggestions for Future Research

There are several limitations of the present research. The first limitation is sample size. My final sample consisted of 78 participants from 2 schools, with 54 being from one school and 24 from the other. Had I had a larger sample size, I may have been able confirm more of my hypotheses. Although I had hoped to recruit a larger number of students, there are number of reasons why I was unable to do so. For starters, I was looking at a very specific subgroup of students within the schools that participated. Although there were a large number of Latino students in both schools, I required that potential participants be foreign born. Because a number of the immigrant students that I recruited may have been undocumented, their immigration status could have led them to avoid participating in my study for fear that their status might be exposed. Moreover, those who did participate may have been less forthcoming about their problems. Although safeguards, such as offering parents the option to provide oral consent and not asking

participants about their immigration status, were in place to protect the privacy of students, this fear may have been a deterrent to participation. Future research in this area should include larger sample sizes.

Another limitation of the study was Hurricane Sandy. Both of the school districts that participated in this study were affected by the storm. In the wake of the hurricane, the New England middle school was closed for almost a week, several homes in the community were damaged, and most neighborhoods this school district serves lost power for varying lengths of time. The Long Island high school was even more affected by the storm. All schools in this district were closed for two weeks until power could be restored and building repairs made, the high school where my participants were enrolled was significantly damaged and closed for several weeks, with students having to be relocated to another building for instruction. A large number of staff and students in the school lost or suffered severe damage to their homes or possessions, and many students' parents' places of businesses were destroyed (leading to financial stress). In short, there were a plethora of external variables and stressors that students at these schools faced this school year that undoubtedly impacted their functioning and may have impacted the results of this study.

A fourth limitation of this study was that self report measures were utilized. Thus, participants' responses may have been biased because of a desire to provide what they deemed to be socially appropriate responses. Because adolescents are very concerned with how they are viewed by others, they may have been reluctant to admit their true feelings or thoughts about questions posed to them. In addition, Latinos are culturally very rooted in their family (Garrison et al., 1999) and may have been reluctant to share personal information with an outside party.

Whenever possible, future research with this group should be conducted using instruments that have demonstrated validity with immigrant youth.

A fifth limitation of this study was that I used participants from two schools with different programs in place for students with limited English proficiency. For example, the middle school offered students with limited English proficiency a choice between a bilingual education program, where students receive all of their academic instruction from bilingual teachers, or a mainstream program with ESL offered as a separate course. The high school, on the other hand, offered an ESL program where students received academic instruction from ESL teachers, with the number of classes taught by ESL teachers varying based on results of state tests of English proficiency. Because of my relatively small sample size and because each school did not have the same methods for instruction their English language learners, it was not possible to compare how the different educational models might have impacted students' functioning on study variables. Future research should examine how different educational programs (i.e., ESL, mainstreaming, bilingual education) might impact study variables.

A sixth limitation of this study was that both schools were located within the same general region of the country, had diverse student bodies, and had large programs in place to instruct newcomers. Consequently, results of this research may not generalize to schools with difference demographic components or to schools in other parts of the country. Future research should include participants from other regions of the US and from schools with a variety of demographic compositions.

A seventh limitation involved the scale that I developed to measure teacher report of academic effectiveness. This scale had only two items, albeit with a very high level of consistency. Yet, it is unclear if this level of consistency was due to a halo effect. It was,

nonetheless, not feasible to create a scale with larger number of items because teachers may have been deterred from participating. In addition, it would have been inappropriate to use grades or standardized tests to assess respondent school functioning because of the diverse educational circumstances of participants, such as length of time in the US education system, level of English proficiency, educational program, and possible interrupted education. Moreover, 3 out of the 9 teachers who participated in this study completed the majority of teacher questionnaires. Unfortunately, there were not many teachers who worked with the students, and even fewer who readily participated. Ideally, future research that includes a teacher rating scale should have each teacher rate a similar number of students.

Another limitation of this study is related to what I was permitted to ask respondents. I had many questions, which could have proved meaningful to my research, about their immigration status, immigration experiences, and life in their homeland. Unfortunately, I was unable to ask most of these questions because they may have deterred many parents from consenting and students from participating for fear that their immigration status or sensitive personal information would be revealed. The IRB also had concerns about protecting the immigration status of participants and even offered me the unusual option to obtain oral consent from parents in order to protect their privacy. Although students shared that they are largely happier living in the United States versus their country of origin, I do not know why. Further, I asked participants if their migration trip was difficult and only a minority admitted that it was. This report was, however, inconsistent with information that school staff provided me regarding the migration experiences that students have shared with them. Future research should utilize measures that ask participants specific questions about their background and current situations in order to analyze how these variables influence their current functioning, risk, and resilience.

Another suggestion for future research is to rethink the way studies are conducted with this population. The administration of translated scales that were developed with nonimmigrant individuals, while useful at times is an imperfect and insufficient method of gaining comprehensive information. When I interviewed just 2 study participants, I was able to acquire invaluable data that was not elicited by the other translated scales that I administered. Future researchers should strongly consider interviewing immigrant participants on a larger scale to obtain critical qualitative data and to discern what sorts of questions might be appropriate to include on a standardized scale designed for this population. Once this is information is available, someone should then develop a scale specifically for Latino immigrant adolescents that accurately reflects them.

Given the small amount of research that has been conducted with immigrant adolescents, their demonstrated risk for psychological and behavioral maladies (Crean, 2004; Garrison, Roy, & Azar, 1999), and their growing presence in the United States, there is a critical need for future research examining risk and resilience with this population. In addition to suggestions outlined in the previous paragraphs, some additional directions for future research may include examining Latino immigrants as a heterogeneous population, research with non-Latino immigrants, and comparing Latino immigrants to US born Latinos, and non-Latinos. The results of such research may hold critical information about variables that make certain individuals more resilient than others. Such findings could lead to the future development of successful prevention and intervention models for this population.

Appendix A

Be Part of a Research Study!
¡Ser Parte de un Estudio!

Participate in a 30 minute research study about your personal thoughts, feelings, and opinion about your school and receive a $5 gift certificate!

¡Participe en un estudio de 30 minutos sobre sus ideas, sentimeintos personales, y su opinion sobre su escuela y reciba un certificado de regalo de $5!

REQUIREMENTS: Be a student in grades 6-12 born in Mexico, Central America, South America, Puerto Rico, Cuba, or the Dominican Republic. Be between 11-18 years old.

REQUISITOS: Ser un estudiante en grados 6-12 nacido en Mexico, Centro America, Sur America , Puerto Rico, Cuba, o la Republica Dominicana. Tener 11-18 años.

For more information, contact Corinne Rivera at riverastudy@gmail.com

Para más información, comuníquese con Corinne Rivera a riverastudy@gmail.com

Appendix B

SCRIPT ENGLISH- For initial presentation of Study

Hello. I am a doctoral graduate student at the CUNY graduate center. I am conducting a study to learn more about how immigrant students' feelings about their school affects the way they feel and behave. I would love for you to participate in my study if you were born in Mexico, Central America, South America, Puerto Rico, Cuba, or the Dominican Republic and are between the ages of 11-18. Your participation is strictly voluntary and can withdraw at any time. The study would take place at your school and will last about 30-45 minutes. In addition to answering some basic questions about yourself, you will be asked to complete 2 questionnaires about how you think and feel.

Your answers will generally remain completely confidential unless I am worried that you might really need counseling or help. If this is the case, I will inform a counselor or related staff member so that they can try to get you help.

When you are done, I will give you $5 gift certificate to Dunkin Donuts. If you are interested please raise your hand and I will give you an informational flyer with my contact information and a permission slip, with a mailing envelope, to give your parents. Your parents must sign the consent form in order for you to participate in this study.

If you think you know someone else who is interested in participating let me know and I will give you extra flyers and permission slips to share with them. Once I have enough students who would like to participate, I will let volunteers know when and where the study will take place. Your participation in this study would not only help me understand more about how you think and feel but could help other people make changes in schools to make immigrant students' experiences better. Remember you can change your mind at any time. Even once you have given me a permission slip. Any questions? Thank you!

SCRIPT SPANISH

Hola. Soy un estudiante de postgrado de doctorado en el Centro de Graduados de CUNY. Estoy realizando un estudio para saber más acerca de cómo los sentimientos de estudiantes inmigrantes acerca de su escuela afecta su forma de sentir y comportarse. Me encantaría que ustedes participen en mi estudio, si usted nació en México, América Central, América del Sur, Puerto Rico, Cuba o la República Dominicana y están entre las edades de 11-18. Su participación es estrictamente voluntaria y puede retirarse en cualquier momento. El estudio se llevara a cabo durante un tiempo en su escuela y durara unos 30-45 minutos. Además de responder a algunas preguntas básicas acerca de usted, se le pedirá que complete dos cuestionarios acerca de cómo piensan y sienten.

Sus respuestas en general se mantendrá completamente confidencial a menos que esté preocupada de que usted realmente necesite consejeria o ayuda. Si este es el caso, informare a un consejero o empleado similar de la escuela para que puedan tratar de conseguirle ayuda.

Cuando haya terminado, te daré certificado de regalo a Dunkin Donuts de $5. Si usted está interesado por favor, levanten la mano y yo te daré un folleto informativo con mi información de contacto y una hoja de permiso, con un sobre de correo, para dar a sus padres. Tus padres tienen que firmar el formulario de consentimiento para que usted participe en este estudio. Si usted piensa que conoce a alguien que estaria interesado en participar, hágamelo saber y yo te daré folletos y hojas de permiso extra para compartir con ellos. Una vez que haya suficientes estudiantes que deseen participar, voy a dejar que los voluntarios sepan cuándo y dónde el estudio se llevará a cabo. Su participación en este estudio no sólo ayudaría a entender más acerca de cómo piensan y tus sentimientos, pero podría ayudar a otras personas hacer cambios en las escuelas para realizar experiencias mejores para estudiantes inmigrantes. Recuerda que puedes dejar de participar en cualquier momento. Incluso una vez que me han dado un permiso. ¿Alguna pregunta?
¡Gracias!

Appendix C

(Printed on Department Letterhead)

Parent/Guardian Consent Form (English)

My name is Corinne Rivera and I am a student in the Educational Psychology Ph.D. Program at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). I am conducting a study about school environment and how it relates to students' feelings and behaviors. The purpose of this study is to try to understand the way immigrant students think and feel about their school and how this influences their feelings and behaviors. Your son/daughter is one of approximately 90 students being invited to participate in this study by answering a few general questions about their background and completing two questionnaires, which will take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete. Your child may also be asked to participate in a short interview about their responses. I will give participants a $5 gift certificate to Dunkin Donuts to participate.

Please remember that your son/daughter is not obligated to participate in this study and that they may choose to stop participating at any time during the process with no penalty. They may also choose not to answer any questions they do not feel comfortable with. There are no risks associated with your son/daughter's participation in this study.

Your son/daughter's answers, name, school, and any other identifying information will be kept confidential to protect their privacy. I will only notify the school if I am worried about your child's well-being. The study will take place during the school day or immediately after last period. In addition, the study will take place prior to the end of this school year and will not interfere with your child's class work. Your child's participation could help educators better understand immigrant students' experiences with the educational system. This may lead to improved support for future groups of students regarding their educational and emotional needs.

If you have any questions about this research, you can contact me at (203) 539-1371 or riverastudy@gmail.com, or my advisor Dr. Georgiana Tryon at (212) 817-8293 or gtryon@gc.cuny.edu. If you have questions about your child's rights as a participant in this study, you can contact Kay Powell, IRB Administrator, The Graduate Center/City University of New York, (212) 817-7525, kpowell@gc.cuny.edu.

If you consent to your son/daughter's participation in this study as it is stipulated, please sign below. A copy of this form will be sent to you with your son/daughter.

____

Corinne Rivera
Ph.D. Student/Principal Investigator

Name of student ____

Signature of parent/guardian _________________________________Date_______________

(Printed on Department Letterhead)

Formulario de Consentimiento de los Padres/Guardiánes (Spanish)

Mi nombre es Corinne Rivera y yo soy un estudiante del doctorado en el programa de Psicología Educacional en el Centro de Graduados de la Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York (CUNY). Estoy realizando un estudio sobre el medio ambiente de la escuela y cómo se relaciona con los sentimientos y comportamientos de los alumnos. El propósito de este estudio es tratar de entender la manera de como los estudiantes inmigrantes piensan y sienten acerca de su escuela y cómo esto influye sus sentimientos y comportamientos. Su hijo / hija es uno de aproximadamente 90 estudiantes invitados a participar en este estudio, dando respuesta a algunas preguntas generales sobre sus antecedentes y completando dos cuestionarios, que tendrá una duración aproximada de 30-45 minutos para completar. Su hijo también puede ser invitado a participar en una breve entrevista sobre sus respuestas. Voy a regalar a los participantes un certificado de regalo de $5 a Dunkin Donuts.

Por favor, debe de recordar que de ninguna manera su hijo(a) tiene la obligación de participar en este estudio y que ellos pueden dejar de participar en cualquier momento sin que haya alguna sanción hacia ellos. Además, pueden dejar cualquier pregunta del cuestionario sin contestar. No hay ningún riesgo asociado con la participación de sus hijos en este estudio.

Las respuestas, nombres, escuela, y cualquier otra información que identifica de sus hijos serán mantenidas confidenciales para proteger su privacidad. Sólo voy a notificar a la escuela si estoy preocupada por el bienestar de su hijo. El estudio se llevará a cabo durante el día escolar o inmediatamente después del último período. Además, se llevará a cabo antes del fin de este año escolar y no interferirá con el trabajo de clase de su hijo. La participación de su hijo/a podría ayudar a los educadores entender mejor las experiencias de alumnos inmigrantes con el sistema educativo. Esto puede hacer que futuros grupos de estudiantes parecidos quizás pueden contar con asistencia mejor con respecto a sus necesidades educativas y emocionales.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta investigación, puede ponerse en contacto conmigo a (203) 539-1371 o riverastudy@gmail.com, o con mi supervisora Dr. Georgiana Tryon (212) 817-8293 o gtryon@gc.cuny.edu. Si usted tiene preguntas acerca de los derechos de su hijo/a como participante en este estudio, puede comunicarse con Kay Powell, IRB administrador, el Centro de Postgrado / Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York, (212) 817-7525, kpowell@gc.cuny.edu.

Si está de acuerdo a que su hijo(a) participe voluntariamente en este estudio tal y como está estipulado, por favor indique su consentimiento con su firma abajo. Una copia de esta forma de consentimiento será mandada a usted con su hijo(a).

____

Corinne Rivera
Estdudiante de Ph.D./ Investigadora Principal

Nombre del Estudiante _______________________________

Firma del Padre/Guardián ____________________________________Fecha_______________

Appendix D

(Printed on Department Letterhead)

Formulario de Información de los Padres/ Guardiánes (Spanish)

Mi nombre es Corinne Rivera y yo soy un estudiante del doctorado en el programa de Psicología Educacional en el Centro de Graduados de la Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York (CUNY). Estoy realizando un estudio sobre el medio ambiente de la escuela y cómo se relaciona con los sentimientos y comportamientos de los alumnos. El propósito de este estudio es tratar de entender la manera de como los estudiantes inmigrantes piensan y sienten acerca de su escuela y cómo esto influye sus sentimientos y comportamientos. Su hijo / hija es uno de aproximadamente 90 estudiantes invitados a participar en este estudio, dando respuesta a algunas preguntas generales sobre sus antecedentes y completando dos cuestionarios, que tendrá una duración aproximada de 30-45 minutos para completar. Su hijo también puede ser invitado a participar en una breve entrevista sobre sus respuestas. Voy a regalar a los participantes un certificado de regalo de $5 a Dunkin Donuts.

Por favor, debe de recordar que de ninguna manera su hijo(a) tiene la obligación de participar en este estudio y que ellos pueden dejar de participar en cualquier momento sin que haya alguna sanción hacia ellos. Además, pueden dejar cualquier pregunta del cuestionario sin contestar. No hay ningún riesgo asociado con la participación de sus hijos en este estudio.

Las respuestas, nombres, escuela, y cualquier otra información que identifica de sus hijos serán mantenidas confidenciales para proteger su privacidad. Sólo voy a notificar a la escuela si estoy preocupada por el bienestar de su hijo. El estudio se llevará a cabo durante el día escolar o inmediatamente después del último período. Además, se llevará a cabo antes del fin de este año escolar y no interferirá con el trabajo de clase de su hijo. La participación de su hijo/a podría ayudar a los educadores entender mejor las experiencias de alumnos inmigrantes con el sistema educativo. Esto puede hacer que futuros grupos de estudiantes parecidos quizás pueden contar con asistencia mejor con respecto a sus necesidades educativas y emocionales.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta investigación, puede ponerse en contacto conmigo a (203) 539-1371 o riverastudy@gmail.com, o con mi supervisora Dr. Georgiana Tryon (212) 817-8293 o gtryon@gc.cuny.edu. Si usted tiene preguntas acerca de los derechos de su hijo/a como participante en este estudio, puede comunicarse con Kay Powell, IRB administrador, el Centro de Postgrado / Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York, (212) 817-7525, kpowell@gc.cuny.edu.

_____

Corinne Rivera

Ph.D. Student/Principal Investigator

(Printed on Department Letterhead)

Formulario de Información de los Padres/ Guardiánes (Spanish)

Mi nombre es Corinne Rivera y yo soy un estudiante del doctorado en el programa de Psicología Educacional en el Centro de Graduados de la Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York (CUNY). Estoy realizando un estudio sobre el medio ambiente de la escuela y cómo se relaciona con los sentimientos y comportamientos de los alumnos. El propósito de este estudio es tratar de entender la manera de como los estudiantes inmigrantes piensan y sienten acerca de su escuela y cómo esto influye sus sentimientos y comportamientos. Su hijo / hija es uno de aproximadamente 90 estudiantes invitados a participar en este estudio, dando respuesta a algunas preguntas generales sobre sus antecedentes y completando dos cuestionarios, que tendrá una duración aproximada de 30-45 minutos para completar. Su hijo también puede ser invitado a participar en una breve entrevista sobre sus respuestas. Voy a regalar a los participantes un certificado de regalo de $5 a Dunkin Donuts.

Por favor, debe de recordar que de ninguna manera su hijo(a) tiene la obligación de participar en este estudio y que ellos pueden dejar de participar en cualquier momento sin que haya alguna sanción hacia ellos. Además, pueden dejar cualquier pregunta del cuestionario sin contestar. No hay ningún riesgo asociado con la participación de sus hijos en este estudio.

Las respuestas, nombres, escuela, y cualquier otra información que identifica de sus hijos serán mantenidas confidenciales para proteger su privacidad. Sólo voy a notificar a la escuela si estoy preocupada por el bienestar de su hijo. El estudio se llevará a cabo durante el día escolar o inmediatamente después del último período. Además, se llevará a cabo antes del fin de este año escolar y no interferirá con el trabajo de clase de su hijo. La participación de su hijo/a podría ayudar a los educadores entender mejor las experiencias de alumnos inmigrantes con el sistema educativo. Esto puede hacer que futuros grupos de estudiantes parecidos quizás pueden contar con asistencia mejor con respecto a sus necesidades educativas y emocionales.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta investigación, puede ponerse en contacto conmigo a (203) 539-1371 o riverastudy@gmail.com, o con mi supervisora Dr. Georgiana Tryon (212) 817-8293 o gtryon@gc.cuny.edu. Si usted tiene preguntas acerca de los derechos de su hijo/a como participante en este estudio, puede comunicarse con Kay Powell, IRB administrador, el Centro de Postgrado / Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York, (212) 817-7525, kpowell@gc.cuny.edu.

_____

Corinne Rivera

Ph.D. Student/Principal Investigator

Appendix E

(Printed on Department Letterhead)

Minor Participant Assent Form (English)

My name is Corinne Rivera and I am a student in the Educational Psychology Ph.D. Program at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY). I am conducting a study about school environment and how it relates to students feelings and behaviors. The purpose of this study is to try to understand the way immigrant students think and feel about their school and how this influences their feelings and behaviors. You are one of approximately 90 students being invited to participate in this study by answering a few general questions about your background and completing two questionnaires, which will take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete. You may also be asked to participate in a short interview about your responses. I will give you a $5 gift certificate to Dunkin Donuts to participate.

Please remember that you are not required to participate in this study and that you may choose to stop participating at any time with no consequences. You do not have to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable with. There are no risks associated with your participation in this study.

Your answers, name, school, and any other identifying information will be kept confidential to protect your privacy. I will only notify the school if I am worried about your well-being. Your participation in this study could help educators better understand immigrant students' experiences with the educational system. This could help future groups of students like you receive better help regarding their educational and emotional needs.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 203-539-1371.

If you consent to participate in this study, please sign below.

Name of Student_____

Signature of student _____

Date_____

_____

Corinne Rivera
Ph.D. Student/ Principal Investigator

(Printed on Department Letterhead)

Formulario de Asentimiento de los particpantes menores (Spanish)

Mi nombre es Corinne Rivera y yo soy un estudiante del doctorado en el programa de Psicología Educacional en el Centro de Graduados de la Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York (CUNY). Estoy realizando un estudio sobre el medio ambiente de la escuela y cómo se relaciona con los sentimientos y comportamientos de los alumnos. El propósito de este estudio es tratar de entender la manera como los estudiantes inmigrantes piensan y sienten acerca de su escuela y cómo esto influye sus sentimientos y comportamientos. Está invitado a participar en este estudio, dando respuesta a algunas preguntas generales sobre sus antecedentes y completando dos cuestionarios, que tendrá una duración aproximada de 30-45 minutos para completar. También puede ser invitado a participar en una breve entrevista sobre sus respuestas. Aproximadamente 90 estudiantes serán invitados a participar. Voy a regalar a los participantes un certificado de regalo de $5 a Dunkin Donuts.

Por favor, debe de recordar que no tiene la obligación de participar en este estudio y que puede dejar de participar en cualquier momento sin consecuencias. Ademas, puede dejar cualquier pregunta del cuestionario sin contestar. No hay ningún riesgo asociado con su participación en este estudio.

Sus respuestas, nombre, escuela, y cualquier otra información que identifica serán mantenidas confidenciales para proteger su privacidad. Sólo voy a notificar a la escuela si estoy preocupada por su bienestar. Su participación en este estudio podría ayudar a los educadores entender mejor las experiencias de alumnos inmigrantes con el sistema educativo. Esto puede hacer que futuros grupos de estudiantes parecidos quizás pueden contar con asistencia mejor con respecto a sus necesidades educativas y emocionales.

Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta investigación, puede ponerse en contacto conmigo a (203) 539-1371.

Si está de acuerdo a que participe voluntariamente en este estudio, por favor indique su consentimiento con su firma abajo.

Nombre del Estudiante _____

Firma del Estudiante _____

Fecha_____

_____

Corinne Rivera
Estdudiante de Ph.D./ Investigadora Principal

Appendix F

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

SCHOOL:_____

NAME: _____

AGE:_____

TELEPHONE NUMBER (optional) :_____

EMAIL ADDRESS (optional):_____

GRADE:_____

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:_____

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: (CIRCLE ONE)

Bilingual Class ESL Only Mainstream (no ESL or bilingual class)

How old were you when you came in the United States? _____

Have you been in the United States for less than 2 years? Yes or No

If yes, about what month and year did you arrive (ex. June 2012)? _____

My migration trip was

1 2 3 4

NOT DIFFICULT A LITTLE DIFFICULT DIFFICULT VERY DIFFICULT

I am happier living in the United States than in my home country Yes or No

I receive free or reduced lunch Yes or No

INFORMACIÓN GENERAL

ESCUELA:_____

NOMBRE: _____

EDAD:_____

NÚMERO TELEFÓNICO (opcional):_____

Dirección de correo electrónico (opcional):_____

GRADO:_____

PAÍS DE ORIGEN:_____

PROGRAMA EDUCACIONAL: (MARQUE UNO)

Clase Bilingüe Sólo ESL Mainstream (No ESL o clase bilingüe)

¿Qué edad tenías cuando entraste en los Estados Unidos? _____
¿Usted ha estado en los Estados Unidos por menos de 2 años? Sí o No
¿Si la respuesta es **"Sí"**, aproximadamente en qué mes y año llegó (por ejemplo, junio de 2012)?
_____

Mi viaje de migración fue

1 2 3 4

NO DIFÍCIL UN POCO DIFÍCIL DIFÍCIL MUY DIFÍCIL

Estoy mas feliz viviendo en los Estados Unidos que en my país de origen Sí o No

Recibo almuerzo de precio reducido or gratis Sí o No

Appendix G

Participant Name: _____

Please describe your language use for each of the behaviors listed in the chart below.

Example:

What language do you use …	**Only Spanish**	**More Spanish than English**	**Both equally**	**More English than Spanish**	**Only English**
To think		✓			

Please check only *one* answer for each item

What language do you use …	**Only Spanish**	**More Spanish than English**	**Both equally**	**More English than Spanish**	**Only English**
To think					
To speak at home					
To speak in the community (with neighbors or at businesses)					
To talk with friends in person					
To talk to friends on the phone					
To communicate with friends on the internet					
To watch TV					
To listen to the radio/music					

Nombre del Participante: _____

Por favor describa su uso del idioma para cada uno de los comportamientos enumerados en la siguiente tabla.

Ejemplo:

Que idioma usa usted …	**Sólo Español**	**Más Español que Inglés**	**Ambos por igual**	**Más Inglés que Español**	**Sólo Inglés**
Para pensar		✓			

Por favor, marque sólo <u>una</u> respuesta por cada pregunta

Que idioma usa usted …	**Sólo Español**	**Más Español que Inglés**	**Ambos por igual**	**Más Inglés que Español**	**Sólo Inglés**
Para pensar					
Para hablar en casa					
Para hablar en la comunidad (con los vecinos o en negocios)					
Para hablar con sus amigos en persona					
Para hablar con sus amigos por teléfono					
Para comunicarse con amigos por Internet					
Para ver televisión					
Para escuchar la radio / música					

Appendix H

TEACHER QUESTIONAIRE

SCHOOL:_____

TEACHER'S NAME: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER (optional) :_____

EMAIL ADDRESS (optional):_____

SUBJECT TAUGHT:_____

STUDENT: _____

On a scale of 1-4, with 4 being highest, please answer the following questions:

The student exerts age-appropriate effort	***1***	***2***	***3***	***4***
	Never	***Sometimes***	***Usually***	***Always***
The student works up to his/her ability	***1***	***2***	***3***	***4***
	Never	***Sometimes***	***Usually***	***Always***

Appendix I

Interview Script (adapted from PSSMS)

1. You indicated that you do/don't feel like a part of your school. Give me an example of a time when you do/don't feel like part of your school.
2. You indicated that people do/don't notice when you are good at something? Tell me about a time when someone did/didn't notice when you were good at something.
3. You said you feel/don't feel accepted here. What is something that people do that makes you feel accepted/unaccepted here?
4. You indicated that people do/don't take your opinions seriously. Please tell me about a time when you felt this way.
5. You indicated that the teachers here do/don't show an interest in you. Tell me about a time that teachers showed/didn't show an interest in you.
6. You said you feel like you do/don't belong here. Why do you feel this way?
7. Tell me about a teacher or adult you can talk to in your school about a problem./Why do you think there is no teacher or adult you can talk to in your school about a problem?
8. Tell me about a time when people in your school were/weren't friendly to you.
9. Why do you feel that teachers in your school are/aren't interested in you?
10. What activities are you involved in at your school?
11. You said you do/ don't feel as respected as other students. Tell me about something that happened that made you feel that you are/aren't as respected as other students.
12. You indicated you feel different/don't feel different than other students. Tell me about the specific ways in which you feel different.
13. You indicated that you can/can't be yourself in school. Why do you feel this way?
14. You said the teachers here do/don't respect you. Tell me about what the teachers do to make you feel this way.
15. You said people here know/don't know that you can do good work. Tell me about a time someone recognized/didn't recognize your good work.
16. You indicated that you do/don't wish you were in a different school. What makes you happy at this school?/ What would a school you'd rather be in look like?
17. You said you were proud/weren't proud to belong to this school. What makes you/doesn't make you proud to belong to this school?
18. You indicated that students here like you/don't like you the way you are. Tell me about something that happened that made you feel this way.

Spanish Interview Script (adapted from PSSMS)

1. Ha indicado que se / no se siente como una parte de su escuela. Dame un ejemplo de un momento en que se / no se sentía como parte de su escuela.
2. Usted indicó que la gente se da/ no se da cuenta cuando eres bueno en algo? Háblame de un momento en que alguien se dio cuenta/ no se dio cuenta cuando usted era bueno en algo.
3. Usted dijo que se siente / no se siente aceptado aquí. ¿Qué es algo que la gente hace que te hace sentir aceptado / no aceptado aquí?
4. Usted indicó que la gente sí / no toman en serio sus opiniones. Háblame de un momento en que usted se sintió así.
5. Usted indicó que los profesores aquí muestran/ no muestran interés en ti. Háblame de un momento en que los profesores mostraron / no mostraron interés en ti.
6. Dijiste que te sientes que si / no perteneces aquí. ¿Por qué te sientes así?
7. Háblame de un maestro o adulto con quien se puede hablar en su escuela acerca de un problema. / ¿Por qué cree usted que hay/no hay maestro o adulto con quien se puede hablar en su escuela acerca de un problema?
8. Háblame de un momento en que la gente en su escuela fueron/no fueron amables con usted.
9. ¿Por qué cree que los maestros de su escuela son/no son interesado en ti?
10. ¿En qué actividades participa usted en su escuela?
11. Has dicho que se siente / no se siente respetado como los demás estudiantes. Háblame de algo que pasó que te hizo sentir que eres/ no eres respetado como los demás estudiantes.
12. Usted ha indicado que se siente diferente / no se siente diferente a los demás estudiantes. Háblame de las formas específicas en que usted se siente/ no se siente diferente.
13. Nos ha indicado que puede / no puede ser tú mismo en la escuela. ¿Por qué te sientes así?
14. Usted dijo que los profesores aquí no te respetan/te respetan. Háblame de lo que los profesores hacen para que te sienta así.

15. Usted dijo que la gente aquí sabe / no sabe que puede hacer un buen trabajo. Háblame de un tiempo cuando alguien reconoció/ no reconoció su buen trabajo.
16. Usted indicó que si/no deseas estar en una escuela diferente. ¿Qué te hace feliz en esta escuela? / ¿Cómo sería una escuela donde te gustaría estar?
17. Dijiste que estabas orgulloso / no estabas orgulloso de pertenecer a esta escuela. ¿Qué te hace / no te hace sentir orgulloso de pertenecer a esta escuela?
18. Usted indicó que los estudiantes aquí les gustan tu forma de ser. Háblame de algo que pasó que te hizo sentir de esta manera.

Appendix J

Key Sheet

ID Number:_____

Demographic Data

SCHOOL:_____

AGE:_____

GRADE:_____

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:_____

Age of immigration to US:

Less than 2 years living in US: Yes or No

If yes, LENTH OF TIME IN USA (months):_____

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Bilingual ESL Mainstream

Migration Trip Response: 1 2 3 4

Happiness Response: Yes or No

Free or reduced lunch Yes or No

Acculturation (only Spanish= 1, more Spanish than English=2, Equal=3, more English than Spanish=5, only English=5)

Item 1
Item 2
Item 3
Item 4
Item 5
Item 6
Item 7
Item 8

PSSMS

Total Belonging Score _____

Conners CI-SR

Mood Disorders score _____ Disruptive Behavior Disorders _____

Anxiety Disorders _____ Learning and Language Disorders _____

Teacher Report

Item 1 Effort 1 2 3 4

Item 2 Ability 1 2 3 4

BESS Score _____

Appendix K

Interview Transcripts (Translated into English)

Respondent A

19. **You indicated that you feel like a part of your school. Give me an example of a time when you do/don't feel like part of your school.**
When we get together with kids from other grades or with students that aren't in bilingual to do projects or go to the auditorium.

20. **You indicated that people notice when you are good at something? Tell me about a time when someone noticed when you were good at something.**
When I get good grades, the teachers notice that I gave it my best and that I can be something in the future.

21. **You said you feel accepted here. What is something that people do that makes you feel accepted here?**
They give us support, help us resolve problems with other students or from home. They care about our social and academic development and teachers and counselor speak Spanish.

22. **You indicated that people take your opinions seriously. Please tell me about a time when you felt this way.**
When I'm in class and want to give an answer to something, others pay attention. If I need help, I get help to figure something out, the teacher will help me.

23. **You indicated that the teachers here show an interest in you. Tell me about a time that teachers showed an interest in you.**
When I first arrived to this school, I was scared and didn't speak English. They helped me learn English and recognized how important it was for me to learn. They showed that they cared about me, took the time to talk to me, and made me feel welcome.

24. **You said you feel like you belong here. Why do you feel this way?**
Because there aren't children here from just one country. We are accepted and learn about each other's culture and countries.

25. **Tell me about a teacher or adult you can talk to in your school about a problem.**
Ms. X. Whenever we have a problem, she tries to help us find a solution. She asks us how we are feeling, helps us, and gives good advice.

26. **Tell me about a time when people in your school were friendly to you.**
When I first entered this school, when I first got here, I didn't have a heavy jacket. Ms. X found me a warm sweater and showed me around. They treated me very well.

27. Why do you feel that teachers in your school are interested in you?
Because they try to teach us, explain that in order to be something, we must learn and that we can be something. They also tell us that we should be proud of our Hispanic heritage and will have opportunities.

28. What activities are you involved in at your school?
After school, tumbling and mental math.

29. You said you do feel as respected as other students. Tell me about something that happened that made you feel that you are/aren't as respected as other students.
The teachers treat us like those that were born here. They treat us like everyone else even though we are Hispanic. They educate us.

30. You indicated you don't feel different than other students. Tell me about the specific ways in which you don't feel different.
They give us the same support as everyone else.

31. You indicated that you can be yourself in school. Why do you feel this way?
I can be myself because there are others like me, I can be treated like everyone else and treat everyone well too.

32. You said the teachers here respect you. Tell me about what the teachers do to make you feel this way.
The bilingual teachers do. They show a lot of interest in my learning, they respect me like all of the other students, and don't look down on us.

33. You said people here know that you can do good work. Tell me about a time someone recognized your good work.
Almost always. When I do my assignments, my teachers congratulate me. They recognize my interest in learning.

34. You indicated that you don't wish you were in a different school. What makes you happy at this school?
There are many Hispanic children, we treat each other like brothers and sisters…like family.

35. You said you were proud to belong to this school. What makes you proud to belong to this school?
Because I am Hispanic and there are many Hispanic children and teachers in the school. I feel proud because others recognize we are intelligent, we are respected. We are all the same, there is no racism between us.

36. You indicated that students here like the way you are. Tell me about something that happened that made you feel this way.
When we hang out in groups, they like to be with me because I'm friendly and I'm fun.

Respondent B

1. **You indicated that you don't feel like a part of your school. Give me an example of a time when you didn't feel like part of your school.**
   Because I don't participate in many school activities. Sometimes other students are picked to play on teams before me in gym.

2. **You indicated that people notice when you are good at something? Tell me about a time when someone noticed when you were good at something.**
   Yes, when I was in science and my project came out good, my teacher noticed.

3. **You said you feel accepted here. What is something that people do that makes you feel accepted here?**
   Sometimes in gym when I'm with the Americans and talk to them. I like that a little.

4. **You indicated that people don't take your opinions seriously. Please tell me about a time when you felt this way.**
   Last year in Social Studies, I asked the teacher a question and she didn't answer my question but answered someone else's.

5. **You indicated that the teachers here show an interest in you. Tell me about a time that teachers showed an interest in you.**
   When Ms. X asks me things about Spain, she shows an interest.

6. **You said you feel like you belong here. Why do you feel this way?**
   Because I play soccer after school. We play with Americans, we talk.

7. **Tell me about a teacher or adult you can talk to in your school about a problem.**
   Ms. X. Because she always worries/shows concern for us.

8. **Tell me about a time when people in your school weren't friendly to you.**
   At one time my classmates treated me badly because they said that I look like I'm Chinese.

9. **Why do you feel that teachers in your school are interested in you?**
   Because they are Hispanic and want us to have better future.

10. **What activities are you involved in at your school?**
    Soccer and art, afterschool.

11. **You said you do feel as respected as other students. Tell me about something that happened that made you feel that you are/aren't as respected as other students.**
    Because Mr. X calls everyone up first for lunch and us last. Sometimes the food is cold or they run out of things.

12. **You indicated you feel different than other students. Tell me about the specific ways in which you feel different.**
    When I walk in the hallways there is no one to talk to because I don't know them but they know each other.

13. **You indicated that you can't be yourself in school. Why do you feel this way?**
    Because in Spain I could go to school dressed how I wanted and people there speak Castellano or Catelan but here they speak Latino Spanish and there are some things I doesn't understand and things I say they don't understand.

14. **You said the teachers here respect you. Tell me about what the teachers do to make you feel this way.**
    Sometimes Ms. X asks how I feel, if I'm okay, things like that.

15. **You said people here know that you can do good work. Tell me about a time someone recognized your good work.**
    Ms. X, because when I'm working on something she knows I can do a good job because when I slack, she brings it to my attention and tells me I can do better. So then I try harder.

16. **You indicated that you wish you were in a different school. What would a school you'd rather be in look like?**
    A school like my school in Spain where I knew more people and there were more students who spoke Spanish.

17. **You said you weren't proud to belong to this school. What doesn't make you proud to belong to this school?**
    Because I don't participate in a lot afterschool. For example, baseball. There are some things they offer that I don't like.

18. **You indicated that students here don't like the way you are. Tell me about something that happened that made you feel this way.**
    Sometimes I feel liked when I return from vacation and the other students talk with me about what we did over the vacation like play videogames. Sometimes I feel like they don't like the way I am because I am is different because I'm from Spain. Here, they listen to regaetton music and I like electronic music. Sometimes they make fun of me.

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