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This study tested R. W. Lent, S. D. Brown, and G. Hackett’s (1994) model of career choice with 364 Mexican American adolescent women. Path analyses were run to determine the influence of contextual and social cognitive variables on career aspiration, career choice prestige, and traditionality. Partial support for the model was evidenced as nontraditional career self-efficacy, parental support, barriers, acculturation, and feminist attitudes predicted career choice prestige. Acculturation, feminist attitudes, and nontraditional career self-efficacy predicted career choice traditionality. Feminist attitudes and parental support predicted career aspiration. The paths between nontraditional career interests and the 3 outcome variables were not supported. Finally, none of the background contextual variables in this study predicted nontraditional career self-efficacy. Implications of the results and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Mexican American women constitute a significant portion of the American population (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996), are underrepresented at all levels of education (Carter & Wilson, 1993; Lango, 1995; McNeill et al., 2001; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1991), and are overrepresented in low-paying occupations traditionally occupied by women (Arbona, 1989; Arbona & Novy, 1991; Ortiz, 1995). Relatively little empirical research has been conducted to identify the variables that contribute to the educational and occupational underachievement of Mexican American women. Indeed, researchers have noted that the career development of Hispanics has received only slight consideration in the counseling and vocational literature (Arbona, 1990; Fouad, 1995; Hoyt, 1989; McNeill et al., 2001), and they have questioned the generalizability of career development theories to Hispanics (Arbona, 1990, 1995; Fitzgerald & Betz, 1994; Hackett, Lent, & Greenhaus, 1991). The purpose of this study was to investigate the applicability of a current model of career choice to the experiences of Mexican American adolescent women and to extend the current model to incorporate variables that are hypothesized to be salient to this population.

It is well documented that Hispanics are the least educated when compared with other major racial/ethnic groups in the United States and that, among Hispanics, Mexican Americans have the lowest high school and college completion rates (47% and 6.5%, respectively; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996). Mexican American women are less likely to graduate from college than their male counterparts (Ortiz, 1995; Tinajero, Gonzalez, & Dick, 1991), and their representation in higher education decreases significantly at each successive level (Carter & Wilson, 1993). Moreover, those Mexican American women who pursue higher education confront many stressors and may experience psychological distress as they seek to reconcile their career aspirations with their familial and cultural values (Niemann, 2001).

Education is related to occupational status, and thus, the restricted employment status among Mexican American women is not surprising given their low educational attainment. Arbona (1989) reported that, occupationally, Hispanic women were concentrated in low and mid-level technical, service-oriented, and clerical type jobs. According to Ortiz (1995), Mexican American women were less likely to be professionals or private business owners and earned less money when compared with women from other racial/ethnic groups and Mexican American men. Moreover, Mexican American women who were in professional occupations were more likely to choose traditional and low-status occupations (Ortiz, 1995).

A review of the literature on Mexican American women revealed inconsistencies between their educational and vocational achievements and aspirations. For example, Arbona and Novy (1991) reported that the majority of Mexican American college women in their study aspired to investigative and enterprising type jobs. It is interesting that the percentage of women who expected to enter these fields was smaller than the percentage of women who aspired to these careers, whereas the opposite was true of those who aspired and expected to enter fields that have typically represented traditional career options for women. Other studies...
revealed that Mexican American girls aspired to careers that required a college degree and to obtaining a postsecondary education (Hernandez, Vargas-Lew, & Martinez, 1994; Valenzuela, 1993). Reyes, Kobus, and Gillock’s (1999) study indicated that 87% of the girls in a sample of predominantly Mexican American 10th-grade students aspired to nontraditional or male-dominated careers. Clearly, a difference exists between Mexican American women’s educational and vocational aspirations and their actual achievements, suggesting that these women may not be realizing their educational and career potential.

Prior studies on the career development of Hispanics have focused primarily on their educational and career aspirations (Arbona & Novy, 1991; Hernandez et al., 1994; Reyes et al., 1999) and the factors postulated to be related to their educational success (Cardoza, 1991; Fisher & Padmawidjaja, 1999; Gandara, 1982; Gillock & Reyes, 1999; Hess & D’Amato, 1996; Keith & Lichtman, 1994; Lango, 1995; Ramos & Sanchez, 1995; Rodriguez, 1996; Valenzuela, 1993; Vasquez, 1982; Wycoff, 1996). Other studies have examined the barriers that Hispanic students anticipate in their educational and career endeavors (Luzzo, 1992; McWhirter, 1997). The research to date provides insight into the career development of Hispanic individuals but contains limitations that restrict its use.

First, several studies are descriptive in nature, and while helpful in understanding patterns of behavior with this group, they do not further knowledge regarding the salient predictors of career behaviors. Second, several studies included racially/ethnically diverse samples (in which the number of Hispanics were disproportionately small) or failed to report the ethnic background of Hispanic participants. Because of the educational and occupational differences between racial/ethnic groups and among Hispanics, investigating ethnically diverse subgroups individually seems warranted (Arbona, 1995). Another limitation of the existing studies is that many included both women and men. Given differences in Mexican American women’s and men’s educational attainment, occupational status, and socialization within the culture, women and men should be investigated separately to understand the effects of cultural and gender role socialization on career decisions.

Finally, few studies have assessed the influence of cultural variables, such as acculturation, on Hispanics’ career-related behaviors (Arbona, 1995).

One notable exception to the research described above was a study investigating the educational plans and career expectations of Mexican American high school girls (McWhirter, Hackett, & Bandalos, 1998). McWhirter and her colleagues studied the utility of Farmer’s (1985) model of career commitment and aspirations in explaining the educational planning and career expectations of Mexican American adolescent women. They extended Farmer’s model by including acculturation and perceived barriers in their theoretical models. The results of this study indicated that their models described the educational and career plans of a sample of Mexican American girls; however, only a modest amount of variance was accounted for by the models. Thus, McWhirter et al. encouraged researchers to include additional variables when developing future models of the career development of Mexican American adolescent women. Moreover, McWhirter et al. suggested that Lent, Brown, and Hackett’s (1994) social cognitive career theory had promise for advancing knowledge regarding the career development of Mexican American women.

Lent and his colleagues (Lent et al., 1994) extended Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory and Hackett and Betz’s (1981) career self-efficacy theory to develop a social cognitive career theory (SCCT) that hypothesized the influence of personal, contextual, and social cognitive factors on interest formation, career goals, and performance. Of interest in this study are the propositions of SCCT that background contextual variables exert an influence on career self-efficacy, which in turn directly influences career interests. In addition, Lent et al. posited that career interests directly influence career goals and that career self-efficacy both directly and indirectly (through career interests) influences career goals. Finally, proximal contextual variables were hypothesized to exert direct effects on career goals (see Figure 1). Lent and his colleagues suggested that SCCT may be used to guide inquiry on the career development of women and racial/ethnic minorities, and they recently advocated for more research to test the hypotheses related to the contextual variables in their model (Lent, Brown, &

Figure 1. Portions of Lent, Brown, and Hackett’s (1994) model of career choice tested in the present study.
Hackett, 2000). Recent studies provided partial support for the model with racially diverse middle school students (Fouad & Smith, 1996) as well as Asian American (Tang, Fouad, & Smith, 1999) and Black college students (Gainor & Lent, 1998); however, no studies to date have investigated the validity of SCCT with Mexican American adolescent women.

To test this theory, when operationalizing the constructs advanced by Lent et al. (1994), we selected variables that were hypothesized to be salient for racial/ethnic minorities or women. Specifically, in our model, we operationalized background contextual variables to include acculturation level, feminist attitudes, and mothers’ modeling through educational attainment and occupation. Multicultural researchers have identified the importance of examining within-group differences of racial and ethnic subgroups, and Casas and Pytluk (1995) discussed acculturation as the only variable that they added to Farmer’s (1985) model that accounted for significant variance in the educational aspirations of Mexican American girls. Other researchers also documented that acculturation was positively related to educational aspirations (Ramos & Sanchez, 1995), in addition to interest in nontraditional careers (Reyes et al., 1999), college attendance (Hurtado & Gauvain, 1997), and achievement styles (Gomez & Fassinger, 1994) among Hispanic students.

Other variables, specifically feminist and gender role attitudes, have been shown to relate to the career choices of young women (Betz, 1994; O’Brien & Fassinger, 1993), such that women with traditional gender role attitudes exhibited lower levels of career orientation and aspiration than women holding liberal gender role attitudes. Among Mexican American girls, nontraditional gender role attitudes were positively related to higher levels of educational and career aspirations (McWhirter et al., 1998) and academic achievement (Valenzuela, 1993; Vasquez-Nuttal, Romero-Garcia, & De Leon, 1987). For Mexican American women, cultural expectations about gender roles may result in traditional gender role attitudes or nonfeminist attitudes (Ginorio, Gutierrez, Cauce, & Acosta, 1995; Reid, Haritos, Kelly, & Holland, 1995), which in turn may contribute to lower levels of career achievement.

In addition, parental factors, such as occupation and educational level, were found to relate to academic achievement and parental involvement in Mexican American students’ educational and career planning (Keith & Lichtman, 1994). With regard to the influence of mothers, having a mother who attended college was predictive of college attendance and persistence among Latinas (Cardoza, 1991). However, other studies that assessed the role of parents’ educational or occupational attainment in children’s educational and career aspirations reported no relation (Fisher & Padmawidjaja, 1999; Hernandez et al., 1994; Hess & D’Amato, 1996; Lango, 1995; Reyes et al., 1999), possibly because of the highly skewed number of parents with lower educational and occupational levels in these samples. The influence of mothers’ educational level and occupational traditionality were included in the present study to determine their influence on daughters’ career development.

According to SCCT, these background variables were hypothesized to influence nontraditional career self-efficacy or confidence in pursuing nontraditional career-related tasks for women (Lent et al., 1994). In turn, nontraditional career self-efficacy should exert a direct effect on both nontraditional career interests and career goals (i.e., career choice prestige, career choice traditionality, and career aspirations). Indeed, these relations have been supported in prior studies, which reported that career self-efficacy was related to career interests and careers considered among Hispanic students (Bores-Rangel, Church, Szendre, & Reeves, 1990; Church, Teresa, Rosebrook, & Szendre, 1992; Lauver & Jones, 1991). In addition, research has shown that career interests were related to careers considered among Hispanic students (Bores-Rangel et al., 1990; Church et al., 1992). These findings were consistent with SCCT, which posited a direct link between career interests and career goals.

We also hypothesized, in accordance with SCCT (Lent et al., 1994), that the proximal contextual variables of perceived support from parents and perceptions of barriers will influence career choice prestige, traditionality, and career aspirations. Among Latinas, encouragement and emotional support from families have been found to be predictive of educational achievement (Hernandez et al., 1994; Keith & Lichtman, 1994; Ramos & Sanchez, 1995) and college attendance (Vasquez, 1982; Wycoff, 1996). With regard to perceived barriers, Hispanic students reported experiencing more barriers to education than students from other racial/ethnic groups (Luzzo, 1992; McWhirter, 1997), and Mexican American women who experienced negative family attitudes related to their college attendance were more likely to attend college close to home (Wycoff, 1996). McWhirter et al. (1998) found no relation among perceived barriers and Mexican American girls’ educational or career plans. However, they suggested that the influence of perceived barriers on academic and vocational goals be further tested with additional samples. It is possible that Mexican American adolescent women’s increased levels of perceived barriers to their educational or career goals may alter their decision making, such that they plan to pursue careers that present the least resistance.

In summary, this study was designed to test several tenets of SCCT (Lent et al., 1994) with a sample of Mexican American adolescent women. Specifically, we explored the influence of background contextual variables, namely, acculturation level, feminist attitudes, mother’s educational level, and mother’s occupational traditionality on nontraditional career self-efficacy. Additionally, we investigated the contributions of nontraditional career self-efficacy, nontraditional career interests, parental support, and perceived barriers to career choice prestige, career choice traditionality, and career aspirations. These dependent variables were selected because of their importance to women’s career development (Fitzgerald, Fassinger, & Betz, 1995; O’Brien & Fassinger, 1993). A secondary purpose of this study was to obtain descriptive information regarding participants’ demographic characteristics, career choices, plans following high school graduation, choice of colleges/universities, and reasons for choosing these schools, given the lack of data regarding this population and their career plans.

Method

Participants

Participants were Mexican American adolescent women enrolled in their senior year of high school. At the same time, Mexican American adoles-
cent men were surveyed for a later study. Participants were drawn from two large public high schools in a mid-sized town (a population of approximately 30,000) in south Texas. The community is close to the United States–Mexican border and is heavily influenced by the Mexican culture. A high percentage of U.S. citizens who are of Mexican descent live in this area, and this is reflected in the student population at the high schools, in which almost 95% of the students are Mexican American.

A total of 931 surveys were distributed to students; 831 were returned (450 female, 381 male), resulting in an 89% overall return rate. Women who were in their senior year of high school and who identified as Mexican American were included in this study (n = 377). Of these women, 13 were dropped from the study because of incomplete data, resulting in a total sample of 364. Participants ranged in age from 16 to 21 years with a mean age of 17.47 (SD = 1.71; range = 2 to 13).

Eighteen percent of the students (n = 65) reported that they were first-generation Mexican American, with 37.9% (n = 138) second generation, 11.3% (n = 41) third generation, 19.2% (n = 70) fourth generation, and 10.7% (n = 39) fifth generation. With regard to acculturation level, 17% (n = 61) were categorized as “very Mexican oriented,” 38% (n = 138) “Mexican oriented to approximately balanced bicultural,” 34% (n = 123) “slightly Anglo oriented bicultural,” 10% (n = 37) “strongly Anglo oriented,” and 1% (n = 5) “very assimilated, Anglicized.”

The educational level of the female and male head of household, respectively, was as follows: completed elementary school, 24% and 21%; attended high school, 25% and 23%; high school graduate, 19% and 21%; attended college/university, 14% and 12%; college/ university graduate, 10% and 12%; and graduate or professional degree, 2% and 1%.

Eighty-seven percent (n = 317) of the students planned to attend a 2- or 4-year college/university following their high school graduation, with the remaining students indicating plans to attend technical school (5.5%), work (3.2%), enlist in the military (2.1%), and marry or stay at home (0.5%). Among students with intentions to continue their education at a 2- or 4-year college/university, almost half (43.2%, n = 137) reported that they would work either full time (1.9%, n = 6) or part time (41.3%, n = 131). Over a third (39.1%, n = 124) planned to attend the local 4-year university, and 19.2% (n = 61) planned to attend the local 2-year community college. The most often cited reasons for choosing to attend the college or university of their choice were because it was close to home and family (36.5%, n = 116), had a good program of study (10.7%, n = 34), was a good college/university (6.9%, n = 22), and was affordable or inexpensive to attend (4.1%, n = 13). Sixty-eight percent (n = 214) indicated that they would rely on financial aid (e.g., loans, grants, and work study) to finance their education, whereas 31.5% (n = 100) hoped to earn scholarships, 26.5% (n = 84) planned to receive financial support from their parents or other family members, and 25% (n = 78) planned to work.

Procedure

Data collection occurred during the fall semester of the school year. Student participation was solicited through English IV classes because every senior was required to enroll in this class. Data collection occurred across 4 days, and Lisa Y. Flores met with every English IV section (n = 46) at both schools. English teachers escorted their students to a central room at the beginning of the class period and stayed to monitor students’ behaviors.

_packets containing an informed-assent form, an entry form for cash prizes, and the research instruments were distributed to students as they entered the room. The questionnaires were counterbalanced to avoid order effects from fatigue. Participants were told that the investigator was interested in studying the career development of Mexican American adolescents. Students were told that it would take them most, if not all, of the class period to complete the questionnaires and were encouraged to work quickly. The investigator told the students that two of the surveys looked very similar (each listed the same occupations and educational programs), but these surveys asked students to rate either interests or skills. Students were informed of a possible follow-up study and were invited to participate in future studies. As an incentive to participate in the study, students who completed and returned the surveys were eligible for a random drawing for cash prizes (10 prizes for $20 and 1 prize for $50).

Instruments

Acculturation level. The Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (ARSMA–II; Cuellar, Arnold, & Maldonado, 1995) was a 30-item scale that assessed association with and identity with the Mexican and Anglo cultures on two independent subscales. Participants responded to the items using a 5-point scale ranging from not at all (1) to extremely often or almost always (5). An acculturation score was calculated by subtracting the mean score for items on the Anglo Orientation Subscale (AOS) from the mean score for items on the Mexican Orientation Subscale (MOS). On the basis of their acculturation score, participants were categorized into one of the five acculturation levels described by Cuellar et al. (1995). Levels range from very Mexican oriented (1) to very assimilated (5). Middle categories represented bicultural individuals. Thus, high scores were indicative of a strong orientation toward the Anglo culture.

The ARSMA–II, as well as prior to its revision, the ARSMA, is one of the most widely used measures to assess acculturation among Mexican Americans, and evidence suggests that it is a reliable and valid instrument. Adequate internal consistency coefficients have been reported for the two subscales with multiple samples (range from .79 to .83 for the AOS and .87 to .91 for the MOS; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar & Roberts, 1997; Lessenger, 1997). Reliability coefficients of .77 for the AOS and .91 for the MOS were obtained in the present study.

Cuellar and his colleagues also reported a test–retest reliability estimate for the AOS and MOS over a 2-week interval of .94 and .96, respectively. Concurrent validity was assessed by comparing scores on the ARSMA–II with scores on the ARSMA and yielded a correlation coefficient of .89. Concurrent validity for the ARSMA–II was further supported when its two subscales correlated in the expected direction with the dominant group and ethnic group subscales of the Stephenson Multigroup Acculturation Scale (Stephenson, 2000). Lessenger (1997) provided additional support for concurrent validity when she reported that acculturation scores on the ARSMA–II correlated positively with other acculturation measures. Construct validity was supported when acculturation scores on the ARSMA–II were compared across generations, and differences were found between generation levels in the expected directions (Cuellar et al., 1995; Lessenger, 1997).

Feminist attitudes. The Attitudes Toward Feminism and the Women’s Movement Scale (FWM; Fassinger, 1994) was used to measure feminist attitudes. The FWM is a 10-item scale that assessed attitudes about the feminist movement. Participants rated their agreement with the items along a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Scale scores were obtained by averaging the items; high scores reflect profeminist attitudes.

Fassinger (1994) reported that the FWM had high internal consistency (α = .89), and O’Brien and Fassinger (1993) reported an internal reliability coefficient of .82 for the FWM with a sample of adolescent women. Cronbach’s alpha for this sample was .68. Enns and Hackett (1990) reported a 2-week test–retest reliability coefficient of .81 with female college students. Convergent validity for the FWM was supported when the FWM was positively correlated with measures assessing attitudes toward women, gender roles, and feminism (Enns & Hackett, 1990; Fassinger, 1994). In addition, the FWM correlated positively with items assessing feminist identification and favorability toward the women’s movement (Fassinger, 1994). Finally, Enns and Hackett (1990) reported that the FWM correlated in the expected directions with both interest and involvement in feminist activities. Divergent validity estimates revealed that the FWM was
not measuring gender role characteristics, dogmatism, and social desirability (Fassinger, 1994).

Mother’s level of education. A single item asked participants to indicate the highest level of education completed by their mother. Options ranged from elementary school to graduate/professional school. High scores represented high levels of education.

Mother’s occupational traditionality. An item asked participants to indicate their mother’s occupation, which was later categorized according to traditionality. Traditionality of mother’s career was computed on the basis of the percentage of women employed in a given career and was obtained through the Statistical Abstract of the United States (1998), a publication of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The U.S. Census Bureau relies on information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Employment and Earnings to report these data. Scores ranged from 6 to 99, with high scores representing careers with high concentrations of women. This indicator of career orientation has been used in previous studies of women’s career development (O’Brien, 1996; O’Brien & Fassinger, 1993; O’Brien, Friedman, Tipton, & Linn, 2000).

Nontraditional career self-efficacy. Self-efficacy expectations with regard to nontraditional occupations were assessed using a short form of the occupational self-efficacy questionnaire used by Church et al. (1992). The self-efficacy questionnaire used in this study was comparable with career self-efficacy measures used by Betz and Hackett (1981) and Lauver and Jones (1991). The original occupational questionnaire contained a total of 31 occupations for which participants rated their confidence in their ability to successfully learn to perform the job. The nontraditional career self-efficacy scale used for this study was modified to include seven male-dominated occupations (e.g., electronic equipment repairer, police officer, mechanical engineer). Occupations were categorized according to the percentage of women in the occupation according to U.S. census data (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). A brief description of the occupation was provided for each job title.

Participants were asked to rate their confidence in their ability and skills to successfully learn to do the jobs. Participants responded to the items using a scale ranging from very unsure (1) to very sure (4). Although studies typically use 5-point scales to measure strength of self-efficacy, we followed the reasoning of Bires-Rangel et al. (1990), whose sample predominantly consisted of Hispanic students, that students may dependably and meaningfully discriminate these four bipolar levels. Occupational self-efficacy scores for male-dominated occupations were obtained by averaging the responses to the items. High scores reflected strong levels of nontraditional career self-efficacy.

Church et al. (1992) reported an internal consistency reliability of .95 for the 31-item self-efficacy scale with a sample of predominantly Hispanic racial/ethnic minority high school students. Convergent validity was supported with a sample of Mexican American boys when nontraditional career self-efficacy was positively related to nontraditional career interests, consideration of nontraditional careers, and selection of careers dominated by men (Flores, 2000). Divergent validity estimates indicated that nontraditional career self-efficacy was not related to acculturation or feminist attitudes (Flores, 2000). Cronbach’s alpha was .74 for the present study.

Nontraditional career interests. Students’ nontraditional occupational interests were assessed using the same male-dominated occupations on the nontraditional career self-efficacy scale. Participants were asked to indicate their interest in the jobs listed on a scale ranging from dislike (1) to like (3); this scale is similar to ones used in other career interest inventories. Scoring the nontraditional career interests scale consisted of summing the items and dividing by the number of items to obtain a mean score. High scores reflected strong levels of interest for the nontraditional or male-dominated occupations.

Church et al. (1992) reported an internal consistency reliability of .86 for the 31-item interest scale with a sample comprising mainly Hispanic students. Construct validity was supported when the original scale correlated positively with another interest measure (Church et al., 1992). In addition, among a group of Mexican American boys, it correlated positively with nontraditional career self-efficacy, consideration of nontraditional careers, and choice of nontraditional careers, providing support for convergent validity (Flores, 2000). It was not related to feminist attitudes (Flores, 2000). Cronbach’s alpha was .74 for the present study.

Parental support. The Career Support Scale (CSS; Binen, Franta, & Thye, 1995) was used to assess the amount of perceived support and encouragement that participants received in their career pursuits from their parents. The CSS was adapted by assessing support from both parents concurrently rather than individually and by reducing the number of items (10 items that were cross-listed on both Mother and Father subscales were retained). Sample items included “My parents agree with my career goals” and “My parents and I often discuss my career plans.” Participants responded to the 10 items using a 5-point scale ranging from almost never (1) to almost always (5). Scale scores were obtained by averaging the items. High scores reflected strong levels of perceived support from parents.

Reliability estimates were .87 for the 22-item Mother–CSS and .90 for the 18-item Father–CSS (Binen et al., 1995). Internal consistency for the modified CCS used in the present study was .76. Discriminant validity estimates indicated that the Mother and Father subscales were not significantly correlated with social desirability (Binen et al., 1995).

Perceived occupational barriers. The Perceptions of Barriers scale (POB; McWhirter, 1997) was a 24-item scale that assessed ethnic and gender-related occupational and educational barriers. Because the present study assessed career choice goals, only those items of the POB that measured participants’ job-related barriers were included. Eight items, which assessed anticipated future gender and ethnic discrimination in the workplace, were used for this study. Participants responded to the items using a scale ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). Scale scores were derived by averaging the responses. High scores reflected low anticipation of gender or ethnic discrimination in a career.

McWhirter (1997) reported an alpha coefficient of .89 for the job discrimination items, and a reliability estimate of .91 was obtained with the present sample. Construct validity was supported when McWhirter (1997) found significant differences in anticipated job discrimination between Mexican American and European American students, boys and girls, and Mexican American girls and European American girls in the expected directions.

Career choice prestige and traditionality. Participants were asked to list their top three career choices. The traditionality rating of the top career choice was obtained with the same procedure for mothers’ occupational traditionality.

Career choice prestige was determined on the basis of Stevens and Featherman’s (1981) socioeconomic index of occupational status. Scores ranged from 13 to 89, with high scores indicating prestigious careers. This indicator of career choice has been used in previous studies of women’s and racial/ethnic minorities’ career development (O’Brien, 1996; O’Brien & Fassinger, 1993; O’Brien et al., 2000; Tang et al., 1999).

Career aspiration. The Career Aspiration Scale (CAS; O’Brien, 1992) contained 10 items that assessed participants’ goals and plans within their career field. Example items included “I plan on developing as an expert in my career field” and “I do not plan on devoting energy in getting promoted in the organization or business I am working in.” Participants indicated whether the items applied to them by using a 5-point scale ranging from not at all true of me (0) to very true of me (4). Scale scores were derived by calculating the mean score for the items. High scores indicated strong aspirations in one’s career pursuits.

Internal consistency of the CAS has been reported as .76 (O’Brien & Fassinger, 1993) with female high school students and .77 (Dukstein & O’Brien, 1994) and .80 (Nauta, Epperson, & Kahn, 1998) with female
undergraduate students. In the present study, a reliability coefficient of .61 was obtained. Convergent validity of the CAS was supported by relations with multiple role self-efficacy, career decision-making self-efficacy, and career salience (O’Brien, Gray, Tourajdi, & Eigenbrode, 1996). Discriminant validity was demonstrated through the absence of relations between the CAS and social desirability, as well as a negative relation between the CAS and a measure of the relative importance of career versus family (O’Brien et al., 1996).

**Demographic information.** A demographic information survey was included to obtain age, gender, race/ethnicity, grade level, number of people living at home, family income, plans following high school graduation, parents’ level of education, and parents’ occupations. If participants were planning to continue their education following high school, information regarding their major of study, choice of college/university to attend, sources of financial support for education, and reasons for choosing the college/university was obtained.

**Results**

The means, standard deviations, ranges, and reliability coefficients for each of the measured variables, along with a correlation matrix, are presented for the full sample in Table 1.

**Model Predicting Mexican American Adolescent Women’s Career Choice Prestige**

The original sample of 364 Mexican American young women was randomly split into two samples. A sample consisting of 262 women was used to test the original models, and a validation sample consisting of 102 women was set aside for confirmation purposes in the case that any of the models were revised. A path analysis was conducted using the EQS (Version 5.7) statistical package (Bentler & Wu, 1995).

The hypothesized model predicting career choice prestige tested the paths from acculturation level, feminist attitudes, mothers’ educational level, and mothers’ occupational traditionality to nontraditional career self-efficacy; nontraditional career self-efficacy to nontraditional career interests; and nontraditional career self-efficacy, nontraditional career interests, parental support, and perceived future barriers to career choice prestige. The exogenous variables, which included the background and proximal contextual variables, in the model were allowed to covary.

Adequacy of model fit was determined by using a variety of goodness-of-fit measures, including the chi-square test, the comparative fit index (CFI), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the standardized root-mean-squared residual (SRMR). The CFI and RMSEA goodness-of-fit measures are preferred indexes by which to assess model fit (Loehlin, 1998).

If a model provides adequate fit, a small chi-square value and a nonsignificant p value are expected. Values for the CFI and GFI indexes range from 0 to 1; models with values above .90 have traditionally been considered models with good fit (Loehlin, 1998); however, values of .95 and higher are suggested today as the baseline to assess model fit. Models with RMSEA and SRMR values around or below .05 (“close fit”) are considered acceptable models (Loehlin, 1998). To further test the adequacy of the model, Hu and Bentler (1999) recommended joint criteria to minimize the dual threats of rejecting the right model and retaining the wrong model. Specifically, a model can be retained if the CFI is .96 and the SRMR is ≤.10, or the RMSEA is ≤.06 and SRMR is ≤.10. See Table 2 for a summary of the goodness-of-fit indices for the career prestige model.

The chi-square statistic for the model predicting career choice prestige was significant, suggesting a poor fit. However, given that the chi-square statistic is overly stringent in its evaluation of exact fit (Quintana & Maxwell, 1999), other indexes were studied. Examination of the CFI, RMSEA, and SRMR indexes implied that the data fit the model poorly, indicating that the fit between the data and model could be improved. Thus, the model was rejected.

We attempted to identify modifications to the model to improve the fit of the model and followed the suggestions of MacCallum, Roznowski, and Necowitz (1992) that changes be made only when they are theoretically meaningful. The Lagrange multiplier test suggested that the model could be improved by adding paths from acculturation level and feminist attitudes to career choice prestige. The influence of acculturation level on career choice prestige was consistent with prior research, which indicated that among racial/ethnic minority women, a positive relationship exists between acculturation level and career choice prestige. This finding is consistent with prior research, which suggested that acculturation level is positively related to career choice prestige. The present study extends these findings by examining the relationship between acculturation level and career choice prestige among Mexican American adolescent women.
The next step involved running the revised model using the combined sample of 364 Mexican American adolescent women given that the model was replicated for both groups. See Table 2 for a summary of the fit indexes. The squared multiple correlation coefficient ($R^2$) was obtained by squaring the residual coefficient of the criterion variable and subtracting that value by 1. The $R^2$ for the model of career prestige indicated that 8% of the variance in career choice prestige was accounted for by acculturation level, feminist attitudes, nontraditional career self-efficacy, nontraditional career interests, parental support, and perception of future barriers. See Figure 2 for the revised model predicting Mexican American girls’ career choice prestige.

**Model Predicting Mexican American Adolescent Women’s Career Choice Traditionality**

The hypothesized model predicting career choice traditionality tested the same paths identified in the career prestige model,

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<th>Model Predicting Mexican American Adolescent Women’s Career Choice Traditionality</th>
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Table 3

**Summary of Multigroup Analyses Between Split Sample of Mexican American Adolescent Women**

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<th>Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career choice model with constraints</td>
<td>48.59</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison of career choice models</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Comparison of career aspiration models</td>
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Note. Significance test refers to chi-square difference tests between constrained and nonconstrained models.

*p < .05.
except that career choice traditionality was used as the criterion variable. The contextual variables in the model were allowed to covary.

The chi-square statistic for the model predicting career choice traditionality was significant, suggesting that the model demonstrated poor fit. Examination of the CFI, RMSEA, and SRMR implied a poor fit with the data; however, the GFI indicated an adequate fit. On the basis of Hu and Bentler's (1999) criteria, the model of career choice traditionality was rejected.

Again, attempts were made to identify modifications to the model based on suggestions that were theoretically sound. Adding paths from acculturation level and feminist attitudes to career choice traditionality were suggested by the Lagrange multiplier, and these additions were justified on the basis of previous research (Fassinger, 1990; Leong & Chou, 1994; McWhirter et al., 1998; O'Brien & Fassinger, 1993; Tang et al., 1999) that found relations among acculturation levels, feminist attitudes, and career choice.

The model was rerun with the modifications and the fit indices improved (see Table 2 for a summary of the fit indexes for the initial and revised model predicting career choice traditionality). The values on the CFI and GFI exceeded .95, and the RMSEA and SRMR values were less than .05. Further, the revised model met Hu and Bentler's (1999) recommended criteria for model acceptance. The chi-square difference test indicated that the revised model was a significant improvement over the initial model, \( \chi^2 \) difference\( (2, N = 262) = 25.04, p < .01 \).

Consistent with the previous method of analysis, the revised model predicting career choice traditionality was tested on the validation sample. On the basis of the fit indexes (see Table 2), the revised model was supported with this sample. We performed a multiple group analysis to determine if the path coefficients in the modified model predicting career choice traditionality could be replicated in the second sample. The chi-square difference between the constrained and nonconstrained models resulted in a nonsignificant chi-square value, \( \chi^2 (11, N = 364) = 6.25, p > .05 \), indicating that the values for the paths were not significantly different across the two groups. Thus, the revised model and the corresponding path values were validated with the validation sample. Table 3 presents the results of the multiple group comparisons for the model predicting career choice traditionality.

Because the model was replicated with an independent sample, the calibration and validation samples were combined, and the revised model was run using the full sample. See Table 2 for a summary of the fit indexes. The squared multiple correlation coefficient in the revised model of career traditionality indicated that 11% of the variance in career choice traditionality was accounted for by acculturation level, feminist attitudes, nontraditional career self-efficacy, nontraditional career interests, parental support, and perception of future barriers. See Figure 3 for the revised model predicting Mexican American girls' career choice traditionality.

Figure 2. Respecified model predicting Mexican American adolescent women's career choice prestige.

* \( p < .05 \).

**Model Predicting Mexican American Adolescent Women's Career Aspiration**

The hypothesized model predicting career aspiration tested the same paths identified in the previous models, except that career aspiration was used as the criterion variable. The exogenous variables in the model were allowed to covary.

The chi-square statistic for the model predicting career aspirations was significant, suggesting that the model demonstrated poor fit. Examination of the CFI, RMSEA, and SRMR fit indexes indicated a poor fit with the data; however, the GFI indicated adequate fit. By using Hu and Bentler’s (1999) criteria, the original model was rejected.

Respecifications to the model were suggested on the basis of the Lagrange multiplier modification index. The addition of a path from feminist attitudes to career aspiration was suggested and was supported by prior research (Fassinger, 1990; O'Brien & Fassinger, 1993).
The revised model was reestimated and the fit indices improved (see Table 2 for a summary of the fit indexes for the initial and revised model predicting career aspiration). Examination of the chi-square differences between the two models indicated that the revised model was an improvement over the initial model, $\chi^2(1, N = 262) = 23.29, p < .01$.

The revised model was estimated on the validation sample, and the fit indexes (see Table 2) suggested that this model adequately fit the data. We performed a multiple group analysis to determine if the path values in the modified model predicting career aspiration would generalize to other samples in the population. The chi-square difference between the constrained and nonconstrained models resulted in a nonsignificant chi-square value, $\chi^2(11, N = 364) = 8.60, p > .05$, indicating that the values of the paths were not significantly different across the two groups. Thus, the revised model and the path coefficients were supported with the validation sample. Table 3 presents the results of the multiple group comparisons for the model predicting career aspiration.

Again, both of the samples were combined, and a path analysis of the revised model was performed using the full sample. See Table 2 for a summary of the fit indexes. The squared multiple correlation coefficient for the model of career aspiration indicated that 13% of the variance in career aspiration was accounted for by feminist attitudes, nontraditional career self-efficacy, nontraditional career interests, parental support, and perception of future barriers. See Figure 4 for the revised model predicting Mexican American girls’ career aspiration.

There were no significant paths between the background contextual variables of acculturation level, feminist attitudes, mothers’ educational level, mothers’ occupational traditionality, and nontraditional career self-efficacy. Nontraditional career self-efficacy predicted nontraditional career interests in all models; however, nontraditional career interests did not predict any of the three criterion variables of career choice prestige, career choice traditionality, or career aspiration. Acculturation, nontraditional career self-efficacy, parental support, and perceived barriers had significant effects on career choice prestige. Acculturation level and feminist attitudes had a significant positive effect, and nontraditional career self-efficacy had a significant negative effect, on choice of traditional careers, but parental support and perceived barriers had no significant effects. Finally, higher parental support and higher levels of feminist attitudes were predictive of higher levels of career aspiration. Nontraditional career self-efficacy and perceived barriers did not significantly predict Mexican American women’s career aspirations.

**Descriptive Statistics**

A wide range of careers, representing both traditional and nontraditional occupational fields, were identified as potential careers for this sample. The top two occupations endorsed by these women were traditionally female occupations (teacher = 16% and nurse = 11.3%). Eleven percent intended to be doctors, and over 6% chose physical therapy as their future occupation. A total of 76 occupations were reported. (Contact Lisa Y. Flores for a complete list.)

**Discussion**

This study was the first to test the validity of SCCT (Lent et al., 1994) in explaining the career-related goals of Mexican American adolescent women. Consistent with SCCT, nontraditional career self-efficacy predicted nontraditional career interests. In addition, nontraditional career self-efficacy had a positive effect on career choice prestige and a negative effect on career choice traditionality. As hypothesized by Lent et al., the proximal contextual variables of parental support and perceived future occupational barriers directly predicted career choice prestige, and parental support was predictive of career aspiration.
However, several SCCT (Lent et al., 1994) propositions were not supported by data from this sample of Mexican American women. Specifically, relations did not emerge between the background contextual variables (i.e., acculturation level, feminist attitudes, mothers’ educational level, and mothers’ occupational traditionality) and nontraditional career self-efficacy. Interestingly, nontraditional career interests did not exert an influence on any of the outcome variables tested in this study. Moreover, the proximal contextual variables did not influence career traditionality, and nontraditional career self-efficacy did not predict career aspiration.

Finally, although not posited by SCCT, adding paths from acculturation level and feminist attitudes to career choice prestige and career choice traditionality were suggested based on the data and increased the amount of variance explained in each model. Also, the addition of the path from feminist attitudes to career aspiration improved the model explaining Mexican adolescent women’s career aspirations.

Explication of potential reasons why several SCCT (Lent et al., 1994) propositions were not replicated in this sample of Mexican American women seems warranted. First, support for the SCCT hypotheses related to the formation of self-efficacy beliefs was not demonstrated by our models. Specifically, SCCT hypothesized that background contextual variables would have an indirect effect on nontraditional career self-efficacy through learning activities. Although learning opportunities were not measured in this study, contextual factors would be expected to exert an influence on career self-efficacy, assuming their relationship to learning opportunities. However, acculturation level, feminist attitudes, mothers’ educational attainment, and mothers’ career traditionality did not predict nontraditional career self-efficacy. These findings suggested that other contextual variables, not assessed in the present study, may account for the variance in Mexican American women’s nontraditional career self-efficacy. Researchers might investigate the contributions of related academic and social experiences, persuasion, and familial expectations in future models to account for the role of learning experiences in the development of Mexican American women’s nontraditional career self-efficacy.

With regard to acculturation and nontraditional self-efficacy, previous research demonstrated a relation between these variables with another racial/ethnic minority group (Tang et al., 1999). The nonsignificant relation with this sample may be due to defining acculturation level along a single continuum and the distribution of the sample, which was overwhelmingly bicultural (n = 237). Future studies should conduct multisample analyses on the basis of acculturation level to determine if differences are present among nonacculturated, bicultural, and highly acculturated individuals.

Feminist attitudes also were not related to nontraditional career self-efficacy, a finding that has been consistently reported in samples of predominantly White women (O’Brien, 1996; O’Brien & Fassinger, 1993). It is possible that the lack of variability in scores on the measure assessing feminist values made detecting a relation with career self-efficacy difficult. Alternatively, feminist beliefs may not be salient for this sample of Mexican American women, perhaps demonstrated by mean scores in the mid-range on this instrument. At times, the feminist movement has been criticized for focusing on the needs and values of White women (Espin, 1994). It is possible that moderate beliefs about feminism combined with little variability in scores on this measure may have contributed to the lack of predictive validity of this variable with regard to confidence in pursuing nontraditional occupations.

In addition to acculturation and feminist attitudes not predicting nontraditional career self-efficacy, mothers’ educational level and mothers’ career traditionality did not influence confidence in pursuing nontraditional occupations. There may be other factors in the mother–daughter relationship that influence the strength of the relation to nontraditional career self-efficacy. Indeed, O’Brien et al. (1996) found that high school girls’ relationships with their mothers often included conflictual feelings. These feelings could affect mothers’ influence on their daughters’ career decision making. Future research studies should assess the quality of mother–
daughter relationships to ascertain the predictive ability of mothers’ influence on daughters’ career self-efficacy. Alternatively, these girls may have looked to their fathers for career role modeling, a finding reported by O’Brien et al. (2000). Seeking other family members for career role modeling may be common among Mexican American girls, especially because Mexican American women tend to be employed in traditional career fields. Indeed, over a third of this sample reported that their mothers were homemakers. Thus, we suggest that future studies also assess the influence of additional role models beyond mothers, including fathers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, siblings, and peers.

An additional SCCT (Lent et al., 1994) proposition that was not supported was the hypothesized relation between nontraditional career self-efficacy and career aspiration. Although nontraditional career self-efficacy appears to exert an influence on the types of careers Mexican American adolescent women choose, this construct did not contribute to their aspiration or goals within a given career. Programs that expose Mexican American women to non-traditional careers and provide opportunities for increased self-efficacy in performing tasks associated with nontraditional occupations could enhance the relation between self-efficacy and aspiration and perhaps increase the number of Mexican American adolescent women who develop interests in and choose nontraditional, prestigious careers (see O’Brien, Dukstein, Jackson, Tomlinson, & Kamatuka, 1999, for an example of a career intervention). Moreover, O’Brien and her colleagues suggested that educational and career planning occur far in advance of graduation from high school. Indeed, prior research recommended the implementation and evaluation of career-oriented workshops, classes, or summer programs with middle school and high school students who are at risk for educational and vocational underachievement (O’Brien et al., 1999; O’Brien et al., 2000). Fouad (1995) noted the need for such interventions to focus specifically on Hispanic students. Programs that demystify the college experience, improve decision-making skills, and assist participants in learning about themselves, colleges/universities, and careers could enhance career self-efficacy.

Also, the SCCT (Lent et al., 1994) proposition that career interests influence career goals was not supported by our data; a similar finding was reported with Asian American college students (Tang et al., 1999). For this sample of Mexican American women, factors other than interests, such as confidence in their abilities to carry out the duties of the career, had a stronger influence on career goals. Alternatively, it is possible that Mexican American adolescent women may not have the luxury of choosing a career based on their interests. If this finding is replicated in other samples, we recommend that Lent et al. consider revising their proposition to reflect the lack of salience of interests in predicting the career paths of women of color. Moreover, psychologists might reconsider the use of a traditional approach to career counseling with Mexican American women, as other factors beyond matching interests and careers may be stronger determinants to their career decisions. Counselors also need to assess if career choices are consonant with interests, and if not, they should explore the obstacles that may be preventing them from pursuing careers in which they have interests.

Finally, modifications to the model suggested that acculturation level significantly influenced the selection of nontraditional, highly prestigious careers, and feminist attitudes was a significant predictor of career traditionality and career aspiration. Women who were more oriented toward the Anglo culture tended to choose less prestigious and more traditional careers. Also, women with higher levels of feminist attitudes were more likely to choose traditional careers and have higher career aspiration. These relations were contrary to prior research that suggested that nontraditional gender role attitudes were positively related to Mexican American women’s educational and career choices (McWhirter et al., 1998; Valenzuela, 1993; Vasquez-Nuttal et al., 1987). One possible explanation for these findings is that acculturated women may be aware of the sociopolitical atmosphere for women in workplaces that are dominated by men and thus may choose to avoid those careers. Results also indicated that women who ascribed to feminist beliefs were more likely to be goal oriented within their chosen career. Indeed, O’Brien et al. (2000) reported this same phenomenon among a sample of White college women and suggested that women may choose nontraditional, less prestigious careers to balance personal and work demands, yet may desire to achieve within their career. As such, it is reasonable to expect that these adolescents may perceive more opportunities for advancement in traditional careers for women.

Several of Lent et al.’s (1994) propositions were supported by our data. First, nontraditional career self-efficacy was found to have a direct influence on Mexican American women’s nontraditional career interests, career prestige, and career traditionality. As nontraditional career self-efficacy increased, nontraditional career interests also increased. Furthermore, higher levels of nontraditional career self-efficacy were related to the selection of nontraditional and prestigious careers. These findings support the SCCT propositions that people develop interests in areas in which they have a strong sense of agency, and they select careers in which they feel confident about their ability to complete the tasks necessary for the career.

Second, results of the present study provided empirical support for Lent et al.’s (1994) proposition that the presence of support and few perceived barriers has a positive effect on career goals. Mexican American adolescent women who perceived support from their parents for their career pursuits and who anticipated fewer barriers chose prestigious careers, and women who perceived their parents to be supportive of their career goals had stronger levels of career aspiration. This finding contradicts an earlier study that found that perceptions of barriers were not predictive of the career expectations of Mexican American girls (McWhirter et al., 1998) and replicates those studies that found that emotional support from the family was predictive of educational plans and career expectations (Gandara, 1982; Hernandez et al., 1994; Keith & Lichtman, 1994; Ramos & Sanchez, 1995; Vasquez, 1982; Wycoff, 1996).

These findings suggest that Mexican American adolescent women may choose highly prestigious careers on the basis of the approval of others or their family obligations. Indeed, with the exception of feminist attitudes, parental support contributed more to the prediction of Mexican American women’s selection of prestigious careers than any other variable assessed in this study. These findings are important given the emphasis placed on the family unit in the Mexican American culture and are consistent with vocational decision-making behaviors among Asian Americans, a group who similarly place a high value on family (Leong & Gim, 1995; Leong & Serafica, 1995). Mexican American women from traditional families may not have the support to
pursue nontraditional educational and vocational aspirations if they conflict with cultural norms and family expectations. Counselors should address these factors when working with Mexican American women.

These findings highlight the salience of addressing cultural and familial expectations when providing career counseling to Mexican American women. Furthermore, counseling psychologists should be encouraged to develop innovative career intervention programs for Mexican American adolescents that involve parents and other family members. Parental involvement in vocational interventions could facilitate the lines of communication between children and their parents about career development and job requirements, which could assist students in planning for their future. Moreover, parents and children could clarify the expectations and dreams that each holds regarding educational and career attainment. Researching the effectiveness of these programs in students' educational and career planning is strongly recommended.

The importance of family also was reflected in the educational goals of these young women. Most of the participants who planned to continue their education beyond high school indicated that they would enroll in the local 2-year community college or 4-year state university. Indeed, students reported that the proximity of the college/university to home was one of the most important factors in choosing a college/university. Remaining geographically close to their families while attending college seems to be a salient consideration in the educational planning of Mexican American women. It is unknown, however, whether these young women choose to stay close to home because of familial expectations or personal preferences. It is also unclear whether this choice provides needed support to pursue their educational and career aspirations or if their future opportunities are limited by this decision. Research is needed to understand how attending college in the same hometown facilitates or hinders attrition and graduation rates as well as the career orientation of Mexican American women.

Future researchers should also consider incorporating additional variables not included in the SCCT (Lent et al., 1994) model of career choice given that the hypothesized models only accounted for 8%, 11%, and 13% of the variance in the prediction of prestige, traditionality, and career aspiration, respectively. Because the contextual variable of student background contextual variables of acculturation level and feminist attitudes have a direct influence on the prestige level and traditionality of Mexican American women's career choices that are not represented in Lent et al.'s proposed model. Furthermore, environmental factors related to the school (i.e., vocational guidance programs in the school) are not included in Lent et al.'s model but should be investigated.

The reliability estimates for the scales used to assess feminist attitudes and career aspiration were relatively low, and thus, the findings related to these constructs should be interpreted with caution. For example, it is possible that significant path coefficients may emerge in the career aspiration model with a more reliable scale. Given the paucity of research with Mexican American women, future studies should attempt to improve on the psychometric properties of the measures used in this study and to develop new instruments for use in research with this population. Additional testing of the revised model with several samples of Mexican American women is necessary to determine if these results can be generalized. Research is also needed to evaluate the validity of Lent et al.'s (1994) model with Mexican American boys and men.

As noted earlier, only a modest amount of variance in the criterion variables was accounted for by the social cognitive and contextual variables assessed in this study. Additional variables that may contribute to career goals should be considered in future studies with Mexican American women. For example, researchers have suggested that socioeconomic status and student ability may be important variables to assess among Mexican Americans and female participants (e.g., Fassinger, 1990; Lauver & Jones, 1991; McWhirter et al., 1998). Moreover, given that teen pregnancy and marriage occur with some frequency in this population, assessing pregnancy and marriage rates at this age could be important variables to assess among Mexican Americans and female participants. Relatively, although this study included an assessment of several environmental influences on women's career development, the focus was on individual variables. Additional research is needed to investigate the ways in which the social environment limits the educational and occupational opportunities of Mexican American women.

Finally, a longitudinal study that assesses the career orientation of Mexican American women at periodic intervals following high school graduation is recommended. Such a study would provide information regarding the factors that affect the vocational development of Mexican American women over the course of their lives. A longitudinal study would also provide useful information regarding the factors that contribute to college graduation among Mexican American women. Future studies could investigate the barriers encountered by students who do not complete college and explore the characteristics shared by those who successfully complete college. Counseling psychologists could then develop empirically based interventions to optimize success in college.

In conclusion, the results of this study advanced knowledge regarding the explanatory power and limitations of SCCT (Lent et al., 1994) in describing the career development of Mexican American adolescent women. Because Mexican American women are largely underrepresented in higher education and in nontraditional, high-prestige occupations, investigating their educational and career aspirations at a critical decision-making time of their lives (in their senior year of high school) seems critically important. Such information could inform counseling interventions aimed at this population to enable Mexican American women to pursue academic and career opportunities that correspond with their ability and maximize their potential for educational and vocational success.

References


