IN SEARCH OF HOPE IN LATINX TENURE TRACK AND TENURED FACULTY

IN HIGHER EDUCATION

by

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ABSTRACT

The problem this study addressed is the disproportionate percentage of Latinx faculty in U.S. universities compared to the percentage of Latinx people in the U.S. population. The purpose of the study was to examine the strength of the relationships between the demographic characteristics and varying levels of demonstrated hope in a sample of tenured, and tenure-track Latinx professors. The Hope Scale Survey was used to measure hope levels by asking Latinx professors to numerically rank their level of agentic thinking and pathways planning. A questionnaire was used to numerically analyze the relationships between professors' hope levels and their demographic characteristics. The Hope Scale model was also tested with confirmatory factor analysis to examine the strengths between the model's latent variables, agency and pathways thinking, and the theory's construct of hope. The descriptive statistics analysis results of the surveys revealed that the measures of agency or goal directed thinking, and pathways thinking were higher for women. Men's hope levels varied more than women's scores. The results also showed that older Latinx professors were more hopeful than the younger participants observed in this study The CFA results of this study indicated that the data acquired from the Hope Scale Survey questions regarding agency and pathways thinking are statistically significant and linked to hope levels. Understanding hope levels in Latinx professors may help inform doctoral program policymakers and other interested program advocates. This type of awareness may help in the decision-making process as it pertains to the support of Latinx professors.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As I sit here and write this I have the same question that always runs just below the surface of my thoughts. I wonder, why I survived my early years on the streets in the near northside area of Houston while almost everyone I grew up with did not? Dicey did not and neither did James, Clemente and Eugene and many others, but they are too many to name here. Looking back over 58 years, I know well that I have always had the drive to know more about the world and about myself.

I worked hard, stayed in school and focused on simple goals: to be a good man and to try and help others. Growing up in rough places with rough people, I faced death sometimes, five times to be exact. I have been lucky I suppose.

Today, I am a Latinx teacher at a community college in Texas where several colleagues have told me that they always knew they wanted to be a teacher. They grew up with this goal. They said that when they were children playing, they always pretended to be teachers. Then when they grew up, their families sent them off to college. It is what was expected of them.

This is not my story, my experience. I did not always want to be a teacher. It never entered my thoughts and never was a goal. In our family only two things mattered most, taking care of each other and going to work.

My father always seemed to be at work somewhere away from us and my world was seven kids growing up together in a small wood frame house on cinder blocks. My dad went up to third grade and my mother to sixth so education was a necessary mandate from some social norm, but it never seemed to be the first priority. Work, putting food on the table and having a place to sleep were.

Out of the seven kids in my family, only four of us finished high school. Three of my brothers dropped out of school for the promise that the money of a fulltime job offered to them.

I finished high school and it was a great accomplishment. I had "*las ganas*", the drive to succeed. I eventually earned a BA in English Literature and have taught for 24 years now. But this has been a solitary journey.

When I sit in a room with my colleagues, or on Zoom these days, during faculty meetings, I am surprised and a little sad to see that I am still the only brown face. I realize that so little has changed, but I keep moving forward day by day. I keep the hope that things can get better for my brown brothers and sisters and in turn for everyone in *la comunidad.*

There has always been social inequality and its effect on knowledge has long been acknowledged (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Like myself, Latinx students in higher education continue to face obstacles to an equitable chance at success (Castellanos & Orozco,2005; SeguraHerrera, 2006; Yosso, 2005). I can identify with all the Latinx students who face obstacles that may leave them feeling as though "The passion, pride, and *ganas* that [they] once felt about pursing a Ph.D. [has been] leached out of [them and they are left with] . . . barely . . . the energy and motivation to show up to class ... [and] . . . nearly convinced that [they do] not belong in [a]

Ph.D. program" (Segura-Herrera, p.225, 2006).

Still, in spite of the barriers I have faced, *sigo adelante*, I continue to move forward into the future with success on my mind.

Success can be defined as attaining the goals of job stability, a high salary and academic freedom. The present study showed that tenured and tenure-track Latinx

professors found success in the academy. Regardless of the low numbers of these

scholars in universities, *tambien siguen adelante*, they also continue to move forward and

hope flows through them and to the lives they touch with their work.

> Latinx people made up 17.8 percent of the U.S. population in 2017 (US Census Bureau,

2017) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) reported that Latinx people were present
in all sectors of the American labor force. However, there is a mismatch between the
number of

Latinx people in the US and the number of Latinx faculty members in universities

(Martinez, 2018; Morris, 2016; Ponjuan, 2011). The percentage of Latinx professors,

assistant professors and associate professors is only 4.1 percent (National Center, 2017).

As Garza (1993) first noted, and other scholars agree is still true today, Latinx professors

hold fewer faculty jobs than they would have held if their numbers were proportional to

the Latinx population (Martinez, 2018; Ponjuan, 2011). Indeed, Latinxs are present in

many areas of the US labor market (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016), but they continue

to be underrepresented in the academy (Deluca & Escoto, 2012; Martinez, 2018;

Ponjuan, 2011).

There is a dearth of knowledge about successful Latinx faculty in the U.S.

professoriate. A review and synthesis of twenty years of literature on faculty of color

concluded that more work is needed that examines the sets of issues that are unique or

specific to various racial/ ethnic groups (Turner, Gonzalez and Wood, 2008).

Furthermore, much of the research on Latinx faculty focuses on endemic institutional

inequities in the academy. However, the present study focused on Latinx strengths. This

study analyzed factors that affect Latinx professors' success in the U.S. professoriate. It

is important to understand how Latinx faculty thrive in the culture of academia.

Examining the factors that influence Latinx faculty planning and agency for successful goal attainment could add to research that aims to help retain, promote and increase the representation of Latinx faculty in the U.S. professoriate.

Studies have shown that Latinx faculty face barriers to their advancement up the higher education profession (Martinez, 2018; Marín, Marín, & Vázquez, 2018; Rodríguez, Martinez, & Valle, 2018; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001; Turner, Gonzalez & Wood, 2008). Some of these barriers are: faculty encounter prejudice and discrimination (De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Garza, 1993; Verdugo, 1995). This discrimination has led to the segregated treatment and undervaluation of the work of Latinx scholars (Garza, 1993). Cultural dissonance with the majority population in the professoriate is another challenge faced by Latinx faculty in higher education (De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Martinez, 2018).

In this study, the researcher decided not to focus on an examination of the problems Latinx faculty face, but rather to focus on their hope levels because although Latinx faculty face many obstacles to success in the academy, strategies for success vary among these faculty members. The researcher recognized that human action and behavior are varied and that thought is affected by hegemonic social structures that favor those in society that have historically been privileged and in positions of power (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). The Hope Scale Model (Snyder, 1991) examines these strategies in the forms of agentic thinking and pathways planning. Even though Latinx professors encounter these problems, there is little research and literature on how Latinx faculty plan goals and maintain the motivation to reach these goals. Latinx faculty are only 4.1 percent of faculty (National Center, 2017)

at all levels in the U.S. professoriate and understanding how they are able to reach their goals is important in retaining, recruiting and preparing future Latinx faculty.

Problem Statement

The problem this study addressed is the disproportionate percentage of Latinx faculty in U.S. universities compared to the percentage of Latinx people in the U.S. population. Some effects of not having Latinx faculty are the creation of a sense of marginalization and isolation among Latinx faculty members; a lack of Latinx mentors for new Latinx faculty (Turner, Meyers & Creswell, 1999); and feelings of "invisibility, isolation, self-doubt, and imposter syndrome, in addition to overt and covert racism, sexism, and classism" (Murakami & Núñez, p. 285, 2014).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the strength of the relationships between the demographic characteristics and varying levels of demonstrated hope in a sample of tenured, and tenure-track Latinx professors. Previous studies of Latinx faculty have focused on the obstacles faced by Latinx professors. Hope Theory is a way to examine Latinx faculty members' strengths that help them overcome obstacles.

Hope is important where Latinx faculty is concerned although Latinx scholars have not used the label "hope". One example is Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Model (CCWM) which asserts that People of Color, and thus Latinxs, are tenacious, persistent and are culturally imbued with strengths that help them attain educational goals even in the face obstacles. This is another way of saying that Latinxs possess the hope necessary for success.

The study aimed to provide university leaders and policymakers develop ways to help predict, retain, promote and increase the representation of Latinx faculty in the

college and university professoriate with a better understanding of the role hope has played in the success of some Latinx faculty.

Theoretical Framework

Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991) provided a way of examining hope, as a way of understanding how a group of Latinx professors achieved their relative levels of success when success is defined as attaining the goals of job stability, a high salary and academic freedom and the attainment of tenure or tenure-track positions in the academy. Hope Theory developed from the field of positive psychology. It is a cognitive motivational model, which focuses on people's strengths and their ability to: identify goals, plan ways to achieve these goals (pathways), and develop and maintain the drive for using those plans to reach goals (agency).

Hope Theory provided a way to examine the cultural strengths of Latinx professors that have helped them overcome difficult situations. These professors have persevered despite the obstacles the face in academia. Latinxs face prejudice, discrimination, cultural misconceptions, marginalization, and isolation (Delgado Bernal, & Villalpando, 2002; De Luca, & Escoto, 2012; Garza, 1993; Martinez, 2018; Gonzales, Murakami, & Núñez, 2013; Ponjuan, 2011).

The use of Hope Theory was justified here because the researcher realized that not everyone reacts the same to the problems they may encounter in life and each individual's way of reacting is affected by the systemic injustice that exists and was created by those who have been historically in positions of power (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). Hope theory provided a way to examine how Latinx faculty, who face many obstacles to success in the academy, are able to persevere.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

The main hypothesis was that the level of hope held by tenured and tenure-track Latinx faculty members is related to the extent of their success in attaining their goals within academia. For the purpose of this study, success was defined as having job stability, a high salary, and academic freedom. A tenure-track position at institutions of higher education often assures these goals and is highly valued by professors (Larson et al., 2019).

Two additional hypotheses were:

- When faced with obstacles, Latinx faculty feel they can find alternative ways to reach a goal.

- When faced with obstacles, Latinx faculty feel they can maintain their motivation to reach goals.

The study addressed three research questions:

1. What is the hope level of Latinx professors as measured by Snyder et al.'s (1991) Hope Scale?

2. What are the demographic characteristics of tenured and tenure-track Latinx professors at varying levels of demonstrated hope?

3. Are the factors of agency and pathways thinking statistically related to hope levels in a group of Latinx professors?

Methodology

Given the research questions posed, a quantitative methodology was deemed most appropriate. The Hope Scale Survey measured hope levels by asking Latinx professors to numerically rank their level of agentic thinking and pathways planning. A questionnaire was used to numerically analyze the relationships between professors' hope levels and

their demographic characteristics. The Hope Scale model was also tested with confirmatory factor analysis to examine the strengths between the model's latent variables, agency and pathways thinking, and the theory's construct of hope.

This study used a survey and a questionnaire to gather data and descriptive statistics and structural equation modeling to describe and measure the degree of relationships between hope levels and the demographic characteristics of a group Latinx professors and to test the strength of relationships between the variables of agency and pathways thinking and hope.

This quantitative study had three objectives: 1. to determine the level of hope of a group of tenured and tenure track Latinx professors; 2. to examine the relationship between the participants' levels of hope and the demographic characteristics of age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught (graduate, undergraduate or both); and 3. to determine if the inferred construct of hope was statistically related the factors of agency and pathways thinking.

To accomplish this the researcher created a demographics questionnaire (Appendix C) to determine the participants' age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught (graduate, undergraduate or both). Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale (Appendix B) was used to measure hope levels.

The data analysis was conducted in two phases. The first phase used descriptive statistics to determine the mean, median and mode of hope levels collated according to the demographic characteristics identified with the questionnaire. The second phase of

data analysis was to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis to determine the validity and reliability of the data to the hope scale model.

The total number of questionnaires and Hope Scale surveys completed was 51 and included faculty nationwide. The survey was completed by male and female tenured and tenure track Latinx professors ranging in ages from 25 to 74 years of age.

The researcher contacted the Latinx Faculty Associations at universities in the United States to ask for assistance in distributing the survey to Latinx faculty members. The questionnaire and Hope Scale survey information was collected with the Qualtrics electronic survey tool.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Personal Biases

One of the limitations of this study was that participants may not have answered the survey questions earnestly. This could have resulted in data that does not accurately measure hope levels. The researcher was not able to verify this, but tried to reduce the chance of this occurring by making participation in the study anonymous.

Another limitation was the number of participants in the study. The Hope Scale survey was sent to universities across the United States and 51 Latinx professors participated. Although it would have been ideal to have more participants, the 51 surveys analyzed resulted in a confidence level of 70 % in the survey's results.

The delimitations of this study were that its' scope was restricted to an analyses of the hope levels in tenured or tenure-track Latinx professors at U.S. universities and the relationship of these hope levels to the specific demographic variables of age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught
(graduate, undergraduate or both).

Another delimitation is that since this study was limited to surveys of Latinx professors at universities nationwide who were tenured or in a tenure track position in 2020, this study may not accurately describe other Latinx professors in other higher education settings who are not tenured or in tenure-track positions at this time. The results of this study are not intended to be a description of all Latinx professors in all higher education institutions. Furthermore, this study does not imply causality.

Additionally, it is important to recognize that researchers bring a lifetime of personal experience and knowledge to their studies. These experiences and knowledge can be positive additions to a study, but a researcher should clarify these for the reader. Reflecting on potential personal bias at the beginning of study helps to validate a study's findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

As a Latinx professor in a community college, my cultural background and my work experience shape my view that professors often face obstacles to their teaching which must be overcome through sustained motivation and planning. My professional development training helps me to be aware of and attempt to control this bias. My training has taught me that my actions and motivation should always be to support and nurture students' learning through the systems and resources established by the college.

Finally, my personal belief is that agency and pathways thinking are the fundamental aspects of being a professor. I specifically want to know how agency and motivation relate to Latinx professors' age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught (graduate, undergraduate or both).

Significance of the Study

This research can inform the development of programs to retain current Latinx professors and to prepare students to become future Latinx faculty in the professoriate.

Latinx professors are valuable to the universities and students that they serve. They have a special role in recruiting the next generation of Latinx professors, and their experiences can serve to inspire those who may be considering a career in the professoriate (Ponjuan, 2011). This is important because Latinx students often lack role models with a similar cultural background to serve as a living example of what one can accomplish. Latinx professors may also be more culturally competent to mentor and advise future Latinx teachers.

Thus, a practical task for universities is to help professors continue to develop and thrive in their positions in the professoriate. Knowledge about these professors will help in the development of effective professional development programs that support the growth of their professional capabilities. This study can also help Ph.D. programs by informing a curriculum that includes an understanding of the positive attributes and coping mechanisms employed by successful Latinx professors.

Society will also benefit from this study by identifying the traits of successful Latinx professors and informing new ways to support scholars from one of the fastest growing minority groups in the United States. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Finally, understanding Latinx professors' hope levels and the relationship to various demographic characteristics is important because so little is known about how they are able to find ways around the obstacles they face. By understanding this, perhaps their numbers can be increased through better recruitment methods and support systems in the academy.

Definition of Terms

Latinx: A person of Latin American origin or descent and used as a gender-neutral or
nonbinary alternative to Latino or Latina.

College or University: A selective, four-year, degree-granting organization of
higher education.

Agency Thinking: A person's ability to begin working towards a desired
expectation, outcome or goal. This type of cognition is also the ability to remain
motivated to reach a goal even when faced with obstacles to those goals.

Pathways Thinking: A person's cognitive ability to plan different ways or paths to
achieve desired outcomes.

Hope: The "sum of perceived capabilities to produce routes to desired goals,
along with the perceived motivation to use those routes" (Snyder, 2000, p. 8).

The Hope Scale: The Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) (Appendix A) is a 12-item
survey that assesses the summative measure of agency thought and pathways thought on
an eight-point
Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (definitely false) to 8(definitely true).

Success: Having a tenure-track or a tenured position in a four-year degree granting
institution.

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the study and presented the research problem, problem
statement, theoretical framework, statement of purpose, research questions, limitations
and delimitations, a statement of researcher biases, significance of the study and
definition of terms. The chapter that follows will be a review of the literature surrounding
the concept of hope, hope theory, other self-expectancy theories and Latinx faculty.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two is a thematically organized review of the literature on hope, Hope

Theory (Snyder et al., 1991), other expectancy theories and Latinx faculty. First, I

present a systematic discussion of hope, which examines various conceptualizations of

hope from orthodox, mythological and ontological perspectives. Second, there is a

description of Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991). Next, there is a discussion of

similarities between Hope Theory and other goal or expectancy theories. Then I present

various studies of hope and Latinxs. Finally, there is a discussion of some of the barriers

to success in the professoriate for Latinx.

Conceptualizations of Hope

The Traditional Concepts of Hope

There are several ways to conceptualize hope. However, these conceptualizations

are not appropriate for the quantitative examination of hope in individuals. Notions of

hope have traditionally been focused on hope's relationship to faith in religion, hopes for

some form of political structure or on humans' motivation to goal achievement (Bloeser,

C. & Stahl, T., 2017). The orthodox view of hope is that it is a belief that something you

want to happen (Hornby,

2005).

Education and Hope

In the past, ideological concepts dominated the literature on hope, but scholars

caution to beware of this idea of hope especially as it relates to education, "as a vague,

warm feeling because it is insufficient, one dimensional, and inhibits understanding hope

in its full complexity" (Acosta, 2017, p. 307). Jacobs (2005) wrote, "For hope to be of

use to us as educators, we need to see that it, like education, is rigorous and intellectual" (p. 798). In the field of education, hope is not a wishful one-dimensional form of desire.

Creation Myths and Hope

In literature, one of the earliest references to hope appears in ancient Creation myths.

Hesiod's account of the Greek creation myth provides an early conceptualization of hope (Geoghegan, 2008; Verdenius, 1985). In ancient accounts, hope became the only defense against evil (Bloeser, C. & Stahl, T., 2017; Verdenius, 1985). When Pandora unwittingly unleashed evil forces on humankind by opening the jar given to her by Zeus, only hope remained as a defense to malevolent forces.

Traditionally, dreaming about reaching one's goals and the idea of hope have been synonymous. In mythology, hope was protection from evil. Orthodox and mythological conceptualizations of hope are one-dimensional, and they do not provide a quantitative way to examine hope in educational settings.

The Ontological Concept of Hope

Ontology is often confused with epistemology (Crotty, 1998). However, where epistemology is concerned with "how we know what we know" (p. 8), ontology debates the essence or nature of existence (Crotty, 1998; Patton 2002). Ontologically, this literature review analyzes the essence or nature of hope in education to understand its existence in university settings.

In education, hope is a communal act between professors, their colleagues, students and administrators (Freire, 1994; Jacob 2005; Marcel, 1951). In academic settings, hope is not a desire to acquire things such as a higher salary or to achieve tenure. The hope that exists within educators is often a desire to have an effect for a better future

for everyone in a classroom or in a university (Jacob, 2005). Hope in academic settings is "something shared between teachers and students . . . hope that we can learn together, teach together, be curiously impatient together, produce something together, and resist together the obstacles [we encounter]" (Freire, p. 69, 1998). This ontological view of hope in education is dynamic and shaped by relationships with others through social interactions in academic settings (Freire, 1994; Jacob 2005; Marcel, 1951).

Education is not possible without hope (Freire, 1998). The "absence of hope is not the 'normal' way to be human. It is a distortion" (p. 69). Education by its nature is hopeful striving towards a change of humans' unfinished state of being or what Freire (1998) called "our unfinishedness" (p.69).

Hope Theory

Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991) is an expectancy theory that was developed from the field of positive psychology. It is a cognitive motivational model, which focuses on people's strengths and their ability to identify goals, plan ways to achieve these goals (pathways thoughts) and develop and maintain the drive for using those plans to reach goals (agency thoughts).

Goals

Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991) assumes that the desire to reach positive expectations guides human thought. Goals are the foundation of this theory. One trait of goals is that they must be valuable to a person. Another characteristic of goals is that people view them as being attainable. Research has shown that goals are often regarded as having an intermediate chance of being achieved (Averill, Catlin, & Chon, 1990; Snyder, 2000).

Pathways Thinking

Pathways thinking is a person's cognitive ability to plan different ways or paths to achieve desired outcomes. One's ability to plan paths to successful outcomes is required to reach goals. Studies have shown that a person with a high level of hope is able to plan multiple ways to achieve desired expectations (Irving, Snyder, & Crowson, 1998; Snyder, Rand, & Sigmon,

2018; Snyder, et al., 1991).

Agency Thinking

Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991) suggests that envisioning goals, planning ways to reach them and remaining motivated towards these goals are equally important to achieving goals. Agentic cognition is a person's ability to begin working towards a desired expectation. This type of cognition is also the ability to remain motivated to reach a goal even when faced with obstacles to those goals. Agency thinking is an iterative process because when a person encounters an obstacle on a path to a goal, agentic thinking provides the necessary motivation needed to pursue alternate paths to achieve the desired outcome (Snyder, 2000; Snyder et al.,

2018).

Other Expectancy Theories

Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory

Hope is different from self-efficacy (Gallagher, & Lopez, 2009; Snyder, 2002). Both planning and motivation underpin Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991) and operate with equal importance in goal achievement. However, Bandura's (1977) Self-efficacy Theory is "concerned principally with the expectancy that one can perform *behaviors*,

whereas hope is concerned with expectancies that one can attain *goals*" (Feldman &
Kubota, p. 211, 2015).

Although self-efficacy places emphasis on future outcomes, it emphasizes
behavior not goals. In contrast, Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991) holds that one's
expectations or goals are attainable through motivation that allows individuals to find
new pathways to desired outcomes even when faced with unexpected obstacles. Self-
efficacy is primarily concerned with actions, while Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991)
focuses on an iterative process that involves motivation and perceived paths to positive
outcomes (Snyder, 2000).

Bandura (1977) explained the difference this way, "Outcome and efficacy
expectations are differentiated, because individuals can believe that a particular course of
action will produce certain outcomes, but if they entertain serious doubts about whether
they can perform the necessary activities, such information does not influence their
behavior." (p. 193). In other words, self-efficacy places emphasis on behavior that is
presumably unaffected by obstacles to desired goal attainment while hope places
emphasis on the cognitive iterative process of pathway and agency thoughts that make
goal attainment possible (Feldman, & Kubota, 2015; Snyder,
2000).

Optimism

Optimism and hope both focus on goal directed thoughts or expectancies
(Gallagher & Lopez, 2009; Snyder, Lopez, Shorey, Rand, & Feldman, 2003). However,
"optimism is primarily concerned with the expectancy that positive outcomes will occur
without regard to one's actions, whereas hope is explicitly concerned with expectancies

that attainment of positive outcomes will occur through one's own planning (pathways) and motivation (agency)" (Feldman & Kubota, p. 211, 2015).

Seligman's Learned Optimism Model

Hope Theory is also different from optimism theory. Seligman's Learned Optimism Model (1991) posits that a human's ability to attribute certain actions to negative outcomes allows them to reach their goals by trying to distance themselves from such actions (Snyder et al., 2018). This optimism theory focuses on the avoidance of negative outcomes while hope theory's emphasis is on the achievement of positive goals.

Scheier and Carver's Optimism Theory

Scheier and Carver (1987) developed an expectancy theory that is similar to Snyder et al.'s (1991) Hope Theory. Both theories consider the effect of agency (motivation) and pathways thought. However, Scheier and Carver (1987) believed the expectation of positive goal attainment motivates goal-directed behaviors (Scheier & Carver, 1987 as cited in Snyder et al., 2018). This is different from Hope Theory in which agency thoughts (motivation) and pathways thoughts are conceptualized as being equal, iterative and constant (Snyder et al., 2018).

Latinx Students and Hope

A review of the literature on hope and Latinx students reveals that although social inequality and its effect on knowledge has long been acknowledged (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), Latinx students in higher education continue to face obstacles to an equitable chance at success (Castellanos & Orozco, 2005; Segura-Herrera, 2006; Yosso, 2005). Dr. Yosso wrote "we have been gagged and disempowered by theories" (Yosso, 2005). Indeed, Latinx students face obstacles that may leave them feeling as though "The

passion, pride, and *ganas* that [they] once felt about pursuing a Ph.D. [has been] leached

out of [them and they are left with] . . . barely . . . the energy and motivation to show up

to class ... [and are] . . . nearly convinced that [they do] not belong in [a] Ph.D. program"

(Segura-Herrera, p.225, 2006). Still, in spite of the barriers they face, Latinx students

expect academic success. The literature reviewed here shows that although Latinxs face

obstacles in their pursuit of their higher education goals, *siguen adelante*, they continue to

move forward.

The first barrier Latinx students face is not having anyone in their family to turn

to as an example of what can be achieved in higher education nor do they have anyone in

their family to whom they can go to for advice. This happens because these students are

often the first in their families to attend college. The following information describes the

differences between first generation and continuing-generation college students when

considering race and ethnicity:

> "A lower percentage of first-generation college students than
> continuing-generation students were White (49 vs. 70
> percent). However, among Black and Hispanic students, the
> pattern was reversed. Black students represented 14 percent
> of first-generation college students, compared to 11 percent
> of continuing generation college students, and Hispanic
> students represented 27 percent of first-generation college
> students, compared to 9 percent of continuing-generation
> students" (First-Generation, 2012).

Despite these numbers there is room for optimism. The present literature review

found that despite the barriers they face, Latinx students hold onto *esperanza* or hope for

academic success and one theoretical model serves as guide to the potential for academic

success that these students possess.

Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Model (CCWM) asserts that People

of Color, and thus Latinxs, are tenacious, persistent and are culturally imbued with

strengths that help them attain educational goals even in the face obstacles. Yosso's

model suggests that Latinx students possess what she labeled as aspirational capital. This

concept holds that Latinxs have hope even in the face of the reality that the majority of

Latinx college students are the first in their families to attend college. They face the

challenge of being the first in their families to attend higher education institutions even

though reality has shown them that first-generation college students are less likely than

continuing-generation students to stay in college through their freshman and sophomore

years (Lohfink & Paulsen 2005).

Latinx students' cultures prepare them for the reality that there will be obstacles to

be overcome on the road to success. "*Tienen que haber piedras en el camino*" is one

saying in the Latinx community that reflects this attitude (Segura-Herrera, p.225, 2006).

Yosso's (2005) seminal model places Latinx cultural influences at the center of what

makes Latinx students succeed in school in the face of barriers to that academic success.

Yosso's (2005) work provides a conceptual model to reconsider Latinx students and the

affective strengths of their culture

Others have expanded the knowledge of the effects of Latinxs' culture and their

relationship to persistence in school (Hinojosa & Vela, 2019). Hinojosa and Vela's

(2019) research suggests that Latinxs' culture plays a part in their academic success.

Their research is important for a better understanding of these learners.

Other studies have shown that hope is present in Latinx students although it is not

labeled as hope. For example, one study focused on the coping mechanisms of a group of

Latinx undergraduates in the Midwest found that a majority of the participants "were

optimistic in believing that they could overcome any barriers to achieve their educational

goals" (Castellanos & Orozco, p.161, 2005). Whereas Snyder' Hope Scale refers to

pathways and agency, this study refers to these same concepts as "coping response[s] of taking a planned, positive action" (Castellanos & Orozco, p. 161, 2005).

There have been other empirical studies with Latinx students that have confirmed the relationship between hope and academic success in a roundabout way. They too have found what Snyder et al., (2002) first realized. Snyder showed the positive connection between hope levels in college students and academic success (Snyder et al., 2002). However, his studies focused primarily on White college students. Furthermore, Snyder specifically mentioned hope and academic success while other studies with Latinx college students make this connection in an indirect way and connect hope with psychological wellbeing instead of directly tying hope levels with academic success.

Hinojosa and Vela's 2019 study focused on hope and depression in college students. This study found that high hope levels were related to less depression which translates into more academic success. Thus, even though hope was not tied directly to academic success this study showed that there is a positive relationship between hope and success in college albeit in a roundabout way.

Finally, it must be noted that not all research studies have found a positive correlation between hope levels and the achievement of academic success of Latinx students. One example is a 2014 study. Yager-Elorriaga, Berenson, and McWhirter (2014) found that Latinx students' grade point average was not related to hope levels. The study's authors explained this as a result of the study's small sample and the way that participants reported their GPAs. In the study, reporting one's GPA was optional and the researchers believed that only those participants with higher GPAs reported this information (Yager-Elorriaga, Berenson, & McWhirter, 2014).

In sum, a review of the literature on hope and Latinx students shows that even though they face challenges when it comes to reaching their academic goals in higher education, Latinxs are resilient and tenacious. Their mental strength and goal expectancy are derived from their cultural backgrounds and hope or *esperanza* is central to their way of being.

Latinx Faculty: The Challenges Faced

A review of the literature on Latinx faculty and studies within the larger group of Faculty of Color revealed that Latinx faculty face multiple challenges. Latinxs in academia face prejudice, discrimination, cultural misconceptions, marginalization, and isolation (Delgado Bernal, & Villalpando, 2002; De Luca, & Escoto, 2012; Garza, 1993; Martinez, 2018; Gonzales,

Murakami, & Núñez, 2013; Ponjuan, 2011).

Prejudice and Discrimination

Prejudice is any concept based on incorrect or unreasonable and emotional generalizations (Hornby, 2005). Discrimination is acting on these generalizations (Hornby, 2005). A review of the literature on Latinx professors revealed that Latinx faculty encounter prejudice and discrimination (De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Garza, 1993; Verdugo, 1995).

The literature also showed that discrimination has led to the segregated treatment and undervaluation of the work of Latinx scholars (Garza, 1993). Garza (1993) described this obstacle as the "barriorization" (p. 36) of Latinx scholarship. This exists in the setting of higher education when Latinx faculty members are hired in academic areas that are not in the mainstream areas such as in fields related to science, technology, engineering, and math or STEM fields (Underrepresentation, 2019). Instead, Latinxs

often find themselves working in academic areas "considered less prominent and prestigious within higher education" (Delgado Bernal, & Villalpando, p. 170, 2002) such as the humanities, social sciences and education

(Delgado-Romero, Manlove, A. N., Manlove, J. D., & Hernandez, 2007; Garza, 1993; Martinez, 2018). Martinez (2018) found that Latinxs are least represented in business, fine arts, and engineering. Furthermore, these faculty members are often asked to serve on committees that are limited to "minority issues" (Ponjuan, 2011; Verdugo, p. 671, 1995) and student recruitment.

Another reality for Latinxs in higher education is that they are often missing from elite four-year institutions (Delgado-Romero, Manlove, A. N., Manlove, J. D., & Hernandez, 2007). Latinxs are primarily found in Hispanic Serving Institutions and two-year colleges and are largely absent from small private four-year institutions (Delgado-Romero, Manlove, A. N.,

Manlove, J. D., & Hernandez, 2007). Delgado Bernal and Villalpando (2002) described this as

"structural segregation" (p. 169) in higher education that has led to an "apartheid of knowledge (p. 169). Their study found that in 1998, 12% of faculty in two-year schools identified themselves as Persons of Color while 8% of the faculty at elite private schools were identified themselves as being People of Color (Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002). Verdugo (1995) described this type of discrimination as "racial stratification" (p. 670) and a product of the way higher education is designed to maintain low numbers of faculty members from underrepresented groups.

Cultural Misperceptions

Cultural dissonance with the majority population in the professoriate is another challenge faced by Latinx faculty in higher education (De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Martinez, 2018). The misunderstandings between Latinx faculty and their white colleagues originate from Latinx cultural ideas of working closely with others to accomplish goals (De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Martinez, 2018). In contrast, the established culture of the academy is based on competition and working independently to achieve goals such as research and publication of one's work (De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Martinez, 2018). "Setting aside competitive, individualistic interests and work[ing] collaboratively may not resonate for those in the majority group" (De Luca & Escoto, p. 31, 2012). Patterns of communication, relationships and trust are part of the Latinx cultural phenomenon that can create barriers for Latinxs in the academy (De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Martinez, 2018; Ponjuan, 2011).

Close personal relationships and trust or *personalismo* are a part of Latinx communication styles (Cuéllar, Arnold, & González, 1995; Delgado-Romero, Manlove, A. N., Manlove, J. D., & Hernandez, 2007; De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Ponjuan, 2011). *Personalismo* is a way of being and communicating. It is "an orientation toward people rather than toward impersonal relationships" (Cuéllar, Arnold, & González, p. 342, 1995). This way of communicating clashes with the patterns of discourse typically found in higher education settings (Delgado-Romero et al., 2007; De Luca & Escoto, 2012).

In Latinx communities, the physical space between speakers is often closer while in academic settings this distance may be problematic (De Luca & Escoto, 2012). When

a Latinx speaks to a colleague from the majority group (i.e. Whites), the space between them matters and misunderstandings can happen. "Non-Latinos [feel] uncomfortable with the minimal distance between themselves and Latino colleagues as some [find] it to be bordering on sexual harassment" (De Luca & Escoto, p. 32, 2012). Latinx faculty members that face these barriers may feel misunderstood or unwelcome (Marín, Marín, & Vázquez, 2018; Turner, Gonzalez & Wood, 2008) and thus less likely to remain in those settings (De Luca & Escoto, 2012).

Isolation and Marginalization

Another barrier faced by Latinx faculty is that when they are the only Latinx member in their department, it can lead to isolation and marginalization. Scholars have reported that this happens when there is often a lack of senior faculty members to serve as mentors for new Latinx faculty members (Turner, Meyers & Creswell, 1999). This leads to feelings of "invisibility, isolation, self-doubt, and imposter syndrome, in addition to overt and covert racism, sexism, and classism" (Murakami & Núñez, p. 285, 2014).

Being the only Latinx faculty can also lead to marginalization (Turner, 2002). This can affect a Latinx professor's performance when they are not provided the same resources or opportunities as colleagues from the majority group (Delgado Bernal, & Villalpando, 2002). Latinx faculty may also feel the pressure to serve on a high number of departmental committees, which affects their ability to develop and focus on their own research agendas (Turner, Meyers & Creswell, 1999). Another effect of being marginalized is it can lead to "charges of racial and ethnic bias in the tenure and promotion process" (p. 31).

Other Barriers for Latinxs

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, faculty ranks are mostly filled by white professors. Some suggest that this is because there are not enough qualified Latinxs when the real problem is that potential Latinx faculty members are perceived as not fitting in with the established white administration on college and university campuses (Gasman, Abiola, & Travers, 2018).

Another obstacle for Latinxs in academia revealed by the literature is how their credentials are reviewed by hiring committees. Latinx credentials are often more heavily scrutinized than their white counterparts (Marín, Marín, & Vázquez, 2018).

Additionally, campus leaders often focus on one ethnic group thereby pitting one ethnic group against another. This makes it hard for Latinxs to succeed and become faculty. In this situation, Latinxs face bias, discrimination, and do not feel they belong in higher education (Marín, Marín, & Vázquez, 2018; Turner, Gonzalez, & Wood, 2008).

Latinx faculty also experience a glass ceiling that blocks them from reaching tenure. This in turn keeps them from obtaining the credentials needed to become administrators in colleges and universities. The lack of Latinx administrators contributes to a lack of individuals who could bring greater diversity of ways of thinking and seeing issues (Marín, Marín, &

Vázquez, 2018; American Council on Education, 2013).

Another hurdle facing Latinxs in the academy is funding. Money allocated for programs created for the recruitment of Latinx professors are often the first programs to be eliminated during tough economic times (Marín, Marín, & Vázquez, 2018).

In sum, the studies cited in this literature review make it clear that Faculty of Color in general, and Latinxs in particular, must navigate a terrain in academia that is

marked by multiple challenges. Latinx scholars struggle to have their work valued and evaluated on equal terms as those from the majority group (Garza, 1993; Marín et al., 2018). A review of the literature shows that there remain multiple obstacles for advancement and tenure for Latinx faculty in the academy.

Conclusion

The present study perceives hope differently from what most people think hope to be.

Hope is not wishful dreaming or an emotional desire without action and motivation. Furthermore, Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991) is also different from other goal expectancy theories such as self-efficacy and optimism theories. Hope Theory is a strength-based cognitive motivational model useful for examining the strengths of Latinx professors at universities. "Hope theory [is] a lens for seeing the strengths in people" (Snyder et al., 2018, p. 267). This theory places equal importance on planned pathways and agency in reaching goals. Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991) will be useful for examining the relationship between Latinx professors' dispositions of hope, specific demographic factors, and success in the professoriate.

It is important to have research that examines "strengths and virtues" (Marín, Marín, & Vázquez, p. 84, 2018). Likewise, it is important to understand the factors related to Latinx success in the professoriate. My study explored and examined how Latinx faculty succeed and thrive in colleges and universities in the United States.

It is "alarming" (Bowen & Schuster, p. 152, 1986 as cited in Garza, p. 36, 1993) that Latinx professors have remained underrepresented in academia. "They help create a culturally diverse, relevant, receptive, and supportive university setting" (Garza, p. 40, 1993). Latinx faculty have a positive impact on university and college campuses and

there have been calls for the preparation and recruitment of more Latinx faculty members (De Luca & Escoto, 2012;

Garza, 1993; Martinez, 2018; Ponjuan, 2011; Underrepresentation, 2019).

Finally, hope was the focus of this study because as the literature review of Latinx faculty showed, barriers and inequities certainly exist. However, little attention has been paid to solutions to these problems that focus on Latinx individuals' strengths and attributes. Hope Theory provided a way to determine the attitudes necessary for reaching goals and the metacognition necessary for further development of the ability for successful goal attainment. In sum, an understanding of hope could be useful for preparing and supporting those who would contribute to the academy.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented traditional and ontological conceptualizations of hope. It also presented Snyder et al.'s (1991) Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991) and contrasted it with other expectancy theories. Finally, the chapter discussed the challenges faced by Latinx professors in colleges and universities. The following chapter that describes the study's methodology and includes a description of the instruments that were used to collect data and how the data was analyzed.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the present study's questions, philosophical approach, epistemology, theoretical perspective, research design, population and sample, data collection instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis and significance.

This study was designed to do two things. First, the study examined the strength of the relationships between the varying demonstrated levels of hope and demographic characteristics of a group of tenured, and tenure-track Latinx professors. The study's second goal was to determine if the inferred construct of hope in the Hope Model Theory is statistically linked to the factors of agency and pathways thinking.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. What is the hope level of Latinx professors as measured by Snyder et al.'s (1991) Hope

    Scale?

2. What are the demographic characteristics of tenured and tenure-track Latinx

    professors at varying levels of demonstrated hope?

3. Are the factors of agency and pathways thinking statistically related to hope

    levels in a group of Latinx professors?

To answer the first question, the researcher used the Hope Scale Survey (Appendix B) and measured the levels of hope in tenured and tenure track Latinx professors in four-year degree granting universities. To answer the second question, a questionnaire (Appendix C) was used to collect demographic data from each participant. The results of the surveys included measures of agency or goal directed thinking, and

motivation. The questionnaire included a summary of the demographic characteristics of the participants, which were correlated with the participants' varying levels of hope.

To answer the study's third question, regarding the statistical relationship between the Hope Scale Model's two factors of agency and pathways thinking and the inferred construct of hope, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted.

The Hypothesis

The main hypothesis is that hope level is related to the extent of success in goal attainment within academia. Two other hypotheses are:

- When faced with obstacles, Latinx faculty feel they can find alternative ways to reach a goal.

- When faced with obstacles, Latinx faculty feel they can maintain their motivation to reach goals.

Philosophical Approach

Latinx faculty face many obstacles to success in the academy. This study is critical of the low representation of Latinx faculty in the professoriate. The present study tried to better understand the strategies used by Latinx faculty that help them succeed and thrive in their careers. The obstacles faced by Latinxs and their strategies for success vary among these faculty members. Therefore, this study required a philosophical approach, which recognized that human action and behavior are varied and that thought is affected by hegemonic social structures that favor those in society that have historically been privileged and in positions of power.

The Critical Realism (CR) perspective places great importance on the idea that multiple realities exist. This lens views the world as a place of varied social, political and cultural contexts where human behavior and action are mediated by hegemonic social

structures (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). In this philosophical stance, causes and outcomes are expected to be varied because multiple realities exist.

Structure and agency are also a part of Critical Realism (CR). CR asserts that social reality is formed by the relationship between social structures and how people react to these structures. CR holds the view that social structures exist until people react to their social reality and change these social structures to create a new ones (Scott, 2005). Critical Realism guided the present study to critically establish the relationship between the variables of Latinx professors' level of hope, and the demographic variables: age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught (graduate, undergraduate or both).

Understanding the relationship among these variables can shed light on the strategies used by Latinx faculty for overcoming obstacles to success. This is important for determining the usefulness of the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) (Appendix B) in recruiting, retaining and supporting Latinx faculty in colleges and universities.

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical perspective that guided this study was Hope Theory (Snyder et al., 1991). It is a strength-based expectancy theory. This theory conceptualizes hope as a person's capacity to 1) identify goals, 2) develop strategies for reaching those goals, 3) develop, and maintain the will to use those strategies. This theoretical perspective conceptualizes hope as a person's ability to achieve desired outcomes through an iterative process that allows one to overcome obstacles to expected outcomes by having the capacity to reimagine new strategies and initiating and sustaining the drive to continue working toward a desired outcome.

The Hope Model

The dependability of any data is reliant on the reliability and validity of the instrument used to collect a study's data (Merriam, & Simpson, 2000). Part of the process of collecting data is determining the reliability and validity of the instrument used to collect research data

(Merriam, & Simpson, 2000).

Previous studies have confirmed the validity and reliability of the Hope Scale survey instrument (Snyder et al., 1996; Snyder et al., 1997). However, these previous studies were conducted using population samples of college students.

It was necessary for the purposes of the current study to determine the equivalence of the statistical fit, or lack thereof, across groups to determine if the Hope Scale is useful with a Latinx population. This information is important not only to the theoretical assumptions that the scale makes, that agency and pathways thinking are linked to hope levels, but also to validate its use in the future with Latinx people.

To answer the present study's third question of whether agency and pathways are linked to hope levels, Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted to compare the statistical fit the study's data with the Hope Scale's factors, agency and pathways thinking, and the inferred construct of hope in earlier studies with the current study's results.

Research Design

1. The study was guided by three research questions. The first question was: What is the level of hope level of Latinx professors as measured by Snyder et al.'s (1991) Hope Scale? The second question was: What are the demographic characteristics of tenured, and tenure-track Latinx professors at varying levels of demonstrated

hope? The third question was: Are the factors of agency and pathways thinking statistically related to hope levels in a group of Latinx professors?

The study used a quantitative methodology to determine the participants' levels of hope regarding their disposition to 1) identify goals, 2) plan ways to achieve these goals (pathways thoughts), and 3) develop and maintain the drive for using those plans to reach goals (agency thoughts).

To address the first question of hope levels in Latinx professors, the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) was used to measure the hope levels of the sample population. The Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) (Appendix A) is a twelve-item, 8-point Likert-type scale (ranging from 1definitely false to 8-definitely true) self-report inventory that can be completed in approximately two to five minutes. This instrument collected data on the two aspects of hope: plans (pathways) and motivation (agency). Four items reflect agency, four reflect pathways and four are distractors. The scale identified separate yet related agency and pathways results as well as an overall hope level. The researcher used the instrument to measure the hope level of each professor.

The study's second question was what the demographic characteristics are of tenured, and tenure-track Latinx professors at varying levels of demonstrated hope? To address this question a demographics questionnaire (Appendix C) was used to determine the participants' age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught (graduate, undergraduate or both).

The study's third question asked about the statistical relationship between the Hope Scale Model's two factors of agency and pathways thinking and the inferred construct of hope. To answer this question, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted.

Correlational Study Number of Surveys Logic

For a correlational study, the higher the number of surveys used the more reliable the results are. Reliability is determined by correlation coefficient r. A correlation coefficient of $r = .05$ is considered statistically significant. To have $r = .05$, the current study would require 1, 539 surveys. (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2015).

The current study used 51 surveys which approximately resulted in a value of $r = .30$. The study will result in a confidence level of .3 which means there is a confidence level of 70 % in the current Hope Scale Survey's results.

It is important to note that the literature suggests that the number of surveys for a study also depends on what the results will be used for. For example, for a high-stakes trial such as a medical trial for a new vaccine, one needs more surveys and that number can easily go into the thousands. The current survey will be used to measure the hope levels of Latinx professors to determine the usefulness of Hope Scale with this population. Finally, the reason for using a smaller sample for this study was the availability of participants.

The present study used descriptive statistics to analyze the relationship between certain demographic characteristics of Latinx professors at varying levels of hope. Little is known about Latinx hope levels and whether the Hope Scale is useful with this demographic group. In sum, a correlational analysis provided vital information about hope in a group of Latinx professors in the United States.

Population, Sample and Recruitment

The population of the study was tenured and tenure-track Latinx professors and used purposive sampling. The sample was recruited through the online social media platform Facebook and through electronic distribution to various university faculty

associations and groups. The researcher posted a flyer on specific Latino Facebook

Groups, sent the flyer via email to Latinx faculty associations and groups and invited

tenured and tenure-track Latinx professors to participate in the study. This type of

sampling allowed me to access a large number of participants while focusing on a

specific sample of the population, Latinx professors, in specific settings, universities and

colleges.

While soliciting participation (Appendix A), the researcher emphasized the value

of the study's results in helping prepare future Latinx professors by understanding the

current faculty from this demographic group. I also emphasized the minimal amount of

time required to take the surveys and the anonymization of all information. I additionally

offered to share the results of the study with each institution. I used Qualtrics, an online

survey tool to administer the Hope

Scale instrument (Appendix B) and the demographics questionnaire (Appendix C).

Data Collection and Management

The data for the study was collected using the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991)

and a demographics questionnaire.

The Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) is a twelve-item self-report inventory that

can be completed in approximately two to five minutes. This instrument collected data

on two aspects of the hope: plans (pathways) and motivation (agency). Four items reflect

agency, four reflect pathways and four are distractors. The demographics questionnaire

asked participants to identify their age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents'

level of education, tenure status, academic level of students taught (graduate,

undergraduate or both), and an option for "Other" description.

Data Collection

The study was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Boards at the home institution, and data was collected via electronic messages. The researcher contacted Latinx faculty associations at universities in the United States to distribute the survey to Latinx faculty at their schools. The survey information was collected through the Qualtrics electronic survey service.

Data Management

The data was managed according to Texas State's Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements. The data was anonymized. The anonymization process included: avoiding the collection of identifying information that was unnecessary for the study; removing direct identifiers (i.e. participant names, addresses, phone numbers) from the data; and when appropriate, replacing this information with a code (i.e. participant number or pseudonym in place of name) and aggregating variables or reducing the precision of reporting when possible to lower the potential for identification. For example, rather than recording full birth dates or precise ages of participants, the researcher recorded age range.

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Data Analysis

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The data was analyzed in three phases guided by three research questions. Phase one surveyed the levels of hope in tenured and tenure track Latinx professors in four-year degree granting universities in the United States. The results of these surveys included measures of pathways thoughts and agency thoughts. It also included a summary of the demographic characteristics of the participants. Phase 2 analyzed the statistical relationships between the participants' demographic characteristics at varying levels of hope. Phase 3 analyzed the data's fit with the Hope Theory Model.

To answer the study's first two questions regarding the hope level of Latinx professors and its relation to various demographic characteristics, the study used the descriptive statistics analysis functions in Microsoft Excel to analyze the hope level and demographic data.

First, the researcher scored each completed Hope Scale survey to determine the hope level of tenured and tenure-track Latinx professors when measured by the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) (Appendix B).

To score the surveys, the researcher first removed the participant responses for the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) distractor items (questions 3, 5, 7, and 11) which do not assess agency thoughts or pathways thoughts. The remaining responses (from questions 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 12) were added together using the sum function in Microsoft Excel. The results enabled the researcher to identify a demonstrated level of hope for each participant.

Next, the study used correlational analysis to establish the strengths of the relationships between levels of hope in Latinx professors at varying levels of demonstrated hope.

Hope Model Statistical Analysis

To answer the study's third question regarding the psychometric properties of Snyder's two factor Hope Scale Model, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted.

A statistical study's findings are considered to be significant through the use of a statistical test. Using one statistical test to check for the significance of a study's findings has commonly been done in the past. A more useful analysis, used in the present study, was accomplished through the use of a Structural Equation Model (SEM).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

One goal of the present study was to find out if a significant statistical relationship exists between the Hope Theory Model's inferred construct of hope and the factors of agency and pathways thinking. I used one type of SEM to check for the significance of the strength of these types of relationships using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). As the name suggests, this type of analysis allowed me to confirm whether hope is a function of the factors, agency and pathways thinking, as Snyder's theoretical construct of hope proposes. To determine this, the current study measured the statistical fit of the data with the Hope Theory Model to determine if the factors of agency and pathways thinking are indeed a function the latent variable hope (see Figure 1).
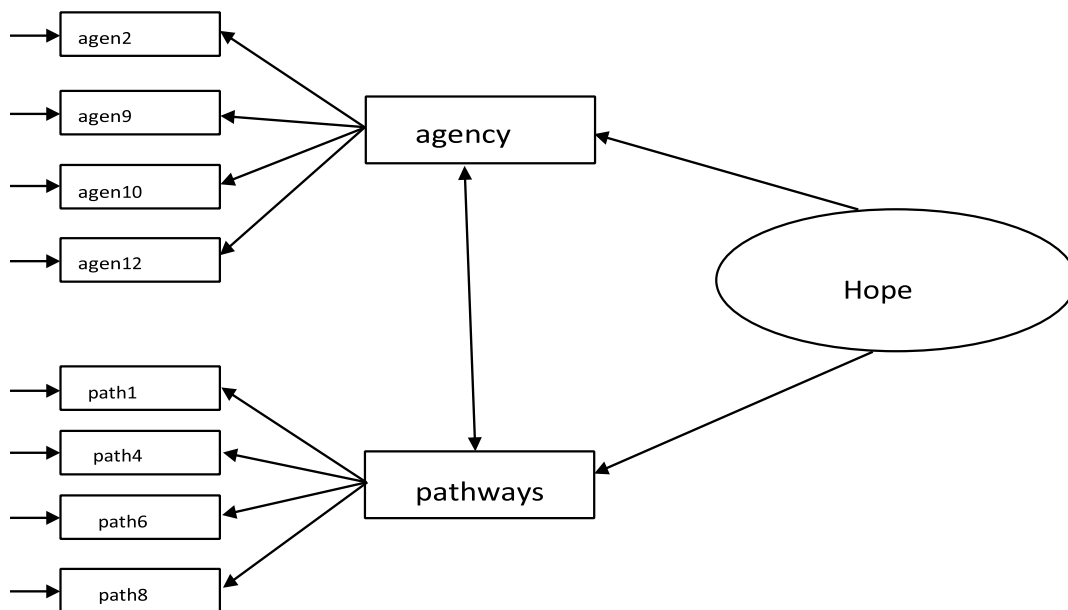
Figure 1

Hypothesized Two Factor Hope Model CFA Path Diagram

Note. The path diagram is based on *Psychometric properties of the Hope Scale: a confirmatory factor analysis* (Babyak, Snyder, & Yoshinobu, 1993).

CFA allowed the researcher to test the hypothesis that a relationship between the observed variable, hope, and its underlying latent constructs, agency and pathways, exists. A statistically good fit suggests that the Hope Scale survey's results with Latinx professors is consistent with earlier CFA analyses of the Hope Scale with college students (Babyak, M. A.,

Snyder, C. R., & Yoshinobu, L., 1993).

When conducting CFA, the number of observations suggested by Kline (2016) is 20 for each factor that is being analyzed. My study had 2 factors, and the number of observations was

51 which exceeded the minimum requirement of 40.

Chi-Squared Test

CFA confirmed the data's fit to a model's constructs through various fit tests. One of the tests I used was the chi-square test. This test revealed the difference between the expected differences in covariances or strengths among the latent variables and the actual or observed covariances. Covariance refers to the tendency of the value of one variable to increase or decrease in a positive or negative way with another variable's value. In this case the expected covariances among the factors of agency and pathways thinking were compared to observed covariance of the observed data. If there was little difference between the expected and the actual covariances then the model shows a good statistical fit (Taasoobshirazi & Wang, 2016; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The chi-squared test produced a "p" value which indicates probability level. Probability level signifies whether variables of agency and pathways thinking are

dependent or independent to the construct of hope. If the probability is level is greater than .05 then agency and pathways are independent and not related to hope levels. A "p" value that is less than .05 indicates that the results are significant (Taasoobshirazi & Wang, 2016; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation Test

The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is test of statistical fit that examined the data outliers or data which lie outside of the norm of the majority of the data analyzed. These data are referred to as the residual. This statistical test used residuals to understand the observed norm or majority data. In essence, RMSEA produced a measurement of not how good the data were, but the probability of how bad it was (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2010; Taasoobshirazi & Wang, 2016). The less "badness" (Taasoobshirazi & Wang, p. 31,

2016) that is found in the data then the more statistically fit it is to the Hope Model (see table 2).

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Reliability and Validity

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The reliability and validity of the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) was supported by previous research evidence. The Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) demonstrated internal reliability with Cronbach alphas ranging from .74 to .84 (Snyder et al., 1991; Sumerlin, 1997; Cramer & Drykacz, 1998). Snyder, Feldman, Taylor, Schroeder & Adams (2000) reported that the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) had satisfactory internal consistency and test-retest reliability. The Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) has been found to be stable over several weeks with a test-retest reliability of .85 and internally reliable with alphas of .74 and .88 (Snyder et al., 2002). Additionally, the test-retest reliability was .85 over a period of three weeks (Anderson,

1988), and .73 over a period of eight weeks (Harney, 1989). Shorey et al. (2007) reported the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) alpha at 0.77 with the alpha for the agency subscale at 0.79 and the alpha for the pathway's subscale at 0.69. Finally, in relation to other self-report measures such as the Life Orientation Test (Scheier & Carver, 1985) which measures optimism ($r = .60$), the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) demonstrates adequate convergent and discriminate validity

(Snyder etal.,1991).

Chapter Summary

This chapter described the study's methodology.

This quantitative study had three objectives: 1. to determine the level of hope of a group of tenured and tenure track Latinx professors; 2. to examine the relationship between the participants' levels of hope and the demographic characteristics of age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught (graduate, undergraduate or both); and 3. to determine if the inferred construct of hope was statistically related the factors of agency which is the development and maintenance of the drive for using those plans to reach goals and pathways thinking or the planning of ways to achieve these one's goals.

To accomplish the study's three objectives the researcher created a demographics questionnaire (Appendix C) to determine the participants' age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught (graduate, undergraduate or both). Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale (Appendix B) was used to measure hope levels.

The data analysis was conducted in two phases. The first phase used descriptive statistics to determine the mean, median and mode of hope levels collated according to

the demographic characteristics identified with the questionnaire. The second phase of data analysis was to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis to test the hypothesis that a relationship between the observed variable, hope, and its underlying latent constructs, agency and pathways, exists.

The total number of questionnaires and Hope Scale surveys completed was 51 and included faculty nationwide. The survey was completed by male and female tenured and tenure track Latinx professors ranging in ages from 25 to 74 years of age.

The researcher contacted the Latinx faculty associations at universities in the United States to ask for assistance in distributing the survey to Latinx faculty members. The questionnaire and Hope Scale survey information was collected with the Qualtrics electronic survey tool.

Data were collected using the Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) and a demographics questionnaire from a sample of tenured and tenure-track Latinx professors. The study used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the hypothesis that Hope Theory's inferred construct, hope, is linked to the factors of agency and pathways thinking. The reliability and validity of Snyder's Hope Theory is supported by previous studies.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This chapter presents the study's data and data analysis results.

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine the strength of relationships between age, gender, race/ethnicity, parents' level of education at varying levels of demonstrated hope in a sample of tenured, and tenure-track Latinx and to determine if the construct of hope is statistically related to the study's participants' agency and pathways thinking.

The data were analyzed and guided by three research questions.

1. What is the hope level of Latinx professors as measured by Snyder et al.'s

   (1991) Hope Scale?

2. What are the demographic characteristics of tenured, and tenure-track Latinx professors at varying levels of demonstrated hope?

3. Are the factors of agency and pathways thinking statistically related to hope levels in a group of Latinx professors?

The study participants' demographic characteristics were classified according to gender, age, race/ethnicity, the highest level of school completed by participant's parents, their rank

(tenured or tenure track) and the type of courses taught (graduate/undergraduate/both).

Latinx Professors' Hope Levels

To answer the study's first question regarding hope levels in Latinx professors, the Hope Scale Survey was distributed as an online survey to tenured and tenure track professors at universities across the United States. Hope levels were determined by

summing the scores of the surveys. The results showed that the average hope level score was high for the group of Latinx professors observed (see table 1).

Latinx Professors' Hope Levels: Age Comparison

The study's second question focused on the demographic characteristics of Latinx professors at varying levels of demonstrated hope. The Hope Scale Survey was distributed as an online survey to Latinx professors at universities across the United States. The results of the survey revealed that hope levels increased as age increased. The greatest difference in average hope levels was evident between the youngest age group and the oldest group in the study (see table 1).

Latinx Professors' Hope levels: Gender Comparison

This study also examined hope levels by gender. The present study's results revealed that there is a difference. Women Latinx professors in this study were shown to have average higher hope levels than their male counterparts. Men's hope scores also varied by a greater degree than that of women's hope scores (see table 1).

Table 1

Hope Levels in Latinx Professors: Mean, Median, Mode and Standard Deviation

Hope Level Category of Comparison	n	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
Hope Level of All Participants	51	53.9608	55	55	6.4744
Hope Level by Gender					
Women	27	54.88889	56	57	4.701336
Men	24	52.9167	54.5	56	7.9995

Hope Level by Age					
25-34 yrs.	6	52.5	52.5	None	5.8224
35-44	20	52.7	55	57	8.7124
45-54	13	54.8462	56	56	3.7383
55-64	9	55.8889	57	60	5.2308
65-74	3	55.6667	56	56	0.5774

Note. Data collected using Snyder's et al. (1991) Hope Scale Survey.

Hope and Latinx Professors: Survey Distribution and Responses

There were 64 Hope Scale surveys distributed. Of this total number, 13 surveys were excluded from analysis. The reasons for exclusion were 10 surveys were incomplete, two respondents were not Latinx and one respondent was retired from teaching. The total number of surveys included in the study's analysis was 51.

Descriptive Statistics Analysis Results

The descriptive statistics analysis results of the surveys revealed that the measures of agency or goal directed thinking, and pathways thinking were higher for women. Men's hope levels varied more than women's scores. The results also showed that older Latinx professors were more hopeful than the younger participants observed in this study.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

This study's third question focused on determining if the construct of hope is statistically related to agency and pathways thinking. CFA provides various tests to measure the statistical strengths of the Hope Model's factors: agency and pathways thinking and the inferred construct of hope. The CFA results of this study indicated that

the data acquired from the Hope Scale Survey questions regarding agency and pathways thinking are statistically significant and linked to hope levels.

The significant fit of this study's data confirmed that hope was related to agency and pathways thinking for this sample. In statistical terms, since analysis of the study's data indicated a good fit, then the latent variable of hope and the factors of agency and pathways thinking are not independent of each other, but actually linked.

Chi-Squared Test Result

The chi-squared test, which produces a "p" value and indicates the level of probability, was used to confirm the data's fit to the model's constructs. A "p" value that is less than .05 indicates that the results are significant (Taasoobshirazi & Wang, 2016; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The chi-squared "p" value of the current study was .002. This verified that the factors, agency and pathways, were strongly related to the construct of hope in the Hope Model. A chisquare near zero means there is a good fit because there is little difference between the expected covariance and the observed data's covariance (Taasoobshirazi & Wang, 2016; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The good fit revealed in this study indicated that the expected and observed covariance among the factors of agency and pathways thinking showed similar behavior and therefore are significant and not random or independent to the inferred construct of hope (see table 2).

Comparative Fit Index

Another CFA test used to examine the relationships between the latent factors of agency and pathways thinking and the latent variable of hope was the Comparative Fit Index (CFI). CFI analyzed a lack of compatibility or similarity between expected and observed covariances of the factors of agency and pathways thinking and inferred

construct of hope. CFI values can range from 0 to 1. A model is shown to have good fit if it has a value of .90 or greater (Taasoobshirazi & Wang, 2016; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The current study had a CFI value of .876.   This value is close to .9 and indicated an acceptable fit (Kim et al., 2016). In sum, the data was statistically significant and therefore agency and pathways thinking are related to hope levels (see table 2).

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

RMSEA values can range from 0 to 1 and the closer to 0 the better the fit. A good fit is any value that is equal to or less than .06 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The lower the RMSEA value the less bad the fit is and the better the data fit is to the model (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2010; Taasoobshirazi & Wang, 2016). The current study produced a RMSEA of .155 which indicates a poor fit of the data to the Hope Model (see table 2).

RMSEA and CFI Fit Disagreement

It should be noted that RMSEA and CFI fit indices can disagree. This does not mean that the model or data are flawed. There are several reasons why these fit indices might disagree. First, RMSEA and CFI evaluate by design, the degree of the model's fit from different perspectives. Second, the values used as thresholds for determining a good or bad fit are arbitrary. Third, the relationship of the concept of good fit to the indices is not well established in the SEM statistical analysis literature (Lai & Green, 2016).

Table 2

The Study's Hope Model Fit Indices Results

Model Fit Indices	Observed Value	Threshold	Fit
p-value (chi-square)	.002	<.05	Good
CFI	.876	>.80	Acceptable
RMSEA	.155	<.06	Poor

Surprises: During the Pandemic

The present study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and it revealed some surprising information about the effects the pandemic has had on some of the study's participants.

COVID-19 and Hope

For the study's follow up question, has the Covid-19 pandemic changed your level of hope about your career, answers were also surprising. Fifty one percent of the study's participants reported that the pandemic had not affected their level of hope.

The average level of hope remained high among the study participants even though the study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic during which, at the time of this writing, there have been over 597,533 coronavirus deaths the United States (Coronavirus, 2021). The median hope level score was reported at 53.96 out of a possible 64. One would expect the pandemic to have a negative effect on hope levels given the fact that people are isolated from one another, and unable to socialize with others and because of the number of lives lost to COVID-19.

The follow up question asked participants if the pandemic had affected their hope about their careers. The responses were consistent with the professors' high hope levels. Fifty one percent reported, that the Covid-19 pandemic had not changed their level of hope about their career. The consistently reported high level of hope and the pandemic's future effect on their careers are examples of the iterative process that has helped these professors reach success in the professoriate. Answers to the follow up question showed

the participants' resilient and persistent characters. For example, some of the study's participants reported feeling that their ability to continue doing research had not been adversely affected and others reported that they could see opportunities that did not exist before COVID-19.

It is this tough mindedness that seemed to allow them to succeed in the face institutional and societal obstacles that the literature on Latinx faculty members reports they often encounter (De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Garza, 1993; Verdugo, 1995). This study revealed the power that hope has played in some of their lives.

Hope Theory's factor of agentic thinking also seems to be fundamental. This reflects what Hope Theory posits, which is that hope is a function of agency and pathways thinking. Professors probably need agentic thinking and pathways planning to deliver instruction in the new pandemic environment. COVID-19 has created an acceleration in the digitalization of teaching and many professors are having to learn to teach and conduct their classes in a completely virtual or hybrid online environment. The high hope scores of the study's participants may reflect their ability to successfully navigate their new pandemic educational environment.

Hope: COVID and Anxiety. Another surprise was the depth of anxiety reported by some participants with high hope levels. This result is different from past studies where only people with low hope levels exhibited anxiety (Snyder & Lopez, 2002). Snyder discussed the relationship between hope and anxiety. He mentioned that hope studies have consistently shown that people with high hope levels are able to successfully pursue goals and have better mental health, i.e. less anxiety (Snyder & Lopez, 2002). Another example of the relationship between hope and anxiety was a longitudinal study

which studied the effects of hope on depression and anxiety and found that agency thinking had a statistically significant negative effect on anxiety (Arnau et al., 2007).

The anxiety reported by the participants in the current study was surprising because according their hope scale scores they held high levels of hope. The median hope score was 53.96 out of a possible high score of 64. Still 49 of them reported that the pandemic had affected them in a negative way and that the situation was "very scary". They reported feeling anxious and insecure in their employment because of the pandemic. Some reported a fear that the pandemic might affect the number of opportunities within academia and some were considering quitting higher education altogether.

An awareness of the anxiety that can be caused by the pandemic may help policymakers and practitioners in academia realize the need for the importance of meaningful interactions with others in online virtual environments to possibly help them feel less stressed and to maybe give them hope to reach their academic goals.

Knowing that anxiety and stress are a big part of the COVID-19 experience will hopefully create an awareness that our students and colleagues may be suffering and anxious as well. People with high hope levels are able to deal with situations that may cause anxiety in those with low hope levels. Identifying who has a high level of hope is the first step to helping others in the academy that may be feeling stressed and anxious. High hope individuals may be able to help others by sharing their experiences and explaining how they have dealt with the obstacles they may have encountered during their careers. They may be able to help their anxious colleagues get through difficult times.

Hope: COVID and Unexpected Opportunities. It was surprising to find that some participants who answered "yes the pandemic affected their hope for their career", were affected in a positive way. These participants reported that the pandemic had made their work more relevant by being working in an online environment and others reported positive career and funding opportunities because of COVID-19. For these professors COVID-19 had "opened a lot of doors" and provided "tons of opportunities".

This seems to indicate that there are opportunities related to the pandemic that have paradoxically emerged in the field of education. The world has changed because of the pandemic, and likewise teaching has often had to change. Many professors may have been forced to become more technologically savvy. Some of these professors, who feel more comfortable adapting to new technology, may feel the pandemic has opened new doors of opportunity to them because online learning and new technical knowledge have often become necessary skills.

The study revealed new opportunities and new challenges facing academia. Half of the professors in this study reported feeling stressed and anxious, but these difficult times may be overcome through careful planning for future challenges and remaining motivated to help those in need. Universities and their professors can survive COVID-19 through the process that Hope Theory suggests. This can be accomplished by having faculty voluntarily self-administer the hope survey instrument. This way faculty opt in to get help or to help others with low hope levels. Knowledge of hope levels could help people realize their potential for pathways planning and agentic thinking necessary for the successful attainment of goals. It is this researcher's belief that recognizing where

hope exists and where it is needed may help those who may be experiencing feelings of stress and anxiety.

Conclusion

This chapter describes the descriptive statistics analysis, and structural equation model tests results and result of the follow-up question. There was a significant effect of age and gender on hope levels according to the results of the descriptive statistics analysis. The CFA results of this study indicated that the data acquired from the Hope Scale Survey questions regarding agency and pathways thinking are statistically significant and linked to hope levels. The result of the follow up question was that participants reported that the pandemic had not affected their level of hope about their career but they reported an increase in feelings of anxiety.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This chapter summarizes the study and discusses the results and their significance. The study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and some surprising results resulting from this are also discussed. The implications for policy, practice and theory are presented. The chapter closes with recommendations for future research with the Hope Scale and the researcher's concluding remarks.

Summary of the Study

As mentioned in the first chapter of this study, my background and family history were not good predictors of my becoming a Latinx professor. However, I learned to overcome obstacles such as being the first in my family to attend college and often being the only Latinx in my college classes to become a successful teacher of adults for over two decades. My ability to plan and maintain agentic thoughts, my hope, allowed me to be where I am today.

Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Model (CCWM) asserts that People of Color, and thus Latinxs, are tenacious, persistent and are culturally imbued with strengths that help them attain educational goals even in the face obstacles. These strengths based on hope are real and they do exist. My accomplishments in education are proof of this.

Even now as I write this, I am the only Latinx in my department at the college where I work and I have been for the last fourteen years. It is only through my tenacious determination to change the circumstances of the poverty into which I was born that I accomplished becoming an Associate Professor. If I am asked to distill one thought

about the current dismally low number of Latinx professors in the United States today, it is that things can change. However, it takes studies that try to understand strengths instead of looking to systemic problems that exist. We need to understand Latinx professors to prepare future Latinx scholars. Measuring hope levels allowed the researcher to explore the level of agentic and pathways thinking that exists within them. This in turn may provide a possible way of understanding how they became tenured and tenure-track professors.

The problem this study addressed was the disproportionate percentage of Latinx faculty in U.S. universities compared to the percentage of Latinx people in the U.S. population. Latinx people made up 17.8 percent of the U.S. population in 2017 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016) reported that Latinx people were present in all sectors of the American labor force. However, there is a mismatch between the number of Latinx people in the United States and the number of Latinx faculty members in universities (Martinez, 2018; Morris, 2016; Ponjuan, 2011). The percentage of Latinx professors, assistant professors and associate professors is only 4.1 percent (National Center, 2017).

Several studies exist that explain the hurdles Latinx faculty face. This study examined their levels agentic and pathways thinking which may play an important role in their attainment of tenure and tenure-track positions in the academy. Understanding these faculty members is important for their recruitment to and retainment in the academy because the numbers of Latinx professors in American universities should be proportionate to their numbers in the U.S. population.

This study examined the strength of the relationships between demographic characteristics and varying levels of demonstrated hope in a sample of tenured, and

tenure-track Latinx professors. The statistical strength between the Hope Theory Model's construct of hope and the factors of agency and pathways thinking was also analyzed.

This quantitative study had three objectives. One was to determine the level of hope of a group of tenured and tenure track Latinx professors. Another objective was to examine the relationship between the participants' levels of hope and the demographic characteristics of age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught (graduate, undergraduate or both). The third objective was to determine if the inferred construct of hope was statistically related the factors of agency and pathways thinking.

To accomplish this the researcher created a demographics questionnaire (Appendix C) to determine the participants' age, area of teaching/research focus, gender, parents' level of education, tenure status, and the academic level of students taught (graduate, undergraduate or both). Next, Snyder's (1991) Hope Scale (Appendix B) was used to measure hope levels by determining the participants' disposition to 1) identify goals, 2) plan ways to achieve these goals (pathways thoughts), and 3) develop and maintain the drive for using those plans to reach goals (agency thoughts).

The total number of questionnaires and Hope Scale surveys completed was 51 and was distributed nationwide. The survey was completed by male and female tenured and tenure-track

Latinx professors ranging in ages from 25 to 74 years of age.

What is the hope level of Latinx professors as measured by Snyder et al.'s (1991) Hope Scale?

The Hope Scale survey was used to answer the study's first question: What is the hope level of Latinx professors? The survey revealed that Latinx professors have high levels of hope.

This study's results agreed with similar findings in other correlational studies that have shown that "hope correlates reliably with superior academic performances" (Snyder, p. 258, 2002; Snyder, Cheavens, & Michael, 1999). This high level of academic achievement was evident in all of the study's participants who had each reached a high level, if not the highest level, in academia for anyone aspiring to be a professor in a university by reaching the rank of tenure or tenure track.

As a Latinx person and an associate professor at a community college, the study's finding that Latinx professors have high levels of hope holds special meaning. The study's results show that with agentic thinking and pathways planning, a group of Latinxs were able to find success in the U.S. professoriate. The disturbing reality that few Latinx professors exist compared to Latinx proportion of the U.S. population, and few have existed in the history of universities in the United States, is tempered by the study's results which uncovered hope in a group of Latinx people. The study's results showed that a group of Latinx professors had high hope levels. The study also revealed that higher hope levels correlated with age and that women had higher levels of hope than the men in the study.

Although, the literature review revealed that Latinxs face multiple obstacles in academia(De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Garza, 1993; Verdugo, 1995), the levels of success as measured by their tenured and tenure-track status of a group of 51 Latinx professors', and their high levels of hope suggest that their success was not just a one-dimensional emotion of desire (Acosta, 2017; Jacobs, 2005), but rather, a dynamic and iterative

process of pathways planning to overcome obstacles and the agentic thought to continue moving forward even when a path seemed impassable (Snyder, 1991).

What are the demographic characteristics of tenured and tenure-track Latinx professors at varying levels of demonstrated hope?

The study revealed that gender and age had an effect on hope levels.

Hope: Women versus Men. There were 27 female participants in the study. Latinx women consistently showed higher hope levels that the men in the study. One explanation for this is that the hope scale is not simplistic and does not ask the participants to self-report whether they are more hopeful. Instead, the survey asked about behavior which the hope scale model associates with hope. For example, the respondents, were not asked if they were hopeful people. Instead the scale asked participants to rate themselves on a scale of one to eight whether they could think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to them.

The Hope Scale's questions which focus on behavior could explain why this study revealed women to be more hopeful than men. Past studies have mistakenly reported that men are more optimistic because they asked men to simply self-report how they feel, and men, it has been speculated, may underreport negative feelings about their future (Wikström, B.M., Lorentzen, B. and Lorentzen, S. (2018).

Not only were women's hope levels higher, the study showed that they were also more consistent then male participants' hope levels. Men's hope scores showed a standard deviation of almost 8 points while women's hope levels varied by less than 5 points.

Hope and Age. The study also revealed that older professors were more hopeful than the study's younger participants. It was counterintuitive to find that older

participants in the study were more hopeful. Since, "traditionally, aging has been conceptualized as an ongoing process of physical and cognitive decline" (Thomas et al., p.1, 2016), one would expect older participants to exhibit lower hope levels than the younger participants. A recent community-based study of 1,546 adults aged 21–100 years living in southern California was conducted by Thomas et al. in 2016 which revealed that people's mental health improves as they age. These researchers stressed that mental health, also "includes perceived stress and absence of anxiety and depressive symptoms" (p. 2).

Likewise, the present study also found that high hope levels were statistically proportionate to age and hope levels were higher in the present study's participants whose age was 44 and above. Latinx professors above the age of 44 consistently showed higher levels of hope than professors below this age. The study's participants were grouped into intervals of 18 to 24, 25-34, 35-44 and so on in intervals ten years up to the age of 85 years of age. Hope scores can range from a low of 8 points to a high of 64 points. In this study the highest score was a 63. Two participants scored this and they were in the 44-55 and the 55-65 age groups. The lowest hope score recorded was 27 points by a male in the 35-44 age group. In sum, professors above the age of 44 had higher levels of hope than professors below the age of 44.

It was tempting to explain the effect of age on hope levels and assume that financial instability, the stress of starting families and getting established in their careers could contribute to the lower hope levels of the participants younger than 44. However, as Maslow (1962) pointed out, being happy, and by default hopeful, does not come about just because one secures financial stability. Indeed, it has been shown that older Latinxs'

positive feelings of well-being such as hope can be considered to stem from their sense of satisfactory family relationships (Beyene, Becker & Mayen, 2001).

Meanings in the Study's Findings to Question 1 and 2. The findings showed that Latinx professors had high hope levels and that age and gender affected these hope levels. The study seemed to confirm Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Model. CCWM asserts that People of Color, and thus Latinxs, are culturally imbued with the strength and tenacity to be successful despite the obstacles they may encounter on the road to academic success.

Are the factors of agency and pathways thinking statistically related to hope levels in a group of Latinx professors?

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to examine the theory's hypothesis that hope is a function of the factors, agency and pathways thinking among tenured and tenure-track Latinx professors. The study determined that there is a statistical fit of the data and that the Hope Theory Model's factors of agency and pathways thinking are indeed linked to the construct of hope in this population.

In statistical terms this finding may be uninteresting. However, this study's results support those of previous CFA studies of the Hope model (Babyak et al., 1993). This study's CFA has shown, that the Hope Scale Model has statistical reliability and validity.

Interpretation of the Study's Findings to Question 3. The study findings revealed that hope is not only an emotion but a process among a select group of Latinx professors. The study began with the idea of a hypothetical construct called hope, but through a structural equation model analysis, it revealed hope to be more than a feeling or dream for expected outcomes. The CFA results of this study indicated that the data

acquired from the Hope Scale Survey questions regarding agency and pathways thinking are statistically significant and linked to hope levels.

Conclusions

Implications

Understanding hope levels in Latinx professors may help inform doctoral program policymakers and other interested program advocates. This type of awareness may help in the decision-making process as it pertains to the support of Latinx professors.

Implications for Policy. This study suggests that Hope Theory could be used to support faculty members. To be more specific, the following is a list of recommendations:

1.   Individuals with high hope levels could be invited to be mentors to those found to have low hope levels and may be anxious about their current situations.

2.   People who have identified themselves as having low hope levels could be offered the opportunity to be helped and or mentored by those with higher hope levels. By instituting these policies, universities may be able to go a long way in supporting and helping Latinxs.

Implications for the Hope Theory Model and Future Research. This study has shown that the construct of hope is significantly linked to the factors of agency and pathways thinking in a sample of Latinx professors. This knowledge could open the way for other researchers to explore Hope Theory's use with other people of color.

Implications for Practice. This study has shown that the Hope Theory Model is valid when used to measure the hope levels of a group of Latinx professors. In practice, recognizing professors' hope levels may be a first step towards building the best PhD programs for Latinx professors and students.

Knowing that older professors have higher levels of hope could be useful in helping new Latinx faculty members, especially younger professors, adjust to a new academic work environment. Older professors could be helpful to new and younger faculty members who may be experiencing anxiety and/or low hope levels.

This study's findings might also be an incentive for the Hope Scale to be applied in support of many others who may be experiencing stressful moments in a higher education environment. Not only could Latinx professors benefit from Hope Theory, but also university students. Many Latinx students are often the first in their families to move away from home to attend college (First-Generation, 2012). Knowing their hope levels could pave the way for universities to help them. University counselors could use the Hope Survey to identify students in need of support and thereby reduce the numbers of Latinxs who do not finish college academic programs (Bill & Melinda, n.d.).

PhD programs which are often directed to the preparation of future scholars could also benefit from the use of the Hope Scale Survey to possibly identify areas of needed support within particular students, whether it be in agentic thinking, and motivation, or pathways thoughts and finding ways around obstacles encountered during their participation in a PhD program.

Recommendations for Research

Future studies with Latinx professors might possibly benefit, statistically speaking, from larger study samples. This could increase a study's reliability. Kline (2016) recommends that the optimum number for a structural equation model analysis is considered to be 200 surveys for reliable results, while according to Fraenkel et al. (2015), a descriptive statistics study is statistically significant with 1,539 surveys.

Future studies could include a more diverse set of professors such as the inclusion of any professor, regardless of ethnicity or race, who teach in a university. In this way, descriptive statistics could reveal correlations among diverse types of professors such as tenured versus nontenured or tenure track scholars and other correlations.

Final Remarks

At the outset of this study, I was surprised and disappointed by the low number of Latinx professors in the United States. However, during my exploration of the hope levels of the current study's group of professors, I discovered some of the ways and means of their success and consequently a hope for a remedy to the low number of Latinx professors that exists in American universities today.

The study revealed that a group of Latinx professors have high levels of hope that included their ability to be persistent and plan ways to become tenured and tenure-track professors regardless of the obstacles of discrimination, institutional barriers, cultural barriers and a general lack of Latinx inclusion in the US professoriate that the literature reports they often face and may have had to overcome (De Luca & Escoto, 2012; Garza, 1993; Verdugo, 1995).

This study took place during the worst health crisis the United States has experienced in a hundred years (Farzan, 2020). Still, even in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, these men and women maintain high hope.

Hope Theory seemed to reveal the strength of the process of pathways and agentic thought in a group of Latinx professors and recognition of this process will hopefully guide policy, practice and theory as universities move forward into a future that is not yet clear.

This study revealed that Hope Theory is relevant, especially now, when hope is needed the most, and it may be helpful in the recruitment, training, and support of current Latinx professors and those of the next generation.

This study of the hope levels in a group of Latinx professors in U.S. universities has hopefully added to the understanding of the process for success in the academy. This study may add to the literature of hope theory and possibly bring about change in universities' policies, and practices. It is my opinion that the use of hope theory to advance the training, support and preparation of Latinx professors is a worthy venture. This study hopefully provides new ideas for further research with the Hope Theory Model and emphasizes the role of hope in our new world and in the world of academia.

APPENDIX A

IN SEARCH OF HOPE IN LATINX TENURE TRACK AND TENURED FACULTY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH STUDY:

Do you self-identify as a Latino/a/x?

Are you a tenured or tenure-track faculty member in a Doctoral, Professional, or Master's College/University?

If you answered yes to these questions, please consider taking part in a research study examining the hope levels Latino/a/x professors in higher education.

The study involves an online survey and a demographics questionnaire which take 2 – 5 minutes to complete. Your participation is confidential and your name will not be associated with the study.

For more information:
The principal investigator at Texas State University, Department of Adult, Professional, and Community Education (APCE) in charge of this study is Raul Cantu. You can contact him at: rwc60@txstate.edu The Principal Investigator is a student, as such, the faculty supervisor is Ann K. Brooks. She can be reached at ab41@txstate.edu. if you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research.

Appendix B

Hope Scale

Instructions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes YOU and put that number in the blank provided.

1. = Definitely False

2. = Mostly False

3. = Somewhat False

4. = Slightly False

5. = Slightly True

6. = Somewhat True

7. = Mostly True

8. = Definitely True

___ 1. I can think of many ways to get out of a jam.

___ 2. I energetically pursue my goals.

___ 3. I feel tired most of the time.

___ 4. There are lots of ways around any problem.

___ 5. I am easily downed in an argument.

___ 6. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to me.

___ 7. I worry about my health.

___ 8. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.

___ 9. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future.

___10. I've been pretty successful in life.

___11. I usually find myself worrying about something.

___12. I meet the goals that I set for myself.

Appendix C

Demographics Questionnaire

Instructions: For the following items, please fill in the blank as appropriate or place X on the box by the

response that is most descriptive of you. The information collected will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

1. Gender: _____

2. Age Range: ❑18-23 ❑24-29 ❑30 and above

3. Race/Ethnicity: (select all that apply to you)

❑American Indian/Alaska Native ❑Asian/Pacific Islander ❑Black/African America

❑Hispanic/Latino ❑White/Caucasian ❑Other: _____

4. Highest level of school your father completed:

❑ Middle school/Jr. high ❑ College or beyond ❑ High school ❑ Other/unknown

Highest level of school your mother completed:

❑ Middle school/Jr. high ❑ College or beyond ❑ High school ❑ Other/unknown

5. Which of the following best describes you:

❑Tenured Faculty (Indicate year you became tenured: _____)

❑Tenure-Track Faculty (Indicate year that you expect to become tenured: _____)

❑Teach Mostly Undergraduate Courses

❑Teach Mostly Graduate Courses

❑Teach a combination of Undergraduate and Graduate Courses

6. Area your teaching/research is focused on:

_____

Appendix D

CFA Model Syntax

```
> library(lavaan)
> my_data <- read.csv("hop.csv",TRUE,",")
> hopemodel1<-'agency=~AGEN2+AGEN9+AGEN10+AGEN12
+ pathways=~PATH1+PATH4+PATH6+PATH8'
> fit<-
cfa(hopemodel1,data=my_data)
> summary(fit,fit.measure =
TRUE)
```

lavaan (0.6-1) converged normally after 31 iterations

  Number of observations   50

  Estimator   ML
  Model Fit Test Statistic   41.884
  Degrees of freedom   19
  P-value (Chi-square)   0.002

Model test baseline model:

  Minimum Function Test Statistic   212.998
  Degrees of freedom   28
  P-value   0.000

User model versus baseline model:

  Comparative Fit Index (CFI)   0.876
  Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)   0.818

Loglikelihood and Information Criteria:

  Loglikelihood user model (H0)   -516.489
  Loglikelihood unrestricted model (H1)   -495.547

  Number of free parameters   17
  Akaike (AIC)   1066.978
  Bayesian (BIC)   1099.482
  Sample-size adjusted Bayesian (BIC)   1046.122

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation:

RMSEA   0.155
90 Percent Confidence Interval   0.091 0.219
P-value RMSEA <= 0.05   0.007

Standardized Root Mean Square Residual:

SRMR   0.081

Parameter Estimates:

  Information   Expected
  Information saturated (h1) model   Structured
  Standard Errors   Standard

Latent Variables:
          Estimate Std.Err z-value P(>|z|)
agency =~
   AGEN2   1.000
   AGEN9   1.546 0.546 2.831   0.005
   AGEN10   2.294 0.713 3.217   0.001
   AGEN12   0.812 0.323 2.511
0.012   pathways =~
PATH1   1.000
   PATH4   0.957 0.179 5.354   0.000
   PATH6   1.345 0.208 6.480   0.000
   PATH8   0.999 0.211 4.733   0.000

Covariances:
          Estimate Std.Err z-value P(>|z|)
agency ~~
   pathways   0.365 0.138 2.649   0.008

Variances:
          Estimate Std.Err z-value P(>|z|)
  .AGEN2   0.659 0.136 4.835   0.000
  .AGEN9   0.811 0.174 4.650   0.000
  .AGEN10   0.571 0.163 3.500   0.000
  .AGEN12   0.404 0.084 4.821   0.000
  .PATH1   0.641 0.144 4.441   0.000
  .PATH4   0.522 0.120 4.366   0.000
  .PATH6   0.250 0.103 2.416   0.016
.PATH8   0.916 0.199 4.616   0.000
agency   0.179 0.109 1.639   0.101
   pathways   0.773 0.261 2.965   0.003

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