

2015-01-01

Immigration and Family Violence at the Household Level of Analysis: Examining the Effects of Immigrant Culture and Neighborhood Structure

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IMMIGRATION AND FAMILY VIOLENCE AT THE HOUSEHOLD LEVEL:
EVALUATING THE EFFECTS OF IMMIGRANT CULTURE AND
NEIGHBORHOOD STRUCTURE

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EVALUATING THE EFFECTS OF IMMIGRANT CULTURE AND
NEIGHBORHOOD STRUCTURE

by

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THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at El Paso

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

May 2015

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1. Statement of the Problem

This research examines the relationship between immigration and crime, specifically family violence. This study centers on the relationship between immigration and family violence at the household level of analysis. The literature will be drawn from studies primarily focused on the neighborhood level of analysis given that the data for this research is gathered at that level. This is an important topic to study for a number of reasons. First, scarce studies of crime and immigration have examined the connection between immigration and family violence. Second, there are number of reasons, both theoretical and empirical, to predict a relationship between immigration and crime. Importantly, some of these predictions are countervailing. For example, some cultural factors associated with immigration such as patriarchy are predicted to increase family violence whereas some structural forces, such as strong neighborhood social control are predicted to decrease family violence. Third, there is a great deal of misinformation and political hyperbole surrounding the issue of immigration and, in particular, its relationship to crime. Thus, the results of the current research will inform these important theoretical, empirical, and political issues.

There is a lot of misrepresentation of the facts regarding the impact that immigration has on communities. Contrary to popular belief, many studies at the neighborhood level have demonstrated that settings with a large percentage of immigrants have low crime rates despite poor economic prospects and a lack of social capital. Scholars such as Robert Sampson (2008) have even gone as far as attributing the decline in the crime rate that the United States has witnessed from the 1990's to the present to the proliferation of immigrants - particularly because of the cultural values that they bring to the communities they migrate to. It should also be noted that Hispanics or Latinos are increasing in number in the United States not just by means of immigration, but also by natural increase. In fact, in 2013 Hispanics or Latinos comprised 17% of the US population (US Census Bureau). But more importantly, it is a worthy endeavor to elucidate what it is about immigrant communities that makes them safe places

to live in. While the effect of immigration on all crimes is of great interest, the present research is focused on family violence in part because this topic has received scant research attention (Wright and Benson, 2010) and in part because there are theoretical reasons to predict that levels of immigration should have specific effects on this type of crime. Before delving into this specific literature, it will be instructive to review research on the larger topic of community level of immigration and crime and then highlighting the theoretical framework of the immigration and family violence relationship at the household level.

All things considered, immigrant communities are some of the safest places to live in (see Research Findings section). This appears to be due to the fact that immigrant communities are characterized by strong informal social control where most people are highly interconnected and, therefore, heavily monitored and neighbors are willing to keep an eye out for children misbehaving and are willing to intervene to correct any behavior that they deem inappropriate. This is otherwise known as collective efficacy (Sampson, 1997). Additionally, an attitude of hard work and keeping their head down seems to be the norm for many immigrants, despite their poor overall economic prospects (Sampson, 2005; Desmond and Kubrin, 2009). An amalgamation of all these variables has come to be known as the *Latino Paradox*. Sampson and Bean (2006) articulated that the Latino Paradox is “the finding that Mexican immigrants, despite their economic disadvantage, experience disproportionately lower rates of violence compared to second- and third- generation Americans” (pg. 9).

The setting for the present research is El Paso County, Texas, which is located in west Texas and borders Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, México which CNN (2010) deemed as one of the most dangerous cities in the world in 2010. I will draw on US Census 2014 statistics: There was a population of 833,487 with about 81% of its residents being Hispanic. As a result of bordering Mexico, 78% of El Paso County’s population is of Mexican origin. Additionally, 26% of the county’s residents are foreign-born.

Unfortunately, 24% of the county's population is living under the poverty line. Despite this fact, El Paso County remains the safest large city in the United States (Morgan et al 2013).

Further examination of the 2014 statistics derived from the US Census reveal significant differences between El Paso County and other settings where immigration and crime research has been conducted such as Chicago, Miami-Dade County, and San Diego County. The US Census statistics reveal differences related to population size, percentage foreign-born, percent Hispanic and Mexican origin, as well as percent living under the poverty rate. The population statistics for the aforementioned traditional research settings are as follow: The city of Chicago's population is 2.7 million, Miami-Dade County's is 2.6 million, and San Diego County's is 3.2 million. Next, we examine the percentage foreign-born, percent Hispanic population, and percentage Mexican origin statistics. The Census statistics show that 21% of Chicago's, 51.3% of Miami-Dade County's, and 23.4% of San Diego County's populations are foreign-born. The statistics also show differences in percentages related to Hispanic origin. For San Diego County that percentage is 32.9%, for Miami-Dade County it is 65.6%, and for the city of Chicago it is 28.9%. Additionally, 21.3% of Chicago's, 29% of San Diego County's, and 2.2% of Miami Dade County's population is of Mexican origin. The statistics also show differences in the poverty rates across the cities. In Chicago, 22.6% of the population is living under the poverty rate. In San Diego County, the percentage is 14.4%, and in Miami Dade County the percentage is 19.9%. These are some of the differences between El Paso County and those traditional places where much of the research has been conducted.

2. Research Findings on Immigration and Neighborhood Crime

Myriad studies examining immigration and crime at the neighborhood level point to the conclusion that immigration does **not** lead to an increase in crime. On the contrary, these studies indicate that immigration typically has no effect on crime or that it actually lowers crime at the neighborhood level. Previous studies have measured immigrant concentration at the neighborhood level, while controlling for other factors, to see the effect it has on the neighborhood crime rate and they have consistently suggested that immigration does not elevate crime (Lee et al. 2001; Lee and Martinez, 2002; Martinez et al. 2004; Sampson et al. 2005; Stowell and Martinez, 2007; Martinez et al. 2008; Desmond and Kubrin, 2009). In addition, it is critical to note that this relationship is not exclusive to Latino or Hispanic immigrants, this relationship has been found among many different immigrant groups in various places. In their study in the cities of El Paso, San Diego, and Miami, Lee et al. (2001) found that immigration is unrelated to Latino homicide in all three cities. Furthermore, they also found that immigration is negatively related to black homicide levels in Miami. Additionally, in a later study analyzing administrative neighborhood level panel data in the city of San Diego, Martinez et al. (2010) found that neighborhoods with a greater amount of immigrants have fewer Latino white and non-Hispanic white homicides. Stowell and Martinez (2009) also examined the effect of immigrant concentration on homicide among different ethnic groups in Miami and find that it lowers homicide among Latino ethnic groups- including individuals from Honduras, Nicaragua, and Cuba. Lastly, in their study of adolescent violence, Desmond and Kubrin (2009) found that immigrant concentration decreases violence in predominantly Asian neighborhoods among that particular group only, and not among other subgroups.

It is basically acknowledged among scholars that “overall, the weight of evidence suggests that concentrated immigration has little if any association with aggregate homicide” (Sampson and Bean, 2006, pg. 20). For clarification purposes, 54.6% of the foreign-born population who entered the US

between the years 2000 and 2009 migrated from Latin America (US Census Bureau). Considering these statistics, Latin Americans' or Hispanics' lower violence can be explained by "a combination of having married parents, living in a neighborhood with a high concentration of immigrants, and having individual immigrant status" (Sampson and Bean, 2006, pg. 20). In addition, the protective effect of immigration does not only affect Latinos, but also African Americans, as "even for blacks... living in a neighborhood of concentrated immigration is also associated with a reduced risk of violence even after a host of factors, including the immigrant status of the person, are taken into account" (Sampson and Bean, 2006, pg. 20).

A host of studies have examined the immigrant concentration and crime relationship at the census tract level of measurement. Notably, Lee et al. (2001) conducted a study examining homicides in the cities of El Paso, San Diego, and Miami and found that immigration is unrelated to Latino homicide in all cities. Their results also indicated that immigration was negatively related to black homicide levels in Miami, null in El Paso, and positive in San Diego. In a study analyzing the relationship between adolescent violence and immigrant concentration, Desmond and Kubrin (2009) found that immigrant concentration had a significant negative impact on violence among Hispanic youth, and also a negative, but not statistically significant among non-Hispanic youth. However, they find that in predominantly Asian neighborhoods, the effect of immigrant concentration only benefits that particular group- and not other subgroups. Furthermore, in a study in the cities of Chicago and Los Angeles, Kubrin and Ishizawa (2012) found that immigrant concentration was negatively associated with crime. Most importantly, they found that immigrant communities situated around larger immigrant communities had lower crime rates. Yet, this effect was more pronounced in the city of Chicago than in Los Angeles. The authors hypothesize that this may be due to the characteristics of the immigrant populations in question, as in Los Angeles a high percentage of immigrants tend to be of Asian descent, where their social capital is reserved for immigrants of Asian descent only, and not to other groups like Latinos/Hispanics.

The above studies clearly have sound methodologies and are paradigms in the immigration and crime literature. However, they do not have the direct measures that could help explain their concluding implications. These studies did not measure immigrant structural measures such as collective efficacy which might have potentially elucidated and clarified their implications. Below are studies that measure collective efficacy at the neighborhood unit of analysis.

One of the seminal studies examining the effects of collective efficacy was conducted by Sampson et al. (1997) in the city of Chicago by use of the *Project on Human Development for Chicago Neighborhoods* (PHDCN) dataset. To gather this data, neighborhoods were operationalized by aggregating census tracts into neighborhood clusters that were similar in terms of geographic information (such as interstates, roads, and other landmarks) and social indicators such as data pertaining to percentage foreign-born and percent Latino. In this study, Sampson et al. (1997) found that at the neighborhood cluster level, collective efficacy reduces violence, measured by self-reported victimization. A later study by Morenoff et al (2001), which also employed the PHDCN dataset, found that collective efficacy decreases homicide. They concluded that neighborhoods close to neighborhoods with high levels of collective efficacy exhibited lower crime. The opposite also held true as neighborhoods close to low collective efficacy neighborhoods have higher crime. In a study in Chicago, Sampson et al. (2005) used the PHDCN data set together with three waves of data on groups aged 8 to 25 and found that immigrant concentration is protective against self-reported violent behavior for all racial groups except for Puerto Ricans/other Latino group. They also find that third generation immigrants commit more crime than first or second generation immigrants.

2.1 Research on Immigration and Family Violence

As previously mentioned, there has not been much research conducted focusing on immigration and family violence. Two studies by Wright and Benson (2010) and Browning (2002) used the *Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods* (PHDCN) dataset which examined neighborhood

clusters of tracts in the city of Chicago- the same dataset Sampson used in 1997. Browning (2002) found that higher levels of collective efficacy reduced the likelihood of intimate partner violence at the neighborhood level. Furthermore, in neighborhoods with more collective efficacy women are more likely to disclose abuse to neighbors. Pearlman et al.'s (2003) found that a high level of linguistic isolation at the census block level was associated with a lower risk of police reported domestic violence. Finally, Wright and Benson (2010) used the Community Survey and the Longitudinal Cohort Study (LCS) portions of the PHDC and concluded that “neighborhoods with high levels of immigrant populations enjoy lower levels of violence between partners; that is, concentrated immigration is *negatively* related to intimate partner violence and functions as a protective structural factor against such violence” (pg. 495).

These studies speak to the power of an immigrant neighborhood to keep its residents in check- as a higher concentration of immigrants is negatively associated with instances of intimate partner violence (Wright and Benson, 2010), no different from the relationship with other crimes. To build on this study's cultural measures, the present study will include the additional cultural variables of machismo and familismo; examining these relationship at the household unit of analysis.

3. Theoretical Perspectives

The current state of knowledge regarding the relationship between immigration and crime is almost unanimous in terms of the neutrality and even negative relationship it has on crime rates in a community, however theoretical development and testing has not kept pace. Scholars have suggested that a host of factors could explain why immigrant communities have low crime rates. Some of the reasons have to do with the family and neighborhood structure that immigrants help bring into communities because of their ideals regarding having a strong family and a close-knit community. Below are discussed a number of theories that tap into these structural and cultural explanations.

3.1 Immigrant Revitalization Thesis

The main theory that this research will examine is the immigrant revitalization thesis which is specifically focused on explaining the relationship between immigration and crime. Lee and Martinez (2002) elaborate on the theory explaining that “immigration revitalizes poor areas and strengthens social control (thereby decreasing crime) due to strong familial and neighborhood institutions and enhanced job opportunities associated with enclave economies.” Proponents of the immigrant revitalization thesis hold that neighborhoods with large numbers of immigrants tend to experience economic growth as immigrant ethnic enclaves are formed which help business flourish. One way that such revitalization happens is through employment. The social capital that exists in immigrant communities assists residents with employment. Particularly in ethnic enclaves, informal labor markets exist to provide first generation immigrants with invaluable employment by means of mom and pop stores. Thus, immigrants are typically poor, but working. New immigrants are able to rekindle a sense of community and cohesiveness which lead to an elevation of informal social control. Lee and Martinez (2002) stated that “although impoverished, immigrant enclaves rich in social capital may adapt more effectively to the deleterious effects of economic deprivation (e.g., family disruption and crime).”

The immigrant revitalization perspective is essentially an integration of cultural and structural factors at the neighborhood level. This perspective shares elements of the systemic theory, collective efficacy, immigrant selection theory, and the neighborhood and cultural structures that immigrants establish in communities they make their home. As immigrants arrive into new communities they revitalize this neighborhood by instilling in the residents a sense of hard work, optimism, an entrepreneurial spirit, and the desire for a low profile. While jobs may not be especially high-paying for immigrants, the enclave economy at least provides them opportunities for employment at or near a living wage. Family bonds and parental authority are also strong in these immigrant communities and they are further augmented by the informal social control brought forth at the neighborhood level by means of collective efficacy (Sampson, 1997) where children's and teenagers' behavior is everybody's responsibility as it would be in the best interest of the community to make sure they remain inconspicuous and away from law enforcement. As mentioned before, the inflow of immigrants serves as a neutralizing force against the acculturation of preceding generation who may become disillusioned by the reality of their prospects in life and as a result may turn to crime.

3.2 Social Disorganization Theory

The Immigrant Revitalization thesis is a recent perspective that challenges the social disorganization theory (Shaw and McKay, 1942) which holds that immigration should be associated with an **increase** in crime for several specific reasons. Social disorganization theory is focused on neighborhood or community levels of informal social control. Neighborhoods with strong informal social control will have low levels of crime, whereas neighborhoods with weak informal social control will have higher levels of crime. Social disorganization theory and research tends to focus on factors that might covary with informal social control, such as poverty, residential instability, and racial and ethnic heterogeneity. Based on the theory, immigration is predicted to lead to higher levels of crime because it will weaken residential stability due to the constant moving in and out of neighborhoods by immigrants,

putting a halt to any camaraderie that usually takes a long time to develop. Second, the racial and ethnic heterogeneity that develops as a result of immigration can lead to distrust among residents. Third, expanding on the issue of poverty, the related concentrated disadvantage view holds that immigration results in high levels of economic disadvantage, given the low level of skill that immigrants bring to the table. Separately, but especially in combination, residential instability, racial and ethnic heterogeneity, and concentrated disadvantage are predicted to disrupt communities thereby reducing informal social control and producing an increase in neighborhood crime (Shaw and McKay, 1942). Yet, for immigrant neighborhoods, the effect of these variables on crime is weakened.

3.3 Systemic Theory and Collective Efficacy

A critical aspect of this research is Criminologist Robert Sampson's (1997) term collective efficacy, which is a way for a community to regulate behavior within its boundaries, and specifically refers to communities' residents being willing and able to "do something" when they become aware of crime and deviance, such as telling people to "stop it" or to call police. Collective efficacy also includes an element of surveillance, where residents look after each other's property when they are gone. It is described by Morenoff et al. (2001) as "the linkage of trust and cohesion with shared expectations for control" (pg. 520). A key component of collective efficacy is the ability to regulate each other's children's behavior, sometimes referred to as collective parenting. The foundation for collective efficacy rests upon three types of informal social control that emerge from a more recent revision of social control called the systemic theory (Bursik and Grasmick, 1993) and which are described below.

The *private* level of social control refers to people regulating each other's behavior directly, whether it is by ridiculing, exiling, or shaming those who break the norms while at the same time rewarding those who conduct themselves like upstanding citizens. This type of social control is predicated on interpersonal relationships, such as parents building trust amongst each other, to the point

where they are willing to intervene when their neighbor's children are up to no good. Private social control may be enhanced when residents have common cultural values and a common language.

The *parochial* level of social control refers to the strength of social institutions such as stores, churches, schools, and recreational or social activities that bring people together, including those that are not socially attached through private social control networks. These parochial institutions serve the purpose of creating informal social control outside the home. The relationships formed in these institutions are not as personal as in the private level of social control. Any connection to these institutions is ultimately voluntary but this type of social control is more far reaching. These institutions are effective at creating and expanding interpersonal networks that provide support, to members of the community, creating a sense of solidarity and cohesiveness.

The *public* level of social control is a neighborhood's ability to access social capital such as local government support from the police and social welfare agencies. When this level of social control is strong residents have strong ties to these aforementioned agencies and are thus capable of acquiring their assistance to address neighborhood problems thus increasing social control (Sampson, 1997). This level of social control is critical at the neighborhood level as it is only when members in a community are able to tap into the government power structure- the likes of politicians, city bureaucrats, and other government officials- that concerns with the adequacy of schools, the quality and fairness of the police force, and the maintenance of roads, buildings, streetlights, and other facilities can be taken seriously and ultimately be dealt with. Having the support of government officials is of utmost importance for the purpose of shaping political decision making that aids in the improvement of a neighborhood.

When these levels of private, parochial, and public informal social control are relatively strong, then collective efficacy should also be high. Separately, but especially in combination, strong informal social control and collective efficacy are predicted to produce low levels of criminality in a neighborhood.

3.4 Immigrant Culture and Family Violence

An argument can be made that certain immigrant cultural influences, particularly from Latin America, could lead to increases in family violence, as they tends to stress patriarchy but it would be a disservice to not acknowledge that machismo is a highly racialized label stereotypically used to describe the Latino and or Hispanic population. Nevertheless, qualitative studies (see Raj & Silverman, 2002) have highlighted that in Latin America there is a strong cultural belief that men have to personify dominance and respect, having financial control of the household. Subsequently, women must remain submissive to their husbands, understanding that abuse is an acceptable part of their relationships thus they must keep it hidden for the sake of avoiding shame, being ostracized and exiled from their respective communities, and maintaining their family's good name intact. As women become increasingly employed in the US, they could potentially undermine men's power and, thus, upset the traditional balance of power in the gender sphere leading to tension and conflict at home, creating a role strain which could lead to an increase in the prevalence of family violence (see Menjívar and Salcido, 2002 and Klevens, 2007). From the outside looking in, all of the above cultural attributes are a recipe for disaster in terms of the precarious situations in which it places women. These cultural aspects pertaining to gender roles are otherwise known as familismo and machismo. Familismo is the belief that family is the main source of one's identity and dishonoring your family's name is one of the most shameful things a person can do (Kim, Soliz, Orellana, & Alamilla, 2009). Machismo, on the other hand, is the belief that a man should always be in control- for instance, making the important decisions in the household- and should be able to handle most situations on his own without assistance (Castro et al. 2012).

3.5 The Paradox of Immigrant Generational Status and Acculturation

Having just described cultural aspects of Hispanic immigrants that could potentially lead to family violence, it would be logical to believe that when immigrants part ways with their culture by becoming more Americanized or as their generational status changes from first to second generation the

likelihood of the occurrence of family violence would be reduced. However, this is not the case as it is well documented that first generation (unacculturated) immigrants do not increase neighborhoods' crime rate. In fact, studies suggest that the same cannot be said about their descendants, the second and later generations. Scholars have examined this phenomenon and the effect it has on propensity to commit crime. In their study of the traditional destination cities of San Diego and El Paso, Alvarez et al. (2013) found that higher levels of acculturation among immigrants was related to a higher number of arrests. Furthermore, Sampson (2008) noted how first generation immigrants are the least likely to commit crimes, but unfortunately the second and subsequent generations are more likely to turn to crime as a result of being subjected to the American cultural code of conspicuous consumption and capitalism. Acculturation also plays a critical role in family violence, as studies suggest that individuals who are more acculturated are at a higher risk for intimate partner violence (Lown and Vega, 2001; Sabina et al. 2013). In addition, Klevens (2007) noted that acculturation leads to intimate partner violence because of the role strain it produces where men's power is undermined by women getting employment and parting ways with traditional gender roles. The acculturation and family violence literature is consistent with the overall correlation between acculturation and crime (Desmond and Kubrin 2009; Morenoff and Astor, 2006; Alvarez et al. 2013).

Immigration itself appears to be protective of acculturation as Zatz and Smith (2012) acknowledged the positive aspects that immigrants bring to the communities, particularly established immigrant communities, in which they find "support in ethnic enclaves, where jobs, housing, and other forms of assistance were readily available. In turn, the new immigrants return the favor by keeping the culture, religious practices, and morals of their homelands vibrant in those communities" (pg. 144). This sentiment is also echoed by Desmond and Kubrin (2009) as they took note of how "being in an immigrant community reduces the likelihood of being acculturated." It is also important to take note of the segmented assimilation perspective which holds that a scarcity of social capital and economic

opportunities culminate with immigrants not being able to elevate their prospects in society (Portes and Zhou, 1993). However, based on the context of the setting where this study takes place, the role that immigrant communities' structural influences play in this relationship will be of great interest.

4. Hypotheses

The present research centers on testing a variety of theoretically based hypotheses regarding the relationship between immigration, which will be measured by immigrant generational status (see data and methods section) and family violence. Most importantly, the present research predicts that first generation immigrant households will have lower levels of family violence than second generation and third generation or higher immigrant households. The hypothesized relationship between immigrant generational status and family violence is further predicted to be affected by a number of cultural and structural factors that intervene in, or explain, this relationship. When looking at this relationship, it is important to understand that there might be additional intervening variables that account for why these variables are associated. Simply put, intervening variables serve to clarify and elucidate the nature of the relationship between the dependent and the independent variable. Below is a specific overview of the study's hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: First generation immigrant status will be inversely associated with rates of family violence.

Hypothesis 2: Machismo and familismo will be positively associated with rates of family violence.

Hypothesis 3: Acculturation will be positively associated with rates of family violence.

Hypothesis 4: Collective efficacy and surveillance will be inversely associated with rates of family violence.

From a cultural standpoint, first generation immigrant status might contribute to family violence because it would be associated with machismo and familismo which might be positively associated with family violence (Raj and Silverman, 2002). However, immigrants also bring forth strong levels of informal social control by means of collective efficacy and surveillance which are hypothesized to be negatively associated with family violence (Lee and Martinez, 2002). This could counteract the

deleterious effects of familismo and machismo in terms of their association with family violence.

Another variable that must be taken into consideration is acculturation, as given the literature; it tends to lead to an increase in criminal behavior- with family violence not being an exemption. It is important to replicate the studies which have confirmed acculturation's positive effect on violence rates in different settings, including El Paso County, the present setting for this study.

5. Data and Methods

The methodology of the immigration and crime project in El Paso County, Texas (NSF grant 1251897, PI Dr. Theodore Curry, Co-PI Dr. Cristina Morales, and Co-PI Dr. Harmon Hosch) follows in the footsteps of Robert Sampson's Community Survey Component of the *Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods* (PHDCN) conducted in 1997. Specifically, neighborhoods were created by aggregating census tracts that were similar in terms of geographic information (such as interstates, roads, and other landmarks) and social indicators such as data pertaining to percentage foreign-born and percent Latino. These social indicators regarding census tracts in El Paso County, Texas were gathered from the American Community Survey (ACS)¹. The research team's knowledge of the neighborhoods in the city was also taken into consideration. Ultimately, a total of 95 neighborhood clusters were created. Then, 44 of these neighborhood clusters were randomly selected out of a sampling

¹ The dataset used is the 2012 5 year ACS which consists of an amalgamation of data gathered from 5 years ranging from 2008 to 2012. The ACS obtains a representative sample of census tract data by analyzing the list of all housing units and grouping quarters from the Master Address File (MAF) which is a collection of all current known living quarters from all 3,142 counties in the US which is updated every year. It is the Census Bureau's objective to "publish multiyear estimates based on 5 calendar years of sample data for all statistical, legal, and administrative entities, including census tracts, block groups, and small incorporated places, such as cities and towns" (US Census Bureau, 2010). All this data is tabulated into the census tract level. While the American Community Survey is done at the one year, three year, and five year level, it is only at the five year level (which we use in the present study) where measurement at the census tract level is possible given the wide breadth of survey responses that are critical for the purpose of measuring with accuracy and reliability.

strata based on data related to percentage foreign-born and percent Latino. The data for this research involves the individual respondents' answers to the survey questionnaire.

5.1 Dependent Variable

Family Violence. For this study, the dependent variable is the performance of family violence at the household level which is characterized by physical violence inflicted by one family member on another family member and also includes child abuse. This measure is predicated on the conflict tactics scale (Straus et al. 1996) which asks “how many times during an argument with their partner in the past year their partner had: kicked, bit, or hit them with their fist; hit or tried to hit them with something; beat them up; choked them; threatened them with a knife or a gun; and used a knife or fired a gun” and “if a family member went beyond what you believe is the acceptable use of physical punishment to discipline a child.” The respondents were given a confidential self-administered section that measured family violence. They were given the following instructions and asked to circle yes or no to the following items:

While you have lived in your neighborhood, are you aware of **any member of your household (including you)** ever doing any of the following to **another household member** in an effort to hurt that person? This does not include play or teasing, and does not include adults disciplining children or children fighting with each other.

A household member threw something that hurt another household member?

A household member twisted the arm or hair of another household member?

A household member kicked, punched or hit another household member, or hit a household member with a weapon or object?

A household member slapped, pushed or shoved another household member?

A household member choked another household member?

A household member slammed another household member against a wall?

A household member used threats or actual force to engage in any type of sexual activity with another household member?

A household member ridiculed or criticized another household member's values or beliefs or their physical appearance?

Please circle **Yes** or **No** to the following question about the discipline of children. While you have lived in your neighborhood, are you aware of any member of your household (including you) members ever doing the following?

A household member went beyond what you believe is the acceptable use of physical punishment to discipline a child?

The responses to these items pertaining to family violence were summed to create a scale measure of family violence. Cronbach's Alpha for the family violence items is .842. Factor Analysis produced two eigenvalues higher than 1.00 (4.097 and 1.039). For the scale measure of family violence the arithmetic mean is .54 and the standard deviation is 1.4.

5.2 Independent Variables

Immigrant Generational Status. In the present study, immigrant generational status is measured based on responses to questions regarding the respondents' and their mothers' country of birth. If the respondent and the mother indicated they were not born in the United States, the respondent is a first generation immigrant. If the respondent was born in the United States and the mother was not born in the United States then the respondent is a second generation immigrant. If both the respondent and their mother were born in the United States then the respondent is a third generation or higher immigrant. The generational status measures were recoded into dummy variables where 1 would equal first generation immigrant and 0 would indicate that the respondent was not a first generation immigrant. The same measurement was used for second generation immigrants and third generation or higher immigrants. Overall, our respondents included 281 first generation immigrants, 276 second generation immigrants,

and 478 third generation or higher immigrants. Furthermore, data pertaining to immigrants' documentation status was available; however there were very few cases to warrant analysis in the present study.

Acculturation. Immigrants that come into the United States oftentimes have to choose (or sometimes the choice is made for them given their circumstances) whether or not and to what extent they will embrace mainstream American culture and ideals and suppress the same culture and ideals from their native country. Redfield et al. (1936) described this concept as follows: "acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups." In this study, the ARSMA II scale (Cuellar, Arnold, and Maldonado, 1995) was used to measure acculturation. Specifically, acculturation was measured by gathering the mean response to questions related to Mexican oriented acculturation and subtracting it from the mean response to questions related to American oriented acculturation which is the way the scale is used by Cuellar et al (1995). Both orientations of acculturation were measured by using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 with 1 being "not at all" to 5 being "extremely often or almost always" to measure the responses. The questions below were related to American oriented acculturation:

I speak English

I associate with Anglos

I enjoy listening to English language music

I enjoy English language TV

I enjoy English language movies

I enjoy reading in English (e.g., books, magazines, and newspapers)

I write in English (e.g., letters, notes, emails, text messages)

My thinking is done in the English language

My contact with people in the USA has been...

My friends, while I was growing up, were of Anglo origin

My friends now are of Anglo origin

I like to identify myself as an Anglo American

I like to identify myself as an American

The questions below were related to Mexican oriented acculturation:

I speak Spanish

I enjoy speaking Spanish

I associate with Méxicans and/or Méxican Americans

I enjoy listening to Spanish language music

I enjoy Spanish language TV

I enjoy Spanish language movies

I enjoy reading in Spanish (e.g., books, magazines, and newspapers)

I write in Spanish (e.g., letters, notes, emails, text messages)

My thinking is done in the Spanish language

My contact with people in México has been...

My father identifies or identified himself as "Méxicano"

My mother identifies or identified herself as "Méxicana"

My friends, while I was growing up, were of Méxican origin

My family cooks Méxican foods

My friends now are of Méxican origin

I like to identify myself as a Méxican American

I like to identify myself as a Méxican

Cronbach's alpha for the acculturation to American values is .910 and for the acculturation to Mexican values it is .948. For the American Oriented items, factor analysis indicated two eigenvalues higher than 1 (6.578 and 1.701) and for the Mexican Oriented Items it indicated three eigenvalues higher than 1 (9.515, 1.623, and 1.001). A value of 4 was added to the acculturation scale to keep the values positive. The arithmetic mean for the acculturation measure is 4.18 and the standard deviation is 1.67.

Collective Efficacy. Sampson (1998) describes collective efficacy in the neighborhood context as "the linkage of mutual trust and the willingness to intervene for the common good". Respondents were asked "how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following?" Items were then summed to create a scale of collective efficacy.

People in your neighborhood would correct a child if the child was showing disrespect to an adult.

They ... are willing to do something (such as call police or parents, or directly intervene) if children or teenagers were observed spray-painting graffiti on a local building.

They ... are willing to do something if children or teenagers were observed in some other sort of bad behavior or misconduct.

People in your neighborhood would break up a fight in front of your house if someone was being beaten or threatened.

The above items were summed in order to create a scale measure for collective efficacy. Cronbach's alpha for the collective efficacy items is .795. Factor Analysis indicated a single factor. The arithmetic mean is 15.76 and the standard deviation is 2.954.

Surveillance. Another measure that is related to collective efficacy is surveillance. This is because in neighborhoods where collective efficacy is high residents look after one another, including watching over each others' property. To measure surveillance, we asked the respondents to indicate "yes" or "no" to the following two questions:

“in the last 12 months have any of your neighbors asked you or a member of your household to keep an eye on their house for any reason?”

Now lets’ consider the reverse of the situation. Have you or any member of your household asked any of your neighbors to keep an eye on your house for any reason in the last 12 months?

Both of these items were coded as 1 equals “yes” and 0 equals “no” and were then summed to created A measure of surveillance. The mean for surveillance is .97 and the standard deviation is .898.

Closely linked to Collective Efficacy are *Parochial Social Control*, *Private Social Control*, and *Public Social Control*. To measure *Parochial Social Control*, the strength of the institutions that bring people together (i.e. schools, churches, recreational activities), we ask the following question: Do you or any other people currently living in your home currently belong to any of the following?

A church, synagogue or mosque (or other religion). Including any religious group, organization or club?

A neighborhood watch program or any other type of neighborhood group or association
The PTA or some other group connected to a school or university

A business, civic or political group [Examples: Rotary Club, Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce, the VFW, LULAC. This also includes volunteer work, such as volunteering for a political candidate or party or to collect funds for a charity.]

A sports club, group or organization (including for youth or children)

The boy scouts or girl scouts or some other type of youth club, group or organization (includes both adults and children)

Any other type of club, group or organization (including for youth or children)

A dichotomous measure for *Parochial Social Control* was created where a measure of 1 indicated that the respondent belonged to any of the groups mentioned above. A score of 0 indicated that

they didn't belong to any of the above groups. The arithmetic mean is .66 and the standard deviation is .473.

To measure *private social control*, the measure of interpersonal relationships, we ask the questions, "Other than those who live in your home, how many of your relatives or in laws live in your neighborhood?" and "Other than relatives, how many other people do you know who live in your neighborhood?" A scale measure of private social control was made by adding the scores of these questions. The arithmetic mean is 10.84 and the standard deviation is 50.861.

To measure *public social control*, which is the measure of access to support from local government agencies, the respondents were asked to use a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very unconcerned) to 5 (very concerned), to respond to the following; in your opinion, how concerned do you think local governmental agencies in El Paso would be in addressing neighborhood problems regarding the following? (Probe: Concerned means "do you think agency personnel would be willing to listen and be interested in the given problem?")

How concerned do you think local governmental agencies in El Paso would be regarding... Any type of problem concerning crime?

How concerned do you think local governmental agencies in El Paso would be regarding... Problems with police not responding to emergencies?

How concerned do you think local governmental agencies in El Paso would be regarding...Problems with police harassing residents

... Police being rude or disrespectful to residents?

... Police abusing their power?

... Problems or concerns with local public schools?

How concerned do you think local governmental agencies in El Paso would be regarding... Dealing with graffiti or litter, trash or illegal dumping?

Dealing with abandoned buildings and cars?

Problems with the maintenance of roads, sidewalks, streetlights, parks, and other public facilities?

Problems with maintaining infrastructure like electricity, water, sewers, draining for rain or floods?

A scale measure of public social control was created by summing the scores for the above items. Cronbach's Alpha for public social control is .937. Factor analysis indicated one component for the scale. The mean for this measure is 34.76 and the standard deviation is 10.099.

Familismo and Machismo. In immigrant communities, particularly those with immigrants from Mexico, familismo and machismo are two characteristics that come to mind (Raj and Silverman, 2002). Familismo can be described as the belief that the family and the family's name and reputation are of the utmost importance (Kim, Soliz, Orellana, & Alamilla, 2009). Machismo is a perspective characterized by male dominance and a patriarchal family structure (Castro et al. 2012). To measure familismo, respondents were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with the following statements, using the same 5 point Likert scale, which were summed in order to create a measure of familismo:

A mother must keep the family unified.

One's family is the main source of one's identity.

One should never bring shame upon one's family.

One's family is the main source of support.

The needs of the family are more important than my own individual needs

To measure machismo, the respondents were asked to assess the following statements using the same 5 point Likert scale. These items were reverse coded and summed to create a measure of machismo:

A man can ask for help when he needs it.

A good father will hug and kiss his children often

A man should always tell his wife and children how much he loves them.

A man can follow orders as well as give them.

A man can share his feelings.

Cronbach's alpha for the machismo items is .833 and for familismo it is .783. Factor Analysis produced a single component both for machismo and familismo. For machismo, the mean is 22.19 and the standard deviation is 2.695. For familismo, the mean is 21.32 and the standard deviation is 3.206.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Measures

	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation
Family Violence Scale	9	0.54	1.40
First Generation Immigrant	1	0.27	0.45
Second Generation	1	0.27	0.44
Third Generation or Higher	1	0.46	0.50
Familismo Scale	15	21.32	3.21
Machismo Scale	20	22.19	2.70
Acculturation	7.534	4.18	1.67
Collective Efficacy Scale	16	15.76	2.95
Surveillance Scale	2	0.97	0.90
Private Social Control Scale	1508	10.84	50.86
Parochial Dichotomous	1	0.66	0.47
Public Social Control Scale	40	34.76	10.10

6. Results

Descriptive statistics serve to provide information pertaining to the demographic characteristics of the respondents. More than half (56%) of the respondents were female. The average age of our respondents was 42 years old. The average income of the respondents was \$30,242. Out of the survey respondents, 81% were Hispanics, 13% were non-Hispanic whites, 3% were black/ African American, 2% were of another race, and a very small percentage of the respondents were American Indian or Asian which is reflective of El Paso County's population.

Table 2 highlights the distribution of the mean measure of family violence and acculturation according to immigrant generational status. The mean family violence scale measure of our respondents was .54. When comparing this mean measure of our dependent variable among the groups we see that first generation immigrants have a mean score of .37, second generation immigrants have a mean score of .50, and third generation or higher immigrants have a score of .64. Additionally, there is also a difference of acculturation levels between the immigrant generational status groups. The respondents' mean measure of acculturation was 4.18. The results show that first generation immigrants have a mean score of acculturation of 2.67, second generation immigrants have a score of 4.02, and third generation or higher immigrants have a score of 5.21. The results of Post Hoc tests (ANOVA) comparing the groups' mean measures of family violence show that the differences between the groups are significant.

Table 2: Differences between Groups' Mean Family Violence and Acculturation

	Total	Mean FV	Accult
Total	1035	0.54	4.18
1st Gen.	281	0.37	2.67
2nd Gen.	276	0.5	4.02
3rd Gen+	478	0.64	5.21
F Value		3.58	354.992
Bold indicates p <.01			

The bivariate correlations between family violence and first generation immigrant status ($r = -.072$), second generation immigrant ($r = -.012$), and non-immigrant status ($r = .075$) are in line with the hypotheses. First generation immigrant ($r = .085$) presents a small and significant correlation with familismo- which is negatively correlated with family violence. Third generation immigrant or higher status ($r = -.101$) has a statistically significant and small negative correlation with familismo. Acculturation exerts a small and significant correlation with family violence which is critical to our immigrant generational status measure. This is because there are significant differences in acculturation between the immigrant generational statuses; First generation ($r = -.566$) has a statistically significant and strong correlation with acculturation and second generation immigrant ($r = -.064$) has a small and negative correlation with family violence. Conversely, third generation or higher immigrant status ($r = .562$) presents a statistically significant and strong positive correlation with acculturation. Furthermore, it should be noted that familismo ($r = -.215$) has a significant and moderate negative correlation with acculturation.

Next, we turn to the correlations regarding the immigrant structural measures. First, we examine the social control behavior measures' correlations. Collective efficacy ($r = -.106$) has a statistically significant and small negative correlation with family violence while surveillance ($r = .062$) has a statistically significant and positive correlation with family violence. Importantly, first generation immigrant status ($r = .082$) has a small and positive correlation with surveillance while familismo ($r = .184$) has a statistically significant and moderate correlation with collective efficacy. The social control capacity measures also present correlations that run contrary to hypothesis. Private social control ($r = .124$) is significant and positively correlated with family violence while public social control ($r = -.096$) is significant and negatively correlated with family violence. Both of these correlations are small. Significant and noteworthy is the fact that first generation immigrant status ($r = -.066$) is negatively correlated with public social control ($r = -.96$) which is negatively correlated with family violence and

significant. Furthermore third generation or higher immigrant status ($r = -.061$) is significant and negatively correlated with private social control which is positively correlated with family violence ($r = .124$) and significant.

Table 3: Correlations between Measures

	1st Gen.	2nd Gen.	3rd Gen. +	Familismo	Machismo	Accult.	C. Efficacy	Surveillance	Private SC	Parochial SC	Public SC
Family Violence	-.072	-.012	.075	-.038	-0.04	.095**	-.106**	.062	.124**	-.004	-.096**
1st Gen.		-.368**	-.568**	.085**	.006	-.566**	-.055	.082**	-.001	.015	-.066
2nd Gen.			-.557**	.029	.046	-.064	.013	-.035	.07	.001	.003
3rd gen. +				-.101**	-.05	.562**	.038	-.04	-.061	-.014	.057
Familismo					.385**	-.215**	.184**	.0336	.044	.045	.005
Machismo						-.021	.239**	.074	.055	.044	.008
Acculturation							.011	-.052	-.033	.008	.067
C. Efficacy								.105**	.038	.086**	.082**
Surveillance									.032	.188**	-.023
Private SC										.061	.054
Parochial SC											.009

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Next, we turn to linear regression analyses (see Table 4). It is important to state that the immigrant and non-immigrant dichotomous measure was also analyzed yielding similar results supporting hypotheses, however, the measure we employ specifying immigrant generational status leads to more cogent results. Thus, we examine the effects that immigrant generational status and cultural variables have on family violence in the following regression equations. Variance inflation factor analysis does not reveal multicollinearity in our measures in the linear regression models we run for the present study. None of the measures exceeded a value of 1.5. The results show that third generation or higher immigrant status ($b = .276$) presents a statistically significant and moderate difference with first generation immigrant status, the reference category (see Model 1). When adding the immigrant cultural measures and acculturation to the model, all these measures lose significance. These results indicate that

cultural factors do not mediate or aid in understanding the higher level of family violence among third generation or higher immigrants compared to first generation immigrants.

Table 4: Linear Regression Models

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Full Model
Variable	B	B	B	B
2nd Gen.	.137	.18	.183	.103
3rd Gen +	.276	.32	.336	.183
C. Efficacy		-.057	-.050	-.046
Surveillance		.139	.146	.148
Parochial SC			-.028	-.033
Private SC			-.001	0
Public SC			-.014	-.014
Acculturation				.061
Familismo				.005
Machismo				-.014
Constant	0.367	1.098	0.706	1.480
R Square	0.007	0.027	0.036	0.040
Bold indicates p <.01				

In Models 2 and 3, we examine the effects that immigrant generational status and structural influences exert on family violence. In Model 2, we incorporate the social control behavior variables, collective efficacy and surveillance. In this model, we see a statistically significant increase in the strength of third generation or higher immigrant status ($b = .320$). Additionally, we see that one of the social control behavior measures, collective efficacy ($b = -.057$) presents a statistically significant and small relationship to family violence while surveillance ($b = .139$) presents a statistically significant and small relationship to family violence. In this equation, collective efficacy presents a suppressor effect which essentially reduces family violence while surveillance presents mediation as it exerts a positive effect on family violence. In Model 3 we add the social control capacity variables which include parochial, public, and private social control into the equation. Supporting hypotheses, we see that those variables have a negative but small relationship with family violence. Furthermore, the positive effect

that third generation or higher immigrant status has on family violence increases in strength and remains significant ($b = .336$). Collective efficacy and surveillance remain significant as well.

In Table 4, we examine a full model which includes all the study's independent variables. In this equation, we see that second generation immigrant and third generation or higher immigrant statuses lose significance and strength. The immigrant structural measures of collective efficacy and surveillance remain significant in the full model and replicate the respective effects they presented in Models 1 and 2. The social control capacity measures of parochial, public, and private social control also replicate their effects from Model 3. When adding the immigrant cultural variables and acculturation to the model, we see that the results are not significant.

7. Discussion

The goal of this research was to get an understanding of the roles immigrant generational status, cultural, and structural variables play in the immigration – family violence nexus. Given the literature and theoretical framework, the hypotheses for this study were as follow; first generation immigrant status would be inversely related to rates of family violence, immigrant cultural variables - machismo and familismo – and acculturation would be positively related to rates of family violence, and finally, the immigrant structural variables (collective efficacy, surveillance, and public, private, and parochial social control) would be negatively associated with rates of family violence.

The first hypothesis was that first generation immigrant status would be inversely related to family violence. The group comparison analysis shows that there are differences in the occurrence of family violence between first generation, second generation, and third generation or higher immigrant statuses with respect to family violence rates. The results also show distinct correlations based on immigrant generational status pertaining to family violence. First generation immigrant status and second generation immigrant statuses are negatively correlated with family violence, with the former presenting a stronger correlation, while third generation or higher immigrant status presents a positive correlation (see Table 3). This is consistent with the literature as findings consistently show that the protective status of immigrant status withers away as subsequent immigrant generations exhibit higher criminal behavior than first generation immigrants (Sampson et al., 2005; Sampson and Bean, 2006, Sampson, 2008). This same effect is evident in linear regression analyses as we see a significant difference (.276) between first generation immigrants and third generation or higher immigrants (see Table 3) These results also add support to the Latino Paradox (Sampson and Bean, 2006) which holds that first generation immigrants engage in less criminal behavior than the second and later generations.

Secondly, the present study hypothesized that immigrant cultural measures, such as machismo and familismo, would increase family violence. The results do not provide empirical support for this

hypothesis as linear regression analyses lead to the conclusion that these measures do not mediate or explain the effect of immigration on family violence (see Table 4). In actuality, bivariate analysis reveals that familismo is negatively correlated with acculturation and positively with the structural measure of collective efficacy (see Table 3). These results provide support for the immigrant revitalization thesis (Lee and Martinez, 2002) as first generation immigrant status is significantly correlated with familismo which is positively correlated with collective efficacy, which is protective against family violence. On the other hand third generation or higher immigrant status is negatively correlated with familismo. Thus a legitimate argument can be made that first generation immigrants revitalize neighborhoods by instilling a sense of family oriented values which bring forth strong levels of collective efficacy which serves to deter family violence.

Thirdly, this study hypothesized that the immigrant structural measures would be protective against family violence. The results present paradoxical implications with regards to their relationship with family violence which are critical given the positive correlation that first generation immigrant has with surveillance and, also, indirectly with collective efficacy through its correlation with familismo. On one hand, collective efficacy is protective against family violence in this study's analyses – which is consistent with immigrant revitalization theory (Lee and Martinez, 2002). However, the finding that surveillance is positively related to family violence raises questions, given that its effect is antithetical to social disorganization theory which holds that this measure of informal social control should deter criminal behavior (Bursik and Grasmick, 1992). To add to this discussion, bivariate correlations reveal that private social control is positively correlated with family violence (see Table 3).

Lastly, the present study hypothesized that acculturation would be associated with higher rates of family violence. The results provide preliminary support for this hypothesis as acculturation is significantly correlated with family violence. We also see differences in acculturation between the immigration status groups as third generation or higher immigrants have higher level of acculturation

than second generation immigrants who in turn have a higher level of acculturation than first generation immigrants. Bivariate correlations also second these results as first generation immigrant status has a significant and strong negative correlation, second generation immigrant status has a negative but small correlation and third generation or higher has a significant and strong positive correlation with acculturation. We also see that acculturation is negatively correlated with familismo, which, as mentioned previously, is correlated with collective efficacy which is protective against family violence. Additionally, we see that acculturation has a deleterious effect on family violence rates in this study which is consistent with the acculturation and crime literature at large (Desmond and Kubrin 2009; Morenoff and Astor, 2006; Alvarez et al. 2013).

The present study has contributed to the family violence literature by elucidating the effects of acculturation, particularly with its specific correlations with the immigrant generational statuses as well as familismo. Additionally, this study served the purpose of dispelling the notion that first generation immigrants would be more prone to crime – including family violence. This study also shed light on the effects that the stereotypical labels used to describe the Latino/Hispanic population, machismo and familismo, have on family violence. The results show that machismo and familismo are not related to family violence rates in any way. In fact, the results show that familismo is protective against family violence through its correlation with collective efficacy which is protective against family violence.

Future empirical studies and policy makers should take heed of these results and keep a watchful eye on the antithetical effect that surveillance and private social control might present in family violence cases. It could very well be that the more people an individual knows the more inclined they might be to engage in family violence because being a popular member in their community might give them a license to operate with impunity because they might believe that their neighbors would not want them behind bars. A similar argument could also be made about surveillance, as having mutual trust between neighbors to look out for each other's property when gone could mean that they would hesitate to report

any suspicion of family violence to the authorities. Yet both of these measures could very well go both ways because knowing a lot of people and having trust in your neighbors might mean that there are more sources for support for family violence victims and thus a higher probability for them to report abuse. These are some examples of the different dynamics that distinguish family violence from other crime customarily studied such as homicide. These types of informal social control might not be as protective as they might appear to be and this is something that future studies might want to examine and take into consideration.

Despite the contributions and implications that this study adds to the family violence literature, it is not without its limitations. For one, we must take note of the low R Square values for the linear regression models. This means that the measures analyzed in this study only account for a small percentage of the relationship with family violence. Additionally, it should be noted that the sample for this study comes from a single county, albeit, a traditional immigrant destination. Scholars should also take heed of studies which distinguish between traditional and new immigrant destinations (Shihadeh and Barranco, 2012) and ensure to continue conducting research in both research settings in order to attain a clear and complete understanding of the immigration and crime relationship.

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Curriculum Vita

Jorge Luis Hernández was born on October 19, 1989 in El Paso, Texas. His parents, Rubén Hernández and María Rosario Ramírez, were both born in Mexico and migrated to the United States to ensure a better life for their children. Their unparalleled work ethic and determination are Jorge's motivation which reminds him to never accept mediocrity. He graduated from Bowie High School in the spring of 2008 and subsequently enrolled in the El Paso Community College and earned his associate of arts degree in Criminal Justice in the fall of 2010. He then went on to the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) to earn his Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice in the fall of 2012 where he met his mentors Dr. Theodore Curry, Dr. Maria Cristina Morales, and Dr. Aurelia Lorena Murga who inspired him to take on the challenge of enrolling in the Sociology Master's program at UTEP. He is forever grateful for his mentors' relentless guidance and support, which propelled him to complete his master's degree in Sociology in the spring of 2015.

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