

## A Case against the Pathology of Matriarchy: The Effect of Family Structure on Need Achievement in Puerto Rican Students

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### Abstract

*Understanding the adaptive nature of unique family structures necessitates considering culture-specific mediators of risk factors. While the pathology of matriarchy in developmental literature may predict negative outcomes, single-mother Puerto Rican households possess adaptive strengths for need achievement, or motivation. The cultural characteristic of familismo shapes how socialization practices instill need achievement. I argue in Puerto Rican families, extended family reinforces standards of excellence while fathers discourage self-reliance training. Eighteen Puerto Rican six- to twelve-year-olds participated in a story-based version of the Thematic Apperception Test and were interviewed regarding their family life. Ethnographic home-visits complemented assessments. Content analysis of need achievement scores found children with a father present and extended family absent had significantly lower need achievement motives than children with a father absent. This research can help both to explain findings of Puerto Rican underachievement and to create culturally-specific methods to motivate students while dissuading the prevailing pathology of matriarchy.*

**Keywords:** single-parent, fathering, Puerto Rican students need achievement, family structure, achievement

### 1. Introduction

Research on single-parent families continues as a growing field with increasingly nuanced arguments. More fine-tuned methods to assess reasons for negative outcomes and to distinguish between single-parent homes temper expectations of negative outcomes for children. The adaptive nature of some single-parent homes, especially with African American homes, has spurred examinations of the differential functioning of homes deemed “non-normative” when compared to the mythic nuclear family. Adding to this discussion, the current exploratory research describes cultural characteristics of Puerto Rican families, namely the value of marriage and *familismo*, to depict parenting practices. In Puerto Rican families, extended family can reinforce standards of excellence while fathers can discourage self-reliance training. Thus, children from Puerto Rican households with an absent father and present extended family will develop greater motivation because of more autonomy and encouragement.

Based on a synthesis of research on single-parent families, Biblarz and Raftery (2010) state, “social science research has produced evidence both for and against the ‘pathology of matriarchy’ view” (p. 224). They indicate some studies find inferior outcomes for children in single-parent families, whereas other studies find children from single-parent households perform similarly, or even better in specific instances, than children from two-parent households. Research has found two-parent families benefit children in a myriad of psychological, social, and academic ways (Amato & Keith, 1991; Demo & Acock, 1996; Dornbusch et al., 1985). Maternal behaviors ineffectively explain these differences because single mothers’ parenting practices cross the spectrum from permissive to demanding and from responsive to rejecting (cf. Florsheim, Tolan, & Gorman-Smith, 1998; Dornbusch et al., 1985; Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch, 1991; Taylor, Larsen-Rife, Conger, Widaman, & Cutrona, 2010). Other explanations focus on the poverty (Adams, Milner, & Schrepf, 1984, p. 143;

Biblarz & Gottainer, 2000; Demo & Acock, 1996, p. 481), stigma (Adams et al., 1984; Dowd, 1997; Ladd-Taylor & Umansky, 1998), and conflict (Kinard & Reinherz, 1986; Strohschein, 2005) concomitant with single-mother families. Negative outcomes are not inherent to the single-parent family structure.

For example, children of widowed single mothers achieve similar to children in two-parent homes, and better than children of divorced single-mothers do (Biblarz & Gottainer, 2000), showing experiences of poverty, stigma, and conflict differ. Research should distinguish between “adaptive and maladaptive aspects of single-mother family functioning” (Florsheim et al., 1998, p. 1437). Investigating the adaptive nature of households should connect to sociocultural factors. One child may perceive another child’s risk factor as neutral (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker 2000, p. 550; Masten et al., 1995). Moreover, expected risks may protect in other cultural contexts (Cabrera & Garcia Coll, 2004; Fagan, 2000, p. 592; Landale & Oropesa, 2001; Staples & Mirandé, 1980, p. 892).

The best-researched example of the adaptive strength of single-mother households is with African American families. Kellam, Adams, Brown, and Ensminger (1982) found Black mothers often started child-rearing as single mothers as well as became single mothers. Longstanding ethnographic research shows African American parents cope with poverty and discrimination through mutuality amongst kin groups and community (Coontz, 2000; Stack, 1970). The risks of single-parent families for African American children differ (Adams et al., 1984, 51; Dunifon & Kowaleski-Jones, 2002). Sometimes African American youth benefit in single-mother households with more parental support and maternal warmth than other youth (Taylor et al., 2010). Thus, developmental assumptions of single-mother households need sociocultural context.

Cultural expectations on marriage play a significant role in understanding varying child outcomes in single-mother households. Focusing on stigma, Adams, Milner, and Schrepf (1984) claim father absence will matter more for “the white middle class or the white lower class aspiring to become white middle class—groups who tenaciously cling to the normative concept of the patriarch-headed nuclear family” (p. 134). Cultural values on marriage alter children’s experience of family structure. Similar to African American families, Puerto Rican families traditionally form families through consensual unions. Social networks on the island support norms expecting mento contribute economically to their children regardless of marital or legal claims (Chavez, 1991). Many have documented lower marriage rates for Puerto Rican families in comparative studies (Fomby & Estacion, 2011, p. 61; Landale & Hauan, 1992; Landale & Oropesa, 2001, p. 946; Leventhal, Xue, & Brooks-Gunn, 2006, p. 1365; Quiroz, 2001; Schmitz, 2006, p. 521). The low marriage rates, similar to African Americans, contrast with other Latino groups. Fomby and Estacion (2011) point to a lack of a marriage requirement like other U.S. Latino groups for family reunification visas as a possible source of this distinction from other Latino groups.

Marital status not only differs with Puerto Rican families, but also how marital status affects children does. Both Schmitz (2006, p. 522) and Leventhal et al. (2006, p. 1366) found certain characteristics of family structure statistically significantly affected child outcomes with Mexican Americans and other groups, but not with Puerto Ricans. Puerto Rican families experience more poverty than other groups, including immigrants, nonimmigrants, Latinos, and non-Latinos (Schmitz, 2006; Oropesa & Landale, 1997; Fitzpatrick, 1971). Thus, understanding the effects of single-parent households in Puerto Rican families requires the same attention to sociocultural characteristics as in African American families.

In addition, cultural expectations on paternal roles affect child outcomes in single-mother households. According to Lamb (1997), paternal roles vary greatly: “various groups hold contrasting views of what constitutes ‘the good father’” (p. 3). For instance, father absence may mean fewer opportunities for warm adult interactions (Cochran, Lerner, Riley, Gunnarsson, & Henderson, 1990), but only in settings where fathers interact warmly. While the family structure and socioeconomic status of Puerto Rican and African American families parallel (Fagan, 1998, 2000), their paternal images diverge. Mirandé (1991) observes, “whereas the Black male has traditionally been viewed as absent and a relatively weak [in the family], the Latino male has been depicted as a dominant, authoritarian figure” (p. 58). While African American fathers expect earlier self-reliance than Latinos do, Latino fathers consult their children less, monitor their children more, and have hierarchical relationships with their children more (Bartz & Levine, 1978, p. 714; Mullins, 2011). Since Mirandé’s (1991, p. 59) call for systematic work on the male in Latino families, a considerable debate has redefined Latino fathers’ roles, along with redefining Western parenting typologies. The image of Latino fathers as harsh is mistaken.

*Machismo* does require the male to have firm control of and authority over his family. However, expected, accepted authority needs no harsh tactics. Latino fathers can be quite warm, especially with young children (Calzada & Eyberg, 2002; Fagan 2000, p. 602; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Mirandé, 1991), even while expecting deference (Toth & Xu, 1999).

Western parenting perspectives unnecessarily split warmth from high parental control and no communication. Puerto Rican parents in particular are more nurturing (Figueroa-Moseley, Ramey, Keltner, & Lanzi, 2006) and communicate less (Calzada & Eyberg 2002, p. 359) than other Latino parents. Baumrind's (1967) typologies mischaracterize Latino parenting practices as rigid or harsh because of the lack of communication with demands. Rather than viewing Latino parents as authoritarian, Rodríguez, Donovan, and Crowley (2009) describe them as "protective" parents, adding the dimension of autonomy granting to Baumrind's traditional categories. High warmth, high demandingness, and low autonomy-granting depict protective Latino parents.

Research connects these parenting behaviors to the cultural value of *familismo*. Familism "emphasizes loyalty, solidarity, cohesiveness, and parental authority" (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007, p. 25; see also Zayas, Bright, Álvarez-Sánchez, & Cabassa, 2009, p. 354). These strong family ties can protect children's wellbeing (Ayón, Marsiglia, & Bermudez-Parsai, 2010, p. 743; Kuperminc, Wilkins, Roche, & Alvarez-Jimenez, 2009; Sommers, Fagan, & Baskin, 1993). In contrast, familism can impede success when family obligations limit utilizing programs and services (Kuperminc et al., 2009, p. 223). More importantly for this study of motivation, formalized familial obligations can decrease self-reliance, especially when a father views decision-making as his familial role because of *machismo*. Parents may interpret autonomy-seeking behavior "as threatening to the family's unity" (Zayas et al., 2009, p. 354). In this way, familism connects to the cultural value of *respeto*, or the "absolute respect and conformity to parental authority expected from Hispanic children" (Calzada & Eyberg, 2002, p. 362). Studies on Puerto Rican parents in particular place a high value on children's behaviors associated with *respeto* for proper demeanor over self-maximization (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007, p. 19; Miller & Harwood, 2001).

Familism obligates reciprocity beyond the nuclear family to extended kin (Fitzpatrick, 1971, p. 72; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007, p. 18; Quiroz, 2001, p. 333; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995, p. 111). Grandparents, aunts, and uncles encourage Latino children. Extended Latino family lives nearby or co-resides more often, especially with Puerto Rican families (Sarkisian, Gerena, & Gerstel, 2006, p. 338). Children refer to their extended kin for how they should act or feel (Marín & Marín, 1991). Extended family encourages the completion of academic goals (Sánchez, Reyes, & Singh, 2006, p. 62). In addition to the consideration of father absence, this research integrates the effect of extended family on children.

In summary, Puerto Rican families may value marriage differently, grant less autonomy, and offer more encouragement than the idealized nuclear family. The achievement motive, or one's desire to succeed, links to autonomy, warmth, and reinforcement (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003; Hofer, Busch, Bender, Ming, & Hagemer, 2010; Leventhal et al., 2006, p. 1371; McClelland, 1961). These qualities vary with parental ethnotheories. Cultural parenting practices "may result in culture-bound characteristics of the implicit achievement motive" (Hofer et al., 2010, p. 769). Limiting self-reliance, or forbidding the child to "handle his affairs in an independent fashion relative to other children his age" (Baumrind, 1967, p. 53), hinders achievement motivation. According to Biller and Lopez Kimpton (1997), "fathers who are overly intrusive and restrictive, and who attempt to impose their solutions on problems confronting their children, can certainly inhibit their sons' achievement motivation" (p. 151). Along with self-reliance, rewarding children's attempts to meet standards of excellence fosters need achievement (Rosen & D'Andrade, 1959). Latino extended family encourages children. Weisner and Gallimore (1977, p. 179) suggest expanding McClelland's analysis on the origins of need achievement beyond parental influences. I hypothesized children with extended family present and fathers absent have higher need achievement.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Participants

I recruited 18 Catholic Puerto Rican children from six to twelve years of age from urban, upstate New York elementary schools. For children in this age range, need achievement assessment is most reliable and least susceptible to demand characteristics (Smith, 1992). A parent of the 10 female, 8 male participants in kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade ( $M = 2.22$ ,  $SD = .37$ ) responded to a letter home to participate in research at school and a home visit. Most students had a father present ( $N = 12$ ), but were equally split on the variable of extended family presence. Pearson chi-square tests comparing presence of father against gender, school, grade, extended family presence, socioeconomic status, and acculturation level were nonsignificant.

I included only self-identified Catholics because Catholic fatalism can decrease self-reliance training (McClelland, 1961; Raybeck&Herrman, 1996) and confound need achievement due to family structure.

Some factors may make this sample unique. The population of Puerto Ricans in upstate New York may be limited in generalizability. Puerto Rican women moved northward when textile industries, their main employer, left New York City for lower minimum wages and taxes (Fitzpatrick, 1971). Selective migration patterns can represent variations in motivation. Voluntary participation may also create an atypical sample if school program volunteers are more motivated. Cultural characteristics create selection concerns (Marín&Marín, 1991). Because of *machismo*, families with a father figure could vary systematically from those without a father figure when a male either insists or refuses participation for his family. In addition, *simpatía* is a sense of obligation out of politeness. *Simpatía* affects participant recruitment and refusal rates along with the validity and reliability of data (Marín&Marín, 1991). Since *machismo* and *simpatía* are cultural characteristics, acculturation analyses help to evaluate their effect.

## 2.2. Procedures

Procedures included projective tests to assess need achievement, interviews to gather information about households, parental surveys for demographic information, and home visits for ethnographic detail. For need achievement assessment, I used an adaptation of Murray's (1943) Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). The TAT asks the respondent to tell a story, "necessarily expressing his or her motives, interests, and anxieties" (Adams et al., 1984, p. 290). Because of the debated cross-cultural applicability of the TAT (Hibbard, 2003; Lilienfeld, Wood, & Garb, 2000), I used an adaptation called the Storytelling Card Game (Gardner, 1989). This game encourages stories based on projection rather than stereotypes with line drawing scene cards and paper dolls of varying skin tones. The children selected cards in three sessions to tell stories. Since school settings can increase achievement imagery and, in interdependent cultures, family settings can increase achievement imagery (Hofer et al., 2010), card options balanced pictures of school and home.

Participant's stories were transcribed into a database without identifying information and randomized independently, rather than grouped by participant. Resulting stories were coded for occurrences of different types of achievement-related imagery (Atkinson, 1992, p. 46). Content analysis training consisted of scoring 30 sample stories with an acceptable level of inter-scorer reliability (McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1992; Smith & Franz, 1992). Transcribed responses were coded blindly twice. Scores converged highly on the level of individual statements ( $r = .87$ ), with the higher standard of the convergence of statements meriting a particular code within stories. Both a predictor variable based on the tape counter and one based on number of transcription lines did not correlate with need achievement scores, with mean  $r = .127$ ,  $p > .64$  and  $r = .197$ ,  $p > .45$  respectively. After completing stories, I asked children some general questions about family structure and other identifying characteristics, such as religion. Children discussed the involvement of extended family in their daily lives. I prioritized children's reports on paternal involvement in analysis. Parents' reported marital status did not determine paternal presence since fathers may coparent (Sobolewski & King, 2005) or cohabitate (Landale & Hauan, 1992). Analyses of need achievement scores and primary language spoken at home, income, and education level were nonsignificant.

Parental surveys collected additional home data with a survey originated in Okagaki, Frensch, and Gordon's (1995) research with Mexican-American student achievement. Home visits are representative illustrative cases to integrate ethnographic data as empirical examples of the patterns of behaviors discussed in statistical analyses (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Home visits were selected through intensity sampling, which intentionally focuses on clear examples of the phenomenon (Ulin, Robinson, Tolley, & McNeil, 2002). The determination of home visits was based on the two children to first receive need achievement scores at the endpoints of the range when scores were summed from randomized transcription database. I selected the family of Arturo, the first child to score the highest need achievement score, and Rodrigo, the first child to score the lowest score. Following Jones's (2010) discussion of participant authenticity, I keep participants' statements in their own words.

## 3. Results

Ethnographic vignettes describe same-aged boys from the same school who lived only blocks apart. Income level matched, but hours worked and consumption patterns differed. To reach the same level of income, in Arturo's family one mother worked a fulltime job and in Rodrigo's family two parents worked more than three jobs.

Arturo had shiny sneakers and coordinating school supplies while Rodrigo wore tattered clothes and wrote with a pencil stub. Arturo's living room had books and an art table whereas Rodrigo's living room had a large-screen television and a pool table. Such differences indicate standard income measures may misrepresent the impact of poverty on children. Income allocations alone do not inhibit need achievement, but child-centered activities versus adults-only furnishings do. Acculturation levels were similar as well, indicating the need for more complex acculturation models. Both children's parents came to the mainland in the early eighties. While Arturo and his siblings primarily spoke English and no male headed the household, extended family and religion were central to household function. In contrast, Rodrigo's father primarily spoke Spanish, but no extended family visited and his family did not attend mass regularly. Both families ate traditional foods frequently. Different aspects of cultural retention may explain differences in the protective nature of cultural retention.

Ten-year-old Arturo lived with his mother and two younger brothers. His maternal grandmother took care of the boys after school. She helped the boys with their homework and posted items on the refrigerator to discuss with their mother. I arranged to visit Arturo's home after his mother returned from work in a loan office. She earned her Associate's Degree at a community college after the boy's father moved to California five years earlier. Arturo's mother said the boys did "not seem to miss" their father and "were happy he was gone." She told me several stories about the boys' father insisting to head the household, regardless of how much she felt his decisions did not benefit their sons. She reported, "He said how everything went and the children were not the focus. My place was in the home and that was the only social life I was allowed." During my visit, the two older children played down the street with other neighborhood children and Arturo's grandmother prepared dinner. Arturo's mother asked her youngest son to play, and he sat coloring where he could still see us. Later, he showed his artwork to his mother who hung it on the refrigerator to commend his efforts. The household was calm as we chatted in the living room.

Ten-year-old Rodrigo's father told me to pick a time and his wife would be there. When I arrived, both parents, who did not complete high school and three out of four sons, were home. No extended family assisted in childcare, but on weekdays the children went to a baby-sitter after school until the father picked them up at 8 p.m. Rodrigo's father wanted his mother to quit her job to take care of the children, but Rodrigo's mother said she refused. They needed the money and her health plan. She cares for the boys on the weekends since she quit her part-time job, at what appeared to be his request and against her wishes. Even though Rodrigo's mother reported she was the head of the household, statements to her children such as, "You ain't no man. You can't talk to me like that" and "Get your feet off that pool table. You know what your father would do to you!" indicated Rodrigo's father handled discipline. The three boys who were at home, ranging in age from six to ten, entered and exited the house to the backyard during my visit. Rodrigo's mother was upset about their messy rooms, so she brought the children into the bedroom and pointed to each item to pick up. One boy tried to aid his mother's discussion by showing me items she had threatened to put in the basement. She told him to shut up and leave because adults were talking. The house felt chaotic. I arrived when Rodrigo's father was leaving for work, which may be an especially hectic time.

For statistical analyses, I operationalized my hypothesis that domineering fathers would detract from need achievement and that reinforcement from extended family would augment need achievement in an independent variable of four family types (See Table 1). Ordered from most likely to instill need achievement to least likely to instill need achievement, family types are (1) father absent and extended family present, (2) father absent and extended family absent, (3) father present and extended family present, and (4) father present and extended family absent. I defined father absence as complete absence of at least five years and defined extended family absence as either distance precluding normal contact or children not mentioning extended family. I hypothesized that family type 2 would instill more need achievement than family type 3 because, while the domineering father detracts from need achievement, someone other than extended family can reinforce children's efforts. Garrett, Antrop-González, and Vélez (2010) found caring teachers were associated with academic success for Puerto Rican students.

**Table 1: Contrast of Family Types for Need Achievement**

Family Type	Father	Extended Family	<i>n</i> Ach M (SD)	Planned Orthogonal Contrasts	Level of Significance t(14)
1	Absent	Present	7.00 (6.93)	1 > 2, 3, and 4	2.05, $p < .06$
2	Absent	Absent	6.00 (4.58)	2 > 3	1.46, $p < .17$
3	Present	Present	2.00 (3.52)		
4	Present	Absent	-2.17 (1.33)	4 < 2 and 3	-2.96, $p < .01$

The dependent variable was the total need achievement score based on the summation of need achievement over each participant's three stories. Because each story could range from -1 to 11, the overall range of the dependent variable could have been from -3 to 33, whereas the actual range was low from -3 to 11. Characteristics of the sample such as socioeconomic status, school quality, and religion may have created this low range. Family type 4 described all participants with the lowest need achievement score and no participants with positive scores. In addition, family type 1 described all children to score the maximum need achievement score of 11.

A one-way between subjects ANOVA on total need achievement scores across family type was significant,  $F(3, 14) = 5.07, p < .02$ . Family type 4 had significantly lower scores. The strength of this relationship was .52, as indexed by  $\eta^2$ , representing a strong effect. To avoid replicating Type I errors with the slight group variation and unequal group sizes (Klockars & Hancock, 1992; Pedhazur, 1982), planned orthogonal (i.e. nonoverlapping) contrasts evaluated the relationships between family types (Table 1). Need achievement for family type 4 was statistically significantly less than other family types. The optimistic a priori ordering of contrasts led to a belief that extended family would boost need achievement more than father absence would detract. Instead, the detraction from father presence was the most significant dependent variable. Children with a father present and extended family absent had significantly less need achievement than other children did. The additional contrasts indicate father presence more likely inhibits need achievement formation than the presence of extended family fosters it. While this may partially result due to the greater difficulty in operationalizing the sporadic presence of extended family, it fits McClelland's (1961) priority on self-reliance training over reinforcement.

#### 4. Discussion

In this research, Puerto Rican children had statistically significantly lower motivation when a father is present and extended family is absent. These results confirm that family structure investigations should continue to move beyond assumptions based on a white, middle-class model of the nuclear family to understand factors uniquely affecting children's development in different sociocultural settings. Such research can reduce stigmatizing "mommy blaming," which Ladd-Taylor and Umansky (1998) indicate is more likely for "single mothers, wage-earning mothers, and mothers of color" (p. 20). Puerto Rican mothers may be all three. The goal is not to shift blame to fathers. This research responds to Amato and Gilbreth's (1999) call to understand how fathers benefit children, instead of what Hewlett (2001) termed a "deficit model" of fatherhood. The deficit model refers to the absence of fathering practices from developmental theories. Paradoxically, the expectation that father absence is detrimental accompanies this deficit. Research may ignore characteristic paternal practices while assuming father presence means family stability, better economic resources, and additional care available.

Amato (1998) found research on paternal practices does yield explanatory value for child outcomes. Two parent homes benefit children in many ways, even though this research shows single-mother Puerto Rican homes foster motivation. Looking further at fathers and Hispanic family functioning is necessary (Calzada & Eyberg, 2002, p. 361) not only for understanding Hispanic families, but families. While less significant than father absence in this research, we should further consider the role of extended family. Extended family may indicate a route for encouraging student success. Need affiliation, or a "concern over establishing, maintaining, or restoring a positive affective relationship with another person or group of persons" (Koestner & McClelland, 1992, p. 205), may encourage need achievement. As Rodríguez and Kosloski (1998) found, acculturation positively relates to some characteristics of familism (familial obligations and support), but not others (family as referents).

Even immersed in an individualistic, competitive atmosphere, Mexican and Central Americans' communal goals motivated "compensatory achievement" to validate their parents' migration journeys, often for educational opportunity (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995, 2001).



Unfortunately, Latino parents' high esteem of educational opportunity does not always result in Latino children's high educational attainment. Latinos drop out of school at the highest rate (Hill & Torres, 2010). Academic performance varies widely across Latino subgroups (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001), and increasingly research indicates the need to study Latino groups separately (Calzada & Eyberg, 2002, p. 361; Figueroa-Moseley et al., 2006; Harris, Jamison, & Trujillo, 2008; Kuperminc et al., 2009, p. 214; Schmitz, 2006; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2001; Vaquera, 2009). Puerto Rican parents were not as influential in encouraging educational attainment in comparison to other Latino groups (Figueroa-Moseley et al., 2006, p. 111).

In addition, peer support affects Puerto Rican students differently than other Latino groups. Puerto Rican students reported having a best friend at school more often, but having a friend did not increase feelings of school belonging as greatly as with other Latino groups (Vaquera, 2009) or as with pan-Latino research (Sánchez, Colón, & Esparza, 2005). On the contrary, Flores (2002) found Puerto Rican high school students from neighborhoods with more Puerto Ricans dropped out more frequently. Friends can be a risk factor for Puerto Rican students (Eitle, Wahl, & Aranda, 2009). Excessive focus on the underachievement of Puerto Rican students (Chavez, 1991) has spurred work highlighting factors that lead to success for Puerto Rican students, including religiosity, maternal influences, ethnic identity, and additional support (Antrop-González, Vélez, & Garrett, 2010; Flores-González, 1999; Garrett, Antrop-González, & Vélez, 2010). The current research on the role of family in developing motivation adds to work illustrating adaptive strengths for Puerto Rican families.

While socioeconomic background plays a significant part in explaining Puerto Ricans' lower educational outcomes (Harris et al., 2008), Hill and Torres (2010) suggest from their work with Latinos "current policies to promote achievement in the United States emphasize the role of family. ... [and] have not considered culturally embedded strategies or beliefs about parental involvement" (p. 96). Teachers may misinterpret no family involvement as academic disinterest (Kuperminc, Darnell, & Alvarez-Jimenez, 2008), whereas family may misunderstand teachers' expectations. Encouraging educational attainment requires understanding culturally-diverse family processes affecting motivation. Knowing Puerto Rican children from two-parent households may especially need assistance with expectations of autonomy while extended family can be a great source of affiliative motivation contributes to educational practices.

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