

# Career Decision-Making in Latino Students

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## Introduction:

Research consistently shows that school climate plays an important role in shaping students' academic outcomes. Strong student-teacher relationships and positive school environments have been linked to higher academic achievement. In career development, Cognitive Information Processing (CIP) theory provides a framework for understanding how students navigate career decision-making. This model emphasizes metacognitions — how individuals think about their thinking during the decision-making process. Research shows that positive career metacognitions are associated with stronger career development outcomes. Despite growing research on career processes, Latino adolescents remain underrepresented in the literature. Few studies directly compare how Latino and non-Latino adolescents navigate career decision-making within the context of school climate. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between perceptions of school climate and career outcome metacognitions in Latino versus non-Latino adolescents. By addressing this gap, the study expands career development research beyond academic outcomes and provides culturally responsive insights for school psychologists, counselors, and educators working to support Latino youth.

## Methodology:

### Participants

- Latino and non-Latino adolescents enrolled in middle school and high school in the United States.
- Convenience sampling method was used as students were recruited through participating schools.
- Participants self-identified their ethnicity, gender, languages spoken, and country of origin (Latino subgroup identification was also reported through self-report).

### Instruments:

- The career outcome metacognitions scale was used to measure positive and negative career metacognitions.
- The Delaware school climate survey was used to assess students' perceptions of school climate.
- The research developed questionnaire form also measured the self-identified parts of the study.

### Procedure:

- The procedure included institutional approval and school permission, as well as parental and student consent.
- Students completed the survey electronically, which had the demographic questionnaire, the DSCS-S, and the COMS.

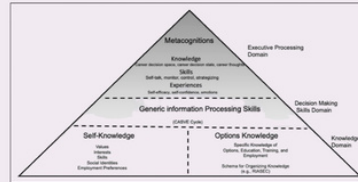


Figure 1: The CIP pyramid illustrates the three levels of career decision-making: knowledge domains (self and options knowledge), the CASVE decision-making cycle, and the metacognitive domain, which guides self-monitoring and regulation of career thinking.

APPENDIX B

The Career Outcome Metacognitions Survey

Read each sentence and rate how much you agree with it by identifying (e.g., circling, highlighting) the number that is most closely associated with your level of agreement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral/Agree per	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I have decided on my career path.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I feel satisfied with my career decision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I feel confident about my career decision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I feel uncertain about my career decision.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. I cannot decide on a career path.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. I feel confident about my career decision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I feel I know the next steps to attain my career goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I know which career fits me best.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I know about my values, interests, and skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I know about the career options I am considering.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I know how to make career decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Figure 2: Sample items from the Career Outcome Metacognitions Scale (COMS), which measures positive and negative thoughts about career decision-making.

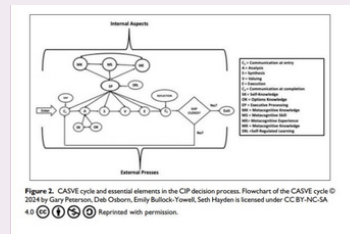


Figure 3: CASVE cycle and essential elements in the CIP decision process. Flowchart of the CASVE cycle © 2024 by Gary Peterson, Dash Ozburn, Emily Bullock-Yowell, Seth Hayden is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0. Reproduced with permission.

Figure 3: The CASVE Cycle (Communication, Analysis, Synthesis, Valuing, Execution) represents the iterative process individuals use to make career decisions within the CIP framework.

## Preliminary Findings

Data analysis is currently in progress, and results are pending.

The preliminary findings are expected to indicate that positive school climate is a predictor of better career outcome metacognitions, with stronger effects for Latino adolescents.

If hypotheses are supported:

- Teacher support and peer relationships may strengthen positive career metacognitions.
- Safety perceptions may reduce negative career thoughts.
- Schools may function as protective factors against career-related anxiety.

Strengths:

- Centers Latino adolescents
- Uses validated measures (COMS, DSCS-S)
- Incorporates demographic moderators

Limitations:

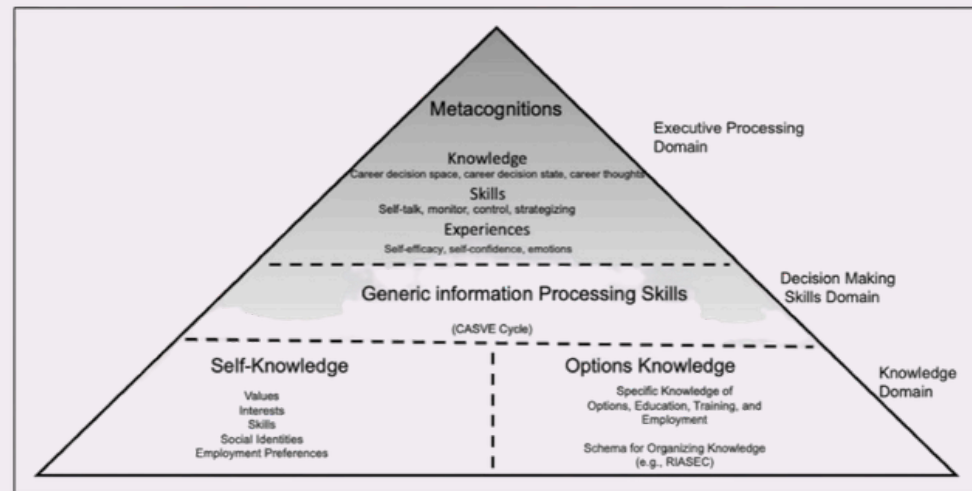
- Convenience sampling
- Self-report data
- Cross-sectional design
- Possible subgroup underrepresentation

## References



## Acknowledgments

We would like to give special thanks to our research mentor, Sabrina Quiroga, for her continued support on our Undergraduate research journey, as well as the entirety of the UROP team, including our class instructors and all faculty.



**Figure 1.** Reformatted pyramid of information processing domains. Pyramid of information processing domains. Note. Original content by G. W. Peterson, J. P. Sampson, and R. C. Reardon, Copyright 1991 by Brooks/Cole with copyright transferred to the authors. Adapted with permission. This figure has since been published in *Cognitive Information Processing: Career Theory, Research, and Practice*, p. 68 ([https://doi.org/10.33009/fsop\\_sampson1123](https://doi.org/10.33009/fsop_sampson1123)). Click or tap if you trust this link.">[https://doi.org/10.33009/fsop\\_sampson1123](https://doi.org/10.33009/fsop_sampson1123)), where it is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/legalcode.en>). Click or tap if you trust this link.">CC BY-ND 4.0) License. Adapted with permission.