Reading Habits

# Abstract

There is ample evidence that parent literacy behaviors (e.g., daily book reading) influence the reading attitudes and habits of young children. However, few studies have examined how parents may continue to promote strong reading habits during adolescence. Although adolescence is a time of increased independence, family remains highly influential in the beliefs and behaviors of Latinx adolescents. It is likely that parents of Latinx youth continue to influence reading attitudes and habits during this time. Because reading is widely considered critical for academic success, broader messaging from parents about academics (i.e., educational modeling) may influence teens’ reading attitudes, and in turn, their reading habits. Guided by situated expectancy-value theory (SEVT) and research on academic socialization, the present study longitudinally examined whether Latinx teens’ perceptions of parents’ educational modeling (Time 1) promoted teens’ later reading habits (Time 3) via reading attitudes (Time 2) (*N* = 329). Teens’ perceptions of their parents’ educational modeling predicted teens’ reading attitudes, and teens’ reading attitudes predicted their reading habits. Teens’ reading attitudes mediated the relationship between their perceptions of parents’ educational modeling and teens’ reading habits. Based on the results of confirmatory factor analyses, we examined separate models for educational modeling of mothers and fathers. These results indicate that parents continue to play an important role in supporting reading into adolescence. By modeling broader educational values, parents of Latinx youth can promote positive views of reading to support strong reading habits.

# Introduction

Although reading is considered critical for both academic success, both interest in reading and frequency of reading decreases during adolescence (Duncan et al., 2016). In response, a number of researchers have sought to understand how we can promote positive reading attitudes and behaviors among adolescents [TK]. Unfortunately, none (***TK few?***) of these studies have focused on reading attitudes and habits among Latinx adolescents in the United States. This work is necessary to support Latinx youth, many of whom are at risk of lower achievement outcomes in reading (Carris, 2024; Reardon & Galindo, 2009). Previous research with other populations of adolescents suggests that parents play a critical role in promoting positive reading attitudes and habits for adolescents (Pelletier et al., 2024).

early literacy (**TK CITE**) and academic achievement (**TK CITE**)

Through a longitudinal design, the present study examines how parents, through modeling general educational beliefs and behaviors (i.e., educational modeling), may promote positive reading attitudes and stronger reading habits among Latinx adolescents.

## Reading habits in adolescence

In the early years of schooling, there is great emphasis on developing proficiency in foundational reading skills, such as decoding and memorizing sight words. As students progress into late childhood and adolescence, reading demands increase, with considerable content being delivered in the form of textbooks, novels, informational articles, and other written materials. With this shift, there are clear advantages to being an avid reader during adolescence: frequent reading supports vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and achievement (Allington, 2014; Stanovich, 2009; Torppa et al., 2020). However, despite these benefits, both the time spent on book reading (Duncan et al., 2016; Scholastic & Fluent, 2022) and the enjoyment of book reading (Scholastic & Fluent, 2022) decrease during adolescence.

The reading habits of today’s youth are of particular concern, as researchers have witnessed a steady decline in the use of print media across several generations. For example, only 16% of 12th graders reporting daily reading of books or magazines in 2016, compared to 60% in the late 1970s (Twenge et al., 2019).

**TK Do I want this paragraph (below)?** Due to the shift from “learning to read” to “reading to learn” that occurs in middle-to-late elementary school **(cite TK)**, both adolescents and their parents are likely more focused on gaining content knowledge than reading for its own sake. Because reading is so closely tied to adolescents’ academic learning (**cite TK**), however, parents’ broader educational behaviors or beliefs (i.e., educational modeling) have the potential to influence adolescents’ reading attitudes and habits. Although this process may occur among families of many different ethnic-racial backgrounds, there is reason to believe the effect of parents’ educational modeling may be particularly salient for Latinx adolescents. **TK stuff about familism etc maybe**

### Reading habits of Latinx youth

In the United States context, gaps in reading achievement between White and Latinx youth have been well-documented (Carris, 2024; Reardon & Galindo, 2009), with Latinx youth earning lower scores than their White peers.

Researchers have suggested that a number of factors contribute to this gap, including local immigration policies and practices (Carris, 2024), family socioeconomic status (Reardon & Galindo, 2009), English language proficiency and school policies (Reardon & Galindo, 2009) (TK add other things here?).

There is little research specifically addressing the reading habits of Latinx children and adolescents (TK is there ANY research on this?).

## Parent influence on reading and academics

TK Introduce SEVT and academic socialization here?

### Parent influence on reading habits *and attitudes?*

It is well-established that parents influence their children’s reading attitudes and behaviors in early childhood through home literacy practices such as shared book reading (Baker et al., 1997; Hume et al., 2015). Although more limited, additional research suggests that parents continue to influence reading attitudes and behaviors during later childhood and adolescence (Lim et al., 2015; Pelletier et al., 2024; see Klauda, 2009 for a review of earlier work). These studies have focused on the effects of parents’ reading-specific behaviors, such as encouraging adolescents to read in their free time, discussing books, and going to the bookstore or library together (Lim et al., 2015; Pelletier et al., 2024).

## The present study

It is well-established that parents influence young children’s reading motivation and habits (Baker et al., 1997). In turn, motivated readers perform better on measures of reading ability (**Baker.1999?**). Although many studies focus on younger children, additional research indicates that parents can continue to promote positive reading attitudes and behaviors during adolescence (Klauda, 2009). [**TK I don’t like this next sentence.**] However, these studies have focused on the impact of parent behaviors that are explicitly reading- or book-specific **(e.g., TK, TK),** therefore providing little insight into alternative ways in which parents may promote positive reading attitudes and habits in adolescence. Furthermore, although Latinx youth are at risk of lower reading achievement levels than their White peers (Carris, 2024; Reardon & Galindo, 2009), few studies have explored reading motivation and habits within this population [TK cite any studies that have].

In the present study, we examined how Latinx teens’ perceptions of parents’ educational modeling (i.e., educational modeling) may influence their later reading habits. We predicted that educational modeling would positively predict teens’ later reading habits and that this relationship would be mediated by teens’ reading attitudes. These predictions were grounded in SEVT (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020) and theories (**TK theories?? or just existing empirical work**) of academic socialization (**TK cite cite cite**).

Within SEVT, adolescents’ perceptions of socializers’ (e.g., parents’) beliefs and behaviors indirectly influence subjective task values, which in turn influence achievement-related choices. In the context of the current study, we identify teens’ perceptions of educational modeling as their perceptions of socializers’ beliers and behaviors. Similarly, we consider reading attitudes to be the subjective task values and reading habits to be achievement-related choices.

Although Eccles and Wigfield (2020) recognize that students’ sociocultural contexts (e.g., race, ethnicity) play a meaningful role in academic motivation, SEVT in its current state provides little explanation for how these processes operate. Therefore, we have also drawn from work on academic socialization (**TK cite**), including academic socialization of Latinx youth, as motivation for our predictions. **TK ADD MORE HERE**

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