

RESEARCH INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCE

Applying Psychological Science on Attitude Change, Intergroup Relations, and Culture to Reduce Disparities in Health and Education

The purpose of my research is to apply scientific understanding of social psychology and world cultures to help change attitudes that affect the health and well-being of underprivileged groups. I aim to contribute to science and social justice by developing better scientific models in health psychology by considering the moderating role of culture and the potential effects of public health communications in multicultural societies. In my research, I seek to identify malleable variables that unfairly affect underprivileged groups.

I concur with Tom Pettigrew's (2021) call for a more contextual social psychology, as socioeconomic factors tend to interact with cultural beliefs in predicting risky behaviors. With my research, I specifically seek to uncover variables that affect how people interpret information depending on unconscious motivations and their social context.

My research program includes three main lines of work:

1. Identifying At-Risk Groups by Focusing on Acculturation and Generation Status since Immigration to the United States and Psychosocial Health Disparities

Topics include:

- Perceived discrimination
- Intragroup discrimination
- Notions of Americanness & Xenophobia
- Unconscious motivations

For example, in a study that was published in *Ethnicity and Health*, I used ArcGIS software to link census data based on zip codes and reports from a panel study of adolescents in Los Angeles to identify if ethnic composition in a neighborhood (i.e., whether too segregated or too mixed) was a protective versus risky factor for depression (Basanez, Unger, Soto, Crano, & Baezconde-Garbanati, 2013). In that study, I found that when comparing among Latinx individuals who do perceived discrimination, those living in neighborhoods with a higher percentage of Hispanics reported fewer depressive

symptoms relative to those living in neighborhoods with fewer Hispanics. Thus, my study validated the paradoxical finding described in Mair et al. (2010) that higher ethnic density seemed to be risky for African Americans but protective for Latinxs.

In a separate study, I examined educational and depressive symptoms as outcomes among Hispanic adolescents. In that study, I proposed exploring *intragroup discrimination* as a source of stress (Basáñez, Warren, Crano, & Unger, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 2013). My study uncovered evidence of group dynamics that could potentially be corrected by raising awareness among the Latino community. For example, of the negative effects of teasing and expecting Latinxs individuals who do not speak Spanish to “act more Hispanic.” I followed up this line of research with a study entitled “Intragroup Xenophobic Attitudes, Social Status, and Cigarette Smoking in Adolescents from an Immigrant Group.” (Basáñez et al., 2019). In that study, I found that harboring xenophobic attitudes about immigration ends up serving as a risk factor for Latino students of low social status but as a protective factor for those of high social status. I drew from system justification theories (Jost, 2010) to elaborate that hypothesis and to explain the findings. The implication is that health interventions efforts should be targeted to combat the myth of meritocracy among people with low socioeconomic resources. More recent topics of study in this line of work include: a) remittance sending stressors and their link to risky behaviors, b) identifying social cure factors related to sunscreen use and helmet use, c) describing cultures of joy (COJ) and the link between that cultural orientation and health outcomes.

2. **Applying Attitude Change Theories, Grounded Cognitions, and Implicit Cues in Communication**

Topics include:

- Attentiveness
- Implicit Association Tests of Social Class and Americanness
- Content Analysis of Marketing on Social Media
- Effect of Imagining a Smell linked to a Metaphor (comparing USA and Mexico)
- Spokesperson Ethnicity and Message on Persuasion
- Changing Motorists Perception of Cyclists

Using a large nationwide dataset, I examined health disparities by developing an innovative measure of implicit cues of communication: A three-item scale that measured patients' perception of *Attentiveness* from their physician (e.g., “*Does your doctor spend enough time with you?*”, “*Do you feel the doctor respects you?*”, “*Does your doctor explain things clearly?*”). Perceived attentiveness is one converse form of perceived discrimination. It was highly linked to likelihood that patients would later comply with their physicians' recommendations (Basáñez, Blanco, Collazo, Berger, & Crano, *Psychology, Health and Medicine*, 2013). In that study, I also discovered differences by ethnicity in patients' perception: Latinx patients in the U.S. were the least likely to report perceiving attentiveness from their physicians, compared with African American and Caucasian patients. Since perception can be malleable, interventions could be designed to alter both physicians' behavior as well as patients' interpretation of that behavior to increase patient compliance.

In a different study, I did a content analysis of Twitter messages related to vaping. I assessed the content of marketing efforts that were potentially misleading consumers by describing e-cigarettes and vaping using healthy food related words such as ‘natural,’ and ‘vegan.’ I knew the topic was urgent given the persuasive role of evaluative conditioning in the development of attitudes (Walther & Langer, 2008). Cigarette smoking in adolescents had already declined to prevalence levels of one-digit numbers by 2012. However, that same year, the use of electronic cigarettes doubled and the rate of adoption of vaping increased so much since then that it has been declared an epidemic (Gottlieb, 2019). Low income has consistently been reported as associated with higher prevalence of smoking, so this research matters. The tobacco industry needs clear limits if our society wants to protect the most vulnerable populations.

My consulting work in this line of work includes collaborating towards the implementation of a Safe Systems Approach to Road Safety.

3. **The Role of Culture, Stress and Coping**

Topics include:

- Measuring the Values of Cultures of Joy (versus Achievement and Honor)
- Active Coping vs Inactive Coping Strategies
- Cross-Cultural Efforts in Making New Friends (Comparing USA and Mexico)

- Self-Disclosure
- Use of Deception as a Coping Strategy

In this third line of research, I have described cultural and environmental differences affecting how people process information while meeting new others and how they make new friends. I am interested in cultural factors affecting people's coping strategies –e.g., the extent to which they talk about their problems with strangers and acquaintances. I have been exploring the link between people's willingness to self-disclose information and their subsequent psychosocial health outcomes. My hypothesis is that the prototypically American values of achievement and extreme self-reliance function as a stressor that increases the likelihood of experiencing depressive symptoms and of self-medicating by using substances intending to combat social pain.

References

Related Work on Research Topic 1 (*Identifying Groups At-Risk, Perceived Discrimination, & Notions of Americanness*):

Sagioglou, C. & **Basáñez, T.** (2023). Exploring Moderators and Mediators of the Effects of Target SES on Moral Judgment. Symposium Co-chair at the International Convention of Psychological Science (ICPS).

Basáñez, T., & Vazquez, F. (2023). The Effect of Socioeconomic Status Descriptors and Desired Position of a Job Applicant on Dispositional Bias after a Transgression of Punctuality. Symposium Paper Presented at the International Convention of Psychological Science (ICPS) in Brussels, Belgium.

Delgadillo, V., Mendieta, C., & **Basáñez, T.** (2023). Exploring the Role of Participant's ADHD as a Moderator of Judgments about Unpunctuality and the Effect of SES Descriptors. Symposium Paper Presented at the International Convention of Psychological Science (ICPS).

Basáñez, T., Ortiz-Ayala, I., Ortiz, A., Andrade, S., Barcena, B., Delgadillo, V., Fajardo, A., Stewart, C. (2022, July). The Effect of Socioeconomic Status Descriptors on Judgements about Unpunctuality. Paper presented at the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology via Zoom.

Miranda, D. & **Basáñez, T.** (2021). *The Role of Socioeconomic Status and COVID-19 Vaccine Usage on Perceived Susceptibility and Job Outcomes in Latinx and African American Young Adults*. Paper presented at So. California Conference of Undergraduate Research.

Basáñez, T., Nguyen, M., Atienza, A. & Miranda, D. (2021). *Remittance-Sending and Risky Behaviors by Generation Status in Young Adults in Southern California*. Oral presentation delivered at Western Psychological Association Conference.

Dennis, J. M., & **Basáñez, T.** (2021). *Culture, the Family Context, and the Conceptualization of Risky Behaviors*. Symposium Discussant at Western Psychological Association Conference.

Basáñez, T., Sussman, S., Clark, J., Unger, J.B. (2019). Intragroup xenophobic attitudes, ethnic identity, and substance use among Latinx adolescents. *Journal of Ethnicity in Substance Abuse*. DOI: 10.1080/15332640.2018.1540954

Basáñez, T., Dennis, J. M., Crano, W. D., Stacy, A., & Unger, J. B. (2014). Measuring acculturation gap conflicts among Hispanics: Implications for psychosocial and academic adjustment. *Journal of Family Issues*, 35(13), DOI: 10.1177/0192513X13477379.

Basáñez, T., Unger, J.B., Soto, D., Crano, W.D., & Baezconde-Garbanati, L. (2013). Perceived discrimination as a risk factor for depressive symptoms and substance use among Hispanic adolescents in Los Angeles. *Ethnicity & Health*, 18(3), 244-261. DOI: 10.1080/13557858.2012.713093

Lac, A., Unger, J. B., **Basáñez, T.**, Ritt-Olson, A., Soto, D., & Baezconde-Garbanati, L., (2011). Marijuana use among Hispanic adolescents: Protective familial factors and gender differences. *Substance Use and Misuse*, 46(5), 644-655.

Dennis, J. M., **Basáñez, T.**, & Farhamand, A. (2010). Intergenerational conflicts among Latinos in early adulthood: Separating values conflicts with parents from acculturation conflicts. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 32, 118-135.

Basáñez, T., Cho, J., Barrington-Trimis, J., & Unger, J. (2019). *Vaping Fruit versus Candy Flavors: Comparing Use Among Ethnic Groups*. Accepted Paper Symposium, International Association for Cross Cultural Psychology Conference in San José, Costa Rica.

Basáñez, T. & Crano, W.D. (2016, August). *Perceptions of the Warmth and Competence of Minorities, and Subsequent Employability*. Individual Research Paper symposium presented at the International Association for Cross Cultural Psychology's Conference in Nagoya, Japan.

Related Work on Research Topic 2 (Attitude Change, Implicit Communication, & Grounded Cognitions):

Basáñez, T., Pham, P., & Crano, W. (*Manuscript in Progress*). Effect of textures (hard vs soft) and metaphors related to difficulty versus ease (ball vs. piece of cake) on learning.

Basáñez, T., Farías-Yapur, A., & Mirshafiei, E. (*Manuscript in Progress*). Effect of imagining a suspicious smell on mood and scrutiny of information: Data from Mexico and the United States.

Duran, A., Bárcenas, D., Martínez-Martínez, D., Velador, D., & **Basáñez, T.** (2021). *Perceived Severity of COVID-19 Buffers the Effect of a Picnic-Promoting Public Service Announcement on Social Gathering Intentions*. Oral presentation delivered at the California State Polytechnic University Pomona Research Conference.

Kang, A., Bradford, A., Delgado, J., & **Basáñez, T.** (2021). *Content Analysis of MeToo Movement Documentary Films: The Portrayal of Consequences for Victims and Perpetrators*. Oral presentation, California State Polytechnic University Pomona Research Conference.

DeLeón, E., Rodarte, V., & **Basáñez, T.** (2021). *Effect of a quiz's ink color and Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) on learning performance*. Oral presentation delivered at the California State University Dominguez Hills Student Research Conference.

Smiley, L.S., **Basáñez, T.**, Kim, S., Allem, J.P., Unger, J.B., Pentz, M.A., Samet, J., & Boley Cruz, T. (2020). *Characterizing "natural" flavored cigar content on Instagram*. Oral Presentation at the Society for Research on Nicotine & Tobacco (SRNT) Annual Meeting, New Orleans.

Winter P.L., Crano, W. D., **Basáñez, T.**, & Lamb, C. (2019). Equity in Access to Outdoor Recreation—Informing a Sustainable Future. *Sustainability*, 12(1).

Basáñez, T., Majmundar, A., Cruz, T. B., Allem, J.P., & Unger, J. (2018). E-cigarettes are being marketed as 'vitamin delivery' devices. Editorial in *American Journal of Public Health*. DOI: 10.2105/AJPH.2018.304804

Basáñez, T., Majmundar, A., Cruz, T. B., & Unger, J. (2018). Vaping associated with healthy food words: A content analysis of Twitter. *Addictive Behaviors Reports*. doi:10.1016/j.abrep.2018.09.007

Basáñez, T., Farías-Yapur, A., Wulf, A., Luna, R., Fernández de la Garza, M., & Mirshafiei, E. (2018, July). *Comparing the Effect of Imagining a Suspicious Smell in the United States and Mexico*. Individual Research Paper Symposium presented at the International Association for Cross Cultural Psychology's Conference in Guelph, Canada.

Basáñez, T., Mirshafiei, E., & Farías-Yapur, A. (2018, May). *Effect of Imagining a Fishy Vs. Fresh Smell on Cognitive Processes, Mood, and Self-Disclosure*. Poster presented at the 30th Association for Psychological Science Annual Convention in San Francisco, CA, USA

Basáñez, T., Lamb, C., & Crano, W. (2016). *Exploring the Effect of Embodied Cognitions on Learning*. Poster presented at the Association for Psychological Science Conference in Chicago.

Basáñez, T., Young, A., Crano, W.D. (2015). *Haptics and Information Processing Fluency in Latino and White Students*. Poster presented at the Western Psychological Association.

Basáñez, T., Blanco, L., Collazo, J.L., Berger, D. E., Crano, W.D. (2013). Ethnic groups' perception of physicians' attentiveness: Implications for health and obesity. *Psychology, Health and Medicine*, 18(1), 37-46. DOI:10.1080/13548506.2012.672750.

Related Work on Research Topic 3 (Culture, Stress, and Coping):

Basáñez, T. (2023). Playing Loud Music as a Coping Strategy that Buffers the Link Between Loneliness and Mental Health. Presented at the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology's Regional Conference, Limerick, Ireland.

Basáñez, T., Joshanloo, M., Barcena, B., Beltrán y Puga, T., & Basáñez, M. (2022, July). Exploring the Factor Structure of Cultures of Joy/Easygoingness and their Link to Mental Health. Data blitz presented at the SPSP Summer Psychology Forum on Addressing U.S. Health Disparities with Social and Personality Psychology, July 7, Minneapolis.

Vazquez, F., Morales, D., & **Basáñez, T.** (2022, July). Cultural Dimensions of Horizontal/Vertical Individualism/Collectivism and Attitudes about Seeking Psychotherapy. Data blitz presented at the SPSP Summer Psychology Forum on Addressing U.S. Health Disparities with Social and Personality Psychology, July 7, Minneapolis.

Dennis, J. M., & **Basáñez, T.** (2021). *Culture, the Family Context, and the Conceptualization of Risky Behaviors*. Symposium Discussant at Western Psychological Association Conference.

Basáñez, T., Nguyen, M., Atienza, A. & Miranda, D. (2021). *Remittance-Sending and Risky Behaviors by Generation Status in Young Adults in Southern California*. Oral presentation delivered at Western Psychological Association Conference.

Basáñez, T., Warren, M.T., Albarracín, D., Basáñez, M., & Crano, W.D. (*Manuscript in Progress*). The role of sociopolitical context and need for improvisation on sociality: Differences between concrete and generalized trust.

Basáñez, T., Naya, C., Toruño, R., Fong, J., & Unger, J. (*Manuscript in Progress*). The role of social support and immigrant generation status on substance use among Latinxs in California.

Basáñez, T., Huwae, S., Warren, M., Basáñez, M., Lac, A., & Crano, W. D. (2015, July). *The Role of Sociopolitical Factors on Interpersonal Trust When Meeting New Others*. Paper presented at the International Association for Cross Cultural Psychology's 23rd International Congress, Chiapas, Mexico.

Basáñez, T., Warren, M., Basáñez, M., Crano, W. D. (2014, July). *Cross-Cultural Differences in Building New Relations*. Paper presentation at the International Association for Cross Cultural Psychology's 22nd International Congress, Reims, France.

Basáñez, T., Warren, M., Crano, W. D., & Albarracín, D. (2014). *Cross-Cultural Comparison of Trust in New Relationships & Implications for Risk Regulation Theory*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Conference, Austin, TX.

Basáñez, T., Warren, M., Crano, W. D. & Unger, J.B. (2013). Perceptions of intragroup rejection and coping strategies: Malleable factors affecting Hispanic adolescents' emotional and academic outcomes. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 43, DOI: 10.1007/s10964-013-0062-y

Basáñez, T., Warren, M. & Unger, J. (2012, April). *Avoidant coping and self-disclosure: Strategies related to self-agency in adolescence*. Paper symposium presented at the Western Psychological Association's Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA.

Basáñez, T., & Dennis, J.M. (2010, August). *Deception and Acculturative Conflicts with Parents among Latino Young Adults*. Poster presented at the 2010 American Psychological Association Convention, San Diego, CA.