THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF LATINA WOMEN
IMMIGRATING TO THE UNITED STATES:
ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT AND ACCULTURATION

A dissertation presented to the faculty of

ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY SANTA BARBARA
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
in
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

By

SOFIA MURILLO,
March, 2018

THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF LATINA WOMEN
IMMIGRATING TO THE UNITED STATES:
ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT AND ACCULTURATION

This dissertation, by Sofia Murillo, has been approved by the committee members
signed below who recommend that it be accepted by the faculty of Antioch
University Santa Barbara in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

Dissertation Committee:

_____
Ron Pilato, PsyD
Dissertation Chair

_____
Salvador Trevino, PhD
Second Chair

_____
Oksana Yakushko, PhD
Expert Reader

Abstract

The occurrence of specific types of mental health problems could be influenced by several factors. Immigration experiences can bring additional distress to the individual. The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study was to expand current knowledge of the experience of Latinas immigrating to the United States during their adolescence in hopes to get a deeper understanding of possible mental health concerns of this specific population. This study included an extensive review of literature regarding adolescent development, Latino immigration into the United States, cultural identity, gender issues, racism, xenophobia, and mental health concerns. A phenomenological methodology approach was used for this study to understand the messages and common themes from interviews directly from individuals who have experienced this phenomenon. The criteria for this study included a sample of eight participants. These participants screened met the criteria; adult women immigrating as adolescents to the United States from any Latin American country. Participants shared their testimonies and provided meaningful information regarding the significance of their immigration experiences as adolescents. Themes identified were participant's experiences of leaving their country, arriving in the United States, and adjustment during the first year after immigration. Interviews lasted for approximately 60 minutes with each participant who answered 11 open-ended questions about their experiences. The interviews conducted were in the participants' language of choice (Spanish/English). The data obtained from the interviews was translated as necessary, transcribed and analyzed using Dedoose Software using qualitative methodology. In this study, six meaning themes emerged. Data results revealed adolescent Latina immigrants might experience family distress, parenting,

separation/reunification, emotional process of adjustment, cultural/social issues,

socioeconomic matters, and psychological concerns. The findings were related to

previous literature regarding psychological concerns, yet the data provided a more in-

depth understanding of the participants looking back at their adolescent experiences. This

Dissertation is available in Open Access at AURA: Antioch University Repository and

Archive, http://aura.antioch.edu and OhioLink ETD Center, http://www.ohiolink.edu/etd

Acknowledgements

With this work, I want to honor the courageous women who shared their experiences giving this dissertation meaning and priceless knowledge to the field of psychology. I also want to acknowledge the support and expertise from my committee members, Dr. Pilato, Dr. Trevino, and Dr. Yakushko. Dr. Pilato, thank you for instilling hope in every conversation through this process. A mi familia y a mis padres, Jesús Murillo y María Mosqueda, no hay palabras para expresar el amor, admiración y agradecimiento por ustedes. Gracias por enseñarme a trabajar con dedicación y avanzar en la vida, cumplir mis metas sin olvidar mis raíces. To my brothers and sisters, thank you for your love and support. I hope to inspire your children to reach their dreams and embrace their potential. To my family friends who always reassure me of my own strength when at times didn't see, Michelle, Jennifer and Suyapa, thank you for being on this journey with me. To my professors and all my clinical supervisors, you have been such an integral part of my career. I hope to inspire others as you have inspired me. I will remain forever grateful. Gracias.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

The United States is a country founded by immigrants who claimed the land as their own by displacing and killing indigenous native peoples (Zinn, 2016). The country has become the home to millions of immigrants who have come from places all over the world. Stepler and Brown (2015) reported that between 1980 and 2000, immigration was the main contributor to Latino population in the United States, with an increase from 4.1 million to 14.1 million. Over the past three decades, millions of Hispanic immigrants have become a part of United States society. The U.S. Census Bureau (2014) reported that there were 54 million Hispanics in the United States. The Hispanic population became the nation's largest ethnic and racial minority group, accounting for nearly half of the nation's growth. Of the 54 million Hispanics, 17 percent were reported to be under the age of 18. In addition, in 2014 the U.S. Department of Justice reported that 150,000 immigrants entering the U.S. were under the age of 18 (Passel, Cohn, & Lopez, 2011).

The Hispanic population in the United States is diverse. Hispanics may identify their origin as being Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino, and may be of any race (U.S. Department of Commerce (2010). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, their origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the individual's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States (U.S Census Bureau, 2012). Hispanic immigrants can vary by country of origin, race, ethnicity, but additional differences form a part of this particular group (Perez & Hirschman, 2009). In the United States, some immigrants who originate from rural areas in their native countries migrate to United States metropolitan areas with varied levels of education. There are others with diverse abilities to enter into the workforce or have advanced

degrees (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Yakushko, Backhaus, Watson, Ngaruiya, & Gonzalez, 2010). Despite these many differences, people from Latin America have a history of colonization with Spanish as a common language. They also maintain many pre-Hispanic cultural practices, which creates a "unifying characteristic" (Falicov, 1998, 2013). For the purpose of this dissertation, the term Latino/Hispanic is used interchangeably when referring to this particular group in order to identify people who have been born and raised in any Latin American country, where the official language is Spanish. The literature reviewed for this dissertation used the terms Latino and Hispanic.

In 2014, the U.S Census Bureau reported that 35% of the 54 million Hispanic population was foreign born. A total of 1.2 million immigrants were under the age of 18. Adolescent immigrants, in particular, face unique challenges when they come to the United States. This is true whether they arrive alone or with their families. Immigrant adolescents face the same challenges that minority adolescents encounter in the United States, such as urban poverty, lack of family and school support, racial inequality, and prejudice (Xu, Bekteshi, & Tran, 2010). Adolescent immigrants also go through their immigration journey and learn to physically adapt to their new surroundings. The process of change and challenges they face include: adjusting to new social norms; familiarizing themselves to a new area; and adapting to new schools and peer associations. Immigrant adolescents also experience a sense of loss and grief related to their native country and some might fear deportation despite their legal status in the United States (Arbona et al., 2010; Zayas, Kaplan, Turner, Romano, & Gonzalez-Ramos, 2000). Other scholars have reported that additional risk factors stemming from the stresses of immigration, resettlement, and assimilation do not necessarily lessen their sense of psychological well-

being. However, immigrant adolescents' unique family environment, life experiences and/or cultural norms seem to have a protective effect and support their development (Xu et al., 2010). Not all immigrants have the same immigration experience or face the same degree of obstacles (Dow, 2011). Consequently, it is important to investigate the lived experiences of those individuals that may identified as Latino, but that also form part of vulnerable groups at risk, such as Latina adolescent women who might develop additional mental health issues during this time in their lives.

Definition of Key Terms

Foreign-born: This refers to being born abroad to non-U.S. citizen parents. It is used interchangeably in the literature with first generation and immigrant (APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration, 2012).

Immigrant: It refers to being born abroad to non-U.S. citizen parents. It is used interchangeably in the literature with *first generation* and *foreign-born*.

Immigrant-origin: This category includes both first- and second-generation immigrant children and adolescents with immigrant parents (APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration, 2012).

Naturalized citizen: This is a foreign-born individual who has become a U.S. citizen by fulfilling requirements set forth in the Immigration and Nationality Act (U.S Census Bureau, 2012) including, in most cases, having resided in the United States for at least five years.

Protective factors: These are conditions in families and communities that when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. These attributes serve as buffers, helping parents find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow

them to parent effectively, even under stress (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).

Undocumented: Individuals without legal authorization, who reside in the country. These individuals are not U.S. citizens, do not hold current visas, and have not been permitted admission under a specific set of rules for longer-term residence and work permits (Passel & Cohn, 2009).

Purpose Statement

Considerable research has undertaken the topic on Latino populations related to mental health problems resulting from immigration (Desjarlais, Eisenberg, Good, & Kleinman, 1995; Duldulao, Takeuchi, & Hong, 2009). Immigration from one country to another is not a typical part of growing up. There has been a minimal amount of research that has focused on immigrant adolescent females, compared to research studies that have included Latino adolescents within larger Latino groups (Akhtar, 2010; Caprio et al., 2008).

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders, Fifth Edition (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), understanding the cultural contexts of the illness experience is essential for effective diagnostic assessment and clinical management. Researchers conveyed that with cultural expertise, clinicians may be able to avoid misdiagnosing individuals by becoming familiar with variations in culture (Alarcón, Westermeyer, Foulks, & Ruiz, 1999; Hinton & Lewis-Fernandez, 2010; Hinton, Pich, Marques, Nickerson, & Pollack, 2010; Kirmayer, 1991; Kleinman & Benson, 2006). In addition, through clinical information associated with cultural differences and changes in symptoms that may be attributed to features of risks,

resilience, and outcomes, clinicians may be able to improve rapport and engagement, and clinical efficacy (Sue, Zane, Nagayama Hall, & Berger, 2009). The purpose of this research study is to explore the experiences of Latina women who immigrated to the United States during their adolescence. This study will expand the current findings regarding this specific population through a deeper understanding of the experience and transition during the adolescent development and immigration. Teachers, psychologists, parents, and community members might have the opportunity to increase their knowledge from the perspectives of adult Latina women sharing their experiences and adjustment in the United States.

Research Question

This study will aim to investigate the type of experiences immigrant Latina women have had when immigrating to the United States as adolescents and provide their perspectives on their experiences as adults. It will also examine the factors that influence their sense in adjusting their lives in the United States. Immigration experiences may threaten the physical, emotional, and mental health of the individual. As a result, counselors in the United States are challenged to learn about the mental health needs of immigrant women to support their successful transition in the United States (Espin, 1997; Yakushko & Chronister 2005). From the United States' perspective, *identity* is key for psychological functioning and maturation. It is also used to identify psychopathological issues. Diller (1999) described identity as a general term referring to the existence of a stable inner sense of a person, formed by the successful integration of various experiences of the self into a coherent self-image (p. 93). By exploring the experiences of Latina adolescents who have immigrated to the United States, the researcher will

investigate how their lives changed because of their immigration experience. It also aims

to add to the current literature significant information from their own experiences, in the

hope of improving the clinical effectiveness of psychological services in the community.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter explores the theoretical perspectives of adolescent development, and the background of immigration in the United States. It will also provide an overview of the literature regarding identity and acculturation, as well as explore the potential risks and protective factors associated with Latina adolescent immigrants according to the literature. This literature review serves as a guide to identify what is missing in the current literature about Latina women who have migrated to the United States during their adolescence, and how teachers, psychologists, parents, and community members can better understand their experiences to lessen mental health risks.

Adolescent Development

In the field of mental health, researchers have always had vested interest in understanding human development, in particular, the process of development during the time of adolescence (Austrian, 2008; Cole, Peeke, Martin, Truglio, & Seroczynski, 1998; Hamachek, 1992). Hall (1904) described adolescence as a period of storm and stress. During adolescence, individuals are developing physically and going through quick changes reflected in their behavior and their moods, both of which may shift rapidly. Other researchers have described adolescence as a period of psychological adjustment that has been investigated in literature on how it affects the lives of individuals and their relationships with others (Barber, Jacobson, Miller, & Petersen, 1998; Berk, 2007). For the purpose of this dissertation, early theories will be reviewed to understand some of the factors that contribute to adolescent development. This includes the theories of Erickson

(1950) and Bronfenbrenner (1977), which focused on the psychological development of adolescents and how they begin to make sense of their own world.

Erikson (1950, 1963) divided the growth of personality into eight psychological stages, in order to define identity, and proposed that individuals must negotiate different tasks at each life stage. Erikson (1963) described that each stage indicated a psychological crisis or a determining point when resiliency and vulnerability greatly increase. In Stage One, Erikson (1959) proposed that individuals go through the process stage of trust versus mistrust. During this stage, in the first year of life, the crisis progresses around resolving feelings of uncertainty from the caregiver to the infant, and how the infant looks toward their primary caregiver for stability and consistency of care (Austrian, 2008).

Erikson (1959) described Stage Two as autonomy versus shame at 18 months to three years. In this stage, Erikson (1959) suggested that children begin to discover their independence by doing things on their own, like walking away from their mother, choosing a toy to play with, and little decisions like deciding what they want to eat or what they want to wear. In Stage Two, if children are criticized or overly controlled, they begin to feel incompetent in their ability to survive, and may then become helpless, insecure, and feel a sense of shame in their own abilities (McLeod, 2013). Stage Three was described as the capacity to exhibit initiative versus guilt at three to six years of age (Erikson, 1959). In Stage Three, Erikson (1959) proposed that guilt was a feeling to assist individuals in making moral judgments and behave responsibly (Hamachek, 1992). Stage Four (Erickson, 1980) was described as the ending of childhood between the ages of 6–12. It is a time when the child's curiosity for learning increases, they desire to become

practical, and they thrive for more. Nonetheless, Erikson (1959, 1980) proposed that the crisis in this stage had to do with the individual's fear of making a mistake when making their own decisions as they learn; therefore, individuals may develop a profound fear of failing.

Erikson (1980) described Stage Five as identity versus identity confusion between ages 12 to 20. The ego values accumulated in childhood that culminates in a sense of identity and characteristics that are involved with the sexual and the occupational identifications of each individual. Cobb (2007) and Schultz and Schultz (2009) believed that during the adolescent stage, between 12 and 18 years of age, individuals tend to experiment with different ideas and roles in order to discover their own identity. Erickson (1950) described this stage as a time where the individual develops consistency in their personality. From Erickson's perspective, if people emerge from this stage with a strong sense of self-identity, they will be equipped to face adulthood with certainty and confidence. Cobb (2007) described that during adolescence, the concept of ideas of who the individual is or wants to be begin to develop. This is also a time of crisis where the individual is in self-conflict or identity crisis because they are determining their identity. This refers to Stage Five in Erikson's theory of personality development. Schultz and Schultz (2009) in describing Erickson's theory, considered peer support groups significant for Stage Five of development. Schultz and Schultz (2009) referred to adolescence as the age when there is the incorporation of new ideas about self-formation by experimenting with different role identities, associations with different groups, risk taking, and sometimes even engaging in risky behaviors. Erikson (1950, 1980) found that individuals who do not achieve endurance during this process in their identity

development, may have an identity crisis and may engage with peers that could have a detrimental impact on their sense of self and create difficulties in finding a positive identity (pp. 215–216).

Stage Six is described as intimacy versus isolation. Erikson (1963) proposed that between 18 to 40 years of age, individuals begin to develop more intimate relationships with others (McLeod, 2013). During this stage, Erikson's (1963) theory proposed that an exploration of relationships happens, leading toward longer term commitments with someone other than a family member. Successful completion of Stage Six was described as the process where the individual can have comfortable relationships and a sense of commitment, safety, and care within a relationship. The crisis in this stage is also understood to be the process where the individual may be avoiding intimacy and fearing commitment and relationships, which can lead to isolation, loneliness, and sometimes desolation. Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of love (McLeod, 2013).

Stage Seven of Erikson's theory (1963) was described as the generativity versus stagnation between the late 30s and 65 years of age. In this stage, individuals begin to take their place in society and move towards the improvement of the result of their involvement, including their ideas of their work and what they produce. In Stage Seven, individuals may make an effort in their participation to improve society by raising children who can also be good contributors to society (McLeod, 2013).

Bronfenbrenner's (1977) model of development is significant, since special attention was given to the phenomenon connecting the experiences of the individual and their social environments. The experience of immigration during adolescence from one country to another is a phenomenon that involves connecting with new experiences and a

change in social environment since many individuals have to leave their community, friends, and family. This model is important for this particular study since it would provide an opportunity to gain knowledge about the experience when a social environment is interrupted and altered because of the immigration and acculturation process.

Bronfenbrenner (1977) formulated a contextual model to understand adolescent development which he conceptualized as the Ecology of Human Development (EHD) with five systems of interaction in the life of individuals (p. 17). According to Bronfenbrenner, EHD is found within five systems: microsystems; mesosystems; exosystems; macrosystems; and chronosystems (p. 17). A microsystem was described as the immediate connections of the adolescent, such as family members and friends. Mesosystems were described as the areas where the adolescent interacts with others, such as in friends or teachers in schools. Exosystems refer to the situations occurring at the community level, such as health clinics or a parent's place of work. These situations are not directly related to the adolescent yet are part of a community context potentially indirectly affecting the development of the adolescent. Macrosystems refer to the broader settings of the environment, such as laws at the state and federal levels. Finally, chronosystems were described as change and the impact of all the other systems as time progresses. Each system depends on the contextual nature of the person's life and offers an ever-growing diversity of options and sources of growth. This includes the influence of family functioning, which is dynamic and interactive in a person's life (Swick & Williams, 2006).

The process of an American identity formation seems to support an individual's self-identity as opposed to setting a priority of a group identity, as long as an individual can present a certain element of the thoughtful apprehension of the autonomous choice. The individual must be able to self–induce to the next step. No matter where the individual is staying or going, they always have the choice of leaving or turning in the opposite direction, if they choose to do so (Akhtar, 1999). Researchers also have described early adolescence as an exciting time when individuals explore their sense of self, discovery, learning, and adjustment to physical changes. Early adolescents meet the challenge of becoming more independent from their parents (Cobb, 2007; Ginsburg & Kinsman, 2014). For most parents, adolescence is also a time to adjust and assist their teens in becoming responsible and happy adults.

In reviewing some theoretical viewpoints in the literature and for the purpose of this study, adolescent development is defined from a Western perspective. Arnett (1999) emphasized that adolescence is typically for many individuals a time of challenge and turbulence where sensation-seeking behaviors take place. Adolescents may engage in activities such as automobile driving, drug use, and minor criminal activities. In adolescence, individuals go through a typically physically noticeable development period of biological changes (Sullivan, 1947). They also undergo neurological changes that are exhibited in their behaviors (Cobb, 2007; Ojeda & Terasawa, 2002). From a biological standpoint, Fechner (2003) and Cobb (2007) noted that physical adolescent development is often noticeable because of the visible changes that occur mostly during early adolescence. These physical changes were reported to include a growth process and maturation of the reproductive system, skeletal growth, and other changes, as children

transform intro physically mature adults. The circulatory and respiratory systems also change to increase physical strength, fitness, and tolerance for exercise.

Rogol, Roemmich, and Clark (2002) also reported that the hormonal and physical changes are accompanied by marked changes in body composition, including alterations in the relative proportions of water, muscle, fat, and bone. These were reported to be the trademarks of pubertal maturation. Researchers have also explained that in terms of the difference between females and males, birth skeletal maturation is four to six weeks more advanced for females than in males. This trend typically continues throughout childhood and adolescence (Fechner, 2002; Rogol et al., 2002). Van Horn et al. (2011) reported that during adolescence, in addition to alterations of body proportions, differences become more apparent between males and females as well as some differences in body mass between females from different ethnic backgrounds.

From a neurological perspective, researchers have found that differences exist in how adolescents develop and respond to daily stressful situations. Ojeda and Terasawa (2002) reported that stress on the developing adolescent brain may induce negative psychological symptoms that could have short and long-lasting consequences for mental health. Ojeda and Terasawa (2002) explained that during maturation in adolescence, there are many shifts in neuroendocrine function. For example, the limbic system is a group of brain structures that are involved in the processing and regulating of emotions, memory, and sexual arousal. Along with other structures, the limbic system is an important response to stress. It helps the hypothalamus to regulate reproduction, eating, drinking, behavior, energy utilization and blood pressure (Ojeda & Terasawa, 2002). During adolescence, the prefrontal cortex, associated with moderating social behaviors, continues

to mature. The amygdala is associated with processing emotions and fear learning (Ojeda & Terasawa, 2002).

Psychological and physical changes occur in both early and late adolescence. Nishina, Ammon, Bellmore, and Graham (2006) investigated the association between body dissatisfaction and adjustment in an ethnically diverse sample of over 1100 urban adolescents. Researchers found more similarities than differences across various ethnic groups. Caucasian, African American, Latino, Asian, and multiethnic males reported similar areas of body dissatisfaction, levels of body dissatisfaction, and associations between body dissatisfaction and psychosocial maladjustment. In addition, for women and girls, the physical development directly predicted less peer victimization, while perceived faster development predicted more victimization.

Rogol et al. (2002) reported that physical growth and maturation are typically influenced by a number of factors that act independently or in concert to modify an individual's genetic potential, which may be broadly defined as nutritional, genetic, and hormonal. Nutrition, including energy and specific nutrient intake, was highlighted as a major determinant of growth and was found to have an effect on sexual development. In addition, one of the most important global influences on physical growth was malnutrition, although in the United States, the causes were typically self-induced food restriction or systemic disease, rather than being poverty-related (Rogol et al., 2002). Transitioning to adulthood is marked in a number of ways in the United States, such as moving out of the parent's home, attending college, getting married, and developing a sense of identity in the workplace and family (Arnett & Tanner, 2006; Setterson, Furtersburg, 2005).

Cultural Identity

Counteracting overgeneralizing cultural information and stereotyping groups in terms of fixed cultural traits is vital to increase the efficacy in clinical practice (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). By understanding cultural identity, Gordon (1964) explained that from an American perspective, identity can be understood as a group of categories that have a common social psychological referent, in that it serves to create groups of people sharing nationality, race, religion, and national origin that can be recognized in the American's public usage. *Ethnicity* is a culturally constructed group identity used to define peoples and communities (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Ethnicity may be rooted in a common history, geography, language, religion or other shared characteristics of a group, which distinguish that group from others (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Culture, race, and ethnicity are reported to be related to economic inequities, racism, and discrimination that result in health disparities (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Culture also specifically refers to systems of knowledge, concepts, rules, and practices that are learned and transmitted across generations. It was defined as an open, dynamic system that undergoes a continuous change over time. Although culture is reported to be a source of strength and group support that enhances resilience, it may also lead to psychological, interpersonal and intergenerational conflict (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Race is a culturally constructed category of identity that divides humanity into groups based on a variety of superficial physical attributes contingent on some theoretical basis, biological characteristics that qualify for certain groups (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Racial categories and constructs have changed over history and

across societies (American Psychological Association, 2013). The construct of race has no consistent biological definition but is viewed as socially significant because it may maintain racism, discrimination, and social exclusion, which are suggested to have strong negative effects on mental health (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Gordon (1964) stated that although these social psychological elements are common, there is also a special sense of ancestral and future-oriented identification of ethnic identity. Individuals may identify with people from past generations of their group and consider their future generations to share a sense of an indissoluble and familiar identity and not the one within a larger society and the world. Gordon (1964) explained that the set of formed groups whether large or small, temporary or permanent, formally and unorganized, may also assist individuals to form part of major institutional activities. Typically, this includes economic, occupational, religious, government and recreation activities that focus on social relationships. Other researchers also described ethnicity as the individuals' integration of heritage culture into their sense of self, rather than their proficiency with cultural beliefs, values or behaviors (Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010). Diller (1999) described ethnic identity as the part of the individual's distinctiveness that contributes to the self-image as a member of an ethnic group (p. 93).

In addition to the sense of social belonging, Gordon (1964) explained that another major characteristic of an ethnic group is the nature of its relationship to the various phenomena where individuals are able to relate to each other in settings in society. Nevertheless, some of the phenomena where individuals relate to each other can also be caused by collective trauma. Alexander (2004) and Das (2001) described collective trauma as phenomena when a group of individuals deals with social suffering

(e.g., trauma caused by war, political violence or practices of state terror) disrupting the everyday life of ordinary citizens. Other researchers described collective trauma as a social injury damaging the social life of individuals, with social pain. As a member of a group experiencing collective trauma researcher described it as hurting the person's social and ethnic identity, and risking a possible increase in extreme traumatization (Becker, Morales, & Aguilar, 1994). Collective trauma creates the perception of being excluded, denigrated, and destroyed as a person (MacDonald & Leary, 2005; Martín-Baró, 2003), and Summerfield (2004) stated that all of this is entailed in collective trauma, bearing in mind that suffering is typically not considered pathological, but an experience growing up and resolved in a social context.

Meeus (2011) conducted extensive research on identity formation by analyzing the results of 48 longitudinal studies that were completed between 2000 and 2010. Of the 48 studies, 29 of them focused on investigating personal identity and ethnic identity, and 19 longitudinal studies were focused on the links between identity and personality, psychosocial problems and well- being, and parenting, respectively. Meeus (2011) reported that longitudinal studies have shown that personal identity develops progressively during adolescence, but also that many individuals do not change identity, especially ethnic identity. In addition, Meeus reported that personal identity appears to progress in adulthood and that adolescents with a mature identity typically show high levels of adjustment, a positive personality profile, live in warm families, and perform well at school. Meeus also reported that there is little evidence for developmental order. This is a significant analysis since it addressed a combination of developmental issues and personal identity. Nevertheless, the complexity of multiple identifications with race,

ethnicity, gender, cultures, religion, social class, and sexual orientation, meets a challenge to consider life experiences within and outside of the family, which are ongoing experiences in a social environment (Shane, 2014). The current investigation targets a group of participants that have lived cross-cultural experiences, which may add to the current literature in understanding more in-depth how these experiences could influence their personal identity.

One of the possible benefits of this research is to increase awareness to providers who work with the Latino population, in particular, with Latina women living in the United States. However, there are certain challenges to take into consideration. Haack, Gerdes, and Lawton (2014) investigated a group of participants of Latino descent and their participation in research studies. They hoped to maximize the recruitment, retention, and satisfaction of at-risk underserved Latino families with a sample of 70 families and children from ages five to 12. Researchers described participants from Latino backgrounds as being difficult to encourage to participate in research since they may encounter additional barriers which may prevent them from participation, such as language, transportation, availability due to time constraints, and levels of acculturation. Researchers suggested that when working with a Latino population, it was necessary to make adjustments, such as translation, transportation, cultural adjustments, and time accommodations, that may be beneficial to break down barriers some Latinos encounter. Therefore, for this study, a qualitative approach was appropriate for Latino participants since it allowed the necessary adjustments, such as establishing a sense of mutual respect, understanding of gender roles, familism, as well as the acculturation level and diversity of families and individuals (Haack et al., 2014).

The current research study of immigrant women from Latin America may add knowledge to the current literature regarding experiences of women who may share a cultural identity, yet their diversity may be recognized with more than one cultural identity. Other commonalities of identity may be race, social class, sexual orientation, and religious background, to name a few. This research study may add to the current literature on current knowledge regarding the impact of the immigration phenomenon and how Latin American immigrant women's identities are shaped as they adjust to a new environment in the United States. Some researchers have paid attention to how women develop their identities and challenged male-center theories of adolescent psychological development (Bem, 1993; Gilligan, 1982). The results from this study might contribute unique information for the participants' unique experiences regarding their adjustment in the United States and add to current literature of how to adapt to gender roles in their new environments.

Gender Issues

Gender roles can vary significantly between the country of origin and the United States (Espín, 2006; López, Ecosto, Mondford-Dent, & Prado-Steiman, 2011). Psychological research regarding gender constitutes a rich and varied field of knowledge that has developed over the last forty years. It began with psychological researchers and psychotherapists who were active in the women's liberation movement in the 1960s and 1970s (Magnusson & Marecek, 2012). Bem (1993) proposed the concept that differences exist on how men and women interpret the world. For the purpose of this research, investigating the experiences of women immigrating to the United States may add to the current literature, since it has the possibility to discover commonalities or differences

among women from Latin America, which have lived the particular experience of immigration.

Questions regarding immigration and gendered social change have been reported to be important for understanding gendered prejudices in contemporary societies where changing patterns of immigration can and often do result in changing gender discourse, norms, and behavior (Näre & Akhtar, 2014). Some immigrant women come from countries whose official governmental policies or cultural beliefs foster the transformation of women's roles (Espin,1999). In other countries, the cultures may include religious or societal rules that are more traditional (Espin, 1999). Future research can investigate how immigrant women negotiate contradictory expectations concerning gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation within their ethnic communities and mainstream contexts. This study will be beneficial to expand the current literature regarding how adult women view their experience of immigration as adolescents and if this phenomenon affects their overall sense of being while adapting to a new culture.

Gilligan (1982) suggested that some theorists have based human development from a male perspective. In Erikson's theory, the male identity is forged in relation to the world and of female identity, as awakened in relationships of intimacy with another person (Gilligan, 1982). This is hardly new and it was pointed out that although Erickson noticed sex differences, his life cycle changes remain unchanged. The benefits of understanding the experiences of women immigrants may be beneficial in learning how they begin to adapt to a new culture and how women, in particular, see themselves in the world during their transition. Lytle and Bakken (1997) investigated the issue of gender differences in identity development using a sample of 703 students, from the sixth

through twelfth grades. The purpose of the study was to determine whether a gender-specific pattern of identity formation was evident in females during their early and middle adolescent years. The researcher reported that adolescent females appeared to be measurably adapting to the need for a broader identity that blends both dimensions of separation and connectedness and trust, whereas adolescent males were not. The researcher made a significant observation in regards to the influence of gender stereotypes and how it might influence gender differences. If a woman, for example, is projected to the children with the role of the "caretaker," this might influence boys and girls to take on certain roles based on their gender at an early age, or suppress certain self-needs, such as autonomy for the girls (Lytle & Bakken, 1997).

This study may provide further information on gender differences and how women may change with the immigration transition. In addition, from the interviews, women may increase information on risks factors that contribute to the challenges of adjusting to a new culture. Many Latina women from Central America and Mexico have been exposed to violence and have witnessed atrocities such as political violence, kidnappings of family members, and drug cartel turf wars in their country of origin or during their journey of immigration (Kaltman, Hurtado de Mendoza, Gonzales, Serrano, & Guarnaccia, 2011). According to the Center for Disease Control (2006), Latinas, in particular, reported relatively high rates of hopelessness, suicide plans, and suicide attempts. Kataoka, Stein, Lieberman, and Wong (2003) found that Latino youths were least likely to be identified as suicidal and to receive crisis intervention in a large community school district compared with other ethnic groups, despite the previously mentioned high rates of suicide attempts. Expectations of obligation to the family appear

to play an important role in Latina suicidal behaviors (Zayas, Lester, Cabassa, & Fortuna, 2005), in spite of the fact that family closeness and good relations with parents have been found to be a resiliency factor for suicidality among Latino males and females (Locke & Newcomb, 2005). Latina women are also at a higher risk of domestic violence if they challenged traditional roles (Rasche, 1988).

Lui (2015) summarized the important literature on acculturation, mainstream intergenerational conflict, and intergenerational cultural conflict within immigrant families. Lui presented results from a meta-analytic review of the relationships among acculturation mismatch intergenerational, cultural conflict, and offspring adjustment described in the expanded acculturation gap-distress theory. Lui (2015) suggested that concerning the expectations about significant gender role differentiations in traditional Asian and Latino cultures, acculturation is more problematic for girls and women. They are more likely to argue with their parents over values and acculturation behaviors than men because they are typically expected to maintain the cultural values and norms compared to boys and men who are given more room to transgress (Lui , 2005, p. 433). This particular study highlights the complexity of cases with immigrant adolescents and the issues women, in particular, face regarding gender roles.

This study may add information about how Latina women deal with issues of immigration and adjustment in changing roles. The current literature states that women may challenge gender roles that are ingrained in their culture during the immigration process and it may be beneficial to learn from their experiences with their adjustment (Zayas et al., 2005). Therefore, the review of current research on immigration and process of acculturation is vital for this study.

Acculturation

Individual development and cultural context have been investigated for decades regarding the process of immigration (Berry, 1997; Graves, 1967; Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936 1936). Trueba (2002) pointed out that despite the rapid growth of Latino population in the United States and the complexity within this group, acculturation and assimilation models have become too simplistic because acculturation and assimilation perceptions are limited and tend to hypothesize that immigrants integrate into the American culture as groups with deficits versus enriching the American culture. Nevertheless, continuing to investigate the phenomenon of acculturation experiences may add to current literature as the diversity in United States population continues to change.

Acculturation has been described as experiences when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continual direct contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups (Redfield, et al. 1936). Graves (1967) introduced the concept of *psychological acculturation* to refer to changes in an individual who is a participant in a culture contact situation being influenced both directly by the external culture, and by the changing culture of which the individual is a member. Berry (2001) described psychological acculturation as the dynamic process that immigrants experience as individuals adapt to the culture of a new country. Berry (1997) constructed the acculturation bi-dimensional model to refer to group psychological acculturation and individual psychological acculturation. In addition, further research has been added to literature centered on Berry's model of acculturation. Therefore, for the purpose of this investigation, this model will be reviewed.

Berry (1997) proposed five possible acculturation strategies: *assimilation, separation, integration,* and *marginalization*. In the process of assimilation, individuals embrace and seek to acquire the practices of the dominant culture and attempt to avoid their culture of origin. This is often done by seeking regular contact with the dominant society and avoiding maintenance of their original identity (Berry, 1997). Berry explained the process of a *separation* of acculturation model, as individuals who tend to reject the dominant culture in favor of maintaining their ethnic identity by highly valuing their original cultural practices and avoiding contact with individuals from the dominant society. Berry (1997) suggested people rarely choose this as an option and rather, individuals may be marginalized as a result of attempts at forced assimilation in combination with forced exclusion.

Vilens and Sher (2010) explained the differences between group and individual factors that may contribute to psychological acculturation. Vilens and Sher explained how the process of acculturation may be influenced by the sociocultural and political characteristics of the country of origin and the immigration social policy of the host country, play an important role in the acculturation process of the immigrant group. Vilens and Sher (2010) described variables before acculturation could include ethnicity, gender, age, education, the motivation for immigration, and/or voluntary or forced immigration. The moderators during immigration could be the length of stay, the residence area with or without their ethnic group, the use of host or primary language, and the development of relations with their own ethnic group only or with the natives (Berry, 2010; Vilens & Sher, 2010). Additionally, in current times, culture learning may not be the same as in past decades before social media existed. Internationalization of the

media has increased accessibility to interact internationally. As a result, learning about different cultures may already take place before the individual has immigrated. Therefore, adjustment to the newer culture and its values may or may not be straightforward (Ventriglio & Bhugra, 2015). Hence, the experiences of Latinas immigrating to the United States may add to the current literature on process of acculturation in this particular study.

In addition to understanding the acculturation process, researchers have investigated factors that may change following immigration. For instance, although domestic violence can happen in both genders and in many cultures, for women from collectivistic countries in Latin American immigrating to a more individualistic country, domestic violence can increase following immigration. Edelson, Hokoda, and Ramos-Lira (2007) investigated the possible differences in the effects of domestic violence between Latina and non-Latina women with 65 participants who were recruited from Mexico City and Southern California. Researchers found that Latina women had significantly lower social self-esteem than non-Latina women. Researchers explained that Latina women who were victims of domestic violence found themselves lost between their duty to preserve and maintain the family as part of their culture and their obligations to themselves as who they were as individuals (Edelson et al., 2007; Galanti, 2003). From this standpoint, this investigation may increase the literature by investigating if participants have challenged cultural values established before their immigration experiences, and the potential to investigate if participants have modified or embraced new ideas to their cultural values.

In Berry's (1997, 2001) acculturation model, *integration* was described as the

acceptance of the maintenance of cultural identity and where individuals participate as an integral part of society at large. Furthermore, individuals of multiracial backgrounds may also identify themselves as Latinos based on their cultural background despite race differences. Fisher, Reynolds, Hsu, Barnes, and Tyler (2014) completed a large study on the components of affirmation and exploration in ethnic identity and mental health outcomes with participants of multiracial backgrounds. In this study, with a sample of 4766 participants, the authors indicated that multiracial adolescents reported significantly higher levels of depressive symptoms than African American and Caucasian adolescents. The authors indicated that this youth might differ from other multiracial youth, since they decided to accept all parts of their identity, as opposed to selecting one and rejecting others. This study was limited to a multiracial group of African American and Caucasian backgrounds. Fisher et al. (2014) concluded that acceptance of multiple identities may be encouraging and the rejection of being put into already established social categories might balance the effect of navigating various diverse environments. Investigating the experience of Latina adolescents who have immigrated to the United States might contribute to the current literature on their experiences regarding immigrating and integrating themselves into different social and racial groups in the United States.

Latino/Hispanic and Immigration in the United States

According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau (2010) data, the Hispanic population, although the largest minority group, is a very complex one that is composed of people from many different countries. The U.S. Census Bureau (2010) reported that the foreign-born immigrants were from Latin America and reported 70% of the Hispanic population was from Central America, followed by 18% from the Caribbean, and 13%

from South America. Mexico accounted for 55% of the population, while El Salvador and Cuba each represented more than 5%. The 18% foreign born from the Caribbean, included 30% from Cuba and 25% from the Dominican Republic. Colombia represented the largest share of the foreign born from South America with 23% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, p. 2).

Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (1995) noted that by the year 2025, the United States will have the second largest number of Spanish speakers in the world. In particular, there are many difficulties Latina adolescent women immigrants face during their migration experience and adjustment. The journey of migration often puts women and children at a higher risk of becoming victims of violence, sexual assault, and child trafficking (Borges et al., 2013; Ugarte, Zarate, & Farley 2003).

Horevitz (2009) reviewed features of the key theoretical frameworks from which modern anthropological immigration and migration studies have been conducted. Horevitz (2009) found that anthropologists have focused their work on understanding the concept of immigration in terms of finding out how people immigrate, the reasons why they migrate, and where they migrate to. Horevitz stressed the importance of understanding the differences and commonalities of two important terms: "*immigration* referred to a movement of people from one place to another permanent location" (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995). The other term, *migrant*, refers to someone who may move back and forth between his or her home community and one or more host communities" (Foner, 2003; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995). Horevitz (2009) explained that migration could be better understood as "old and new migration." The researcher stated that anthropologists distinguished between the "old immigration" (also

known as the Great Transatlantic Migration), such as from the 1890s and 1910s, and the "new immigration" that began to appear as a result of globalization (Horevitz, 2009, p. 749).

Prior to the landmark legislation of the Immigration and Nationalization Act of 1965 (Fountas, 2005), approximately 43 million legal immigrants had come to the United States since 1600. At that time, the immigration policy was based on a national-quota system, where each nationality was based on part of U.S. census categories, most of them from Europe. A shift in immigration from developed Western countries occurred, which eliminated national origin, race or ancestry as the basis for denying immigration and removing from the law its discriminatory elements (Fountas, 2005). It is also significant to note historical occurrences that have influenced migration to some degree (Bhugra & Becker, 2005). For example, Wright reported that immigration dramatically slowed down during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Several scholars have proposed various reasons for making decisions to immigrate. The motives can vary significantly from person to person (Falicov, 2013; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995). Akhtar (1999) and Suarez-Orozco, Bang, and Kim (2011) described different circumstances of immigration. It was pointed out that whether immigration is temporary or permanent, it makes a difference to one's psychological understanding of the phenomenon as being something short-term or long lasting. Akhtar (1999) further highlighted the importance of the degree of choice when leaving behind one's country of origin. For example, the stressors of departing one's native country because of political persecution may have a very different impact than departing in hope of better economic opportunities (Betancourt et al., 2014).

In recent years, there has been a massive increase in the number of children and adolescents immigrating alone to the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in 2014, a total of 68,541 unaccompanied alien children (between the ages of 0 to 17) were apprehended at the United States–Mexican border. Gozdziak, Bump, Duncan, MacDonnell, and Loiselle (2006) completed interviews with service providers in the United States' refugee foster care and unaccompanied minors' programs with 35 females and one male unaccompanied survivor of trafficking between the ages of 12 to 17. The survivors were trafficked for sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, and labor. Gozdziak et al. (2006) reported that many times the idea to migrate came from the survivors, while in other situations a family member, friend or child trafficker posing as a trustworthy individual would promise a better future for them. The authors also reported that in most cases, the survivors' decision to migrate resulted from their own desire to help their family financially or to escape a difficult family situation, violence and extreme poverty. Nevertheless, while adolescent immigration has existed for many years across nations, limited research has been focused on this target population.

Berry (1997) and Akhtar (1999) highlighted aspects of immigration and the process of adjustment, which might depend on the magnitude of cultural differences. Berry (1997) suggested that "differences can be of a wide array such as attire, food, language, music, political ideologies, degrees and varieties of permissible sexuality, extent of autonomy versus familial enmeshment, subjective experience of time, communication of sexes and more" (p. 19). Nevertheless, gender, age, and where people come from or migrate to, the process of immigration might contribute to important psychological changes that take place before and after arrival in the new country (Espin,

1987). There is an irretrievable process of change that people experience, which continues throughout the life of the immigrant and includes the development of new identity (Garza-Guerrero, 1974).

As an example of a common practice for Latino immigrants, Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (1995) reported that typically one person in the family migrates. They become responsible for improving the living standard of his/her family members despite the role that they play in the family. "A sad Latino paradox is that enduring psychological and cultural loss best enables one to help those back home" (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995). The person who immigrates could be one of the parents or a son or daughter. Despite their family role, the individual carries a tremendous responsibility to help the whole family to progress. The one who leaves has to deal with the grief of leaving his family and use the grief as an empowerment for motivation to help those left behind. However, there are many different factors that influence the differences in how people migrate. According to the American Psychological Association (2012), experiences of migration are often mediated by immigration status, generation status, level of education, and socioeconomic status. It frequently depends on how the individual entered the country and their current immigration status.

In order to avoid making generalizations based on the ethnicity or immigration status of Latinos/as, it is essential to understand that this minority group continues to grow, and it is in the best interest of psychologists, teachers, and community members to increase their knowledge about the Latino population to attain a heightened multicultural competence in how the experience of immigration affects the life of an individual (Villalba, 2007).

Acculturation and Mental Health

Schwartz et al. (2010) explained that scholars such as Berry (1980) have recognized that acquiring the beliefs, values, and practices of the receiving country does not automatically imply that an immigrant will discard the beliefs, values, and practices of her or his country of origin. Understanding the dynamic process of acculturation and the complexity of the Latino population, this study will increase knowledge in the current literature regarding Latina adolescents and their experienc to guide providers working with this population a better understanding of individuals who have experience this phenomenon and how they view their life today in the United States.

Berry (2001) described *marginalization* as a factor in understanding psychological acculturation. Golash-Boza (2006) completed an analysis based on the 1989 Latino National Political Survey (a survey of nearly 2,800 Cubans, Puerto Ricans and Mexicans in the United States) and the 2002 National Survey of Latinos where another group of 4,213 Latinos were interviewed. Golash-Boza (2006) reported the phenomenon of rejection from individuals in accepting to be an American, was often related to the response of facing discrimination in the United States. Furthermore, embracing the "Latino" label was in response to discrimination and exclusion to those who faced discrimination and were learning that they were not viewed as equals in the United States. Golash-Boza (2006) suggested that it was a reaction to discrimination and exclusion. The researcher also reported that experiences of discrimination discouraged immigrants from Latin America and their children from self-identifying as American, despite the fact that many of the immigrants and their children were born in the United States. Golash-Boza (2006) and Hatton and Leigh (2011) explained that assimilation in

general also depended on the interactions between immigrant communities and the host society, and not solely on the characteristics and the motivation of immigrants as individuals. In addition, Vilens and Sher (2010) pointed out that in places where multiculturalism is not welcome, integration may be more challenging for the individual and the dominant group.

In more recent studies, Kroon Van Diest, Tartakovsky, Stachon, Pettit, and Perez (2014); Sirin, Ryce, Gupta, and Rogers-Sirin (2012); and Turner, Kaplan, and Badger (2006) reported that there are multiple psychological stressors connected to acculturation with ethnic groups adjusting to a new culture around them. Sirin et al., 2012 explored in a longitudinal study the trajectories of internalizing mental health symptoms such as depression, anxiety, and somatic symptoms with first and second-generation immigrant adolescents. The researchers revealed that internalizing mental health symptoms declined over time but not always in the same fashion across different sets of mental health symptoms. One important finding for the researchers was the critical role that acculturative stress plays in the course of mental health symptoms for urban immigrant youth during their high school years. Researchers made the observation that when levels of acculturative stress increased in immigrant youth, mental health symptoms increased as well (Sirin et al, 2012). The current qualitative research has the potential to expand in current research on how acculturative stress played a role in the adjustment of the participants in their first year of immigration to the United States.

This study (Sirin et al., 2012), in particular, was focused on female participants to explore possible acculturative stress. Kroon Van Diest et al. (2014) completed a similar study in relation to acculturative stress and psychological problems focusing on

acculturative stress and eating disorders with a sample of 247 undergraduate women. Kroon Van Diest et al. (2014) found when comparing levels of acculturative stress among different ethnic groups focusing on women, the results indicated that acculturative stress was significantly related to bulimic symptoms among Asian Americans, African Americans, and Latinas, even after controlling for general life stress. Turner et al. (2006) noted from two studies of adolescent Latinas between the ages of 12 and 18 in the United States who had stressors such as poverty, discrimination, immigration and acculturation stress, that they often struggle with low self-esteem, depression, suicide attempts, and school dropout. However, researchers pointed out that the groups of adolescent Latinas who had a greater degree of mutuality with their mothers were significantly less likely to have made a suicide attempt within the previous five years and were also significantly more likely to use positive coping strategies when faced with stressful situations. Turner et al. pointed out that adolescent females are likely to succeed if they have protective factors that may mitigate stressors of acculturation stress. They supported the need for future research to identify what type of support they needed to promote their adaptive functioning, resilience and sense of well-being (Turner et al., 2006, pp. 452–454).

Cristini, Scacchi, Perkins, Santinello, and Vieno (2011); Fuentes-Afflick and Hessol (2008); Lee and Hahm (2010); and Romero, Carvajal, Valle, and Orduña (2007) have all concurred in findings of acculturation and psychological stressors among Hispanic adolescents compared to other adolescents from different backgrounds. For instance, Fuentes-Afflick and Hessol (2008) reported that Latina women in the United States have a unique profile of risk factors relative to women of other ethnic groups, with high fertility rates and high rates of younger and older childbearing. Fuentes-Afflick and

Hessol (2008) noted that increasing gravidity was associated with obesity in a study with a sample of 313 Latina women living in the vicinity of San Francisco. Other researchers investigated social, cultural, and economic factors among 8304 participants who were Latina women living in California and were of Mexican-origin and Central American-origin. The researchers also reported that women who had three or more children were more likely to be overweight or obese than women who had no children (Bowie, Juon, Cho, & Rodriguez, 2001).

The previous investigation is significant as the researchers pointed to the importance of reducing the prevalence of obesity among Latina women, which should target long-term immigrants, and women with higher age, lower educational attainment, and high gravidity. For this current investigation, the data collected will increase knowledge of adult women and their views about immigration and their lives in the United States, which may add to other particular themes in regards to the factors that may contribute to psychological stressors.

In a similar study regarding acculturation and psychological stressors, Lee and Hahm (2010) completed an investigation of Latina adolescents, including sexual risk behaviors and level of acculturation, in a longitudinal study with a sample of 1073 participants. The researchers divided the participants into four groups to differentiate the level of acculturation. Lee and Hahm (2010) reported that Latinas who were U.S.-born and spoke English at home were more likely to have had a sexually transmitted disease (STD) and to have had four or more lifetime sexual partners as compared to Latinas who were foreign-born and did not speak English at home. However, researchers also found that Latinas who were foreign born and spoke English at home had the highest odds of

risky sexual outcomes, including self-reported STD diagnoses, four or more lifetime sexual partners, and regret of sexual initiation after drinking. Lee and Hahm (2010) noted that the reason for such findings was not immediately clear, and suggested that it may be due to the fact that Latinas who were foreign-born and spoke English at home might have been struggling the most with the acculturation process as compared to the other groups. Lee and Hahm (2010) suggested that future studies should examine the specific factors associated with low parental monitoring among Latinas and develop strategies that will increase parental monitoring for these young women. They predicted parental monitoring as one of the factors that might have contributed to risks of sexual behavior. The authors also suggested that substantial prevention and intervention efforts are still necessary from social work and public health professionals in order to improve sexual and reproductive health and to reduce health and risk disparities among Latina adolescents who are transitioning to young adulthood (Lee & Hahm, 2010, p. 424).

Romero et al. (2007) investigated the subjective perception of bicultural stress and its relation to mental well-being among Latino, Asian American, and European American youth. The researchers utilized a total of 650 participants, dividing them into three different groups: 304 urban Latino youth, 215 European American youth, and 131 Asian Americans. Researchers defined bicultural stress as the perception of stress due to everyday life stressors that result from the pressure to adopt the mainstream society as well minority cultural norms. Romero et al. (2007) also included stressors such as discrimination, negative labels, breaks in the acculturation process, and pressure to speak more than one language. Romero et al. (2007) found higher bicultural stress was associated with more depressive symptoms and less optimism among girls only. The

researchers had hypothesized that European American youth would report fewer stressors and with less intensity than minority groups; however, this was only partially supported. The authors reported that European American youth did report bicultural stress but few ethnic differences were found in the intensity. Similar to previous researchers mentioned in other studies, Romero et al., (2007) suggested there is a need to better understand positive buffers for bicultural stress and to develop health promotion programs to prevent or limit negative effects on adolescent mental well-being (pp. 529–531).

Cristini et al. (2011) explored the link between perceived discrimination and depressive symptoms reported by immigrant adolescents. The sample was chosen from 214 mostly male participants from an area of northern Italy. Researchers found that perceived discrimination had a significant effect on the mental health status and well-being of participants. Cristini et al. (2011) also reported they found support from teachers as the only difference between those participants with less significant symptoms. Cristini et al. (2011) highlighted that when individuals experience discrimination in their new environment, such as negative messages about their primary ethnic identification, it makes the process of assimilation more difficult for those attempting to adjust increasing the risk of possible psychological stressors such as low self-esteem (pp. 244–250). Investigating Latina immigrants would increase current knowledge regarding perceptions from the participants regarding their experiences, which has a possibility of identifying potential mental health symptoms.

Xenophobia

Scholars have identified that an unreceptive host community and a lack of social support can lead to a increased source of stress in various immigrant groups (Ahmad,

Riaz, Barata, & Stewart, 2004; Pottie, Brown, & Dunn, 2005). In particular, this might

happen in communities with high unemployment, little racial or ethnic diversity

(Westermeyer, 1989). In the current anti-immigrant climate, xenophobia significantly

may affect the lives of immigrants in the United States (Deaux, 2006, 2011). Translantic

Trends, (2010) have reported that immigrants are sometimes viewed by native-born

Americans as taking jobs from them and are discriminated against in the workforce,

service agencies, schools, and housing opportunities (Dietz, 2010; Rumbaut, 2005; Stone

& Han, 2005; Zárate, Garcia, Garza, & Hitlan, 2004). Acts of discrimination can be the

result of motivated discrimination based on prejudice, traditionalistic views, and gain

motivated discrimination (Feagin & Eckberg,1980). In addition, for immigrant women in

the United States, multiple sources of social oppression exist, such xenophobia, racism,

sexism, and discrimination based on poverty and employment (Marsella & Ring, 2003;

Yakushko & Chronister, 2005).

Researchers have paid attention in understanding the psychological implications

of racial and ethnic discrimination (Umana-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007; Viruell-Fuentes,

2007) and have found that discrimination and racism, both intended or unintended, have

important implications for immigrants' sense of well-being and belonging (Viruell-

Fuentes, 2007). Therefore, investigating diverse groups within the Latino community

may add to the psychology field how some Latina women experience immigration and

their adjustment in the United States.

Whether overt or subtle, the negative impact of discrimination on the

psychological well-being of an individual is the same (Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson,

2008). Moreover, immigrants, especially those of color, are often the targets of

discrimination and it often has an impact on their well-being and academic achievement (Berry & Sabatier, 2010; Buddington, 2002; Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). Scholars have pointed out that immigrants who are racially distinct from the majority are at greater risk for experiencing discrimination than those who are not (Abdulrahim, James, Yamout, & Baker, 2012; Hummer & Chinn, 2011; Williams 1999). Experiences of racial/ethnic discrimination have been associated with mental health problems, including stress, and depression (Viruell-Fuentes, 2007). Scholars have also researched the impact of discrimination with groups from different ethnic backgrounds and have found that many immigrants from Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa encounter racial discrimination for the first time in the United States, which can have a substantial impact on their health and mental health (Brown et al., 2000). Xenophobia affects both immigrants and U.S.-born minority populations and is an increasing problem for Latinos in the United States (Lopez & Taylor, 2010).

Moreover, researchers have proposed that cultural values and prejudices might influence how immigrant women have been represented in psychological science and this has led to narrowly conceptualize immigrant women as oppressed and helpless (Yakushko & Chronister, 2005). The current research may add to literature regarding the experiences of immigration and adjustment of Latina women in the United States, in hope to expand clinical knowledge of Latina women in the United States and current knowledge that could amplify how immigrant women are conceptualized in current research. Researchers have explored the negative consequences of profiling immigrants and have found that profiling might contribute to fear and anxiety for immigrants, especially those of color and who might possibly live in fear of being spotted and deported (Arbona et al., 2010). Arbona et al. (2010) examined differences between

documented and undocumented Latino immigrants in the prevalence of immigration-related challenges. Although undocumented immigrants reported higher levels of immigration challenges than documented immigrants, Arbona et al. (2010) reported that both groups reported similar levels of fear of deportation.

Consequences, such as discrimination-based issues, discrimination whether over or aversive, effects of profiling, racial identity issues, sense of fear, anxiety, and a compromised sense of safety, should be issues of great concern for psychologists in understanding how different groups experience those consequences (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Other issues may include feelings of being a "second class" person, lack of a sense of belonging and decreased use of mental health services (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The hope of this study is to add to the current literature how psychologists might benefit by using multiple sources of evidence, in particular, from a qualitative approach where the experiences described by adult women and may reflect back to their years of adolescents and period of adjustment.

Racism

Experiences of racial/ethnic discrimination have been associated with mental health problems, including stress and depression (Viruell-Fuentes, 2007). Scholars have also conducted research on the impact of discrimination on groups from different ethnic backgrounds and have found that many immigrants from Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa encounter racial discrimination for the first time in the United States. This can have a substantial impact on their physical and mental health (Williams et al., 2008). Xenophobia affects both immigrants and U.S.-born minority populations. It is an increasing problem for Latinos in the United States (Lopez & Taylor, 2010).

Immigrants, especially those of color, are often the targets of discrimination which often has an impact on their well-being and academic achievement (Berry & Sabatier, 2010; Buddington, 2002; Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). Scholars have pointed out that immigrants who are racially distinct from the majority are at greater risk of experiencing discrimination than those who are not (Abdulrahim et al., 2012; Hummer & Chinn, 2011; Williams, 1999).

A race can be understood as a group that is seen as distinct because of common physical or biological characteristics that are believed to be inherent. The characteristics to define race were defined by social conventions (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998). However, the lived experience of race cannot be understood as a single, static identity (Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Rodrıguez, 2000). Hispanics in the United States illustrate the lack of correspondence between racial statistic information and how race is experienced. In 2000, 42.2 percent of U.S. Data from the U.S Census Bureau indicates that Hispanics checked only "Some Other Race" on the Census, suggesting that official systems of racial classification do not correspond well with their self-concept (U.S. Census, 2001). Those from the Hispanic Caribbean are particularly likely to be classified by others in ways they may not classify themselves. Oropesa and Jensen (2010) indicated United States bystanders might often classify those with darker skin as Black, an identity that many Dominicans and Puerto Ricans reject (Itzigsohn, Giorguli, & Vazquez, 2005; Rodrıguez, 2000).

In summary, this literature review found that since the establishment of the United States, immigration has been part of its history and the Latino population is a diverse group with many commonalities. The literature has also found xenophobia, racism,

gender discrimination, and socio-economic discrimination could be contributing factors of increase stressors for immigrant women in the United States. The literature has also shown that even though the Latino immigrant population has decreased, the number of Latino residents in the United States continues to grow and is one of the largest minority groups in the nation. However, there is limited research on how Latina adolescents experience immigration and acculturation and the possible factors that contribute to their adjustment to the United States. In this literature review, it was found that acculturation is a process that can be viewed in different perspectives based on the person's own experiences. It also highlighted that age, gender, and socio-cultural practices can influence how the person experiences of immigration. Limited information was found regarding Latina adolescents, their experiences of immigration, and their perspectives as adults living in the United States.

Adolescence is a time when bodies, minds, and emotions are rapidly changing, and is when most mental disorders begin. When Latina immigrant adolescents emigrate to the United States, they make up an extremely high-risk group population for mental illness and psychological stressors. It is vital to expand the current literature in the field of psychology to learn from the phenomenon of the immigration experience from adolescent Latinas. The results could facilitate the understanding of how to provide support and lessen the possible psychological risks to this population in order to prevent future cultural trauma.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview

This chapter contains an overview of the methodology used in this study, which includes a brief history of the methods. A phenomenological methodology was used for the investigation of the lives of eight to ten immigrant Latina women who immigrated to the United States during their adolescence. The intent is to understand the messages and common themes from the participants' experiences during their transition in adjusting to the American culture, using phenomenology with a heuristic approach.

Phenomenology is the term given to the major movement in philosophy and the humanities in continental Europe in the 20th century (Given, 2008). The heuristic approach to qualitative research was pioneered by Clark Moustakas, an American humanistic psychologist (Given, 2008). Although it was defined as an exploratory approach for research, it is different from other approaches in that it is not concerned with discovering theories or testing hypotheses, but is concerned directly with human knowing and especially with self-inquiry (Given, 2008; Moustakas, 1990). It is possible that psychologists, teachers, and social workers can learn of the participants' experiences to better support other individuals in increasing an understanding of immigrant experiences with this targeted population. In this chapter, a rationale for why a qualitative approach is used for this particular study is included, as well as the researcher's predisposition for the research, the research design, a description of participants, data collection, data analysis, ethical procedures, trustworthiness, and limitations of the methods used in the study.

History of Method

Qualitative social science research is one of the oldest methods utilized by many different cultures dating back to the ancient Greek historians (Barker, Pistrang, & Elliott, 2005). Qualitative inquiry has made important contributions to the understanding of health and illness. Since the 1920s, qualitative research has been used by anthropologists to delineate beliefs about health and illness in various cultural groups (Morse, 2008). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) described qualitative methods as compound methods; they are interpretative and naturalistic. The research takes place in the participants' natural settings, and it attempts to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 2). Creswell (2013) explained that the definition of qualitative research continues to evolve and to be refined by researchers in the field, as the world continues to change, and defined qualitative methods as follows:

Qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretative/ theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative research researchers have used an emerging qualitative approach inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and establishes patterns or themes (Creswell, 2014). The final written report or representation includes the voices of participants, the flexibility of the researcher, the complex description and interpretation of the problem, and its contribution to the literature or call for change. (p. 44)

One approach to qualitative research is phenomenology. Edmund Husserl first introduced phenomenology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Barker et al., 2005; Eberle, 2014). The objects of study are people's experiences, in their own words, and their underlying perceptions. Barker et al. (2005) described the phenomenological approach with four assumptions. The first assumption is that one's perception of reality is more important than objective reality–it is about what the occurrence means to the person's own awareness. The second assumption is that the goal of phenomenology is to create and understand the person's experiences and actions in terms of intentions, purposes, and values. The third assumption is that each person has his or her own perspective, and each perspective is equally valid. Fourth, the individual's perception of the world is based on a set of beliefs that the individual is often not aware of, and expectations are the automatic context of actions and perceptions (Barker et al., 2005).

Limitations in a qualitative study using a phenomenological approach with sensitive topics have also been found (Creswell, 2012). One of the challenges for this method is the role of the researcher and the *bracketing* of personal experience (Al-Busaidi, 2008). Bracketing one's experience may be challenging for the researcher who has faced the phenomenon in regards to the difficulty of the interpretation of the data, since it may be challenging to separate the researcher's personal assumptions as a result of their experience (Creswell, 2013). It is important that as a researcher, personal experience does not influence the interview process. The researcher must not share his or her experience with the participant because of the effect the researcher's experience may have on the participant, and thus on the study results. In order to prevent a researcher's

perspectives from influencing or tainting the data, qualitative researchers use the term bracketing by utilizing a journal where the researcher can write thoughts, emotions, and reactions that arise while conducting the study (Elmir, Schmied, Jackson, & Wilkes, 2011; Groenewald, 2004). Bracketing may allow the researcher to identify what needs to be set aside to work on a personal level and to develop a better sense of the researcher's personal awareness. Researchers also used strategies like rapport building, by starting the interview with casual conversation, letting the participant know the researcher will set up a timer, and the reassurance of a nice, comfortable setting (Elmir et al., 2011). The researcher is prepared with appropriate and sensitive open-ended questions to maintain the organization of the interview (Elmir et al., 2011). These strategies are recommended to lessen uncomfortable feelings in participants about being interviewed about sensitive topics (Elmir et al., 2011).

Feminist scholars addressed the issue of women interviewing other women in research. For example, Tang (2002) stressed the importance of recognizing that the interviewer and the interviewee's perception of social, cultural, and personal differences may have an impact on the relationship between the two. Therefore, it is important for the researcher to develop strategies to set aside any differences, including those of authority for the interviewee and the researcher's dynamics, and to have an authentic interview (Tang, 2002). Some of those strategies might include clarifying the confidentiality guidelines, inquiring about any concerns or hesitation from the participant, asking if the participant has any questions beforehand, and acknowledging the participant's efforts of availability for the interview.

Rationale of Methodology

The use of a phenomenological approach was appropriate in order to understand the experience of adolescent Latinas migrating to the United States in this specific time of their lives. It takes into consideration that the process of immigration and acculturation is unique to the individual and their experiences the phenomenon. Creswell (2014) stressed that qualitative researchers tend to collect data in the field at the site where participants experience the phenomenon or have face-to-face interaction in their natural settings. Wallace and Bartlett (2013) suggested that cultural modifications could be made by setting up interviews in public places. Meeting in community centers, public libraries, churches or places for day-to-day activities may be comforting for participants, if they find they can avoid conflicts about participating with their family members (Wallace & Bartlett, 2013, p. 163).

Reflexivity

Mathison (2005) described reflexivity as the process of acknowledging and critically examining the researcher's own characteristics, biases and insights, as they might influence the participants and the evaluation processes and findings. It was recommended that the researcher keeps field notes documenting the methodological choices, reactions of participants in the study, intentions and interpretations (Mathison, 2005). Written records reflect the researcher's efforts to understand and aid in interpreting the directions that the study might take (Mathison, 2005). Therefore, this researcher has included the predisposition of this current study.

Researcher's Predisposition of Research Study

In qualitative research, the investigator can have an active or passive role. Researchers use bracketing as a way to allow readers to learn a researcher's own background, since it serves to identify the personal experience of the phenomenon and makes it possible to distinguish between the researcher's experiences and those of the participants. The researcher also builds rapport with the participants, which was reflected in the depth of the interviews and in the information provided by participants (Creswell, 2013; Elmir et al., 2011).

This researcher's professional interest with the Latino/a population started at the beginning of her doctoral education because of her experience working with Latino youth in clinical settings. The researcher is an immigrant Latina who brings a personal significance to the research topic. However, the subject of immigrant youth became a solid subject of interest for the researcher during her professional experience, while working in a crisis shelter with unaccompanied minors arriving to the United States from parts of Central America. The researcher recognized that existing predispositions, prejudgments, assumptions, and values might have an influence on the participants and the research.

Research Design

Participants. For the purposes of this study, the criteria for participation included female adults of 18 years and older who identified themselves with a Hispanic/Latino background. The researcher's plans followed Moustakas' (1994) model on participant selection on phenomenological research. The essential criteria included the following: the participant has experienced the phenomenon of immigration to the United States at

between the ages of 12 to 18 years from any country in Latin America; interested in

understanding the nature and meaning of the process of acculturation; willing to

participate in an interview for 60 to 90 minutes; participants grant the investigator the

right to audio record and-possibly videotape the interview; and to publish the results in a

dissertation and other publications with confidential data redacted (Moustakas, 1994).

The participants were recruited through snowball sampling among California

Central Coast community programs and schools. The process of recruitment was initiated

after IRB approval. The researcher began by making phone calls and distributing a flyer

to community representatives and professors regarding the study. The researcher will

make screening phone calls to possible participants using a recruitment script (Appendix

A).

Data Collection. According to Moustakas' (1994) approach, the data collection

included eight to ten participants. The researcher assisted each participant in completing a

set of forms, including the informed consent form (Appendix E). The consent form

included the purpose of the research study, procedures, benefits and risks of discomfort,

information on the opportunity to ask questions, compensation, freedom of withdrawal,

and confidentiality. Another form used was a demographic questionnaire. This form

contains general questions regarding age, gender, geographical location from birth, and

current residential area, as well as the time of departure from their native country and

time residing in the United States (see Appendix C). The next form is the consent to

record (see Appendix E), which states that during the interview, the researchers will be

audio-recording the interviews. The researcher explained to the participants the terms of

confidentiality including limitations and welcomed questions or concerns of participants

to decrease cultural bias. The researcher developed an observation protocol for recording observations of participants to gather the effect of research participant during the interview.

Interview Protocol. According to Moustakas' (1994) approach, the phenomenological interview begins with a brief conversation creating a relaxed and trusting atmosphere to build rapport with the participant. Following this opening, the investigator suggests that the participant take a few moments to focus on the experience, moments of particular awareness and impact and then describe the experience completely. The interviewer is responsible for creating a climate in which the research participant will feel comfortable and will respond honestly and comprehensively. The researcher will be responsible for prompting the participant with open-ended questions created by the researcher using an interview protocol (see Appendix B). The interviews were audio-recorded and lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. The participants were informed if they need additional time that they might continue for an extended period of time or be seen for a follow-up interview. The researcher followed up with participants with a phone call to conclude the interview, if the participants needed additional time or schedule a second interview.

Barker et al. (2005) suggested before analysis or coding data, it is important to check the transcripts for accuracy before transcription. To ensure the participant's anonymity is preserved, identifying information was removed. Some participants felt more comfortable doing the interviews in Spanish. Therefore, the researcher used an external reviewer to verify the accuracy of the translation of the interviews. The reviewer

was asked to sign a confidentiality agreement to protect the participant's confidential information.

The researcher utilized assisted qualitative analysis software Dedoose to analyze the data and identify important themes. Following Moustaka's model of data analysis, after bracketing is recommended to include procedures of *horizonalizing* the data and regarding every perception or testimony relevant to the topic. From the horizonalized statements, the *meaning or meaning units* are listed. These are *clustered* into *common themes*, removing overlapping and repetitive statements. The clustered themes and meanings are used to develop the *textural descriptions of the experience*. From the textural descriptions, structural descriptions and an integration of textures and structures into the meanings and essences of the phenomenon are constructed (Moustakas, 1994).

The hermeneutic approach of phenomenology was used to make interpretations of the lived experiences of the adult Latinas who were interviewed. The intent was to understand the messages the participants provided. The data collected was analyzed to identify themes from the data in regards to their transition adjusting to the American culture. In heuristic methodology, one seeks to obtain qualitative depictions that are at the heart and depths of a person's experience—depictions of situations, events, conversations, relationships, feelings, thoughts, values, and beliefs. A heuristic quest enables the investigator to collect "excerpts or entire passages from documents, correspondence, records and case histories" (Patton, 1990, p. 187). The researcher gathers detailed descriptions, direct quotations, and case documentation.

Ethical Procedures

By participating in the research interview, there are risks for potential emotional distress or traumatic memories that might inadvertently surface for the participant. Consequently, the risks of emotional distress and possible discomfort were addressed with each participant prior to the interview. Resources and professional referrals were offered to participants for additional for mental health support. Language differences, stereotypes, and prejudices are some of the challenges that make Latino participants difficult to recruit and retain. A suspicion of research often exists among minority groups (Wallace & Bartlett, 2013). Consequently, building trust in a targeted community was essential as part of this dissertation. Researchers have suggested that building trust may be the most important consideration for enrolling low income and minority women (Kneipp et al., 2013; Wallace & Bartlett, 2013). Therefore, it was important that the participants' demographic information and any other personal information remain protected and the researcher ensured participants understood that their information would be secure. Information regarding the research was well-defined in English and Spanish and the researcher is culturally competent and able to build a trusting rapport with the participants.

The researcher was responsible for providing consent forms and information regarding the research study in the preferred language of the participant (Spanish or English). The researcher was supportive and empathetic regarding the participants' emotional responses and evaluated the participants' level of distress. If for any reason, the participant was unable to continue to participate in a full interview because of the

level of intensity, at the researcher's discretion, the interview could end. No interviews were terminated early due to evident distress of participants.

Fidelity and Limitations of the Research

The study was designed to be restricted to interviewing a group of Latinas who immigrated during their adolescence to the United States and currently resided in the State of California. The data collection and data analysis findings were not to be generalizable to all immigrant women because of the small sample size and the subjectivity of a qualitative research study. Furthermore, results may be subject to different interpretations by other researchers. Other limitations of this study were due to gender and culture-based selection. The research focused only on Latina women who immigrated during their adolescence, which prevented the study from gathering data about male participants or non-Latina immigrant adolescent females.

To establish fidelity of data analysis, the researcher used Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four-point criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. A way to maintain credibility was to show interview transcripts and research reports to the research participants. To support credibility, participants indicated their agreement or disagreement with the way in which the researcher has represented them. Another method to maintain credibility was to provide a detailed, rich description of the background of the study so readers have sufficient information to be able to judge the applicability of findings. This was accomplished by maintaining consistency of the documentation of data, methods, and decisions made during the research. Another method to maintain efficacy was by auditing, which involves the researcher being able to provide a self-critical account of how the research was done (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In summary, a phenomenological methodology was utilized for the investigation of the lives of eight immigrant Latina women who immigrated to the United States during their adolescence. This chapter provided the history of qualitative social research and an understanding of the rationale for utilizing this approach in this study. This chapter also provided the structured approach of organization used in this study, a description of the researcher's predisposition regarding the topic of this investigation, and its research design. In the research design, the criteria for the participants was explained, as well as the process of data collection, protocol of interviews, data analysis, and ethical procedures. This researcher also provided information regarding the fidelity and limitations of the research in hopes to sustain credibility, and efficacy of this investigation.

A total of nine participants were interviewed for this study. They were all screened to meet the study criteria. One participant was excluded during an interview, because her story revealed that she did not meet the study criteria. Therefore, eight interviews were completed. The eight participants identified themselves as being from Mexico and one from Guatemala, and the participants were between the ages of 29 to 55. They were asked 11 questions in the interview about their experience of immigration as adolescents. The intent of this research was to understand the experiences of women who immigrated as adolescents to the United States, are now adults, and were willing to speak about their experiences. The study focused on their immigration experiences and their views on adjusting in the United States. Approximately 10 hours of audio recorded material was accumulated, after which transcriptions were created from the data. The

researcher's familiarity with the participants and having shared similar immigration

experiences helped her in capturing the participants' lived experiences.

Chapter IV: Results

Responses from the eight participants were analyzed to understand their experiences of immigration as adolescents. The participants responded to the 11 questions in the questionnaire; the main themes were distilled from their responses. The data was analyzed by creating 470 code applications with a mode of 58.75 code applications per participant. From the data, six themes were distilled based on the highest number of participants and code applications. Six themes were distilled from 182 codes and 17 themes sub-themes.

Main Theme Categorization

    Theme one: Immigration experiences.

    Awareness of immigration

    Documented/Undocumented

    Motivation to immigrate

    Family separation

    Theme two: Adolescent Concerns

    Education

    Family/parent conflicts

    Social environment

    Theme three: Adjustment

    Gender Roles

    Family unification

    Parenting

    Lack of emotional support

Theme four: Cultural Issues

Language

Family values

Latino cultural values

U.S. cultural values

Theme five: Potential psychological risks

Abuse/neglect

Symptoms of depression

Grief

Isolation

Xenophobia and Racism

Theme six: Socioeconomic Issues

Housing instability

Financial difficulties

Employment/Labor

Table 1: Demographic Information

Participant	Age of Immigration	Marital status	Country of origin	Current Age	Education in years	Years in the U.S	Children at home
1 NP	16	Married	Mexico	39	18	20	3
2 MO	14	Single	Mexico	30	12	15	0
3 GM	16	Single	Mexico	39	18	23	2
4 SC	16	Divorced	Guatemala	39	18	23	2
5 ER	17	Widowed	Mexico	55	2	38	4
6 NE	15	Married	Mexico	42	18	27	4
7 MI	17	Married	Mexico	33	9	16	2
8 ZI	12	Married	Mexico	40	13	28	0

Main Themes Index

Theme one: Immigration experiences. The majority of the participants described their experiences of leaving their native country abruptly to come to the United States. Four reported that they were informed just days before their departure. Participant ZI shared,

One day in the middle of the night, she told me let's go to Ciudad Juarez. It was in the middle of the week, so I didn't get to say goodbye to my friends or family. When we arrived in Ciudad Juarez, I found out that I was coming to the U.S.

The reasons for immigration varied between participants. Most participants had the impression they were immigrating for a short period of time. Less than half of the participants immigrated to reunite with one or both parents. Two participants were already married before the age of eighteen and immigrated with their husbands. One

immigrated with her entire family and shared that she still does not know the main reason for immigrating. A couple of participants were motivated to immigrate for employment and educational purposes.

Although no questions regarding their legal status were included in the interviews, all of the participants disclosed their immigration status in the United States. The majority of participants disclosed they immigrated without documentation, one had a tourist visa to travel, and one had legal residence in the United States. Fifty percent of them described their disagreement with their parents to immigrate to the United States. A majority of participants described their departure with uncertainty of their return and difficulty saying goodbye to their family and friends. During their interviews, all of the eight participants expressed their desire to go back to their native countries days after immigrating. The reasons for not going back varied among participants: a few participants reported their parents telling them it was a temporary stay with the promise to send them back after finishing high school or after a year. The participants who were married immigrated to stay together with their husbands. Other reasons were due to not having legal documentation to travel back and return. Other reasons were becoming parents and staying in the United States because of their children.

Participant 6NE shared:

I didn't want to leave my culture and my language either. We were exposed to the American culture through the music and television shows. I didn't want to leave my country, especially because we were having family problems. The reasons were family and financial related, so we were living under a lot of stress.

Theme two: Adolescent concerns. Three sub-themes emerged from the interviews regarding adolescent concerns in relation to education, family/parent conflicts, and social connections. Half of the participants shared being upset with their parents about the immigration decision and dreaded leaving their family and relatives behind. The participants whose parents were in the United States prior to immigrating shared being worried about changes in their relationship with their parents after immigration. Some of their worry arose from the length of time that they had been separated. Participant 6NE shared, "I wasn't part of the decision to come here. What I remember is that my grandma told me that I was going to live with my mom." The participants were asked to share their experiences during the first year after immigrating. The majority of the participants mentioned being worried about how they were going adjust to their community. They also spoke about creating new social networks, particularly in school settings, and their challenges with language, social norms, and lack of emotional support during their adjustment period. Half of the participants shared differences in lifestyles with their same age peers. Participant 2MO shared, "I was not thinking about boyfriends or anything like that. I was thinking about my future and my education. I was not thinking about boys at that time. I remember that it was a very confusing time." Participants shared differences in communities, such as city life versus rural areas, public versus private education, and adjusting to housing changes. They also spoke about differences in lifestyles and interpersonal relationships with family and friends. Participants who were married as adolescents had comparable accounts about their experiences during their first year. Their attention was focused on their home, attending to their husbands, and creating a family.

Participant 8ZI described her experience by sharing: "I arrived in the U.S. on a Wednesday and the following Monday I started school. It was the worst. I went from being in a private school to a public school and not knowing the language. I was in disbelief."

Participant 7MI expressed her feelings, stating:

> I was only in school for two semesters. I was nervous because I am a slow learner and school is scary. I get scared about new things and when people ask me, I don't know the answer. I just can't learn easily. It is hard to get to know new people. I don't know why the people that come from Mexico don't have to go to school. It seems like people from other countries are more optimistic. I have noticed that they are more social.

The participants were asked to share their thoughts about their experiences during the first year after they had immigrated. Half of them spoke about their school experiences. Participants noticed a lack of guidance from academic counselors and the absence of parental support regarding education. Six of them described interest and motivation for higher education. However, they shared in common a sense of displacement academically and a desire that they had more guidance to help them understand their opportunities for higher education. Some participants shared falling behind in school after immigrating. They felt that they were at a disadvantage after being placed in basic courses while they learned English instead of having an assessment of their level of education and academic capabilities. The participants who were married prior to their immigration experience spoke about getting adjusted to their homes and having children. For example, participant 8ZI expressed:

I believe my level of education was high when I came here. Academically, I fell

behind when I came to the U.S. They would teach us the very basic stuff. Maybe

it was also because I had always been in a Catholic school and I feel like students

are more naïve in certain things. When I arrived here, kids would behave more

grown, I wasn't as into boyfriends and things like that.

Participant 2MO remembered her experience stating:

I think the support from my school counselors was very insignificant. They really

didn't talk about college and how the system works. No one really talked to me

about our transition. It was probably our homework to do. However, during this

period I was going through family and emotional issues due to my life experience.

Similarly, sentiments arose from the lack of support regarding education. For example,

participant 6 NE shared, "They never told me that I could go to college if I applied

myself. I feel like if I had that support, I could have learned the language faster by taking

regular classes instead of ESL classes."

Theme three: Adjustment. The participants articulated various sub-themes in

their responses concerning family in their lives. The majority of the participants spoke in

length about the importance of extended family members who provided support before

and after immigration. Half of the number of participants expressed their close

relationship to their grandparents when growing up and reported a sense of loss from

leaving their extended family members in their native countries. These participants

explained that their grandparents played a significant part of their lives in their childhood.

It was as if they were their biological parents. They also mentioned the risk of never

seeing their relatives again once they immigrated.

Participant 4SC expressed her thoughts and feelings by sharing:

It was hard because that's was all that I knew. My parents were here. My dad left

when I was eight and my mom left me when I was nine. As a result, I grew up

with my grandma, brother, and aunt. I didn't want to come. That was my family.

My mom would go to visit there and I wouldn't really see her much. I didn't want

to come here, because I didn't feel like they were my parents. I wanted to stay

with my grandma and I really didn't want to come.

Participant 7MI her expressed sentiments of lack of support and additional responsibility

by stating:

When you come here, you have to work and help others. You also have to send

money to Mexico to help the others. I would have liked to have had more support

from my family about going to school or have had them push me a little bit more

to keep going to school.

Similarly, participant 1NP shared her sentiments as:

I said goodbye to my father, my brothers, and my grandparents and we left. I

remember that I got on the bus and my dad stayed. We were just crying and

crying. I didn't know when I was going to see them again.

Another sub-theme emerged regarding family and adjustment after immigration.

One of the most common themes regarding adjustment was the connection between

having children and feeling more comfortable living in the United States. Most

participants shared similar responses about feeling content living in the United States.

after having children. The two participants who don't have children mentioned that

learning English and obtaining employment were key factors related to feeling more comfortable living in the United States.

Participant 3GM described her understanding as:

> I believe that as the years have gone by, I have lived half of my life here and half there. I still haven't gotten used to being here. Here it is very routine and we have to be here for a lot of reasons. I'm here for my kids. I want to see my daughter finish school. I don't know what is going to come of my son. I think that one never gets used to it. I see my friends from my country. It makes me think of how far I would have gone. However, one never forgets.

Furthermore, participants spoke eloquently about continuing to hold family values learned in childhood and continue to share these family values with their children. One participant shared the following statement regarding her cultural traditions:

> Now that my grandma is no longer with us and I have the girls, I am teaching them about the Nativity. I feel like I lost all of the traditions that I brought with me. People don't celebrate the traditions that people practice in Guatemala. I am now trying to teach my daughter, so she doesn't forget where she comes from. Maybe not them, but me.

Another important thematic cluster found in their stories was reunification with one or both parents. A common response from the participants revealed a sense of disconnection, feeling out of place, rejection, and conflict with their parents after reunification. Nevertheless, a few participants expressed sympathy and ability to relate to their parents after becoming parents themselves. Another cluster theme regarding family was the subject of parenting. However, no particular questions were asked about marital

status and parenting. Based on the demographical information, none of the participants

had children before immigrating. However, the majority of them are parents today. One

participant stated, "I remember just feeling like, okay I got this. After I had my daughter,

I was 22 or 23. I had a better understanding of the language, and I'm learning the

language every day." The two married participants shared their experiences of

immigration along with becoming parents. One of them shared her experience of

becoming a parent. She discussed details regarding the complications she faced including

giving birth to twins prematurely at 17 years old. The other four participants with

children shared increasing their confidence and adjustment in the United States after

becoming parents. One of the participants who is a parent stated:

> The morning when I gave birth, ICE arrested my husband. After that my husband
>
> getting deported and having two newborns with cerebral palsy and blind,
>
> everything changed. I was always aware of the kids and went to visit them every
>
> day in the hospital. Every time the phone rang, I would feel something in my
>
> stomach, because I would think it was something wrong with the incubator . . .
>
> We started thinking that we always wanted to be better for the kids and wanted to
>
> have the best for them.

Theme four: Cultural issues. A common cluster theme among six participants was similar daily life difficulties of communicating and learning a second language. Difficulties ranged from getting lost in a new community, ordering the same thing at a restaurant, or feeling ashamed and fear of saying the wrong thing. Other challenges were due to language barriers. Almost all of the participants identified themselves as Mexican and one as Guatemalan. The participant from Guatemala shared feeling singled out because of having a different Spanish accent than her schoolmates from Mexico. This participant reported feelings of inadequacy and attempting to change her accent to feel included.

Participant 7MI explained her sentiments as:

> I sometimes hate English, because I can't learn it. When I listen to movies or the radio, I remember that I can't learn it and I feel bad. I feel that if I continued school, I would have learned more. As a mother, I now learn new things, but I forget. I feel like my four year old daughter knows more than me.

Similarly, participant 8ZI expressed:

> I remember that at 15, I couldn't even order popcorn. I was always embarrassed about my accent, or not saying the right thing. I knew, but I had a hard time responding. Now that I am almost 40, if I don't have to speak English, I don't do it. If I'm working, I do it very naturally. I think I have to speak, write, and read in English. However, when I'm out of that environment, the switch turns off. I feel like, "Why do I have to speak English, if I have to think about it?"

The majority of the participants found that learning a new language was especially difficult in the first months after immigrating to the United States. The majority of the

participants shared in detail their struggles. Participant 1NP described some of her

challenges and expressed feeling shame and fear about not knowing the language;

> The only place he [her husband] knew how to order was at Burger King. Every
>
> Sunday, we would do our errands and then go to Burger King. To this day, I
>
> cannot eat at Burger King. I cannot even step into a Burger King, because I was
>
> so sick of it. In the same Burger King, we didn't know how to order anything
>
> different, so we would always order the same thing. It was always the number 1
>
> with large fries. Due to the language barrier, I didn't know how to order anything
>
> different. The shame and fear made me hesitant to go somewhere, because I
>
> wouldn't know what to order and things like that.

Another thematic cluster was about family values. Six participants spoke about the

importance of family as part of maintaining their Latino cultural values while living in

the United States. Four participants shared a sense of pride about their Latino culture and

reported feeling a sense of commitment to conserve childhood memories to keep their

Latino traditions alive. Participants were asked what U.S. cultural values they have

embraced after immigration. One participant responded, "We do have a beautiful culture,

traditions and family structure. We are a very close community. I think that we spread

this feeling, which is beautiful."

One theme that emerged regarding family values was the differences in the gender

roles between their native countries and the United States. A common theme among four

participants was acknowledging being able to be more independent and having more

opportunities to choose different career paths to thrive. Participants recognized that in the

United States they have the opportunity to break conventional gender roles. For example,

participant 4SC stated, "There are more opportunities here. If I had stayed in Guatemala, I would have stayed married. I would not go to college or anything like that." Participant 1NP shared, "I am more independent, instead of depending on my family or my husband." The participants were also asked about the cultural values they have maintained from their Latino culture.

A common theme among the participants was the topic of gender differences they experienced when they immigrated to the United States. Half of the participants disclosed having some awareness of the traditional gender roles that were ingrained in their cultural values. For example, participants shared that if they were to stay in their native countries, they would be most likely to take on the role of housewives as adults. Participant 5ER, who has been in the United States for 38 years and is 55 years old, immigrated when she was 17 years old. She spoke about her difficulties in having to adjust her obligation as a housewife and adapt to her husband doing house chores. In contrast, participant 2MO, who immigrated when she was 14 years old and was 30 years old at the time of the interview, shared that she appreciates the freedom women have in the United States and feels empowered having her own voice.

For participant 4SC, her experience with her family regarding her marital status was described as:

> In Guatemala, it was really bad if you were a single parent. I was a single parent for four years. My family in Guatemala was surprised that I didn't have a husband. It is different when we are here, because many people are single parents. In Guatemala, if you go leave your house, you have to be married. Sometimes people even get married and they stay at home. People can leave their home here

and live apart. If that's something the girls want to do with time and I am not

going to tell them not to. I feel like it is better to have more freedom. When my

friend got married in Guatemala, I told her that she would be leaving the house

without asking permission from her father. Now you have to ask your husband,

which is so boring.

In this study, participants provided insight regarding experiences as adolescents when

facing traditional gender roles after immigrating to the United States. Participant 5EH

shared:

I didn't have a car. My husband would have to go by himself to do the laundry in

big baskets. I would get really sad and cry because he also didn't have the support

from his dad. I used to do everything in the home before. I saw that my mother

would take care of everything. My Dad wouldn't do anything, so I would feel

very sad for my husband that he had to do it.

Conversely, the majority of the participants voiced that women's independence was one

of the major societal changes they embraced when immigrating to the United States.

Some participants shared that they were challenged to break traditional roles as

adolescents, which brought intense conflict with their family members. Participant 3GM

described experiencing some conflict with cultural beliefs and her behaviors as an

adolescent, stating:

My brothers believed that you had to leave home as a bride dressed in white, like

in the old days. Since none of my sisters did it the right way, they focused on me

to be the example. I had to be the one doing things right. That's what it hurt me

the most that they left me in that way.

I remember that when I was seventeen years of age, my brothers found out I had a boyfriend. They stopped paying my rent and my bills. When I was almost eighteen, I had to look for a part-time job to pay for my things. I remember that the first six months was when my brothers told me that I could no longer be there with them.

Participant 7MI recalls:

The first couple of days I wanted to go back. I never talked to anyone about it. I missed my sisters. We didn't really talk. We don't really, I don't know how to say it. We don't really pay attention to feelings. It is something that you have to do. We thought that if we didn't like this job we could go to another job. I think it was a decision I made. It was new for me and I was missing people. The people at work didn't really like me because I wasn't able to finish the work. I feel like when I immigrated, I was missing my sisters more than my parents. I would get sad thinking about them. They are younger than me. When my mom was out running errands, I would take care of them. Therefore, I missed them more. When I was going to have my baby, I felt like I was not going to love them the same. I felt that I was not going to be able to have time for them or to help them.

The participants in this study also shared their appreciation for those differences in gender roles. For example, one participant disclosed,

I think that the freedom for women is important. I appreciate the freedom that women have in this country and the freedom for people to say what they think. Many children are raised to believe that they are so empowered, that they can do anything. I think that's pretty amazing.

Theme five: Potential psychological risks. A theme about psychological concerns emerged from the participants' experiences. Although participants may have not considered certain experiences as psychological concerns based on their testimonies, six participants shared experiencing xenophobia, shame, sense of isolation, grief, low self-esteem, distress and lack of emotional support associated with their experience of immigration. In addition, four participants reported that during their first year after immigrating, they experienced additional stressors. During their first year of immigration, all participants disclosed dealing with some type of burden related to grief from the loss of a parent, becoming mothers, family problems, or socioeconomic difficulties. Participant 6NE expressed her thoughts explaining:

> I wish that my mom had a better understanding of bringing her children into a family situation. I did not feel included in that family. I felt like I was a second class citizen in that unit. She might not have had the tools. My grandma cared for me, but I never really had that emotional support. I never really got sick, although I remember wanting to get sick, so I would know what it felt like to have someone care for you. I could see it when my grandma was watching the *novelas*. People in the *novelas* would get love and care when they got sick. I remember hoping to get sick, so I could get loved. I wish I felt more confident in the family unit, but that was lacking.

Participant 4SC expressed her experience being a minority within the Latino population:

> It was difficult because everything was different, especially because of the language. I would get emotional because the other Hispanics kids would laugh. I would notice this with people from Mexico and other Latinos that were from the

U.S. They were cruel but I would try not to pay attention. I knew that it wasn't my

country

Participant 5ER recalls her sad childhood experiences and getting married at a young age

as the following:

My life has changed because I lived a very sad life. We lived in a very tiny place

and we would sleep on the floor. They would leave me to sleep by the door

because my feet were longer and I was scared. When my father would come back

from parties, he would step on our feet and yell at us. If I had to write a book

about my life, I think it would make people cry. I remember that snakes and rats

would pass by on the ceiling. My father made good money but he didn't care for

us. He would lock us up to go out to the parties and we couldn't go out. I would

see my cousins living in the same patio. I don't regret getting married at a young

age, because I was 21 when my husband began to get sick and had very serious

complications. But I didn't care because I was happy with him and I would

always love him.

Some participants identified themselves having potential psychological risks that they

faced, even after years of residing in the United States. For example, one participant was

able to make her own hypothesis regarding long term effects in regards to her identity

because of her experience of immigration.

Due to my circumstances, I think that I lack self-confidence. It is not due to my

identity, but because of my family dynamics and the situation of being left and

abandoned by both of my parents. My dad left when I was less than five years old.

My mom left in order to support us. She tried to work in Mexico, but she couldn't

earn enough. I had many insecurities from being in a totally different country. I

had to assert myself in my peer groups, in order to be accepted into a group. I

wish that I had different circumstances, and was more assertive, with more

confidence in my abilities.

Theme six: Socioeconomic concerns. A common theme emerged where

participants spoke about facing financial difficulties. Five participants spoke about

housing instability within one to five years after they immigrated. They mentioned

receiving shelter from family members and arrangements that brought family conflicts.

The two married participants had in common their feelings of inadequacy when they

shared housing with other families. They had to follow rules and felt deprived from

fulfilling their role as homemakers. Six participants spoke about their challenges

regarding housing instability. These participants shared their experiences from living in a

garage with their families and moving into a home where multiple families resided.

Participants also shared their experiences moving with multiple family members to being

homeless. One participant shared her struggles when she lived with multiple families and

worked in the strawberry fields.

Participant 1NP recalls her experience as:

I remember that we spent about three months struggling with what we were going

to eat. I remember we would buy a lot of potatoes, a sack of corn for all the

families, Top Ramen, and beans. We did not have gifts for Christmas, but we

were okay. We had financial limitations, but we were OK emotionally. We made

sure that we had enough for the rent. We knew it would pass. After winter,

February came and they started working again.

A few of the participants identified taking on traditional gender roles in their responsibilities to help as part of the family, despite their age. For instance, participant 1NP shared:

> I would wake up, clean the house, prepare the food, and wait for the men to arrive so we could go somewhere. None of the women knew how to drive. There were four families in one house sharing one car. We had to take turns with the car so we could go do laundry. On the weekends, they would work on Saturday in the field picking strawberries.

Participant 5ER explained:

> When I had my kids, it was a very difficult experience. I didn't even know how to bathe my daughter. However, with my husband, we overcame the difficulties. I would have liked to have my mother or someone close to me here to help me. My husband's family offered their support and their love because I came here when I was so young. I lived a very sad life. I came here lacking love and I sought the love in my husband's family. His aunt offered me her support and her love. They are my family to this day and I love them very much. They all loved us and I trust them more than my own sisters. Thank God that they accepted me.

Five participants spoke in length about overcoming challenges and having a positive mindset while facing struggles related to immigration during their adolescence. The participants also shared their experiences about their ability to manage stressors and shared their perspectives as adults about their experiences during their adolescence. One common theme among these participants was that, in retrospect, they were not aware of the many risks they were taking when they immigrated. Now as adults they voiced their

unawareness of these risks stressors regarding financial difficulties mitigated their struggles as new immigrants in the United States.

Participant 2MO recalled her experience, explaining:

> We stayed in a transition house for about a week. My parents used to deliver newspapers, so I had to get up with them in the morning. This was because you were not allowed to leave your kids behind. I saw it as an adventure because shelters get donations and they have really good pizza and chocolate cake. [She laughs.] I didn't see it as a hard time, because I was with the people that I love.

For participant 1NP, her experience of becoming a parent at a young age was motivation to be better explaining:

> The fact that I had my kids (not that they were born premature because we didn't want that to happen), but they were born with cerebral palsy and this made us better people. We have cared about their quality of life and we have struggled for them to be okay. I have been learning English and my husband has been trying to work in a better job. We have wanted to improve our lives like getting another car. We started living in a garage and then we moved to a room. We started thinking that we were always wanted to be better for the kids and wanted to have the best for them.

Overall, participants shared significant information by relating stories that helped them to understand their experiences before and after immigration. Most participants are parents today, this was a significant factor in their interviews. Participants were able to share their perspectives about the decisions their parents made in connection to their immigrating as adolescents.

Chapter V: Discussion

The identified themes were associated with the participants' experiences of immigration, adolescent concerns, adjustments to living in the United States, cultural issues, psychological risks and socioeconomic issues. While there were many limitations of this study and the participant recruitment process, the interpretation of the findings may be useful in generating additional insights into the way that clinicians understand the experience of women who immigrate as adolescents and how these adult women understand their experiences as adults. There are many potential clinical and social implications for generating more interest in this area of study.

Interpretation of Findings

Researchers have suggested that typical adolescent development may include adolescents challenging parents, when they might be increasing their independence (Cobb, 2007; Erickson, 1959; Schultz & Schultz, 2009). Half of the participants shared finding themselves concerned about the relationship with their parents due to long periods of separation and reunification. Immigration experiences appear to be an additional factor of distress for the participants in this study, which has been shown in previous literature (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). This finding might help psychologists to enhance their clinical assessment with families and to incorporate practices to guide parents and family members in understanding psychological risks, such as isolation and grief related to immigration and stress related to cultural differences. Psychologists could guide Latina adolescent immigrants so they could amend family relationships in the hope of lessening distress regarding reunification, particularly during first year of immigration. Psychologists could help Latina immigrants to express their thoughts and feelings

regarding their experience of separation and reintegration with their families, and guide parents in understanding typical developmental issues in adolescence, such as mood changes, maturation, and typical behavioral changes that might differ from immigration concerns. Latina adolescent immigrants might have experienced detachment from their primary caregivers at an early age, which can increase the risk for emotional dysregulation later in life.

The study results indicated that in addition to family concerns, participants were worried about social connections during the first year after immigration. Most participants in this study were not informed in advance of their parents' immigration plans. Participants became emotional when discussing the departure from their native countries and leaving their family and friends behind. This finding is consistent with past research on the importance of social connections during adolescence. Bronfenbrenner (1977) noted social environments during adolescent development is a significant period typical during teenage years, referring to how adolescents interact directly with others and who they relate to outside of their family circle. In this study, participants experienced feeling isolated or not included socially while adjusting to living in the United States. A sub-theme emerged regarding participants who were concerned about not having solid friendships after immigration. They voiced experiencing distress when adjusting to their neighborhoods and relating to school peers from different backgrounds. This research demonstrates that while social connections might be part of typical healthy development (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2000), the experience of being a new adolescent immigrant increased concerns about making connections, such as not being able to speak English, and not feeling familiar with their surroundings. This gives an opportunity to

psychologists to assess the risk of xenophobia and experiences that might include covert discrimination affecting the individual's well being.

Another finding in this study was related to the lack of support for academic advancement in high school with Latina immigrant adolescents. Although a few participants shared that school teachers were very important in providing support in attaining educational goals, the findings suggest that the majority of the participants did not always receive support in their new schools or support regarding their education. The majority of participants also expressed that it would have been helpful to process their experience of immigration when entering their new schools. Some suggested full immersion in an English-speaking curriculum. Participants also suggested they would have liked to have had more support in regards to their education from their parents. Although no participants described overtly experiencing xenophobia, this study offers meaningful insight as to the need for academic and emotional support in school settings for new immigrants and their parents. This finding provides the opportunity for further research about other factors that might contribute to the lack of academic and emotional support for newly adolescent immigrants.

Current research indicates undocumented immigrants might experience additional stressors, when immigrating without legal documentation (Falicov, 1998, 2013). In this study, participants were able to provide in detail the different stressors they experienced when living undocumented in the United States. Participants shared that possible deportation, past experiences of deportation, inability to find lawful employment, and unstable living situations, were some of the difficulties they have faced as undocumented immigrants. All of the participants who immigrated undocumented are parents today.

With the current U.S. Administration's policies concerning citizenship, millions of individuals who immigrated as adolescents are at risk of being deported. Some of these individuals might again experience separation from family members and the social relationships they have formed while living in the United States due to their immigration status and possible deportation. This is meaningful information for psychologists who work with immigrants who might be experiencing these stressors. This is also of particular importance to immigrants who are parents and have experienced separation as adolescents due to their first experience of family separation.

Although the participants' legal status might have changed today, six participants reported that they immigrated as undocumented minors. For this study, most participants had immigrated with a family member. Researchers have explored the risks of immigration and have suggested that the journey of migration often puts women and children at a higher risk of becoming victims of violence and human trafficking (Borges et al., 2013; Ugarte et al., 2003). Despite these risks, none of the participants reported experiencing any type of abuse in their journey. However, participants were able to recognize the risks they now face as adults. While no participants in this small sample reported experiencing any type of violence in their journey, it is important to note that other adolescents may be at a higher risk, such as refugees, minors immigrating alone, and younger children. Therefore, further investigation is important to better understand the different types of immigrant populations.

Gordon (1964) stated that although social factors may be common between groups, a sense of connection between past and future generations is significant for ethnic identity. The results from this study provide evidence that the family connection was a

key factor in the participants' adjustment to living in the United States after their

immigration experiences. Six participants reported that they had a sense of grief

regarding the separation from their grandparents and the siblings of family members left

behind in their native countries after immigration. Another important sub-theme that

emerged was the motivation of participants to immigrate, which varied among

participants. Five participants dreaded immigrating during the first few months after their

arrival in the United States. The participants missed things that were familiar to them,

such as their language, traditions and family members. The experience of departing from

their native countries was frightening for most of the participants. Some participants were

uncertain if they could reunite with their family members again due to their legal status in

the United States. Miller (2013) expressed the importance of grief work with adolescent

immigrants from Latin American countries cannot be stressed enough, highlighting that

guiding adolescents in their process of grief does not mean disproving the teens' cultural

identity, for that identity should be celebrated and encouraged to develop further

according to the individuals' self-image and culture identification. Grief work can be

seen as a way of preventing an immigrant teenager from feeling forced to reject his/her

native culture due to pressures to catch up to other teens who have developed more solid

identities and from whom the Latino teenager wants approval (Miller, 2013).

The majority of participants reported feeling comfortable in the United States

after having children and developing a sense of responsibility for their children's futures.

The results indicated that participants might have experienced a sense of loss to their

family or origin. However, through parenting, a sense of belonging was found among

participants. This finding could be an additional factor that might be related to teen pregnancy; however, further investigation might be needed.

In addition to language difficulties, the majority of the participants found that despite their family separation, they continued to consider family values to be one of the main cultural principles they hold strongly, regardless of the adjustment and time living in the United States. Latino families provide a sense of belonging and welfare in a cooperative environment (Murillo, 1971; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995). The statements from the participants in this study described feeling more comfortable living in the United States after becoming parents themselves. This provides evidence of the importance of family despite separation due to immigration and continues to be a central part of their lives after immigration.

Results of this study related to the importance of family unity to Latina adolescent immigrants. The importance of family unity might help psychologists and community providers help individuals adjust to living in a new community and continue to have a sense of unity in their family and their cultural beliefs, as this appears to be an important protective factor in this study. Mental health providers might be able to help individuals balance embracing new cultural practices with holding family values significant in the lives of Latina adolescents who immigrate from Latin American countries.

Another significant theme in this study was the awareness of financial difficulties the participants experienced during their immigration transition. The participants identified financial difficulties as a significant stressor in their families when they arrived in the United States. Some of the participants expressed a lack of understanding regarding financial difficulties, yet some considered this to be a protective factor. For example,

some participants reported a sense of family unity when they were facing financial difficulties, which might have lessened the stressors related to financial struggles.

The literature has supported the view that physical growth and maturation are typically influenced by a number of factors, and one of the most important influences on physical growth is nutrition (Rogol et al., 2002). Understanding the difficulty of newly adolescent immigrants could help psychologists to gain a broader understanding of some of the risks that adolescents face, such as malnutrition and risk of homelessness, and guide families to seek community resources that may be available to lessen the stressors. New immigrants might not know of services available in their community, which might prevent them from accessing resources.

This study suggested that although participants developed strong bonds with their families from their native countries, participants shared forming relationships with other families after immigration and were helpful to each other. The collectivistic nature of Latino families bonds them together to share many cultural values and attributes in supporting and taking care of one another as a group (Falicov, 2013). Participants expressed their desire to accomplish personal goals and expressed a longing for preserving a strong family sense of connection after immigration. Nevertheless, they also developed a sense of independence. Espin (1999) explained that cultural beliefs may include societal roles that are more traditional.

The results of gender roles are significant in that psychologists can provide support to Latina adolescent women and their families in understanding societal changes and how can they manage cultural conflicts in order to lessen the psychological risks for Latina adolescents. Previous research has shown that Latino youths are less likely to be

identified as suicidal or to receive crisis interventions compared to other groups.

Expectations of family obligations play a significant role in Latino families and

challenging family expectations could pose a risk for suicide (Katoaka et al., 2003; Zayas

et al., 2005).

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

One of the primary strengths of this study is having the unique perspectives of the

participants, who are the experts on the experience of immigrating as female adolescents

to the United States. The study is not only instructive in understanding the meaning of the

immigration experience, but it is also informative about real stories of adult women who

were able to reflect back to their immigration experiences during their adolescence. This

researcher chose to interview adult women to allow them to provide insights into their

experiences in adjusting to life in the United States by sharing their thoughts, emotions,

and memories about their experience during the first year after immigrating. Based on the

researcher's observation, the participants shared valuable enhanced information on areas

of great importance. For instance, participants shared their struggles with family

separation or reunification and economic difficulties. The participants' willingness to

share part of their lives provided insight regarding family conflicts and their

understanding as adolescents and things they continue to struggle with as adults.

Existing literature suggests that bilingual individuals might exhibit a higher

emotional intensity when speaking in their native language (Alicea, 2010). The

interviewer's ability to speak English and Spanish fluently provided the opportunity for

the participants to respond to questions in their preferred language. Six participants chose

to be interviewed in Spanish. They responded at times in English, but most of the

interviews were conducted in Spanish. Thus, the role of bilingual interviews should be examined more in-depth with a larger sample size and preferably with different languages. Two participants responded to most of the questions in English with some Spanish mixed in. This researcher had the opportunity to analyze the data with a sense of understanding of colloquial language, such as metaphors, explanations, and cultural references within the context that had the potential to get lost or misunderstood in translation.

The difficult task of recruiting and identifying adult women who immigrated during their adolescent years was clearly a limitation of this study. This limitation was not evident to the researcher while proposing and recruiting for the study. During the screening for possible candidates, it became clear that some individuals did not feel comfortable sharing their immigration stories or being recorded, possibly a reflection of increased fear due to the current political situation regarding immigration. This reduced the number of possible candidates. Another limiting factor was the age gap for qualifying participants. The criteria for this study included female participants who had immigrated to the United States between ages 12–18 years of age. This disqualified many possible candidates who were willing to share their stories. However, in order to capture the essence of the adolescent immigration experience, it was necessary to maintain the age criterion. Further research might benefit from expanding the age criterion to include women who have immigrated in young adulthood.

Another limitation for this study was the gender selection of the participants based on geography. The researcher's intent was to produce a study that would provide promising insight into the experiences of women who immigrated as adolescents.

Therefore, it limited the criteria to only include female participants who immigrated between the ages of 12–18. It might also be beneficial to compare between genders about their adjustment and what helped them to have a better transition. Due to the large population of Mexican descent in California, it was challenging to find a wide variety of women from other Latin American countries who immigrated during their adolescence and were willing to be interviewed. Therefore, future research might benefit from expanding the geographical criteria for the participants' selection.

The educational background and privilege of the interviewer was also a potential obstacle. The participants may have felt compelled to provide formal answers for the interviewer to meet the expectations of someone with a higher educational level. Nonetheless, the number of commonalities, such as the common language, ethnicity, and awareness of the interviewer's immigration status, might have reduced the participants' hesitation to provide honest responses. Although there are a number of limitations to this study, identifying these limitations will promote opportunities for further research in the field of psychology.

Conclusion

The findings of this study add to current literature important information regarding the experience of Latina adolescents who immigrate to the United States and provided a platform for the participants to give insight as adults about their unique experiences that might increase an understanding for a more comprehensive clinical assessment. It was discovered that learning to speak English helped participants to adjust living in their new communities. Some participants revealed that being included with other new immigrants who spoke different languages helped to increase their practice of

English. Participants also shared that having parents structure daily routines to increase exposure to English was helpful in practicing and learning a second language. Other participants shared that increasing academic expectations from parents and counselors could have benefitted their English comprehension. Furthermore, clinicians could guide participants to recognized that speaking multiple languages can be a strength.

Participants also shared that joining the workforce facilitated opportunities to increase communication in English and having more social interactions helped them feel more comfortable about using their skills and living in the United States. Participants revealed that having the choice to attend college or to join the workforce was a positive experience and lessened the feeling of needing to meet societal expectations from gender-based traditional cultural beliefs, including getting married or having children.

The participants in this study provided substantial insights regarding becoming parents and feeling more comfortable living in the United States. It appears that becoming parents provided them with a more concrete sense of resiliency to survive and succeed, not only for themselves, but also for their own children and families. Some participants found that having children inspired them and gave them the strength to overcome challenges. Some participants shared that having children motivated them to return to school, get a higher education, seek better employment, or work for better living conditions. For psychologists, this is significant information for a better understanding of young immigrant women who become parents in early age and to help them identify psychological risks that might increase a sense of isolation, depression and inadequacy . It also provides the opportunity for future research with this population or other immigrants that become part of the United States.

The results of this study suggest that women's experience of immigration from Latin America during adolescence is often linked with other stressors related to adolescent development, such as edification, interpersonal relationships, social connections, and individual growth. This study also provided evidence that separation and reunification of family is a significant stressor. This study also provided insights from the participants about what helped them to adjust in their community. In this study, it was found that speaking English, joining the workforce, and the experience of being parents helped them in their adjustment to the United States.

References

Abdulrahim, S., James, S. A., Yamout, R., & Baker, W. (2012). Discrimination and psychological distress: Does Whiteness matter for Arab Americans? *Social Science & Medicine*, *75*(12), 2116–2123. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2012.07.030

Ahmad, F., Riaz, S., Barata, P., & Stewart, D. (2004). Patriarchal beliefs and perceptions of abuse among South Asian immigrant women. *Violence Against Women,10,* 262–282. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801203256000

Akhtar, S. (1999) *Immigration and identity. Turmoil, treatment, and transformation.* NJ: Jason Aronson Inc. https://doi.org/10.1023/b:tajp.0000027371.70842.90

Akhtar, S. (2010). *Immigration and acculturation: Mourning, adaptation, and the next generation*. NJ: Jason Aronson.

Alarcón, R. D., Westermeyer, J., Foulks, E. F., & Ruiz, P. (1999). Clinical relevance of contemporary cultural psychiatry. *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, *187*(8), 465–471. https://doi.org/10.1097/00005053-199908000-00002

Al-Busaidi, Z. Q. (2008). Qualitative research and its uses in health care. *Sultan Qaboos University Medical Journal*, *8*(1), 11–19. https://doi.org/10.18295/squmj.2017.17.04.023

Alexander, J. C. (2004). Toward a theory of cultural trauma. *Cultural trauma and collective identity*, *76*, 620–639. https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520235946.003.0001

Alicea, E. (2001). *Gender differences in the use of language switching and the detachment effect in therapy with Latino/Latina, Spanish /English bilingual clients* (Order No. 3015432). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (251753577). Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.antioch.idm.oclc.org/docview/251753577?accountid=26438

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5th Ed.)*. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596

APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration. (2013). Crossroads: The psychology of immigration in the new century. *Journal of Latina/o Psychology*, *1*(3), 133-148. doi:10.1037/lat0000001

Arbona, C., Olvera, N., Rodriguez, N., Hagan, J., Linares, A., & Wiesner, M. (2010). Acculturative stress among documented and undocumented Latino immigrants in the

United States. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *32*(3), 362–384. doi:10.1177/0739986310373210

Arnett, J. J. (1999). Adolescent storm and stress, reconsidered. *American Psychologist*, *54*(5), 317. https://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066x.54.5.317

Arnett, J. J., & Tanner, J. L. (Eds.). (2006). *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century* (pp. 303-330). Washington, DC: APA. https://doi.org/10.1037/11381-000

Austrian, S. G. (Ed.). (2008). *Developmental theories through the life cycle*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Barber, B. L., Jacobson, K. C., Miller, K. E., & Petersen, A. C. (1998). Ups and downs: Daily cycles of adolescent moods. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, 82,* 23–36. https://doi.org/10.1002/cd.23219988203

Barker, C., Pistrang, N., & Elliott, R. (2005). *Research methods in clinical psychology: An introduction for students and practitioners* (2nd ed.). Chichester: Wiley.

Becker, D., Morales, G., & Aguilar, M. I. (Eds.). (1994). *Trauma psicosocial y adolescentes latinoamericanos: Formas de acción grupal*. Santiago; Instituto Latinoamericano del Salud Mental y Derechos Humanos. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139226561.012

Bem, S. L. (1993). *The lenses of gender: Transforming the debate on sexual inequality*. Binghamton, NY: Yale University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/2074863

Berk, (2007). *Development through the lifespan* (4th ed). New York. Pearson.

Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, *46*(1), 5–34. doi:10.1111/j.1464-0597.1997.tb01087.x

Berry, J. (1980). Acculturation as varieties of adaptation. In A. Padilla (Ed.), Acculturation: Theory, models, and some new findings. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1981.8.4.02a00200

Berry, J. W. (2001). A psychology of immigration. *Journal of Social Issues*, *57*(3), 615– 631. https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00231

Berry, J. W. (2010). Mobility and acculturation. In *The psychology of global mobility* (pp. 193–210). New York: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-6208-9_10

Berry, J. W., & Sabatier, C. (2010). Acculturation, discrimination, and adaptation among second generation immigrant youth in Montreal and Paris. *International Journal of*

Intercultural Relations, *34*(3), 191–207.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.11.007

Betancourt, T. S., Abdi, S., Ito, B. S., Lilienthal, G. M., Agalab, N., & Ellis, H. (2014). We left one war and came to another: Resource loss, acculturative stress, and caregiver–child relationships in Somali refugee families. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 21*(1), 114-125. doi:10.1037/A0037538

Bhugra, D., & Becker, M.A. (2005). Migration, cultural bereavement and cultural identity. *World Psychiatry, 4*(1), 18–24.

Borges, G., Rafful, C., Tancredi, D. J., Naomi, S., Aguilar-Gaxiola, S., Medina-Mora, M., & Breslau, J. (2013). Mexican immigration to the U.S., the occurrence of violence and the impact of mental disorders. *Revista Brasileira De Psiquiatria*, *35*(2), 161–168. doi:10.1590/1516-4446-2012-0988

Bowie, J. V., Juon, H. S., Rodriguez, E. M., & Cho, J. (2007). Peer Reviewed: Factors associated with overweight and obesity among Mexican Americans and Central Americans: Results From the 2001 California Health Interview Survey. *Preventing Chronic Disease*, *4*(1).

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist, 32*(7), 513. https://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066x.32.7.513

Brown, T. N., Williams, D. R., Jackson, J. S., Neighbors, H.W., Torres, M., Sellers, S. L., & Brown, K. T. (2000). "Being black and feeling blue": The mental health consequences of racial discrimination. *Race and Society*, *2,* 117–131. doi:10.1016/S1090- 9524(00)00010-3

Buddington, S. A. (2002). Acculturation, psychological adjustment (stress, depression, self-esteem) and the academic achievement of Jamaican immigrant college students. *International Social Work*, *45*(4), 447. https://doi.org/10.1177/00208728020450040401

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2006). Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report Surveillance* 1–108.

Caprio, S., Daniels, S. R., Drewnowski, A., Kaufman, F. R., Palinkas, L. A., Rosenbloom, A. L., & Schwimmer, J. B. (2008). Influence of race, ethnicity, and culture on childhood obesity: Implications for prevention and treatment: A consensus statement of Shaping America's Health and the Obesity Society. *Diabetes Care*, *31*(11), 2211–2221. http://doi.org/10.2337/dc08-9024

Cobb, N. J. (2007). *Adolescence: Continuity, change, and diversity* (6th ed.). Mountain View, CA: McGraw Hill.

Cole, D. A., Peeke, L. G., Martin, J. M., Truglio, R., & Seroczynski, A. D. (1998). A longitudinal look at the relation between depression and anxiety in children and adolescents. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *66*(3), 451. https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-006x.66.3.451

Cornell, S., & Hartmann D. (1998). *Ethnicity and race: Making identities in a changing world.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cresswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches.* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cresswell, J. W. (2014). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches.* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cristini, F., Scacchi, L., Perkins, D. D., Santinello, M., & Vieno, A. (2011). The influence of discrimination on immigrant adolescents' depressive symptoms: What buffers its detrimental effects? *Psychosocial Intervention / Intervencion Psicosocial*, *20*(3), 243–253. doi:10.5093/in2011v20n3a2

APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration. (2013). Crossroads: The psychology of immigration in the new century. *Journal of Latina/o Psychology*, *1*(3), 133-148. doi:10.1037/lat0000001

Das, V. (Ed.). (2001). *Remaking a world: Violence, social suffering, and recovery*. Berkeley / Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Deaux, K. (2006). A nation of immigrants: Living our legacy. *Journal of Social Issues*, *62*(3), 633–651. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.2006.00480.x

Deaux, K. (2011). An immigrant frame for American identity. *Applied Developmental Science*, *15*(2), 70-72. https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2011.560807

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Strategies of inquiry. *Handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Desjarlais, R., Eisenberg, L., Good, B., & Kleinman, A. (1995). *World mental health: Problems and priorities in low-income countries.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Dietz, J. (Ed.). (2010). Employment discrimination against immigrants [Special issue]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 25*(2). doi:10.1108/02683941011019320

Diller J.V. (1999). *Cultural diversity: A primer for the human service*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Dow, H. D. (2011). An overview of stressors faced by immigrants and refugees: A guide for mental health practitioners. *Home Health Care Management & Practice, 23*(3), 210–217. doi:10.1177/1084822310390878

Duldulao, A. A., Takeuchi, D. T., & Hong, S. (2009). Correlates of suicidal behaviors among Asian Americans. *Archives of Suicide Research, 13,* 277–290. doi:10.1080/13811110903044567

Eberle, T. (2014). Phenomenology as a research method. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data analysis.* (pp. 184–203). London: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: http://dx.doi.org.antioch.idm.oclc.org/10.4135/9781446282243.n13

Edelson, M., Hokoda, A., & Ramos-Lira, L. (2007). Differences in effects of domestic violence between Latina and non-Latina women. *Journal of Family Violence, 22*(1), 1–10. doi:10.1007/s10896-006-9051-1

Elmir, R., Schmied, V., Jackson, D., & Wilkes, L. (2011). Interviewing people about potentially sensitive topics. *Nurse Researcher, 19*(1), 12–16. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2011.10.19.1.12.c8766

Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Growth and crises of the healthy personality.* In *Identity and the life cycle* (pp. 50–100). New York. International Universities Press.

Erikson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood and society*. New York. Norton. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.113.2931.253

Erikson, E. H. (1959/1980). Identity and the life cycle: Selected papers. New York: International Universities Press. Republished in 1980 by W. W. Norton & Company. https://doi.org/10.1080/00207284.1961.11508152

Espin, O. M. (1987). Psychological impact of migration on Latinas. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *11*(4), 489. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1987.tb00920.x

Espín, O. M. (1997). *Latina realities: Essays on healing, migration, and sexuality*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Espín, O. M. (1999). *Women crossing boundaries: A psychology of immigration and transformations of sexuality*. New York, NY: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203905241

Espín, O. M. (2006). Gender, Sexuality, Language, and Migration. In R. Mahalingam (Ed.), *Cultural psychology of immigrants* (pp. 241-258). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Falicov, C. J. (1998). The cultural meaning of family triangles. In M. McGoldrick (Ed.), *Re-visioning family therapy: Race, culture, and gender in clinical practice* (pp. 37–49). New York: Guilford Press.

Falicov, C. (2013). *Latino families in therapy* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford. https://doi.org/10.1111/jmft.12093

Feagin, J. R., & Eckberg, D. L. (1980). Discrimination: Motivation, action, effects, and context. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *6*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.06.080180.000245

Fechner, P. Y. (2002). Gender differences in puberty. *The Journal of Adolescent Health: Official Publication of The Society for Adolescent Medicine*, *30*(4), 44–48. https://doi.org/10.1016/s1054-139x(02)00357-9

Fechner, P. Y. (2003). The biology of puberty: New developments in sex differences. In C. Hayward (Ed.), Gender differences at puberty (pp. 17–28). New York: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511489716.003

Fisher, S., Reynolds, J., Hsu, W., Barnes, J., & Tyler, K. (2014). Examining multiracial youth in context: Ethnic identity development and mental health outcomes. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence, 43*(10), 1688–1699. doi:10.1007/s10964-014-0163-2

Flood, A. (2010). Understanding phenomenology. *Nurse Researcher, 17*(2), 7–15. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2010.01.17.2.7.c7457

Foner, N. (2003). *American arrivals: Anthropology engages the new immigration.* Santa Fe: School of American Research Press. https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.41-5986

Fountas, A. J. (2005). Waking up American: Coming of age bi-culturally: First-generation women reflect on identity. Emeryville, CA: Seal Press.

Fuentes-Afflick, E., & Hessol, N. A. (2008). Acculturation and body mass among Latina women. *Journal of Women's Health*, *17*(1), 67–73. doi:10.1089/jwh.2007.0389

Galanti, G. A. (2003). The Hispanic family and male-female relationships: An overview. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, *14*, 180–185. https://doi.org/10.1177/1043659603014003004

Garza-Guerrero, C. A. (1974). Culture shock: Its mourning and the vicissitudes of identity. *Journal of American Psychological Association, 22*, 408–429. https://doi.org/10.1177/000306517402200213

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.1016/0091-2182(83)90042-3

Ginsburg, K. R., & Kinsman, S. B. (2014). *Reaching teens: Strength based communication strategies to build resilience and support healthy adolescent development*. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics.

Given, L. M. (2008). *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781412963909

Golash-Boza, T. (2006). Dropping the hyphen? Becoming Latino(a)-American through racialized assimilation. *Social Forces*, *85*(1), 27–55. https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2006.0124

Gordon M. M. (1964). Assimilation in American life: The role of race, religion, and national origins. New York: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/1385241

Gozdziak, E., Bump, M., Duncan, J., MacDonnell, M., & Loiselle, M. B. (2006). The trafficked child: Trauma and resilience. *Forced Migration Review*, *25,* 14–15. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17335-1_6

Graves, T. D. (1967). Psychological acculturation in a tri-ethnic community. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, *23*(4), 337–350. https://doi.org/10.1086/soutjanth.23.4.3629450

Grinberg, L., & Grinberg, R. (1989). Psychoanalytic perspectives on migration and exile (N. Festinger, trans.). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. https://doi.org/10.1177/000306518403200103

Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *3*(1), 42–55. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690400300104

Haack, L., Gerdes, A., & Lawton, K. (2014). Conducting research with Latino families: Examination of strategies to improve recruitment, retention, and satisfaction with an at-risk and underserved population. *Journal of Child & Family Studies*, *23*(2), 410–421. doi:10.1007/s10826-012-9689-7

Hall, G. S. (1904). *Adolescence: Its psychology and its relations to physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion and education*. New York: D. Appleton. https://doi.org/10.1037/14684-000

Hamachek, D. E. (1992). *Encounters with the self*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Hatton, T. J., & Leigh, A. (2011). Immigrants assimilate as communities, not just as individuals. *Journal of Population Economics*, *24*(2), 389–419. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00148-009-0277-0

Hinton, D. E., & Lewis-Fernández, R. (2010). "Idioms of distress" (*culturally salient indicators of distress) and anxiety disorders*. In H. B. Simpson, Y. Neria, R. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511777578.014

Hinton, D. E., Pich, V., Marques, L., Nickerson, A., & Pollack, M. H. (2010). Khyâl attacks: A key idiom of distress among traumatized Cambodia refugees. *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, *34*(2), 244–278. https://doi.org/10.1037/e533652013-218

Horevitz, E. (2009). Understanding the anthropology of immigration and migration. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, *19*(6), 745–758. https://doi.org/10.1080/10911350902910914

Hummer, R. A., & Chinn, J. J. (2011). Race/ethnicity and US adult mortality: Progress, prospects, and new analyses. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, *8*(1), 5–2. https://doi.org/10.1017/s1742058x11000051

Itzigsohn J., Giorguli S., & Vazquez O. (2005). Immigrant incorporation and racial identity: Racial self-identification among Dominican immigrants. *Ethnic and Racial Studies. 28*(1), 50–78. https://doi.org/10.1080/0141984042000280012

Kaltman, S., Hurtado de Mendoza, A., Gonzales, F. A., Serrano, A., & Guarnaccia, P. J. (2011). Contextualizing the trauma experience of women immigrants from Central America, South America, and Mexico. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, *24*(6), 635–642. doi:10.1002/jts.20698

Kataoka, S. H., Stein, B. D., Lieberman, R., & Wong, M. (2003). Suicide prevention in schools: Are we reaching minority groups. *Psychiatric Services, 54*(11), 1444. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.54.11.1444

Kirmayer, L. J. (1991). The place of culture in psychiatric nosology: Taijin kyofusho and DSM-III—R. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*. https://doi.org/10.1097/00005053-199101000-00005

Kleinman, A., & Benson, P. (2006). Culture, moral experience and medicine. *The Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine, 73*(6), 834–839.

Kneipp, S. M., Lutz, B. J., Levonian, C., Cook, C., Hamilton, J. B., & Roberson, D. (2013). Women's experiences in a community-based participatory research randomized controlled trial. *Qualitative Health Research*, *23*(6), 847–860. doi:10.1177/1049732313483924

Kroon Van Diest, A., Tartakovsky, M., Stachon, C., Pettit, J., & Perez, M. (2014). The relationship between acculturative stress and eating disorder symptoms: Is it unique from general life stress? *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, *37*(3), 445–457. doi:10.1007/s10865-013-9498-5

Lee, J., & Hahm, H. C. (2010). Acculturation and sexual risk behaviors among Latina adolescents transitioning to young adulthood. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, *39*(4), 414–427. doi:10.1007/s10964-009-9495-8

Lewis-Fernandez, & F. Schneier (Eds.), *Theory, research and clinical perspectives* (pp. 127–138). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Liebkind, K., & Jasinskaja-Lahti, I. (2000). The influence of experiences of discrimination on psychological stress: A comparison of seven immigrant groups. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *10*(1), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1002/(sici)1099-1298(200001/02)10:1<1::aid-casp521>3.3.co;2-x

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic enquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage. https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-008043349-3/50014-1

Locke, T. F., & Newcomb, M. D. (2005). Psychosocial predictors and correlates of suicidality in teenage Latino males. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *27*(3), 319–336. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739986305276745

López, I., Escoto, E. R., Monford-Dent, T., & Prado-Steiman, M. (2011). Theories of acculturation and cultural identity. In *Working with Immigrant Families* (pp. 39-56). Routledge.

Lopez, M. H., & Taylor, P.T. (2010). *Latinos and the 2010 Census: The foreign born are more positive.* Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center. Retrieved from http://pewhispanic.org/files/ reports/121.pdf

Lui, P. P. (2015). Intergenerational cultural conflict, mental health, and educational outcomes among Asian and Latino/a Americans: Qualitative and meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, *141*(2), 404–446. doi:10.1037/a0038449

Lytle, L. J., & Bakken, L. (1997). Adolescent female identity development. *Sex Roles*, *37*(3/4), 175–185.

MacDonald, G., & Leary, M. R. (2005). Why does social exclusion hurt? The relationship between social and physical pain. *Psychological Bulletin*, *131*(2), 202. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.2.202

Magnusson, E., & Marecek, J. (2012). *Gender and culture in psychology: Theories and practices*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139086318

Marsella, A. J., & Ring, E. (2003). Human migration and immigration: An overview. In L. L. Adler & U. P. Gielen (Eds.), *Migration: Immigration and emigration in international perspective* (pp. 3–22). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Martín-Baró, I. (2003). *Poder, ideología y violencia:* Power, ideology, and violence. Madrid, Spain: Trotta.

Mathison, S. (2005). *Encyclopedia of evaluation.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781412950558

McGoldrick, M., Giordano, J., & Garcia-Preto, N. (2005). Ethnicity and family therapy. Guilford Press.

McLeod, S. A. (2013). *Developmental psychology*. Retrieved from www.simplypsychology.org/developmental-psychology.html

Meeus, W. (2011). The study of adolescent identity formation 2000–2010: A review of longitudinal research. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 21*(1), 75–94. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00716.x

Miller, L. (2013). 'I am not who I thought I was': Use of grief work to address disrupted identity among Hispanic adolescent immigrants. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 4*, 316–323. doi:10.1007/s10615-012-0410-5

Morse, J. (2008). Health sciences, qualitative research in. In Lisa M. Given (Ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 381–385). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi:http://dx.doi.org.antioch.idm.oclc.org/10.4135/9781412963909.n192

Moustakas, C. (1990). *Heuristic research: Design, methodology and applications*. London: Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412995641

Moustakas, C. (1994a). Methods and procedures for conducting human science research. In *Phenomenological research methods* (pp. 103–120). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: http://dx.doi.org.antioch.idm.oclc.org/10.4135/9781412995658.d8

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412995658

Murillo, N. (1971). The Mexican American family. In N. Wagner & J. J. Haug (Eds.), *Chicanos: Social and psychological perspectives*. St. Louis, MO: C.V. Mosby.

Näre, L., & Akhtar, P. (2014). Gendered mobilities and social change—An introduction to the special issue on gender, mobility and social change. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 47, 185–190. doi:10.1016/j.wsif.2014.10.007

Nishina, A., Ammon, N. Y., Bellmore, A. D., & Graham, S. (2006). Body dissatisfaction and physical development among ethnic minority adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *35*(2), 179–191. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-005-9012-7

Ojeda, S. R, & Terasawa, E. (2002). Neuroendocrine regulation of puberty. In D. W. Pfaff & M. Joels (Eds.), *Hormones, brain and behavior, Vol. 4* (pp. 589–689). New York: Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-012532104-4/50077-9

Oropesa, R. S., & Jensen, L. (2010). Dominican Immigrants and Discrimination in a New Destination: The Case of Reading, Pennsylvania*. *City & Community*, *9*(3), 274–298. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6040.2010.01330.x

Passel, J. S., & Cohn, D. (2009). A portrait of unauthorized immigrants in the United States, 14. Retrieved from http://www.pewhispanic.org/2009/04/14/a-portrait-of-unauthorized-immigrants-in-the-united-states/

Passel, J. S., Cohn, D. V., & Lopez, M. H. (2011). Hispanics account for more than half of nation's growth in past decade. *Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.*

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation research methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. https://doi.org/10.1097/00006199-199109000-00006

Perez, A. D., & Hirschman, C. (2009). The changing racial and ethnic composition of the US population: Emerging American identities. *Population and Development Review*, *35*(1), 1–51. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2009.00260.x

Population Estimates (2012). United States department of commerce. *United States Census Bureau. Retrieved* from http://www.census.gov/population/hispanic/data/201S2.html

Population Estimates (2013) United States Department of Commerce. *United States Census Bureau*. Retrieved from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk

Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2006*). Immigrant America: A portrait (3rd ed.).* Berkeley: University of California Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/2579986

Pottie, K., Brown, J. B., & Dunn, S. (2005). The resettlement of Central American men in Canada: From emotional distress to successful integration. *Refuge*, *22*(2), 101–111.

Rasche, C. E. (1988). Minority women and domestic violence: The unique dilemmas of battered women of color. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, *4*(3), 150–171. https://doi.org/10.1177/104398628800400304

Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M. J. (1936). Memorandum for the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist*, *38*(1), 149–152. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1936.38.1.02a00330

Rockquemore, K., & Brunsma, D. (2002). *Beyond black: Biracial identity in America*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. https://doi.org/10.1016/s1090-9524(02)00038-4

Rodriguez, C. E. (2000). *Changing race: Latinos, the census, and the history of ethnicity in the United States*. New York: New York University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/2675257

Rogol, A., Roemmich, J. N., & Clark, P. A. (2002). Growth and puberty. *Journal of Adolescence Health, 31*(6) 192–200. https://doi.org/10.1016/s1054-139x(02)00485-8

Rolider, A., Lapidot, N., & Levi, R. (2000). The bullying phenomenon in Israeli schools. Jezreel Valley, Israel: Emek Yezreel College (in Hebrew).

Romero, A. J., Carvajal, S. C., Valle, F., & Orduña, M. (2007). Adolescent bicultural stress and its impact on mental well-being among Latinos, Asian Americans, and European Americans. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *35*(4), 519–534. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20162

Roth, J., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2000). What do adolescents need for healthy development? Implications for youth policy. San Diego, CA: Worth Publishers. https://doi.org/10.1037/e640342011-002

Rumbaut, R. G. (2005). Sites of belonging: Acculturation, discrimination, and ethnic identity among children of immigrants. In T.W.Weiner (Ed.), *Discovering successful pathways in children's development: Mixed methods in the study of childhood and family life* (pp. 111-162). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1352.2010.01123.x

Schultz, D., & Schultz, S. E.f (2009) *Theories of personality*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Schwartz, S. J., Unger, J. B., Zamboanga, B. L., & Szapocznik, J. (2010). Rethinking the concept of acculturation: Implications for theory and research. *The American Psychologist*, *65*(4), 237–251. http://doi.org/10.1037/a0019330

Setterson, R. A., Furstenburg, F. J., & Rumbaut, R. (Eds). (2005). *On the frontier of adulthood: Theory, research, and public policy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.1177/009430610603500217

Shane, E. (2014). Explaining trauma in highly traumatized patients: A brain-based psychoanalytic perspective. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, *34*(4), 315–321. doi:10.1080/07351690.2014.899782

Sirin, S. R., Ryce, P., Gupta, T., & Rogers-Sirin, L. (2012). The role of acculturative stress on mental health symptoms for immigrant adolescents: A longitudinal investigation. *Developmental Psychology*, *49*(4), 736–748. doi:10.1037/a0028398

Stepler, R., & Brown, A. (2015). *Statistical portrait of Hispanics in the United States, 1980–2013*. *Pew Research Center's Hispanic rends Project*. Retrieved March 19, 2016, from http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/05/12/statistical-portrait-of-hispanics-in-the-united-states-2013-key-charts/#growth-sources

Stone, S., & Han, M. (2005). Perceived school environments, perceived discrimination, and school performance among children of Mexican immigrants. *Children andYouth Services Review, 27,* 51-66. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2004.08.011

Suarez-Orozco, C., Bang, H. J., & Kim, H. Y. (2011). I felt like my heart was staying behind: Psychological implications of family separations & reunifications for immigrant youth. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 26*(2), 222–257. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558410376830

Suarez-Orozco, M., & Suarez-Orozco C. (1995). Transformations: *Immigration, family life and achievement motivation among Latino adolescents*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/2547238

Sue, S., Zane, N., Nagayama Hall, G. C., & Berger, L. K. (2009). The case for cultural competency in psychotherapeutic interventions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *60*, 525–548. http://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163651

Sullivan, H. S. (1947). *Conceptions of modern psychiatry*. New York: Norton. https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01654330

Summerfield, D. (2004). Cross-cultural perspectives on the medicalization of human suffering. In G. M. Rosen (Ed.), *Posttraumatic stress disorder: Issues and controversies* (pp. 233–245). Chichester, England: Wiley. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9780470713570.ch12

Swick, K. J., & Williams, R. D. (2006). An analysis of Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological perspective for early childhood educators: Implications for working with families experiencing stress. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *33*(5), 371–378. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-006-0078-y

Tang, N. (2002). Interviewer and interviewee relationships between women. *Sociology*, *36*(3), 703–721. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038502036003011

Transatlantic Trends. (2010). *Immigration 2010*. Washington, DC: The German Marshall Fund of the U.S. Retrieved from:

http://trends.gmfus.org/immigration/doc/
TTI2010_English_Key.pdf https://doi.org/10.3886/
icpsr33022.v1

Trueba, H. T. (2002). Multiple ethnic, racial, and cultural identities in action: From marginality to a new cultural capital in modern society. *Journal of Latinos & Education*, *1*(1), 7. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532771xjle0101_2

Turner, S. G., Kaplan, C. P., & Badger, L. W. (2006). Adolescent Latinas' adaptive functioning and sense of well-being. *Affilia: Journal of Women & Social Work*, *21*(3), 272–281. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109906288909

Ugarte, M. B., Zarate, L., & Farley, M. (2003). Prostitution and trafficking of women and children from Mexico to the United States. *Journal of Trauma Practice*, *2*(3/4), 147–165. https://doi.org/10.1300/j189v02n03_08

Umaña-Taylor, A. J., & Updegraff, K. A. (2007). Latino adolescents' mental health: Exploring the interrelations among discrimination, ethnic identity, cultural orientation, self-esteem, and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Adolescence, 30*(4), 549–567. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2006.08.002

U.S. Census Bureau Population Division (2014). Population and housing unit estimates. *Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States.* Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/popest/methodology/index.html

U.S Deparment of Commerce (2010). *U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Population Estimates Program.* Retrieved from: https://www.census.gov/topics/population/hispanic-origin/about.html

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (2001). *Mental health: Culture, race, and ethnicity—A supplement to Mental health: A report of the Surgeon General.* Retrieved from http://www. surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/cre/

United States Department of Homeland Security. (2014) Retrieved from http://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-border-unaccompanied-children

Van Horn, L. V., Bausermann, R., Affenito, S., Thompson, D., Striegel-Moore, R., Franko, D., & Albertson, A. (2011). Ethnic differences in food sources of vitamin D in adolescent American girls: The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Growth and Health Study. *Nutrition Research*, *31*(8), 579–585. doi:10.1016/j.nutres.2011.07.003

Ventriglio, A., & Bhugra, D. (2015). Migration, trauma and resilience. In M. Schoulder-Ocak, *Trauma and migration: Cultural factors in the diagnosis and treatment of traumatized immigrants* (pp. 69-79). Cham: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17335-1_6

Vilens, A., & Sher, L. (2010). *Immigration and mental health: Stress, psychiatric disorders, and suicidal behavior among immigrants and refugees*. Hauppauge, N.Y.: Nova Science Publishers, Inc. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mehy.2010.01.023

Villalba, J. A. (2007). Culture-specific assets to consider when counseling Latina/o children and adolescents. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development*, *35*(1), 15–25. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1912.2007.tb00046.x

Viruell-Fuentes, E. A. (2007). Beyond acculturation: immigration, discrimination, and health research among Mexicans in the United States. *Social science & medicine*, *65*(7), 1524-1535. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2007.05.010

Wallace, D. C., & Bartlett, R. (2013). Recruitment and retention of African-American and Hispanic girls and women in research. *Public Health Nursing*, *30*(2), 159–166. doi:10.1111/phn.12014

Westermeyer, J. (1989). *Mental health for refugees and other migrants: Social and preventive approaches*. Springfield, IL: Chas. C. Thomas. https://doi.org/10.1176/ajp.148.3.380

Williams, D. R. (1999). Race, socioeconomic status, and health: The added effects of racism and discrimination. *Annals New York Academy of Sciences, 896*, 173–188. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-6632.1999.tb08114.x

Williams, D. R. Neighbors, H. W., & Jackson, J. S. (2008). Racial/ethnic discrimination and health: Findings from community studies. *American Journal of Public Health*, 98, S29–S37. https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.98.supplement_1.s29

Xu, Q., Bekteshi, V., & Tran, T. (2010). Family, school, country of birth and adolescents' psychological well-being. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, *8*(1), 91–110. https://doi.org/10.1080/15562940903379142

Yakushko, O., Backhaus, A., Watson, M., Ngaruiya, K., & Gonzalez, J. (2010). Career development concerns of recent immigrants and refugees. *Giornale Italiano Di Psicologia Dell'orientamento, 11*(2), 35–54. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845308316292

Yakushko, O., & Chronister, K. M. (2005). Immigrant women and counseling: The invisible others. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *83*(3), 292–298. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2005.tb00346.x

Zárate, M. A., Garcia, B., Garza, A. A., & Hitlan, R. (2004). Cultural threat and perceived realistic group conflict as predictors of attitudes towards Mexican immigrants. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 40,* 99–105. doi:10.1016/S0022- 1031(03)00067-2

Zayas, L. H., Kaplan, C., Turner, S., Romano, K., & Gonzalez-Ramos, G. (2000). Understanding suicide attempts by adolescent Hispanic females. *Social Work*, *45*(1), 53–63. https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/45.1.53

Zayas, L. H., Lester, R. J., Cabassa, L. J., & Fortuna, L. R. (2005). Why do so many Latina teens attempt suicide? A conceptual model for research. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *75*(2), 275. https://doi.org/10.1037/0002-9432.75.2.275

Zinn, H. (2016). *A people's history of the United States*. New York: Boxtree. https://doi.org/10.2307/30036794

Appendix A: Recruitment Script

My name is Sofia Murillo and I am a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology Program at Antioch University of Santa Barbara, CA. I am conducting a research study that will explore experiences with immigration and acculturation during adolescence. I am looking at the context of Latina women who migrated to the United States when they were adolescents between 12- 18 years of age and what facilitated their transition to their new culture. I will be setting up an interview with participants to ask questions about their experience of immigration, adjustment process, and reflections after becoming adults. There is no monetary compensation for participating, but you can choose to receive the results of this study upon its completion. This study is completely voluntary and confidential. The study will include completion of a short demographic form and a sit-down interview to run the length of about 90 minutes or two separate interviews of an hour. Would you be interested in participating?

Recruitment Script (Spanish version)

Mi nombre es Sofía Murillo, soy estudiante de Doctorado en La Universidad de Antioch de Santa Barbara, CA, en el Programa Clínico de Psicología. Estoy haciendo un estudio de investigación que explorará las experiencias de inmigración y culturización durante la adolescencia de mujeres latinas que migraron a Estados Unidos durante su adolescencia entre los 12 y 18 años de edad; cómo fue su adaptación y transición a su nueva cultura. Estaré haciendo entrevistas con las participantes haciéndoles preguntas sobre sus experiencias de inmigración, proceso de cambio y reflexiones de experiencias vividas cómo adultas en E.U. No hay compensación monetaria, pero puede recibir los resultados de los estudios al final de la investigación. Este estudio de investigación es

completamente voluntario y confidencial. El estudio incluirá un cuestionario

demográfico, una entrevista de 90 minutos o dos entrevistas separadas de una hora, ¿Está

usted interesada en participar?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interviewer: Sofia Murillo   Interviewee Name: _____

Interview Date: _____ Time: _____ to _____

Introduction

Review the consent form information and obtain consent

Describe the interview process

Restate that interviews will be audiotaped and interviewer will take notes

Review assumptions, definitions, etc.

Start audiotape

Interview Questions

1. Please describe your experience leaving your native country (Family, School, Friends).

2. What was the immigration journey experience like for you?

3. Please describe your experience arriving to the U.S the first month and who was there to support you?

4. Please describe some experiences that made a better transition when you arrived to the U.S in the first year?

5. Now that you are an adult, is there something you wish you had then to better adjust into the American culture as Latina adolescent girl?

6. How could staff (teachers, peers, counselors) have helped you in adjusting to your school?

7. What are some things that your parents could have done to help with the transition to the U.S?

8. How long did it take for you to start feeling comfortable living in your new community? Why?

9. What are some values/beliefs that helped you cope with the transition from the Latino culture?

10. What are some values and beliefs that you have adopted from the American culture that have helped you to adjust?

11. How has your life changed because of your immigration and acculturation experience?

Interview Questions (Spanish version)

1. ¿Cómo fue su experiencia al dejar en tu país natal (comunidad, escuela, amigos, familia)?

2. ¿ Cómo fue su experiencia de jornada inmigración?

3. ¿ Cómo fue su experiencia en acomodarse en E.U. y quien le brindo apoyo en el primer mes?

4. ¿Qué experiencias hicieron una mejor transición cuando llego a los E.U. en primer ano?

5. ¿Ahora que ya es una adulta, hay algo que hubiera querido tener para una mejor transición?

6. ¿ Cómo cree que el personal de la escuela (maestros, compañeros consejeros) le pudieran haber ayudado a sentirte mejor en la escuela?

7. ¿Cuáles son algunas cosas que sus padres hubieran podido hacer para ayudarle a tener una mejor transición en E.U?

8. ¿Cuánto tiempo le tomó para comenzarse a sentir cómoda en su nueva E.U? Escuela? Casa?

9. ¿Cuales son los valores o creencias principales de su cultura que le ayudaron en la transición a los E.U?

10. ¿Cuales son los valores o creencias principales de la cultura de E.U que te ayudaron en la transición?

11. ¿ En que maneras ha cambiado su vida por la experiencia de inmigración y culturización a un nuevo lugar?

Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire

Instructions: Please read each question carefully and answer it. For questions that do not apply to you, please mark (N/A).

How old are you? _____

What country were you born in? _____

How old were you when you came to the United States? _____

How long have you been living in the United States? _____

How many years of education do you have? _____

What is your marital status? _____ ___Children? _____

How many times have you gone back to your native country? _____

Do you have family in your native country? _____

Demographic Questionnaire (Spanish)

Instrucciones. Por favor lea cada pregunta y marque la respuesta. Si la pregunta no le aplica a usted marque N/A

¿Qué edad tiene? _____

¿En que país nació? _____

¿Qué edad tenia cuando llego a los Estado Unidos? _____

¿Cuánto tiempo tiene viviendo en los Estados Unidos? _____

¿Cuántos años tiene de educación?_____

¿Cuál es su estado civil? _____ Tiene hijos? _____

¿Cuántas veces a viajado a su país natal? _____

¿Tiene familia en su país natal? _____

Appendix D: Information and Consent Form for Non-Medical Research

This study will be reviewed and approved by the Antioch University, Santa Barbara

Institutional Review Board. You are being asked to participate in a research study

conducted by Sofia Murillo, MA, a doctoral candidate completing her dissertation in the

Psychology Department at Antioch University, Santa Barbara.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AND PROCEDURES

This is a study about the experiences of eight to ten Latinas who migrated to the United

States as adolescents who would like to share their experiences to explore their

experiences of immigration and integration into the American culture. The purpose of

this study is to expand current literature for psychologists, teachers and other community

members to support young Latina women to increase functioning and lessen mental

health risks within the Latino adolescent community.

I am interested in your thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and memories of your experience

of immigration. This study could stir up feelings related to your experience of

immigration and if you become sufficiently uncomfortable, counseling referrals will be

given to you as they are requested. You will be asked a set of questions in a face-to-face

in a recorded in-depth interview for about 60 minutes to 90 minutes. You will also be

asked to complete a questionnaire to provide demographic information.

I will be the only person doing the interview and having access to this information.

Quotes and excerpts of the interview may be a part of the final research report, but under

no circumstances will the identifying information or names be included. Your

participation in this study is purely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. If at any

time you are uncomfortable with any of the questions, please feel free to decline to answer the questions.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS There may be some emotional distress and possible discomfort when sharing stories about immigration or situations of distress. If this is the case for the participant and need for support is needed resources for support will be provided.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS this study is to expand current literature for psychologists, teachers and other community members to increase an understanding about young Latina women who immigrate to the U.S with the home to lessen mental health risks within the Latino adolescent community.

CONFIDENTIALITY the author of this study will have access to the data associated with this study. The names of the participants will be protected and changed with Pseudonyms. The data will be stored in the investigator's office in a locked file cabinet and a password protected, external computer storage drive. After the study is completed, the data will be stored for five years and then destroyed. When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, only group demographics may be shared. Demographic information pertaining to individual participants will not be revealed.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to enter it, or you may withdraw at any time without creating any harmful consequences to yourself. Additionally, the investigator may withdraw you from the analysis of this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or

remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have any questions

regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Antioch University Santa

Barbara IRB, 602 Anacapa Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

If you have any questions regarding your participation in this study, please feel free to

email me at XXXX@XXXXX call me at XXX XXX-XXX or contact the Chair of my

Dissertation Committee, Ron Pilato, PsyD XXX-XXX-XXXX and XXX@XXXX.XXX

Information and Consent Form for Non-Medical Research (Spanish version)

Consentimiento de Participación En El Estudio De Investigación

Este estudio fue revisado y aprobado por El Comité Institucional De Evaluación de La

Universidad de Antioch De Santa Barbara.Usted está siendo invitada a participar en el

estudio de investigación por Sofia Murillo, MA, una estudiante candidata de Doctorado a

su disertación del Departamento de Psicología del Departamento de la Universidad de

Antioch de Santa Barbara.

DESCRIPCION DEL ESTUDIO Y PROCEIMIENTOS Este estudio es acerca de la

experiencia de siete Latinas que migraron a Los Estados Unidos durante su adolescencia,

a quienes les gustaría compartir sus experiencias para explorar que factores influenciaron

su sentido de sobrevivencia en adaptarse a la cultura Estadounidense. El propósito de este

estudio es expandir la literatura actual para psicólogos, maestros, y miembros de la

comunidad para que apoyen a las jóvenes Latinas y puedan aumentar su adaptación y

reducir los riesgos de salud mental entre los Latinos adolescentes en la comunidad.

Estoy interesada en sus pensamientos, sentimientos, percepciones, y emociones, de cómo

esto influenció su forma de adaptación. Este estudio puede tocar sentimientos

relacionados con su experiencia y si usted se siente lo suficientemente incomoda,

servicios de terapia pueden ser ofrecidos. A usted se le darán una serie de preguntas en

persona y se grabará la entrevista a fondo de 60 a 90 minutos. También se le pedirá que

complete un cuestionario para que pueda proveer su información demográfica.

Yo seré la única persona que estará haciendo la entrevista y que tendrá acceso a la

información. Frases y piezas de la entrevista tal vez sean parte del reporte final, pero bajo

ninguna circunstancia la información o los nombres de los participantes serán incluidos.

Su participación es completamente voluntaria y usted puede retirarse en cualquier

momento. Si usted se siente incomoda con cualquiera de las preguntas por favor siéntase

en libertad de no responderlas.

RIESGOS POTENCIALES Y INCOMODIDADES Puede haber algún estrés emocional

e incomodidad y es posible que cuando se estén compartiendo historias acerca de

inmigración o situaciones difíciles. Si este es el caso para la participante y necesita apoyo

es necesario, recursos serán provistos.

BENEFICIOS POTENCIALES Este estudio expandirá la actual literatura para

psicólogos, maestros y otros miembros en la comunidad para apoyar a las jóvenes Latinas

y aumentar adaptación y minimizar los riesgos de salud mental en la comunidad.

CONFIDENCIALIDAD la autora en esta investigación tendrá acceso a los datos

asociados con la investigación. Los nombres de las participantes serán protegidos y

cambiados por seudónimos. Los datos serán guardados en la oficina de la investigadora

bajo llave y protegida en un gabinete y en la computadora con una unidad externa y

privada. Después de que el estudio sea completado, los datos se guardarán por cinco años

y después se destruirán. Cuando los resultados de la investigación sean publicados y

discutidos en la conferencias, solo información demográfica en grupo será compartida.

La información demográfica que tenga información de las personas individualmente no será revelada.

PARTICIPACION Y CLAUSURA La participación de este estudio es voluntaria. Usted se puede reusar a participar, o puede clausurar su participación en cualquier momento sin crear ningún tipo de consecuencias negativas para usted. Adicionalmente, la investigadora puede darle de baja del análisis de la investigación si las circunstancias lo indican.

LOS DERECHOS DE LOS SUJETOS Usted tiene la opción en cualquier momento de discontinuar su participación sin ninguna penalidad. Usted no esta vetando a ningún reclamo legal, derecho, o remuneración por su participación en este estudio. Si usted tiene preguntas acerca del tema pude comunicarse a Antioch University Santa Barbara IRB, 602 Anacapa Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

Si tiene cualquier pregunta acerca de su participación en este estudio, por favor comuníquese conmigo por e-mail a XXXX@XXXXX.XXX o llame al teléfono (XXX) XXX-XXX o puede comunicarse con el Director del Comité de mi Disertado Ron Pilato, PsyD,XXXX@XXXX.XXX o (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Appendix E: Consent to Audio-Record

To ensure the quality and effectiveness of the study, the interview will be audio taped any identifying information will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used to label the tapes to ensure confidentiality. Following transcription of the interviews, audiotapes will be erased and destroyed. Transcriptions and analysis will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's personal office and will only be seen by the researcher during the study and for five years after the study is complete.

I hereby give consent to Antioch University of Santa Barbara, CA and the researcher of this study, Sofia Murillo, to audiotape my interview. I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time without fear of adversely affecting my relationship with the researcher, or Antioch University of Santa Barbara.

Signature of Participant: Date

_____   _____

Consent to Record (Spanish version)

Para asegurar la calidad y la efectividad de la investigación, la entrevista será audio-grabada para identificar información que se mantendrá privada. Seudónimos serán usados para marcar las grabaciones y para asegurar la privacidad. Después de que se transcriban, las grabaciones se borrarán y se destruirán. El análisis y las transcripciones serán guardados bajo llave en propiedad personal del investigador/a y solo será accesible por el investigador/a por cinco años después del estudio.

Yo doy mi consentimiento a la Universidad de Antioch de Santa Barbara, CA y a la investigadora de este estudio, Sofia Murillo que grabe mi entrevista. Yo entiendo que

puedo retirar mi consentimiento en cualquier momento sin miedo de que mi relación con

la investigadora se afecte negativamente o con la Universidad de Antioch de Santa

Barbara.

Firma del Participante: Fecha

_____   _____