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A study of social service utilization by Hispanics

Tijerina, Gloria, M.S.S.W.

The University of Texas at Arlington, 1993

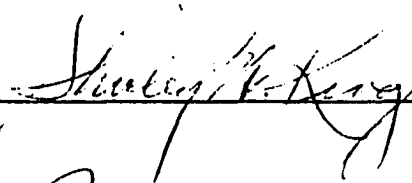
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**A STUDY OF SOCIAL SERVICE UTILIZATION
BY HISPANICS**

The members of the Committee approve the masters
thesis of Gloria Tijerina

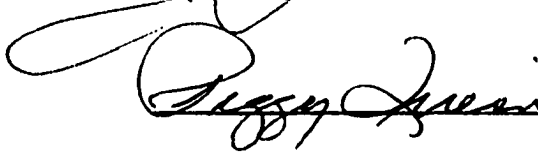
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**A STUDY OF SOCIAL SERVICE UTILIZATION
BY HISPANICS**

by

GLORIA TIJERINA

**Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of**

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SOCIAL WORK

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

August 1993

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July 29, 1993

ABSTRACT

**A STUDY OF SOCIAL SERVICE UTILIZATION
BY HISPANICS**

Publication No. _____

Gloria Tijerina, M.S.S.W.

The University of Texas at Arlington, 1993

Supervising Professor: Shirley W. King

This study of social service utilization by the Hispanic community in the City of Dallas was conducted as a joint effort with the Dallas Concilio of Hispanic Service Organizations. The purpose of the study was to provide the Dallas Concilio with data for evaluation and planning purposes. The study examined: (1) the relationship between ethnicity of agency board and staff composition to participation rates of Hispanics at various social service agencies in Dallas; and (2) barriers to service utilization for these Hispanic clients. The study focuses on the central research question of the extent to which the ethnic makeup of boards and staff correspond

with the service utilization of Hispanics. The study also considered a number of questions relevant to service utilization by Hispanics, such as: What type of services are Hispanics utilizing? Do agencies with Spanish-speaking staff show a greater frequency of service usage by Hispanics? Do agencies with greater Hispanic board representation have a correspondingly higher Hispanic staff and client representation? The comparative analysis of the findings revealed that despite the fact that Hispanics are the largest ethnic group in Dallas, they are underrepresented on the boards and staffs of the majority of social service agencies in Dallas.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

As a city was in flames, the world watched in shock. A little over a year ago, race was briefly on the national agenda as the country watched the Los Angeles riots unfold. It has now become another part of this great country's modern racial history. Yet, race is still a national dilemma. Even human service providers are challenged to embrace cultural diversity in America. The problems in the inner city, where most ethnic minorities live, have only worsened with the increased joblessness and economic disparity (Newsweek, 1992). A quote from Barbara Jordan sums up best what continues to happen daily in this country with respect to people of color:

America is moving backward, not forward, in its efforts to achieve the full participation of minority citizens in the life and prosperity of the nation. In education, employment, income, health, longevity, and other basic measures of individual and social well-being gaps persist; and, in some cases, the gaps are widening between members of minority groups and the majority population. (Jordan, 1990)

This nation is uniquely composed of many diverse ethnic minority groups. These various ethnic groups have grown by leaps and bounds due to the tremendous population explosion of fertility rates and

immigration. According to Lecca and Watts (1989), one in five persons in the United States is a member of an ethnic minority group. More recently, demographics from the 1990 Census indicate that Hispanics are already the second largest ethnic group in the country. Hispanics rank as the fastest growing and one of the most diverse ethnic groups in the United States. While Hispanics can be located throughout the country, more than half live in the states of California with 34% and Texas with 19%. Between 1980 and 1990, the Hispanic population grew by 53%, which is eight times as fast as the non-Hispanic population (National Council of La Raza, NCLR, 1992). These numbers do not even include the estimated 5.2% of Hispanics missed in the national census undercount of ethnic minorities (Skerry, 1992). In 1990, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that Hispanics comprised 9% of the total general population in the country or 22.4 million people. In Texas, the Hispanic population grew from 1.4 million in 1960 to 4.3 million in 1990. In the City of Dallas, Hispanics comprised 21% of the general population in 1990, surpassing the 12.3% Hispanics reported in 1980 (Dallas Concilio of Hispanic Service Organizations, 1991; 1990 U.S. Census).

*NOTE: The terms *Hispanics* and *Latinos* are used interchangeably throughout the paper as inclusive of all the various Spanish-speaking subgroups.

The country's increasing diversity creates the urgent need for social service personnel who are trained effectively to problem solve with understanding and are sensitive in providing the needed services to all the special populations of society. The 90's call for human service providers to be equipped to work with persons of diverse cultures, and this is a demanding and complex challenge (Berger, 1989). The Hispanic population is in itself a highly diverse group composed of several subgroups, which includes: Mexican Americans (61.2%), Puerto Rican (12.1%), Cuban (4.8%), Central and South American (13.8%), and other Hispanics (7.6%) (NCLR, 1992). The actual term "diverse" comes from the United States (U.S.) government and is used as an inclusive description of all Spanish-speaking or Latino groups (Root, 1992). There are some twenty different Latin nationalities in the U.S. today. The 1990 Census indicates that the group with the largest number of people is the Mexican Americans with 13,393,208 people; the Puerto Ricans are at 2,651,815; the Cubans at 1,053,197; and the Central Americans and South Americans have 1,035,602 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1990). Many of the Hispanics are recent immigrants, while others are the descendants of the Mexicans and Spanish that settled this territory generations ago before it belonged to the U.S. By the 21st century, ethnic groups will actually be nearly one-half of all Americans (O'Hare, 1991), while the white majority continues to shrink in size. For

example, in 1980, the white population was at 80% but in 1990 it dropped to 76% while other groups continued to grow at a more rapid pace (McGarvey, 1992). Between 1960 and 1990, the ethnic minority population actually tripled reaching 61 million (O'Hare, 1991).

Working with today's diverse ethnic population is a challenging task, and many other factors attributed to Hispanics further compounds the difficulty in meeting the needs of this group. Several pertinent factors are worth mentioning at this point. For instance, Hispanics have the lowest level of education attainment in comparison to the general population and are far more likely to be among the working poor in the country. They are more prone to contract certain diseases, yet less likely to have access to health care. They receive less preventive health care, and are more likely to be uninsured. They tend to be younger in age and have larger families. They are more likely than non-Hispanics to live in female-headed households, and have less probability of being homeowners. They have lower per capita incomes than either Blacks or Whites, and are more likely to live in poverty (NCLR, 1992).

An underrepresentation of Hispanics has been clearly documented in the mental health field, which includes social work, psychology, and psychiatry (Callicutt & Lecca, 1983). In the past, an inadequacy of social services to reach the Hispanic population left a void that gave rise to the

development of Hispanic service organizations in the 1970s (Padilla, Ruiz, & Alvarez, 1975). In Dallas in 1981, the Dallas Concilio of Hispanic Service Organizations was created to address this void in services to Hispanics. A major concern about the underutilization of the human social services by the Hispanic community prompted this researcher and the Dallas Concilio of Hispanic Service Organizations to join efforts in this project. The Concilio serves as a consciousness-raising agent in the city that actively advocates for the needs of Hispanics and promotes reaching out to the Hispanic population in Dallas. The Concilio has as its mission statement: "to serve the Hispanic community of the Dallas area by ascertaining social needs and catalyzing the delivery of health and human services that address such needs." The Concilio is non-profit and is an affiliate of the National Concilio of America, the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, and is a member of the National Way of Metropolitan Dallas, and is a member of the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Service Organizations (COSSMHO). Community planning, cultural awareness seminars, staff and volunteer training, and technical assistance are provided to local agencies and community groups by the Concilio. Another service of the Concilio is the Network of Affiliates which serves as an information-sharing and peer-support mechanism for Hispanic

human service professionals, and is a resource for community agencies striving to reach out to Hispanic populations.

The fundamental aspect of this study concentrates on examining the client demographics and the profile of the agency's board of directors and staff members. While the Concilio's primary purpose is to receive aid for future long-range planning as a result of the study, the researcher's purpose is different. The major concern is that historically Hispanics have underutilized social services in relation to their levels of need and it is the reason that this joint effort with the Concilio was undertaken. A review of the literature in the next chapter shows that Hispanics do not utilize the resources available to them. The population statistics provided by the Census Bureau clearly show that this ethnic group is multiplying faster than the government can keep up with (O'Hare, 1991). Human service agencies must be sensitive to issues of cultural diversity because open communication enhances the ability to serve a diverse population (Solomon, 1991). Another issue of concern is the thrust of this study is the stresses and demands imposed on the Hispanic social worker as the "lone ranger" in too many agencies. The demographic information on the make-up of the agency boards, staff, and clients provides the opportunity to do some comparative analysis of the data.

As stated previously, the delivery of services to this heterogeneous group is complicated by the demographic nature of the group which includes the new immigrants, American citizens, and undocumented aliens. These include people from different national origins, some who closely identify with their ethnic heritage while others do not, and includes those who speak either English or Spanish or both languages. The need for bilingual-bicultural staff is a pressing problem and factor to be considered in providing equipped social service providers for effective service delivery to Hispanics (Gutierrez & Ortega, 1991).

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Central Research Question

The central concern of this study is the extent to which the ethnic makeup of agency boards and staff personnel correspond with the service utilization rates of Hispanics. Does the ethnic makeup of the social service agency's board of directors and staff have a significant affect on the utilization rates of their Hispanic clients?

This study of the social service utilization by Hispanics centers on the research question of the affect of the ethnic composition of agency board of directors and staff on the participation rates of Hispanics.

The review of the literature for this study will address the various barriers that exist for Hispanics in their efforts to utilize available services to meet their varied needs. Several elements need to be considered as key factors in the low service utilization rates of Hispanics since they serve as inhibiting forces. King and McNeil (1980) group the elements which contribute to the service utilization by ethnic group members into two groups or forms, structural and psychosocial. Organizational design,

staffing patterns, staff expertise which includes the sensitivity to cultural differences of clients, the hiring practices of staff, and the recruitment of ethnics all fall into the structural group. Attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of social service workers are part of the psychosocial group (King & McNeil, 1980).

This literature review first examines the factors that are in the structural group. The lack of bilingual-bicultural workers is considered a factor in the underutilization of services by Hispanics (Karno & Morales, 1971), and institutional racism continues to exist throughout the employment process and accounts for some of the underrepresentation (U.S. Equal Employment Commission, 1974). Ethnic minority workers face particular stress and dilemmas in the workplace (Vargus, 1983), and merit discussion. Issues on the retention of ethnic workers, promotions, and equal treatment and pay are structural factors related to agency policies and should be considered in the underrepresentation of Hispanics in the social services (Healy, Haven, & Chin, 1990). Staff expertise is another important factor since the knowledge and understanding of the various cultural subtleties related to sex, age, and trust for Hispanic clients is vital in the helping process. Language and cultural barriers can keep Hispanics from seeking services, or expressing their needs (Humm-Delgado & Delgado, 1986).

The psychosocial factors cannot go unexamined in this literature review because they represent a second tier of significant factors in the arena of service utilization. Although a number of studies on the social service utilization by Hispanics have rendered mixed findings, the effect of racial similarity on counselor-client interactions has been supported in several studies (Banks, 1972). Unfortunately, social workers have been guilty of insensitivity to their use of language with ethnic clients (Sotomayor, 1977). The role of Hispanic natural support systems in facilitating service delivery (Humm-Delgado & Delgado, 1986) must be considered since it has been believed and stated by some researchers as a reason for the low utilization of services. The perceptions, attitudes, and behavior of the helping professional to persons of diverse cultural backgrounds may also affect the low rates of service utilization by ethnic minorities (Schwartz, 1989). Before examining the structural and psychosocial factors in detail, the facts on the low utilization of services by Hispanics in general need to be stated.

The Low Utilization of Services by Hispanics

The low utilization rate of social services by Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics is well documented (Fitzpatrick, 1971; Padilla & Ruiz, 1974). When compared to other ethnic groups, Puerto Ricans had a much lower rate of utilization (Abad, Ramos & Boyce, 1974) than other Hispanics. A

number of reports indicate that Mexican Americans have a lower prevalence of mental health service usage than other ethnic groups. Compared to their representation in the population, Mexican Americans do not receive mental health services (Barrera, 1978). A history of accumulated inequalities has made equal access to education, employment, and social and health services for Hispanics an impossibility. A history of exclusion has defined the boundaries between the Anglo and the Hispanic, but has resulted in and forced a strong cultural integrity in areas of values and language. This exclusion has kept Hispanics in a dependent status of poverty only forcing a further dependency on each other for survival. It has brought about the formation of their own community-based organizations to meet their social and service needs. Hispanic researchers agree that service delivery must be viewed within the context of the group's cultural differences. Despite an obvious need, this ethnic group continues to underutilize traditional helping services (Valdez & Gallegos, 1979). Suchman (1965) believed that the knowledge, availability, and convenience of services affects utilization by the elderly. Racial status and cultural uniqueness result in barriers to service utilization (King, 1983). An examination of the structural and psychosocial factors that affect service utilization for Hispanics provides a more complete picture of the problem.

Structural and Organizational Factors

Given the demographic changes of the last decade that reveals vast growth in the ethnic population, the social work profession must respond by ensuring that the social service agencies are truly meeting the needs of the diverse groups (Rivera & Erlich, 1981). The characteristics of the organization are determined by its mandate and structure of work, and it determines how interactions with the client system take place (Hasenfeld, 1983). The growth in the ethnic community brings with it the challenge of addressing and meeting a variety of needs intertwined with differing languages, culture, and traditions (Rivera & Erlich, 1981). The organizational atmosphere and how ethnic minority clients are treated from the minute they walk in the agency's doors affect the utilization rates by ethnic groups. Culturally appropriate services must be provided if ethnic client needs are to be met and the services utilized (Federico, 1990). Ethnic-sensitive management is discussed before examining the organizational barriers of institutional racism, hiring practices, retention of ethnic staff, bilingual-bicultural staff, and agency boards.

Ethnic-Sensitive Management

A review of literature regarding the responsibility of management in the social services arena is important in examining the underutilization of services by Hispanics. Macro practitioners of the service agencies must

give particular attention to the ethnic community in their service areas if culturally appropriate services are to be provided. Attention must be given to all phases of macro practice: planning, administration, evaluation, and community organization. The task of the agency's administration is to ensure that an environment in which services can be dispensed in an effective manner is provided. In the planning aspect of macro practice, the planners must examine the effectiveness of their services in light of the ethnic reality by taking into account all segments of their particular community. In the administrative process, the macro worker is involved in problem solving, decision making, information processing, programming, forecasting, and leadership. The administrator must realize that having an ethnic-sensitive agency applies to the board, the staff, and client population. The evaluative process includes reviewing employee performance, program effectiveness, and evaluating suggestions and proposals. Again, the ethnic reality must be a foremost consideration (Devore & Schlesinger, 1991). Managing the culturally diverse in the workplace is an essential need today in view of the growth rates of the extremely diverse society. Federico (1990) refers to *human diversity* as "the biological, psychological, social and cultural differences among people which in turn affect the way their needs are expressed and satisfied" (Federico, p. 57). Although all people have certain common needs, these

are related to each other and influenced by human diversity (Federico, 1990). Diversity training in all types of agencies is a nationwide norm today, especially in the education and business fields (Staples, 1993). Since the labor force is projected to be 27% minority and 47% female by the year 2005 (Heller, 1992), agencies must realize the value of educating their workers on how to deal with cultures other than their own (Staples, 1993). Copeland (1988) states that in order for workers to value diversity, they need to be trained in four problem areas: 1) stereotypes and assumptions, 2) actual cultural differences, 3) the exclusivity of the "white male club" and its access to information and relationships, and 4) the unwritten rules and double standards for success, which are often unknown to ethnic minorities and women (Copeland, 1988).

Organizational Barriers

Whenever underutilization of services by any ethnic group exists, consideration must be given to possible agency organizational barriers that might be in place. It merits a discussion of institutional racism, hiring procedures, retention of ethnic staff, lack of bilingual-bicultural staff, and importance of agency boards.

Institutional Racism. Racism is a system of attitudes and beliefs, behaviors and practices, and laws and policies that are based on a negative evaluation of a group. Racism has been institutionalized in the patterns of

American life. Institutional racism exists when the structure and the operations of an institution are determined by racial criteria and result in the unequal access to the protection, benefits, opportunities, and rewards of society (Ables & Murphy, 1981). Institutional racism consists of institutional behavior which treats members of different ethnic and racial groups in unfair and different ways from the majority. It originates in the operation of established and respected forms in society, and therefore receives little condemnation (Morales & Sheafor, 1980).

Since slavery was first debated in 1787, America has struggled with the question of how to treat its ethnic minority members. Racism has permeated this society to the extent that many who believe that they are free of it actually practice it. They cannot escape thinking in stereotypes (Jacob, 1990).

Hiring Procedures. The Department of Labor reports that social welfare services as an occupation will show a growth of 51.5% by the year 2000. Latinos are expected to account for 27% of the nation's labor force in the 90s. Both Hispanic males and females are employed most often in low paying jobs in the U.S. Hispanic workers' median income was \$14,141 for the men, compared to \$22,207 for non-Hispanics men. The median income for Hispanic women was and \$10,099, versus \$12,438 for non-Hispanic women. The income gap between the Hispanics and Whites is not

narrowing (NCLR, 1992). Employment disparities exist for Hispanics in management positions with only 13% in these occupational positions (Dovidio, Gaertner, Anastasio & Sanitioso, 1992). Historically, Hispanics have been underrepresented in managerial positions and are overrepresented in clerical and service types of jobs (McNeely, 1989). Racism can be found in hiring practices and promotion policies. Racist policies affect the delivery of services (VanDenBergh & Cooper, 1986). However, discrimination in hiring practices is especially hard to detect and measure. Unfortunately, when a job applicant is told that the vacancy has already been filled, there is no way of verifying that or whether the person hired was better qualified (Bendick, Jackson, Reinoso & Hodges, 1991). A study by Cross et al. (1990) concluded that individuals with a "foreign appearance or accent" are discriminated against by 10% of employers in the hiring process. In another study in the Washington, D.C. area on discrimination against Latino job applicants, the Latino applicants did receive less favorable treatment than the equally qualified Anglos more than 20% of the time (Bendick et al., 1991). Spanish-speaking adults are often denied employment on the basis of their language (LeVine & Padilla, 1980). Biases against Mexican-American's have caused them to be treated differently because they speak English with a Spanish accent. The simple use of Spanish itself may elicit bias (Dovidio et al., 1992).

Many discriminatory practices of the past remain embedded in the basic institutions of society and continue to have an unequal effect on certain groups of the population (U.S. Equal Employment Commission, 1974). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a clear statement to end discriminatory treatment of minorities in the labor market (Carnegie Council, 1975). The most pervasive discrimination today results from the normal, and often unintentional, practices that exist throughout the whole employment process. Affirmative Action is the specific remedy to deal with in situations where discrimination has been proven, but it has become a heated issue for many White workers who advocate for "reverse discrimination"(Glasser, 1988).

Retention of Ethnic Staff. The sort of service delivery that an agency gives its clients depends on the individuals providing the services. Several things should be considered in retaining ethnic workers, such as giving employees proper training, realistic workloads, and favorable working conditions. Staff may not have the proper training to do an effective job, such as paraprofessionals hired to do a professional's job. Workers all too often are assigned heavy workloads with unrealistic demands. Working conditions in social services are not always the best, or safest (Federico, 1990). Having cultural diversity in the workplace includes being able to understand the special needs of different ethnic

groups. It means moving minorities up the employment ladder as opportunities arise (Heller, 1992).

Human service managers must have an understanding and commitment to affirmative action and equal employment. Policies on recruitment, selection, promotion, appraisal, and termination must be fair and impartial. Organizations that have established affirmative action goals for the underutilized groups are the ones that hire them more (Lewis, Lewis & Souflee, 1991). Of the litigated cases of employment discrimination by Hispanics, the predominant issues were hiring (32.9%), discharge (28.9%), and language (14.5) (LaVan, 1992).

In cases where Hispanics are hired, it often means that only one Hispanic person is hired and expected to handle all the Spanish-speaking clients. Agency administrators have complained of high turnover rates among their Hispanic staff (Delgado, 1979). Hispanic workers are often confronted with taking on additional work because of the tremendous need for people who speak the Spanish language. Their desire to help and the fact that they speak the language causes their fall into the "compassion trap" (Medina & Reyes, 1976). The recruitment and retention of ethnic workers in the social work profession is vital, and needs more attention and research (Berger, 1989). Not much focusing on the job satisfaction or employment careers of Hispanics and non-Hispanic professionals cannot

be explained by differences in education, length of employment, or occupational status (McNeely, 1989).

Lack of Bilingual-Bicultural Staff. The need in social services for staff personnel that are sensitive to and knowledgeable about the cultural needs and differences of Hispanics has been noted by several researchers (Barrera, 1978; Karno & Morales, 1971). Unfortunately, there is a shortage of bilingual and bicultural mental health professionals in this country (Olmedo & Lopez, 1977), and the underrepresentation of Hispanics in social work (Callicut & Lecca, 1983) was noted earlier. Sustained high dropout rates for Hispanics for the past 20 years currently places this ethnic group's dropout rates at nearly triple the national average (Henry, 1992). Only 44% of Hispanics age 25 and older have completed high school, compared to the 70% rate for non-Hispanics (Schmid, 1990).

Individual and institutional racism are a reality in America that has created a dual system of education, one for majority students and another for the minority students (Lecca & Watts, 1989). Is it any wonder then that this has resulted in a shortage of bilingual-bicultural staff? Hispanics have encountered, as have other ethnics, discrimination in human resource management in the areas of hiring as mentioned in a previous section (Bendick et al., 1991).

Why are bilingual-bicultural staff needed? Spanish is considered to be the non-English language most likely to be maintained in this country (Christian & Christian, 1966), and for that reason its availability would impact service utilization by Hispanics. The presence and availability of Spanish-speaking bilingual staff is essential to the human service agencies since monolingual Spanish-speaking clients are not likely to seek out the needed services where their culture or language are not understood (Barrera, 1978). The facility with two languages is an advantage because the sense of meaning is more refined in bilinguals than in monolinguals. Fluency in Spanish facilitates understanding and makes communication possible with the Hispanic client (LeVine & Padilla, 1980). Barrera (1978) reported that the use of Spanish-speaking, indigenous personnel increases the utilization of services by Mexican-Americans. Spanish-speaking professionals are a necessity. But despite the face validity of the argument for bilingual-bicultural mental health professionals, it has not been empirically proven (Barrera, 1978).

Importance of Agency Boards. The board of directors of non-profit organizations is a "group of persons vested with the management of the affairs of the corporation irrespective of the name by which such group is designated" (Hadden & French, 1987). The board has the power to manage the affairs of the agency. This power includes the actions for the

efficient daily operations of the organization. The board has the right to approve corporate budgets, development plans, contracts, and transfers of property. It has the right to elect or remove members, directors, or officers (Singer, 1987).

In human service organizations, boards are a governing body of policymakers ultimately accountable to society for their actions (Lewis et al., 1991). Board of directors have the responsibility for policy decisions and oversee policy implementation (Cox, Erlich, Rothman, & Tropmen, 1984). Agency policies relating to the recruitment, selection, promotion, appraisal, and discharge of employees must be fair. Commitment to equal opportunity and affirmative action practices is necessary (Lewis et al., 1991). The board shares the responsibility with the agency's executive director for the integrity of organization mission and whether the agency succeeds or fails. It is responsible for making the strategic decisions and choices as they meet long-term goals (Lewis et al., 1991). Sizes of boards vary, but the number recommended is a minimum of twenty-seven members, which allows for at least three members per each board subcommittee. Cox, Erlich, Rothman, and Tropman (1984) point out that subcommittees are the best way to accomplish more of the board's tasks and list nine possible committees:

- 1) the executive committee

- 2) the budget and finance committee
- 3) the resource development committee
- 4) the personnel committee
- 5) the program committee
- 6) the public relations committee
- 7) the community relations committee
- 8) the nominating committee
- 9) the recruitment and training committee.

In looking at board composition, it should be examined in terms of age, sex, income level, and racial-ethnic backgrounds. Considering the occupations, skills, experience, education, and expertise of potential board members is important. Most of all, board members must be committed to be effective members. Agencies should openly advertise for prospective members and should utilize a screening and interviewing process for the candidates. Racial and ethnic relations affect the planning and implementation of human services programs. Theories and beliefs on ethnic relations can create barriers in service delivery (Cox et al., 1984). The community should be served in ways that consider the ethnic reality of today, and it requires agency board and administrative commitment. Board selection should be of individuals that reflect the wide range of the community diversity (DeVore & Schlesinger, 1991).

Psychosocial Factors

The various elements that contribute to the service utilization by ethnic minorities, as mentioned earlier, fall into two categories: the structural, which has been discussed, and the psychosocial. The psychosocial factors include attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of the service providers (King & McNeil, 1980). This section of the review concentrates on the psychosocial factors. The importance of language and the possibility that it can serve as a barrier to the service utilization by Hispanics (Humm-Delgado & Delgado, 1986) was examined in the following section. The fact that studies have indicated that client's preference for ethnically-similar helping professionals by Hispanic groups (Banks, 1972) is important in this part of the review. Since some researchers have noted natural support systems as the reason for underutilization of services by Hispanics, some points must be made on this subject. The fact that personal prejudices and biases of the human service worker can result in discriminatory behavior and affect service utilization by Hispanics and other ethnic groups (Schwartz, 1989) must be addressed. The various dilemmas that ethnic minority members encounter in the workplace (Vargus, 1983) is worthy of some discussion in this review.

Language Barriers

An estimated 70% of the general population of this country, and slightly more, indicate that Spanish is their mother tongue (Callicutt & Lecca, 1983). More than half of the Hispanic population speak primarily Spanish at home, with 20% reporting a difficulty with the English language (ibid.). The percentage of Chicanos speaking Spanish varies from one community to another and is dependent on several factors. Spanish usage is determined by the proximity to Mexico and other Latin countries, family's generation in the country, level of acculturation, and age (Cuellar & Roberts, 1984).

In a study by Torrey (1972), it was found that monolingual Spanish or bilingual Spanish-English clients are not adequately served by monolingual English speaking professionals. The number of Spanish-speaking professionals has increased slightly in recent years, but the overwhelming majority continue to be Anglo-American, non-Spanish speakers. The inability of Spanish-speakers to communicate in the English language keeps many from receiving the services which they need. However, no research or statistics are available to show how many clients have been refused services due to the absence of Spanish-speaking therapists (Acosta, 1984).

Language is so important because it reveals to helping professionals how the client perceives the world. Language affects the therapeutic process, but exactly how it does is not easily determined. Language is also important to the assessment process. Speaking Spanish as a primary language can be a hindrance only to the degree that the dominant society sees the language difference as inappropriate. Language variations can and do exist even within one ethnic group (Green, 1982) making it more of a challenge. A translation of language often changes the original meaning of the concept being presented (Buriel, 1984), making the working through an interpreter difficult. Many expressions cannot be directly translated in a clear manner where they make sense (LeVine & Padilla, 19808). Ruiz (1975) reports that feelings related in a native language are more likely to be expressed with more emotion. The communication of feelings, thought processes, and history are essential to the accurate diagnoses and assessments of ethnic clients (Cuellar & Roberts, 1984). An understanding of the language of an ethnic group is necessary for an understanding of their culture. Different cultures express themselves differently from the dominant culture. A sensitivity to the various cultural differences in self-disclosure and listening skills is absolute. Nonverbal behavior needs to be considered because what is said is not always what is meant (Green, 1982). To be effective in serving culturally diverse groups, the helping profession-

al must conceptualize the problem in a way that is consistent with the client's belief system (Hepworth & Larsen, 1990). Human service agencies must exhibit sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity because open communication enhances the ability to serve a diverse population (Solomon, 1991). Green (1982) makes the vital point that language is the key to the components of any presenting problem of the client. Aguilar (1972) presents the following questions worth consideration:

How can a social worker help people if he cannot communicate with them? How can a common purpose be established if that purpose cannot be discussed? How can a worker know where his clients are and proceed at a pace comfortable to them when he cannot even start at all? Obviously, fluency in the language of a client is a necessary tool. (Aguilar, 1972)

Preference for Ethnic Similarity

The ethnicity of the counselor, or helping professional, is another important factor in the underutilization of mental health services by Mexican Americans (Padilla, Ruiz & Alvarez, 1975). Previous research in regard to Mexican American's preferences and attitudes about counselor ethnicity has been inconsistent and yielded varied findings (Gomez, 1982). The ways in which the respondents made their preference choices of counselors in the various studies conducted is debatable. Research done in the 1970s and early 1980s showed that when the respondents were presented with a simple choice between an ethnically similar counselor

and an ethnically dissimilar counselor, Mexican Americans showed a preference for the ethnically similar counselors (Atkinson & Wampold, 1993). Social psychologists (Berscheid, 1966; Brook, 1965; Minnick, 1957) believed that when a similarity exists between individuals, then more credibility, trust, respect, and attraction will be possible. The difference in the self-disclosure styles of Mexican Americans lacks sufficient empirical evidence (Martinez & Mendoza, 1984). Another major problem with these earlier studies is that they were conducted with college students and excluded the majority of the population that is 25 years and older who have not even completed high school. It is essential to break out of the historical trend of minimizing the significance of ethnicity, culture, and race in human behavior if service delivery is to be successful (Lopez & Lopez, 1993). When the acculturation level of Mexican Americans is low, they will then display a greater preference for ethnically similar therapists. The preference for psychotherapists of their own ethnicity is shown in three later studies with Mexican American college students that contradicted past research (Lopez, Lopez & Fong, 1991). Boulware and Holmes (1970) found that the client's perception of the therapist's ability to understand their problem is seen as unrelated to their ethnically similar counselor. Another critical factor in earlier studies is the ethnicity of the experimenter (Lopez et al., 1991). A further interesting finding by Acosta and

Sheehan (1976), which again is contradictory, shows that Mexican Americans view therapy favorably, but underutilize the mental health services. One other study worth mentioning is the extensive study conducted by Valdez (1992) for the Hispanic Community Fund of the Bay Area in the State of California. This study focused on assessing the status of Latino non-profit organizations and looked at their capacity to serve the growing needs of Latinos in the San Francisco Bay Area. The vast majority of the respondents in that study felt that it is vitally important for Latinos to receive services from other Latinos. The respondents noted that cultural and linguistic factors are significant in enabling Latinos to provide better and more relevant services to other Latinos (Valdez, 1992). An accurate assumption is that when a client and the helping professional share similar lifestyles and value systems, it creates a greater opportunity for favorable treatment (Callicutt & Lecca, 1982).

Hispanic Natural Support Systems

The natural support systems that Hispanics and other ethnic minority groups are known to utilize in times of need have often been used as an explanation for their low service utilization. Humm-Delgado and Delgado (1986) offer the list of these natural support systems for Hispanics in four categories: 1) extended families and friends, 2) folk healers (curanderos, herbalists, santeros, santiguadores, and spiritists), 3) churches (such as the

Catholic, Jehovah's witness, Pentecostal, and Seventh Day Adventist, and 4) social clubs and merchants (groceries, botanical shops, and market places). Generally, Hispanics first turn to their natural support systems when in need of assistance before going to the more formal sources (Humm-Delgado & Delgado, 1986).

The earlier researchers have assumed that Hispanics seeking out folk healers explains the underutilization of traditional services. However, Hispanic scholars have questioned the credibility of this empirically unverified notion. Edgerton, Karno, and Fernandez (1970) found that while *curanderismo* was present, it was not extensive, nor the preferred resource for mental health needs. Another study by Keefe (1979) and colleagues indicated that little use of *curanderos*, or folk healers, was displayed by Hispanics. An interest in future research on the similarities between folk therapy and psychotherapy (Delgado, 1979) may reveal it as a useful possible alternative to traditional psychotherapy. Barrera (1978) states that it is a poor explanation to say that the utilization of *curanderos* is the reason for the underutilization of mental health services by Mexican-Americans or other Hispanics. Some argue that the influence of *curanderismo* is declining among Mexican-Americans (Edgerton et al., 1970). The extent of the practice today of folk medicine by Hispanics is unclear and not well established. In fact, most modern day, urban, or middle class

Hispanics will not subscribe to the folk beliefs of the ancestors. In spite of the possibility that some Hispanics may frequent a *curandero*, it does not indicate that other means of help will be avoided. If a culturally sensitive approach is used with clients, the most traditional of Hispanics can respond in a positive manner (LeVine & Padilla, 1980). Barrera (1978) suggests several reasons why *curanderismo* is a poor excuse to explain the low utilization rates of services by Hispanics. He notes that data obtained in studies has been limited to a few urban areas, a way of identifying the *curanderos* is not definite, and desirability factors needed consideration (Barrera, 1980).

Another factor attributed as a reason for the underutilization of social services is that *la familia*, the family, provides the emotional nurturance to Hispanics. Traditionally, *la familia* is one of the most important aspects of life among Hispanic people and represents a great source of strength for them. Much value is placed on the preservation of family unity, respect, and loyalty. For Hispanics, the extended family may include not only the immediate nuclear family members and relatives but extends to lifelong friends and even kin created through religious customs (Acosta, 1984), *los compadres* (the godparents). Although the family is a stabilizing and socializing force within the Hispanic community, it is not

the adequate substitute for the much needed human services that clients need (Valdez & Gallegos, 1982).

The church is another of the natural support systems for Hispanics. The vast majority of the people in this ethnic group faithfully follow the religious norms of the Roman Catholic Church. The Church plays an important role in the daily life of Hispanics. It is within the setting of the Church that the godparents are selected to help care for a child and become part of the extended family. The Church has not been a unifying force for Hispanics, as it has been for other ethnic groups. Allegiance to the Church as an institution varies, and the impact of its presence are not felt equally in all people. The impact of the Church seems to be greater on those of lower socioeconomic status, who are more traditional and reside where the majority population is Hispanic (Valdez & Gallegos, 1982). According to Valdez and Gallegos (1982), the research is lacking and inadequate in providing information on Hispanics as needed.

The other aspects of these informal and natural support systems for Hispanics is that they are concentrated in the *barrio*, the neighborhood. The *barrio* is where this social type of support takes place. Here in the *barrio* the *bodegas*, neighborhood groceries, abound. It is often here that families can get the ethnic spices and foods to prepare their favorite ethnic dishes. *Botanicas*, the botanical and herbal shops, also help to provide the

familiarity to ease the transition to a new land and culture. The *bodegas* and *botanicas* are typical in the Puerto Rican neighborhoods (Banks, 1975). The *barrio* is the social arena for the Hispanic, where people come together for a sense of familiarity and security (Sotomayor, 1971). Living in these supportive ethnic communities has reduced the stress caused by the migration to this country, a source of comfort especially for the Hispanic elderly since they are the less acculturated to the White dominant society. The Spanish language further isolates the Hispanic elderly from the Anglo culture. Participation in senior clubs or community organizations are a way of expanding the social networks for Hispanics. Extremes of the very traditional to the very modern continue in all forms of cultural practices in America for Hispanics (Becerra, 1983).

Discrimination in Service Agencies

Low service utilization rates for Hispanics and other ethnic minorities due to discriminatory practices, attitudes, and behaviors by human service providers are examined in this section.

Discrimination can take many forms, and can be directed at various groups that are different from the dominant group. Discrimination refers to specific behaviors directed to members of a group, which are unfair in comparison with behavior toward members of other groups (Ables & Murphy, 1981). Many people in the mental health field believe that ethnic

discrimination is a factor in the low utilization of services by ethnic minorities that is alive and operating in the delivery of services today (Bruce, 1974). Often the perceptions, attitudes, and behavior of the social worker clash with those of diverse cultures. For this reason, it is important that workers be aware of their own prejudices and biases. The service providers must be honest with themselves and be aware of the values and stereotypes they may have towards various ethnic groups (Schwartz, 1989). Unfortunately, prejudice in its purest forms is commonly encountered face to face by ethnic minorities with the helping professional. Unfriendly or antagonistic feelings communicated by insensitive people hinders the helping process (Aguilar, 1972). As a result of these negative attitudes, ethnic persons feel rejected and unwanted. A depressing fact is that the attitudes, beliefs, and values of human service workers are a result of the system that has allowed disparities that benefit a select few and while harming others. These negative attitudes are usually displayed by the White worker (King & McNeil, 1980). If human service providers of the 90s do not learn to effectively interact and serve those of diverse backgrounds, it will mean that 63% of minorities will continue to be the victims of modern prejudice (Laabs, 1991).

Dilemmas of Ethnic Workers

Ethnic minority professionals face some particular stresses and strains that affect service delivery. The human service worker will not only be faced with supervising an ethnic worker but may have to work under the direct supervision of one. Agencies need to be aware of the extra pressure and demand for performance that ethnic workers face: 1) The natural reaction is to assume that workers are hired due to their abilities, but not for an ethnic worker who likely was hired because of affirmative action; community pressures, or client make-up; 2) Ethnic minorities are aware that they can be criticized for over-identifying with clients or other workers of their own ethnic group and this can result in self-identity issues that force them to distance themselves; 3) Non-whites have learned that they must be better in all that they do (a super-person) and put extra demand on themselves; 4) Ethnic workers at other times may be employed to pacify other ethnic workers and to serve as a sounding board for their grievances; 5) Ethnic-group expectations may place added pressure on ethnic workers; 6) The ethnic community can expect a role-model worker at all times since it reflects back on the whole ethnic group; and 7) An inconsistency in agency goals and personnel policies, plus functioning without changing their operational behavior in how services are provided to ethnic minorities adds to tension. These are only

some of the more common type of dilemmas that ethnic workers may face daily (Vargus, 1983). A final dilemma important to mention is that often being the "lone ranger" as the only Hispanic worker in the agency or department causes additional pressures. Being the only Spanish-speaking worker, he is often overloaded with work and client caseload. The desire to help everyone needing his assistance as a Spanish-speaking worker allows falling into the trap of over-compassion and not being able to say no (Medina & Reyes, 1976). As a result, "quantity" service outweighs the importance of "quality" service.

In conclusion, the literature review shows that not just one explanation can be offered as the reason for the low service utilization rates of Hispanics and other ethnic minorities. A few contradictions are obvious when some researchers try to explain away this serious problem that affects all ethnic groups by stating that the reason is the presence of factors such as the natural support systems. The cited works and studies clearly indicate that many barriers exist, and that these are a result of the discrimination or indifference to ethnic needs. This study on the service utilization of Hispanics within the City of Dallas examines these contradictions and looks at the various barriers in place today. The data address these questions: What type of human service agencies/programs are Hispanics utilizing more? What is the relationship between agency staff

and board profiles to the client demographics? How many agencies meet the criteria designated for a Hispanic community-based organization? Do the agencies with staff and board members who speak Spanish show a greater frequency of service utilization by Hispanics? Which services that the Concilio offers have been utilized more in the past year? What program topics are suggested for future use by the Concilio?

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The review of literature in Chapter Two of this study supported the concern that a number of factors contribute to the underutilization of social services by Hispanics. In spite of the fact that contradictions exist with respect to the causes of the underutilization of services by Hispanics, there is no clear evidence about most of the existing information (Gomez, 1982). A major concern of this study is the fact that Hispanics in this country continue to underutilize the resources available to them through the various social service agencies. The quality of service that is or is not being provided to the monolingual Spanish-speaking clients is an issue that merits examination. The overload of work that Hispanic social workers experience due to the low representation of bilingual-bicultural staff members in the agencies requires attention and a change.

Research Question

The study centers on the principal research question of the extent to which the ethnic make-up of agency boards and staff personnel correspond with the service utilization rates of Hispanics. The research

question is, "Does the ethnic make-up of the social service agencies' board and staff significantly affect the participation rates of the Hispanic clients?"

Another significant research question is, "Do agencies with Spanish-speaking board and staff members positively affect the service usage of Hispanics?" Spanish-speaking ability is an important factor to consider in the analysis. The study prompts additional questions. Do Hispanics utilize social services in higher proportions than the White clients? Does the number of White board and staff members outweigh the number of the Hispanic representation? Is the Hispanic representation on agency boards and staff in proportion to the Hispanic client population served by the agencies? An assumption that affects the data analysis is that the larger the ethnic group's concentration on boards and staff, the higher the rate of service utilization by that group.

Sampling and Data Collection

The City of Dallas has approximately 500 social service agencies, and 280 agencies (56%) of the total number were chosen as the sample for this study. A survey was mailed to 280 affiliate-member agencies of the Dallas Concilio of Hispanic Service Organizations and to other social service agencies on the Concilio's mailing list. The sample included service agencies who have either ordered any of the Concilio's printed materials, attended their training seminars, or just requested to be on the Concilio's

mailing list. The survey yielded a 19% response rate, with 53 agencies participating of the 280. The majority (13%) of the responding agencies were average-size (16-30 employees). Twenty agencies were United-Way affiliates and 13 were governmental/tax-supported, and 13 others were private non-United Way agencies. Four agencies did not respond to the survey question that addressed the agency's description. One agency noted that it was church-affiliated, and another a for-profit agency. Three other agencies did not specify what type of agency they are, although they did select the "other" category. The survey was mailed to the executive directors and other upper management personnel at each agency. All the participating agencies are located within the boundaries of the City of Dallas. The survey was mailed to the agencies by the Concilio, and upon completion of it the respondents returned it to the Concilio's office. Two weeks were allowed for the data collection.

Instrument

The joint effort with the Dallas Concilio for this project required the development of an instrument that would solicit the type of information that would meet the immediate needs of the Concilio, plus obtain usable data for this study. There was a need to not only obtain information on the make-up of the service agencies but to also know what services are being utilized at present by the Hispanic community. A questionnaire was

developed with this two-fold purpose in mind and put into a mailout survey format. The unique thrust of this study necessitated that the questionnaire primarily focus on two areas: 1) the first five questions dealt with demographic information on the agency's makeup and the makeup of its board of directors, staff, and client population; and 2) the last five questions solicited information on the agencies' affiliation to the Concilio and their past experience with the services provided by the Concilio. The demographical information was the primary source of information utilized for this study of social service utilization by Hispanics in the City of Dallas. The second part of the questionnaire allowed respondents to give positive and negative feedback about the Concilio's services and make program recommendations that will assist the Concilio in their long-range planning.

Closed-ended questions were structured for the questionnaire and the respondents were asked to select an answer from the list of answers provided. All possible responses were considered as questions were formulated. The first part of the questionnaire was of primary concern for this study and provided most of the data for this study. To obtain the description of the agencies, the first question asked the respondent to select the category that best describes their agency from the following list: 1) United-Way Affiliate, 2) Government entity, 3) State/federally

supported, 4) Private/Non-Profit/Non-United Way, or 5) Other (asked to specify). To determine the size of the agency, the respondents were to indicate the number of employees they have at their agency from the list: 1) Less than 5 people, 2) 5-15 people, 3) 16-30 people, 4) 31-50 people, 5) 51-75 people, or 6) over 75 people. The approximately size of the agency's annual budget was noted by choosing from the following list: 1) Less than \$250,000; 2) \$250,001 to \$499,999; 3) \$500,000 to \$999,999; 4) \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000; or 5) over \$5,000,000. To learn about the agency's program, they could select from a list of 17 items the one(s) that best describes the program(s) within their agency. The next two questions addressed and asked for the total number and the ethnicity of the agency board members, employees, and client population. The respondents were asked to further indicate the number of employees in management positions by ethnicity and how many are bilingual Spanish-speaking staff members.

Of particular interest to the Dallas Concilio was the second part of the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to note if their agency, or a staff member, are network affiliates of the Concilio and to choose their answer from the selections presented: 1) Yes, agency is affiliate; 2) Yes, staff is affiliate, 3) No affiliation, or 4) Don't know. Next, the participants were asked to indicate which of the Concilio's services were utilized in the past 12 months from a list of the nine available services. A list of nine

possible program topics was provided as an opportunity for the respondents to express what they would like to see on future programs. Lastly, the final two questions were open-ended and the respondents were given the opportunity for the respondents to express what they would like to see on future programs. Lastly, the final two questions were open-ended and the respondents were given the opportunity to say what they like or dislike the most about the Concilio's role and programming. The results in the next chapter gives a picture of the social service utilization by Hispanics in Dallas.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

It has been the intent of this study to analyze the data and reasonably determine what the relationship is between the makeup of the boards and staff of the agencies and the participation rates of Hispanics in the human social services arena within the City of Dallas.

Data Results

Agency Size

The survey results indicate that the largest response came from the average-size agencies (16-30 employees) with 13 agencies participating. The small-size agencies (5-15 employees) had 12 agencies respond. The other high response came from the very large agencies (over 75 employees) with 11 agencies returning the survey. The very small agencies (less than 5 employees) had nine agencies that replied to the survey. The large-sized agencies (51-75 employees) accounted for six of the responses. The smallest response came from the medium-size agencies (31-50) with only four agencies replying. Four of the agencies did not supply information in this part of the survey and were omitted from the count (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of sample agencies by agency type, indicating the agency size by number of workers employed.

Agency Size	Agency Type				
	United Way (n)	Government (n)	Private (n)	Other (n)	Total (n)
Less than 5 (very small)	0	0	6	1	6
5 to 15 (small)	4	4	3	1	12
16 to 30 (average)	8	1	2	1	12
31 to 50 (medium)	3	0	1	1	4
51 to 75 (large)	3	1	0	0	4
Over 75 (very large)	2	6	0	1	8
Total	20	12	12	5	49

NOTE: Fifty-three agencies responded to survey, four were omitted for not providing complete information on agency size. (Source: Author).

Budget

The financial capabilities of an agency are another aspect of the agency's make-up that helps to give a more complete picture in this look at the service agencies in Dallas. The data obtained on the annual budgets show that out of 53 agencies participating in the survey, 15 reported budgets of \$1,000,000-\$5,000,000. Another 13 agencies indicated an annual budget below \$250,000. The \$500,000-\$999,999 category had 10 agencies that indicated this as their budget range. Three agencies noted that their budget fell at the \$250,000-\$499,999 mark, and only seven agencies

reported a budget over \$5,000,000. Five agencies did not respond to this question and were not counted in this analysis. The findings show an even distribution on size of agency funds.

Table 2. Budget overview of participating agencies in the survey.

Agency Budget Size	Agency Type
(1) Less than \$250,000	13
(2) \$250,000 to \$499,999	3
(3) \$500,000 to \$999,999	10
(4) \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000	15
(5) Over \$5,000,000	7
Total (N) Reporting:	48

NOTE: Five surveys were not counted for failure to indicate budget. (Source: Author).

Client Population

One of the most important factors in this study of service utilization by Hispanics is to know the client demographics of the agencies in order to do an adequate comparison to the actual makeup of their boards and staff. The demographical information given rendered the following totals: the agencies reported a total of 96,243 white clients and 164,087 ethnic minority clients with 96,382 of those reported as Hispanic clients. Since three agencies reported a total number of client population served, but did

not provide the ethnicity breakdown as requested, a total of 18,549 clients were counted as unknown. In total, ethnic clients were the largest group of clients served in the past year in the City of Dallas by the agencies surveyed.

The United Way agencies provided the most complete information, with all but two of the agencies giving the client information as requested. Six of the thirteen private agencies did not provide the client information, and eight of the 13 governmental agencies did not either. The remaining agencies in these two groups that did respond did not provide very complete answers or information.

Eight of the United Way agencies reported that the largest group of clients they served was the white population with two agencies reporting 70-79% white clients, one agency was at 69% white clients, and another one was at 51% white clients. Nine of the United Way agencies indicated that they had served over 50% minority clients. Two agencies, one at 98% and the other at 97%, noted they had served mostly minority clients. One agency reports that 100% of its clients are ethnic minorities. Another four agencies had over 80% ethnic minority clients, and two agencies had just over a 50% ethnic client population. Four agencies indicated that they had over 50% Hispanic clients, with one of them at 92% Hispanic and another at 90% Hispanic client population. Two of the private agencies that

provided this information on their clients indicated that one agency had 97.5% ethnic minority clients with 90% of those reported as being Hispanic. The other agency reported 72% minority clients, with 40% of that total being Hispanic clients. Only one of the four governmental agencies reported an ethnic minority population over 50%, but that one agency actually served 100% ethnic minority clients with 94% of them Hispanic clients. Of the governmental agencies, two reported that the white population was the largest group served with one at 55% white clients and another one with 81% white client population. Data reveal that more agencies reported that ethnic minority clients are more often seen than the White clients. A total of 12 agencies noted that fact (Table 3).

Board Members

Another of the vital factors in this study is the size of the agency board of directors, which serves as a point of comparison in relation to the ethnic client population in determining if the best possible service was being provided. Data analysis on the size of the agency boards revealed that the average size for a board for the United Way agencies is 35 members, with 20.5 average size for governmental agencies, and 15 as the average size for the private agencies. Of the United Way agencies responding, eighth were in the average size group (16-30 employees), which represented the largest response. Of the governmental agencies

participating, five were in the very large size (over 75 employees) group. The private agencies for the most part had very small agencies (less than 5 employees) replying, with five of them. The United Way agencies on the average had the larger board of directors.

Table 3. Ethnicity composition of agencies' client population, boards, and staff.

Ethnic Group	Client Population		Board Members		Staff Members		Spanish Speaking Staff	
	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)
Hispanic	96,382	35.0	113	12.0	318	13.0	198	8.0
African American	33,026	12.8	143	15.5	596	24.0	2	.009
Native American	1,658	0.005	22	.02	5	.001	1	.004
Asian	1,948	.006	4	.004	14	.005	0	0.0
White	96,243	34.5	635	69.0	1301	52.0	13	0.06
Other	49,622	18.0	5	.005	267	11.0	0	0
Unknown				3.5				
Total	278,879	100.0%	922	100.0%	2,501	100.0%	214	100.0%

NOTE: The other category includes unspecified groups. The Hispanic Spanish-speakers denotes the bilingual-bicultural workers, which is only 8% of the total number of employees reported in the study. With other Spanish-speakers from other groups, the total of Spanish-speakers reported was only 9%. (Source: Author).

The data provide the following breakdown on the ethnicity of the board members: 143 were African American, 113 were Hispanic, 22 were Native American, 4 were Asian American, 635 were white, and 5 agencies

marked the "other" category. This rendered a total of 922 board members, with only 31% being ethnic minority group members. A total of 15 of all the participating agencies did not even provide the data on their boards, and again the United Way agencies provided the most complete information. This means that only 36 of all the 53 agencies provided any information on its board members. All but two of the agencies showed a majority of white board members. Seven of the United Way agencies had over 80% white board membership, and another six of them are over 50% white. The governmental agencies had six of the agencies at over 50% white board membership. White board membership at five of the private agencies ranged between 52% and 87%, and one agency had 100% white members. Only two agencies showed a large percentage of ethnic board members, one at 94% Hispanic, and the other at 100% Hispanic (Table 2).

Staff

Staff makeup is the other vital variable in this study of the service utilization of Hispanics at the various social service agencies in Dallas. A review of the staff makeup of the agencies responding shows that nine of the 20 United Way agencies reported that over 75% of their staff personnel are white, and another four agencies are at over 50% white staff members. Only six of these 20 agencies reported that they had over 50% ethnic minority staff members. The governmental agencies indicated that five

agencies had 50% or more ethnic minority staff members, and only two agencies had over 50% white staff members. Of the private agencies, only two of them report that 75% or more are white staff members. Six private agencies have over 50% ethnic staff membership with three of these noting they do not have any white staff members. In the "other" category of agencies, two agencies (church and for-profit) reported ethnic minority staff at over 50%, and two other agencies at 50% or more white staff members. Five agencies did not answer this question and were not counted. Four agencies reported a total number of staff members, but did not give any ethnicity breakdown. The combined total number of staff members is 11,316, and another 9,050 whose ethnicity is unknown since the information was not reported. This brings the grand total number of staff personnel to 20,366 (Table 2).

Agency Program Focus

Another pertinent factor in this study is knowledge of the agency's program area of focus to determine which type of service Hispanics are utilizing. From the list, respondents selected the items that best described their agency's program focus. More than one item was chosen on several instances where agencies had more than one particular type of program. Agencies with multiple services that offer a wide scope of programs was indicated by eight of them. The respondents chose from the following list

of 17 items: Abuse and Neglect, Adoption, Crisis Intervention, Disabled Services, Education, Emergency Assistance, Employment, Family Planning, Health Care, Information and Referral, Legal Service, Mental Health, Recreation, Refugee Services, Substance Abuse, and Victim Services. An "other" category was included to allow for an area not included already in the list. The area most often selected as a program focus of their agency that is offered in their community was information and referral, with 25 agencies noting this. The next area receiving the most votes was education, with 24 agencies selecting it. Health care was the third type of service being provided, with 16 agencies indicating that. Another 10 agencies noted employment as their program focus.

Relevant Information to the Concilio

As mentioned earlier in this study, the last five of the survey questions were of importance to the Dallas Concilio. This set of questions address affiliation with the Concilio, past Concilio services utilized by the responding agencies, and future program suggestions. The majority of the survey participants indicated that their agency is an affiliate member of the Dallas Concilio of Hispanic Service Organizations (24 agencies). Seven others reported that they, as staff persons representing their agency, are affiliate members of the Concilio. Eleven replied that there was no

affiliation at present. The last 11 agencies noted that they did not know if their agency was affiliated with the Concilio.

The Concilio services utilized by the service agencies in Dallas is of importance to the Concilio as they evaluate their past work and plan future improvements. Out of eight various services that the Concilio provides, three of those were selected as the most utilized by their agency in the past 12 months. The Concilio's network luncheon received the most utilization, with 32 agencies of the 53 participants in the survey. The next in line was the Dallas County Hispanic Health Coalition with 13 agencies utilizing this service. The Reaching Latinos Seminar was attended by six of the agencies responding. The survey allowed for input from the agencies on future program planning as the Concilio desired. The respondents were able to indicate which program topics they would like to see the Concilio offer from a list of nine topics. The most popular topic selected was Recruiting Hispanic Staff, with 32 agencies selecting it. Next in line, with 30 votes, was Interagency Collaborations. Outreach Techniques was selected by 24 agencies, and Working with the Hispanic Media got selected by 19 agencies. Several topics not on the list were suggested, which are: recruiting Hispanic volunteers, bringing Hispanic issues to agency attention, helping Hispanics grasp early childhood education and

English skills, fundraising, and helping to identify potential Hispanic board members.

These findings and the relevance they have in determining the affect of the agencies' board and staff make-ups on the low service utilization rates of Hispanic clients in Dallas are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the findings will be put into perspective as it relates to the underutilization of social services by Hispanics in the City of Dallas. Built-in barriers with the findings will be discussed. The participating agencies' board and staff make-up and its significance to their client population will be presented, as well as the reasons for those conclusions. Implications for practice and policy of the findings will be discussed.

Built In Barriers

The data presented in this study had some built in barriers that affected and limited the analysis. A major problem with this research survey study was that not all of the 53 participating agencies (19% return rate) provided complete information on the composition of their agency's board and staff membership. While some agencies provided complete information on client population, they failed to give it for either one or both of the board and staff make-up. Other agencies reported their total client population, but did not give the ethnicity breakdown of those

clients. This limited the ability to provide a more accurate picture of the service utilization of Hispanics in Dallas.

The inability to secure accurate data from the agencies is a problem when this type of research survey study is conducted. It does not provide a complete picture of the agencies, their board and staff make-up, and client population. It has limited the data analysis and interpretation of the actual service provided. The lack of complete cooperation with the Dallas Concilio demonstrated by the results of this mail survey makes it difficult for the Concilio to perform their role in an improved and effective manner. Inaccurate and incomplete information from the responding agencies limits formulating a total picture of the services presently being provided to the Hispanic community in Dallas. The Concilio works to assist local agencies in better servicing and meeting the needs of Hispanics. The provision of incomplete information brings to mind a couple of questions to ponder. What is the reason that some respondents appeared to be selective about what information they did release? Several provided client population with ethnicity breakdown, but not for the staff or board memberships. Perhaps some of the agencies felt threatened in providing this information to the Concilio, whom they know acts as an advocate for the Hispanic community. Their incomplete replies could be an indication that perhaps their agency is indeed not providing the best possible service to Hispanics

and are failing to hire more representatives of this ethnic group. Since agency management provided the information, it is unlikely that they are uninformed and did not have access to the information requested. Lack of informed respondents is a highly unlikely possibility.

Research Questions

The central research question about the relationship between the ethnic composition of the agency boards and staff to the utilization rates of Hispanics is the first to be discussed. The findings indicated that ethnic minorities are presently the largest group of clients utilizing services at the reporting agencies (35%), yet the Hispanic representation on the boards is only 12%, while White membership is at 69%. The Hispanic staff representation is only 13%, while White staff members compose 52% of the total number reported. This shows a significant difference of 57 percentile on board membership, and a 39 percentile difference on staff membership. A factor to note is the assumption that the ethnic group with the largest population within the area of the agency is likely to have the higher rate of service utilization based on simple level of need. Demographics for the City of Dallas show that Hispanics are the largest of the ethnic minority groups (21%) with 4,339,905 people reported in the 1990 census report (Dallas Concilio, 1991). The inference from this data is that since Hispanics are the largest ethnic group in Dallas, then this factor accounts for

having the higher rate of service utilization. However, the difference between the White (34.5%) client population and Hispanic (35.0%) client population is only .5%, and it is not a significant difference. Despite this fact, the ethnic makeup of the boards and staff reveals that the White representation is significantly larger than the Hispanic members. The number of White board and staff members does outweigh the number of Hispanic representation. The data further show that for the African American client population served (12.8%), their representation on the board (15.5%) is also larger than Hispanic clients, which is the largest group served. The difference between the African American and Hispanic representation in the staff membership is even larger. A discrepancy appears to exist. Of the ten agencies with over 50% White client population served, with some as high as over 80% white clients, all of them across the line have at least 50% or more White representation on the boards and staff. Yet out of the six agencies with over 50% Hispanic clients, only in two of the agencies reporting was Hispanic representation over 50%. At the other two agencies, 50% were White board members, and one agency did not provide the information. Hispanic staff representation at these five agencies was at least over 50%, with one not reporting this information. Of the remaining eleven agencies with at least 50% or more ethnic minority clients, board make-up was over 50% white at eight

of these agencies. The data show overwhelmingly that Whites are over-represented, even in the agencies predominantly Hispanic or other ethnic minority client population. Is the Hispanic representation on agency boards and staff in proportion to the Hispanic client population served? These findings clearly show that indeed equality does not exist for Hispanic representation on boards and staff in proportion to the predominantly Hispanic minority population.

Do the agencies with Spanish-speaking board and staff members show a greater frequency of service utilization by Hispanics? Only three of the agencies had over 90% Hispanic client population, which are the ones with the largest number of Hispanic clients. The Hispanic board and staff representation at these agencies did indicate it to be over 50% Hispanic. The agencies with over 50% Hispanic board and staff membership did show a greater Hispanic client population.

Implications

The implications possible from the data merit attention and discussion. The first worth mentioning is that Hispanic and other minority staff members are just not being hired in proportion to the ethnic population in the City of Dallas (see Table 4).

Table 4. The Hispanic population growth for the Dallas metroplex area as well as the state and country.

Area	(n)	(%)
City of Dallas	210,240	21%
Dallas County	315,630	17%
Tarrant/Dallas Counties	455,509	14%
Texas	4,339,905	19%
United States	22.4 million	21%

NOTE: Figures do not include the estimated 5.2% undercount of Hispanics. The U.S. Hispanic growth is 53%, five times as fast as the total population. (Source: 1990 U.S. Census).

As the numbers continue to climb for Hispanics, as well as for other ethnic groups, the implication is that the ethnic group members are just not getting hired in a pace to meet the growing needs of the culturally diverse population.

A great need for skilled personnel to effectively relate to the various ethnic groups is a demand not yet met (Berger, 1989). Historically, discrimination in the workplace has kept the ethnic client population at a disadvantage (Bendick et al., 1992), and as a result there is the low representation of Hispanics in social work and related fields (Callicutt & Lecca, 1983). Societal factors of discrimination and unfair treatment will continue

to affect the service delivery to ethnic groups in this country (Ables & Murphy, 1981). Meanwhile, the few Hispanic workers that do get hired get overloaded because of the Spanish language need and some even burn out (Medina & Reyes, 1976). The literature has shown that Hispanic people relate better, and probably more, to workers who are culturally similar to them. Ethnicity is considered a significant factor in counseling (Lopez et al., 1991) for Hispanics, and this factor should be considered by social service agencies. The service delivery to clients highly depends on the people that provide the services, and so the workers must be skilled in relating to the diverse client population (Federico, 1990) in order to provide quality service. Unfortunately, ethnic workers have been held down by the structural and psychological barriers at the workplace. Discrimination manifested in hiring practices, promotional opportunities, and salaries keeps needed Hispanic workers away (Healy, Haven & Chin, 1990).

The evident need for Spanish-speakers in social services has been documented in the literature review, and the concern expressed that monolingual Spanish-speakers just might not be best served by monolingual English-speakers (Torrey, 1972). Aguilar (1972) suggest that fluency in the client's language is a needed skill. Based on the demographic information already provided earlier in this study on the Hispanic

population explosion, another assumption possible is that more Hispanic workers are necessary (Barrera, 1978). Because of the facility with the language and relationship to the culture, bilingual-bicultural workers can provide quality service to the Hispanic clients (LeVine & Padilla, 1980). The survey results showed that only 8%, of the total number of workers reported that speak Spanish, are bilingual-bicultural. Obviously, an unmet need exist in the social service agencies in Dallas to effectively provide the better services that all clients deserve. Benito Juarez, the first president of Mexico said, "El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz," the respect of others' rights brings peace. While English remains the language of this nation, the need for Spanish-speakers for the sake of those who cannot speak English must be met (Cejas & Feinberg, 1987).

Recommendations

If the service utilization rates for Hispanics are to improve, then serious and active attention must be given to the issues and barriers addressed in this study. The barriers presented throughout the study require solutions if in the near future Hispanics are to receive adequate services that do meet their needs. The passiveness of the past will not do any longer. Several recommendations come to mind as this study is concluded:

- 1) A need for Hispanic bilingual-bicultural social workers (LeVine & Padilla, 1980) must receive serious consideration by administrators in service agencies. If quality service is to be provided for this diverse group, then both language and culture needs must be met.
- 2) Policies about hiring procedures (Lewis et al., 1991) especially need to be studied and revised. Closer supervision that ensures that all applicants get equal treatment, and that job openings are announced with Hispanic organizations is necessary.
- 3) For workers that are not Hispanic, cultural training sessions by the Dallas Concilio or other groups that are equipped to do it effectively is a strong recommendation. A special sensitivity to those of different cultures is a must, since different cultures define problems in different ways (Hepworth & Larsen, 1990). Training will help to a degree. However, an awareness of one's prejudices and erroneous stereotypes as social workers is required to truly provide unbiased services to clients (Schwartz, 1989).
- 4) While education has not been viewed as that essential by Hispanics that immigrate from Latin countries where the established hierarchy allows little upward mobility (Mujica, 1987), it does explain some of the high dropout rate for this group. Despite that school dropout rates remain high for Hispanics and that less than one in ten graduates from college (NCLR, 1992), real and sustained efforts must be made from the schools of

social work to recruit and retain Hispanics. Locally in the metroplex at the University of Texas at Arlington, numbers show that only 3.57% in the bachelor program and 5.99% in the masters in social work program were Hispanic for this past year (University of Texas at Arlington, 1992). This is only one example that strongly indicates that the schools need to do more than what is being done, especially in an area that demographics show Hispanics as the largest ethnic minority. A real need exists for more Hispanic social workers, and a key is the schools and efforts that are or are not made by them.

5) The presence of ethnic minority social workers is vital (Berger, 1989). Retention issues must be resolved for Hispanics if their presence is to be maintained. Issues such as overloading of work and unrealistic caseloads (Medina & Reyes, 1976) must be corrected. Employment careers of the minority social workers need attention (Berger, 1989).

6) A final recommendation is in the area of research about Hispanics. Research on the effects of ethnicity on worker-client relationships is needed, since previous research has been inconsistent. Research on the effects of language and the effects of working with the aid of non-professionals who are utilized as interpreters is needed. Research about Hispanics should utilize other Hispanics as the ones directly involved in the

process, such as the interviewers. Research in general regarding Hispanics is needed since sufficient empirical evidence does not exist.

APPENDIX

DALLAS CONCILIO OF HISPANIC SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
Member Survey

Please describe your agency by checking the appropriate boxes in items 1-4 below.

1. What category best describes your agency?

- United Way Affiliate
 Governmental Entity
 State/Federal Supported
 Private/Non-profit/Non-United Way
 Other: _____

2. How many people are employed by your agency?

- Less than 5 people
 5 -15 people
 16-30 people
 31-50 people
 51-75 people
 Over 75 people

3. What is the approximate size of your agency annual budget?

- Less than \$250,000
 \$250,001 to \$499,999
 \$500,000 to \$999,999
 \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000
 Over \$5,000,000

4. Please classify your agency by program focus, checking all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abuse and Neglect | <input type="checkbox"/> Information & Referral |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Intervention | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disabled Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Victim Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care | |

5. Description of agency board members, employees, and clients. Please indicate how many are in each category by inserting appropriate number in the blank.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: _____ (total)

<u>Ethnicity/Race</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Bilingual Spanish</u>
African American	_____	_____	_____
Hispanic	_____	_____	_____
Native American	_____	_____	_____
Asian American	_____	_____	_____
White	_____	_____	_____
Other (specify)	_____	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____	_____

SALARIED EMPLOYEES: _____ (total)

<u>Ethnicity/Race</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Bilingual Spanish</u>	<u>Management</u>
African American	_____	_____	_____	_____
Hispanic	_____	_____	_____	_____
Native American	_____	_____	_____	_____
Asian American	_____	_____	_____	_____
White	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other (specify)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____	_____	_____

(over, please)

AGENCY UNDUPLICATED CLIENTS: _____ (total)

<u>Ethnicity/Race</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Bilingual Spanish</u>
African American	_____	_____	_____
Hispanic	_____	_____	_____
Native American	_____	_____	_____
Asian American	_____	_____	_____
White	_____	_____	_____
Other (specify)	_____	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____	_____

6. Is your agency, or is a member of your staff, a Network Affiliate of the Dallas Concilio?

- Yes, agency is affiliate No affiliation
 Yes, staff is affiliate Don't know

7. Which programs or services of the Concilio have you or your staff utilized in the past 12 months?

- Have not used services Reaching Latinos Seminar
 Dallas Co. Hispanic Health Coalition Use of Meeting Facility
 Network Luncheon Translations
 Hispanic HIV Coalition Technical Assistance
 Other: _____

8. Please indicate program topics you would like to see the Concilio offer in the future (check all that apply).

- Research/Fund Clearinghouse Working with Hispanic Media
 Outreach Techniques Recruiting Hispanic Staff
 Professional Presentations Youth Development
 Interagency Collaborations Grass Roots Advocacy
 Board Training for Hispanics Other: _____

9. What do you like most about Concilio programming?

10. What do you like least?

THANK YOU --MIL GRACIAS--FOR YOUR TIME AND YOUR ASSISTANCE!

Please mail your completed survey form by June 11---or bring it with you to our OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION from 3-6 p.m. that day!



Dallas Concilio of
Hispanic Service Organizations
2914 Swiss Ave.
Dallas, TX 75204

* please tape survey form here *

75204-5245 204



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