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Nuestra identidad y experiencias (our identity and experiences): ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at a Hispanic-Serving Institution

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Nuestra identidad y experiencias (Our identity and experiences): Ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at a Hispanic-Serving Institution

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For the Major Program

DEDICATION

Para mi sobrina Adriana

Te quiero siempre

Tio Juan

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ABSTRACT

Higher education scholars have examined Latino/a student experiences and ethnic identity, yet there is no research describing the ethnic identity development of members of a Latino fraternity at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand how membership in a Latino fraternity at a HSI enhanced members' ethnic identity development. Utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological theory of human development as the guiding framework for this study, six themes emerged which enhanced members' ethnic identity development: family, the HSI campus, language, involvement, other Greeks and Greeks affairs policies, and gender. Implications for student affairs and higher education administrators at HSIs and non-HSIs and for Latino parents and families are discussed. In addition, recommendations for future research are explored.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> *Today it is important to understand "heritage" as dynamic and evolving, and no power is more compelling in that evolution than learning. Ensuring that Hispanics have opportunities as students, faculty, and administrators is central to the continued richness of Hispanic heritage. The core value of education cannot be stressed enough.*
>
> Dr. Eduardo Padron, President, Miami Dade College

In 2003, the U.S. Census Bureau announced that Hispanics[1] are the nation's largest minority group. As of July 2004, the Hispanic population constituted 41.3 million people—14% of the nation's population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Guzman (2001) reported that Hispanics are the youngest and fastest growing population, with an increase of 58% over the last 10 years, compared to just 13% for the rest of the U.S. population. Mexicans are the largest Hispanic group at 64% of the total Hispanic population, followed by Puerto Ricans at 10%, and Cubans, Dominicans, and Salvadorans at 3% each; the remainder consists of Hispanics from Central and South America (U.S. Census Bureau).

Hispanics are an extremely diverse group. They can be a mixture of races: Black, Asian, Indigenous, or White/European (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; J. C. Hernandez & Lopez, 2004); thus, it is important to note that they are labeled as an ethnic group and not a racial group. "Race is used by social scientists to refer to distinctions drawn from physical appearance (skin color, eye shape, physiognomy), and ethnicity is used to refer to distinctions based on national origin, language, religion, food, and other cultural markers" (Frable, 1997, p. 145). In 2005, the Pew Hispanic Center released *Hispanic Trends: A People in Motion* in which they defined Hispanic identity:

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[1] The terms Hispanic and Latino/a will be used interchangeably throughout this study.

> The Hispanic population is not a racial group, nor does it share a common language or culture. The single overarching trait that all Hispanics share in common is a connection by ancestry to Latin America. This population, in fact, traces it origins to many countries with varied cultures, and while some Latinos have family histories in the United States that date back centuries, others are recent arrivals. Some speak only English, others only Spanish, and many are bilingual. Given this diversity, it is not easy to define an identity, belief system and set of values that all Hispanics share. (p. 3)

The center's findings validated previous research (S. Brown, Santiago, & Lopez, 2003; Casas & Pytluk, 1995; Chilman, 1993; Ryan & Kanellos, 1995) on Latino/a identity. It is also important to note that Latinos/as represent a variety of social classes and speak different dialects of Spanish, Portuguese, and the indigenous languages of Latin America.

Although Latinos/as are the largest minority group in the United States, they lag behind other major racial and ethnic groups in higher education (Ramirez, 2002, slide 14; Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2002). "Hispanics currently constitute 17.5% (4.7 million) of the traditional college-age population (18- to 24-year-olds), yet they make up less than 10% (1.5 million) of the total student enrollment in higher education in the United States" (Benitez & DeAro, 2004, p. 39). Fry (2002) found that just 1.7% of first-time, full-time students in American public universities were Latino/a. Llagas and Snyder (2003) found that a larger proportion of Hispanics now attend college than 20 years ago. In 2000, Hispanics represented 22% of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college and universities, up from 16% in 1980 (Llagas & Snyder): "The increase in Hispanic enrollment is being driven by both population growth

and by increasing proportions of the population enrolling in colleges and universities" (p. 96).

Although increasing numbers of Hispanics are enrolled in college, they are disproportionately enrolled in two-year colleges (Llagas & Snyder, 2003). The community college is the major pipeline into higher education for many Hispanics (Nora & Rendon, 1996). Nearly 60% of all Hispanic students are enrolled in community colleges (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). The highest proportion of Latinos/as attending community college are of Mexican origin (Fry, 2002), which parallels this group being the largest Hispanic group in the nation. Many Hispanics choose community colleges because of their open admissions policies, close proximity to home, and low tuition (Fry, 2002). The high number of Hispanics enrolled in community colleges is reflected in their attainment of associate degrees. In 1999-2000, Hispanics earned 9% of all associate degrees (Llagas & Snyder). In addition, Hispanics attending Hispanic-serving community colleges accounted for 42% of the enrollment in these institutions compared to the enrollment of other racial/ethnic groups, including 10% African American, 9% Asian American, 1% Native American, and 30% White (Benitez & DeAro, 2004). Unfortunately, "the broad pathway to community colleges followed by Latinos leads to a reduced number of bachelor's degrees" (Fry, 2004, p. 11).

However, Hispanic enrollment and graduation at 4-year colleges and universities is increasing across the nation. Between 1990–1991 and 1999–2000, the number of bachelor's degrees awarded to Hispanics increased by 105%, faster than any other racial/ethnic group (Llagas & Snyder, 2003). In 2002, Hispanics earned 11.1% of bachelor's degrees. The ethnic group breakdown was: Cuban 18.6%, Central and South American 17.3%, Puerto Rican

14.0%, and Mexican 7.6% (Ramirez, 2002, slide 17). In 1999–2000, Hispanics earned 39% of all bachelor's degrees at Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) in the U.S. (Stearns, Watanabe, & Snyder, 2002). As the numbers of Hispanics attending 4-year colleges and universities increase, so will their graduation rates.

With such increases of Hispanics in higher education, HSIs have become an important option for Hispanic students entering higher education. HSIs are defined by the federal government as institutions with at least 25% Hispanic undergraduate full-time enrollment (FTE) with at least 50% of Hispanic FTE students coming from low-income backgrounds (Merisotis & Redmond, 2003). The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities ([HACU]; 2005a) defined an HSI as "a non-profit, accredited college, university or system, where total Hispanic student enrollment constitutes a minimum of 25% of the total enrollment, including full-time and part-time students whether at the undergraduate or graduate level, or both" (¶ 1). Using the federal government's definition of HSIs, currently there are 242 HSIs located in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. HSIs include both public and private, 2-year and 4-year institutions.

A majority of HSIs are located in regions of the U.S. where there are substantial Hispanic populations, including California, Texas, New Mexico, New York, and Florida. According to Stearns et al. (2002), the total fall enrollment at public HSIs in 1999 was 1,245,772. Hispanic students who attend HSIs earn 45% of the associate's degrees and nearly half of all bachelor's degrees awarded to Hispanic students nationwide (White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans et al., 1998). "As Hispanic enrollment grows, Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs) play an increasingly important role in providing Hispanic Americans with access to college education" (Stearns et al., p. 1).

Student services at HSIs (as at all institutions) play a vital role in the social, cultural, and personal development of students. The college experience helps shape people into more well-rounded individuals, both personally and socially. Services such as academic advising, personal and career counseling, student activities, Greek affairs, and multicultural affairs enhance student learning and development. In addition, "the impact of the college experience on students is increased when they are more actively engaged in various aspects of college life" (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1991, p. 5).

Astin (1984) stated, "The greater the student's involvement in college, the greater will be the amount of student learning and personal development" (p. 307). Latino/a college students are involved on campuses in a variety of ways. Whether they serve in student government or participate as admissions ambassadors, orientation leaders, or even as athletes, Latino/a college students are engaged in all aspects of campus life. An additional way in which Latino/a college students become involved is by participation in Greek life, specifically Latino/a Greek letter organizations (LGLOs).

Problem

Minimal research has been done on Latino/a college students' participation in LGLOs. The research that has been done on LGLOs has focused on the history of such organizations (Kimbrough, 2003; Mejia, 1994; Muñoz & Guardia, in press; Rodriguez, 1995), their growth (Castro, 2004; Kimbrough, 2002), and how they empower and provide academic and social support (Adam, 1999; Helem, 2004; Reyes, 1997). Only one study has focused on the impact of participation in a LGLO on ethnic identity. Nuñez's (2004) master's thesis explored how involvement in a Latina-based sorority contributed to members' ethnic identity development. She found that members gained a heightened sense of ethnic identity

through their participation in the Latina-based sorority at a predominantly White university in the Midwest.

This research study focuses on a Latino fraternity at an HSI located in the Southeast. No research has been conducted on how participation in a Latino fraternity at an HSI contributes to ethnic identity development. This phenomenon warrants further investigation using qualitative research in order to make meaning of the experiences that enhance the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members.

Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to understand how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development.

Research Questions

This study fills a void in the research on Latino/a college student ethnic identity development. As such, the following research questions serve to guide this study:

1. How is ethnic identity defined within the Latino fraternity?
2. In what ways does membership in a Latino fraternity at a Hispanic-serving institution enhance members' ethnic identity development?
3. In what ways does attending a Hispanic-serving institution enhance the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members beyond the contributions made by membership in the Latino fraternity?

Rationale

My interest in the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at an HSI stems from my professional and personal experiences. Professionally, before enrolling in the doctoral program at Iowa State University, I was the Assistant Director for Hispanic Student

Affairs in the Office of Diversity Programs and Services at George Mason University (GMU) in Fairfax, Virginia. In that position, I planned the annual Hispanic Heritage Month and American Indian Heritage Month festivities; created the university's first annual Latino student leadership conference, Organizations for Hispanic Leadership in America (OHLA); and advised Hispanic/Latino/a students and organizations.

In that position I worked with the only Latino fraternity and Latina sorority on campus. Although I was not the advisor to either organization, I was intrigued by the members' commitment and dedication to their respective organizations. It was clear that the Latino/a culture played an important part in the cultural, social, and educational programs they contributed to the GMU campus. In addition, members of these organizations constantly discussed how being a member of the Latino/a fraternity and sorority affirmed their ethnic identities as Latinos/as. As such, through my working relationships with members of these organizations, I found that members were empowered and confident in their Latino/a ethnic identities.

Personally, I must acknowledge my insider/outsider status as a researcher for this study. I am a member of the Latino/a community, specifically Cuban. I was raised in South Florida and attended an HSI community college. As a member of the Latino/a community, my "insider status" may prove beneficial in this study. I am also a member of a Latino fraternity, Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity, Inc. It is important to note that the Latino fraternity that I studied is not the same organization to which I belong. I acknowledge that would be a conflict of interest. Because I joined the fraternity as a doctoral student, findings from this study may assist me in understanding the ethnic identity development that being a member of a Latino fraternity provides to undergraduates.

There are various reasons why this study is important. First, there has been minimal research conducted on the ethnic identity development of members participating in LGLOs. As more and more Latino/a college students join LGLOs, it is important to understand how their ethnic identity develops while participating in a LGLO, specifically a Latino fraternity. Second, this initial attempt at studying the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members may help prospective male students who are considering joining a Latino fraternity. Findings from this study may assist them in deciding if a Latino fraternity is right for them. Finally, this study took place at an HSI. Because previous research on Latino/a college student ethnic identity development has taken place at predominantly White institutions and community colleges (Nuñez, 2004; Schneider & Ward, 2003; V. Torres, 1999, 2003; V. Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004), a study at an HSI may open the doors for additional studies of other Latino/a or non-Latino/a students' ethnic identity development at HSIs.

Significance of the Study

V. Torres (2003) suggested that there is more research to be done on Latino/a college student ethnic identity development with regard to different contexts and social environments. As noted earlier, most research on Latino/a college student ethnic identity development has been conducted at predominantly White institutions and community colleges. This study is important because it focuses on a combination of contexts with regard to Latino/a college students: a Latino fraternity nested within an HSI. As noted earlier, much of the research that has been conducted on LGLOs has focused on history, growth, and academic and social support. No study has yet explored how participation in a Latino fraternity has contributed to the ethnic identity development of its members. An HSI provided an additional dynamic in the study of ethnic identity development of Latino

fraternity members. According to Stearns et al. (2002), the total fall enrollment at public HSIs in 1999 was 1,245,772. With such large numbers of Hispanics attending HSIs, this study sheds light on Latino/a college student ethnic identity development in this setting.

I hope that the information gained from this study also will assist student affairs professionals when working with LGLOs, specifically Latino fraternities. Although all Latino fraternities are not the same, the results from this study may assist student affairs professionals as they advise and work with Latino fraternities on their respective campuses.

Theoretical Perspective

Various studies have addressed Latino/a college students and ethnic identity (Schneider & Ward, 2003; V, Torres, 2003; V. Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004). No studies of which I am aware have focused on the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members and the relation of this aspect to the campus environment. Utilizing Bronfenbrenner's (2005b) bioecological theory of human development as the guiding framework for this study, I propose a model that focuses on the Latino fraternity members and the HSI campus environment. Bronfenbrenner (2005a) defined the bioecological theory of human development as

> the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation, throughout the life course, between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by the relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded. (p. 107)

Bronfenbrenner's (2005b) bioecological theory of human development consists of five systems (levels) that describe the interactions between human beings and their

environment. He identified the systems as microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. In her study of mixed-race college students' identities, Renn (2003) utilized Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory of human development and described how through each of the first four levels an "individual receives messages about identity, developmental forces and challenges, and resources for addressing those challenges" (p. 388). The following are descriptions of the five layers and how they relate to the framework of this study.

Microsystem

The microsystem "is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical and material features and containing other persons with distinctive characteristics of temperament, personality, and systems of belief" (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b, p. 148). Renn (2003) noted that "microsystems for college students may include classrooms, laboratories, athletic teams, living situations, friendship groups, student organizations, on and off campus jobs, families or origin, partners or spouses, and possibly children" (p. 388). For the purposes of this study, microsystems for Latino fraternity members include the Latino fraternity, their families, their on- and off-campus jobs, and the HSI campus environment.

Mesosystem

Bronfenbrenner (2005a) described how the mesosystem "comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person . . . in other words, a mesosystem is a system of microsystems" (p. 148). Utilizing the microsystems identified in this study, mesosystem interrelations include the Latino fraternity and the HSI

campus environment and the Latino fraternity and the families of fraternity members. Renn (2003) provided an example with regard to Latino ethnic identity:

> The messages a student receives about what it means to be "really Latino" in one microsystem (a friendship group of other Latinos) may be supported or challenged by messages from another microsystem (the professor of his class on the cultures of Latin America). (p. 389)

Renn went on to describe how other messages may come from family or fraternity brothers. For example, if a member of a Latino fraternity was raised in a family environment in which his Hispanic/Latino identity was affirmed or not affirmed, does participation in a Latino fraternity assist in his ethnic identity development?

Exosystem

Exosystems are settings in which the individual does not actively participate but in which events occur that influence an individual's development. In her study of the identities of mixed-race college students, Renn (2003) described the following exosystems that had the potential to impact mixed-race college students: academic major, financial aid awarded, and parents' income. Prior to this study, various exosystems were hypothesized to contribute to the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at an HSI, including financial aid awarded, university and Office of Greek Affairs policies, and parents' income (as most members of the Latino fraternity live with their parents).

Macrosystem

The subculture and culture of which the individual is a part is the macrosystem. Bronfenbrenner (2005a) defined the macrosystem as consisting of

> the overarching pattern of micro, meso, and exosystems characteristic of a given culture, culture, subculture, or other broader social context, with particular reference to the developmentally instigative belief systems, resources, hazards, lifestyles, opportunity structures, life course options, and patterns of social interchange that are embedded in each of these systems. The macrosystem may be thought of as a societal blueprint for a particular culture, subculture, or other broader social context. (pp. 149-150)

Some examples of macrosystems described by Bronfenbrenner (2005a) include race/ethnicity, social class, and region (urban vs. rural). As such, Bronfenbrenner's examples are applicable to this study on how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development. In the case of Hispanic/Latinos, ethnicity would be more important than race given that, as previously noted, they can be of any race. Ethnicity, social class, and the region where the HSI is located were considered as potentially making important contributions to members' ethnic identity development.

Chronosystem

The chronosystem is the final system in Bronfenbrenner's (1995) bioecological theory of human development. As he described it:

> The individual's own developmental life course is seen as embedded in and powerfully shaped by conditions and events occurring during the historical period through which the person lives. . . . A major factor influencing the course and outcome of human development is the timing of biological and social transitions as they relate to the culturally defined age, role expectations, and opportunities occurring throughout the life course. (p. 641)

In the chronosystem, changes over time may influence the development of individuals and the previous systems (micro-, meso-, exo-, and mesosystems) in which they are embedded. Because Latino fraternity members may share past experiences and events that have influenced their ethnic identity development, the chronosystem was considered in this study.

Figure 1.1 provides an illustration of Bronfenbrenner's (2005a) bioecological model of human development and the systems identified in his theoretical framework. For purposes of this study, I have identified and labeled the various systems that I initially thought might enhance the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at an HSI.

Tentative Presuppositions

As required in qualitative research, I must be up front about my assumptions as I entered this study. My first assumption was that participation in a Latino fraternity contributes to ethnic identity development. Through activities and programs associated with participating in a Latino fraternity, including the pledge process, rituals and ceremonies, social and cultural activities, and community service, members gain a strong sense of their ethnic identity. Second, I believed the HSI campus environment further contributes to members' ethnic identity development. Because the Latino fraternity members I studied were on a campus where 59% of the student population identifies as Hispanic, I assumed that the campus community, culture, and Spanish language further aids in members' ethnic identity development. Third, I guessed that parents' income and financial aid awarded might impact participation within the Latino fraternity and enrollment at the HSI. Fourth, I thought that the participants' relationships with family and on- and off-campus jobs might assist in ethnic identity development; specifically, that the messages members receive from family and co-workers could assist with their ethnic identity development. Finally, I assumed that past

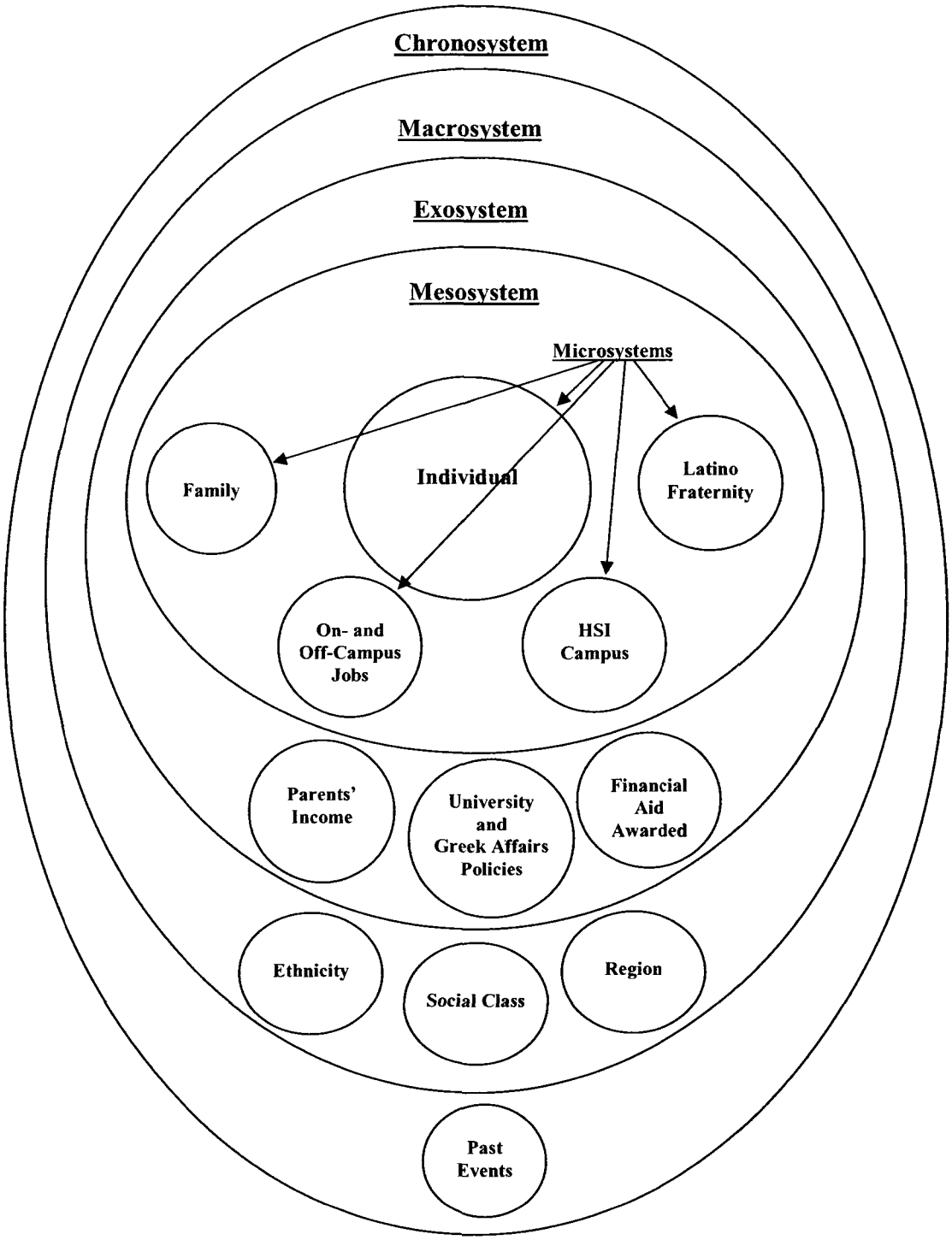

Figure 1.1. Theoretical Model Based on Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory of Human Development informed by Renn's (2003) figure

experiences and events might influence Latino fraternity members' ethnic identity development.

Context of the Study

This study took place at an HSI located in the Southeast. For the purpose of this study, the HSI will be referred to as Latino University. In 2004, Latino University enrolled 35,061 students. The racial/ethnic breakdown was: 59.5% Hispanic, 14% Black, 4% Asian, and 21.1% White. Approximately 8.8% of enrollment comprised international students.

The Latino fraternity is the only one of its kind at Latino University. In addition to the Latino fraternity, there are six Hispanic/Latino/a student organizations on campus. The Latino fraternity is a member of the campus Interfraternity Council (IFC), which acts as the supervising body for all North American Interfraternity Conference recognized fraternities at Latino University.

Definitions

This section defines various key terms that are used throughout the study.

Hispanic/Latino/a: There have been many debates surrounding the terms Hispanic and Latino/a. Scholars have used both terms in literature. Castellanos and Jones (2003) discussed the difference:

> Both terms are used interchangeably. Many groups reject the term Hispanic because it is too broad and was given to the Latino group without consent. In fact, many have argued in history that the term Hispanic does not acknowledge the heterogeneity in the Latino group. On the other hand, in certain regions, you will find Latinos who prefer the term Hispanic. However, there is a group of Latino college students who prefer the term Latino over

> Hispanic indicating that Latino is even more sensitive to people with mestizo background and not Spanish heritage. The term most used by government agencies and the media is Hispanic. (p. xx)

For the purposes of this study, the terms Hispanic and Latino/a are used interchangeably to refer to Americans who trace their ancestry to Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain, the countries of Central and South America, and other Spanish cultures regardless of race.

Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI): Defined by the federal government as institutions with (a) at least 25% Hispanic undergraduate FTE, and (b) at least 50% of Hispanic FTE students coming from low-income backgrounds (Merisotis & Redmond, 2003). HACU (2005a) defined an HSI as "a non-profit, accredited college, university or system, where total Hispanic student enrollment constitutes a minimum of 25% of the total enrollment, including full-time and part-time students whether at the undergraduate or graduate level, or both" (¶ 1). The definition that best fits this study is Merisotis and Redmond's as it is in line with the federal legislation authorizing Title V at the HSI where the study took place.

Ethnic Identity: "A construct or set of self-ideas about one's own ethnic group membership" (Bernal, Knight, Ocampo, Garza, & Cota, 1993, p. 33). As noted earlier, Hispanics/Latinos/as are an ethnic group and not a racial group. "Ethnicity refers to an organization of people with their cultural, racial, and linguistic characteristics, whereas race refers to inherited physical qualities" (Bernal et al., p. 34).

Ethnic Identity Formation: "The way in which individuals come to understand the implications of their ethnicity and make decisions about its role in their lives, regardless of the extent of their ethnic environment" (Phinney, 1993, p. 64).

Latino Fraternity: Refers to the organization with which I worked throughout the study. Omega Beta (ΩB) was used as the pseudonym for the fraternity in this study. The fraternity was founded by Latino men and focuses on Latino unity, cultural awareness, brotherhood, community service, and Latino empowerment (Omega Beta, 2001).

The following terminology is commonly used by members of LGLOs:

Brother/Hermano: A term used by members of a Latino fraternity when referring to one another.

Crossing: The act of completing an educational process and the ceremony in which one becomes a member of an African-American or Latino/a fraternity or sorority. Kimbrough (2003) defined it as "the symbolic process of moving from the status as a non-Greek student into the ranks of a brotherhood or sisterhood [or in the case of LGLOs, the *hermandad*]" (p. 119).

Educational Process: The process in which an initiated member learns the history, values, activities, and traditions about a respective Latino/a fraternity or sorority. The educational process is usually completed in one academic semester or less. Also referred to as membership intake.

Hermandades: The term used by most LGLOs to refer to themselves instead of fraternities and sororities. In essence, it means brotherhoods and sisterhoods (Kimbrough, 2003; Rodriguez, 1995).

Informational: A prescheduled meeting for prospective and interested men and women to learn more about a specific Latino/a fraternity or sorority.

Interest: A student interested in seeking membership in an African-American or Latino/a fraternity or sorority.

Line: What a new member class is often called in an African-American or Latino/a fraternity or sorority.

Line Name: A word or phrase used to describe a specific chapter member (i.e., "Varadero," "Genesis," "Latino Dinamico"; Sanchez, Freni, & Peralta, 2005a).

Set: A prescheduled date and time in which a line of pledges meet with the brothers or sisters of a Latino/a fraternity or sorority to present projects they have worked on during their educational process (Sanchez et al., 2005a).

Summary

In this study, I inform student affairs professionals and educators about ways in which membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development. A theoretical model identifying several factors based on Bronfenbrenner's (1995) bioecological theory of human development provides insight into the ethnic identity development of members of a Latino fraternity. Furthermore, this study helps to identify if attending an HSI enhances the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members beyond the contributions made by membership in the Latino fraternity.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the literature pertaining to Latino/a college students and ethnic identity development. The chapter begins with a review of Latinos/as in the United States, including demographic information, the role of the Spanish language in their lives, the importance of family, and the terminology used to identify members of this

community. Then, a review of the literature pertaining to Latino/a college students is offered. Next, Latino fraternities and their culture, customs, and traditions are discussed. A review of HSIs considers their historical background and their importance to the Latino/a college student community. Finally, a comprehensive review of three widely used models of Latino/a college student development is provided, including Phinney's (1993) model of ethnic identity development, V. Torres's (1999) bicultural orientation model, and Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) Latino/a racial identity orientation model.

In chapter 3, I describe in detail the methodological approach used in this study, philosophical assumptions, research approach, participants, data collection procedures, research with Hispanics/Latinos/as, data analysis procedures, trustworthiness criteria, delimitations, and limitations.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to presenting and discussing the profiles of the seven men who participated in this study. These profiles allow the reader to gain a deeper understanding of who these men are as individuals, as students, and as members of Omega Beta Latino fraternity. Each of the seven men also chose various orientations from Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) racial identity orientation model that best described where they viewed their identities at this point in their lives. Their choices are presented and discussed in chapter 4.

The findings from this study are presented in chapter 5. Six themes emerged that played a significant role in the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at an HSI: family, the HSI campus, other Greeks and Greeks Affairs policies, gender, language, and involvement. Each theme is discussed in depth and is presented in the context of the five systems within the theoretical model that guided this study.

In chapter 6, I discuss the findings from the study and provide connection to the related literature. In this chapter, I also discuss implications for student affairs professionals, such as deans of students, campus psychologists, and campus diversity professionals, as they advise and/or work with Latino fraternities on their respective campuses. In addition, the implications can also assist Latino/a parents and families as they begin to understand how and why their sons, brothers, and cousins have joined Latino fraternities. I also provide recommendations for HSIs (and non-HSIs) to better provide policies and programs for LGLOs, specifically Latino fraternities. Finally, I offer recommendations for future research and describe my personal reflections regarding my journey throughout this research study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focuses on the review of literature pertaining to Latino/a college students, ethnic identity development, HSIs, and Latino fraternities. The literature review provides a framework for establishing the importance of this study and for comparison of results and findings from previous related research (Creswell, 2003). Marshall and Rossman (1995) noted that the literature review serves four broad functions. First, it establishes the underlying assumptions of the research questions. Second, it demonstrates that the researcher is informed about related research and the traditions surrounding the study. Third, it indicates that the researcher has identified gaps in previous research and describes how the proposed study will fill a need. Fourth, the literature review aids in clarifying the research questions.

For the purposes of this study, I provide a review of the literature that I have identified examines factors that influence Latino fraternity members' ethnic identity development. The review also focuses on various micro-and macrosystems of the theoretical model based on Bronfenbrenner's (2005a) bioecological theory of human development that was used in this study. First, I summarize information about Latinos/as in the United States. Then, I review the literature relevant to Latino/a college students. Next, I discuss literature on HSIs. Then, I examine Latino fraternities and their culture, customs, and traditions. Finally, I provide a comprehensive review of three models that are widely used to examine Latino/a college student development, including Phinney's (1993) model of ethnic identity development, V. Torres's (1999) bicultural orientation model, and Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) Latino/a racial identity orientation model.

Latinos/as in the United States

As noted in chapter 1, Latinos/as are the nation's largest minority group. As of July 2004, the Hispanic population constituted 41.3 million people—14% of the nation's population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). In 2002, Ramirez and de la Cruz reported that one in eight people in the U.S. were of Hispanic origin. Mexicans are the largest Hispanic group at 64% of the total Hispanic population, followed by Puerto Ricans at 10%, and Cubans, Dominicans, and Salvadorans at 3% each; the remainder consists of Hispanics from Central and South America (U.S. Census Bureau).

The U.S. Census Bureau (2005) found that one of every two people added to the nation's population between July 1, 2003 and July 1, 2004 were Hispanic. The U.S. Census Bureau projected that by July 1, 2050, Hispanics will constitute 102.6 million (24%) of the nation's total population. There are 13 states in which Hispanics represent at least one half million residents: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington. Forty-three percent of New Mexico's residents are Hispanic, the highest of any state. California and Texas follow at 35% each.

More and more foreign-born Hispanics are immigrating to America on a daily basis. Over 10 million foreign-born Hispanics in the U.S. are from Mexico, which is by far more than from any other Latin American country or any other country in the world (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). Other Latin American countries of birth that contribute large numbers of Hispanics in the U.S. are El Salvador (937,000), Cuba (925,000), the Dominican Republic (688,000), Guatemala (590,000), and Colombia (500,000; U.S. Census Bureau).

The Role of Language

Language is an important part of the Latino/a culture. The Spanish language is spoken by 31 million U.S residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). The U.S. Census Bureau found that Spanish speakers constituted a ratio of more than 1 in 10 U.S. household residents. However, the U.S. Bureau did not take into account Hispanic residents who speak Spanglish. Spanglish is a combination of English and Spanish and is spoken by most second and third generation Hispanics living in the United States. It emerges when one switches from Spanish to English (and vice versa) within the same sentence. Spanglish is considered to be poor English, but for Latinos/as, it is a form of cultural resistance (Padilla, 1997) As Padilla eloquently stated:

> To take English words and incorporate them into Spanglish vernacular speech, to combine the two languages into the same idiom, is a direct defiance of the rules of standard English, a defiance of the dominant culture, a moment of liberation. (p. 26)

Moreover, Padilla added, "We, as Latino/a people have created an everyday language by transforming the language of the dominant culture—almost ridiculing standard English—into a vernacular speech intelligible only to us" (p. 27). Language is an important part of bonding for many ethnic and racial groups. Howard (2000) described language as people producing identity through their talk. For Latinos/as, Spanish and Spanglish are no exception. Both languages keep many Latinos connected to their culture and ethnic identity. Members of Omega Beta spoke in Spanish and Spanglish and described how the fraternity enhanced their ethnic identity development.

The Importance of Family

An additional important part of the Latino/a culture is family. Familism (or *familismo*) refers to "the importance of the extended family as a reference group and as

providers of social support" (Tatum, 1997, p. 137) and plays a huge role not only in ethnic identification, but also in the lives of Latino/a students. The importance of familial influences on Latino/a college students' ethnic identity development has been documented in higher education literature (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). More recently, V. Torres (2004b) conducted a qualitative study to explore how Latino/a families influence the ethnic identity development of first-year Latino/a students. The study included 83 self-identified Latino/a first-year students representing nine countries of origin (Cuba, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela) and seven institutions, including two community colleges, three urban universities, and two private colleges. Of importance was that four of the institutions are HSIs. V. Torres found that students' language, label, and self-identification were influenced by their parents and families. In addition, the generational status of their families in the United States also played a major role in how they viewed themselves and self-identified.

The literature has also highlighted the importance of family as support for Latino/a college students (Attinasi, 1989; Babler, 1992; Cibik & Chambers, 1991; Gloria & Rodriguez, 2000; Haro, Rodriguez, & Gonzales, 1994; J. C. Hernandez, 2000, 2002; J.C. Hernandez & Lopez, 2004; Padilla, 1997; Rendon, 1992). Head (as cited in Ball-Brown & Frank, 1993) noted that

> the family is the source of strength, the survival mechanism, the adviser, the counselor, and the center of social life . . . when a Hispanic student makes an important decision, it is not his or her decision alone to make, but the unit, the family. (p. 84)

I identified family as a microsystem in my theoretical model and believe it plays an important role in Latino fraternity members' ethnic identity development.

Gender within the Latino/a Community

How Latino men are viewed within the Latino/a community is an important part of their gender identity. Latino males have often been characterized as machismo. Novas (1998) explained that machismo has the root macho, which in Spanish means male gender but it "is much more than that, it connotes strength, bravery, power, and importance" (p. 114). In addition, Rivera (1998) noted that Latino men are "believed to be irrational, reactive, hot-blooded, passionate, and prone to emotional outbursts" (p. 502). Santiago-Rivera (2003) described machismo as "controlling, possessive, sexist and dominant, and often is associated with violence against women" (p.11). As such, macho and machismo are synonymous with Latino men and male culture (Rivera).

Latino/a authors have written articles and books combating the machismo stereotypes surrounding Latino men (Abalos, 2002; Mirande, 1997; J. B. Torres, 1998). One example is Gonzalez's (1996) *Muy Macho: Latino Men Confront Their Manhood*, in which Gonzalez and other Latino male authors "address how they see themselves as men within the concept of what it means to be 'macho'—the catchword for Latino adult manhood" (p. xiii). In addition, Gonzalez added, "Latino men have been more hesitant in re-evaluating their gender roles than White males, who are dramatically organizing and expressing themselves" (p. xv). How gender is viewed and defined by members of Omega Beta Latino fraternity was an important aspect of this study as all participants were Latino males.

Terminology

An issue for Hispanics/Latinos/as in the United States is the terminology used to identify members of this community. Throughout the literature, the terms Hispanic, Latino/a, and Chicano/a have been used to identify individuals who have emigrated from Latin American and Spanish-speaking countries to the United States. Most of the higher education literature uses the terms Hispanic or Latino/a, but in reality the literature revolves around the Mexican American experience (V. Torres, 2004a). The focus on Mexican Americans is justified as they are the largest Hispanic group in the United States at 64% of the total Hispanic population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

The term Hispanic was created by the Nixon administration in the 1970s in an effort to lump together all ethnic groups that spoke Spanish and that had cultural and ethnic ties to Spain. Casas and Pytluk (1995)

> opted to use the generic term Hispanic to include individuals of diverse Hispanic-based national origins including, Mexico, the countries of Central America (i.e., Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama), the Spanish-speaking countries of South America (i.e., Columbia, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina), the Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean (i.e., Cuba, the Dominican Republic), and the U.S. territorial island of Puerto Rico. (pp. 156-157)

Interestingly enough, the authors left out Spain as a country of origin for many Hispanics. On the contrary, the U.S. Census Bureau (2005) defined Hispanic as U.S. residents "who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America and the Caribbean" (¶ 1). As Oboler (1998) put it "as a result, millions of people of

a variety of national backgrounds are put into a single ethnic category, and no allowances are made for their varied racial, class, linguistic, and gender experiences" (p. 3).

Padilla (1997), as he discussed in *The Struggle of Latino/Latina University Students*, explained to his students that the term Hispanic denounces the African and indigenous in them. He advised his students that the term Latino/a was more indicative of who they are and that it was created by their people to take them "where the European, African, and indigenous are all present, either independent of one another or in different *mezclas de razas* (racial mixes)" (p. 202).

The term Latino/a is more inclusive of the various backgrounds from which members of this community come. Many Latinos/as tend to choose the term over Hispanic because of the latter term's association with Spanish colonial power. Oquendo (1998) noted that many prefer Latino/a "because it lacks any such connotation and is more inclusive and descriptive" and refers to people "who come from the territory in the Americas colonized by Latin nations, such as Portugal, Spain, and France, whose languages are derived from Latin" (p. 62). Latino/a is short for "latinoamericano/a." In addition, the term Latino/a incorporates gender, which is the case in the Spanish language, whereas Hispanic follows English rules (Shorris, 1992). As such, Latino and Latina is used to refer emphatically to a male/female experience.

Geography takes center stage when referring to Hispanics and Latinos/as across the nation. Shorris (1992) noted that

> Hispanic is preferred in the Southeast and much of Texas. New Yorkers use both Hispanic and Latino. Chicago, where no nationality has attained a majority, prefers Latino/a. In California, the word Hispanic has been barred from the *Los Angeles*

> *Times*, in keeping with the strong feelings of people in that community. Some people in New Mexico prefer Hispano. (pp. xvi-xvii)

As a Cuban American raised in South Florida, Hispanic was the preferred term in my culture.

A final term used in the literature is Chicano/a. Delgado and Palacios (1998) defined Chicano as "any individual residing in the United States who traces his [sic] lineage to Indo-Hispanic or Hispanic ancestors who are living or once lived in Mexico or the Southwestern United States" (p. 285). Chicano/a is inclusive of Mexican Americans who have emigrated from Mexico and also inclusive of Mexican citizens living in Mexico.

For the purposes of this study, the terms Hispanic and Latino/a are used interchangeably to refer to Americans who trace their ancestries to Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain, the Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America, and other Spanish cultures regardless of race. As noted previously, Hispanics are an ethnic group and not a racial group. Throughout this study, I encouraged participants to self-identify and choose the term (or any other term) that best described their ethnic identity.

Latino/a College Students

Since Michael A. Olivas's (1986) *Latino College Students,* vast research has been done on Latinos/as in higher education. The literature examining the experiences of Latino/a college students can be categorized into several areas; prominent among them are studies of Latino/a college students' sense of belonging (J. C. Hernandez, 2000; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Mayo, Murgula, & Padilla, 1995; Turner, 1994). Astin (1984) stated, "The greater the student's involvement in college, the greater will be the amount of student learning and personal development" (p. 307). These researchers found that involvement in a variety of organizations, including ethnic student organizations and LGLOs contributed to students'

sense of belonging on campus and development. In addition, J.C. Hernandez (2000) described how Latino/a college students involved in Latino/a student organizations "stay[ed] culturally grounded" and how involvement in such organizations "nurture[ed] one's sense of ethnic identity" (p. 583). This outcome was considered a possibility for members of Omega Beta at Latino University.

Additional research on Latino/a college students has focused on student persistence and financial and socioeconomic barriers (Babler, 1992; Chacon, Cohen, & Strover, 1986; Cibik & Chambers, 1991; Padilla, 1997), retention (J. C. Hernandez, 1999, 2000; J. C. Hernandez & Lopez, 2004), and access and achievement (C. Brown, 1991; Duran, 1994). Although there are many more articles that address the experiences of Latino/a college students, for the purposes of this study I focused on those related to Latino fraternities.

Latino Fraternities

Greek letter organizations have been around for decades, largely because of the friendships and shared purposes they provide college students (Whipple, 1998). The first fraternities were established as honorary and literary societies to meet student needs (Castro, 2004). The origins of today's Greek letter organizations can be traced back to the founding of Phi Beta Kappa in 1776 at the College of William and Mary (Anson & Marchesani, 1991; Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). "Phi Beta Kappa established precedents that today's groups still follow, including names composed of Greek letters; secret rituals and symbols that affirm shared values and beliefs; and a badge that, in general, only initiated members wear" (Whipple & Sullivan, p. 7). The first social fraternity, Kappa Alpha Society, was established in 1812 (Kimbrough, 2003). As such, the formation of these organizations provided members

with housing and social networking opportunities that brought students with common interests together (Ross, 2000).

Fraternities and sororities fulfill cultural and academic needs for many college students (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). This is no different for Latino/a college students. The first Latino fraternities were established in the late 1800s as secret societies whose members were elite and wealthy students from various Latin American countries attending prestigious colleges and universities in the United States (Mejia, 1994; Muñoz & Guardia, in press; Rodriguez, 1995). These men formed secret societies that "evolved into alliances or loose-knit fraternities of Latinos who shared the same social background" (Rodriguez, p. 26).

The first Latino fraternity in the United States was Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated which was established December 26, 1931, at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York (Adam, 1999; Castro, 2004; Jerez, 2004; Kimbrough, 2002, 2003; Miranda & Martin de Figueroa, 2000; Muñoz & Guardia, in press; Phi Iota Alpha, 2005; Rodriguez, 1995; Sanchez, Freni, & Peralta, 2005b; Torbenson, 2005). As such, Phi Iota Alpha is the "Oldest Latino Fraternity in Existence" (Phi Iota Alpha, ¶ 1).

Phi Iota Alpha can trace its beginnings to 1898 when a group of elite Latin American men organized the first association of Latin American students in the United States, the Union Hispano Americano (Muñoz & Guardia, in press; Phi Iota Alpha, 2005). The Union Hispano Americano eventually merged with Pi Delta Phi fraternity (founded at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1916) and Phi Lambda Alpha fraternity (founded in 1919 at the University of California, Berkeley) to become Phi Lambda Alpha in 1921. Phi Lambda Alpha later merged with Sigma Iota (founded in 1904 at Louisiana State University) and formed Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated in 1931 (Anson & Marchesani, 1991; Phi

Iota Alpha, 2005). Phi Iota Alpha was an active organization from 1931 until 1973, when the last undergraduate chapter closed its doors due to dwindling enrollment of Latino males in colleges and universities. In 1984, Phi Iota Alpha was re-established at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and has continued to prosper ever since.

Since the founding of the first Latino fraternity, the number of LGLOs has grown substantially. According to LatinoGreeks.com (2005), there are currently 13 Latino fraternities, 29 Latina sororities, and 6 co-ed organizations. In addition, similar to mainstream and Black Greek letter organizations who have their own respective national governing bodies (the National Interfraternity Council, National Panhellenic Conference, and National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc.), LGLOs have their own national umbrella council, the National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations, Inc. (NALFO). Established in 1998, NALFO (2005) consists of 24 Latino/a fraternities and sororities; its purpose is to "promote and foster positive interfraternal relations, communication, and development of all Latino Fraternal organizations through mutual respect, leadership, honesty, professionalism and education" (¶ 1).

The 1980s and 1990s was a time of substantial growth for Latino fraternities and Latina sororities. Many Latino/a college students sought membership in mainstream fraternities and sororities but found that "they did not fit the mold of the traditional, already-established, nationally-recognized fraternities and sororities" (Miranda & Martin de Figueroa, 2000, p. 7). For Latino/a college students, the creation of Latino fraternities and Latina sororities was not only academic, but incorporated the Latino/a culture, which provided a twist to traditional Greek life (Kimbrough, 2003). "The desire to be part of

mainstream culture, yet preserve one's own heritage, gave birth to the Latino/Latina fraternities and sororities" (Miranda & Martin de Figueroa, p. 7).

Miranda and Martin de Figueroa (2000) noted that LGLOs have adopted four primary purposes from the Latino/a culture into their organizations: (a) advance Latino/a/Hispanic cultural awareness, (b) advocate for Latino/a/Hispanic goals, (c) provide a family atmosphere at college or university campuses, and (d) solidify the Latino/a/Hispanic population. One example of how these purposes have been carried out can be seen in how many LGLOs have taken Spanish names for their organizations, such as:

- La Unidad Latina/Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, Inc.
- Latino America Unida/Lambda Alpha Upsilon, Fraternity, Inc.
- Latinos Siempre Unidos/Lambda Sigma Upsilon Latino Fraternity, Inc.
- Latinas Promoviendo Comunidad/Lambda Pi Chi Sorority, Inc.
- Sigma Lambda Upsilon/Señoritas Latinas Unidas Sorority, Inc.
- Corazones Unidos Siempre/Chi Upsilon Sigma Latin Sorority, Inc.

In addition, many LGLOs do not refer to themselves as fraternities and sororities, but rather as Hermandades (brotherhoods and sisterhoods; Kimbrough, 2003; Rodriguez, 1995) and members call each other hermanos and hermanas (brothers and sisters). These are just a few examples of how LGLOs have incorporated their culture and native language into the traditional Greek system.

Some LGLOs also use calls and hand signs and participate in strolling/stepping events. McCoy (2005) explained that "calls are vocal utterances, either words or sounds, coined for use by the respective organizations. . . . .It is understood that nonmembers do not use the call, because it is viewed as offensive and disrespectful toward the organization that

has coined it" (p. 297). Hand signs are used by LGLOs members to display pride for their respective organizations. In many instances "it is not uncommon to see members form the symbol of the group with their hands when posing for photographs, especially if they are not wearing paraphernalia [Greek letter t-shirts, jackets, or sweaters]" (McCoy, p. 297).

Strolling is seen mostly at college and university parties when members of a LGLO get in a line and do a synchronized party walk to music (Diaz, 2004). Stepping, a historically African American cultural tradition used by most Black Greek letter organizations, has been embraced by many LGLOs. "About five years ago, LGLO resurrected their ancestors' creative forms of expression through their fraternities and sororities. . . . For LGLOs, stepping involves regaining their Latino roots while having fun and showcasing their organizations" (Latinos Step, 2004, ¶ 5). There is debate about whether LGLOs should be allowed to stroll or step. Kimbrough (2003) noted that many Black Greek letter organizations see these activities as nothing but blatant copying of Black Greek customs. As such, "these competing forces for the rightful 'ownership' of these traditions appear to be a point of future tension" (Kimbrough, 2003, p. 182) between Black Greek letter organizations and LGLOs. The Latino fraternity at the focus of this study, Omega Beta, has a hand sign and a call, but the members do not stroll or step.

LGLOs serve as important avenues of involvement for Latino/a college students on today's college and university campuses. They serve as homes away from home for students and provide on-campus camaraderie and support networks that are important to the academic, social, and cultural lives of Latino/a college students (Jerez, 2004; Mejia, 1994; Puente, 1992). Alex Macias, a student and member of Omega Delta Phi at Arizona State University, noted how membership in a LGLO has kept him focused on grades and studies

(Wingett, 2004). In addition, participants in John Hernandez's (1999) dissertation study focusing on the retention of Latino/a college students described how membership in LGLOs provided social and academic benefits that had a positive influence on student retention. As one of the study participants stated: "I say my fraternity more than definitely had a major impact on me staying in school" (J. C. Hernandez, 1999, p. 151).

Many Latino/a college students join LGLOs for the "brotherhood or sisterhood, to forge a deep bond based on shared traditions, ethnic celebrations, language and skin color. Others join to find role models who can mentor them in and out of the classroom" (Wingett, 2004, ¶ 7). Participants in J. C. Hernandez's (1999) study described how membership in LGLOs provided them with brotherhoods and sisterhoods, positive self-esteem, language sensitivity, and empowerment. Moreover, participants in Reyes' (1997) study on how participation in an ethnic fraternity contributed to persistence described how membership in a Latino fraternity provided members with a sense of family, empowered them to be involved in various facets of campus life, and served as a means of academic and social support.

Castro (2004) observed that in addition to the brotherhood and sisterhood aspect of multicultural Greek organizations, there is an added cultural component that contributes to the identity of its members. She stated:

> This additional aspect of cultural identity allows students to more fully explore their self-awareness within a comfort zone of similarly focused individuals. These organizations provide support as well as a cultural education to individuals who are still defining the many aspects of their identity. (p. 1)

In a phenomenological study on the ethnic identity development of members of a Latina-based sorority, Nuñez (2004) found that members had a heightened sense of ethnic

development through membership in a LGLO. Participants described "how the sorority had encouraged their growth and development by enabling them to learn more about their own ethnic identity" (p. 95). In addition, another participant described how her involvement in the sorority encouraged her to learn and speak her native language of Spanish, which then enhanced her ethnic identity. J. C. Hernandez's (1999), Reyes's (1997) and Nuñez's studies demonstrated how membership in LGLOs had a positive effect on retention, ethnic identity, and the academic and social lives of Latino/a college students.

Boschini and Thompson (1998) discussed how fraternities and sororities "help shape the institution's character and culture; conversely, those institutional characteristics influence student groups" (p. 21). This held true for the Latino fraternity participating in this study. How attending an HSI enhanced the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members beyond the contribution made by being a member of the Latino fraternity is further discussed in chapter 5.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)

HACU (2005a) defined an HSI as "a non-profit, accredited college, university or system, where total Hispanic student enrollment constitutes a minimum of 25% of the total enrollment, including full-time and part-time students whether at the undergraduate or graduate level, or both" (¶ 1). HSIs are defined by the federal government as institutions with at least 25% Hispanic undergraduate FTE with at least 50% of Hispanic FTE students coming from low-income backgrounds (Merisotis & Redmond, 2003). Based on the enrollment data produced by the U.S. Department of Education (2005), there are 242 HSIs in 14 states and Puerto Rico. In addition, HSIs include public and private, 2-year and 4-year institutions. According to Stearns et al. (2002), the total fall enrollment at public HSIs in

1999 was 1,245,772. "As Hispanic enrollment grows, Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs) play an increasingly important role in providing Hispanic Americans with access to college education" (Stearns et al. p. 1).

Unlike historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) that were created through a congressional mandate to serve African Americans, HSIs "were not created to serve a specific population; rather, most of them evolved as HSIs due to their large geographic proximity to Hispanic populations" (O'Brien & Zudak, 1998, p. 6). Through enrollment changes, colleges and universities that transformed into HSIs have restructured curriculum, hired additional faculty, and added services that are tailored to the educational needs of the diverse Latino/a college population (Raines, 1998).

The Higher Education Act (HEA) has been a very important funding source for HSIs. Since its inception in 1965, "the HEA funds programs and initiatives aimed at mitigating social and cultural barriers to higher education access and completion faced by educationally and economically disadvantaged students" (Merisotis & Redmond, 2003, p. 12). The 1992 reauthorization of the HEA created a new federal program to provide direct support to the HSIs within Title III, the same program that funds HBCUs (Wolanin, 1998). Grants and funds under Title III are authorized "for fourteen purposes, including student service programs designed to improve academic quality, endowment building, financial management, faculty development, and infrastructure improvement" (Merisotis & Redmond, p. 15).

HSIs were part of Title III until the 1998 reauthorization when they were moved from Title III to Title V with the goal of better serving the needs of the institutions and their students (Merisotis & Redmond, 2003). This push for a new category was the work of

HACU and other Hispanic higher education activists. "HSIs historically and persistently receive a fraction of funds compared to all other degree-granting institutions. . . . Title V of the Higher Education Act remains the strongest, best-known vehicle within the HEA for direct funding support to HSIs" (HACU, 2003, ¶ 11). Through the hard work of HACU, HSIs receive Title V funds that expand opportunities for Hispanics and low-income students.

The recognition that HSIs have received across the nation can be attributed to the HACU. HACU was formed in 1986 to call attention to institutions of higher education that served large numbers of Hispanics (Laden, 2001). "Supported by predominantly Hispanic educational and business leaders, HACU successfully united 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities serving high proportions of Hispanics into a professional association" (Laden, 2001, p. 75). As such, HACU's (2005b) mission is

> to promote the development of member colleges and universities; to improve access to and the quality of post-secondary educational opportunities for Hispanic students; and to meet the needs of business, industry and government through the development and sharing of resources, information and expertise. (¶ 1)

Through the hard work of HACU, HSIs received recognition from the federal government. "Quality education isn't the only reason Hispanic students attend these institutions. They are affordable, close to home, and understand the Latino culture" (White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans et al., 1998). Many Hispanics choose to attend local community colleges or universities near their homes, many of which are HSIs, so that they can pursue their educational goals and be close to their families. Hispanic students attending HSIs earn 45% of associate's degrees and nearly half of all bachelors' degrees

awarded to Hispanic students nationwide (White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans et al.).

HSIs are also responsible for educating students outside of the walls of academia. Student services at HSIs (as at all institutions) play a vital role in the social, cultural, and personal development of students. The college experience helps shape people into more well-rounded individuals, both personally and socially. Services such as academic advising, personal and career counseling, student activities, Greek affairs, and multicultural affairs enhance student learning and development. In addition, "the impact of the college experience on students is increased when they are more actively engaged in various aspects of college life" (Kuh et al., 1991, p. 5).

HSIs can be viewed in variety of ways, both by students and administrators. Dayton, Gonzalez-Vasquez, Martinez, and Plum (2004) interviewed students and administrators at HSIs in California and Texas to "explore the experiences of working and going to college in HSI environments" (p. 31). Of importance to this study are the experiences of students attending HSIs. The authors found that students described HSIs as institutional environments that comforted them and where faculty and staff supported them. In addition, students described how being in a community with other Latino/a college students helped create a supportive environment where students shared similar experiences (Dayton et al., 2004).

Laden (2001) described six prevailing myths associated with HSIs. They were: (a) Hispanics have little interest in going to college; (b) Hispanic parents do not encourage their children to attend college; (c) Hispanic students do not seek financial assistance; (d) Hispanic students have few educational role models; (e) HSIs siphon off resources from other special focus institutions, and (f) HSIs do not figure prominently in the community (pp. 80-87).

Laden (2001) debunked these myths and discussed how other institutions, such as predominantly White institutions and other special focus institutions, may want to look at HSIs to learn how to increase their Hispanic enrollment and retention rates. In addition, predominantly White institutions and other special focus institutions should look at the partnerships that HSIs have established with selective institutions across the nation.

It is clear that HSIs have a made name for themselves in higher education. They serve almost half of all Latino/a college students in the nation. Most of the literature on HSIs has focused on what type of institutions they are (Laden, 2004), the myths associated with HSIs (Laden, 2001), their challenges and opportunities (Benitez, 1998; De Los Santos & De Los Santos, 2003), HSI two-year colleges (Laden, 1999; Wolf-Wendel, Twombly, Morphew & Sopcich, 2004), and statistical trends of attendance at HSIs (Stearns et al., 2002). Latino University, the HSI where this study took place, is one microsystem of the theoretical model guiding this study. For the purposes of this study, I wanted to know in what ways attending an HSI enhanced the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members beyond the contributions made by their membership in the Latino fraternity. Unfortunately, there has been no literature that has touched upon the ethnic identity experiences of Latino/a college students or Latino fraternity members at HSIs.

Ethnic Identity Development

Ethnic and cultural identity development has been explored by various researchers (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1983; Cross, 1978; Helms, 1990; Kim, 1981). Ethnic groups are microcosms of the dominant society. Ho (as cited in T. W. Jones, 1990) described six aspects of the worldview of minority ethnic groups that distinguish them from the dominant White group:

1. The ethnic group's reality: Racism and poverty dominate the lives of many ethnic minorities.
2. The impact of external systems on the cultures of the ethnic group: Ethnic minority groups experience tensions created by conflicting values between their ethnic culture and White American values.
3. Biculturalism: Ethnic minorities are members of two cultural systems, and their level of acculturation to both systems should be considered in understanding them as members of an ethnic group.
4. Ethnicity differences in group's status: Historical roots and governmental relationships of a particular ethnic group in the United States indicate or mark the group's status.
5. Ethnicity and language: Ethnicity is experienced and persists through language.
6. Ethnicity and social classification: Individuals may act in accordance with their personal class interest in some situations and in accordance with their cultural preferences or ethnic identity in other situations. (pp. 60-61)

Some of these factors contribute to the ethnic identity development of Latino/a college students. Ultimately, as Evans, Forney, and Guido-Dibrito (1998) described, "ethnic identity develops from the shared culture, religion, geography, and language of individuals who are often connected by strong loyalty and kinship" (pp. 79-80). All of these factors play important roles in the ethnic identity development of Latino/a college students.

Casas and Pytluk (1995) suggested that in order to understand an individual's ethnic identity, enculturation and acculturation must be taken into consideration. Enculturation (or ethnic socialization) occurs when "developing individuals acquire (either by generalized

learning in a particular cultural milieu, or as a result of specific instruction and training) the host of cultural and psychological qualities that are necessary to function as a member of one's group" (Berry, as cited in Casas & Pytluk, p. 158). For Latino/a college students, this may occur through socialization within one's ethnic group. Acculturation is defined "as the product of cultural learning that occurs as a result of contact between the members of two or more culturally distinct groups" (Casas & Pytluk, p. 158). This process occurs when Latino/a college students learn to interact with an ethnic group other than their own. The two concepts play important roles in the ethnic identity development of Latino/a college students.

Phinney's Model of Ethnic Identity Formation

Although there are a variety of ethnic identity development models, I will focus on those that have been applied to Latino/a college students. Phinney's (1993) model of ethnic identity formation describes the developmental process of ethnic identity development. Originally focusing on minority adolescents, Phinney's (1993) model

> is rooted in the . . . idea that an achieved identity occurs through stages and is a result of a crisis, an awakening, and/or encounter, which leads to a period of exploration or experimentation, and finally to commitment or incorporation of one's identity. (Casas & Pytluk, 1995, p. 169)

The model is composed of three stages: (a) unexamined ethnic identity/diffusion–foreclosure, (b) ethnic identity search/moratorium, and (c) ethnic identity achievement.

The first stage, unexamined ethnic identity, is described as a lack of exploration of identity (Phinney, 1993). This stage involves two subtypes: diffusion and foreclosure. Diffusion is defined as a lack of interest in or concern with ethnicity. Latino/a college students experiencing diffusion may not be interested in knowing about or being aware of

their ethnicity. Foreclosure occurs when views of ethnicity are based on the opinions of others. The knowledge and information Latino/a college students may receive or know about their ethnicity may be untrue. As such, these two subtypes can hinder or prevent Latino/a college students' ethnic identity development.

Ethnic identity search/moratorium is the second stage in Phinney's (1993) model. In this stage, individuals become interested in their ethnic heritage and seek and explore the meaning of ethnicity for themselves (V. Torres, Howard-Hamilton, & Cooper, 2003). For Latino/a college students, this may involve researching information on their countries of origin, engaging in discussion with family members, and reflecting on what it means to be Latino/a. In addition, "this stage can evoke strong emotions in the individual, which can be characterized as the release of internalized anger toward the majority culture that is now viewed as the oppressor" (V. Torres et al., pp. 36-37).

The final stage of Phinney's (1993) model is ethnic identity achievement. Individuals in this stage are characterized as having a clear and confident sense of their own ethnicity and group membership (Casas & Pytluk, 1995). V. Torres et al. (2003) added that in this stage, "a bicultural identity develops whereby individuals achieve a level of comfort with who they are in society" (p. 37). For Latino/a college students, this stage is when they may feel the most comfortable with themselves and their ethnic group.

Most of Phinney's research has centered on adolescents (Phinney, 1989, 1990, 1991). Only one of her articles has addressed ethnic identity in college students. Phinney and Alipuria (1990) examined ethnic identity search and commitment among three minority groups (Asian American, Black, and Mexican) and a comparison White group. The authors found that Black and Mexican college students showed greater ethnic identity search than

White students (Phinney & Alipuria). In addition, ethnic identity search was related to self-esteem for Black and Mexican college students.

Although Phinney's (1993) model of ethnic identity formation has been utilized in work on college students, a drawback is that students have to progress through stages. Because Latino fraternity members may experience various environmental influences at different times, including family and the HSI campus environment, with regard to their ethnic identity development, the stages may be limiting. Utilizing Phinney's (1993) model as a framework, V. Torres (1999, 2003) and V. Torres and Phelps (1997) developed the bicultural orientation model (BOM) to specifically address Latino/a college student ethnic identity.

Torres's Bicultural Orientation Model

V. Torres (1999) conducted a study to validate the BOM first introduced by V. Torres and Phelps (1997). The BOM is represented by four quadrants created by intersecting acculturation and ethnic identity and how the varying levels of the two affect Latino/a college students (see Figure 2.1). "Acculturation looks at the choices made about the majority culture, whereas ethnic identity looks at the maintenance of the culture of origin" (V. Torres, 2003, pp. 533-534). As noted earlier, Casas and Pytluk (1995) pointed out that in order to understand one's ethnic identity development, acculturation is one aspect that must be taken into consideration. The BOM's four quadrants are: Hispanic orientation, bicultural orientation, Anglo orientation, and marginal orientation. Descriptions of the four quadrants are provided below.

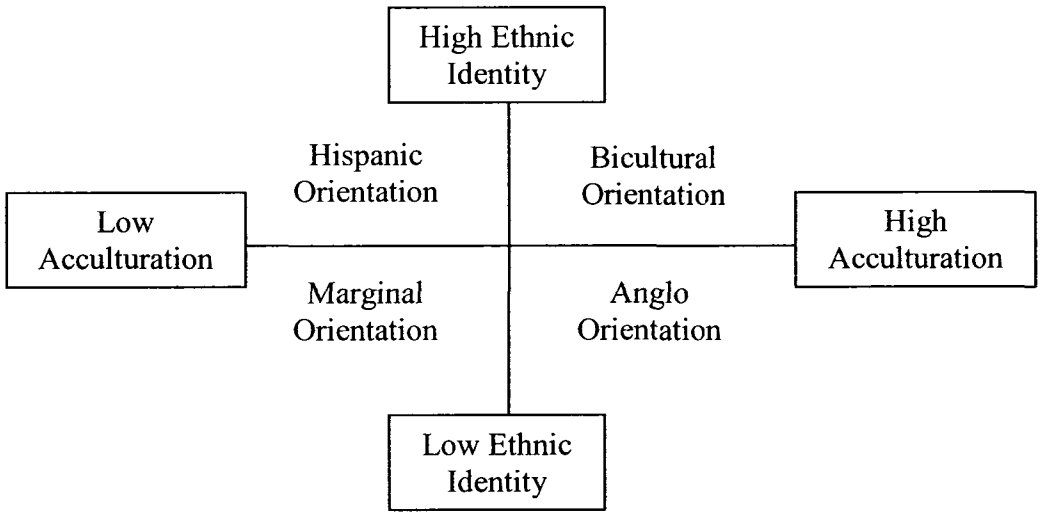

Figure 2.1. Bicultural Orientation Model (V. Torres, 1999, p. 287)

- A person with a high level of acculturation and a high level of ethnic identity has a **Bicultural Orientation**, indicating a preference to function competently in both the Hispanic and Anglo cultures.
- A person with a high level of acculturation and a low level of ethnic identity has an **Anglo Orientation**, indicating a preference to function within the Anglo culture.
- A person with a low level of acculturation and a high level of ethnic identity has a **Hispanic Orientation**, indicating a preference to function within the Hispanic culture.
- A person with a low level of acculturation and a low level of ethnic identity is considered **Marginal**, indicating that he or she is not able to function adequately within the Hispanic or Anglo cultures. (V. Torres, 1999, p. 286)

The BOM is a two-dimensional model where acculturation and ethnic identity are viewed as two separate constructs. "Two dimensional models incorporate both the relationship with the ethnic culture and the relationship with the new culture" (V. Torres,

1999, p. 287). For Latino/a college students, interactions can occur between their ethnic culture and the new culture, and those new cultures can include the majority society or new campus environment. Of significance is how the BOM differs from linear models in that it views acculturation and ethnic identity development as two separate continuums (V. Torres, 1999).

In her study, V. Torres (1999) found that whereas some Hispanic students are "more acculturated to the Anglo culture and are less aware of their culture of origin, some maintain high levels of ethnic identity and can be considered bicultural in their orientation" (p. 294). In addition, 71% of the Latino/a college students in the sample identified with either a bicultural or Anglo orientation.

V. Torres (2003) also conducted a qualitative study on the factors influencing ethnic identity development of Latino/a students during their first two years of college. The sample consisted of 10 students: 7 women and 3 men; 8 born in the U.S.; and 8 bilingual. Two themes emerged from her study: (a) situating identity and (b) influences in the change of identity development (V. Torres, 2003).

The first theme, situating identity, consisted of various influences that contributed to students' ethnic identity development, including the environment where they grew up, familial influences, generational status in the United States, and self-perception of status in society. For the purposes of this study, the environment in which students grew up and their families will be discussed. The environment in which students were raised played an important role in ethnic identity development: Students who grew up in a diverse environment had a stronger sense of ethnic identity. Family also played an important role in student's ethnic identity development. According to V. Torres (2003), "all of the students

credited their parents for their views on ethnicity and its role in their life" (p. 538). In addition, when family "participated in culturally relevant activities, such as speaking Spanish at home and attending Latino social functions, the more students identified with their ethnic identity" (p. 538). It is clear that family, the Latino/a culture, language, and where students were raised played important roles in ethnic identity development.

The second theme, influences on change in identity development, focused on how cultural dissonance and change in relationships within the environment contributed to students' ethnic identity development. The cultural dissonance students experienced in their first two years of college contributed to the formation and development of ethnic identity. The change in relationships within the environment focused on the peer groups that the students sought out while in college. One student reported that he had a much better adjustment in his second year of college after seeking out diverse groups of friends, including other Hispanic students, which led to a stronger sense of ethnic identity (V. Torres, 2003). Ultimately, both cultural dissonance and changes in relationships contributed to Latino/a students' ethnic identity development.

V. Torres and Baxter Magolda (2004) conducted a study to examine how cognitive development influences the ethnic identity process of Latino/a students. The sample was drawn from seven institutions (three urban universities, two private universities, and two community colleges) and included 28 students representing nine countries of origin. Using a constructivist approach, the authors found that when Latino/a students reconstructed social knowledge, their ethnic identity was positively influenced. "The process of reconstructing knowledge is the result of resolving dissonance between previously held beliefs and new information" (V. Torres & Baxter Magolda, p. 335). I hypothesized that the results of V.

Torres and Baxter Magolda's study might hold true for members of the Latino fraternity as they resolve personal beliefs regarding their ethnic identity development.

The studies conducted by V. Torres and Phelps (1997), V. Torres (1999, 2003), and V. Torres and Baxter Magolda (2004) shed light on the ethnic identity development of Latino/a college students. V. Torres' (1999) BOM demonstrated how the varying levels of acculturation and ethnic identity can affect Latino/a students. Although the BOM is a good model to examine students' ethnic identity development, it may not be applicable to this study as it was used mainly at predominantly White institutions. Because this study took place at an HSI, the BOM was incompatible with the environment at Latino University.

Ferdman and Gallegos's Latino/a Racial Identity Orientation Model

In 2001, Ferdman and Gallegos developed a new model that focuses on Latino/a racial identity orientation. As noted previously, Latinos/as are an ethnic group and not a racial group. The authors discussed how this has been a challenge: "When we think about Latino identity . . . race [is] secondary at best. It is one of many factors constituting identity for Latinos, but certainly not the most prominent. Writing about Latino racial identity has therefore been a challenge for us" (Ferdman & Gallegos, pp. 33-34). Because Latinos/as originate from a variety of different countries and have different cultures and social classes, they "are treated as an ethnic and cultural category more than a racial one" (Ferdman & Gallegos, p. 44).

Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model captures the intricate nature of Latino/a identity development. Unlike Phinney's (1993) model of ethnic identity formation in which individuals move sequentially from one stage to another, Ferdman and Gallegos's model is

not a stage model. This model highlights "more patterns and orientations than clear-cut, predictable steps" (Ferdman & Gallegos, p. 48) in Latino/a identity. As the authors noted:

> In the context of our initial model, there may be movement from one orientation to another depending on a number of factors. It is also possible and feasible for some individuals to maintain one orientation throughout their lives with little or no movement or change. (p. 48)

How Latinos/as view themselves in this model was important for the authors. Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) explained that the word "lens" describes how Latinos/as

> view their ethnicity, how they "see" the wider issues and context of racial groups in the United States, and how much they take in versus how much they keep out. Our lenses for race limit the data we take in and support our framework for making sense of the environment. (p. 50)

The model is composed of six different orientations, varying from White-identified to Latino-integrated (see Table 2.1). Although there are six different orientations, they "do not exhaust the possibilities nor do they address the complex issues involved in ethnic and cultural identity" (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 50). As such, this model leaves the door open for a variety of possibilities that may occur in the development of Latino/a college students.

Orientation: Latino-Integrated. Individuals in this orientation understand the full complexity of their Latino/a identity and how their identities are fully integrated with other social identities, including gender, profession, and class. These individuals have a strong sense of self and their identification with other Latinos/as that encompasses both the positive and negative attributes associated with being members of the Latino/a community. Most

importantly, "they take into account the importance of their group membership without making this the only part of themselves they are aware of" (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 50). Finally, Latino-integrated individuals are able to educate other Latinos/as about race and ethnic identity, are comfortable with all types of Latinos/as, and have a broad lens of Whites and members of other groups.

Table 2.1. *Latino/a Racial Identity Orientations* (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 49)

Orientation	**Lens**	**Identify as/prefer**	**Latinos are seen**	**Whites are seen**	**Framing of Race**
Latino-integrated	Wide	Individuals in a group context	Positively	Complex	Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed
Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)	Broad	Latinos	Very Positively	Distinct; could be barriers or allies	Latino/not Latino
Subgroup-identified	Narrow	Own subgroup	My group OK, others maybe	Not central (could be barriers or blockers)	Not clear or central; secondary to nationality, ethnicity, culture
Latinos as Other	External	Not White	Generically, fuzzily	Negatively	White/not White
Undifferentiated/ Denial	Closed	People	"Who are Latinos?"	Supposed color-blind (accept dominant norms)	Denial, irrelevant invisible
White-identified	Tinted	Whites	Negatively	Very positively	White/Black, either/or, one-drop or "mejorar la raza" (i.e., improve the race

Orientation: Latino-Identified. Latinos in this orientation have a pan-Latino/a identity that focuses on culture, history, and other ethnic markers as important pieces in their lives. Many Latinos/as in this orientation define themselves as La Raza. Oquendo (as cited Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001) defined Raza, the Spanish equivalent of race, as extremely important for Latinos/as in the United States, especially for Chicanos/as, because of its union with the former indigenous peoples. Latino-identified Latinos/as have a positive view of all Latino/a subgroups and constitute a distinct racial group. Moreover, they view Whites as a different racial group where its members can be barriers or allies, depending on their behavior (Ferdman & Gallegos). Whites, Blacks, and other racial groups are seen in "categorical and relatively rigid, unshifting terms" (Ferdman & Gallegos, p. 52).

Orientation: Subgroup-Identified. Subgroup-identified individuals view themselves primarily in their specific ethnic or national origin subgroups (i.e., Cuban, Puerto Rican) and not with the broader Latino/a community. Because individuals in this orientation identify exclusively with their own subgroup and view themselves positively, they may view other Latino/a subgroups as inferior (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). As such, subgroup-identified Latinos/as do not participate in coalitions with other Latino/a subgroups unless such involvement leads to increased societal power for the Latino/a community. Ultimately, Ferdman and Gallegos concluded that these individuals "do not view race as a central or a clear organizing concept; instead nationality, ethnicity, and culture are seen as primary" (p. 52).

Orientation: Latino as "Other". Individuals who identify as Latino as "other" may not be aware of their specific Latino/a background, culture, or history and "simply see themselves . . . as 'persons of color' without distinguishing themselves from other

subgroups" (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 52). As such, they may choose to identify themselves as a "minority." Latinos/as in this orientation do not follow Latino/a cultural values but do not follow White cultural values either.

Orientation: Undifferentiated. Latinos/as with the undifferentiated orientation want to be seen as just people and claim to be color blind while promoting this orientation to others of various groups (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). Latinos/as in this orientation accept the dominant norms of society and encounter barriers that they attribute to their own behavior. Lastly, Ferdman and Gallegos asserted that these individuals "do not seek any particular association with other Latinos, since they prefer to view each person as distinct from his or her racial or ethnic identity" (p. 53).

Orientation: White-Identified. Latinos who identify as White-identified view themselves as racially White and superior to people of color. These individuals can assimilate to the White culture and mainstream society and have a complete disconnect with the general Latino/a community and culture. Latinos/as in this orientation view the world through a White lens and view Latinos/as as less than Whites. Within the Latino/a culture, the term *mejorar la raza* (improving the race) is associated with Latinos/as who identify as White-identified. "They view intermarriage with Whites positively while viewing marriage to darker groups negatively" (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 54).

Only one study has utilized Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model of Latino/a racial identity orientations. For his dissertation, F. Hernandez (2005) examined the racial identity experiences of Latino/a principals and how their identity impacted their leadership practices. Utilizing life history methodology, F. Hernandez interviewed six principals from the upper midwestern United States who identified as Latino/a. Six themes emerged through his study:

(a) family, (b) schooling experiences, (c) Spanish language, (d) differences, (e) college experiences, and (f) adult racial identity experiences. All of the themes provided connections between the Latino/a principals' racial identity development and their leadership practices. As Hernandez eloquently stated:

> These school leaders have taken their own life experiences and have cultivated them into practices that focus on the success of children. The Latino school leaders have practices that are grounded in compassion for all their students, staff, and families. They are also transparent in their leadership practices, and are excited to work with students that reflect their Latino racial identity development and other racial identity experiences. Their leadership enables them to speak openly and honestly about life issues, specifically those relating to racial identity. (p. 393)

I used Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model of Latino/a racial identity orientations with members of the Latino fraternity. This model is broader than V. Torres's (1999) BOM and not linear in fashion such as Phinney's (1993) model of ethnic identity formation, thus it allowed Latino fraternity members to choose a variety of orientations that pertain to their ethnic identity development. In addition, Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model allows an individual to remain in one orientation if they choose to. Moreover, the variety of orientations that this model offers allowed Latino fraternity members the option to choose which orientations suit specific microsystems (Latino fraternity, family, on- and off-campus jobs, and the HSI campus) from the theoretical model guiding this study. Finally, Ferdman and Gallegos's model had yet to be applied to Latino/a college students or at an HSI. Although Ferdman and Gallegos's model is labeled racial identity orientations, it was suitable for Latino fraternity members when selecting an orientation that suits their ethnic

identity. As mentioned previously, Latinos/as are an ethnic group and not a racial group. For example, one participant chose the subgroup-identified orientation because his ethnic identity revolved only around his Cuban nationality and not with the broader Latino/a community. As such, the model proved to be beneficial for this population and institutional type.

Summary

This chapter provided a review of the literature pertaining to Latino/a college students and ethnic identity development. A review of Latinos/as in the United States, including demographics, the Spanish language, family, and the terminology, provided background and insight into members of this community. In addition, literature on Latino/a college students and several ethnic identity development models, including those of Phinney (1993), V. Torres (1999), and Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) illustrated the variety of models that can be applied to Latino/a college students. For the purposes of this study, Ferdman and Gallegos's model was used to assist Latino fraternity members in self-selecting which Latino racial identity orientation(s) best fit with their ethnic identity development.

A review of the literature also suggested a gap in the research on Latino/a ethnic identity development among Latino fraternity members and at HSIs. As many more Latinos/as enroll in higher education and choose to attend HSIs, it is imperative that we understand how their ethnic identity develops at HSIs. In addition, there is no research on Latino fraternity members' ethnic identity development. As such, the importance of this study was to find out how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development.

In Chapter 3, I describe in detail the methodological approach used in this study, philosophical assumptions, research approach, participants, data collection procedures,

research with Hispanics/Latinos, data analysis procedures, trustworthiness criteria, delimitations, and limitations.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to understand how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development. Additionally, this study sought to understand how attending an HSI enhances the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members beyond the contribution made by being a member of the Latino fraternity. This chapter provides information on the philosophical assumptions of this study, the research approach, information on the participants, data collection and analysis procedures, trustworthiness criteria, delimitations, and limitations of the study. Prior to collecting data, applications to conduct research involving human subjects were submitted to the Office of Research Compliance at Iowa State University and the Office of Research Integrity at Latino University. I received approval for this study from Latino University on October 17, 2005 and from Iowa State University on November 21, 2005.

Methodological Approach

To achieve the purpose of my study, I chose qualitative methodology in order to hear students' voices and stories. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) explained that qualitative methodology "refers in the broadest sense to research that produces descriptive data—people's own written or spoken words and observable behavior" (p. 7). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) defined qualitative research as

> a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this

> level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

Thus, "qualitative researchers try to understand the meanings of social events for those who are involved in them" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 3).

> There are several qualities and characteristics of all qualitative research, including: Understanding comes from an emic, or insider's perspective; the researcher is the instrument; research is field based or occurring in natural settings; research is inductive in nature; and research findings depend upon rich description and writing to tell the central story of a phenomenon under investigation. (Merriam, as cited in S. R. Jones, 2002, p. 461)

Esterberg (2002) described how "qualitative researchers . . . look at their own lives to see if they can find anything interesting to study, an unusual angle, or puzzling event or phenomenon" (p. 26). It was through my own lived experience that the topic of my dissertation was born. "Effective qualitative inquiry requires that the researcher be familiar not only with qualitative research methods but the also with the phenomenon under study" (Crowson, as cited in Whitt, 1991, p. 408). As mentioned in chapter 1, I was raised in South Florida and attended an HSI community college. As a member of the Latino/a community, I anticipated that my "insider status" might prove beneficial in this study. My "outsider status," as being a member of a different LGLO and my own undergraduate experience at a different HSI, contributed to this study as well.

For the purposes of this study, I chose a basic interpretative qualitative approach. In basic interpretive research, "the researcher is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon, this meaning is mediated through the researcher as instrument, the strategy is inductive, and the outcome is descriptive" (Merriam & Associates, 2002, p. 6). This approach allows the researcher to "identify the recurring patterns or common themes that cut across the data" (Merriam & Associates, p. 7). Participants in this study provided rich descriptions of their experiences that enhanced their ethnic identity development. "Through qualitative research, information completely unanticipated by those soliciting input about the quality of campus life can be collected. The resulting data are richly descriptive and faithful to students' perspectives" (Manning, 1992, p. 133).

Qualitative research has been a growing phenomenon in the field of student affairs. M. J. Patton (1991) noted that "qualitative approaches to research provide methods for raising and answering questions about college students through the investigation of their participation in socially organized interaction" (p. 393). One example of how qualitative research is used in the field of student affairs is the July/August 2002 special issue on qualitative research of the *Journal of College Student Development* (S. R. Jones, Arminio, Broido, & Torres, Eds.). Reading qualitative articles in student affairs assisted me in deciding to write a qualitative dissertation. Ultimately, "qualitative research methods have much to offer the student affairs field. They can help make sense of complex questions, address the meaning present in a situation, and delve deeply into understanding another's perspective" (Manning, 1992, p. 135). For the purposes of this study, the perspective of which I wanted to

make meaning was how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhanced members' ethnic identity development.

Manning (1992) pointed out that "multiculturalism is an important area of student affairs [in] which [one] can gain knowledge through qualitative research" (p. 133). Because this study focused specifically on the experiences of Latino fraternity members, I traveled to one campus to collect my data. Therefore "to understand student experiences at a particular college, many and varied student experiences must be obtained and information from others at the college must be interpreted from students' points of view" (Whitt, 1991, p. 407). In this study, I was able to collect data from seven participants, which provided a variety of student experiences to consider.

Philosophical Assumptions

The goal of this study was to make meaning of how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhanced members' ethnic identity development. The philosophical assumption underlying this study is constructionsim. Crotty (1998) defined constructionsim as "the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (p. 42). Broido and Manning (2002) noted that in the constructionist paradigm:

1. The researcher-respondent relationship is subjective, interactive, and interdependent.
2. Reality is multiple, complex, and not easy quantifiable.
3. The values of the researcher, respondents, research site, and underlying theory cannot help but undergird all aspects of the research. (p. 436)

Constructionism was appropriate for this study because I wanted to understand, through dialogue with the participants, how they made meaning of their membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI. In addition, the constructionist paradigm "has been embraced in educational practice, including higher education and student affairs" (Broido & Manning, p. 436).

Research Approach

To understand the participants' meaning-making, I chose phenomenology as the qualitative research approach for exploring the experiences of Latino fraternity members at an HSI. According to Merriam and Associates (2002), "a phenomenological study focuses on the essence or structure of an experience" (p. 7). Phenomenology "involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for reflective structural analysis that portrays the essence of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). Moustakas explained that

> in phenomenological studies the investigator abstains from making suppositions, focuses on a specified topic freshly and naively, constructs a question or problem to guide the study, and derives the findings that will provide the basis for further research and reflection. (p. 47)

In addition, Moustakas pointed out that in a phenomenological investigation the researcher

> during the course of the study, becomes an expert on the topic, knows the nature and findings of prior research, has developed new knowledge on the topic, and has become proficient enough in recognizing the kinds of future research that would deepen and extend knowledge on the topic. (p. 162)

After completing this study, I acquired an understanding of how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development.

There are various articles that demonstrate the usefulness of phenomenology in understanding college students' experiences. I will highlight two of them. Arminio and McEwen (1996) utilized phenomenology in their study of the lived experiences of White graduate students: "The exploration of what, how, and to whom these students are connected brought insight into not only their specific experiences but also the general lived experiences of Whites" (p. 315). The authors found that through reflection, the graduate students described their experiences of being White. Arminio and McEwen identified four themes: family, place, race, and ethnicity, with the overarching theme being connection. Ultimately, through phenomenological research, Arminio and McEwen were able to attach meaning to the lived experience of White graduate students.

Mayhew (2004) conducted a phenomenological study to explore the essence of spirituality in college students. The eight students in his study represented eight different worldviews: Agnosticism, Atheism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Muslim, Protestantism, and Roman Catholicism. The study explored how the eight students made meaning of spirituality and how each student described or captured the phenomenon of spirituality. Mayhew found 10 separate themes connected by the overarching theme of connection and explication. Mayhew concluded that for these students, "spirituality is the human attempt to make sense of self in connection to and with the external world" (p. 666).

The Arminio and McEwen (1996) and Mayhew (2004) articles illustrated that phenomenology is useful in learning about the experiences of undergraduate and graduate students. These articles provided me with good examples of how to conduct my own

phenomenological study of the ways in which membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development.

Participants

"Qualitative researchers usually choose research participants for the specific qualities they can bring to the study" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 93). Creswell (as cited in Mayhew, 2004) described two sampling strategies characteristic of qualitative research: "(a) criterion sampling (which guarantees that students have experienced the phenomenon) and (b) maximum variation sampling (which involves the intentional selection of students whose experiences, when analyzed in the aggregate, provides the fullest description of the experienced phenomenon)" (p. 653). An additional sampling technique discussed by Patton (as cited in Merriam & Associates, 2002) is known as purposive sampling. He noted that "information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposive sampling" (p. 12).

For this study, I interviewed seven Latino fraternity members at an HSI. Thus, I utilized purposive sampling, which occurs when researchers "sample research participants for the specific perspectives they may have" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 93). Participants in this study provided me with information-rich cases about their experiences as members of a Latino fraternity at a HSI. In order to include participants who would provide a wide array of experiences and backgrounds, the following absolute categories were included: (a) Latino male, (b) membership in a Latino fraternity, and (c) attendance at an HSI. In addition, variations in the following categories were sought out: (d) academic major/discipline; (e) place of residence (those who live on and off campus); and (f) involvement (on- and off-campus organizations). In addition, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that "the sample . . .

be selected in ways that will provide the broadest range of information possible" (p. 233). Because Omega Beta is the only Latino fraternity at Latino University, the entire chapter membership was asked to participate in this study. Out of the nine members, seven participated in this study.

The HSI selected for this study was chosen for a few reasons. First, I chose Latino University because it is recognized among the top HSIs that graduates Latino/a college students with undergraduate degrees in the United States and ranks in the top 100 colleges for Hispanics (Lopez-Isa, 2005). In addition, Latino University is ranked in the top 25 graduate schools for Hispanics and first in the number of master's degrees awarded to Hispanics (Cooper, 2005). Because of the academic reputation that Latino University has and because Omega Beta is the only Latino fraternity at this HSI, I was interested in how attending an HSI enhanced members' ethnic identity development beyond the contributions made by being a member in the Latino fraternity. Moreover, the HSI campus environment was an important part of the microsystem in the theoretical model for this study.

Gaining Access to Participants

The issue of access to Latino fraternity members at the HSI for data gathering purposes was of major importance to this study. "Because interviewing involves a relationship between the interviewer and the participant, how interviewers gain access to potential participants and make contact with them can affect the beginning of that relationship and every subsequent step in the process" (Seidman, 1998, p. 34). Fortunately, access to the HSI for this study was made easier by the fact that a classmate from graduate school works at the institution. However, I did not assume that gaining access at the HSI was guaranteed or without difficulty.

Access to Latino fraternity members at the HSI was difficult because, although my classmate works at the proposed study site, her position is not in Greek life. "When interviewers try to contact potential participants whom they do not know, they often face gatekeepers who control access to those people" (Seidman, 1998, p. 37). Gatekeepers at the HSI included the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Associate Director of Campus Life for Greek Affairs. I originally made contact with these individuals via an e-mail letter of introduction (Appendix A) on September 6 and 29, 2005, respectively. I received an e-mail from the Vice President for Student Affairs who then referred me to the Title V Project Director at Latino University. The Title V Project Director falls under the Department of Assessment and Evaluation in Student Affairs and is in charge of all Title V grants that are awarded to the HSI. I made a campus visit in mid-October 2005 to introduce myself to the Title V Project Director and the Associate Director of Campus Life for Greek Affairs. Seidman described three advantages of the contact visit:

1. "Laying the groundwork for the mutual respect necessary in the interview process" (p. 40).
2. "The potential to meet interview participants" (p. 40).
3. "It allows the interviewer to become familiar with the setting" (p. 41).

During my campus visit, I met with the Title V Project Director to discuss my study and why I chose Latino University as my study site. He offered me advice and opinions on my research. Most importantly, he agreed to serve as my on-site faculty supervisor for IRB purposes. I also met with the Associate Director of Campus Life for Greek Affairs who was very helpful in providing me with information on the Latino fraternity. She also agreed to support my project.

During my campus visit, I also met with two of the nine members of Omega Beta, including the president of the fraternity. I had e-mailed a letter of introduction to the president of the fraternity on September 29, 2005 (see Appendix A) describing the proposed study, when it would take place, the reason I chose their organization, and why I specifically chose their institution. I met with the president and another member of the fraternity on October 15, 2005. The meeting served an important purpose: for the fraternity members to meet me personally and ask any questions they had regarding the study. During the meeting, the members expressed that they were very intrigued and interested in the study. At the end of the meeting, they verbally agreed to participate in the study. Ultimately, as Seidman (1998) noted, the contact visit served as an important "way in" to meet gatekeepers, access the possible research site, and meet participants. In addition, I used a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B) to gain more background on the Latino fraternity members.

Data Collection Procedures

The following section describes the various data collection procedures I used to gather information from participants on how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhanced members' ethnic identity development.

Interviewing

There are a variety of methods qualitative researchers use to gather data. Whether through focus groups, case studies, or observation, the researcher uses what is deemed suitable for the study. An additional method for collecting data is interviewing. In simplest terms, interviewing is defined as "one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings" (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 645). Janesick (as cited in Esterberg, 2002) defined an interview as "a meeting of two persons to exchange

information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic" (p. 83).

Seidman (1998) stated that at the root of interviewing "is an interest in understanding the experiences of other people and the meaning they make out of that experience" and "that at the heart of interviewing research is an interest in other individuals' stories because they are of worth" (p. 3). The stories of worth in this study were the membership experiences of Latino fraternity members at an HSI. Rubin and Rubin (1995) described three elements behind the philosophy of qualitative interviewing:

> One element of this philosophy is that understanding is achieved by encouraging people to describe their worlds in their own terms. A second component of this philosophy is that interviewing involves a relationship between the interviewer and interviewee that imposes obligations on both sides. Third, this philosophy helps define what is interesting and what is ethical and helps provide standards to judge the quality of the research, the humanity of the interviewing relationship, and the completeness and accuracy of the write-up. (p. 2)

Spradley (as cited in Stage & Mattson, 2003) described three key elemental phases in ethnographic interviewing:

1. "Interviews begin with the explicit purpose of the interview being explained by the ethnographer to the research participant" (p.98).
2. "Second, the interviewer, through ethnographic explanations, offers particulars about how the goal of the interview might be achieved" (p.98).

3. "Third, after discussing the explicit purpose of the research project and providing ethnographic explanations, the researcher employs a variety of ethnographic questions to guide the interview" (p. 98).

The format described by Spradley offers researchers a guide for how interviews could be constructed and followed.

There are several types of interviews, including structured, semistructured, and unstructured. Specifically, I conducted semistructured interviews as they are used "to explore a topic more openly and to allow interviewees to express their opinions and ideas in their own words" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 87). This format allowed me to "listen carefully to the participant's responses and to follow his or her lead" (Esterberg, p. 87).

There are a variety of formats in which interviews can be conducted. I used the three-interview series designed by Dolbeare and Schuman (as cited in Seidman, 1998, p. 11) when interviewing members of the Latino fraternity. Seidman described the three-interview series:

1. "Interview One: Focus Life History—In the first interview, the interviewer's task is to put the participant's experiences in context by asking him or her to tell as much as possible about him or herself in light of the topic up to the present time" (p. 11).
2. "Interview Two: The Details of the Experience—The purpose of the second interview is to concentrate on the concrete details of the participants' present experience in the topic area of the study" (p. 12).
3. "Interview Three: Reflection on the Meaning—In the third interview, participants are asked to reflect on the meaning of their experience" (pp. 12-13).

During Interview One, I collected data on the participants' life stories. Using a set of open-ended questions (Appendix C), I gathered information that set up the context for each individual interview. These questions allowed me to establish a rapport and trust with the participants. Interview Two specifically focused on the study and their experiences as members of the Latino fraternity. Participants provided in-depth information and shared experiences that enhanced their ethnic identities as members of a Latino fraternity at an HSI. In Interview Three, I provided the participants' with some emerging themes and asked them to reflect on those experiences. In addition, they provided member checks with regard to the previous data collected.

Interviews conducted in this series utilized a 90-minute format. "Given that the purpose of this approach is to have the participants reconstruct their experience, put it in the context of their lives, and reflect on its meaning, anything shorter than 90 minutes for each interview seems too short" (Seidman, 1998, p. 14). Thus, the 90-minute format allows the interviewer and interviewee enough time to engage in a conversation and to exchange information within the context of the interview.

There is debate surrounding the spacing of interviews in the three-interview series. Seidman (1998) suggested spacing interviews from three days to a week apart. I thought anything longer than three days would stifle the interview process and lessen the chances that students would want to continue participating in the study. Seidman suggested alternatives to the three-interview structure: "As long as structure is maintained that allows participants to reconstruct and reflect upon their experience within the context of their lives, alterations to the three-interview structure and the duration and spacing of interviews can certainly be explored" (p. 15). As such, interviews with participants were spaced out in two-day intervals

and took place in conference rooms at the student union or university library. Because my time at the HSI was limited and students were busy, alterations to the three-interview series were necessary. Yet I was able to sustain the credibility gained through the three-interview series to collect meaningful, rich descriptive data from students. In addition, it is important to note that before I began interviewing members of Omega Beta, I used a demographic questionnaire (Appendix B) in order to gain information concerning fraternity members' age, year in school, how they self-identify ethnically, parents' level of education, and primary language spoken at home. Moreover, students also read and sign an informed consent form (see Appendix D) before interviews began.

Another aspect of interviewing involves not only the interview, but the analysis as well. Kvale (as cited in Attinasi, 1992) described six possible phases in phenomenological interviewing. The first is when the participant describes his or her life with regard to the phenomenon of interest. This phase is accompanied by spontaneous description in which neither the interviewer nor interviewee provides any special interpretation of the description.

The second phase is when the interviewee "discovers new relations, sees new meaning in his or her life-world on the basis of the spontaneous description" (Kvale, as cited in Attinasi, 1992, p. 63). This phase also does not involve any interpretation of the description by the interviewer or interviewee.

In the third phase, the interviewer, during the interview, begins to condense and interpret the meaning of the descriptions provided by the interviewee. It also involves a form of member checking in which the interviewer sends the interpreted meaning back for confirmation and clarification.

The fourth phase consists of the interviewer interpreting the completed transcribed interviews on three different levels:

> (a) the self-understanding of the interviewee; (b) a commonsense interpretation that involves extending the meaning of what the interviewee said by reading between the lines and by drawing in broader contexts than the interviewee did; and (c) more theoretical interpretations, based on, for example, an existing social or sociopsychological theory. (Kvale, as cited in Attinasi, 1992, p. 63)

The fifth phase is when the interpreter provides the interviewee his or her interpretations during a second interview. This provides the interviewer with the opportunity to correct, elaborate, and discuss the interpreted meanings with the interviewee. This format was used at the beginning of each second interview with study participants.

The sixth and final phase may be an extension of the previous phase. During this phase the interviewee "begins to act from new insights gained during the interview, or the researcher and the interviewee together, in a program of action research, act on the basis of experiences and insights about social situations developed through the interviews" (Kvale, as cited in Attinasi, 1992, p. 63). During the third and final interviews, the participants and I reflected on the interviews and the overall study and how it had allowed them to view how their membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhanced their ethnic identity development.

It is important to note that this study did not include all six phases, and that the stages did not need to be followed in chronological order. Furthermore, "the offerings of each phase have their own worth and can stand and be utilized independently of the others" (Wertz, as cited in Attinasi, 1992, p. 64). Appendix C includes the interview questions that were used in this study.

Focus Groups

An additional method for data collection is the focus group research design. This method allowed me to produce data and gather insights from Latino fraternity members that would have been "less accessible without the interaction found in [the] group" (Morgan, 1997, p. 2). "Focus groups draw on three of the fundamental strengths that are shared by all qualitative methods: (1) exploration and discovery, (2) context and depth, and (3) interpretation" (Morgan, 1998, p. 12). All three of these strengths assisted me in understanding the experiences of Latino fraternity members. I conducted one focus group, which lasted 75 minutes, on Monday, February 20, 2006, in a conference room in the student union. Six of the seven fraternity members participated. Unfortunately, one participant was not able to attend as it conflicted with his work schedule. Through the focus group I established a connection with all of the fraternity members and observed their interactions with one another. In addition, due to my time constraint at Latino University, the small group interview format allowed me to collect a large amount of data in a short period of time, which generated "a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs" (Morgan, 1998, p. 11). Appendix E includes the focus group questions that were used in this study.

Participant Observation

A major advantage of direct participant observation is that it provides the researcher with a here-and-now experience (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It was my goal to range between a non-participant to complete participant, depending on the situation. For example, during the study I acted as a non-participant when recording observational notes of the activities that took place at chapter meetings. On the other hand, I was a complete participant when I attended a Black Greek letter step show with the participants at a neighboring college. At this

activity, the participants and I discussed Latino fraternities, among other things. My notes included demographic information (time, place, and physical setting) and fraternity members present, but most importantly the behaviors I observed. These observational notes were critical as they described and made meaning of the Latino fraternity members' experiences and how they played a role in their ethnic identity development.

Document Collection

Throughout the study, I collected documents that pertained to the Latino fraternity members' ethnic identity development. Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted that documents "are a rich source of information, contextually relevant and grounded in the contexts they represent" (p. 277). Documents I collected were helpful in this study. I requested copies of any non-written or written material that the participants shared with me that related to their ethnic identity development and the Latino fraternity. Participants provided me a with a variety of documents that outlined the history of the chapter at Latino University and the organization nationally, including a fraternity pamphlet, chapter web site, and a flyer describing Omega Beta, which included a national map highlighting where chapters of Omega Beta are located. In addition, I reviewed the fraternity's history book for background information on the organization.

Journaling

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested the use of a reflexive journal in which the researcher records information about self and the method being used. Mattson and Stage (2003) explained that "journaling can assist researchers in evaluating their position prior to entering the field" and "through journaling the various roles of the researcher become sorted out which aids in the development of contextual sensitivity" (p. 109). Throughout the study, I

took notes of personal reflections on the interviews and all aspects of the study so that I was able to capture all my experiences in the field. Such reflections assisted me in understanding my perceptions of students' interpretations of their experiences and the context in which those experiences were described.

Research with Hispanics/Latinos/as

"Probably the first concern of a researcher trying to study Hispanics is deciding on the ethnic label to be utilized in describing the participants" (Marin & VanOss-Marin, 1991, p. 18). As mentioned previously, the terms Hispanic and Latino/a are used interchangeably to refer to Americans who trace their ancestries to Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Spain, the Spanish speaking countries of Central and South America, and other Spanish cultures regardless of race. Throughout this study, I encouraged participants to self-identify and I used the label they gave themselves when referencing the participants.

Another issue when studying members of the Hispanic community is access. Marin and VanOss-Marin (1991) explained that "Hispanics could be expected to be more weary of researchers than are other ethnic or racial groups for a variety of reasons" (p. 42). The foremost reason is the exploitation of members from the community for data collection purposes by non-Hispanic individuals. Marin and VanOss-Marin suggested that "same-ethnicity data collectors should be employed in research projects where personal contact is involved" (p. 53). Specifically, they "can enhance rapport, [the] willingness to disclose, and the validity and reliability of the data provided" (Marin & VanOss-Marin, p. 53). As a member of the Latino/a community, my "insider status" proved beneficial in this study. Participants were able to relate to me not only as a Latino, but as a member of a Latino fraternity. "Being ethnically similar to the interviewer can help the participants feel that they

share experiences with the members of the project" (Marin & VanOss-Marin, p. 53). Moreover, "insiders studying their own cultures offer new angles of vision and depths of understanding" (Clifford & Marcus, as cited in Sherif, 2001, p. 438). Such angles and understanding may be more difficult to achieve for researchers who are not members of the community.

Insider/Outsider Status

As mentioned previously, my insider statuses within the Latino/a and Latino fraternity communities were important to this study. Schwandt (2001) described the differences between insider and outsider perspectives:

> An internalist or insider perspective holds that knowledge of the social world must start from the insider or social actor's account of what social life means. To know the world of human action is to understand the subjective meanings of that action to the actors. In contrast, an externalist or outsider perspective argues that knowledge of the social world consists in causal explanations of human behavior. (p.128)

Griffith (1998) elaborated on the insider/outsider status:

> Where the researcher enters the research site as an Insider—someone whose biography (gender, race, class, sexual orientation and so on) gives her a lived familiarity with the group being researched—that tacit knowledge informs her research producing a different knowledge than that available to the Outsider—a researcher who does not have an intimate knowledge of the group being researched prior to their entry into the group. (p. 361)

I acknowledge that my insider status as a member of the Latino/a and Latino fraternity communities provided me with opportunities to which a non-Latino/a or non-Latino

fraternity researcher may not have had access. With regard to the Latino/a community, I know the language and cultural values, such as *simpatia* (sympathy) and *familismo* (familism), which comes with being a member of this community. In addition, as a member of a Latino fraternity, I know Latino Greek terminology, such as *hermano* (brother) and *hermandad* (brotherhood) that comes with being in a Latino fraternity. Thus, such insight afforded me privileges that others cannot experience or fully comprehend.

Although being a member of a LGLO increased my insider status, I could be seen as a possible outsider as well. My goal was to let members of Omega Beta know that although I am a member of Phi Iota Alpha, our commonality as members of Latino fraternities was most important. In addition, I stressed to them the importance of this study as no one has yet explored how membership in a Latino fraternity enhances members' ethnic identity development.

Another possible outsider status was our varied experiences at two different HSIs. This study took place at a 4-year HSI; I attended a 2-year HSI. As such, participants and I shared our experiences about attending HSIs, and although we discussed the commonalities, such as being surrounded by members of the Latino/a community and the ability to speak Spanish with others on campus, there were some differences that were attributed to our specific institutional environments. For example, the two-year HSI I attended did not offer Greek life; it was not an option. In addition, most of my classmates were older, adult students whereas at the HSI where this study took place the student body consisted of predominantly traditional-age college students.

Several researchers have described the advantages of being insiders. Lomba De Andrade (2000) described her experience when she conducted research on members of the

Cape Verdean American community, of which she is a member. She argued that "because race and ethnicity are ever-present factors in field research, insider/outsider status is also an ongoing presence or dynamic in the research process" (Lomba De Andrade, p. 271). Lomba De Andrade described her experience:

> I quickly discovered that my inside status complicated the interview situation in ways that I had not read about or imagined. I learned that my Cape Verdean identity was negotiated and constructed as part of the interview process and that it challenged, changed, and distorted the interview subject in ways that were sometimes visible, sometimes not. (p. 275)

Although Lomba De Andrade (2000) was a member of the community she studied, participants still acted as gatekeepers, as she later revealed: "Many participants questioned me about my knowledge of the Cape Verdean community, history and culture. This seemed to be another gatekeeping procedure" (p. 282). Ultimately, Lomba De Andrade "understood that insider status is not simply granted or achieved. It is created through an ongoing process of evaluation that is dependent on the performance of group membership by researchers and participants at multiple levels" (p. 283).

Sherif (2001) discussed her partial insider status when conducting research for her dissertation in Cairo, Egypt. Sherif, who has an Egyptian father and German mother, lived in Cairo until the age of nine, when her family moved to the United States. She described how her partial insider status played an integral role while conducting research in Cairo:

> I was in the unique position of having instant access to a very large, extended family and all of its acquaintances. Thus, I did not experience the anthropologist's common

dilemmas of isolation and the search for social acceptance and ties with the society.

In fact, there was no question that, from the beginning, I was accepted. (p. 440)

Sherif also described how her experience had an impact on her identity: "My ambiguous insider/outsider status among Egyptians who became the subjects of my fieldwork research forced me to be constantly aware of my multiple selves, my own experiences, and my subjective interpretations" (p. 445). In the end, Sherif discovered that by "being forced to balance an insider/outsider perspective, I ultimately became more sensitive to my informants' voices and experiences" (p. 446).

In *The Struggle of Latino/Latina University Students*, sociologist and college professor Felix M. Padilla (1997) described an ethnographic study he conducted of students enrolled in his Sociology of Latino Society course at Northeastern University. For three consecutive spring semesters (1993–1995), Padilla worked with Latino/a students "who agreed to engage in a critical learning process of self-recovery, a reclaiming of their individual and social understanding and history—the kind of knowledge denied to them by prior education experiences" (p. 18).

Utilizing ethnographic methods, Padilla (1997) observed his insider/outsider status with his students and was careful in sharing his own experiences as a Latino when discussing the experiences and environment of his students. "Non-Latinos studying and writing about Latino/a life is another major matter that Latino/a students have been concerned with for a long time" (p. 124). Thus, it was instrumental that Padilla was a member of the community in order to tap into the experiences of his students. In addition, through hearing his students' stories, Padilla reflected on his own identity formation.

These studies I have highlighted provide a small sample of researchers' experiences as insiders in their studies. Although it seems that being an insider and gaining access is easy, Lomba De Andrade's (2000) experience with gatekeepers from her own community demonstrated otherwise. In addition, as Sherif (2001) and Padilla (1997) described, being an insider can cause one to reflect on his or her identity within his or her community. McKinley Brayboy and Deyhle (2000) noted that

> insiders writing ethnographic accounts of their own group have issues with which they must deal, but these issues do not mean they cannot conduct good, rigorous research. Rather, they must address the issues in a manner that shows integrity and an awareness of some of the complicated issues facing them. (p. 166)

For Lomba De Andrade and Sherif, in particular, being insiders not only provided them the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the experiences and voices of their participants, but also challenged their own interpretations of their communities. Through this study, I learned more about the undergraduate Latino fraternity experience, and it also allowed me to reflect on my own identity as a member of both the Latino Greek and Latino/a communities, as described in my personal reflections in chapter 6.

Data Analysis Procedures

Qualitative data analysis is "the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 111). Moustakas (1994) described a method of organizing and analyzing phenomenological data derived from methods suggested by Stevick, Colaizzi, and Keen (as cited in Moustakas). The following steps are presented in the order of analysis:

1. Using a phenomenological approach, obtain a full description of your own experience of the phenomenon.
2. From the verbatim transcript of your experience complete the following steps:
    a. Consider each statement with respect to significance for description of the experience.
    b. Record all relevant statements.
    c. List each nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping statement. These are the invariant horizons or meaning units of the experience.
    d. Relate and cluster the invariant meaning units into themes.
    e. Synthesize the invariant meaning units and themes into a *description of the textures of the experience.* Include verbatim examples.
    f. Reflect on your own textual description. Through imaginative variation, construct *a description of the structures of your experience.*
    g. Construct *a textural-structured description* of the meaning and essences of your experience.
3. From the verbatim transcript of the experience of *each* of the other *co-researchers,* complete the above steps, a through g.
4. From the individual textural-structural descriptions of all co-researchers' experiences, construct *a composite textural-structural description of the meanings and essences of the experience,* integrating all individuals' textural-structural descriptions into a universal description of the experience representing the group as a whole. (p. 122)

Moustakas's (1994) method of organizing phenomenological data assisted me in coding and analyzing the data I collected about Latino fraternity members' experiences. In addition, it provided me with a useful format to complete data analysis. I began data analysis after my first set of interviews on February 8 and continued until my last interview on February 27, 2006. Throughout the interviews, focus group, and observations, I reflected on my own experience and the interactions between myself and the participants. I began transcribing the audio-taped interviews and focus group while on site and completed it once I returned to Iowa. After I completed transcribing, I began open coding, "working intensively with the data, line by line" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 158), developed tentative ideas, and placed them into "invariant meaning units and themes" (Moustakas, p. 122). Specifically, I made notes in the margins of my transcripts and used a variety of different color highlighters, each color represented an emerging theme. Through inductive data analysis, these units resulted in themes that led to interpretations and findings (Whitt, 1991).

Trustworthiness Criteria

A key aspect in qualitative research is the concept of validity. The issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were addressed throughout the study. Marshall and Rossman (1995) explained that the goal of credibility "is to demonstrate that the inquiry was constructed in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described" (p. 143). Credibility was maximized through prolonged engagement in the field, member checks, and peer debriefing. I was at the study site for the entire month of February 2006. This allowed me to develop an in-depth understanding of the Latino fraternity members' experiences through extensive one-on-one interviews, focus group, and participant observation. As such, prolonged engagement

allowed me to "convey detail about the site and the people that [will] lend credibility to the narrative account" (Cresswell, 2003, p. 196). In addition, I utilized member checks with the students in order to determine the accuracy of my interpretations of the findings. Maxwell (2005) stated that member checking "is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on" (p. 111). I began member checking while on site when I began to send participants transcribed individual interviews. I received only a handful of responses from the participants. In addition, I sent them their individual participant profiles; none of the participants contacted me with any corrections to their profiles. I also sent participants the findings of this study to which only Tony responded: "I've read the better part of it and I really liked how it turned out." Member checks provided participants the opportunity to comment on my interpretation of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2002). Moreover, I utilized two of my classmates for peer debriefing purposes in order to question and comment on the study.

Transferability was completed via rich, thick descriptions of the data collected. It was my goal to provide detailed information of the Latino fraternity members' experiences that contributed to their ethnic identity development. Such detailed information "transport[s] readers to the setting and give[s] the discussion an element of shared experiences" (Cresswell, 2003, p. 196). In addition, the use of purposive sampling (M. Q. Patton, 1990) aided in the transferability of the data collected.

To achieve dependability, the researcher "attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for the study as well as changes in the design created by increasingly refined understanding of the setting" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 145). The

phenomena in this study were the membership experiences of Latino fraternity members at an HSI and how these experiences enhanced members' ethnic identity development. As I anticipated, conditions changed when I collected data. For example, I scheduled interview dates with participants and they would sometimes cancel hours or minutes before our meeting. As such, triangulation of data from one-on-one interviews, the focus group, participant observation, and document analysis aided in ensuring the dependability of this study.

Confirmability refers to whether the findings of the study can be confirmed by others. A major technique in establishing confirmability is the confirmability audit, or audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using a three-ring binder, I created an audit trail, which included all raw data, including tape recordings and field notes from the interviews, focus group, and observations. An additional aspect of confirmability is reflexivity on the part of the researcher. As such, I kept a journal that included all personal notes and reflections from the study.

Delimitations

As noted in chapter 1, this study took place at Latino University, an HSI located in the Southeast. Omega Beta is the only Latino fraternity at Latino University. All interviews, focus groups, and participant observations with members of Omega Beta took place at Latino University.

Another delimitation is that the topic of this study had yet to be explored. Ethnic identity development (and human development) is complex and interwoven. As such, this study focuses mostly on one slice of development of Latino fraternity members.

Limitations

There are two principal limitations pertaining to this study. First is the issue of population and site generalizability of the results from the study. Maxwell (2005) described two types of generalizability in qualitative research: "Internal generalizability refers to the generalizability of a conclusion within the setting or group being studied, while external generalizability refers to its generalizability beyond that setting or group" (p. 115). Because this study focuses on the experiences and accounts of Latino fraternity members at an HSI located in the Southeast, the results from this study cannot be generalizable to all Latino fraternities at HSIs. Second, the ethnic identity development of Latino university men outside of the fraternity at the HSI is not addressed. Despite these limitations, the findings from this study may assist student affairs professionals when working with LGLOs, specifically Latino fraternities. Although all Latino fraternities, much less chapters, are not the same, the findings from this study may assist student affairs professionals, such as deans of students, campus psychologists, and campus diversity professionals as they advise and/or work with Latino fraternities or fraternity members on their respective campuses. Moreover, findings from this study may assist Latino/a parents and families as they begin to understand how and why their sons, brothers, and cousins have joined Latino fraternities. The implications of this study are discussed in chapter 6.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development. This chapter provided the methodological framework that was used in this study. Specifically, the guiding characteristics and principles of a qualitative research study were presented in order to lay the

foundation for this study, including the philosophical assumptions, the research approach, participants, data collection procedures, research with Hispanics/Latinos/as, data analysis procedures, design issues, delimitations, and limitations.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to presenting and discussing the profiles of the seven men who participated in this study. These profiles allow the reader to gain a deeper understanding of who these men are as individuals, as students, and as members of Omega Beta Latino fraternity. Each of the seven men also chose various orientations from Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) racial identity orientation model that best described where they viewed their identities at this point in their lives.

CHAPTER 4

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres
[Tell me who you associate with and I'll tell you who you are]
Dicho Latino (popular Latino saying)

This chapter presents and describes the profiles of the seven men who participated in this study to allow the reader to gain a deeper understanding of who these men are as individuals, as students, and as members of Omega Beta Latino fraternity. At the beginning of the study each participant chose a pseudonym that is used throughout the chapter to identify each man. Table 4.1 lists the seven participants in alphabetical order according to their pseudonym. First, a group profile is provided and then individual profiles are presented using quotations taken from individual interviews. Finally, Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) Latino/a racial identity orientation model is included for each participant as each was asked to choose what orientation(s) best described his identity at this point in his life.

Group Ethnic Identification

One of the requirements of the study was that participants not only be members of a Latino fraternity, but also identify as Hispanic or Latino. Each of the seven men was asked to complete a demographic questionnaire and during the individual interviews and the focus group to self-identify with regard to their ethnic identity. Four of the men self-identified as Latino. More importantly, three of them chose to identify with their family's Latino country of origin. Bob, David, Rodrigo, and Siebel identified as Latino, but Bob also identified as Honduran, David as Colombian-American, and Siebel as Cuban. Two of the other men chose to identify solely with their family's Latino country of origin: Bart identified as Guatemalan and Tony as Cuban. Finally, the last participant identified with a combination of his two

cultures: Joe identified himself as Trinirican, a label he created because his parents are from Trinidad and Puerto Rico (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. *Study Participants*

Pseudonym	Age	Class Year	Self-Identified	Time Lived in the U.S.	Primary Language	Level of Participation
Bart	19	Freshmen	Guatemalan	Born in Guatemala; U. S. since 1990	Spanish	Interviews 1-3; Participant Observation; Focus Group
Bob	23	Senior	Honduran & Latino	Born in U.S.	Spanish	Interviews 1-3; Participant Observation; Focus Group
David	24	Senior	Latino & Colombian-American	Born in U.S.	English	Interviews 1-3; Participant Observation; Focus Group
Joe	24	Senior	Trinirican (Trinidadian & Puerto Rican)	Born in U.S.	English	Interviews 1-3; Participant Observation; Focus Group
Rodrigo	20	Junior	Latino	Born in U.S.; moved to Honduras for 5 years then moved back to U.S.	Spanish	Interviews 1-3; Participant Observation; Focus Group
Siebel	22	Senior	Cuban & Latino	Born in U.S.	English & Spanish	Interviews 1-3; Participant Observation
Tony	19	Freshmen	Cuban	Born in U.S.	Spanish	Interviews 1-3; Participant Observation; Focus Group

During my 4 weeks on site collecting data, all of the men participated in various facets of the study. Each man participated in all three individual interviews and participant observation. Six of the seven men participated in the focus group. Unfortunately, one participant was working the night the focus group was conducted. The following profiles

of the participants provide only a small glimpse into who these men are as individuals. The information presented here reflects their families and pre-college experiences. More of their experiences regarding involvement in Omega Beta and how membership in the Latino fraternity played a role in their ethnic identity development can be found in the themes presented in chapter 5.

Bart

> I refer to myself as Guatemalan. My parents left the country for whatever reasons, started with nothing, and sacrificed a lot for me to be here. Me by saying I'm Guatemalan and knowing the political status of the country and the economic state that it's in, I feel proud saying that I'm Guatemalan. And I *always* say I'm Guatemalan.

Bart is a 19-year-old freshmen majoring in architecture. He and his two siblings, an older brother and a younger brother, were all born in Guatemala City, the capital of the country. When they left Guatemala, Bart's family moved in with his grandparents in an apartment complex in the southeastern United States where he was raised by both his mother and father and his grandparents. His mother works at a bank as a loan processor, and his father is a waiter at a restaurant. Neither of his parents attended college.

Bart's family was adamant in teaching him about his Guatemalan roots. His mother and father constantly reminded him about where he was born and raised, the beauty of the countryside, especially the volcano overlooking the city and the cliff down the street from their home. His home is also a daily reminder because they have "*cosas tipicas of el pais* [artifacts from Guatemala]" all around his house. As he became older, Bart began to go on-

line to research his home country and its history. When he was 15, Bart went back to Guatemala to visit his grandparents and was taken aback by how pretty the country really is.

Bart described being raised in a diverse community considering that his family was the only Guatemalan family in his neighborhood. "Our neighbors were from New York [and they] had a Chinese background and the people upstairs were a Black man and a White woman. It was all kinds [of people] and now mainly it's all Puerto Rican."

Bart attended a small public high school in which the racial/ethnic make-up was mainly White until they built a new high school with the same name. When he graduated in 2005, most of the student body was Hispanic. Bart was involved in a variety of activities in high school, including band where he played the tuba, the science club, and community service projects. In the summers he also participated in a summer camp working with small children. I asked him how he became involved in clubs and organizations.

> Well in band, well I guess I did [it] because my older brother was in band, he was in the jazz band, he played the clarinet though. I guess my parents were like, "You need to be like your older brother." So I guess he got me into it the whole band thing. The science club I did pretty much so that people wouldn't think that I was there to waste time.

As mentioned previously, Bart is the middle child of three sons. Bart described how he looked up to his older brother as a role model.

> I would always talk to him no matter what. Whether it was good, whether I knew he was going to yell at me or not, he was like the role model. He was the college boy, he wanted to be an aerospace engineer guy. I wanted to be like him, not just like him, but get as far as he did.

Unfortunately, Bart's brother died when Bart was a sophomore in high school. His brother and some friends went to a TGI Friday's restaurant after work one evening and his brother's friends were drinking but Bart's brother did not drink because he was the designated driver that evening. Ironically, after he drove everyone home, Bart's brother was killed by a drunk driver who ran a red light.

Bart always planned to follow in his brother's footsteps and attend college. When he was applying to colleges and universities, he looked at several in-state and out-of-state institutions. He was looking for institutions with architecture programs. Ultimately he was admitted to three colleges and chose Latino University because it was in state but away from home at the same time. He is the only participant who lives on campus. As a second semester freshmen, he described his experience at Latino University.

> Because for me, most of my friends went to [another state institution] and they say that their institution is boring but they live at home still. I live on campus, so I wake up here and fall asleep here. And there's also no reason why I should miss class. It's different. Because I don't have any of my family with me and I've always been close to my family. So at first I was homesick like crazy. It got pretty lonely. I get more stuff done as a result of being on campus.

I asked him to elaborate on his experience attending Latino University.

> Oh, everyone's Latino here. Over here it's mainly Cubans. But when you come [to Latino University] you have Venezuelans, you have Colombians, you have a lot of Cubans, a lot of Cubans. I've met a lot of people that are actually from Cuba. I never met that before. Actually from Cuba. I met a girl that came [to the United States] on a boat. And that was the first time in my life I had ever seen that. It was amazing. First

> time in my life I seen that. You also have Brazilians, you have Guatemalans. You have all of kinds of stuff here. It's different. I like it, because everywhere you go everyone speaks Spanish. So I can keep practicing my Spanish. Which is good. So I like it.

Bart became a member of Omega Beta in fall 2005. In the beginning, Bart "hated fraternities." He felt that Omega Beta stood out from all the other fraternities on campus, especially because Omega Beta is the only Latino fraternity at Latino University. He described how the brothers of Omega Beta

> were more down to earth, more realistic, more in tune with what they want to do, their ideals and everything. Like helping out the Latino community, community service, and I don't know, it seemed more realistic to me.

As mentioned earlier, every participant was asked to choose the orientation(s) from the Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model that best described their identity. Table 4.2 shows how Bart identified himself within the model. Bart identified both as Latino-integrated and Latino-identified. He feels that both orientations "represent my family [and] they also represent my history and culture." He described how he feels comfortable with all types of Latinos.

> Well I can hang out with Colombians, I can hang out with Venezuelans, I can hang out with Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, it doesn't matter as long as I'm there. So for me I'm more comfortable being with other Hispanics and Latinos.

Bart views Latinos "as a positive thing" and believes that when he meets other Latinos, "they've gone through some stuff [struggles]." In addition, he has a broad lens with regard to Whites and other groups: "Like I don't see a problem with a White man [marrying]

Table 4.2. *Bart's Racial Identity Orientation Model*

Orientation	Lens	Identify as/prefer	Latinos are seen	Whites are seen	Framing of Race
Latino-integrated	Wide	Individuals in a group context	Positively	Complex	Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed
Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)	Broad	Latinos	Very Positively	Distinct; could be barriers or allies	Latino/not Latino
Subgroup-identified	Narrow	Own subgroup	My group OK, others maybe	Not central (could be barriers or blockers)	Not clear or central; secondary to nationality, ethnicity, culture
Latinos as Other	External	Not White	Generically, fuzzily	Negatively	White/not White
Undifferentiated/ Denial	Closed	People	"Who are Latinos?"	Supposed color-blind (accept dominant norms)	Denial, irrelevant invisible
White-identified	Tinted	Whites	Negatively	Very positively	White/Black, either/or, one-drop or "mejorar la raza" (i.e., improve the race

a Spanish girl or a Spanish guy [marrying] a Black girl or White girl, it doesn't matter. It's not a big deal."

Bob

> Being that my grandparents from my Dad's side are Honduran, a lot of times I would identify with them more even though I'm from two backgrounds [Honduras and El Salvador]. But to generalize it better since I was raised more from one background to another being Latino is a more generalized term here in the United States.

Bob is a 23-year-old senior majoring in criminal justice at Latino University. He was born in the southeastern United States and raised by his parents and grandparents. His father

is from Honduras and his mother is from El Salvador. Most of his father's family lives in the United States while most of his mother's family continues to live in El Salvador. Bob's father attended college and is a mechanical technician; his mother is a bank teller. Bob is the older of his parent's two children; he has a younger sister. He described how his family played an important role in his Latino identity.

> Since I was raised by my grandparents, the whole having that type of Hispanic influence is major, even though being born in the United States you have to accustom yourself to American ways, but at the same time try not to forget your Latin roots. I was always instilled that. My grandparents spoke in Spanish at home and the Spanish food and the people I was raised around [whom] I played soccer with all spoke Spanish, too. I remember my roots basically.

Bob described when he first realized his ethnicity as a small boy. His

> elementary school used to give awards for the best student but I actually got an award for being the best student in the Spanish class. And that was something that opened my eyes. I would read Spanish since I was raised in a certain way, speaking Spanish and what not, I was a lot more of the Spanish that was spoken all the time. So that really opened my eyes.

Bob was raised in a large Hispanic community. The majority of the Hispanics were Cuban, but he also had neighbors and friends that were of South American descent, including Colombians, Peruvians, and Ecuadorians. The large public high school he attended was also predominantly Hispanic. He guessed that the enrollment was about 3,000 when he attended. "It was one of the larger high schools [in the area] at that time."

Bob was involved in clubs and organizations in high school. He was a member of S.A.D.D. (Students Against Drunk Driving) and TSA (Technology Student Association). TSA "helped me with my decision for college and what I wanted to do at that time, which was architecture and mechanical engineering." Mostly he was involved in sports. He played soccer all four years, which was a natural extension because he played as a small boy. He was captain his senior year and "it was really good, a real good experience."

Bob always knew he wanted to attend college. He described how his family played an important role in his decision.

> My parents, my father especially. He would drill in my sister and I you need to go to college, you need to make something out of yourself. Look at these other people how they do it. You know you can do it as well. He was actually pushing us to actually further our education so that we can be successful.

Originally, Bob applied to Latino University and was denied. He was accepted to the local community college where "everybody here in [Southeastern City] starts off." He was planning to enroll at the community college but then received a letter from Latino University stating that he was accepted with the condition that he attend summer school at the University. He was elated: "I got accepted and it's a state school, it's a university, it's not [community] college. I guess you can call it prestige going to a university." This was also a welcome relief to his family as they contributed to his tuition via the state's prepaid college program.

As mentioned earlier, Latino University is an HSI where 59% of the student population identifies as Hispanic. Bob described what it is like to be a Latino at Latino University.

> You know what, you're just another person. Here is you're just another person because the majority of people here obviously are Hispanic but it opens your eyes to what type of Latino comes to this university. When you come to a school like this where the majority of people are Hispanic because of their parents or their background, yet they seem more Americanized then the average person.

I asked him to elaborate on what he meant by Americanized.

> The way you speak, the way you dress, the way you act. You know, those type of things. You know maybe it's because I was influenced in other ways as far as my parents and what not, what type of music you listen to or the way you talk, but at the same time I never forgot where I was from. So when I see things here, you start talking to people, it's more like your Hispanic background but you're more, you really don't pay that much attention to much, only when it's convenient to you that you bring it up, that you're Hispanic.

When Bob began attending Latino University, he was not interested in Greek life. His perception of Greeks were students who joined just to get drunk and party, which unfortunately are stereotypes associated with Greek organizations. It was not until he met a brother of Omega Beta in class that he began to inquire about the organization. Even then he still was not sure if Greek life was something he was interested in, "I was always hesitant about it because I didn't know if they were going to be the same as mainstream fraternities."

During the spring 2004 semester he began researching information on Omega Beta. He and a friend attended an informational meeting and he also researched the organization on the Internet.

> I knew what they were like prior to the web site and what they did but I went to them personally to see what they're about and that's how it started. I also want to add the fact that being that it was a Latino fraternity that really opened my eyes a lot, it opened up my interests a lot more. Like I said before, I am really always about keep showing my Latin roots, keep promoting that and not forgetting about that neither. It's just a constant reminder that you know that's where you're from and you're here to help bring people up. It [Omega Beta] really opened my eyes to see how they actually focused on not only the Latino community but they also focus on the overall community itself.

Thus, during the spring 2004 semester Bob became a member of Omega Beta Latino fraternity.

Similar to all the men who participated in this study, Bob filled in the orientation(s) from Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) Latino/a racial identity orientation model that best described his identity at this point in his life (Table 4.3). Bob felt that Latino-integrated best described who he is as a Latino and how he views members of his community. He described why he chose the two orientations when it comes to his views on Whites because as a Latino it "means a struggle, even though being born in this country you still have to fight for an identity, for people to actually understand who you are." He went on to say that many Whites in this country continue to believe in stereotypes associated with being a member of the Latino/a community. "Well I mean it's so often even though you were born in this country

Table 4.3. *Bob's Racial Identity Orientation Model*

Orientation	Lens	Identify as/prefer	Latinos are seen	Whites are seen	Framing of Race
Latino-integrated	Wide	Individuals in a group context	Positively	Complex	Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed
Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)	Broad	Latinos	Very Positively	Distinct; could be barriers or allies	Latino/not Latino
Subgroup-identified	Narrow	Own subgroup	My group OK, others maybe	Not central (could be barriers or blockers)	Not clear or central; secondary to nationality, ethnicity, culture
Latinos as Other	External	Not White	Generically, fuzzily	Negatively	White/not White
Undifferentiated/ Denial	Closed	People	"Who are Latinos?"	Supposed color-blind (accept dominant norms)	Denial, irrelevant invisible
White-identified	Tinted	Whites	Negatively	Very positively	White/Black, either/or, one-drop or "mejorar la raza" (i.e., improve the race

there's always the stereotype but you still gotta fight for what you want. As far like struggle to get into school, get a good job, be successful."

David

> For the most part like I see myself all around as a Latino. I mean even though I was to speak Spanish and you know certain music and food that I like you know you can tell that I'm more Colombian. I kind of stand out at that point. But I mean I'm very much I love being around other Latinos. I kind of see myself as all around Latino and definitely very noticeable as a Colombian.

David is a 24-year-old senior majoring in public relations at Latino University. He was born and raised in the northeastern United States. His father is from El Salvador and his mother is from Colombia, but he was raised mostly by his mother's side of the family. "I was pretty much raised my entire life by my mom's side of the family so I would say that I'm pretty much more Colombian than anything else." He has an older brother who lives in the northeastern United States and an older sister who lives on the west coast. David's father works with David's uncle for a real estate company; his mother stopped working due to asthma. David was raised in a majority Italian neighborhood. He described the environment.

> I mean my neighbors were some of the coolest people. They were really nice. They are actually are very open minded to other cultures so they weren't really like, you know, hating upon anybody Latino but they were very Italian and I was surrounded by a lot of Italian people.

Growing up in a non-Latino/a neighborhood and not being surrounded by other Latinos/as affected how he identified ethnically. He remembered that it was not until sixth grade when

> people were like "Oh, what are you?" and I'm like "What do you mean, I'm American." And it just didn't click in my head. A lot of Latino kids were like "You know, you're Latino; we know that you know how to speak Spanish, but why don't you identify with us?" I mean I was just like I didn't see the big deal at first. It opened my eyes up to being Latino; like I spoke Spanish but never paid attention to what we are. I mean that was when I was getting around, being that Latino . . . and letting everybody know that you were Latino and anything that was Latino, even if it was

> Puerto Rican, I had to pretty much identify to because it was the closest thing we had to Latino at that moment.

It was then when David realized that he wanted to find out more about where his family was from and who he really was. But his mother had a difference of opinion.

> As far as my mom was concerned I was American. Like here in her eyes we're American because she wanted to assimilate. So I mean you get to a point where basically I was trying to find my roots, like what I am about, what's my family all about.

Every so often David has the opportunity to visit his mother's family in Colombia. Even then, they refer to him as "*El Americano* [the American]." He elaborated: "In the U.S. you're seen as a Latino, but when you go back to your country, you're seen as an American. So you're pretty much stuck in the middle somewhere." He admits that although he sees himself as Colombian-American,

> I realized that I am very Americanized. From what I eat to how I talk to the people and kind of languages I've picked up, slang, the music, I mean it's very different when you realize that you gain so much more from other cultures that you see, so technically yes, I am an American.

By the time David was in high school, he was comfortable identifying as Latino. He attended a public high school that was minority majority; most of his classmates were Black, Latino, and Asian. He was active in extracurricular activities including soccer and the Latino club. He became involved with the Latino club because a Puerto Rican teacher was the advisor and he got along well with him. In addition, David liked being around his Latino/a peers.

Latino University was not David's first institution of higher education. He began at University of Massachusetts–Boston and was majoring in communications. A good friend was transferring to Latino University and mentioned to him that Latino University had a great public relations program. David and his mother would often visit the city where Latino University is located because they have family there and they discussed moving there. For David it was an easy decision to transfer: Latino University was a good school, affordable, and most importantly, the weather was better than in the Northeast.

When David considered becoming Greek, he originally looked at Black Greek letter organizations. He attended a coming out show (where the newest members of Black and some Latino Greeks reveal their newest members) and noticed how Black fraternities were strolling and he liked that. He also wondered if there was something similar for Latinos. He began doing research on Latino Greek organizations and at their missions and fraternal colors and shields. He decided that he

> wanted to be in an older organization that's more established and that it already had its reputation and credibility already up. I wanted to join an organization that people know and had heard about. I was kind of more hesitant to start or join another organization; I wanted something that was already established that was beyond me.

In addition, he liked that Latino Greeks also had similarities to Black Greek letter organizations: "I liked the hand signs, I liked the calls, the stepping and the strolling, the [greetings]; I mean all of that caught my eye." In the end, he chose and became a member of Omega Beta Latino fraternity during the spring 2004 semester.

As with all the participants, David chose the orientation(s) from Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model that best described his identity (Table 4.4). For David, identifying

as Latino-integrated was natural. He views other Latinos in an extremely positive manner and has a wide lens when it comes to all Latinos. As he described it:

> I think the understanding of it and then the whole reason I'm really proud of the whole Latino thing and not just Colombian is because when you start integrating yourself with a whole bunch of Latinos and regardless of whether they speak in a different accent or anything like that, it's the same type of umbrella you're underneath.

Table 4.4. *David's Racial Identity Orientation Model*

Orientation	**Lens**	**Identify as/prefer**	**Latinos are seen**	**Whites are seen**	**Framing of Race**
Latino-integrated	Wide	Individuals in a group context	Positively	Complex	Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed
Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)	Broad	Latinos	Very Positively	Distinct; could be barriers or allies	Latino/ not Latino
Subgroup-identified	Narrow	Own subgroup	My group OK, others maybe	Not central (could be barriers or blockers)	Not clear or central; secondary to nationality, ethnicity, culture
Latinos as Other	External	Not White	Generically, fuzzily	Negatively	White/not White
Undifferentiated/ Denial	Closed	People	"Who are Latinos?"	Supposed color-blind (accept dominant norms)	Denial, irrelevant invisible
White-identified	Tinted	Whites	Negatively	Very positively	White/Black, either/or, one-drop or "mejorar la raza" (i.e., improve the race

He also described his views on Whites.

> Well because a lot of the times depending on individual people some Whites that I've come across are very open minded and then a lot of others may be because the sociological structure of the society is somewhat racist. I remember living back North everybody thought I was White and they're like, "You're Italian," and I'm like, "No, I'm Colombian." The moment you identified as Latino they were like, "Oh," and all of the sudden it changed. It went from being, "Oh you're super cool," to "Oh he's a cool Latino," and not just as a cool person. And then when I [moved] here I mean I guess I would say because Latinos are predominant [in this area] I pretty much haven't been able to get that same vibe anymore. I really don't have a problem with White people. It's just a lot of the times depending on where they grew up it really depends.

Joe

> I [identify as] Trinirican and that's how I go by. Because at first I used to be like "Oh, yeah I'm Spanish and Trinidadian." Latino people aren't always the same, it's like you have to be more specific. So it kind of evolved into Trinirican after a while.

Joe is a 24-year-old senior majoring in marketing at Latino University. He was born in the southeastern United States and was raised by both of his parents. Joe is the middle child; he has an older sister and a younger sister. His father is from Trinidad and moved to the U.S. when he was 13. His mother was born in the U.S., raised in Puerto Rico for the first six years of her life, and then moved back to the U.S. His father graduated from college and owns a mortgage company; his mother graduated from high school and works as a media

specialist at an elementary school. Joe was raised predominantly by his mother as his father was frequently out of town for business.

Joe grew up in a typical suburban community. Most of his neighbors were White and there were few families of color. The community in which he was raised was fairly new. "I grew up with a few kids in the neighborhood and we didn't have any playgrounds, there weren't any facilities for us so we grew up around construction sites having rock fights and stuff. Pretty interesting really."

By the time Joe attended high school, the community had become much more diverse. Joe attended two high schools. The first was "mostly a White school" and he "fit in okay because I look White." Later they opened a new high school, which was more diverse, next to his house. The school had students who were "Caribbean, Latino, White, Black, all racially diverse." For Joe, it was pretty difficult going from an all White high school to a racially diverse school. It was not until his junior year that he became more aware of his ethnic identity.

> Like at first I always thought [of] myself to be more Puerto Rican than Trinidadian because I didn't know [much] about Trinidadian so I looked more Spanish. At first I was with the Spanish kids but I'm not Spanish speaking. It was just easier to fit in because I looked Spanish or something similar. But after a while I couldn't speak Spanish so [the Latino students] were like "Oh, you're not really Spanish" type deal. So then I started hanging out with the Caribbean people more and more.

He described how the Caribbean students also inquired about his ethnicity.

> The Caribbean people were like "You don't look Trinidadian, but you're still Trinidadian." So it was kind of hard for me to place myself. It was kind of hard for

me. I kind of felt that when I was around a certain group I'd have to be a certain way. It was kind of hard for me to truly be myself. So I finally got comfortable with it. So I started hanging out more with the Trinidadian people and they took me in pretty well.

Joe was involved in school organizations during high school. He played football and was a member of both the technology club and the senior class club. Joe enjoyed football as it provided him with "more self-confidence." Unfortunately, he turned 15 the same time he played football and his father found him a job. As such, he had to forego football so that he could work. He was still able to participate in the technology club and senior class club when it revolved around his work schedule.

Similar to David, Latino University was not the first institution of higher education that Joe attended. He originally enrolled at the Central University (CU; pseudonym) because he wanted to move away from home and experience something different. In addition, it was the best computer science school in Florida. Later, Joe realized that he was much more interested in business and found that Latino University was starting a new business school so he decided to transfer there. Joe described how he misses the college environment at CU because Latino University is much more of a commuter school. "People come to school and they leave." He added, "You don't really get that college feeling [at Latino University], at least I don't. I don't feel like a student, like work almost. Like come to school, go to class, do my homework and that's it."

Joe began looking into Greek life while attending CU. He remembered walking around Greek row and as he went into each house, none of them felt like home. When he transferred to Latino University, he bumped into an old friend who was a member of Omega Beta Latino fraternity and "right away I was interested." He elaborated: "When I got here all

the brothers were like warm, I felt like we had a lot in common, it felt like I was home. Like this could actually be my second family. I think that was the most important thing." Joe became a member of Omega Beta in spring 2004 and since then "it's been great."

With regard to Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model, Joe chose a variety of orientations that best described him (Table 4.5). Joe felt that his primary orientation was Latino-identified. He described how he has a broad view of all Latinos, but "when I'm asked if I'm Latino I say Puerto Rican, but I don't really think that I'm much different from someone else." He then described why he views Latinos as generic or fuzzy.

Table 4.5. *Joe's Racial Identity Orientation Model*

Orientation	**Lens**	**Identify as/prefer**	**Latinos are seen**	**Whites are seen**	**Framing of Race**
Latino-integrated	Wide	Individuals in a group context	Positively	Complex	Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed
Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)	Broad	Latinos	Very Positively	Distinct; could be barriers or allies	Latino/not Latino
Subgroup-identified	Narrow	Own subgroup	My group OK, others maybe	Not central (could be barriers or blockers)	Not clear or central; secondary to nationality, ethnicity, culture
Latinos as Other	External	Not White	Generically, fuzzily	Negatively	White/not White
Undifferentiated/ Denial	Closed	People	"Who are Latinos?"	Supposed color-blind (accept dominant norms)	Denial, irrelevant invisible
White-identified	Tinted	Whites	Negatively	Very positively	White/Black, either/or, one-drop or "mejorar la raza" (i.e., improve the race

> Some people [can] differentiate more like between Latinos. Where I feel like I really cannot tell [if someone is Latino by] the way a person really looks, but I really can't tell by like, like some I can identify them by the region or from Central America. But some people can look and say "Oh by the way she looks she's got to be from [a certain Latin American country]" but I really can't differentiate, so it seems fuzzy.

Joe then discussed how he does not really view Whites as negative, but his sense of them "is kind of bland." He elaborated, "It's kind [of] the way they act. Like I don't know. It's kind of a stereotype almost. They just seem like kind of uptight, not so much like free flowing. Like kind of narrow minded."

Joe went on to describe his personal views on the framing of race.

> Like me, most people can't tell I'm Trinidadian until I do something. For instance, I can bring out a Trinidadian accent so right there people are like "Whoa, where is this guy from?" It makes me feel that mixed is better, I think everyone should be mixed. I think that one drop kind of makes things a little better.

Rodrigo

> Pride man. Latinos are prideful people. *Orgullo* [Pride]. Just proud of who you are, pride in what you believe in and just everything that was instilled me since I was a kid. Just be proud that you're Latino, never be ashamed of it, and don't let nobody talk you down about it.

Rodrigo is a 20-year-old junior double majoring in psychology and criminal justice at Latino University. He was born in the southeastern United States and at five months of age he was sent to live with his grandmother in Honduras because his parents were just starting off in the U.S. and "they couldn't give [him] all the attention that [he] deserved." He has

three siblings, two who are from his father's side of the family, an older brother who is 32 and a sister who is 28; and from his parents union, a younger brother who is 10 years old. His father is from Venezuela and is a truck driver, and his mother is from Honduras and owns a housecleaning company; neither of his parents attended college.

Although Rodrigo lived at home with both parents, his mother did the majority of the childrearing.

> He [his father] really wasn't that much around, he really wasn't that there for me. But my mother raised me, she did the best she could be, she wasn't a single mother, not to say that my dad wasn't there, but he wasn't there as much.

Rodrigo described the admiration and love he feels for his mother: "My mother is just, I don't know, she can be sick, she can be feeling like it's the worst day but she'll still get up." He believes his mother has set a good example for him and for the way he lives his life. With regard to his ethnicity, his family "always instilled in me to be prideful of where I came from and remember my roots."

Rodrigo was raised in Honduras until the age of five when he moved back to the U.S. to begin school. He remembered how different it was when he moved to the U.S.

> Well, when I was in Honduras . . . everybody treated me like a grandson because they knew about me so I was kind of spoiled because everybody knew about me. So I had a lot of attention there as opposed to when I came back [to the U.S.] that it was just my parents and we don't really have that much family here in the U.S. So I mean I still got the attention of my family, but I didn't have such a big group of people that were all around. There [in Honduras] is a huge family. We are definitely smaller here.

He continues to visit family in Honduras every two years.

Rodrigo was raised in an urban community. His neighbors were either Hispanic, Black, or White. On the contrary, his high school was very different. He attended a public high school where "like 90 percent [was] Hispanic." He was involved in a variety of clubs in high school, but his favorite was the Distinction Club. Most of the members were minority students and the advisor, Mr. Jones, was a member of a Black Greek letter organization. "Through him I learned a lot about Greek life and everything."

Rodrigo chose to attend Latino University because of the proximity to his home. Because his father was a truck driver and would be away from home for weeks at a time, Rodrigo felt that it would be unfair to his family if he attended an institution farther away or outside of the state. "It wouldn't have been fair for me to just leave and put the burden on [my mother] to hold down the house." He added, "I applied to this school, that's where I'm going, that's it. There's no point in even tempting myself [by applying to other in-state or out-of-state institutions] and maybe getting accepted and then having to deny it."

Rodrigo described how there are two types of Latino students at Latino University:

> You have the Latinos who only speak Spanish, straight out of Argentina or Colombia, and it's like they are the most Latino of all of us because they're the ones that grew up in these different countries and have experienced more than I have. Then you have Latinos that have grown up here and who have been socialized differently, exposed to totally different stuff. I mean we still eat similar foods and speak the same language, but we've been exposed to completely different levels of stuff, like from our music to our clothes to the politics, you're exposed to whole different level of stuff.

When Rodrigo began looking into Latino Greek organizations, he began by doing his "homework" and researching various Latino fraternities. He visited various fraternity web

sites and sent e-mails to members of the organizations. Similar to David, Rodrigo also researched various fraternities' shields and colors. "I actually thought that [another Latino fraternity] was pretty cool but there was something about the colors I didn't like." In the end, he chose Omega Beta because they "were the only ones on campus" and Omega Beta "was everywhere in the state, so I began weighing all the options, they're here on campus, they're all over the state, and I have seen some of the alumni and it was just like why battle and fight for something new if there is something already going on here." Rodrigo became a member of Omega Beta during the fall 2004 semester.

With regard to Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model, Rodrigo chose Latino-identified as the orientation that best described his identity (Table 4.6). Rodrigo discussed how Latino-identified best captured who he was because "I identify myself as Latino" and it "means I came from a Central American country or from a Latino background . . . and I speak Spanish." He has a broad lens of all Latinos because he "respects a Peruvian as much as I respect an Argentinean. I don't think any less or any more of them." With regards to his views on Whites he added, "like it depends on how they approach you." Rodrigo feels that if Whites approach a person the right way and they want to work with you, he's fine with it. In his words, "It just depends on how the person approaches you. They can easily be an ally to me and be cool with anybody."

Table 4.6. *Rodrigo's Racial Identity Orientation Model*

Orientation	Lens	Identify as/prefer	Latinos are seen	Whites are seen	Framing of Race
Latino-integrated	Wide	Individuals in a group context	Positively	Complex	Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed
Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)	Broad	Latinos	Very Positively	Distinct; could be barriers or allies	Latino/not Latino
Subgroup-identified	Narrow	Own subgroup	My group OK, others maybe	Not central (could be barriers or blockers)	Not clear or central; secondary to nationality, ethnicity, culture
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White-identified	Tinted	Whites	Negatively	Very positively	White/Black, either/or, one-drop or "mejorar la raza" (i.e., improve the race

Siebel

> I see myself more as an overall Latin American. As a Latino, as a Hispanic. You get that it's just not Cuban, I'm still Cuban above all but you got that whole mix. When people say Latinos, I got to stand up because I'm one of them.

Siebel is a 22-year-old senior majoring in international relations at Latino University. He was born in the southeastern United States and raised by both his parents. He has three younger siblings: a 21-year-old sister and a 19-year-old sister, both of whom attend Latino University, and an 8-year-old brother. His father is Cuban and his mother was born in New

York of Cuban parents, was raised in Cuba, and then moved back to the U.S. Everyone in his family is Cuban with the exception of his grandmother on his mother's side who is Lebanese. Siebel's father attended college and is an attorney; his mother attended community college and is a net enforcement officer with the local police department.

Siebel described how he attributes his ethnic identity to his family:

> Well pretty much my ethnic identity development I owe to my family because they're the ones that brought me up the way they did. When you're little you grow up looking through the world in the lens pretty much created by them, you look at it through their eyes and stuff, you look at it through their past experiences and stuff. So, yeah, I've been shaped by the fact that everybody in my family is Cuban.

He went on to describe how strongly he feels regarding his belief and values as a Cuban.

> Pretty much my beliefs, what's most important to me are my religious views and my political views, but when it comes to that I'm unchanged. I'm a Catholic, right leaning all the way, and that's the way I was brought up.

Siebel was raised in a community where the majority of his neighbors and family friends were Cuban. It was a "close knit" family where "everyone looked out for each other," both with immediate family and extended family (*familismo*). His family is politically active and his father has done a lot of work with the Cuban community. He described it as "there was always something going on at the house."

Siebel recalled the first time he realized his ethnicity was in kindergarten. He attended a Jewish school and everyone in his class was American and spoke English. Siebel's first language is Spanish and the only English he knew "was in the form of Beatles songs"

because "my dad loved the Beatles so that's the only way I could communicate with these people." It was then that he "kind of realized that [he] was a little different."

Siebel attended a private high school where the majority of students were Cuban. He was very active in student clubs and organizations, including Amnesty International, the fishing club, and French club. He also participated in sports; he joined track and field his senior year. He became involved because most of his friends were in the same clubs as well. In addition, he also admits that the clubs was "where all the girls [were] at."

Siebel always knew that he would attend college. He chose Latino University because he "knew that [he] was going to get in." It was also close to home. In addition, he receives a scholarship so "pretty much I'm getting paid to come here." He described that because the institution is a commuter school "there's no real school pride because you just come here to go to school" but he likes it, "it's a good school." As a Latino attending Latino University he blends right in but

> the thing about [Latino University] is not that it's just a Latino school, I mean it's a melting pot, this is an international school, we have Indians, Arabs, we have everybody here. Actually the people that stick out here are the Anglos.

In the beginning, Siebel was not interested in Greek life. He felt that his main objective in college was to go to classes and work. The reason he looked into Greek life was because his father was a good friend with one of the founders of Omega Beta. When he was a freshman in high school "this guy was showing me para [paraphernalia], he would tell me things about the brotherhood, [and] also the mystique about it." Eventually he attended an informational meeting on campus during spring semester 2003. It was also during that semester that he pledged Omega Beta and became a member of the organization.

With regard to Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model, Siebel chose two orientations that best described him (Table 4.7). Siebel chose Latino-identified and subgroup-identified as the two orientations that best described his identity. He discussed why he views himself in both orientations.

> Well, like I said before, I identify very much with my Cuban side but as I've grown older and through this fraternity I've been able to see that I'm also a part of bigger picture. That I'm a Latino, not just a Cuban.

Table 4.7. *Siebel's Racial Identity Orientation Model*

Orientation	**Lens**	**Identify as/prefer**	**Latinos are seen**	**Whites are seen**	**Framing of Race**
Latino-integrated	Wide	Individuals in a group context	Positively	Complex	Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed
Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)	Broad	Latinos	Very Positively	Distinct; could be barriers or allies	Latino/not Latino
Subgroup-identified	Narrow	Own subgroup	My group OK, others maybe	Not central (could be barriers or blockers)	Not clear or central, secondary to nationality, ethnicity, culture
Latinos as Other	External	Not White	Generically, fuzzily	Negatively	White/not White
Undifferentiated/ Denial	Closed	People	"Who are Latinos?"	Supposed color-blind (accept dominant norms)	Denial, irrelevant invisible
White-identified	Tinted	Whites	Negatively	Very positively	White/Black, either/or, one-drop or "mejorar la raza" (i.e., improve the race

Interestingly, he elaborated on why he views Whites as positively.

> Well, everybody I grew up with was Cuban and stuff but they're all White, so White Cubans. Like you [I am light-skinned Cuban] and me, this is what I grew up in. So when you see TV and politics and all that stuff everybody is the same color you are. You might be a little darker shade, but pretty much you can identify with them so that's what I thought growing up was the norm.

Siebel's positive views of Whites are specific to lighter-skinned Cubans and Latinos/as. With regard to White Americans he had a different view.

> Maybe not very positive in the sense. Like, you know, like now I'm older and you see racist things, stuff like that but remember I grew up around light-skinned people. So that's why I can identify with [White Americans] more. But then of course now as I'm growing up I've met people of all different types of races. This is America; until quite recently everything was dominated by Whites. But we have different places where we come from.

It is clear Siebel has different views regarding White Americans and White Latinos/as.

Tony

> I'm real proud to be Cuban and Hispanic. That's usually one of the first things I tell people. I'm real proud of where I'm from, real proud of my background. I'm real glad I'm Cuban.

Tony is a 19-year-old freshmen majoring in mass communications at Latino University. He was born in the southeastern United States and raised by a single mother. His father has not been around since he was two years old. He is the oldest child; he has a

younger brother. Both of his parents are from Cuba. Tony's mother did not attend college and works as an office manager at a dental office.

Although Tony was initially raised in a non-Hispanic community, his mother comes from a large family. "I [had] plenty of cousins around all the time. I consider them almost brothers and sisters." In addition, he elaborated on his family upbringing.

> On a personal level a lot of people say, "Oh you come from one parent only, he comes from a broken home or what not." But as a Cuban family the whole family is so close that, yeah, maybe my dad wasn't there but there was always an uncle or my grandfather. There was always a male, like someone to look up to there. I always had a role model there. In a sense it's not like the textbook family but it works and it worked for me just fine.

Tony attended an elementary school that had a small number of Hispanic and Caucasian students. The majority was African American. He believes that because he was Hispanic he was constantly picked on.

> I was treated pretty different in school. I got picked on a lot when I was younger; it taught me a lot. I was always in fights and I guess that's why I got taken out of my school and transferred to a [new] school.

Tony was pleased when his mother moved back to a majority Hispanic community. He feels that his ethnic identity was enhanced as a result of living in a Hispanic neighborhood and being surrounded by the Cuban culture. Whether it was the people, "Since we were the majority there it was easier for me," or the food, "I'm real big on Cuban food; I love eating Cuban food as often as possible," Tony feels they both contributed to his ethnic identity as a Cuban.

Because his family moved around, Tony attended three different high schools. The first was a technical high school that offered a radio broadcasting program, which is his current college major, but he did not like the school because it was too small. He then attended his home school where he completed ninth grade. He left that school because he "was getting into plenty of problems in that school." Finally he transferred to a newer high school where eventually he completed his high school career. This was a large public high school where a majority of the students were of Hispanic descent. The school had over 5,000 students; his graduation class consisted of almost 900 students.

Tony was involved in clubs and sports while in high school. He played football at both his second and third high schools. Unfortunately, he tore his anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) during his sophomore year. He then became involved with the school's Red Cross and filmmakers clubs. He described how he also became involved in television production.

> I was an anchor mostly throughout middle school so it came naturally; I was never too much of a shy person. So when the opportunity came at [his high school] and they didn't have a sports reporter at the time I was playing on the football team, I was already taking the [TV production] class and the teacher approached me about doing it and I tried out on the first day and then I did [sports reporting] every day from then on.

Tony knew that he wanted to attend college, but he was not sure if he would stay in state or go out of state. He applied to a lot of schools in the southeastern United States and also in California and New York. In the end, his three choices were in state. He was accepted and planned to begin classes at another state school that was away from home, but then he applied to Latino University at the last minute. A few days later, he was accepted to Latino

University and he decided to stay at home so he could attend college nearby. "It was the whole being away from everything I've ever known. It scared me to just take it that quickly." Originally he wanted "to get away from everybody but the school [Latino University] is so big and so large and I'm involved in so many different things that I really don't see anyone from [my high school]." Tony described the campus environment at Latino University:

> I mean this mostly is a commuter school, so for the most part you don't get the feeling of like a college student being from here. There are students that come from California and come here; they are getting the college experience.

In addition, he described what it is like to be a Latino at Latino University: "You fit right in [laughs]. Really no separation of Hispanics from everyone else here. It's just a predominantly Hispanic school."

Tony knew he was interested in Greek life since high school. His initial views on fraternities were the stereotypical images portrayed in the media: partying and drinking and "that's not what I was looking into." As he continued his research he was looking into service fraternities and Omega Beta constantly kept coming up. He also knew that Omega Beta was the only Latino fraternity on campus. He also considered several Black Greek letter organizations, but

> I wanted something with a process, something smaller numbers, tighter group. I was looking into a more small scale fraternity and when it came down to it I went to [informational] meetings for both [Omega Beta and the Black Greek letter organizations] and it was so much easier to fit in with the brothers of [Omega Beta]. They took me in.

He added,

> For it to be a Latino organization and be the only one on campus I knew it was real unique and I saw that there was such a small number [of brothers] and like they're such a tight group because everyone respects the facts that from all ethnicities, we're not all Latinos. That's what pushed me the most towards this organization.

In the end, Tony pledged and became a member of Omega Beta Latino fraternity in fall 2005.

Tony also completed Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) model. He chose Latino-integrated as the orientation that best described his current identity (Table 4.8). He elaborated on why he chose Latino-integrated:

Table 4.8. *Tony's Racial Identity Orientation Model*

Orientation	**Lens**	**Identify as/prefer**	**Latinos are seen**	**Whites are seen**	**Framing of Race**
Latino-integrated	Wide	Individuals in a group context	Positively	Complex	Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed
Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)	Broad	Latinos	Very Positively	Distinct; could be barriers or allies	Latino/not Latino
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White-identified	Tinted	Whites	Negatively	Very positively	White/Black, either/or, one-drop or "mejorar la raza" (i.e., improve the race

> In a sense because I feel like I am in a Latino group. I am Cuban which is a smaller set of that group but in the same sense I am my own individual. I do fall in that group [Cuban] but it doesn't define me.

Tony mentioned that he views Latinos as positive because of the integral role family plays in the Latino/a community.

> I'm real big on family, and Latinos across the board are real big on family. It's usually big families, very close families, grandma lives in the house, the aunt lives in the house, three or four cousins, and I really like that because I'm a big family person. On top of that, it's people that have struggled, most of them have struggled to come to this country and make it here. They come from other countries where they don't have the kind of freedom they have here but they struggle and they come here with English as a second language and they make it. It takes a real strong person to come to this country and learn English because it's one of the hardest languages in the world to learn.

Tony described that he views Whites as complex because "I don't understand some of their values, some of the things they claim to stand for." In the past he has experienced acts of racism from Whites but also admits that some Hispanics also treat Whites poorly. He also believes that only some Whites are racist and he does not generalize it to the whole community. He described his views on race:

> Some people see race as Black and White. Some people see Hispanic and White or Hispanic and Black. But I mean as Latino cultures being so diverse as they are, you have Latinos that are Black, that are White, that are Mulatto, that are in between, that are Indian, that look like Caucasians with light eyes. We go across the board as

Hispanics so it kind of teaches you that race is not something that can be defined in a sentence or two. It's really complex.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce the reader to the seven different men who participated in this study. All of the participants shared various commonalities: most were raised in the southeastern United States, for some Spanish was their first language, and most were involved in clubs and sports activities during high school. In addition, some were first-generation college students and many joined Omega Beta because they were looking for an organization that connected them to the Latino/a community.

Each of the seven men also chose various orientations from Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) racial identity orientation model that best described where they viewed their identity at this point in their lives. Bart felt that both Latino-integrated and Latino-identified best described his current racial identity. Bob and David specifically chose Latino-integrated, but chose from two other orientations when it came to perceptions of Whites. Joe chose a variety of orientations, which represents his dual identity as a Trinirican. Both Rodrigo and Tony each chose one orientation, Latino-identified and Latino-integrated, respectively, that best suited their identities. Siebel felt that Latino-integrated and subgroup-identified best described his view as a Latino, but also his strong identification as a Cuban. Their identity orientation(s) also described how they view Latinos and members of other racial groups and how this dynamic plays out in their everyday lives. Overall, the seven men had one distinctive thing in common: They all shared their pride as members of the Latino/a community.

The profiles of the seven men also provide the reader with information about how the participants came to know their ethnic identities. The chronosystem in the theoretical model I proposed based on Bronfenbrenner's (1995) bioecological theory of human development describes how an individual's life has been influenced and "powerfully shaped by conditions and events occurring during the historical period through which the person lives" (p. 641). The past experiences participants shared in this chapter, such as where they grew up, how they were raised by their families, and their experiences in and out of school, have helped shape who they are as Latinos and how they choose to identify with regard to their ethnic identities.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings from this study. Six themes emerged as having played a significant role in the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at an HSI: family, the HSI campus, other Greeks and Greeks Affairs policies, gender, language, and involvement. Each theme is discussed in depth and is presented in the context of the five systems within the theoretical model that guided this study.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

This chapter is dedicated to presenting the findings from this research study. The findings were derived through phenomenological data analysis (Moustakas, 1994), which yielded six different themes related to the three primary research questions guiding this study: (a) How is ethnic identity defined within the Latino fraternity? (b) In what ways does membership in a Latino fraternity at a Hispanic-serving institution enhance members' ethnic identity development? and (c) In what ways does attending a Hispanic-serving institution enhance the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members beyond the contributions made by membership in the Latino fraternity?

The findings are presented and intertwined with the theoretical model guiding this study that resonated with the experiences participants shared. The revised theoretical model was based on Bronfenbrenner's (1995) bioecological theory of human development. The six major themes that emerged from this study are: family, the HSI campus, other Greeks and Greeks Affairs policies, gender, language, and involvement. It is important to note that some themes include subcategories that pertain to a specified theme. Each theme is presented in the context of the five systems within the revised theoretical model (Figure 5.1):

- Microsystems–Home family, Latino fraternity, and HSI campus
- Mesosystems–Language and involvement
- Exosystem–Other Greeks and Greek Affairs policies
- Macrosystem–Gender
- Chronosystem–Past events (as highlighted in chapter 4).

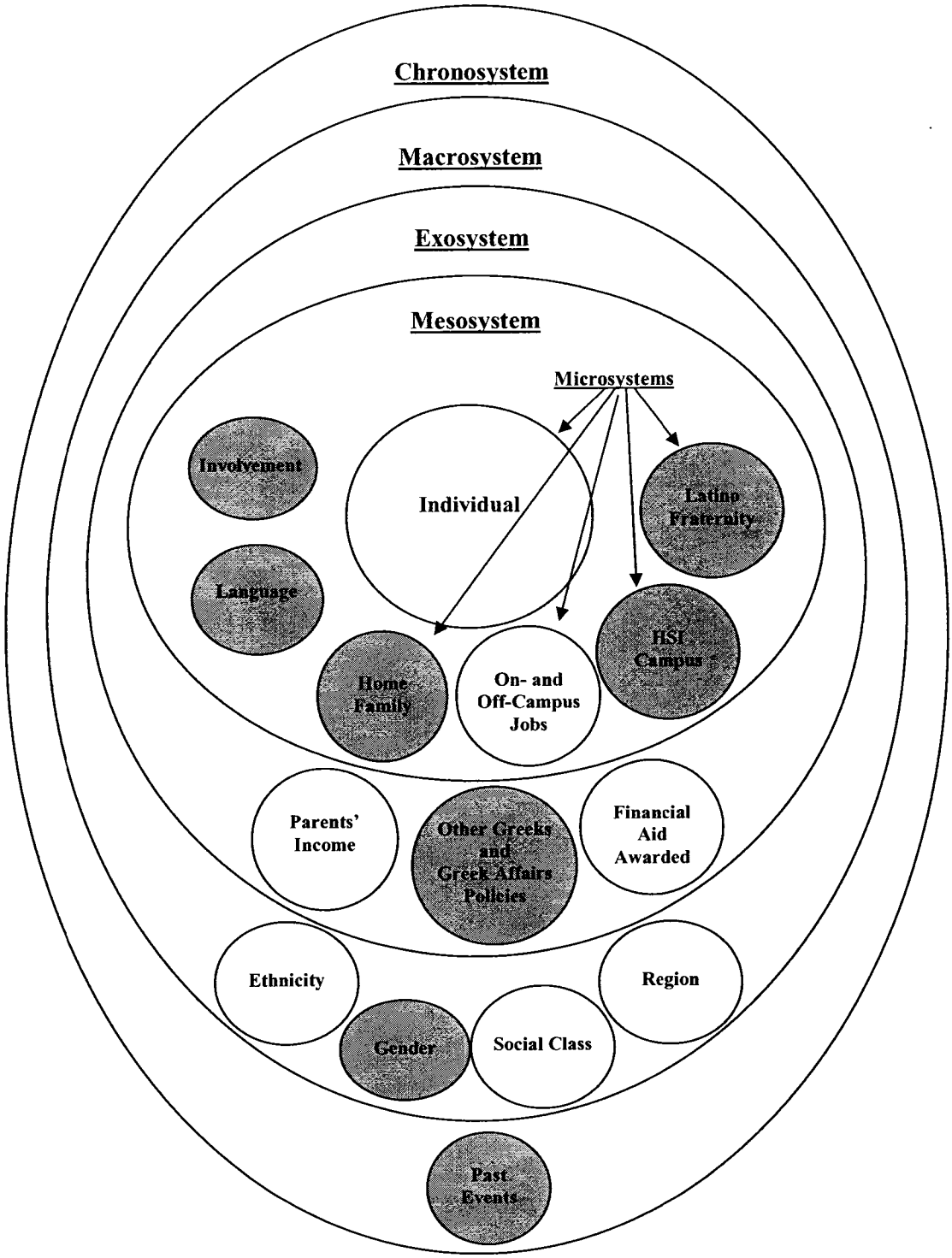

Figure 5.1. Revised Theoretical Model Based on Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory of Human Development informed by Renn's (2003) figure.

The shaded circles in Figure 5.1 are those themes that emerged from the study. Those that are not shaded were my initial assumptions. In chapter 6, I discuss why they were not found to be important.

Microsystems

The microsystem "is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical and material features and containing other persons with distinctive characteristics of temperament, personality, and systems of belief" (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b, p. 148). Three microsystems, home family, Omega Beta Latino fraternity, and the HSI campus, and how they enhanced members' ethnic identity development were clear from interviews and the focus group with the participants. Participants did not hold back when describing their experiences and how membership in the fraternity played an important role in their ethnic identity development. Throughout the interviews the seven men were very candid and I believe because of my insider status (as a member of the Latino/a community, member of a Latino fraternity, and having attended an HSI), they felt extremely comfortable in sharing their stories with me. Through their stories and experiences, the participants painted a descriptive picture of membership in the Latino fraternity as an important part of their ethnic identity development and their lives. First, the theme of family is presented and divided into two subcategories: home family and the Latino fraternity, which will also be referred to as fraternity *hermandad.* Then, the HSI campus theme is discussed.

Home Family

Familia is the very center of Latino culture. . . .
It is the strongest thing about us and the most universal.
Gregory Nava, filmmaker

The participants described how their home families aided in their ethnic identity development. Siebel described how he comes from a "close knit" family and how they played an important role in how he identifies as Cuban.

> Well, pretty much my ethnic identity development I owe to my family because they're the ones that brought me up the way they did. I see pretty much when you're little you grow up looking through the world in the lens pretty much created by them, you look at it through their eyes and stuff, you look at it through their past experiences and stuff. So, yeah, I've been shaped by the fact that everybody in my family is Cuban.

Siebel's family experiences revolved around their coming to the Unites States after being forced to leave Cuba because of the Castro regime. This personal experience led Siebel and his family to be personally involved with the Cuban exile community. In addition, these experiences greatly influenced Siebel's personal beliefs.

> Pretty much my beliefs, what's most important to me are my religious views and my political views, but when it comes to that I'm unchanged. I'm a Catholic, right leaning all the way, and that's the way I was brought up.

His beliefs were influenced not only by family members, but by extended family, including Cuban "uncles" and "cousin types." Thus, *familismo*, which includes extended members of the family, played a significant role in how Siebel chooses to identify.

Tony also illustrated how *familismo* was an important part of his ethnic identity. As mentioned in chapter 4, Tony was raised by a single mother. "I believe my mom's one of the strongest people I've ever met with everything she has been able to do to raise me and my brother." His family also included many cousins that who he considers to be like "brothers and sisters." Although his father has not been around since he was two years old, his extended family provided male role models for him.

> On a personal level a lot of people say, "Oh, you come from one parent only, he comes from a broken home" or what not. But as a Cuban family, the whole family is so close that, yeah, maybe my dad wasn't there but there was always an uncle or my grandfather. There was always a male, like someone to look up to. I always had a role model there. In a sense it's not like the textbook family but it works and it worked for me just fine.

Rodrigo also described how his family's influence played a role in how he identifies as a Latino. His family

> always instilled in me to be prideful of where I came from and my family and everything. The humbleness was also instilled in me so just to be humble. Even if I were to become some rich billionaire, whatever, just to remember where I came from and remember my roots. As far as it helped me identify myself it was just what I saw, everything I saw around me, the way people conducted themselves around me and that's where I got everything from.

Similar to Siebel, Rodrigo's family also played a role in his views of Latin America. "I guess my Dad thinks that I'm older so he can talk to me about more stuff. So we started having conversations about stuff that we never talked about, like politics in Honduras and

Venezuela; he's from Venezuela so it's just different now that he sees me as older and I can handle the conversations."

As described in chapter 4, Bart is the only participant who was living on campus. Latino University is located more than 4 hours from his home, so his connection to family is very important. He described how his family continues to support him daily.

> Well, my home family pretty much when I talk to them everyday, when I call my mom, my dad, my brother even though I talk to my brother in English, because we grew up here it's still a constant reminder you know, like don't forget this or forget that, like certain things, like don't forget to pray tonight because back home religion is a big thing, it's really a big thing, and my grandma is really religious. That's how my family reminds me of where I'm from as well.

Support and encouragement from family were also echoed by Bob and David. Bob described how his family

> always instilled [in] me when I was young to be humble where you come from, but always be a step ahead of everybody else. Step up the game. Be very determined in what you do, make sure you complete what you start because quitting in their eyes is not an option.

Similarly, David reflected on how he was "instilled to just hold up the family values, just keep everything in the family, do the best you can, and get the best education you can and just pretty much everything being positive and pushing forward."

Joe's family provided him with support and encouragement through weekly social gatherings. Gatherings include birthdays, holidays, or just get-togethers for the family to catch up with one another. "And like family is always together, like on the weekends you're

always hanging out with your family. Like your uncles, your aunts, your cousins, everybody gets together." These gatherings are very important to him because they allow him to not only spend time with family, but also to seek their advice, such as when he decided to transfer from the Central University and attend Latino University.

Fraternity Hermandad

> *Brotherhood is not a right, it's a duty.*
> Jose Julian Marti, poet and father of Cuban independence

Omega Beta Latino fraternity was established by four men at Latino University in fall 1997. Participants provided me a with a variety of documents that outlined the history of the chapter at Latino University and the organization nationally, including a fraternity pamphlet, chapter web site, and a flyer describing Omega Beta, which included a national map highlighting where chapters of Omega Beta are located. Through document analysis, I discovered that the Omega Beta chapter at Latino University had struggled to maintain members. After Omega Beta's initial establishment in 1997 the chapter died until 1999 when two men re-established the chapter. Since then, the chapter has seen a steadily growing number of members.

Omega Beta is nationally known for its fundraising and community service projects. According to its history book, Omega Beta established a foundation to raise funds for scholarships and grants to be awarded to Latino high school students and college students that exemplify the leadership qualities of Omega Beta members. The chapter members at Latino University have also volunteered in their local community. Projects such as the Omega Beta leadership workshop, campus movie screenings, and volunteering at the local YMCA have allowed members to contribute back to the campus and local communities.

The participants in this study constantly described how Omega Beta has provided them with a second family at Latino University. As the chapter website states, "[Omega Beta] serves as a source of support for student and professionals in pursuit of an education or career while promoting Latino unity" (Omega Beta, 2006, ¶ 5). Participants felt the Latino unity they experienced as members was a "natural extension" of their home families. David elaborated on how the fraternity is a second family to its members.

> We're all mostly from Latino families or some kind of connection to Latinos eventually in our life. We struggle to find out where we're from and then when we want to actually belong to something that kind of help us get closer to it.

Joe added how strangers automatically become family once you are a member of the fraternity.

> It's weird when you meet strangers but you feel like they're family. You really do feel the bond, even when you're just an interest, and when you become a brother it's even more so, [I] definitely feel that with any brother I meet, you definitely feel that. It doesn't matter where you are. Wherever there's a brother, there's a friend.

He elaborated:

> I would say the thing I appreciate the most, what I value the most is the brothership here in the fraternity. Anywhere I go if there's a brother, then he's my brother. It's like instant love you know. Definitely like an instant love between brothers. It felt [like] home, like I felt home right away, like these are like my family members. Because they share the same values. Family is important. You take care of your family first.

Rodrigo became a member of Omega Beta in spring 2004. He felt that because Omega Beta was established "for Latinos, like this was aimed for us," the fraternity family has allowed him to feel "comfortable." He added, "I was always told by the fraternity to think of the brothers as your family, so when you go in [become a member] those are going to be your brothers. So what better organization to be in than a Latino organization?"

The Omega Beta *hermandad* also assisted members with their ethnic identity. Bart described how the fraternity *hermandad* enhanced his ethnic identity.

> The fraternity as a family reminds me first off because we're all Latino, we're all Hispanic, we're all from different backgrounds and sometimes when we get together we start talking and joking around and we start talking about food and the countries and the way things run in the countries. When we talk about that [it] reminds me again of my ethnic identity and where I come from.

As mentioned in chapter 4, Joe identifies as Trinirican. He discussed how throughout his high school years he sought out members of the Latino, Caribbean, and Trinidadian communities to better determine how he would choose to identify. Joe reflected that the brothers of Omega Beta have assisted him in exploring the Latino side of his ethnic identity.

> [Brothers will say], "You know you're Spanish, there's things you have to like to start embracing." The brothers are bringing me back [to it] so like definitely has helped me be more Latino. Like more connected to like the culture. They'll like to talk to me in Spanish and if I have a question in Spanish they'll like teach me how to say something. Or introduce me to a new food, like my brother Arnie [pseudonym brother name], me and him, he always wants to show me more Latin food and these guys like

> to take me to all these places [Latino restaurants]. Each brother has like a different influence.

The *hermandad* within Omega Beta has also assisted Siebel with how he identifies. Although he has always identified as Cuban, the fraternity has also assisted him in identifying as Latino.

> The thing of the fraternity, they helped me see a lot more of who I am. You know that's helped me look to more of a broad definition of who I am instead of just being Cuban. Like my friends and family are mostly Cubans. Well, the thing about the fraternity is that it opens up doors to different areas and backgrounds. The brothers have helped me see myself as a Latino.

He elaborated:

> Now, [because of] the fraternity I've been more exposed now to my Latino side overall, so the fraternity has helped me out big time because thanks to these guys that come from all over the place we still share that same common bond, you know that we're all Latinos. That has helped out, too, because you have that family feeling within that group. It just pushes you towards that Latino, that Latin unity type thing. The more people that you meet that have this common cultural identity, the more that you can develop as a Latino in that group.

Similar to Siebel, other participants described how membership in the fraternity has allowed them to explore their identities outside of their nationalities. Bart identifies as Guatemalan, but

> pretty much I think a little bit different because of the fraternity. Because we're based on Latino unity and it seems that before Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans were all separate, and now I see it more as we're all pretty much from the same roots anyway.

David noted how Omega Beta also assisted him in seeing outside his identity as a Colombian-American.

> I joined the organization because I feel like I'm in a circle of people that even if they're not all Colombian, they do have that love of their family's culture. The fraternity basically taught me to be broader with that because I always [wanted] to meet more Latinos that weren't Colombian and I started to open up more, appreciate more the different cultures of the subcultures of Latinos that we have. A lot of it it's kind of like going back to the whole family thing.

Participants shared varying opinions on how ethnic identity is defined by Omega Beta Latino fraternity. Siebel felt that "individually, we all come from different parts of the world, we all have different ancestors" but "as a group we all share that same cultural bond." Joe elaborated:

> We are just diverse, multicultural. Not all brothers are Latino. I say we're multicultural. That's how I would define us. We kind of ignore each other's ethnicities and [focus on] our fraternity [as] an Omega Beta. Yeah, it's like you're my brother so we came from the same family. Definitely gives you a sense of family.

David provided a colorful definition.

> I like to see it as a big pot of jambalaya mixed ethnicities and even though it is predominantly Latino, the lovely part about it is that anybody who's involved has a love or a deep devotion for the Latino community at one level or another whether

> they are Latino or not. Even brothers that don't even speak Spanish or [are not] even Latino at all have a fondness for the culture.

In addition, Siebel added how ethnic identity is defined by Omega Beta:

> Well, I mean, I guess it's the culture that defines us. We all have something that brings us together somehow. Whether it be part of the region or language for us, it's our religion, it's our language. It's all of that. I would have to say that I think that's what defines us.

Many Latino Greek organizations have a membership intake/educational process in order to become members. The process is usually completed in an academic semester or less and it is during the process that initiated members learn the history, values, activities, and traditions of the organization. Throughout the process members also learn more about themselves and their ethnic and cultural heritage. In addition, initiated members are involved in group activities and projects with members of their line, learn valuable academic and leadership skills, and ultimately gain a sense of camaraderie and family as brothers. Although members of Omega Beta could not share the exact nature of their educational process, they did share how it enhanced their ethnic identity. Joe noted, "I would say that our educational process kind of helps you bring out the Latino in you, I guess that's the best way to say it." Bart added, "You prove a lot to yourself pretty much [during the educational process]. You learn a lot about yourself."

Rodrigo went through his educational process in spring 2004. The educational process allowed him to learn more about the Latino/a culture and the meaning of family within the fraternity.

> Well, there are certain things in our process that we have to learn a lot about Latino culture. Like, for example, we have to learn the flags and capitals of all the Latin American countries and I pretty much knew them already. If somebody were to step back and just look at [Omega Beta], look at it for what it is, you go through this [educational] process and you start hanging with these people and it's like BAM, all of a sudden you're family. But if you look at beyond that it's just hard [going through the educational process], the time you spent with the guys while you're on-line, you can't get any closer to somebody in that time because I barely knew my line brothers and now I know my line brothers inside and out. It's scary!

Tony elaborated on his self-reflection through his educational process.

> Through the [educational] process you're always asked to embrace, like you're always asked where you're from, your background, your parents, [the brothers] get to know you a lot through your process. It got me to open [up] a lot and really look into, I'm not sure how I can say it without giving anything away. I learned a lot of my family history. Through the process you have to learn a lot about the history of the fraternity and I had to go back and learn a lot of history about myself and be able to share that with everyone. So I really had to go back farther in my family tree than I ever expected, than I ever had before since I really had no reason to before. Especially through the process you have a lot of time to look at yourself and realize what you value and what you don't value.

Another integral aspect of the Omega Beta educational process is the coming out show, which is when members have completed the educational process and crossed, but they have yet to reveal who they are to the campus community. Rodrigo described how "you can't

even wear [Omega Beta Greek] letters on campus. We don't even let [the newest brothers] wear colors, it's like you're just another guy. That amps it up more and makes it more of a show." Essentially, no one on campus knows that you have become a brother of Omega Beta until the member(s) go through a coming out show.

Tony recently completed the educational process in fall 2005 and described his coming out show.

> So basically before your coming out show you can't really wear [Greek] letters or really can't tell anyone on campus because it's kind of like when you're reintroduced to the campus as a brother. In our [coming out shows] we come out with our faces covered in full uniform so you can't really tell it's us. Lines come out in masks; some will come out in bandanas only; it depends. Your line chooses how it is you want to come out dressed. We came out in our boots, fatigues, [and] our hoodies [hooded sweatshirts], which is basically our uniforms, and our bandanas. My favorite moment was when we do [our greeting], so we did our three [greetings] that we learned and then our [greeting] that we made up, which is our line [greeting]. We learn our Alpha chapter [greeting]; every brother learns to pay respect to the first chapter. Then there's a national [greeting] that every brother knows. And then there's our chapter [greeting], which every brother knows. And then there's the [greeting] that only me and my line brother know, which is our line [greeting]. When you're done with that [greeting], then the brothers get together and with our pledge master, he'll grab the Ace [the first person in a line] because it goes in order by line brother, he's the number one, so he comes out first and say, "You may have know him as *Tony*, but we know him as *Montañero* [pseudonym brother name]." And then that's when I can

take off my mask and my bandana and introduce themselves. That was the best moment for me.

Throughout the interviews and focus groups, the participants shared how they enjoyed engaging in the fraternity greeting. Rodrigo described it: "You prepare so long for it and you practiced so hard for it . . . you don't want to mess up because when you look bad, you make the chapter look bad." It is important to note that Omega Beta does not step or stroll, but they perform greetings at coming out shows, National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) step shows, and brother bonding events.

On Saturday, February 18, 2006, I had the opportunity to observe an Omega Beta greeting that was performed at a neighboring college's annual NPHC step show. Although the brothers who were performing the greeting were not the participants in this study, it was important that I observe how the greeting is performed because the participants in this study feel that it is an important part of their identities as members of Omega Beta.

Before the step show began, I met up with my participants. Two of the seven participants of this study were in attendance and I sat with them and their fraternity brothers. They also introduced me to their brothers from the neighboring university where the step show was taking place. Because of the nature of the event, I wore my fraternity baseball jersey, which includes my organization's Greek letters. My participants asked various questions regarding the jersey such as where could they purchase a similar jersey and if the company from which I purchased my jersey also carries Omega Beta paraphernalia.

The step show took place in the open-air patio of the student union at a local university. The patio faces the campus lake and is surrounded by various food vendors. The show began with the traditional Black Greek letter organizations performing their step

routines. After two performances, Omega Beta marched on to the stage. They were dressed in the fraternity colors and were wearing either Omega Beta t-shirts with Greek letters or jackets or both. All of the members embraced one another with their arms locked around the chest of the man directly in front of them. This is known as "locking up." Their heads are placed on the necks of the man directly in front of them. The first man (the Ace) looked directly toward the audience and his arms were locked and raised to form one of the Greek letters of the organization. The Ace began with a command for the greeting, which was followed by every man in the line. The men continued to march in a line, then in circles, and then stopped, facing forward to the crowd. They started by stating the fraternity mascot in Spanish. Then the Ace whispered a message in the ear of the man directly behind him. This whisper was then repeated by every man on the line until it reached the end of the line. The members then stepped back, separated, and clapped their arms on the sides of their bodies and began yelling out fraternity information and their founding date and institution. Then the men stated phrases in Spanish and then locked up again and marched off stage.

The performance was over in less than 10 minutes, but I saw the excitement in the eyes of the Omega Beta study participants. They rushed their brothers who performed and congratulated them for a job well done. They then proceeded to take a variety of pictures in which they were doing their hand sign. As mentioned in chapter 2, hand signs are used by LGLO members to display pride for their respective organizations. After pictures, the participants and I stayed through the rest of the step show and then left once it was over.

The HSI Campus

Latino University is a unique institution. It is a beautiful urban campus seated in the heart of a metropolitan city in the southeastern United States. The university is surrounded by

colorful, modern buildings and is adorned with palm trees anywhere one looks. The campus has baseball and football facilities and also includes a lake in the middle of campus. No matter the time of day, the campus is constantly busy with student and faculty traffic alike.

One of the more popular spots on campus is the student union. During my 4 weeks on site I spent considerable time observing the campus culture at the student union. Students greet each other with the customary kiss on the cheek, which is part of the Latino/a culture. As a member of the Latino/a community and because Latino University is an HSI, I was not surprised by this. On the contrary, I found it reaffirming to see members of my community partaking in this cultural tradition.

The student union definitely caters to the Hispanic student community. The union offers Latino/a-style fast food, drinks, and snacks, such as *pastelitos de guayaba* (pastries filled with fruit) and *café con leche* (Cuban coffee with milk), which are common in the Hispanic community in which the campus is located. The union also houses the university's theater, a computer center, most of the Division of Student Affairs offices, a travel agency, a small supermarket, the university bookstore, and even a hair salon that provides manicures, pedicures, and tanning bed services. On one particular evening, students (and possibly non-students) were taking part in salsa lessons at one end of the union. I was later told by several of the participants that there are salsa lessons in the union every night. Bob described the student union environment.

> When it comes to actually just sitting in [the student union] or in the library or what not, it's a constant reminder that [we're] actually in [Southeastern City] but at a Hispanic-serving institution. I mean it's a constant reminder. You got [name of local Latino fast food vendor in the student union], yeah I want *arroz con frijoles* [rice with

beans] with *platanitos* [plantains], let me get a *café con leche*, you know stuff like that. And then it's always there, there's no way to avoid it. There's no way to avoid it [laughs]. Like for example at night, [there are] salsa classes, people are always there talking Spanish, and the majority of the people there are Hispanic, but then you got people from other cultures as well.

I observed that students are extremely friendly with members of the custodial staff (both men and women) who are majority Hispanic at Latino University. They greet them with a handshake or hug and the customary kiss on the cheek. In addition, they speak in Spanish asking about their day and joking around with them.

What I found most interesting was how most students in the union sit in groups depending on club or organizational affiliation. The mainstream Greek letter organizations always sit on the right side of the union. Omega Beta and the Latina sorority members are usually hanging out with each other or with members of Black Greek letter organizations on the left side of the union. This is also the same area where most Asian students congregate. David described the separation of groups: "It's good and bad because at the same point. Even though this school has a high percentage of Latinos, all these minority organizations see the differences between the mainstream orgs and us, and it kind of separates the school."

Students who play card games, fantasy role-playing games, arcade games, and those interested in anime congregate in an eatery on the other side of the union. At several other campuses I have attended or worked at, students from racial/ethnic groups usually congregate with one another, but on a campus where 59% of the student population identifies as Hispanic, groups are separated by club and organizational affiliation.

With all that Latino University has to offer, it was no surprise participants described how the university enhances their ethnic identity development. For many of the men, it offered the opportunity to be around fellow Latino/a college students. Tony said, "You fit right in [laughs]. [There is] really no separation of Hispanics from everyone else here. It's just [a] predominantly Hispanic school." Siebel added, "You kind of take it for granted [being Latino at Latino University]." Bart described how Latino University allowed him to be who he was.

> It reminds me of who I am, where I come from, but that's pretty much it, there's not that much to it. We're all Hispanic [at Latino University]. We speak Spanish most of us and we also have that in common. I'm surrounded by nothing but Hispanics and that's a good feeling.

Bob described how the university enhances his ethnic identity.

> I would say it's more of knowledge of I'm Hispanic, I understand I was born here [in the United States] but there is always that label that you're Hispanic. You know this campus has actually made me realize that there's a lot more pride in actually being Hispanic than what people actually see here. Not that I never had it before but basically just boosted it up.

Rodrigo added,

> We're at [Latino University] and everyone's just Latino. You know whether they show it off or whether they exhibit it or not, they are. So you really can't help but to just feel it. Even they're a little different than you, they're still Latinos so you really don't ever feel out of place here. Nothing reminds you more of it.

Other participants shared how the campus really has no effect on their ethnic identity development. Joe said, "I don't think it's helped me develop at all as a Latino. In general no one cares to expand your Hispanic identity. It's assumed that you are Hispanic and assumed that you're already maxed out [as identifying as Latino]." Siebel described how his ethnic identity has not been challenged at Latino University.

> Okay, the school itself really hasn't done much. Like I mean, I guess I've grown up in a city where everyone is pretty much the same. With me as a Cuban in a Latino fraternity at a Latino institution, pretty much what I would say to that would be at [Latino University] you got a lot of Cubans here, but it's mainly a Latin American school. We all have the same background [Latino]. This school, the majority of the people here are Cuban or Latin American, so we have the same background, so it's not like you're going to be challenged. You got way different ideas here than what Cubans are used to. You have an influx of ideas but that doesn't really affect you. The thing that affects me the most here is mainly the fraternity. That's even more in your face than the school.

Although the student population at Latino University identifies as 59% Hispanic, the university also caters to students from non-Hispanic backgrounds. In 2004, the racial/ethnic breakdown of non-Hispanic students was 14% Black, 4% Asian, and 21% White. Siebel said, "This is a very multicultural [campus], you have people from all over the world at this school so everybody respects everybody else." Bob described how this has also influenced his views about other groups on campus.

> Well, as far as that, I mean it's more of an understanding of cultures. I've been influenced a lot by [other Hispanics and non-Hispanics on campus] but it's more of

> an understanding of certain people and where they come from because it's a lot more diverse here. You know the amount of people you meet here is not only that they're from Hispanic backgrounds but it's also from other cultures.

As mentioned in chapter 4, David transferred to Latino University from the University of Massachusetts–Boston. He described the pride he has for attending Latino University.

> I always joke around telling people that I joined the national historic Latino University because there really is not a Hispanic nationwide known Latino University. Like this is the Latino Harvard. So to me it's pretty much kind of like an honor . . . it's kind of like my little honor of saying, yeah, I went to this school. Attending an all predominant Latino University was a God's gift to us. I love this university.

Mesosystems

Bronfenbrenner (2005a) described how the mesosystem "comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person . . . in other words, a mesosystem is a system of microsystems" (p. 148). Language and involvement were two mesosystem themes that emerged from the interrelations of various microsystems. Language emerged from the interrelation between participants' home families and the Latino fraternity; involvement emerged from the interrelation between the Latino fraternity and HSI campus. These two themes were described by participants as having an influence on their ethnic identity development.

Language

Most of the seven participants in this study speak Spanish. For many, it was the first language they learned at home. During most of the interviews and focus groups the participants spoke in English. When they did speak Spanish, it was infrequently and usually related to Latino/a food or words or phrases that could not easily be translated. Nonetheless, participants described their affinity for the Spanish language. As mentioned in chapter 4, Bart moved to the United States from Guatemala. He learned how to speak Spanish from his parents. He described how important it is for him to continue speaking his native language.

> Growing up here, my parents made sure I knew how to speak Spanish. Even though I don't speak it perfect because I learned it from them, but as long as I maintain [it] is what matters the most. And I think that's every Hispanic's goal when they move here is to maintain the language. [Spanish] helps me so I don't forget from where I come from.

David had a different experience growing up. Because his mom wanted him to assimilate with the larger American culture, his first language was English. As such, he began speaking Spanglish as a way to connect to the Latino/a community. He described how it was not until he became older that he realized that he needed to learn and maintain Spanish.

> Subconsciously I knew Spanish but I never really got into it until middle school when I started like perfecting my Spanish. But other than that, before I [spoke] Spanglish. I was the only one speaking Spanglish because I just didn't know how to pronunciate some of the [Spanish] words. Later on I figured out all the words for everything. I myself don't like using Spanglish unless it's informal conversation with someone.

He also commented on speaking Spanish at Latino University. "I think at [Latino University] a lot of people mostly speak Spanish. So you're able to speak in your native tongue [and] you have that deep connection."

The fraternity also impacted participants' knowledge of Spanish. For example, Bob described how knowing Spanish is an essential aspect of the Omega Beta educational process.

> I would say mostly through our educational process. We encounter certain parts where we actually obviously have to speak in Spanish to understand what you're saying in Spanish. At the same time, what we do our tradition, which is our [greetings]. Some of our [greetings], we have Spanish words in them as well, where we actually say them and you obviously have to understand what you're saying.

David elaborated on how Spanish is used throughout the educational process.

> We have certain information and education that's in Spanish. At one level you have to be able to speak some words in Spanish and know what they mean and regardless of people who aren't Latino and join [Omega Beta]; they end up learning something out of it. When we're together we speak Spanish and Spanish is kind of like our family language. So that's why we can identify to that.

Joe's first language was not Spanish. While growing up his Puerto Rican mother would speak Spanish to Joe and his siblings at home, but he always spoke English. He does, however, understand Spanish, which has assisted his understanding and comprehension of the language. He reflected on how it has affected his ethnic identity: "People don't think I'm Hispanic because I don't speak Spanish. It kind of hurts me a little bit." He described how he relies on his fraternity brothers to assist with his learning of the language.

> Like when [the fraternity brothers] go into Spanish mode, it's hard for me to keep up. Like I've grown more, like I'm developing more of a knowledge base but I still can't keep up with them so I kind of feel like that, as soon it goes Spanish, like I feel left out but they always include me right after. So like they'll speak in Spanish but then it's like they already know [that] they'll say it in English and I get it and it's funny. That's kind of like how my knowledge base has grown because it's kind of like translating for me you know. So I hear it and then they tell me so I kind of get it next time.

Bob elaborated on how the fraternity assists Joe with learning Spanish.

> You know it always helps the fact that you know one brother doesn't know Spanish well but if you keep on studying it he'll understand it, he'll know what it is and then from there the interest of learning and speaking Spanish will come into play. I talk Spanish with some of my brothers and the same thing at home. Home is always Spanish anyway. So there's sometimes [we speak] English but mostly Spanish is the predominant language there. It's always there [so] you won't forget. As much as you speak it, it's better for you.

Because many of the participants speak Spanish at home, the fraternity provides dual extensions, both as family and in speaking Spanish. In Siebel's words: "I'm with people that speak Spanish. They're different people than just my [home] family. Like now I have this thing [connection] to a certain group." Rodrigo also described how he enjoys the opportunity to speak his native tongue with fraternity brothers.

> It is interesting to be in a chapter meeting, to be in an organization that I can speak Spanish to fellow members. That's probably why I chose to go into this fraternity and

> try to hang out with people that speak Spanish [which allows me] to be more involved in that side of our Latino culture.

As mentioned earlier, Omega Beta engages in various fundraising and community service projects throughout the academic year. One of its most popular programs is working with youth at a local YMCA. Bob described how knowing Spanish was integral when working with youth and their families.

> It was interesting that you know all these kids [and] their parents, most of their parents are Spanish-speaking, and we were able to speak with them. The kids themselves they enjoyed the fact that we were helping them out and what not. But the parents seem to have a lot more of a respect for us [because of] the fact that we were able to communicate with them and a lot better than any just random person and they actually appreciated the fact that we took time out of our busy schedules to help them out.

Involvement

The participants described how being involved was an important part of their fraternity and collegiate experience at Latino University. As described in chapter 4, many of the participants had been involved in clubs, organizations, and sports activities during high school. The fraternity and other campus clubs were natural extensions of those experiences. Bob shared how "as a member of my organization I feel a lot more involved. If it wasn't for the organization I think I wouldn't be as involved per se because it would be just coming to school and going back home." Rodrigo elaborated: "The fraternity helped me get involved in a lot more stuff and get to know a lot more people."

Although Latino University is a large institution, both in size and in enrollment, the university is more commuter in nature. Participants described how the fraternity provided them with a sense of belonging on campus. In Siebel's words,

> Well, see like I said before, this is a commuter school and if it wasn't for the fraternity I'd just come to school and leave. I actually find myself staying here and talking to people [and] organizing events, I'm now the president of our chapter so I got a lot of things to do. Normally I would be like out of here but now I got different things to do. I come and I table [participate at the fraternity information table] during the week and just hanging out in school and getting involved.

He added,

> If it wasn't for the fraternity I probably wouldn't be involved in any extracurricular activities here [at Latino University]. Just because I really wouldn't make the time for it. It's just if I wasn't in the fraternity I wouldn't think about it because I wouldn't be spending any time in school besides the time that I have to be here.

Tony also felt that the fraternity contributed to his involvement on campus.

> I feel like I'm more involved. Outside of [Omega Beta] if I hadn't joined, I really don't see myself doing anything else on campus. Now that I'm a member like I've seen what other brothers are doing, like they're in this club or that club. Now I want to get involved in those clubs. Now I want do other things on campus. But if I hadn't joined this fraternity I really don't see myself doing anything but coming to school and going back home. Now I actually want to move on campus; I didn't want to do that before.

Bart became a member of the fraternity in fall 2005. During my time on site, he was elected as the vice-president of the Omega Beta chapter at Latino University. There is a common saying told to members of both Latino and Black Greek organizations once they have crossed: "The easy part is over, now the real work begins." This statement rang true for Bart.

> It's just a lot of stuff. It's not fun and games like a lot of people think. It's actually work, a lot of work, paperwork and what not. Responsibility, you have to have a level of professionalism. It's a lot of balancing with homework and projects. It's pretty much balancing your time, managing your time wisely. Using every minute and every hour the way it needs to be.

Participants were also involved in non-Greek clubs and organizations. Many were members of the Student Programming Council, the Hispanic Heritage Month Committee, and other clubs catering to their academic majors. In addition, several were also part of the university's Interfraternity Council (IFC), which represents all fraternities at Latino University.

Bob is a member of several organizations. He is past president of Omega Beta Latino fraternity and has served on the Student Programming Council (SPC). His main focus within the SPC was the Hispanic Heritage Month Committee. His goal in the committee was to "be more involved and promoting Hispanic heritage through SPC as far as whatever they could promote through the school."

Joe described how before becoming a member of Omega Beta he was not as involved at Latino University. He described how his involvement with Omega Beta led to his being involved in other campus organizations.

> If you want to look into a club or something like that you definitely feel more introduced to it. Like you don't feel so intimidated. Just step up to it and see what it's about. You get to know events on campus, because you want to show yourself on campus, show that your fraternity is involved. You want to just start being involved. And so it starts snowballing and stuff.

Other members also became much more involved on campus due to their membership in Omega Beta. During my time on campus Siebel became the president of the chapter in addition to being a member of the American Conservative Student Union and the Free Cuba Foundation. On campus, Tony was also involved with the Student Programming Council, but he was also involved off campus with the local YMCA and often volunteered his time at his former high school by assisting his former television production teacher as a tutor to current high school students enrolled in the class.

Rodrigo felt differently regarding his involvement on campus. He noted how he feels "less involved on campus" because his involvement focuses specifically on the fraternity or other programs geared at Latinos and other minorities. He elaborated:

> Once I got involved [with Omega Beta] I started looking towards things to do that emphasize the Latino culture and minorities in general. So it definitely gave me a push to go into things that are dealing with the Latino community but also just with minorities in general.

He described that because he is so heavily involved in programs geared to Latinos and other minorities, he feels that Omega Beta as a whole is less involved with general university programs.

> Just because you get involved with so much other stuff here or through the fraternity you kind of miss out on some of the things going on at the university. Like there's a lot of events that the university throws that sometimes we have meetings so we can't go and so we can't participate in. So we may not be as involved at the university level but we are very involved through our organization.

Exosystem

Exosystems are settings in which the individual does not actively participate, but in which events occur that influence an individual's development. As discussed throughout this study, Omega Beta is the only Latino fraternity at Latino University. With the exception of Omega Beta, all the fraternities at Latino University are mainstream organizations. These are the same fraternities that could typically be found on most college and university campuses across the nation. Because of the high percentage of Hispanic students at Latino University, a majority of the members in the mainstream fraternities are Hispanic. Tony shared his thoughts on Hispanics in mainstream organizations.

> I believe since this school is such a large part Hispanic that there would be no mainstream organizations [that could] survive without Hispanics in this school. So they don't really hold back against letting Hispanics in [the mainstream organizations]. I guess it's just mass numbers.

During my time on site, I was told about a new Latino fraternity on campus, but they had only achieved club status and were not yet recognized by the Office of Greek Affairs or the Interfraternity Council. Tony provided a vivid example of what's it like to be a member of the Interfraternity Council.

> What hit me real hard the other day was I went to my first interfraternity council here on campus and I walked in to represent [Omega Beta] so it was the first time going to an IFC meeting and wow did I realize I was Hispanic when I walked into that meeting. The tension hit me as soon as I walked in the door and everyone looked [at me] and it was just like the tension just hit me. And I walked into and realized how Hispanic I was because I don't realize all the time because I'm always hanging out with brothers [who] for the most part are Hispanic or people I hang out with are Hispanic but I walked in there and I was the only Hispanic person in the room in a group of 35 guys. I was the only Hispanic person there.

Although a majority of the members of the mainstream fraternities are Hispanic, their executive boards are made up of White students.

Participants shared strong feelings during individual interviews and the focus group about other Greeks and Greek Affairs policies at Latino University. Members of Omega Beta mentioned how they are well received by minority Greeks and the Black Greek letter organizations. Rodrigo described how Omega Beta gets "along really well with NPHC [the historically Black Greek letter organizations] so through them, we do a lot of stuff with them" and "we like to gear ourselves to do things with the minority Greeks. When the minority Greeks are doing stuff, we're there all the time." David elaborated:

> I have close ties to the Black Greeks and it's this constant love and appreciation for one another. The minority Greeks tend to stick together and have a lot of love for each other because they know they are the minority on campus. They themselves differentiate us. They see us as the real Latinos versus the other ones that are the fakers [those in the mainstream fraternities] or whatever you want to call it. So even

> though they're Cuban or Nica [Nicaraguan] or whatever other [Latino] ethnicity, they kind of assimilate into this, I want to say this MTV White image. Because we're the only ones that claim Latino, we feel them with respect and support where the other ones [mainstream organizations] don't.

The perception of Omega Beta is much different in the eyes of the mainstream fraternities and sororities than it is to its members. Omega Beta members feel that they are stereotyped as the "bad boy" fraternity on campus because of their hand sign, call, or when they perform their greeting. Bob elaborated on others' perceptions of Omega Beta: "It's the thug-looking guys, those bad boys, the Latin boys, we're labeled as that because [we're] in a Latino fraternity."

Tony described how when members of Omega Beta perform their call on campus, other Greeks "are scared, like we scare people" because they do not understand that the call is part of the culture of their organization. In addition, David feels that Omega Beta lacks support from the mainstream fraternities and sororities.

> There's no support. Only on an individual basis will you find certain mainstream members at minority Greek events. These are events that are well discussed, brought up at IFC meetings, and have flyers, and it's this constant disregard for us by others. They don't want to acknowledge us at times. They might feel threatened or they just don't care to want to have anything associated with us.

On two occasions, I observed members of Omega Beta "tabling" in the student union. Tabling is when student and Greek letter organizations display tables in the union to advertise and recruit prospective members to their respective organizations. The table included a blanket/throw, which included the fraternity crest, letters, and colors, over the top

of the table. In addition, there was also a huge paddle that included the letter and number for every line that has crossed in this specific chapter. The back of the paddle is signed by every member of the fraternity. Moreover, the table included a fraternity jacket, a license plate with the Omega Beta Greek letters, a photo album, a baseball cap with the Omega Beta Greek letters, and pamphlets and handouts with information on the organization. During both observations, Omega Beta members were dressed well; they wore shirts and ties in the fraternity colors.

It was during one of my observations when an event occurred that exemplified how other Greek letter organizations at Latino University do not understand Omega Beta Latino fraternity. Joe described the situation:

> We had an interest [a person interested in a Latino Greek letter organization] with us and one of the other fraternities said something [to him] and he comes back "Do you guys really beat everyone down until they [urinate] blood?" We're like 'What are you talking about?' [laughs]. So that's the kind of thing that people see.

Rodrigo elaborated on the same situation.

> Like we have a bad reputation . . . don't pledge Omega Beta because they'll beat you up. Or don't pledge Omega Beta because they beat people up with bats and they make them [urinate] blood. It's ridiculous things that people come up with and that's a constant battle, like "No, sorry, that doesn't happen."

This was just one example highlighting how members of other organizations, mostly mainstream Greeks, have stereotyped Omega Beta and spread rumors about their organization.

On the other hand, David does not understand why other Hispanic students at Latino University choose to become members of mainstream Greek letter organizations. Currently there are 12 mainstream Greek fraternities and a majority of their members identify as Hispanic. David refers to Hispanics in mainstream Greek organizations as "twinkies" because they are in organizations that do not embrace the Latino/a culture. He had strong feelings about this topic.

> I kind of attack the mainstream orgs [organizations] as a Twinkies or whatever because I would sit there and talk to them and say, "Do realize that you're Latino and you're at a predominantly Latino university but yet you're in a Jewish fraternity?" Or "You're in an Anglo-Saxon fraternity and if you leave the city limits and meet a brother or a sister elsewhere, they are not probably going to welcome you as much because they're going to realize 'what's this Latino doing in my fraternity? [It's] not to say you shouldn't be here, but it's Jewish.'"

He added how he believes Latino University perceives Omega Beta.

> One of my main things is sometimes I feel like we are [Latino University's] token Latino fraternity. I think our presence being felt that we are a Latino organization trying to come up in this predominantly Latino school did put a hole or dent into the mainstream [organizations] because they all pretty much believe that they were all majority Latino but then when you look at them historically they were Jewish or they were just Anglo-Saxon. So once it was determined this is a Latino fraternity born and raised out of Latino-ness, it did put a dent not necessarily in their numbers but their ego. Like they cannot represent at the level that we can. And they know that.

Bob believes that the stereotypes surrounding Omega Beta can be averted if discussed with mainstream fraternities in the proper context. He feels that "it could start off with the head person in Greek affairs, like understanding where we're coming from and then obviously cascading it down [to the mainstream fraternities]." He advocates strongly for the creation of a Multicultural Greek Council, which Latino University does not have. Besides the Interfraternity Council, there is the Panhellenic Council, which is the governing council for all sororities, and the National Pan-Hellenic Council, the governing council for the nine Black Greek letter organizations. David provided an example of why IFC doesn't fulfill the needs of Omega Beta.

> I myself don't really care much for IFC. They talk about mainly issues that have nothing really to do with us. We talk about rush [enrollment membership for mainstream fraternities] for an hour or two and we're sitting there like "we don't rush, so there's nothing for us to even discuss." Lately they had an issue with alcohol which is oblivious to us because we already know you're not supposed to bring alcohol [to events], but for some reason they always constantly get in trouble for alcohol. I guess in a way that separates us from them because we don't want to be seen as your typical fraternity. That's kind of like our mentality is we don't want to be like that.

Most Latino/a Greeks across the nation are members of a separate Greek council, whether it is a Multicultural Greek Council or Latino Greek council, which serves the specific needs of cultural Greek letter organizations. One such need is the membership intake/educational process that Latino/a and multicultural Greeks have for interested members.

Participants shared varying opinions of establishing a Multicultural Greek Council at Latino University. Bob mentioned how Omega Beta and other multicultural Greeks, including a Latina sorority, have petitioned for the creation of such a council "but when the idea was brought up, it was shot down." He feels that the current Greek Affairs administration is not willing to allow a Multicultural Greek Council to be established. He went on to describe how having a Multicultural Greek Council at Latino University would be beneficial not only to Omega Beta, but other multicultural and Latino/a Greeks as well.

> If we did have what would be a Multicultural Greek Council, the fact that as a whole whether it would be three or four organizations, I think we would be able to do more events as a whole and actually get us out there a lot better and [for] people to actually open up their eyes . . . but obviously it would be done to benefit not only ourselves but also more people, Hispanic people that really actually want to join what would be a multicultural organization whether it be Latino or multicultural but it gives them more of an option.

Tony also believes that having a Multicultural Greek council would attract more Latino/a students into such organizations.

> The mainstream organizations' biggest percentage of members are Hispanic. Now if more and more Latino [Greek] organizations got on campus, less and less Hispanics would go mainstream and more of them would want to join Latino organizations. Therefore if we have four or five Latino fraternities on campus, most freshmen guys looking into fraternities would look at Hispanic fraternities first because we're here in numbers. So, yeah, they may not all go our way [join Omega Beta] but they're all going to join a Latino fraternity.

Macrosystem

The subculture and culture of which the individual is a part is the macrosystem. Some participants discussed how the macrosystem of gender played a role in their ethnic identity development. As the researcher, I was pleasantly surprised because the focus of the study was a Latino fraternity and obviously only men can seek membership. As such, I did not believe that gender would be such a huge topic. However, the fraternity indeed did make an impact on how the participants viewed their gender and masculinity with relation to their ethnic identity development.

As discussed earlier, Bart became a member of Omega Beta in fall 2005. He discussed how becoming a brother influenced his gender identity.

> [The] thing I value the most is earning the [Greek] letters because it was one of the hardest things but it represented a lot more than just the letters. It represented a step towards becoming a man and towards taking responsibility, and whatever might happen, you stick to it because when it comes down to it that's pretty much what life is. One day I'm going to have a family and I'm not going to be caring for myself but I'll be caring for a wife and kids as well. As a man, I need to take responsibility.

He also described the definition of a Guatemalan man:

> Oh boy, being a Guatemalan man is more like saying what a man should be. Proud, strong, don't cry; show no emotion, pretty much everything my dad and my grandpa are. Always act like you know what you're doing. And if you don't, you don't say you don't. Always have a good heart at doing things. You don't do things like tyranny or whatever. You do things for a reason and you always—you put your

> family first and your children first and your wife and then you put yourself. I guess as a [Latino] man, supposedly we're believed to know everything.

David also described how "being male in some ways [is] a hard thing to deal with because when you think about it you're always trying to be a gentleman." Participants discussed how they try to break the machismo stereotype associated with Latino men. Stereotypes surrounding machismo include aggressiveness, power, and dominance over women. Bart described his parents' varying opinions with regard to machismo.

> So my mom is always like respect women, love women, treat them right, don't just do things because you're mad, think about it, take it easy, and then try to solve it.
>
> Whereas my dad would be like, go do it right now, do this, do that.

He then shared his opinion regarding machismo and his fraternity brothers.

> Well gender, machista, machismo, we're all men so we all have that mentality. Most of us are from Central America so we have that mindset of being machisto and what not, but up to a certain level. I guess as a [Latino] man supposedly we're believed to know everything.

David had a difference of opinion: "I would say [the brothers] always get that Latino men are machista and they have their bravado I guess you want to call it" but

> as a Latino male, it's kind of like you're just basically working to fix any of those bad stereotypes that we're lazy or just known for being romantic lovers or whatever it is.
>
> There's a lot more to us than just that.

Joe described his view of the Latino male.

> I think Latino men got to have a lot more pride as far as like [being] protective, like don't mess with my family. But then it's like what's expected of the females, like

> most of us are like Latino princes, like the way your mom treated [and raised] you really good, so you kind of look for that in the females or you're expecting it.

Rodrigo elaborated on how some Omega Beta brothers may buy into the stereotypes.

> We have some brothers that are like the stereotypical proud Latino and then you have some brothers that are just like open minded to different things. Like certain brothers are like, "This is the way it's going to be and that's how it is." Other brothers are like, "No man you gotta look at it, think about it this way."

Participants feel they are stereotyped as machismo because of their membership in a Latino fraternity. Women and others may feel that because most of the brothers are Latino that they buy into the machismo that is part of the Latino culture. Siebel described how Omega Beta shatters the machismo stereotypes.

> That's one of our main things in the fraternity. You got to be a chivalrous man if you want to be a man. There's no other way of putting it. If you're an adulterous, if you beat women, you're not a man. You're hiding behind a guise.

Chronosystem

Chapter 4 highlighted participants' past events and experiences that contributed to their ethnic identity development. In the chronosystem, changes over time may influence the development of individuals and the previous systems (micro-, meso-, exo-, and mesosystems) in which they are embedded. Through the participants' profile descriptions, readers were able to gain a better understanding of the men participating in this study. The profiles of the seven men also provided information about how the participants came to know their ethnic identities. Highlights shared by participants, such as where they grew up, how they were raised by their families, and their experiences in and out of school, helped shape who they are

as Latinos and how they choose to identify with regard to their ethnic identities. In addition, participants chose various orientations from Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) racial identity orientation model that best described where they viewed their identity at this point in their lives.

Summary

In this chapter the findings were presented and intertwined with the theoretical model guiding this study, which resonated with the experiences participants shared regarding the six major themes that emerged from this study: family, the HSI campus, language and involvement, other Greeks and Greeks Affairs policies, gender, and past events. When presented collectively, these themes provide an understanding of how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development.

Through my conversations with the participants I was able to provide rich, thick descriptions of how members defined ethnic identity within Omega Beta Latino fraternity, how membership in Omega Beta Latino fraternity enhanced members' ethnic identity development, and how attending Latino University enhanced the ethnic identity development of Omega Beta Latino fraternity members beyond the contributions made by membership in Omega Beta Latino fraternity. Through participants' experiences and stories, their voices gave meaning and brought to life their ethnic identity development.

Chapter 6 includes the findings from the study and provides connections to the related literature. The chapter also includes a discussion of implications for student affairs professionals, such as deans of students, campus psychologists, and campus diversity professionals, as they advise and/or work with Latino fraternities on their respective campuses. In addition, these implications can also assist Latino/a parents and families as they

begin to understand how and why their sons, brothers, and cousins have joined Latino fraternities. I also provide recommendations for HSIs (and non-HSIs) to better provide policies and programs for LGLOs, specifically Latino fraternities. Finally, I describe my personal reflections regarding my journey throughout this research study.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

> *Every generation has the opportunity of doing what is demanded of them at their own time and it's up to them to face their challenges and opportunities, make mistakes, have achievements and live their moments of glory and despair, and learn by both, and grow by both, in the process of becoming better citizens of the world, for a better world, and that is what this* [Latino Greeks] *is all about, I humbly believe.*
> Tiberio C. Faria, Phi Iota Alpha member since 1956 (Muñoz & Guardia, in press)

This chapter is dedicated to discussing the findings that emerged from the three original research questions guiding this study: (a) How is ethnic identity defined within the Latino fraternity? (b) In what ways does membership in a Latino fraternity at a Hispanic-serving institution enhance members' ethnic identity development? and (c) In what ways does attending a Hispanic-serving institution enhance the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members beyond the contributions made by membership in the Latino fraternity?

The discussion focuses around the six themes that emerged from this study that describe how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhanced members' ethnic identity development. In addition, the six themes will be discussed within the context of the existing literature and the revised theoretical model guiding this study. Moreover, this chapter highlights implications and recommendations for student affairs professionals as they advise and/or work with Latino fraternities on their respective campuses based on the findings from this study. Future research related to this topic is also suggested.

Overview of the Findings in Relation to the Existing Literature

The six major themes that emerged from this study were family, the HSI campus, other Greeks and Greeks Affairs policies, gender, language, and involvement. Some themes included subcategories that pertain to a specified theme. Discussion of the findings are presented in the context of the five systems within the revised theoretical model (Figure 5.1) presented in chapter 5:

- Microsystems—Home family, Latino fraternity, and HSI campus
- Mesosytems—Language and Involvement
- Exosystem—Other Greeks and Greek Affairs policies
- Macrosystem—Gender
- Chronosystem—Past events (as highlighted in chapter 4)

Microsystems

Bronfenbrenner (2005a) defined the microystem as "a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical and material features and containing other persons with distinctive characteristics of temperament, personality, and systems of belief" (p. 48). Renn (2003) described a variety of microsystems for college students, including families and student organizations. As described in chapter 5, participants discussed how home family, the Latino fraternity, and the HSI campus enhanced their ethnic identity development.

The significance of family was described by participants throughout the three interviews and the focus group. Participants provided a variety of rich examples that highlighted the importance family played in their ethnic identity development. The theme of family is divided into two subcategories: home family and the fraternity *hermandad.*

Home Family. Home family played an important role in members' ethnic identity development as described by various participants. As discussed in chapter 3, *familismo* refers to "the importance of the extended family as a reference group and as providers of social support" (Tatum, 1997, p. 137). One example that highlights *familismo* was Tony's upbringing without his father around and how the extended family provided him with male role models. In addition, he described how he views his cousins more like brothers and sisters. As such, *familismo* played an important part in Tony's family environment.

The literature highlighted the importance of family in relation to Latino/a college students' ethnic identity (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). V. Torres (2004b) found that students' self-identification, among other things, is influenced by their parents and families. In chapter 5, I presented the description Siebel and Tony shared of the integral roles that their Cuban families played in their ethnic identification. Rodrigo also mentioned how his Honduran family played a role in how he identifies as Latino. With regard to terminology, although Shorris (1992) noted that "Hispanic is preferred in the Southeast" (p. xvi), in this study, which took place in the southeastern United States, rarely did the participants identify as Hispanic. For most participants, their families influenced how they identified ethnically, whether identifying as Latino or with their respective Latino nationalities.

The strength and support received from family is important for many Latino/a college students (Attinasi, 1989; Babler, 1992; Cibik & Chambers, 1991; Gloria & Rodriguez, 2000; Haro et al., 1994; J. C. Hernandez, 2000, 2002; J.C. Hernandez & Lopez, 2004; Padilla, 1997; Rendon, 1992). This was clear in the interviews with Omega Beta Latino fraternity members. Participants described how support from family encouraged them to enroll in college after completing high school and how family has continued to support them during

their undergraduate careers to "get the best education that [they] can." For members of Omega Beta, familial support is an important aspect of their ethnic identity and the Latino culture (Tatum, 1997).

Not only does family provide strength and support, but in many cases family serves as a survival mechanism (Head, as cited in Ball-Brown & Frank, 1993). This was particularly true for Bart. Latino University is located more than 4 hours from his home, so his connection to family is very important. The daily phone calls he receives from family have kept him grounded and remind him of where he is from.

Family is not only a source of strength and support, but also acts as the "center of social life" (Head, as cited in Ball-Brown & Frank, 1993). Joe provided a good example of how at family gatherings he sought advice in deciding to transfer from Central University to Latino University. "When a Hispanic student makes an important decision, it is not his or her decision alone to make, but the unit, the family" (Head, p. 84).

Fraternity Hermandad. Miranda and Martin de Figueroa (2000) explained how Latino/a Greek letter organizations provide a family atmosphere at college and university campuses. In his dissertation study, Reyes (1997) described how an ethnic fraternity provided his participants with a sense of family. Moreover, LGLOs serve as a home away from home for students and provide on-campus camaraderie and support networks that are important to the academic, social, and cultural lives of Latino/a college students (Jerez, 2004; Mejia, 1994; Puente, 1992). Participants in this study viewed Omega Beta Latino fraternity as a natural extension of their home families that provides them with cultural and social support.

J. C. Hernandez (1999) and Wingett (2004) noted that Latino fraternities provide brotherhoods for students who join them. This was no different for members of Omega Beta

Latino fraternity. Throughout chapter 4, participants' statements demonstrated how the fraternity has provided them with *hermandad*. Joe mentioned that when he arrived at Latino University "all the brothers were like warm, I felt like we had a lot in common, it felt like I was home. Like this could actually be my second family." He also stated that he values the "brothership" within Omega Beta and the "instant love" a brother receives from fraternity brothers after he became a member. Rodrigo also noted that when he was thinking of joining Omega Beta he was told by then current members to always think "of the brothers as your family, so when you go in [become a member] those are going to be your brothers."

The fraternity *hermandad* also played a strong role in how members' identified ethnically. Castro (2004) described how membership in multicultural Greek organizations "provide[s] support as well as cultural education to individuals who are still defining the many aspects of their identity" (p. 1). For Bart, Siebel, and David, the Omega Beta *hermandad* has assisted them in identifying outside of their respective Latino/a nationalities and with the greater Latino/a community, thus providing them with affirmed messages regarding their ethnic identities. Joe described how the brothers of Omega Beta have assisted him in exploring the Latino side of his ethnic identity: They "helped me be more Latino." In addition, identifying with the greater Latino/a community allowed these men to embrace a pan-American view of Latinos/as as they discuss the economic, political, and social issues affecting the Latin American nations. For example, during a participant observation, Omega Beta members discussed the recent talks between Cuban president Fidel Castro and Venezuela's president Hugo Chavez critical of the US backed Free Trade of the Americas and its implications for the global Latino/a community as well as the United States.

Participants also shared how the educational process Omega Beta members go through also enhanced their ethnic identity development. Through the educational process, members learn more about the organization and about themselves. Several participants shared how it enhanced their ethnic identity. Joe noted, "I would say that our educational process kind of helps you bring out the Latino in you, I guess that's the best way to say it." Bart added, "You prove a lot to yourself pretty much [during the educational process]. You learn a lot about yourself."

The HSI Campus. In chapter 4, I presented the reasons that several participants gave for choosing to attend Latino University. For many, it was close to home and their families. Others noted that it was affordable. Most importantly, they highlighted how Latino University understood their needs as Latino college students. "Hispanic students attend these institutions [because] they are affordable, close to home, and understand the Latino culture" (White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans et al., 1998).

Dayton et al. (2004) found that students described HSIs as institutional environments that comfort them and where faculty and staff support them. In addition, students described how being in a community with other Latino/a college students helps create a supportive environment where students shared similar experiences (Dayton et al.). As described by participants, Latino University offers them the opportunity to be around fellow Latino/a college students.

Boschini and Thompson (1998) discussed how "institutional characteristics influence student groups" (p. 21). This was evident in the responses provided by members of Omega Beta Latino fraternity. Some of Latino University's institutional characteristics include its high percentage (59%) of students who identify as Latino/a, the Latino/a culture on campus,

and its national reputation for graduating Latino/a college students. Latino University is recognized as the HSI that graduates the most Latino/a college students with undergraduate degrees in the United States and ranks in the top 100 colleges for Hispanics (Lopez-Isa, 2005). David described how he takes pride in telling others that he attends the "Latino Harvard" and "it's kind of like my little honor of saying, 'Yeah, I went to this school.'" As Tony said, "You fit right in [laughs]. [There is] really no separation of Hispanics from everyone else here. It's just [a] predominantly Hispanic school."

Several participants discussed how Latino University has enhanced their ethnic identity. Bart described how the campus reminds him of who he is and where he came from. Bob and David noted that the campus has enhanced their pride as Latinos. Rodrigo added that he has never felt out of place at Latino University. On the contrary, he said: "Nothing reminds you more of it." Only two participants, Joe and Siebel, felt that Latino University's campus environment didn't do much to enhance their ethnic identity development.

Mesosystems

Bronfenbrenner (2005a) described how the mesosystem "comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person . . . in other words, a mesosystem is a system of microsystems" (p. 148). Language emerged from the interrelation between participants' home families and the Latino fraternity; involvement emerged from the interrelation between the Latino fraternity and HSI campus. As described in chapter 5, language and involvement were two themes described by participants as having an influence on their ethnic identity development.

Language. Language was an important part of participants' ethnic identity development. Most of the seven men spoke Spanish, others spoke English and some

Spanglish. Bart described how his family assisted him in maintaining his Spanish and how speaking it helps him not forget where he comes from. On the other hand, David's first language was English because his mother wanted to him to assimilate with the larger dominant White society. Subconsciously he knew Spanglish and this was his form of cultural resistance. For David, speaking Spanglish defies "the dominant culture, a moment of liberation" (Padilla, 1997, p. 26). For Bart, David, and the other participants, Spanish and Spanglish keep them connected to their culture and ethnic identity (Ho, as cited in T. W. Jones, 1990).

The interrelations of language between participants' home families and Omega Beta were discussed by various participants. Siebel described how speaking Spanish with fraternity brothers is an extension of speaking Spanish with family. Through the fraternity, he felt that "I have this thing [connection] to a certain group." Rodrigo, a native Spanish speaker at home, described how he enjoys speaking his native tongue with his fraternity brothers. Thus, speaking Spanish with family is reinforced and supported by his fraternity brothers.

Howard (2000) described language as people producing identity through their talk. As presented in chapter 5, Joe described how not speaking Spanish affected his ethnic identity: "People don't think I'm Hispanic because I don't speak Spanish. It kind of hurts me a little bit." Although his Puerto Rican mother spoke to him in Spanish when he was younger, he always spoke English. For Joe, learning Spanish from and speaking it with his fraternity brothers has enhanced his ethnic identity. As such, the fraternity has provided him with the resource to learn and maintain his Spanish.

The educational process was yet another way in which language was instrumental in members' ethnic identity development. As described in chapter 5, there are certain parts of

the Omega Beta educational process in which members must know and speak Spanish. In addition, members must be fluent in Spanish when they perform their greetings. As David stated, "We speak Spanish and Spanish is kind of like our family language."

Involvement. The participants described how being involved is an important part of their fraternity and collegiate experience at Latino University. To be a member of Omega Beta Latino fraternity (and all Greek letter organizations), a student must be enrolled at a 4-year institution. As such, one cannot exist without the other. Thus, the seven men in this study were all enrolled at Latino University before seeking membership and becoming involved with Omega Beta Latino fraternity.

Six of the seven participants were living at home with family. They described how, if it were not for being involved with Omega Beta, they may not be involved on campus at all. Latino University is mostly a commuter school, and Bob and Siebel explained that if it weren't for the fraternity, they would just come to school and leave. Other participants described how their involvement in Omega Beta led to them to becoming involved in other campus organizations, including, for example, the Hispanic Heritage Month Committee, which aided in their ethnic identity development, and the Student Programming Council.

As mentioned in chapters 4 and 5, Bart is the only member of Omega Beta who was living on campus. Astin (1984) described how living in residence halls is positively associated with several forms of involvement, including social fraternities. For Bart, this statement rang true. Since becoming a member of Omega Beta in fall 2005, he has sought out other clubs and organizations in which to become involved. He is also looking into becoming a resident assistant in 2006-2007. In addition, his role within the fraternity has increased; he became vice president of his chapter during my time on site.

Student involvement "refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience," both inside and outside of the classroom (Astin, 1984, p. 297). Through their involvement in Omega Beta and other clubs and organizations on campus, participants' collegiate experience and ethnic identity have been enhanced.

Exosystem

Exosystems are settings in which the individual does not actively participate but in which events occur that influence an individual's development. For members of Omega Beta Latino fraternity, other Greeks and Greek affairs policies contributed to their ethnic identity development. As mentioned in chapter 5, Omega Beta is the only Latino fraternity at Latino University. Most of the support Omega Beta receives comes from the Black Greek and other multicultural Greek letter organizations. David described how Black Greek and other cultural Greek letter organizations see the members of Omega Beta "as the real Latinos versus the other ones that are the fakers [those in the mainstream fraternities]." In addition, he felt that his fraternity was founded on Latino cultural values whereas the mainstream organizations were not. As such, Omega Beta fulfills cultural needs for its members (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998).

Participants also described how the mainstream fraternities and sororities perceive them. They are stereotyped by mainstream Greeks as the "bad boys" on campus and described having little or no support from the mainstream Greeks. In addition, mainstream Greeks do not understand why members of Omega Beta perform a call, have hand signs, and perform greetings in public.

Greek affairs policies at Latino University also affected Omega Beta members' ethnic identity development. Omega Beta is a member of the Interfraternity Council (IFC), the governing body for all fraternities at Latino University. Because most of the membership in IFC is mainstream fraternities, they do not understand Omega Beta's needs. David shared how at IFC meetings "they talk about mainly issues that have nothing really to do with us," such as rushing when Omega Beta does not participate in rush events. Participants felt that having a Multicultural Greek Council (MGC) would better serve their specific needs as cultural Greek letter organizations. As such, having a MGC would enhance members' ethnic identity development as they would be joined by other Latino/a and multicultural Greek organizations that understand and value the Latino/a culture.

Macrosystem

The subculture and culture of which the individual is a part is the macrosystem. Bronfenbrenner (2005a) defined the macrosystem as consisting of:

> the overarching pattern of micro, meso, and exosystems characteristic of a given culture, culture, subculture, or other broader social context, with particular reference to the developmentally instigative belief systems, resources, hazards, lifestyles, opportunity structures, life course options, and patterns of social interchange that are embedded in each of these systems. The macrosystem may be thought of as a societal blueprint for a particular culture, subculture, or other broader social context. (pp. 149-150)

Some participants discussed how the macrosystem of gender played a role in their ethnic identity development. For Bart, becoming a member of Omega Beta "represented a step towards becoming a man." He also added that he will "be caring for a wife and kids as

well. As a man, I need to take responsibility." Joe elaborated: "I think Latino men got to have a lot more pride as far as like [being] protective, like don't mess with my family." Santiago-Rivera (2003) stated that an aspect of machismo behavior is the Latino male displaying a protective nature for the members of his family.

Several men shared how others believe that as members of a Latino fraternity, they buy into the machismo stereotypes, such as being "controlling, possessive, sexist and dominant, and . . . violen[t] against women" (Santiago-Rivera, 2003, p. 11). Siebel described how members of Omega Beta are taught to be "chivalrous" men and how they need to break the machismo stereotype associated with Latino men. Novas (1998) argued that machismo means more than gender, but "it connotes strength, bravery, power, and importance" (p. 114). Members of Omega Beta described being "proud, Latino men," which should not be confused with machismo.

Chronosystem

Bronfenbrenner's (1995) final system in his bioecological theory of human development is the chronosystem. As he described it:

> The individual's own developmental life course is seen as embedded in and powerfully shaped by conditions and events occurring during the historical period through which the person lives. . . . A major factor influencing the course and outcome of human development is the timing of biological and social transitions as they relate to the culturally defined age, role expectations, and opportunities occurring throughout the life course. (p. 641)

In the chronosystem, changes over time may influence the development of individuals and the previous systems (micro-, meso-, exo-, and mesosystems) in which they are embedded. In this study, participants' past events were their chronosystems.

As highlighted in chapter 4, members of Omega Beta described past events and experiences that have contributed to their ethnic identity development. The profiles of the seven men provided the reader with a better understanding of the participants and how they came to self-identify with regard to their ethnic identity. Throughout this study, it was my intention to have participants self-identify and choose the term that best described their ethnic identity. For example, most members of Omega Beta identified with their families' Latino country of origin as opposed to Hispanic/Latino, terms often associated with members of the Latino/a community. Furthermore, the participant profiles included highlights, such as where they grew up, how they were raised by their families, their experiences in and out of school and how these experiences helped shape who they are as Latinos, and how they chose to identify with regard to their ethnic identities.

An additional aspect of the study, as discussed in chapter 4, was allowing participants to choose the orientation(s) from Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) racial identity orientation model that best described where they viewed their identity at this point in their lives. This model highlights "more patterns and orientations than clear-cut, predictable steps" (Ferdman & Gallegos, p. 48) in Latino/a identity than other models, including Phinney's (1993) model of ethnic identity formation. As the Ferdman and Gallegos noted:

> In the context of our initial model, there may be movement from one orientation to another depending on a number of factors. It is also possible and feasible for some

individuals to maintain one orientation throughout their lives with little or no movement or change. (p. 48)

It is important to note that although the participants in this study chose an orientation(s) that best described their identity at the present time, the six orientations in this model did "not exhaust the possibilities nor do they address the complex issues involved in ethnic and cultural identity" (Ferdman & Gallegos, p. 50). Identity is constantly changing and participants' ethnic identity will continue to develop through a variety of experiences and surroundings. As such, this model leaves the door open for a variety of possibilities that may occur in the identity development of Omega Beta Latino fraternity members.

The themes discussed in chapter 5 and in the findings are those that emerged from the study. In the original model guiding this study (Figure 1.1), I highlighted other themes that were my own initial assumptions. These initial assumptions are presented in the context of the specific systems within the original theoretical model:

- Microsystems—On-and-off campus jobs
- Exosystem—Parents' income and financial aid awarded
- Macrosystem—Ethnicity, social class and region

With regard to the microsystem, on- and off-campus jobs were not found to be of significance for participants' ethnic identity development. Although all of the seven men had jobs both on and off campus, they never described them as having any effect on their ethnic identity. Within the exosystem, parents' income and financial aid awarded also was not discussed. Six of the seven men in this study were living at home with their families and none mentioned their parents' income or how the financial aid they were awarded had any influence on their ethnic identity. Aspects of the macrosystem, including ethnicity, social

class, and region, also were found not to be important with regard to participants' ethnic identity development. Although ethnicity was an important part of this study, participants in the study came into the study acknowledging their ethnicity and it was not addressed independently of other factors. When participants did address ethnicity, it revolved around how they chose to self-identity and how Omega Beta and Latino University enhanced their ethnic identity development. Social class and region, especially the city in which Latino University is located, also were not described as having any influence on participants' ethnic identity development.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development. The study took place on site at Latino University, an HSI located in the southeastern United States, over a 4-week period and utilized a phenomenological perspective. Data were collected through three individual interviews with each participant, one focus group, participant observation at meetings and activities, document collection, and a demographic questionnaire. All of the individual interviews and the focus group were audio-taped and transcribed; the transcripts were analyzed by the researcher.

Bronfenbrenner's (2005a) bioecological theory of human development served as the theoretical framework guiding this study of ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at an HSI. In addition, Ferdman and Gallegos's (2001) Latino/a racial identity orientation model allowed the seven participants to choose the orientation(s) that best described their current Latino/a identity.

Seven men who are members of a Latino fraternity participated in this study. Although each individual brought a variety of experiences and differences to the study, the one commonality among all of them was that they identified as Latino. More importantly, several participants specifically identified with their respective Latino nationalities.

The research questions guiding this study will now be addressed.

1. **How is ethnic identity defined within the Latino fraternity?**

   Members of Omega Beta Latino fraternity defined ethnic identity within the Latino fraternity as "diverse," "multicultural," and "a big pot of jambalaya mixed ethnicities." Siebel stated, "It's the culture that defines us." Although Omega Beta is historically a Latino fraternity, many members, including other members at Latino University, are not Latino. As such, participants felt that "diverse" and "multicultural" best captured how ethnic identity is defined by Omega Beta Latino fraternity.

2. **In what ways does membership in a Latino fraternity at a Hispanic-Serving Institution enhance members' ethnic identity development?**

   Omega Beta Latino fraternity provides members with various opportunities that enhance their ethnic identity. The *hermandad* (brotherhood) provides members with a familial atmosphere and Latino unity. Participants noted that there is an "instant love" between brothers and that being a member has allowed them to explore their self-identity outside their respective nationalities and identify with the broader Latino/a community. In addition, participants described how the educational process and the coming out show also made a significant impact on their ethnic identity. As Joe noted, "I would say that our educational process kind of helps you bring out the

Latino in you." Moreover, many participants pointed out that they are able to speak and comprehend Spanish. Whether it was through the educational process, during chapter meetings and activities, or performing their greeting, speaking Spanish enhanced members' ethnic identity development.

3. **In what ways does attending a Hispanic-Serving Institution enhance the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members beyond the contributions made by membership in the Latino fraternity?**

   Participants constantly discussed ways in which attending an HSI enhanced their ethnic identities. Latino University's campus environment embraces and promotes the Latino/a culture in a variety of ways, including providing Latino-style fast food and nightly salsa dancing classes. Bart stated that as a Latino at Latino University, "I'm surrounded by nothing but Hispanics and that's a good feeling." In addition, participants mentioned that they are in a comfortable environment where a majority of the students look like them and speak Spanish. As Bob eloquently stated, "You know this campus has actually made me realize that there's a lot more pride in actually being Hispanic . . . [it] basically just boosted it [my ethnic identity] up."

Limitations and Strengths

As highlighted in chapter 3, there are two principal limitations pertaining to this study. First is the issue of population and site generalizability of the results from the study. Because this study focused on the experiences and accounts of Latino fraternity members at an HSI located in the Southeast, the results from this study cannot be generalized to all Latino fraternities at HSIs, let alone all HSIs. In addition, I was further limited by the 4-week

time period of my on-site visit at Latino University. Third, the ethnic identity development of Latino university men outside of the fraternity at the HSI was not addressed.

In spite of these limitations, this research study also contained two strengths. First, I was familiar with Latino University through several friends who attended and work at the institution. In addition, I visited the campus previously during my "contact visit" (Seidman, 1998), which allowed me to get a better understanding of the campus environment. Moreover, during the contact visit I met with two members of Omega Beta, and we established a rapport even before I arrived at Latino University in spring 2006.

Second, my "insider status" as a member of the Latino/a community and of a Latino fraternity allowed me greater access to the participants. Marin and VanOss-Marin (1991) suggested that "same-ethnicity data collectors should be employed in research projects where personal contact is involved" (p. 53). Specifically, they "can enhance rapport, [the] willingness to disclose, and the validity and reliability of the data provided" (Marin & VanOss-Marin, p. 53). Participants in the study were very candid and forthcoming with their responses, and I strongly believe that being a member of both the Latino/a and Latino Greek communities enhanced and validated the data collected.

Implications for Practice

The findings from this study provide various implications for practice for student affairs and higher education administrators. Findings from this study demonstrate the powerful relationship between membership in a Latino fraternity and ethnic identity development. The following implications are beneficial for student affairs professionals at both HSIs and non-HSIs.

The findings illustrated how a Latino fraternity enhances members' ethnic identity development. Participants described joining Omega Beta Latino fraternity because they sought an organization that embraced the Latino culture and provided them with a familial (*hermandad*) atmosphere on campus (Jerez, 2004; Mejia, 1994; Miranda & Martin de Figueroa, 2000; Puente, 1992; Wingett, 2004). Members also described how speaking Spanish was reinforced and supported by fraternity brothers. These findings suggest that membership in a Latino fraternity enhances members' ethnic identity. Student affairs and higher education administrators should take note that members of Latino fraternities seek out such organizations because they embrace the Latino/a culture and provide a familial atmosphere, which in some cases may not be found in the general campus environment.

The HSI campus environment also enhances members' ethnic identity development. The campus environment is surrounded with elements of the Latino/a culture, including language, cultural traditions, and food. Bob and David described how the campus enhanced their pride as Latinos. In addition, most faculty and staff are Latino/a, which also played an important part in members' ethnic identity development. HSI campuses support the development of the Latino/a culture and understand the needs of their Latino/a students. Non-HSIs should consider hiring bilingual Latino/a faculty and staff who can contribute to the campus's Latino/a culture and support the student population.

Participants described how a Multicultural Greek Council would further enhance members' ethnic identity development. Such councils provide students the opportunity to be around other Greeks who have similar racial and ethnic backgrounds, which can enhance all members' ethnic (and possibly racial) identity development. Greek affairs professionals who have Multicultural Greek Councils on their respective campuses understand that the needs of

multicultural Greeks are very different than those of traditional mainstream Greek organizations. Some examples of the various differences between traditional Greek councils (such as Interfraternity and Panhellenic councils) and Multicultural Greek councils include the governance structure, recruitment of prospective members, the membership intake/educational process for initiates, and the unification of organizations whose purpose is to promote diversity and inclusion in the campus community. As such, Greek affairs and student affairs professionals who do not have MGCs on their campuses may want to consider establishing such a council.

Findings from this study highlight how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development. The impact of the fraternity and the HSI campus encouraged and supported members' ethnic identity. Student affairs professionals should take into account the establishment of Latino fraternities and Multicultural Greek Councils on their campuses and their importance in aiding students' ethnic identity development.

Implications for Latino/a Families

The findings from this study may assist Latino/a parents and families as they begin to understand why their sons, brothers, and cousins choose to become members of Latino fraternities. Participants described that as members of the fraternity they feel "more connected to the [Latino] culture" and they have learned to embrace their Latino backgrounds. In addition, Omega Beta provided members with a sense of family, *hermandad*. Of most importance was how the fraternity enhanced the ethnic identity of its members. As a result, Latino/a parents and families will notice how their sons, brothers,

cousins, and nephews are even more prideful as members of the Latino/a community and their respective Latino/a nationalities.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research study contributes to the gap in the literature on the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at an HSI. As mentioned in chapter 1, no previous research had been conducted on how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development. As such, I discuss how this study opens the door for more research focusing on ethnic identity development of Latino/a college students and Latino/a fraternities and sororities.

Throughout my time at Latino University, I discovered that a majority of Latino/a students at Latino University are members of mainstream fraternities and sororities. Does membership in mainstream fraternities and sororities (and possibly Black Greek letter organizations) also enhance members' ethnic identity development? If so, in what way? These questions merit further investigation.

Research should also be conducted on the ethnic identity development of Latino/a college students not affiliated with Latino/a Greek letter organizations. For example, a study can be done on the ethnic identity development of Latino/a college students involved in cultural clubs and organizations. In addition, what influence does membership in non-Latino/a cultural clubs and organizations have on Latino/a college students' ethnic identity development?

V. Torres (2003) suggested that there is more research to be done on Latino/a college student ethnic identity development with regard to different contexts and social environments. More research should be done on the ethnic identity development of Latino/a

college students attending different minority-serving institutions. Previous research on Latino/a college student ethnic identity development has taken place at predominantly White institutions and community colleges (Nuñez, 2004; Schneider & Ward, 2003; V. Torres, 1999, 2003; V. Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004). As such, research on the ethnic identity development of Latino/a college students attending historically Black colleges and universities and tribal colleges warrants consideration.

Future research studies should also consider the ethnic identity development of Latino/a graduate students who become members of LGLOs. Through my own personal experience in joining a fraternity as a doctoral student, I wonder if the experiences of other graduate students who are or are considering becoming members of LGLOs are similar to those of undergraduates, and what, if any, influence membership has on their ethnic identity development.

Personal Reflections

This research study has been an interesting journey from beginning to end. I originally began with a similar topic regarding Latino/a college students' ethnic identity development at an HSI. I was told by committee members and friends that this topic was too large and not manageable enough for a dissertation study. For this I am thankful. My major professor, Nancy Evans, suggested that I look at Latino fraternities and their contribution to ethnic identity development after she learned that I became a member of Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity, Inc., in spring 2005. The following are my personal reflections about how my study topic emerged, reflections as a qualitative researcher, and my experience with the participants.

When I became a member of Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity, Inc., I did not know then that Latino Greeks would become my dissertation study. My friend and colleague, Susana M. Muñoz, and I had just completed writing a chapter on the history of Latino fraternities and sororities in December 2004 (Muñoz & Guardia, in press). As part of that project, I interviewed Phi Iota Alpha trustee Tiberio C. Faria, a member of the fraternity since 1956. After interviewing Mr. Faria and completing the chapter, I began doing my research on Phi Iota Alpha and found that it was an organization through which I could see myself making a lifetime commitment to education, community service, and brotherhood. Esterberg (2002) described how "qualitative researchers . . . look at their own lives to see if they can find anything interesting to study" (p. 26). It was through my own lived experience that the topic of my dissertation was born.

After becoming a member of the fraternity, I began researching LGLOs and found minimal research on them. What I did find was focused on the history of such organizations (Kimbrough, 2003; Mejia, 1994; Muñoz & Guardia, in press; Rodriguez, 1995), their growth (Castro, 2004; Kimbrough, 2002), and how they empower and provide academic and social support (Adam, 1999; Helem, 2004; Reyes, 1997). My interest revolved around ethnic identity development: I found only one study (Nuñez, 2004) that specifically focused on how involvement in a Latina-based sorority contributes to members' ethnic identity development. After discussing the findings with my major professor and advising her that I did not find any research on Latino fraternity members' ethnic identity development, we both decided that this would be a good topic for my dissertation study.

This research study has allowed me to become a better qualitative researcher. As I met with each individual participant, I learned a great deal about asking and directing

interview questions. Participants provided me with clarifications regarding certain questions, which assisted me when interviewing others throughout my 4 weeks on site. Although I had conducted individual interviews in the past, this process allowed me to "go with the flow" and make changes as they became necessary.

Throughout the process of data collection, I realized that I had to be patient when working with seven college men. There were many times when I would grow impatient as some of the men did not show up for pre-scheduled interview meetings. On the other hand, there were days when I did not plan on going to campus and I would receive calls from participants stating that they would be available for an interview, sometimes with less than an hour to prepare! Fortunately, I anticipated that such events would occur. As such, during my 4 weeks on campus I learned that "life happens," and I had to be prepared for anything and everything. Flexibility was key!

An important part of this research study was journaling. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested the use of a reflexive journal in which the researcher records information about self and the method being used. I began journaling when I started writing the dissertation proposal in fall 2005 and continued all the way through my time on site. For me, journaling allowed me to disclose how the study was coming along. On one particular day, I found that journaling allowed me to calm my nerves. I had completed my second interview with David, and I was bothered as he made wide generalizations about Latinos/as, specifically how Cubans have assimilated into the White/Americanized society. As a Cuban-American, I was bothered because he was making a generalized assumption not just about the Cuban students at Latino University, but Cubans overall. As I noted in my journal:

> I just completed my second interview with David and I left feeling so pissed! He is basing his opinions on the Cuban students who are members of mainstream Greek letter organizations. He made HUGE generalizations on a group of people and he's not even a member of that community. Obviously he is entitled to his opinion, but I feel that he is making huge assumptions of all Cubans. And if the Cuban students are not acting Cuban or Latino (whatever that may be), then who is he to judge them? Those students may be making generalizations based on who he is and as a member of Omega Beta.

In retrospect, I respect that this is how David was viewing his peers at this time of his life and that his opinions may change as he gets older and has contact with different Cuban individuals. As a researcher, I remembered that I must keep my opinions to myself and make sure that I tell the participants' story and not my own.

Throughout this research study I reflected on my own ethnic identity development. I am and will always be proud to refer to myself as Cuban, but as I became older, I recognized the importance of identifying with the greater Latino community. In addition, my own ethnic identity was enhanced after completing the educational process for my fraternity. As such, my own experiences have informed my work with Latino college students (and all students) as I have made it a point to assist students to identify and be proud of their racial/ethnic groups and their various identities.

This research study has also allowed me to get an "insider's" view into the lives of undergraduate Latino fraternity members. Through the various activities I observed, such as attending chapter meetings, members' tabling at the student union, and Omega Beta's greeting being performed at the NPHC step show, in addition to the individual interviews and

focus group, my time spent with participants was very fulfilling. In addition, the rich, thick descriptions provided by participants assisted me in understanding how membership in a Latino fraternity at an HSI enhances members' ethnic identity development. Overall, this experience has left me empowered as a member of both the Latino Greek and Latino/a communities.

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

September 29, 2005

Omega Beta
c/o Greek Affairs
[Latino University]
Southeastern, United States

Gentlemen of Omega Beta:

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is Juan R. Guardia and I am a doctoral student in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Iowa State University. For my dissertation study, I am interested in understanding how membership in a Latino fraternity at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) contributes to members' ethnic identity development.

I specifically chose your organization because it is the only Latino fraternity at [Latino University]. In addition, I chose [Latino University] because it is recognized as the HSI that graduates the most Latino/a college students with undergraduate degrees in the United States.

My study will take place during the Spring 2006 semester. I will be [visiting your area] on October 14 and Saturday October 15 and would like to meet with your members and/or advisor to discuss my research plans and formally ask for your participation.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Juan R. Guardia
Doctoral Student/Research Assistant
Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
Iowa State University
515-292-8213 Home
515-294-3817 Office
515-294-4942 Fax
jguardia@iastate.edu

cc: Associate Director of Campus Life for Greek Affairs

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Information on this sheet will assist the researcher with background information of study participants. There are no right or wrong answers. This information will be kept strictly confidential. Presentations of this information will be in general terms (e.g., "six of the study participants identified as Latino").

1. Name:_____ 2. Telephone:_____

3. Email:_____

4. Age:_____

5. What is your country of birth?_____

6. How long have you lived in the United States?_____

7. Major/Minor:_____

8. Year in school: Freshmen_____ Sophomore_____ Junior_____ Senior_____

9. Do you attend college full-time?_____ or part-time?_____

10. Do you live on campus_____ or commute to campus?_____

11. Do you currently work?_____ How many hours per week?_____
On or off campus?_____

12. Have either of your parents attended college in a college/university in the United States?
Yes (which parent?)_____ No_____

13. Do you have siblings? _____ Did they attend college?_____

14. What is the primary language spoken at home?_____

15. Please list all activities or organizations you participate in at your college/university. Include work experiences, clubs, organizations, internships, volunteer organizations, etc.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at a Hispanic Serving Institution
Interview Questions (Adapted from Nuñez, 2004)

Interview 1: Context

1. Tell me about your home background and family. How large is your family? Where were you raised and by whom?
2. Where are you from? What type of community were you raised in?
3. What do your parents do for a living?
4. What was your high school like (i.e., ethnic make-up, public or private, small or large)?
5. What clubs were you involved in and what was your experience like? If not, what stopped you from getting involved?
6. How did you become involved in those organizations?
7. How would you identify yourself in relation to ethnicity (e.g. Latino/Hispanic/Bi or Multiracial/ethnic)? How do you identify ethnically (e.g. Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc.)? Is this self-identifier one a member of your family would use to describe him or her self?
8. What does it mean to be a (self-identifier) man?
9. Please talk about when you realized your own ethnicity. How old were you? Who or what event introduced you to thinking about it?
10. Please describe your family and friends in the community in which you were raised and discuss any issues related to ethnicity?
11. Who had the most influence on you before attending college?
12. Why did you choose to attend Latino University (LU)?
13. What is/was it like to be a college student at LU?
14. What is/was it like to be a Latino at LU?
15. What types of activities are you involved in on campus or in the community?
16. Why did you choose to become a member of the Latino fraternity?
17. How long have you been a member of Omega Beta?
18. What were some of the reasons that made you decide to join Omega Beta?
19. How much time do you spend per week involved in activities associated with Omega Beta?
20. What is your most memorable experience with being a member of Omega Beta?
21. Do you/did you participate in any other campus organizations?
22. Describe your major network of friends and acquaintances on campus.
23. Has this community of people influenced how you identify yourself in relation to ethnicity? If so, how?

Interview 2: Experience

1. What does being Latino (or other self-identifier) mean to you?
2. Tell me about an event at college that caused you to think about your ethnicity.

3. Has the perception of your ethnicity changed since attending college? If so, how has this new perception impacted you? Your family? Your high school friends? Your college friends? Your career goals?
4. Describe specific cultural values or beliefs that are significant to your ethnicity.
5. How has it been for you to maintain your cultural values, beliefs, and behaviors on campus?
6. Being Latino (or other self-identifier), what struggles and challenges have you encountered on campus?
7. How has being a Latino at a Hispanic Serving Institution (LU) contributed to your ethnic identity development?
8. Describe any specific aspects of the fraternity that have confirmed or developed your understanding of your ethnicity.
9. How have other members of the fraternity influenced your understanding of your ethnicity?
10. What similarities in ethnicity do the members of the Latino fraternity possess? What differences?
11. How do you define your ethnic identity as a group versus individually?
12. Of the activities you are involved in within the fraternity, what has had the greatest impact on your ethnicity?
13. Do you/did you feel more or less involved in college as a member of a Latino fraternity?
14. Was/Is there a feeling of connectedness and involvement in the general campus life important to your ethnic experience?
15. How did your participation in a Latino fraternity affect your participation in general university activities or organizations?
16. What are the major advantages and disadvantages of being a member of Omega Beta?
17. Is there something you wish I would have asked you but didn't – pertaining to your ethnic identity development as a member of a Latino fraternity at a HSI?

Interview 3: Follow-up and member check

1. This interview will consist of additional exploration of information offered in the first two interviews that may not be clear or that may need more elaboration.
2. Students will also be presented with preliminary themes from the data analysis and will be asked to verify that these themes are an accurate representation of their background and experiences. They will have an opportunity to correct any misinterpretation or add additional information.

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Title of Study: **Ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at a Hispanic Serving Institution**

Investigator(s): Juan R. Guardia (A.A., B.S., M.S.) will be responsible for contacting and obtaining all information from participants, including informed consent forms.

This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like to participate. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research study is to understand how membership in a Latino fraternity contributes to ethnic identity development. You are being invited to participate in this study because of your membership in a Latino fraternity at a Hispanic Serving Institution.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will last for six months and will involve my presence at weekly meetings (when available) and any activities the fraternity participates in throughout the six months that are open to those not affiliated with the organization. During the study you may expect the following study procedures to be followed.

I will record observational notes of the activities that take place at weekly meetings and when I am present during other activities.

I will request copies of any non-written or written material you wish to share with me that you believe relates to your ethnic identity development and the Latino fraternity. Non-written material includes artifacts related to the Latino fraternity. Written material includes journals, memoirs, etc.

If you agree to participate in this study, your involvement will consist of three 90 minute interviews and several focus groups. Interview and focus group questions will cover your experiences as a member of the Latino fraternity and how the fraternity contributes to your ethnic identity development. You may skip any questions that you do not wish to answer or that makes you feel uncomfortable. Your responses will be audio recorded and erased a year after the study has been completed.

Prior to beginning the study there will be discussion of the informed consent form and confirmation of your eligibility. You will also have the opportunity to ask any questions about the study or the informed consent form.

RISKS

At this time, no foreseeable risks are present from participating in this study.

BENEFITS

If you decide to participate in this study there may be the direct benefit to you of gaining a better understanding of your own ethnic identity development. It is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit society by providing valuable information about the ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity men at a Hispanic Serving Institution.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs and will not receive compensation for your participation in this study.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or leave the study at any time. If you decide to not participate in the study or leave the study early, it will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies and the Iowa State University Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy your records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

Interviews will be tape recorded to foster accuracy in data collection and analysis. You will not be identified by name, either in coding or reporting the data, in this study in an effort to maintain confidentiality. To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken: participants will be assigned pseudonyms and/or codes that will be used on forms instead of their true names. Juan R. Guardia will be the only person to have access to study records, which will be kept password protected on my personal computer. In addition, audiotapes and observation notes and non-written materials will be stored by Juan R. Guardia in a locked file cabinet for 3 years. If the results are published, your identity will remain confidential.

_____ By initialing in the space provided, you verify that you have been told that audio recordings will be generated during the study.

QUESTIONS

Questions are encouraged during this study. For further information about the study contact either Juan R. Guardia, jguardia@iastate.edu, (515) 292-8213 or Dr. Nancy Evans, nevans@iastate.edu, (515) 294-7113. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the Iowa State University Human Subjects Research Office, 1138 Pearson Hall, (515) 294-4566; austingr@iastate.edu or the Research Compliance Officer, Office of Research Compliance, 2810 Beardshear Hall, (515) 294-3115; dament@iastate.edu

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Subject's Name (printed)

_____
(Subject's Signature)(Date)

INVESTIGATOR STATEMENT

I certify that the participant has been given adequate time to read and learn about the study and all of their questions have been answered. It is my opinion that the participant understands the purpose, risks, benefits and the procedures that will be followed in this study and has voluntarily agreed to participate.

_____
(Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent) (Date)

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Ethnic identity development of Latino fraternity members at a Hispanic Serving Institution
Focus Group Questions (Adapted from Nuñez, 2004)

1. In what ways did your family or the community you grew up in influence how you identify yourself?

2. What is your preferred ethnic identification? If you would, please describe different aspects of that identification.

3. Has your ethnic identification changed over time? Why or why not?

4. At college, what or who has influenced your ethnic identity the most? And in what ways?

5. What campus activities have given you the opportunity to learn about your ethnic identity? (classes, organizations, friends, etc.)

6. How do you feel your involvement in the Latino fraternity has influenced your understanding of your ethnicity?

7. How is ethnic identity defined within the Latino fraternity?

8. What aspects of your membership to the Latino fraternity do you value the most? (for example: friendships, involvement in an organization that focuses on Latino issues.)

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