# THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL FACTORS ON MEXICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP ROLES IN EL PASO COUNTY, TEXAS

by

Monica Liza Galante

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Approved:

D'Marie Hanson, Ph.D., Mentor

Mary Jo Moran, Ph.D., Committee Member

Susan A. Orshan, Ph.D., Committee Member

Accepted and Signed: _____ March 11, 2010
D'Marie Hanson — Date

Accepted and Signed: _____ March 11, 2010
Mary Jo Moran — Date

Accepted and Signed: _____ March 11, 2010
Susan A. Orshan — Date

_____ March 11, 2010
Jeremy Moreland, Ph.D. — Date
Dean, School of Advanced Studies
University of Phoenix

ABSTRACT

The glass ceiling is a concept familiar to women. Fox-Genovese (2001) suggested the challenges faced by women are not gender-based but culturally related. El Paso County, Texas is rich in history and culture. The influence of the Mexican culture is present in every aspect of life. Despite the presence of the Mexican culture, leadership positions still evade some Hispanic women. Catalyst (2003, 2005) established that Hispanic women held only 0.34% of corporate leadership positions in the United States in 2005. In the mixed explanatory study, the influence of Mexican cultural values on Mexican American women in leadership roles in El Paso County, Texas, is examined. Purposive sampling was used to identify and select participants for each phase of the study. The themes for the qualitative phase were predefined by the quantitative phase using the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (Copyright by ITAP International, 2008). Participants' scores were compared with existing country scores from the United States and Mexico and two dimensions were significantly different, namely, individualism and achievement. The qualitative phase, conducted with semi-structured interviews, explored themes in an effort to gain understanding of the differences between the scores. Findings contradict Fox-Genovese's claim that culture and not gender discrimination is the primary contributing factor to the glass ceiling experienced by women. The findings also suggest evidence that women of Mexican ancestry experienced a moderate level of assimilation compared to acculturation into American society.

# DEDICATION

To my family and friends who have supported me on this journey and to the Mexican American women of El Paso County, Texas, who have worked to make the El Paso community strong.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF TABLES

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Organizations in general have experienced rapid change brought about by the propagation of markets across a broad continuum of national, global, cultural, and ethnic borders. Technological advances and the lessening of trade restrictions have increased immigration, leading to culturally diverse work environments that are standard in organizations (Benjamin, Kristjansdottir, & Ganesan, 2002). For organizations to stay competitive, they must cultivate diverse leadership.

Women of all ethnicities entering the labor force have shown themselves to be capable leaders; yet, women are not represented well in leadership positions (Catalyst, 1999, 2001). The glass ceiling, described as "an intangible barrier that prevents women from rising to leadership position," may be responsible (Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, Cardy, & Dessler, 2002, p. 243). Even if the glass ceiling exists as a barrier, the source may involve more than just gender; it may relate to culture as well (Fox-Genovese, 2001; Hite, 2007).

In research, a relationship between cultural values and an individual's conduct in the workplace was suggested (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006). Hofstede (2001) conducted a cross-cultural study that explored the correlation between culture and workplace relationships beginning in 1967 (ITAP International, 2007d). Hofstede (2001) identified five cultural dimensions based on the data:

1. Individualism--the degree an individual takes action for the benefit of him or herself or a group.
2. Power distance--the degree of interpersonal power between the leader and follower.

3. Certainty--the measure of an individual's preference between structured or unstructured situations.
4. Achievement--the degree an individual focuses on task or quality of life and caring for others.
5. Time orientation--the degree an individual sustains his or her cultural values oriented toward the past, present, or future (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b).

In chapter 1, awareness of the relationships between the dependent variables, namely, leadership behaviors, and the independent variables, namely, cultural values and Mexican American women in leadership positions, is built. The circumstances that led to the existing challenges for minority women, specifically Mexican American women, are described. The importance of organizations going beyond a cursory understanding of the Mexican American workforce's leadership potential is discussed, a foundation for understanding provided, and the framework for the study introduced.

## Background of the Problem

Leadership positions can exist at all levels of management. Women appear to experience success in leadership positions at all levels of management, except at the executive management level in larger organizations. "Just 13 Fortune 500 companies are headed by women" (Wong, 2007, para.10). The number is even smaller for Hispanic women (Catalyst, 2003, 2005). Research evaluating the gender and racial demographics found that the proportion of Hispanic females holding corporate officer positions was 0.34% in 2005, just a minimal increase (0.1%) from 2002 (Catalyst, 2003, 2005).

Fox-Genovese (2001) suggested that the discrimination women face in the workplace is exaggerated. Fox-Genovese disputed the belief that women still face discrimination in the workplace, especially when it comes to pay. In contrast, statistics for 2008 show that women earned 80.6 cents for every dollar a man earned, up from 59 cents in 2004, taking four years to narrow the gap by 27% (Bureau of Labor Statistic [BLS], 2004, 2008).

Fox-Genovese (2001) further suggested that gender discrimination might occur because of cultural factors that include economic differences and educational attainment. Cultural influences are yet to be explored in depth empirically. Kirkman et al. (2006) presented a review of empirical research that incorporated Hofstede's (2001) cultural values framework. The review examined 180 studies; only nine addressed leadership, none of which was dated beyond 2001. Kirkman et al.'s (2006) review supported the view that limited research exploring the influence of cultural values on leadership exists, even in a general sense.

Past research about gender in the workplace was limited because it focused only on White women and excluded cultural factors (Catalyst, 1999). Subsequent research included and focused specifically on women of color, namely, Black, Asian, and Hispanic, but neglected cultural issues (Catalyst, 1999; Hite, 2006). Although focusing on women of color provided new and useful information and provided a context for the challenges faced by women of color in management, the research did not allow for consideration of the cultural effects. Catalyst (1999) suggested the following:

1. Women of color continued to face informal barriers to advancement because they were not members of the dominant group. Unlike White women, women of color continued to see the glass ceiling as impenetrable.
2. Women of color had a perceptible exclusion from the networks required for advancement.
3. Women of color had little or no access to mentors, severely hindering their opportunities for advancement.
4. Women of color continued to face pay inequities.
5. Women of color faced different obstacles, viewed differently in terms of aptitude and performance, and faced stereotypes that affected working relationships.

Available research corroborated some of the obstacles noted by Catalyst (1999) by identifying a number of employment challenges specific to Mexican American women: cultural stereotypes, access to influential people, and lack of effective mentoring (Catalyst, 2003; DeAnda, 2005; Vélez-Ibáñez, 2004).

Kroeber and Parsons (as cited in Hofstede, 2001) suggested that culture is a factor that shapes human behavior. *Culture* is the "transmitted and created content and patterns of values, ideas, and other symbolic-meaningful systems" (p. 9). Thus, a woman's behavior provides visible evidence of her cultural factors. In turn, cultural factors, on both a conscious and subconscious level, affect a woman's behavior that consists of, but is not limited to, her perception, judgment, attitude, communication, relationships, and ethics, aspects of culture that are also reflected in organizations (Hofstede, 2001). The factors identified by DeAnda (2005) and Hofstede (2001) provide potential clues for

studying the challenges faced by Mexican American women in leadership positions. In the study conducted, cultural factors influencing Mexican American women in leadership roles, possibly creating or contributing to the challenges, were explored from the participants' perspective.

## Statement of the Problem

The concept of a glass ceiling involves a belief in the existence of barriers to advancement faced by women and minorities (Lockwood, 2004). Fox-Genovese (2001) cited one possible source of barriers as an individual's culture. The Hispanic culture gives credence to the existence of a glass ceiling. "Between 1990-2000, Hispanic women seeking a bachelor's degree increased 150% and those seeking a Master's degree increased 164%" making Hispanic women a viable labor source for leadership positions, but "only 25 of the 10,092 corporate leaders among the Fortune 500 companies are Hispanic" (Catalyst, 2003, p. 2).

In the study conducted, a mixed explanatory method first identified the cultural preferences exhibited in the workplace by Mexican American women. Thereafter, using the cultural preferences identified, the cultural factors that may influence Mexican American women in leadership roles were identified.

## Purpose of the Study

In the study, the influence of Mexican cultural values on Mexican American women's access to and performance in leadership roles from the perspective of Mexican American businesspersons who are women was examined. A mixed explanatory method design was used. The method involved the collection of qualitative data after a

quantitative phase of data collection. Inclusion of a qualitative method allowed for a deeper understanding of the themes generated from the quantitative data.

Data in the quantitative phase was collected using the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (ITAP, 2007f) from participants of Mexican ancestry who resided or worked in El Paso County, Texas. Participants were selected by means of purposive sampling. Data was collected from 40 of the 127 participants originally solicited. The data provided a cultural profile of the participants. The cultural profile identified attitudes and values that may affect participants' interaction in the workplace. The profiles were compared to the original data collected by Hofstede (2001) in a comprehensive study focusing on how values in the workplace are influenced by culture. Comparisons of the original country scores published by Hofstede illuminated whether individuals of Mexican ancestry tended to acculturate versus assimilate into the American culture, specifically the leadership environment.

In the second phase of the study, qualitative, semi-structured interviews with 10 Mexican American female leaders who completed the first phase of the study were conducted. The explanatory follow-up interviews focused on the ways that Mexican cultural factors may affect Mexican American women's access to and performance in leadership roles. The study presents a new source of information about Mexican American women in leadership.

## Significance of the Problem

Business practitioners view diversity as an asset to organizations because diversity promotes innovative practices and complies with laws that prohibit workplace discrimination (Benjamin et al., 2002; Ricaud, 2006). Cultural diversity, however,

remains a principal challenge facing organizations. Stereotypes, intolerances, and misinterpretations intensify the challenges. Benjamin et al. (2002) stated, "Diversity must be approached with sophisticated knowledge and advanced tools" (p. 1). Douglas (2004) stated, "Cultural development is dependent on the willingness to challenge one's beliefs and values, respect others, and empathize" (p. 207). Creating an organizational culture of awareness and acceptance may provide a business with a strategic advantage in a global economy by generating new sources of talent and leadership teams that are as culturally diverse as the business environment.

## Significance of the Study to Leadership

Leadership studies tend to focus on a researcher's definition of leadership when determining the factors for effective leadership. Such biases often eliminate factors other researches deem important (Oyinlade, 2006). The diverse perspectives for defining leadership make it challenging to identify one definitive approach for evaluating the effectiveness of leadership. Oyinlade proposed, "Leadership effectiveness is a relative decision based on definition and assessed characteristics" (p. 26). In the literature, the focus is on leadership behavior but the literature focused on the sources of the behaviors is minimal.

The study, while adding to the literature, provides the basis for further studies about leadership as it relates to Mexican American women. A framework for replicating the study among other populations is offered. The results of the study may assist organizations, as well as individuals, to create effective employee development programs and succession plans that are inclusive and supportive of Mexican American women who aspire to or are in leadership roles but guided by cultural factors.

## Nature of the Study

Literature and general commentary between 1993 and 2007 suggested the challenges experienced in leadership roles by Mexican American women were the result of cultural influences (Catalyst, 2003; Hite, 2007). The purpose of the mixed explanatory study was to explore the influence of cultural factors on Mexican American women in leadership roles. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) posed the "Central premise [of mixed methods] is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of the research problem than either approach alone" (p. 5). Mixed method approaches consist of two phases conducted simultaneously or consecutively. A mixed explanatory method design, as defined by Creswell and Plano-Clark, is a two-phased method that first conducts the quantitative phase, then applies the qualitative phase to facilitate explanation and deeper understanding of the themes identified in the initial quantitative analysis. The study conducted was a mixed explanatory approach; first, the cultural preferences exhibited in workplace relationships were identified, and second, the cultural influences that assisted or dissuaded Mexican American women achieving self-perceived success in leadership roles were explored qualitatively.

The purpose of the mixed explanatory study, despite the cultural emphasis, is not well served by research approaches commonly used in human science studies, including ethnography, grounded theory, and phenomenological explication because the context of the study exists outside participants' culture and the approach seeks to explore events that characterized by the presence of blended variables (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). The study conducted was a mixed explanatory approach; first, the cultural preferences

exhibited in workplace relationships were identified by administering the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (CWQ2) (ITAP, 2007f). Second, the cultural influences that assisted or dissuaded Mexican American women achieving self-perceived success in a leadership role were explored qualitatively using a combination of open-ended and directed questions focused on predetermined categories.

*Quantitative Phase*

In the quantitative phase of the study conducted, the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (CWQ2), a "researched-based [tool] and associated with two of the world's leading experts in the intercultural field—Dr. Geert Hofstede and Dr. André Laurent" (ITAP International, 2007b, para. 5), was administered. The CWQ2 provides an individual with a foundation of cultural understanding in an effort to create effective cross-cultural working relationships (ITAP International, 2007a).

The CWQ2 is web-enabled and poses 60 questions centered around five cultural dimensions: individualism, power, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. A non-probability method of sampling was used due to the mixed nature of the study, specifically purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select female participants of Mexican ancestry who resided or worked in El Paso County, Texas. Purposive sampling is used to identify specific cases for exploration with the intent of gaining a deeper understanding as opposed to generalizing the findings to a population (Neuman, 2005). Participants had access to a personal computer and working knowledge of the internet. The data collected and processed in phase 1 guided the questions in the second qualitative phase.

*Qualitative Phase*

Content analysis, a more flexible methodology for analyzing textual data, takes meaning from the context of the data. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) defined content analysis as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes and patterns" (p. 1278). Downe-Wamboldt (1992, as cited in Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) stated, "The goal of content analysis is to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study" (p. 1278). Hsieh and Shannon listed three kinds of content analysis approaches: conventional, directed, and summative. Conventional and summative approaches are not appropriate for this study because these methods use the text data to identify coding categories. A mixed explanatory method suggests a directed analysis: themes are identified in the quantitative phase to define coding categories. A directed content analysis approach uses a structured process. The purpose of directed content analysis is "to validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory" (p. 1281). Data are collected through interviews using a combination of open-ended and directed questions that are focused on predetermined categories. Results of a directed content analysis generate both supporting and non-supporting evidence for the theme or concept being explored, occasionally extending the theory.

Purposive sampling was also applied in the qualitative phase for selecting a minimum of 10 participants. The criteria for the selection of participants were as follows:

1. Female
2. Mexican ancestry

3. Holds or aspires to a leadership position either in the community or with an employer
4. Participated in the quantitative phase of the study.

The qualitative phase established a level of trustworthiness. Allen et al. (1993) stated, "Establishing trustworthiness enables a study to make a reasonable claim to methodological soundness" (p. 131). In the study, trustworthiness was accomplished by applying purposive sampling and engaging in peer debriefing and reflexive journaling.

## Hypothesis

In a mixed explanatory method study, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected. In a mixed explanatory method, themes identified in the quantitative data are investigated using qualitative methods (Creswell, 2007). Mixed methods, in general, blend the strengths and neutralize the weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Employing a mixed method enhances examination by combining divergent data to yield the same themes. The hypothesis in the quantitative phase of the study served as an affirmation of the role cultural factors play in workplace relationships.

$H1_0$: Women of Mexican ancestry do not show evidence of cultural preferences in the work environment as measured by individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation.

$H1_a$: Women of Mexican ancestry show evidence of cultural preferences in the work environment as measured by individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation.

## Research Questions

The Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ provides a "cultural display of preferences in workplace behavior" (ITAP International, 2007b, para.1). The research questions for the mixed explanatory study sought explanations for deeper understanding of the quantitative results. The research questions, coupled with the results from the quantitative phase, guided the qualitative phase of the study.

1. What are the cultural preferences identified by women of Mexican ancestry that are believed to influence their performance in leadership roles?
2. How do the identified cultural preferences influence women of Mexican ancestry with respect to access to and performance in leadership positions?

## Theoretical Framework: Cultural Dimensional Model

The purpose of the mixed explanatory study was to interview Mexican American women in leadership positions and to identify the cultural factors that influenced their entrance into leadership positions and ability to sustain and progress in leadership positions. The study brought together the concepts of culture, women, and leadership. The unique connection of concepts prescribed a mixed methods approach to explore and understand participants' cultural preferences about workplace behaviors and their lived experiences as related to leadership.

Research indicated the existence of a relationship between natural cultural values, workplace behaviors, attitudes, and other organizational outcomes (Kirkman et al., 2006). Hofstede (2001) quantitatively analyzed the cultural influences of workplace behaviors over a span of seven years between 1967 and 1973, and included more than 70 countries in the analysis (ITAP International, 2007d). Even though Hofstede (2001) eventually

narrowed the areas researched to 50 countries and 3 regions, replication and extension of the original study provided scores for 74 countries (ITAP International, 2007d).

One replication of Hofstede's (2001) study in particular was that conducted by Bond. Bond (1984 as cited by Hofstede, 2001), in concert with a number of colleagues from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, conducted a cultural survey similar to Hofstede (2001) using the Rokeach Value Survey with 10 ethnic groups in the Asia-Pacific region (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Bond (1984 as cited by Hofstede, 2001), using the same approach as Hofstede (2001) but different material, yielded similar findings as Hofstede that, in turn, confirmed the fundamental nature of the findings in both studies (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). The replication of the study led to a joint study between Hofstede and Bond (1984 as cited by Hofstede, 2001), which explored the correlation between the two studies. The study did not span as many countries as Hofstede's (2001) original study but provided scores for the time orientation dimension for 39 countries. Mexico was not included, and a score for Mexico for the time orientation dimension is not available. The data from Hofstede's initial study and subsequent replicated studies gave rise to five cultural dimensions, creating the cultural dimensional model. The dimensions included in the cultural dimensional model are individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation.

*Individualism*

The measure of individualism is the degree to which an individual's action is for his or her advantage or the advantage of a group (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). Society as a whole is one large group comprised of many groups that may vary in composition but can be classified as either collectivist or individualistic. A

collectivist society has a tendency to create family-like ties with individuals, maintain close contact with immediate and extended family members, and honors the memory of family members who passed (Hofstede, 2001). Individualistic societies, unlike collectivist societies, are not integrated vertically or horizontally. Members of individualistic societies do not maintain familial ties. Memories of loved ones who passed quickly fade.

Individually, a social individual who seeks a participative, non-confrontational approach is representative of the collectivist individual. In contrast, individualistic members seek to speak their minds and confrontation is seen a means to a higher truth (Hofstede, 2001). Moreover, the collectivist individual will view the organization as an extension of the family and poor performance is not viewed as a valid reason for dismissal, whereas the individualist individual sees the relationship between the individual and organization as a business agreement, viewing poor performance as a socially acceptable reason for termination. A person with an individualist orientation tends to provide direct and quick answers, accepts individual versus participative decisions, and is more attracted towards items that appeal to their self-interests than the interests of the group (ITAP International, 2007c). In contrast, a person with a collectivist orientation will not provide direct and quick responses, trusts the participative decision-making approach, and looks for solutions or activities that address common and personal interests.

*Power Distance*

Hofstede (2001) defined the concept of power distance as "The measure of the interpersonal power or influence between leader and follower as perceived by the

follower" (p. 83). An individual's perceptions are shaped from birth through the learning and sharing of cultural values, beliefs, traditions, and behaviors. An individual, as a child, will model his or her behavior after the examples shared by his or her elders.

Children with large power distance relationships, or a hierarchical orientation, are expected to be obedient toward their elders, and independent behavior is not supported. In contrast, children with small power distance relationships, or a participative orientation, are viewed as equals; such children are encouraged to take control of their destinies and challenge authority. People who observe family interactions of those involved in a small power distance relationship see the interaction as cold, aloof, and lacking passion. An individual who leans towards a hierarchical orientation will not be assertive when addressing management and expect direction from supervisors, whereas individuals exhibiting a participative orientation prefer the application of gentle persuasion and influence, include other individuals in the decision and management process, recognize equality among individuals regardless of positions held in the organization, and encourage employees to take initiative in addressing challenges.

*Certainty*

The measure of certainty is the degree to which an individual prefers structured or unstructured situations (ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). Hofstede (2001) used the term *uncertainty avoidance* and defined it as "The extent to which an individual feels threatened by unknown events" (p. 161). Strong uncertainty-avoidance individuals follow rules and standards, approach change and innovation conservatively, and need clarity and structure. In contrast, individuals who embody ambiguity welcome change and

innovation are not bothered by chaos, desire flexibility in applying rules, and are viewed by some as emotionless.

Individuals who favor a need for certainty, or uncertainty avoidance, in the workplace, need information, require time to make decisions, support and apply the chain of command in addressing organizational needs, and adhere to procedures in completing tasks (ITAP International, 2007c). In contrast, individuals who tolerate ambiguity only need to know that the information they received in the decision-making process is correct; they are not interested in the data collection process and analysis. The low certainty individual welcomes others who think beyond established boundaries, do not accept the status quo, understand conflict is part of doing business, and believe rules must remain flexible for practical reasons.

*Achievement*

Achievement is the degree to which an individual concentrates his or her efforts on the task or quality of life and caring for others (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). Individuals with an achievement orientation demonstrate ambition, meet deadlines, respond immediately, go beyond expectations, work under all types of favorable and unfavorable conditions, and enjoy working (ITAP International, 2007a). In contrast, individuals who exhibit a quality of life orientation avoid self-display, favor a quality of work-life environment, approach tasks in a consultative manner, and emphasize interdependence.

The achievement dimension also tracks gender influence in the work environment. Masculine societies have "Fewer women in professional and technical jobs, gender stereotypes are country specific [as is] socialization toward traditional gender

roles" (Hofstede, 2001, Exhibit 6.13). Feminine societies, in contrast, have "larger share of women in professional and technical jobs, gender stereotypes rooted in universal biological differences, and socialization toward nontraditional gender roles" (Exhibit 6.13).

*Time Orientation*

Time orientation is the degree to which the individual embraces values oriented toward the future or the past and present (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). Individuals tend to favor either a long-term or a short-term orientation. Individuals with a short-term orientation expect quick results and rewards based on the results, apply policies broadly, consider individual status as unimportant, value leisure time, and anticipate changes in organizational loyalty. In contrast, individuals with a long-term orientation are persistent, adapt traditions to current situations, reward others in a consistent manner, believe business loyalties remain stable, consider leisure time unimportant, and place emphasis on individual status in working relationships.

In the study, examining the influence of Mexican cultural values on Mexican American women in leadership positions presented a challenge because literature was limited. Studies that examined similar phenomena often approached the topic from the contextual perspective of leadership, using leadership as the constant. Leadership may take on the role as a constant in this study but it also takes on a variant role along with cultural influences, hence the importance of building a theoretical framework that addresses both leadership and culture. The intertwining of the two elements is anticipated to create a dynamic that determines the success of Mexican American women in leadership positions.

Culture is a central focus for the study but not in the sense of a cultural study. In the study conducted, the science of leadership and workplace relationships combined with the lived cultural experiences of participants is accessed in an effort to gather data that explores and explains the experience of individual, specifically Mexican American women, in leadership roles. The creation of a holistic understanding of the occurrence provides a new window of understanding of the participants' experiences, promising to build a foundation for future studies.

## Definition of Terms

Words in a multilingual world have more than one definition, depending on the context. The following words are defined in the interests of maintaining consistent understanding and application throughout the study:

*Acculturation* is "the process by which one group learns the culture of the dominant group" (Healey, 2003, p. 589).

*Assimilation* is the process of replacing an individual's birth culture with another culture (Korzenny & Korzenny, 2005).

*Cultural relativism* is "the suggestion that ethical behavior is determined by its cultural context" (Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 2003, p. 741).

*Culture* is patterns of behavior, values, ideas, and other symbolic systems created and transmitted through interpersonal communication among group members (Krober & Parsons, 1958, as cited by Hofstede 2001).

*Hispanic* is a term employed by the United States government and encompasses anyone who emigrated from a country where Spanish is the primary language. The countries include people of various nationalities. Many of those coming from Central and

Latin American prefer the term that addresses the country of origin, for example, Mexican. The term *Latino* refers to descendants of Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America (Cafferty & Engstrom, 2003). The available literature tends to use the broader term Hispanic with minimal focus on Mexican ethnicity. Despite the similarity of the terms and considering that 66.9% of the Hispanic population is of Mexican ancestry, the study uses the terms Mexican and Hispanic interchangeably but in agreement with the literature and findings (Paulin, 2003).

*Internal colonialism* involves the controlled power relationship between two or more ethnic or racial groups while generating and sustaining the interest of the dominant group (Holleran, 2003).

*Latino* refers to descendants of Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America (Cafferty & Engstrom, 2003).

*Mexican refers to a* person who is of Mexican ancestry and born in Mexico (Garcia, 2002).

*Mexican American* refers to a person who is American born but of Mexican ancestry or Mexican born but became a citizen of the United States (Garcia, 2002).

*Organizational or corporate culture* "is a system of shared actions, values, and beliefs that develops within an organization and guides the behavior of its members" (Schermerhorn et al., 2003, p. 745).

*Second-generation Mexican American* is an individual whose biological grandparents are Mexican born and whose parents are American born.

*Subculture* refers to a group within a larger group that shares distinctive patterns of behaviors, values, and characteristics (Jandt, 2007).

*Transformational leader* is an individual who "that develops in their subordinates an expectation of high performance rather than merely spending time praising or reprimanding them (Gilbert, 1985 as cited by Bass, 1991, p. 54); a hero of technical competence and organizing skills (Bradford and Cohen, 1984 as cited by Bass, 1991, p. 54); and a developer of people and builder of teams" (Bass, 1991, p. 54).

## Assumptions

Qualitative research explores human behavior in a variety of social or cultural contexts (Salkind, 2003). Qualitative observational research does not control the conditions or environment in which a study is conducted, unlike experimental methods (Palmquist, 2007). A mixed method study adds the quantitative, experimental perspective. The mixed explanatory method designed assumed participants responded openly and honestly to interview questions, recalling pertinent details of their experiences; moreover, the experiences expressed by the participants were statistically representative of Mexican American women in the United States' workforce.

## Limitations

The limitations of the study are the honesty of participants' responses, the congruence of participants' perceptions, and the time limitations associated with conducting the study. The accessibility to and knowledge of the technology involved in collecting the data did not prove challenging to those individuals with a working knowledge of the internet, but it is acknowledge that some participants might have experienced challenges with navigating the web-based Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™. The credibility of the study is proportionately limited to the researcher's ability for sustaining consistent understanding of the data within the context

of the study without allowing personal experiences and background to affect the collection and interpretation of the data.

## Delimitations

The mixed explanatory study was limited to surveying women of Mexican ancestry who resided or worked in El Paso, County. Texas. The belief exists when conducting a mixed explanatory study that "qualitative and quantitative research used together produce more complete knowledge necessary to inform theory and practice" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, Table 5). The challenge arises that in a mixed explanatory study, a researcher cannot outline the research design for both phases; the qualitative phase was not finalized until the conclusion to the quantitative data analysis were reached, which places the concentration of delimitations with the quantitative phase.

Contact with the participants was gained through professional networking and participant referral. The Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ administered yielded results based on respected research that spans more than 10 years. It is possible that themes occurring outside the focus of the instrument went unnoticed. The data resulting from the quantitative phase generated dominant themes based on Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. The dominant themes influenced the direction of the qualitative phase.

In the mixed explanatory study, purposive sampling and directed content analysis was employed. Purposive sampling identified specific set of circumstances such as Mexican American women in leadership roles for exploration with the objective of gaining a deeper understanding as opposed to generalizing the findings to a population. A

researcher using purposive sampling will not know if the participants selected represent the population under study (Neuman, 2003).

A directed content analysis has some intrinsic limitations. Hochschild (1981) believed "intensive interviews are a device for generating insights, anomalies, and paradoxes, which later may be formalized into hypotheses that can be tested by quantitative social science methods" (as cited Neuman, 2003, p. 213). Researchers approach data collection and analysis with an informed predilection that can result in an over emphasis on the themes, blinding researchers to contextual aspects involving and surrounding the themes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Participants may also perceive signals from the researcher in responding to the questions targeting the themes.

## Summary

Barriers continue to exist for individuals in the workplace, some of which are self-imposed and others a result of unexplored phenomena. Leadership positions exist at all levels of management, but Hispanic women held only 0.34% of the corporate leadership positions in 2005 (Catalyst, 2003, 2005). Mexican American women continue to face informal barriers to advancement, have very limited access to the networks required for advancement, face pay inequities, and are viewed differently in terms of aptitude and performance, which feed stereotypes that affect working relationships (Catalyst, 1999; Vélez-Ibáñez, 2004). Fox-Genovese (2001) introduced the idea that the discrimination faced by women in the workforce is a result of cultural influences.

Research suggested a relationship exists between cultural values and an individual's conduct in the workplace (Kirkman et al., 2006). The factors recognized by DeAnda (2005) and Hofstede (2001) provide potential clues for analyzing the

impediments faced by Mexican American women in leadership positions. The mixed explanatory study is designed to explore the impediments. In chapter 1, a foundation was constructed for understanding the relationships between the dependent variables, namely, leadership behavior and achievement, and the independent variables, namely, cultural values and Mexican American women in leadership positions.

A crucial challenge for the study was the limited literature available that purposefully addressed the effects of Mexican cultural factors on Mexican American women in leadership. Original research on gender in the workplace was limited because it focused on White women and excluded cultural factors (Catalyst, 1999). In chapter 2, concepts in the literature that were related to the contributing elements are examined: diversity and diversity practices, Mexican culture, women in leadership, Mexican American culture, and the acculturation of Mexican Americans.

# CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A primary challenge facing organizations is to remain competitive in a global economy; meeting the challenge requires organizations to make use of the human resources available. The BLS (n.d.) projects minorities as the fastest growing available labor force, with a growth rate of 20% for Black/non-Hispanic, 37% for Hispanic, and 40% for Asian and other non-Hispanic as compared to 7% White/non-Hispanics. A plethora of leadership and management theories exists, and before applying the theories, a leader needs to develop insight into the cultural characteristics that affect organizational culture and in turn, productivity. The focus of the study was on the affects of the Mexican culture on Mexican American women in leadership roles even though cultural characteristics resulting in challenges are not unique to a specific ethnicity. The study may provide a basis for further research about cultural influences as they relate to individuals of Mexican ancestry in the work place as well as facilitate an understanding that enables organizations to recruit, retain, and develop a truly diverse leadership team that includes Mexican American women, positioning an organization strategically in a rapidly growing and competitive global economy.

In chapter 2, data from related literature is explored to develop an understanding of the role of culture in the experience of Mexican American women in leadership positions. Areas covered include cultural diversity leadership practices, barriers to career growth, cultural exploration, the Mexican culture, and the assimilation of Mexican American women in American society.

## Documentation and Literature Review

The literature explored included peer reviewed journal articles and government reference materials and statistics, such as those from the United States Department of Labor and Catalyst; published research documents using the University of Phoenix University Library Internet search engines to access databases such as EBSCOhost, Emerald, ProQuest, and ProQuest Digital Dissertations; and scholarly books accessed through publishers and a variety of libraries. Current literature (2002 to present), despite the available resources, was limited because the literature addressed the general sources of work-place behavior for Mexican American women in leadership rather than specifically cultural sources. Limited research focused on the influence of cultural values in the workplace, specifically the cultural values distinctive of Mexican American culture.

Title searches began with broad titles such as race and gender in the workplace, Hispanics in the workplace, Latinos in the workplace, cultural values, and diversity in the workplace. The various searches did not provide subject-specific information and research about Mexican American culture and leadership; and the information available was dated and general to the Hispanic population, women of color, and gender diversity. Further exploration, using broader categories, provided bibliographic information for refining targeted searches and provided the necessary literature in support of the proposed study. A review of Hofstede (2001) research and results as it related to Mexico and the United States was deemed critical.

## Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede, in 1967, embarked on a study to evaluate cultural influences in workplace relationships that would span seven years, more than 70 countries, and yield four primary dimensions for Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (ITIM International, 2007a). Dimensions revealed were power distance; individualism; uncertainty avoidance, later changed to certainty; and masculinity, later renamed achievement. Subsequent studies, through replication and extension, increased the data to 74 countries and created a fifth dimension, long- and short-term orientation, also known as time orientation. Table 1 reflects the index scores and ranking for Mexico and the United States generated by Hofstede's (2001) study.

Table 1

*Index Scores and Ranks for Mexico and United States*

| | World averages | Mexico | | United States | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Index | Rank | Index | Rank |
| Power distance | 55 | 81 | 5-6 | 40 | 38 |
| Uncertainty avoidance | 43 | 82 | 18 | 46 | 43 |
| Individualism | 50 | 30 | 32 | 91 | 1 |
| Masculinity/femininity | 64 | 69 | 6 | 62 | 15 |
| Long- & short-term orientation | 45 | Not available | Not available | 29 | 27 |

*Note:* From *Culture Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations* (2nd ed.) by G. Hofstede, p. 500. Copyright 2001 by Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Reproduced with permission from the author.

The first dimension is power distance. Power distance quantifies the power or influence between leaders and follower as perceived by followers (Hofstede, 2001). Uncertainty avoidance assesses the degree an individual feels vulnerable to undefined events. Individualism scores identify the extent to which an individual takes action for the advantage of him or herself or a group (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). Masculinity evaluates the magnitude to which social gender roles are undoubtedly distinct, whereas with femininity, gender roles extend beyond stereotypical gender roles (Hofstede, 2001). Long- and short-term time orientation determines an individual's tendency to embrace values oriented toward the future or the past and present (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). A deeper understanding of the dimensions can be gained by reviewing the scores for Mexico and United States, the two countries that provide cultural support to participants.

*Mexico Dimensional Scores*

Mexico is considered a collectivist society, which is supported by Mexico's low individualism ranking score of 30 (ITIM International, 2007b). Mexico's ranking is marginally higher than the Latin-American country average of 21. Mexicans demonstrate collectivist behavior by virtue of close family ties with immediate and extended family members. Mexicans value loyalty, superseding societal rules and regulations and foster strong relationships within social circles where individuals share responsibility for each other.

Mexico also has an elevated measure of gender role separation, evident in the masculinity dimension score of 69 (ITIM International, 2007b). The degree to which the population reinforces the masculine roles of male achievement, control, and power is

measured with the masculinity dimension. The higher the masculinity dimension score, such as in the case of Mexico, the more reinforcement of masculine roles will be observed (Peek et al., 2007). The belief in the inequality of women in Mexican society is further evidence of Mexico's high score in Hofstede's (2001) masculinity dimension (Peek et al., 2007). Mexican women among themselves however, may exhibit assertive and competitive behavior.

The last notable dimension score is power distance. Mexico's score ranking on the power distance dimension is 81 (ITIM International, 2007b). Mexico's score ranking is to be expected in a society with high levels of power and wealth inequality that is culturally accepted. Hofstede (1984, as cited by Peek et al., 2007) identified societal norms associated with higher power distances:

1. Individuals with power are justified in having special privileges
2. Subordinates are uncomfortable with challenging superiors
3. Employees lack solidarity and are cautious about trusting coworkers.

*United States Dimensional Scores*

The United States ranks first in individualism (ITIM International, 2007c). The United States fosters individualistic attitudes, resulting in frequent casual social relationships. The focus is on the individual and his or her immediate family, making self-reliance on the part of the individual necessary. The United States ranks 15 in the masculinity dimension, with an index score of 62. The score reflects a country with distinctive gender roles. Men still dominate societal and political structures despite the strides women have made. The United States also scored below the global average in long-term time orientation. Such a score is indicative of the society's attitude and

appreciation for living up to obligations and sustaining cultural traditions. The United States ranked low in power distance despite the higher ranking in the masculinity dimension. The power distance score demonstrated a society that has little difference, if any, between power structures. A greater equality exists on societal, government, organization, and family unity levels, which sustains a stable cultural environment. The freedom found and espoused in the United States Constitution is evident with the score and ranking of the uncertainty avoidance dimension. The sense of freedom and limited control fosters a healthier tolerance for ideas, thoughts, and beliefs.

Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions provide one perspective, supported by prolonged research, on how individuals can assess the influence of culture in workplace relationships. Hofstede stated, "Culture is more often a source of conflict than synergy. Cultural differences are a nuisance at best and often a disaster" (as cited in ITIM International, 2007a, para.1). It is critical that research explore other perspectives in attempting to understand the challenges. The discussion that ensues provides alternative perspectives about how culture and individual gender roles influence an organization. The discussion concludes by focusing on the Mexican culture and expanding on the characteristics that support the placement of Mexicans on the cultural dimension scales.

## Diversity

The concept of diversity suggests individuality and dissimilarity can coexist in an organization. The practice of diversity refers to an organizational effort designed to sustain organizational paradigms that promote standards, procedures, and practices that facilitate creativity, productivity, and the advancement of all employees (Elmuti, 1996; Ferner, Almond, & Colling, 2005). Diversity, on an individual level, consists of

elements, both visible and invisible, that provide an individual with a unique identity. The visible elements include age, race, gender, disability, and sexual orientation (Salomon & Schork, 2003). The invisible elements include, but are not limited to culture, work experience, personality, education, and political affiliation. Diversity goes deeper than visible aspects such as race, skin color, and language. Diversity is inclusive of intangible characteristics, such as values and beliefs (Douglas, 2004).

*Challenges in Diversity*

Diversity is also a concept that presents organizations with the challenge of attracting and retaining talent and greater diversity among employees (Lockwood, 2005). Sustaining the challenge are worldwide demographic trends (Corneulus Grove & Associates, 1995):

1. Workforce growth in industrialized nations such as the United States is stunted in comparison to emergent countries where workforce growth is rising. As a result, the surpluses of workers in emergent countries migrate to the industrialized nations for work.
2. The need for educated knowledge workers is high and continues to grow at a rapid rate due to the sweeping technological advances. Comparing countries worldwide, the number of high school and college graduates in the United States is declining, while in developing nations, the number is increasing. Organizations seeking knowledge workers look to other countries to fulfill their needs.
3. The birthrate trends of White Americans are low; in contrast, immigrants and minorities have a higher birthrate, thus increasing the potential for diversity in

the workforce. A diverse workforce requires an understanding of others in order to work cohesively to achieve organizational objectives.

Managers contend with resistance when developing and leading teams of people who do not reflect themselves or other members of the team (Corneulus Grove & Associates, 1995). Individuals working in a diverse environment may require significant changes in their personas in order to adapt to the norms and expectations of an organization. A benchmark diversity practice noted by successful organizations requires organizations to take the elements and create a culture of inclusion, or "an environment in which there is comparatively little pressure on anyone to conform to a single system of norms or values" (p. 5).

Diversity challenges continue more specifically in the area of advancement. Kilian, Hukai, and McCarty, (2005) identified common impediments in advancement for minorities, including a shortage of mentors, stereotypes regarding roles and abilities, minimal or no access to personal networks, and familial responsibilities. The one challenge more prominent for women as compared to men was familial responsibilities.

*Personal/familial responsibilities*. The United States Census 2000 reported that 80% of women bore children and, of those women, only 55.2% remained in the workforce (Wells, 2001; U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). One consequence noted is women will resign from their positions and re-enter the workforce later, and that may happen more than once in a woman's career. Not only will women place their careers second to child rearing, but also, women are more likely to be elder caregivers than men are (S. J. Wells, 2001). Some organizations may contemplate placing women in inconsequential positions to reduce the organizational impact of employee turnover (Kilian et al., 2005).

The choice to rotate in-and-out of the workforce inhibits opportunities for training and career growth. Women may also select career tracks that are less favorable to promotional growth in order for them to maintain their work-life balance. Regardless of the governmental protections and family-friendly personnel policies, organizations do not openly support work-life initiatives such as flextime and parental leave.

*Mentors and networks*. Studies indicated that individuals, especially women and minorities, without mentors decreased their opportunities for important career development experiences (De Janasz, Sullivan, & Whiting, 2003; Kilian et al., 2005). Individuals with mentors experience higher salaries, increased job satisfaction, increased organizational loyalty, and more opportunities for advancement (De Janasz et al., 2003). A mentor is an individual who is has considerable tenure with an organization in comparison to the one mentored. Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy (2002) described a mentor as "highly placed, powerful individuals who developed relatively long-lasting relationships with younger colleagues whose professional careers are influenced and furthered as a result" of the relationship" (p. 60). The relationship also connects the mentee to networks of people and a variety of professionals that assist in the success of the mentee, connecting the mentee to resources outside immediate and extended organizations. Technology, dynamic organizational structures, and a global marketplace necessitate mentoring networks versus a single network (De Janasz et al., 2003). The literature highlighted the gender and racial divide among management, minimizing sponsorship and membership in networks, consequently enabling continued segregation (Kilian et al., 2005).

*Role and ability stereotype*. Karsten (2006) defined stereotypes as "sweeping generalizations that may have been based on a kernel of truth at one time" (p. 123). Hofstede (2001) defined a stereotype as "a fixed notion about persons in a certain category, with no distinctions made among individuals and reflects the mind sets of those judging" (p. 14). Davies, Spence, and Steele (2005) stated, "Stereotypes communicate to stigmatized individuals the accusations that specifically devalue their group's social identity" (p. 1). Healy (2003) defined stereotypes as "stressing a few traits and assume[ing] that these characteristics apply to all members of the group, regardless of individual characteristics (p. 85).

Some of the more common stereotypes Latinos must overcome are illegal residency status and allegations of being lazy and lacking in ambition; criminal; poor with minimal, if any, education and social skills; too emotional; and easily excitable. Latinas face labels of being submissive, easily intimidated, and lacking power and influence (Hofstede, 2001). Stereotypes aid in discriminatory practices, subtle and overt, occurring in the workplace, restricting Hispanics to low paying, minimally skilled manual labor positions. Opportunities for visible and high profile positions for Hispanics are negligible; once in a position, a wrong move can prove detrimental to a career (Kilian et al., 2005).

## Leadership Studies and Gender Differences

Leadership studies that have focused on gender differences have been prevalent since the 1970s (Aldoory & Toth, 2004). Studies that support the existence of gender differences focused on followers' perceptions of leadership. Eagly, Makijani, and Klonsky (1992 as cited in Aldoory & Toth, 2004) conducted a meta-analysis in the

1990s. The conclusions reached were that female leaders received somewhat more negative assessments than male leaders did, and male participants had a propensity to undervalue female leaders (Aldoory & Toth, 2004; Wolfram, Mohr, & Schyns, 2007). Studies that focused on superiors' perceptions revealed no significant findings relating to gender differences, leadership styles, and leadership effectiveness (Aldoory & Toth, 2004).

Further analysis identified differences in leadership behavior between women and men. Aldoory and Toth (2004), in an attempt to explain the discord in findings, proposed two theoretical perspectives: structuralism and socialization, with structuralism supporting no gender differences and socialization acknowledging the existence of gender differences. Structuralism's primary argument assumes structural and job variables such as job descriptions, positions in the hierarchy, and status as reasons for differences between men and women; these factors are deemed void gender differences. Socialization credits gender differences in leadership to "gender socialization in which individuals manifest congruent, gendered stereotypical traits and behaviors that are not readily amenable to change" (Aldoory & Toth, 2004, p. 161). Stereotypical characteristics associated with the female gender are emotionality, nurturance, and sensitivity to others, whereas characteristics such as being independent, goal oriented, objective, assertive, competitive, and logical are associated with the male gender. Socialization lends power to gender stereotypical behaviors by encouraging some behaviors and discouraging other behaviors, depending on the individual's gender. Leaders who adhere to gender roles in a socialized structure are assumed effective whereas leaders who choose to exhibit behaviors contrary to the stereotypical gender

characteristics are assumed to display ineffective leadership behaviors. Aldoory and Toth did not offer a definitive explanation about the lack of conclusive evidence to support gender differences in leadership studies but the information yielded from their work underscores the cultural challenges faced by those in leadership roles.

Wolfram et al. (2007) made similar observations in a study evaluating the effect of gender-relevant factors on leadership. Female leaders tended to exhibit democratic and socially oriented behaviors whereas male leaders favored autocratic behaviors, or behaviors aligned with masculine gender stereotypes. Wolfram et al. (2007) further acknowledged that female leaders who demonstrated behavior opposite to the female gender stereotype often risked less than favorable leadership assessments, unlike male leaders who received more positive leadership scores when exhibiting non-stereotypical behavior. Findings also indicated challenges to the acceptance of women in leadership roles and organizational practices because women are required to fulfill both their gender and leadership roles (Wolfram et al., 2007; Rhode, 2007).

The Center for Work-Life Policy conducted a study of 3,000 American men and women who completed advanced degrees or graduated with honors as undergraduates (Rhode, 2007). Four out of 10 women, in comparison to 1 out of 10 men, left the workforce or took less challenging jobs to accommodate domestic obligations. Rhode suggested the trend confirmed gender stereotypical behavior.

## Glass Ceiling

Lockwood (2004) referred to the glass-ceiling concept as "the barriers faced by women and minorities who attempt, or aspire to attain senior positions" (para.2). The barriers in organizations where the glass ceiling phenomenon exists are the following:

"corporate policies and practices, training and career development, promotion policies, compensation practices, behavioral and cultural explanations, communication styles, stereotypes, preferred leadership styles, power in corporate culture, maintaining the status quo, and tokenism in top management circles" (Figure 2). The most evident barrier is salary. An example cited by Lockwood (2004) suggested that female chief executive officers of nonprofit organizations earned 50% less than their male counterparts. Women executives in the private sector experienced similar discrepancies but the margin of difference may not be wide. Another strong influence on the perpetuation of gender-based barriers, such as stereotyping and tokenism in the leadership ranks, is a well-ingrained corporate culture that sustains the status quo or fosters a particular leadership style.

Lockwood (2004) identified three existing and divergent views addressing the glass-ceiling concept:

1. Women, should they desire, can achieve senior-level positions through hard work, applied ambition, and adding value to the organization.
2. Work and family challenges interfere with women's advancement, and it is the choice of women to choose family over career, not the lack of organizational work-life balance and family friendly initiatives within organizations.
3. Research ignores smaller companies where women have achieved comparable successes to their male counterparts.

Studies conducted in the 1990s gave voice to these views. Further research highlighted the differences that opened opportunities for further exploration and

understanding (Aldoory & Toth, 2004; Wolfram et al., 2007). The proposed study will explore the first two views.

## Mexican Culture

The United States southwestern region, which includes Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada, and Colorado, is home to the majority of Mexican Americans; these lands were owned by Mexico (Holleran, 2003). The Mexican culture embraces a mixture of Indian, Mestizo, African, and European cultures. In the literature, it was suggested that the Mexican-origin population will comprise approximately one third of the United States population by the year 2100 (Vélez-Ibáñez, 2004). Because of the United State's nearness to Mexico and the permeable nature of the border, many Mexican Americans experience biculturalism.

### *Machismo and Marianismo*

Two terms that an individual may associate with the Mexican culture are *machismo* and *marianismo*. The two terms describe the stereotypical personas of the Mexican male and female. *Machismo* refers to a male who believes he is superior to women and exhibits his superiority through actions and attitudes. *Marianismo* embodies the ideals of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus. Women who show evidence of *marianismo* take up the perceived principles of the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus, by "staying at home and protecting their purity," which is further supported by the Mexican's culture idealization of women as mothers (Speas, 2006, p. 86). In other words, women are expected to stay at home raising the children and maintaining the family bonds. Mexican cultural norms do not embrace women in the workforce and place the financial burden for familial support on men. The *machismo* culture defines two distinct

role characteristics for the genders: the dominant male and passive female. The belief, in itself, creates challenges for individuals of Mexican decent in the Western business culture.

*Mexican Cultural Values*

Hofstede (2001) defines values as "a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others" (p. 5). Rokeach (1972 as cited in Hofstede, 2001) added that a person who possesses values holds a conviction that an explicit manner of behavior is socially preferred. Values determine the significance of concepts such as religion, familial relationships, honor, education, and loyalty. Values guide a person's behavior and interaction in society. Values provide the structure in which a person makes decisions that affect his or her life and the lives of those around him or her. Values will also determine a person's success in leadership, as values are the basic elements of significant decisions linking perceptions, judgments, motives, and actions (Priddy, 2003).

The three values held in the highest regard by Mexican Americans are family, community, and religion (Garcia, 2002). Mexican Americans believe that the values are important to the survival of self and family. Mexican Americans create social enclaves in an effort to sustain their cultural values.

*Family.* While Mexican Americans appreciate individuality, the ultimate value of the Mexican American culture is family (Garcia, 2002). The Mexican American culture is patriarchal with traditional family roles. Both men and women have clearly defined roles: men are the providers and protectors, while women are the caretakers (Zambrano, 2004). The kinship link is strong among immediate family as well as the extended family. Relatives multiple times removed from the nuclear family are as active within the nuclear

family as the nuclear family themselves. Many instances exist throughout the culture exemplifying the commitment to family:

1. The man and woman who sponsor the baptism of a child become that child's godparents. The godparents raise the child in the event of the death of the child's parents. The expectation expands with the religious responsibility of a godparent, which is to ensure that the child grows up in the Church, living and embracing religious values.
2. Obligations and relationships among siblings take precedence over those held with friends.
3. Family members rely on each other both financially and emotionally before seeking assistance outside the family. Family members still extend assistance even when the family member extending the assistance faces hardship.
4. Multiple families may live in the same household, next door, or in the near vicinity.
5. Children respect the importance of providing economic support to their parents even at the expense of their own families or personal gratification (Garcia, 2002, pp. 23, 67-68).

*Religion.* The majority of Mexican Americans are Catholic (Healey, 2003). Mexican Americans tend to be spiritual, and religious practices serve to preserve cultural the identity of Mexican Americans (Garcia, 2002; Helms & Weber, 2008). Some Mexican Americans refer to their lives as a life of faith, suggesting that the words spoken in their faith dictate practices and traditions; moreover, while much in life can be lost or taken away, the relation to each other and God will always be intact (Chetti & Joseph,

n.d.; Helms & Weber, 2008). Some of the more observed religious celebrations and traditions are the celebration of the Day of the Dead (*Dia de los Muertos*); the celebration of a young woman entering womanhood, celebrated on her 15th birthday (*quinceiñera*); and Mexican Americans' social celebrations such as weddings, holidays, and Mother's Day. All the events are rich and rooted in tradition and religion.

*Community.* The Mexican American culture brings together family and religion. The collectivity is synonymous with an ethnic enclave. Healey (2003) defined an ethnic enclave as "a social, economic, and cultural sub-society controlled by the group itself located in a specific area or neighborhood" (p. 377). The exhibition of community in the Mexican American culture is no different from any other ethnic enclave, but the value of family and religion embedded since birth encapsulates the community in which Mexican Americans live. The value of community is also visible in the favoring of interpersonal relations versus a task orientation and teamwork versus individual competition (Zambrano, 2004).

The Mexican American culture has shared values that are universal across its communities and the values specific to the Mexican community. Mexican cultural values, in an overt and subtle manner, affect the success of Mexican Americans in the workplace, especially women. It is critical that organizations seek a better understanding of the effects of Mexican cultural values on the success of Mexican American women in leadership positions.

*Intercultural Communication*

Communication is the process of giving and receiving information, opinions, or ideas verbally and nonverbally (Taylor, 2006). The workforce in the United States is

representative of the diversity organizations experience globally. An individual who keeps an open mind and develops an understanding for cultures will increase his or her chances for communicating effectively because such individuals communicate in terms of the cultures involved in the communication process. Language plays an intricate role in the communication process; moreover, the cultural background of the language will affect the transmission and receipt of the message:

> The role of language within a culture and the influence of the culture on the meanings of words and idioms are so pervasive that scarcely any test can be adequately understood without careful consideration of its cultural background (Nida, 1993, as cited by Xiaoqian, 2005, p. 86).

The Mexican culture exemplifies Nida's discussion on the role of language in a culture.

Mexicans have a noticeably different communication styles in terms of the actual spoken word. Americans, in business, are succinct, speaking only the necessary verbiage and focusing on the task (Benjamin et al., 2002). Mexicans use dramatic and sumptuous words in an interpersonal manner, emphasizing positive business relationships because Mexicans believe the style of communication is important to the success of business interactions. Mexicans take personal honor seriously and will avoid confrontations; in contrast, Americans, believe that adversarial conflict resolution will produce a profitable end.

*The Female Gender in Hispanic and Mexican Society*

The low earning ability of Hispanics, in contrast to European-American women and Hispanic men, supports the highly traditional patriarchal Hispanic community (Flores, Carrubba, & Good, 2006). School, work, and family have a profound effect on

the lives of Mexican American women. Mexican Americans have the least formal education among Hispanics (Ortiz, 1996). Most Mexican American women reside in community with a low socio-economic status, and as such, school experiences will more than likely be negative. Research is limited concerning the educational achievements of Mexican American women because data is grouped under one label, namely, Hispanic, and is not consistently gathered or represented (Ortiz). Ortiz stated, "the factors affecting the success [in education] appear to be Chicanas' perception of racism, sexism, economics, family responsibilities, support networks, role models, and mentors" (para.9). Mexican American women are breaking the workforce stereotype often associated with Mexicans. Mexican American women fill jobs in the areas of technical, sales, administrative support, and service occupations. Mexican American women bring innate skills to the workplace, skills pertaining to fundraising, organizing neighborhood groups, and negotiating with authority figures.

The Mexican American culture places little, if any, emphasis on using women's success in the labor market as a measure for determining a woman's individual worth (Ortiz, 1996). Because of the traditional positions that Mexican American women hold, Mexican American females belong to the working class. Members of the working class use family socialization to form their attitudes and behaviors, whereas professional workers reject the family-based mindset. Hispanic women identify the desire to combine traditional and nontraditional roles, while advocating for equality and seeking job satisfaction (Flores et al., 2006). Moreover, while the majority of Hispanic women did not consider themselves feminist, they subscribed to the tenets of feminism.

## Acculturation of Mexican Americans in American Society

Adapting to one's environment can present challenges for an individual whose culture is not the dominant culture of the environment in which they exist. A simple search of popular literature and newspapers highlights the public debate on the level of success of Hispanics in the United States as it relates to the individual's level acculturation. The study focuses on Mexican American women in leadership role, which suggests addressing literature relating to organizational culture, access to education, and women in leadership is essential.

### *Organizational Culture in the United States*

Organizational culture is easier to experience than to describe. An organization's culture encompasses the shared values, beliefs, traditions, standards, and philosophies of individuals within an organization (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). Kreitner and Kinicki identified a conceptual framework for understanding an organization's culture: "antecedents, organizational culture, organizational structure and practices, group and social processes, collective attitudes and behavior, and organizational outcomes" (p. 81). The precursor, or antecedents, to an organization's culture include the founding individuals' values, the industry environment, the host country culture, and the vision and behavior believed, shared, and demonstrated by the most senior executives. The organization's observable artifacts, values, and basic assumptions establish the agenda for an organization's culture and are the basis for the organizational structure, practices, and subsequent social processes and behaviors, which culminate in organizational outcomes.

Sathe (1983, as cited in Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004), a Harvard researcher, simplified the definition of organizational culture, classifying the indications of organizational culture into shared objects, talk, behavior, and feelings. An organization will have subcultures within the primary organizational culture. The subcultures might be the result of different geographical locations, product lines, or departments/divisions. The primary functions of subcultures are to align themselves with the organizational values and generate emerging values in response to the customer needs, community, and business necessity (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005).

*Barriers in Higher Education*

Hispanics, as the largest minority, some 12% of the total population in the United States, are not represented equally in four-year higher education institutions; moreover, of the ethnic groups classified Hispanic, individuals of Mexican ancestry have the lowest completion rate (Gloria, Castellanos, & Orozco, 2005). Looking specifically at undergraduate degrees conferred in 1996 and 1997 ($n$ = 1,168,023), the completion rate of Hispanic women was .5% higher ($n$ = 35,934) than for Hispanic men ($n$ = 26,007), but still comparatively low as compared to White or African-American females. The year 2005 presents a similar picture for the 51,377,703 degrees conferred, with Hispanics comprising only 5% of the total as compared to the 78% completion rate of Whites, 8% completion rate of Asians, and 7% completion rates by Blacks (Pew Hispanic Center, 2007, Table 19). Young (1992, as cited in Gloria et al., 2005) identified financial constraints, the need to take time from work, familial interruptions and obligations, and limited time to study as primary impediments for female Mexican American college

students, but noted Hispanic males faced fewer challenges as compared to Hispanic women.

Research, in the past, focused on the cognitive and non-cognitive factors inhibiting the educational success of minorities; more recently, researchers began incorporating the socioeconomic and interpersonal aspects (Gloria et al., 2005). Gloria, et al. (2005) identified financial challenges as impeding success for Hispanic females but also included minimal familial support, few mentors, cultural stereotypes, inhospitable educational environments, and self-awareness of the consequences of cultural nonconformity.

*Women in Leadership in the United States*

Women face many challenges when they enter the leadership realm, primarily the negative perceptions of their abilities to lead despite their success at being "non-coercive and adept at building relations" (Pounder & Coleman, 2002, para.1). Typical traits found among female leaders included "lower leader control, participative decision-making, friendliness, unselfishness, concern of others, expressiveness and problem-solving based on intuition" (Yammarino & Dubinsky, 1997, para.14).

Hispanics, in 2000, represented 10.9% of the labor force, or 15.4 million workers, and, in 2007, the figure increased to 14.0%, making Hispanics the third largest labor force group in the United States (BLS, 2007; Fullerton & Toossi, 2001). By 2010, Hispanics are expected to add 7.3 million workers with only 1.8 million leaving the labor force (Fullerton & Toossi, 2001). Fullerton and Toossi attributed the growth in the Hispanic labor force to the following: higher birth levels, increased migration, and an increase in the participation rate of Hispanic women.

Hispanics are apt to acculturate and not assimilate. Some researchers looked to the Hispanic youth to gain an understanding the choice between acculturation and assimilation among Hispanics. Holleran (2003), for example, conducted a study in hopes of gaining an insight into the perspectives of Hispanic youth about their ethnicity. Part of the ethnic struggles among Hispanic youth is the allegiance to Mexico and the United States, commitment to family rituals, and working towards making the American dream a reality.

## Conclusion

Morrison and Von Glinow (1990) maintained women experience an intangible barrier of discrimination that limits their access to influential leadership roles (Davies et al., 2005). The inequalities continued to surface even though several studies (e.g. Hollander, 1992; Powell, 1993) showed no distinct relationship between gender and leadership effectiveness (Davies et al., 2005). The lack of distinct relationships among inequalities, gender, and leadership effectiveness led to Fox-Genovese's (2001) claim that culture was an impediment in the advancement of women in the workplace. Hofstede's (2001) work was the first step in exploring the influence of culture in workplace relationships, focusing on cultures in over 70 countries worldwide (ITIM International, 2007a). Hofstede's (2001) research provided the starting point to explore and understand the effects of an individual's culture on his or her workplace relationships.

## Summary

In chapter 2, a kaleidoscope of concepts addressing individual aspects that provide insight into the research questions posed for study were brought together.

Available literature addressed the broad concept of women in leadership. The most specific literature addressed Latinas or Hispanics. Leadership studies that focus specifically on Hispanics was limited, dated, and focused more on styles or behavior rather than on the influence of that behavior on Mexican American women in leadership roles (Catalyst, 1999). The literature did not address the topic of the proposed study directly.

The challenges experienced by Mexican American women are not unique to a specific ethnicity; however, what influences the challenges, for example, cultural factors, affected the manner in which Mexican American women approached the challenges. The data from related literature was reviewed to cultivate an understanding of the role of culture in the experience of Mexican American women in leadership roles. Areas explored consisted of cultural diversity in leadership practices, barriers to career growth, culture, the Mexican culture specifically, and the assimilation of Mexican American women into American society.

Hofstede's (2001) research broke ground by evaluating the link between culture and workplace relationships (ITAP International, 2007a, 2007d). In chapter 2, Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions were explored and the two cultures identified as the focus of the study, namely, Mexicans and Americans, rankings in comparison to the world average were introduced. Hofstede's research identified Mexico as a collectivist society; in contrast, the United States is an individualistic society. The differences point toward a wide range of challenges Mexican American women may face (ITIM International, 2007b). Research also suggested that gender differences contributed to the challenges faced by women in leadership roles. The Mexican culture hosts a diverse mixture: Indian,

Mestizo, African, and European cultures; despite the diverse cultural influences, the values considered to be of utmost importance by Mexican Americans are family, community, and religion (Garcia, 2002). The Mexican American culture places minimal emphasis on the success of women in the labor market as a measure for shaping individual worth and, in turn, Mexican American women tended to be employed in traditional female positions such as sales, administrative support, and service occupations (Ortiz, 1996).

# CHAPTER 3: METHOD

The purpose of the mixed explanatory study was to explore Mexican cultural factors as an influential element upon Mexican American women in leadership roles who work or reside in El Paso County, Texas. Mixed methods provide the opportunity to test for consistency through evaluating the themes using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Mixed methods reduce intrinsic biases and strengthen the research in an attempt to enhance the literature (Rocco, Bliss, Gallagher, & Perez-Prado, 2003). The study used qualitative data to explain themes generated from quantitative data.

## Research Design

The Mexican American culture, as with other Hispanic cultures, is rich in customs and practices. Fox-Genovese (2001) believed the customs and practices create career barriers for women. The context of the study is focused on culture, which is often examined with a qualitative approach. Before the influence of cultural factors is explored, however, the behavior that the cultural factors may or may not affect must be identified. In applying the mixed explanatory method, cultural preferences exhibited in the workplace by women of Mexican of ancestry were first identified. Thereafter, isolating and understanding identified cultural factors that may play a role in access to and performance in leadership positions was attempted.

A mixed explanatory method permits deeper understanding of the themes produced by the quantitative data. Rocco et al. (2003) define mixed method research as "the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques methods, approaches, concepts, or language in a single study" (p. 17). The research design selected for the study is a mixed explanatory study,

which uses two phases sequentially. The first phase is the quantitative phase and the second phase is the qualitative phase.

The study required purposive sampling to select participants for the qualitative phase of the study. The quantitative phase required the solicitation of data from 100 participants who were of Mexican ancestry, 18 years of age or older, and worked or resided in El Paso County, Texas. The participants for the qualitative phase of the study were a subset of the sample used in the quantitative phase. To participate in the qualitative phase, participants were required to participate in quantitative phase. Participants for both phases were experienced in or aspired to hold leadership roles.

The quantitative phase of the study used the research-based Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (CWQ2). ITAP International licenses the CWQ2 and retains exclusive global rights to its use and provided permission for use in this study (see Appendix A). ITAP International administered the questionnaire (see Appendix B) to 127 participants, and processed and compiled the data in a spreadsheet format. The quantitative data yielded the participants' cultural profiles. The cultural profiles do not identify a person's race or ethnicity but are inclusive of attitudes and values that directly influence working relationships, which fall into one of the five cultural dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. A comparison of the profiles with country scores derived from Hofstede's (1967-1973, as cited in Hofstede, 2001) original work, associated with individuals' ethnic backgrounds, provided a focal point for developing the qualitative phase of the research. The profiles were compared to the country scores for the United States and Mexico (see Table 1) to identify any possible societal associations among participants.

The quantitative analysis and profile comparison identified the most prominent themes that illustrated the participants' cultural preferences in workplace relationships. The individual results of the CWQ2 for each participant yielded scores in the five dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. A factor analysis using the quantitative data identified themes in relation to the variables to be considered for further study. The questions, centered on the themes, sought participants' perspectives in general, the possible source of those perspectives, how the themes were reflected in participants' work environments, and what impediments the themes created for participants seeking or serving in leadership roles. Identification of areas requiring further study was also possible. The questions focused on the emerging themes followed the same framework after the significance of the themes was determined. Before finalizing the questions and beginning the qualitative phase, the quantitative results were reviewed in order to ensure that the questions drafted for the qualitative phase were aligned with the results of the quantitative phase.

The qualitative phase served as an explanatory follow-up to the quantitative phase of the study. In the qualitative phase, a directed content analysis was applied to explore prominent themes by conducting semi-structured interviews with Mexican American women in leadership roles. A directed content analysis takes meaning from the content of the data using subjective interpretation through systematic coding (Hseih and Shannon, 2005). The goal of the directed content analysis in the study was to extend an understanding of the theoretical framework as it applies to the study participants. Results of a directed content analysis generate both supporting and non-supporting evidence for the theme being explored.

Purposive sampling was used to select 10 participants for semi-structured interviews to gather data. In the interviews, information was elicited concerning background, demographics, experiences, behaviors, opinions, values, and knowledge as the factors related to the themes identified in the quantitative phase. The interview sought common ground and a language to ensure accurate interpretation of the information shared.

## Appropriateness of Design

In a mixed explanatory method, emphasis can be placed on the quantitative or qualitative phase of the study, depending on whether an explanation or selection approach is used. An explanation approach is used when the qualitative phase is needed to expand on the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). A selection approach is used when the quantitative phase is needed to identify and purposefully select participants for the qualitative phase or factors for follow up (Creswell & Plano-Clark). A mixed explanatory study, specifically the selection approach, is appropriate because of the limited literature available about the influence of Mexican cultural values on Mexican American women in leadership that would be needed in an explanation approach and the need to provide a starting point for future study

In the mixed explanatory study, qualitative data were used to build upon quantitative findings in two phases (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). The study used the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ to collect the quantitative data. The analysis completed by ITAP International yielded participants' profiles. A factor analysis was conducted using the quantitative data, which identified underlying themes in relation to the variables. The themes provided the structure and focus for the semi-structured

interviews used in the qualitative data collection method, which provides the dependent connection often associated with mixed explanatory methods.

## Hypothesis

The hypothesis in the quantitative phase of the study served as an affirmation of the role of cultural factors in workplace relationships.

$H1_0$: Women of Mexican ancestry do not show evidence of cultural preferences in the work environment as measured by individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation.

$H1_a$: Women of Mexican ancestry show evidence of cultural preferences in the work environment as measured by individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation.

## Research Questions

The purpose of the mixed explanatory study was to evaluate the effects of Mexican cultural factors on the participating women's current and anticipated leadership experiences. The quantitative phase made use of the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (CWQ2) and identified the prominent themes that shaped the interview protocol for the qualitative phase, specifically behaviors in the five cultural dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and, time orientation. The qualitative phase sought to identify specific factors within the dimensions with the following questions:

1. What are the cultural factors identified by women of Mexican ancestry that are believed to influence their performance in leadership roles?

2. How do the identified cultural factors influence women of Mexican ancestry with respect to access to and performance in leadership positions?

The interview questions for the qualitative phase were formulated after examining the results of the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (CWQ2) for themes related to the five dimensions that comprised participants' cultural profiles.

## Population

The population for the study is women of Mexican ancestry who live and work in El Paso County, Texas. El Paso County, Texas is the fifth largest city in Texas, 23rd largest city in the United States (City of El Paso, 2006), and home to a border community. El Paso County is located on the United States-Mexico border and viewed as the sister or twin-city to Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. A narrow river separates the two cities. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the total population (approximately 755,000 people) in El Paso County are of Mexican ancestry; 28% are foreign born, and 16% of the residents are not United States citizens (City of El Paso, 2005a, 2005b; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). The population for El Paso's twin city, Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, is just over 1.5 million, making it the fifth largest city in Mexico, which suggests it may have influence on its neighboring community (City of El Paso, 2006).

El Paso's unique geographic location for organizations provides an opportunity to expand beyond the United States' borders, creating twin-plant operations and capitalizing on the North American Free Trade Act (El Paso Chamber of Commerce, 2007). The opportunity involves many challenges, including balancing business, people, and culture for ensuring organizational success. A large percentage of El Paso County residents are

of Mexican ancestry and their proximity to the Mexican border suggested that residents might maintain close cultural ties with their country of origin.

The study consisted of two samples drawn from the population of women of Mexican ancestry who live and work in El Paso County, Texas. Purposive sampling was used to select participants for the quantitative phase. The sample in the quantitative phase consisted of 40 of the 127 originally solicited women of Mexican ancestry who lived or worked in El Paso County, Texas. Of the six attempts that spanned 4 weeks to increase participation in the quantitative phase, 71 of the women approached did not respond to the original solicitation or follow-up emails, 10 e-mails were returned as undeliverable and 6 women declined stating they were ineligible to participate based on the study selection criteria.

The research questions guided the purposive sampling method for selecting participants for the qualitative phase. The sample for the qualitative phase consisted of 10 women who had participated in the quantitative phase and who had had experience of, currently filled, or aspired to leadership roles. Participants were solicited for both the quantitative and qualitative phases from the outset. Eight participants responded to the initial solicitation to participate in the qualitative phase and two participants responded after a second solicitation. The timing and scheduling of the in-depth interviews, in the month of December, may have prohibited others from responding because of the holiday season and commitments to end-of-year work functions.

## Informed Consent

Walker (2007) stated, "Two of the most fundamental ethical principles applicable to research are beneficence and non-malfeasance" (p. 39). Informed consent afforded

participants a number of protections to keep them from harm as related to the study. The protections outlined in the informed consent were the following:

1. Participants were protected against physical or psychological harm.
2. Participants' privacy and confidentiality were maintained.
3. Participants were protected against unwarrantable deception and trickery (Erlandson et al., 1993).

The informed consent form outlined background information for the study using non-technical language and was inclusive of the following elements:

1. The voluntary nature of participation in the research, including the right to withdraw.
2. Participants' roles in the study.
3. An audio tape recorder was available to ensure the accurate collection of data upon consent of the participant. Participants opted to have their responses transcribed instantly into electronic form. Participants reviewed their responses, noting corrections when necessary. A printed transcript was provided and acknowledged by participants.
4. The procedures and processes ensured the identified protections.
5. All participants agreed to the informed consent form (see Appendix C). The consent forms will be secured for three years.

## Sampling Frame

The mixed explanatory study used a purposive selection approach, placing emphasis on the qualitative phase of the study. The qualitative phase was focused on the purpose of the study, which sought to explain themes elicited about leadership from the

experience of Mexican American women using directed content analysis. Non-probability sampling was applied in both the quantitative and qualitative phases, specifically purposive sampling. Purposive sampling identified specific sets of criteria, such as participants being women of Mexican American descent who had filled, were currently filling, or aspired to fill leadership roles. Exploration was focused on the objective of gaining deeper understanding as opposed to generalizing the findings to a broader population (Neuman, 2003). Purposive sampling improves the breadth of data, making best use of the ability to recognize themes emerging from the study.

The quantitative phase involved the collection of data using the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (CWQ2), and purposive sampling was used to select participants. In the qualitative phase, criterion sampling, a purposive design, was used to select a sub-sample of the sample involved in the quantitative phase of the study for the explanatory follow-up interviews. In the quantitative phase, data was collected from women of Mexican ancestry who lived or worked in El Paso County, Texas, in an effort to identify and select themes for further exploration.

Determining an appropriate sample size was problematic because the population was difficult to identify and access to contact information was limited. The local Chamber of Commerce was contacted in an attempt to obtain a roster and statistics about Mexican American women in leadership roles living or working in El Paso County, Texas. Specific data as it related to the population was not available at a local level; nor could the Chamber provide the names of entities that collected and retained such data. An internet search of national, regional, and local organizations was conducted. The national and regional organizations identified focused on Hispanic women in leadership, but the

organizations identified did not have a local representative or chapter located in El Paso, Texas. Other organizations focused on broader and non-related purposes. Participants for the quantitative phase of the study were recruited through professional networking, such as previous employers, the El Paso Society for Human Resource Management, and e-mail directories accessed via the Worldwide Web for major employers in El Paso, Texas, and participant referrals

Hofstede (2001) suggested a minimal sample size of 20 per country, preferably 50, when conducting a cross-cultural study. The mixed explanatory study was not a cross-cultural study; nor was it meant to replicate Hofstede's original study. The mixed explanatory study used the dimensional model as a paradigm to identify dimensions dissimilar from the original country scores and used the dissimilar dimensions as a starting point for exploration and explanation in the qualitative phase. Creswell and Plano Clark (2005) stated qualitative researchers "use small numbers to provide in-depth information" (p. 112).

Statistical analysis requires a sufficiently large sample in order to include analysis of power, population effect size, and level of significance of findings. A power analysis, for example, evaluates the associations between sample size, significance criterion, population effect size, and statistical power (Cohen, 1992b). Cohen suggested that during the design phase researchers would find it beneficial to calculate the sample size necessary to have a specific power for a given level of significance and population effective size. A power of significance statistic tests the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when the null hypothesis is false, making a false positive claim more significant than a false negative claim (Denis, 2003; Cohen, 1992a). Effect sizes are

small (.20), medium (.50), and large (.80), according to Cohen. A small sample size is required to allow a large effect size, which is appropriate for the study. The study used a .80 level of power, making the false negative four times as likely as the false positive. A power analysis for a one sample *t*-test was conducted in G-POWER to determine a sufficient sample size using an alpha of 0.05, a power of 0.80, a medium effect size ($d$ = 0.5), and two tails (Buchner et al., 1997). Based on the aforementioned assumptions, the desired sample size is 34.

The sample identified to participate in the study consisted of 127 women of Mexican ancestry who were 18 years or older and had experience of, currently filled, or aspired to be in leadership roles. Forty (40) of the 127 women solicited participated in the quantitative phase.

## Confidentiality

Qualitative research presents a number of ethical considerations, particularly with respect to confidentiality. Lasky and Riva (2006) stated, "Confidentiality is the respect for and protection of private information disclosed by participants" (p. 456). The fundamental ideology underlying confidentiality is autonomy and fidelity. Participants' rights to possess personal beliefs, choices, and actions and make decisions affecting their lives are acknowledged through autonomy. Fidelity recognizes the elements that give a participant a sense of faithfulness to keeping promises, creating the foundation for an honest and trustworthy relationship with the researcher. Participants were advised of the confidentiality of the process and possible limitations at the time informed consent was obtained. Participants were reminded of the confidentiality of the data at the beginning of each interview.

The participants may not only have had an individual relationship with the researcher but also a spatial relationship with other participants. A strong possibility existed that participants had spatial familiarity or awareness of each other professionally and personally considering the nature of the study. Krueger and Casey (as cited by Hofmeyer & Scott, 2007) stated, "It is important that researchers be aware of contextual issues, recent history, and organizational norms that might inhibit open communication or sanction those whom express alternative views" (p. 4). The interview questions posed during the first interview solicited information that identified possible relationships with the researcher or other participants that might interfere with data collection and analysis. The participants, at any time during the process, could choose to resign from the study.

ITAP International administered the quantitative phase of the study. The organization's privacy statement for the data collected and retained read, "All data collected remained confidential and may be used only for aggregate statistical analyses" (ITAP International, 2007e). The data provided by ITAP International was presented in electronic form. The file followed the confidentiality guidelines outlined in the study.

## Instrumentation

The quantitative phase of the study was performed using the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (CWQ2), a web-based survey (ITAP, 2007d). ITAP International, in concert with the researcher, forwarded the participants the necessary information via email to log on and complete the web-based survey. Derived from the work of Hofstede (2001), the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (CWQ2) provides an individual with an awareness of how cultural preferences affect working relationships (ITAP International, 2007a). The data yielded facilitates a foundation of

cultural understanding in an effort to create effective cross-cultural working relationships (ITAP International, 2007a). The CWQ2 is web-enabled and poses 60 questions centered around five cultural dimensions:

1. Individualism is the degree to which action is taken for the advantage of an individual or group.
2. Power distance is the degree to which inequality or distance between leaders and followers is accepted.
3. Certainty is the extent to which an individual prefers structured or unstructured situations.
4. Achievement is the degree to which the individual concentrates on the task or the building of relationships and quality of life concerns and reflects the masculine and feminine influences in the work environment.
5. Time orientation is the degree to which the individual embraces values oriented toward the future or the past and present (ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b).

ITAP International (2007b) stated, "the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ is researched-based and associated with two of the world's leading experts in the intercultural field—Dr. Geert Hofstede and Dr. André Laurent" (para.5). Powell (2006) claimed, "Geert Hofstede is the most cited non-American in the field of management in the US Social Science Citation Index" (p. 12), specifically in the areas of national culture and its effects in various environments. The Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ has evolved since its original version over a decade ago. The composition of the original version of the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™

contained items from both Hofstede's (1967-1973) original cross-cultural survey and Laurent's (1981-1991) cross-cultural studies (ITAP International, 2007f). The original version proved to be valuable worldwide for the following reasons:

1. [It] provided an opportunity to learn about the differences in cultural preferences with respect to work and communications across different cultures.
2. [It] provided a better understanding of the similarities and differences of an individual's attitudes and values toward work and relations.
3. [It] recommended a course of action for lessening the cultural gaps in the workplace. (ITAP International, 2007f, para.4)

ITAP International introduced the latest version of the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™, identified as CWQ2, in late 2006. The CWQ2 does not include questions from the original version that showed statistically weaker alignments to the dimensions (ITAP International, 2007f). The CWQ2, as reviewed by Hofstede, added questions used to compute the scores, including questions to examine statistical qualities (ITAP International, 2007f).

The CWQ2 measures cultural preferences within the following cultural dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation (ITAP International, 2007f). The questionnaire facilitates comparisons of the statistical means of national culture values to individual participants' dimensional scores. ITAP International applied construct validity to determine the validity of the instrument to discover if the questionnaire measured an individual's cultural preferences. ITAP

International provided the following information as it relates to the construct validity of the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™:

> To establish the construct validity of the CWQ, it must be shown that the items in fact do reflect the content areas. This has been established for CWQ1. Several researchers have performed content analysis of the items, and have concurred that the wording and construction of the CWQ accurately reflect their content areas. Additionally, statistical analyses have shown that individual responses to the items, across a broad range of cultures, do implicate the existence of the underlying content areas. This has been statistically illustrated at an overall confidence level of 95% (ITAP International, 2007f, para.11).

The instrument administered to participants was the most recent version of the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™, namely, the CWQ2. The revisions made to the original instrument focused on the removal of the questions that were statistically weaker in aligning with the dimensions (ITAP International, 2007f). ITAP International checked the questions for statistical correlations with the Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions (ITAP International, 2007f) and is in the process of updating the validity tests.

## Data Collection

A mixed explanatory method uses sequential data collection. The study first collected the quantitative data followed by the collection of the qualitative data. The quantitative and qualitative phases of data collection were dependent upon each other with the latter building upon the former. The study followed the collection procedures as outlined by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007):

1. Stage 1: Focus was placed on the collection of quantitative data. ITAP International collected the data using a web-based version of the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ (CWQ2).
2. Stage 2: Data from stage 1 shaped the explanatory follow-up interview protocol and participant selection.
3. Stage 3: Explanatory follow-up used a semi-structured interview based on the results of the quantitative phase to compose the questions.

Two conceptual processes required consideration prior to the qualitative phase: epoche and bracketing. *Epoche* is the process of "setting aside predilections, prejudices, predispositions, and allowing things, events, and people to enter anew into consciousness, looking and seeing them again as for the first time" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85). *Bracketing* takes the belief a step further in that it requires setting aside beliefs concerning the themes to evade influence in the collection and analysis of data (Walker, 2007). The interviews were approached with an open mind, taking no particular position.

The mostly widely used interview approach is the semi-structured interview (Erlandson et al., 1993). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant individually using questions developed from the quantitative phase of the study. The interview questions were a result of the collective responses of the participants in the quantitative phase of the study and cannot be connected individually to participants in the qualitative phase. Questions were placed in a prearranged order that remained flexible, changing the order of the questions based on the information shared by participants. The interviews continued until new themes no longer surfaced.

Interview protocols encourage taking notes in an organized manner (Creswell, 1998). The interview protocol creates a script as a means to maintain consistency in the process and data collection. An interview protocol was used for the study (see Appendix D). The header records the following information:

1. Name of study
2. Date, time, and place of interview
3. Participant's name
4. A reference code was used to label data storage devices and in the data analysis
5. Interviewer's name.

The protocol listed the interview questions with sufficient space to record information and indicated follow-up questions with corresponding responses. The end of the protocol was a closing script. Participants' responses were recorded directly onto the interview protocol. Participants were provided an opportunity to review the transcripts and if inconsistencies existed between the completed protocol and transcript, the information was corrected to reflect the participant's feedback. Participants acknowledged the accuracy of the information recorded through signed acknowledgement.

The study anticipated the use of observation and cultural documents identified or shared by the participants in so much as participants were encouraged to share documents such as historical accounts, photographs, written correspondence, and other means of recording recent and past historical events. Additional documents were not required for

possible clarification however, because the primary sources for data collection were interviews and observations. No participants provided such documents.

A combined approach of interview and observation constructed a more comprehensive understanding of the context in an interactive manner (Erlandson et al., 1993). Erlandson et al. described the complement between interviews and observations:

> Through interviews, the researcher often gains a first insight into the constructed realities that are wrapped up in the idiolect of the respondent. Through observations, the researcher often gains a partially independent view of the experience on which the respondent's language constructed the realities. (p. 99)

Observation, for the purpose of the study, was limited to activities observed during the interview. Both descriptive and reflective notes were recorded with field notes. Descriptive notes were based on observations of activities, while reflective notes commented on the activities, processes, and conclusions (Erlandson et al., 1993).

## Data Analysis

The purpose of the data analysis in a mixed explanatory study is to identify emerging themes in the quantitative phase. The qualitative phase explored the influence of the themes identified in the quantitative phase in an effort to gain a better understanding of the quantitative results. The combined approach was aimed consistency in the results and fostered realistic representations. The study took a combined approach to evaluating the data collected in both phases. The data collected in the quantitative phase identified themes associated with Hofstede's (2001) dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. The data collected in the qualitative phase explored the themes identified in the quantitative phase in an effort to

determine the influence of cultural factors on Mexican American women in leadership roles.

*Quantitative Phase*

ITAP International administered, collected, and compiled the cultural profiles of the participants, producing an individual cultural profile for each participant in a spreadsheet format. The participants' dimensional scores were compared to the country scores for the United States and Mexico. A factor analysis identified underlying relationships between the variables. The quantitative analysis was based on testing the hypothesis that a relationship exists between culture and workplace relationships among Mexican Americans, specifically Mexican American women, in terms of Hofstede's (2001) dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. The relationships among the variables identified from the quantitative phase were used to create the structure for the qualitative phase.

*Qualitative Phase*

The primary data collection methods used included individual interviews with and observations of participants. The data gathered were presented in the form of interview protocols, transcripts, field notes, and cultural documents. The *NVivo 8.0* (QSR International, 2007) qualitative analytical software and triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative results were used for data analysis.

*NVivo 8.0.* The qualitative analytical software organizes the qualitative data, or invariant constituents, for easy access and identifying themes (QSR International, 2007). The *NVivo 8.0* provides the tools to code and collate from small to large volumes of data. The software has increased security through password protection and data encryption to

ensure the confidentiality of the data and permits the importing of documents, embedded tables, and images. As analytical software, it creates a computerized likeness to Moustakas (1994) modification of Van Kaam's method of data analysis.

Moustakas (1994) provided a modification of Van Kaam's method of data analysis. The application of the steps is reflected in the *NVivo 8.0* analytical software. The data produced by the analytical software is comparable to a manual data analysis because the data analyses have in common the following steps:

1. Horizonalization of the data: Horizonalization refers to the listing of relevant data.
2. Reduction and elimination: The expressions identified in horizonalization must contain sufficient data for understanding the expression in determining the relationship to the invariant theme. Expressions that do not conform to the criterion are eliminated.
3. Clustering and thematizing: The invariant themes are clustered into core themes.
4. Final identification of the invariant themes: The invariant themes are compared to each participant's complete record.
5. Construct an individual textural and structural description for each participant: A description of the participant's experience as it relates to the invariant themes.
6. Construct a composite description for all the participants: A blended account of all participants' experiences as it relates to the invariant themes. (Moustakas, 1994)

*Triangulation.* Allen et al. (1993) defined triangulation as "the method in which the researcher seeks out several different types of sources that can provide insights about the same events or relationships" (p. 115). Triangulation enhances the significances of a research, providing a more substantial portrayal of relevant information. The limited availability of independent resources and literature posed some concerns for the research. Findings from the qualitative data when compared to the quantitative data collected with the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ provided some connection where gaps in literature may exist. Testing of the hypothesis suggested areas for further exploration in the qualitative phase. The qualitative data provided information that facilitated deeper understanding of participants' cultural preferences as their preferences related to the workplace and dimensions identified in the quantitative phase. Relationships between cultural preference and workplace behavior were apparent between the themes identified during the qualitative phase, and the research questions could be answered.

*Data Storage*

Written and digital means were used to collect, transcribe, and retain data. Original hard copies were maintained in individual files to include such items as the informed consent agreement, interview protocol, and field notes. The documents were scanned and stored digitally with transcribed interviews and any other computer generated documentation. Complete computerized documentation will be maintained electronically on a memory stick for three years in a locked filing cabinet.

## Validity and Reliability

Valid research is "plausible, credible, trustworthy, and therefore, defensible" (Johnson, 1997, as cited by Baker, 2006, p. 185). Reliability explains how a particular

protocol, procedure, test, or tool will generate comparable findings in different circumstances (Roberts, Priest, & Traynor, 2006). Combined, reliability and validity convey the accuracy of processes and trustworthiness of the results.

*Reliability*

The mixed explanatory method places equal emphasis on both the quantitative and qualitative phases, conducting the phases sequentially. In the study, a valid and reliable instrument, namely, the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ was applied for the quantitative assessment, thus increasing the reliability of the study and adding scientific rigor. The results of the quantitative phase, using a valid and reliable instrument, provided the foundation for development of the qualitative phase.

*Validity*

Baker (2006) discussed three categories of validity: descriptive, interpretive, and theoretical. Descriptive validity requires an accurate factual description of the data collected. Interpretive validity necessitates a truthful reporting of facts and portrayal of the meaning communicated by participants. Theoretical validity occurs when the theoretical explanation derived from the study fits the data, making it credible and defensible.

One particular challenge to the validity of a study is reflexivity. Reflexivity recognizes that a researcher's involvement in the process will inescapably affect the meaning and context of the theme under exploration (Horsburgh, 2003). Reflexivity is acknowledged by being transparent about all aspects of the collection, analysis, and presentation of data that may be affected by personal involvement in the study, thus reducing the challenges of bias.

Popay, Rogers, and Williams (1998, as cited by Horsburgh, 2003) identified three interrelated criteria that reflect good qualitative research in an effort to foster a study that is reliable and valid:

1. Analysis of subjective meaning, using the participants' accounts as the data in which all ensuing analysis is grounded.
2. Description of context, specifically the configuration, surroundings, and frameworks in which participants were positioned.
3. Attention to lay knowledge, ensuring that the weight of participants' perspectives is equally significant to those of experts.

Interviews were transcribed directly into electronic form using a laptop computer. Transcripts were reviewed with each participant at the conclusion of the interview, seeking feedback on content, meaning, and interpretation before compiling the findings in a final report. A signed copy of the transcript was obtained from each respective participant in a follow-up contact. Bracketing was applied throughout the research process. Bracketing requires the researcher to shelve his or her beliefs about the themes to avoid influencing the collection and analysis of the data (Allen et al., 1993). *NVivo 8.0* qualitative analytical software uses pre-programmed rules and standardized data coding to assist with the collection of consistent and valid data for interpretation. The study also included an audit trail, which clarified critical decisions of a theoretical and procedural nature, as suggested by Koch (1994, as cited by Horsburgh, 2003). The independent collection and assembling of the quantitative data by ITAP International significantly reduced the possibility of bias and added the scientific rigor sought in research studies.

## Summary

Organizations are challenged to operate in markets spanning a broad continuum of national, global, cultural, and ethnic borders. In a review of the literature, it has been suggested that people of Mexican-origin will comprise approximately one third of the United States population by the year 2100 (Vélez-Ibáñez, 2004). Thus, for organizations to stay competitive, they must cultivate diverse leadership. The research reviewed suggests a relationship exists between cultural factors and an individual's behavior in the workplace (Kirkman et al., 2006). The study conducted was intended to explore the relationship using a mixed explanatory method to explain the role of Mexican cultural factors in the performance of Mexican American women working or residing in El Paso County, Texas who fill leadership roles.

The intention of using a mixed explanatory method was to comprehend the implications of the themes generated by the quantitative data. The study required purposive sampling to identify participants for the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study. Participants for the quantitative phase of the study were women of Mexican ancestry; resided or worked in El Paso County, Texas; and were 18 years or older. Participants completed the web-based Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™.

The qualitative phase provided an explanatory follow-up to the quantitative phase of the study. The qualitative phase of the study dictated a smaller sample, a subset of the original sample. Participants in the qualitative phase were in, aspired to, or had experience in leadership roles. The study produced findings that may be beneficial to participants in their personal career developments, the Mexican American community at large, and extend the literature in the field.

# CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of Mexican cultural factors on Mexican American women's access to and performance in leadership roles. The mixed explanatory method, conducted in two sequential phases, with the quantitative phase first and the qualitative phase second, provided the opportunity to explore themes generated with the quantitative data qualitatively. The Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™, derived from the work of Hofstede (ITAP, 2007f), was used to collect data along five dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. Hofstede (2001) suggested that when using the dimensional model as a paradigm, the focus be on one or two dimensions. Hofstede stated, "The model allows for conceptual parsimony" (p. 465) because it permits determination of the responsible dimension for a specific behavior. The two dimensions identified after administering the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ that became the focus of the study were achievement and individualism.

## Findings

A mixed explanatory research method consists of quantitative and a qualitative phases. The quantitative results influence the qualitative phase, and the two phases are connected because the qualitative results deepen understanding of the significant findings of the quantitative process (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The explanatory design lends itself to two variants: the follow-up explanations model and participant selection model. The study conducted conformed to the follow-up explanations model. The model has two phases or stages conducted sequentially, with the quantitative phase being conducted first. The steps in the quantitative phase are data collection, data analysis, quantitative

results, and identification of results for qualitative explanatory follow-up (Creswell & Plano, 2007). The steps in the qualitative phase are data collection, data analysis, and qualitative results. The mixed-explanatory research method concludes the study by bringing together the quantitative and qualitative results in a descriptive interpretation of the findings.

*Quantitative Phase*

*Data collection.* A purposive sample of Mexican American women in leadership roles was collected. Participants were solicited via e-mail (see Appendix E). Organizational websites, specifically the El Paso Society for Human Resource Management, County of El Paso; University of Texas, El Paso, student organizations; and El Paso Community College were used to solicit or retrieve the e-mail addresses of 100 Mexican American women in leadership roles. Soliciting participants through e-mail ensured participants would have access to the appropriate technology to access the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™. An e-mail invitation to participate in the study was sent to each individual, inviting the women to participate as well as to request the names and e-mail addresses of women who may be interested in participating. The request for the names of interested individuals added 27 participants to the list. The ITAP system administrator forwarded the appropriate information for completing the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ survey to the 127 potential participants. A reminder email was forwarded to each participant (see Appendix F).

Participants had 34 days to complete the survey. Three reminders during the 34-day period were sent to participants. The emails for 10 participants were returned as undelivered. Return emails were the result of recipients' e-mail security settings or

invalid e-mail address. Six participants declined to participate by stating they were ineligible based on the study selection criteria. Seventy-one participants did not respond to initial invitations and reminders and did not complete the survey. Forty individuals completed the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™.

*Data analysis.* ITAP International assigned a letter key to each of the 40 participants, collected and assimilated the data, and provided the results in a variety of formats, including a spreadsheet and group reports. The group reports reflected the scores for the dimensions, identifying individual letter keys and group averages in comparison to the country scores for the United States and Mexico. Table 2 illustrates the average score for the participant group and the country scores for Mexico and United States listed by dimension.

Table 2

*Average Dimensional Scores for Participants: Mexico and United States*

| Dimension | Participant group average score | Mexico country score | United States country score |
|---|---|---|---|
| Individualism | 57 | 30 | 91 |
| Power distance | 38 | 81 | 38 |
| Certainty | 44 | 82 | 46 |
| Achievement | 44 | 69 | 62 |
| Time orientation | 55 | N/A | 29 |

*Note:* Figures for Mexico and United States from *Culture Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations* (2nd ed.) by G. Hofstede, p. 500. Copyright 2001 by Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Reproduced with permission from the author (see Appendix A).

The quantitative phase of the study served to identify and affirm the role of cultural factors in workplace relationships. The null hypotheses proposes that women of

Mexican ancestry will not show evidence of cultural preferences in the work environment as measured by individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. Rejecting or accepting of the null hypothesis requires an evaluation of Mexico and United States' country scores respectively for each dimension in relationship to the average score of participants:

$H1_a0$: The statistical mean for the individualism dimension of participants is equal to Mexico's country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with Mexican cultural values.

$H1_b0$: The statistical mean for the individualism dimension of participants is equal to United States' country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with the United States' cultural values.

$H2_a0$: The statistical mean for the power distance dimension of participants is equal to Mexico's country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with Mexican cultural values.

$H2_b0$: The statistical mean for the power distance dimension of participants is equal to the United States' country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with the United States' cultural values.

$H3_a0$: The statistical mean for the certainty dimension of participants is equal to Mexico's country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with Mexican cultural values.

$H3_b0$: The statistical mean for the certainty dimension of participants is equal to the United States' country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with the United States' cultural values.

$H4_a0$: The statistical mean for the achievement dimension of participants is equal to Mexico's country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with Mexican cultural values.

$H4_b0$: The statistical mean for the achievement dimension of participants is equal to the United States' country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with the United States' cultural values.

$H5_a0$: The statistical mean for the time orientation dimension of participants is equal to Mexico's country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with Mexican cultural values.

$H5_b0$: The statistical mean for the time orientation dimension of the participants is equal to the United States' country score, indicating that participants exhibit characteristics closely associated with the United States' cultural values.

*Hypothesis 1*

*Hypothesis 1a*. To examine $H1_a0$, a one sample *t*-test of was conducted to assess if Mexico had a statistically different mean ($M = 30$) for individualism as compared to the sample. The results of the *t*-test are significant, $t(41) = 18.30$ and $p < .001$, suggesting that the sample has a larger mean ($M = 57.10$, $SD = 9.59$) for individualism compared to Mexico. The null hypothesis was rejected.

*Hypothesis 1b*. To examine $H1_b0$, a one sample *t*-test of was conducted to assess if the United States had a statistically different mean ($M = 91$) for individualism compared to the sample. The results of the *t*-test are significant, $t(41) = 22.90$ and $p < .001$, suggesting that the sample has a smaller mean ($M = 57.10$, $SD = 9.59$) for individualism when compared to United States. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Individualism reflects the extent to which in an individual makes a decision for his or her own benefit versus the benefit of the group (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). The Mexico country score for the individualism dimension reflects a collectivist culture, a culture that focuses on the welfare of a group versus an individual. Rejecting the null hypotheses $H1_a0$ and $H1_b0$ requires further exploration because the results suggest that participants are significantly different from both Mexico and the United States' country scores.

*Hypothesis 2*

*Hypothesis 2a.* To examine $H2_a0$, a one sample *t*-test of was conducted to assess if Mexico has a statistically different mean ($M = 81$) for power distance compared to the sample. The results of the *t*-test were significant, $t(41) = 21.72$ and $p < .001$, suggesting that the sample has a smaller mean ($M = 38.45$, $SD = 12.69$) for power distance when compared to Mexico. The null hypothesis is rejected.

*Hypothesis 2b.* To examine $H2_b0$, a one sample *t*-test of was conducted to assess if the United States had a statistically different mean ($M = 38$) for power distance compared to the sample. The results of the *t*-test are not significant, $t(41) = 0.23$ and $p = .818$, suggesting that no statistical difference exists for the sample ($M = 38.45$, $SD =$

12.69) for power distance when compared to United States. The null hypothesis is accepted.

The sample mean for power distance among participants aligns with the country score for the United States, confirmed by the rejection of $H2_a0$ and acceptance of $H2_b0$. The acceptance of $H2_b0$ reflects a preference for participative orientation, seeking status equality, and interdependence (Hofstede, 2001). The acceptance of $H2_b0$ also suggests that the United States' cultural values and not Mexican cultural values are the cultural values related to the power dimension. The dimension was not explored further in the qualitative phase because the focus of the qualitative phase is to explore Mexican cultural values.

*Hypothesis 3*

*Hypothesis 3a.* To examine $H3_a0$, a one sample *t*-test of was conducted to assess if Mexico has a statistically different mean ($M = 82$) for certainty compared to the sample. The results of the *t*-test are significant, $t(41) = 17.33$ and $p < .001$, suggesting that the sample has a smaller mean ($M = 44.05$, $SD = 14.20$) for certainty when compared to Mexico. The null hypothesis is rejected.

*Hypothesis 3b*. To examine $H3_b0$, a one sample *t*-test of was conducted to assess if the United States has a statistically different mean ($M = 46$) on power distance compared to the sample. The results of the *t*-test are not significant, $t(41) = 0.89$ and $p = .378$, suggesting that no statistical difference exists for the sample ($M = 44.05$, $SD = 14.20$) for the certainty dimension when compared to United States. The null hypothesis is accepted.

The results for the certainty dimension mirror the results for the power dimension. The rejection of $H3_a0$ and acceptance of $H3_b0$ indicates an alignment with the certainty country score for the United States. The certainty dimension, like power distance, was not explored further in the qualitative phase.

*Hypothesis 4*

*Hypothesis 4a.* To examine $H4_a0$, a one sample *t*-test was conducted to assess if Mexico has a statistically different mean ($M = 69$) for achievement compared to the sample. The results of the *t*-test are significant, $t(41) = 12.32$ and $p < .001$, suggesting that the sample has a smaller mean ($M = 43.69$, SD = 13.31) for achievement when compared to Mexico. The null hypothesis is rejected.

*Hypothesis 4b*. To examine $H4_b0$, a one sample *t*-test of was conducted to assess if the United States has a statistically different mean ($M = 62$) for achievement compared to the sample. The results of the *t*-test are significant, $t(41) = 8.91$ and $p < .001$, suggesting that the sample has a smaller mean ($M = 43.69$, SD = 13.31) for achievement when compared to United States. The null hypothesis is rejected.

The achievement dimension indicates a culture that prefers a quality of life orientation with a healthy balance between work and personal life and an achievement orientation where gender roles are distinctly identified (Hofstede, 2001). $H4_a0$ and $H4_b0$ are both rejected. The rejection of the null hypotheses was explored further in the qualitative phase.

*Hypothesis 5*

*Hypothesis 5a*. To examine $H5_a0$, a one sample *t*-test of was conducted to assess if Mexico has a statistically different mean ($M = 0$) for time orientation compared to the

sample. The results of the *t*-test are significant, $t(41) = 32.08$ and $p < .001$, suggesting that the sample has a larger mean ($M = 55.02$, $SD = 11.12$) for time orientation when compared to Mexico. The null hypothesis is rejected.

*Hypothesis 5b*. To examine $H5_b0$, a one sample *t*-test of was conducted to assess if the United States has a statistically different mean ($M = 91$) for time orientation compared to the sample. The results of the *t*-test are significant, $t(41) = 15.17$ and $p < .001$, suggesting that the sample has a larger mean ($M = 55.02$, $SD = 11.12$) for time orientation when compared to United States. The null hypothesis is rejected.

$H5_a0$ and $H5_b0$ are focused on the time orientation dimension. Time orientation measures individual preferences for an emphasis on long-term rather than short-term results. $H5_a0$ and $H5_b0$ are both rejected, but unlike the two dimensions identified for further study, namely, individualism and achievement, the time orientation will not be explored further because no country score is available for Mexico.

*Qualitative Phase*

The quantitative phase of the study identified the dimensions that warranted further exploration in the qualitative phase. The study hypotheses were applied to the country scores for United States and Mexico respectively for each dimension. Rejection of the null hypothesis for both the United States and Mexico country scores warranted further explanation. The two dimensions warranting further exploration were individualism and achievement. The null hypothesis is also rejected for the time orientation dimension. However, country scores for Mexico were not available; therefore, the time orientation dimension is not earmarked for further explanation.

*Research questions*. In the study, identifying the cultural factors believed to influence the performance of Mexican American women in and with access to leadership roles is proposed. The following research questions guided the qualitative phase of the study:

1. What are the cultural factors identified by women of Mexican ancestry that are believed to influence their performance in leadership roles?
2. How do the identified cultural factors influence women of Mexican ancestry access to and performance in leadership positions?

The quantitative phase did not identify specific cultural factors but, in the course of defining the dimensions during the interviews, certain characteristics, factors, and values associated with a cultural influence are identified and confirmed.

*Demographics and characteristics of the sample.* The purpose of the study pre-defined the general demographics and characteristics of the sample; more specifically, participants were required to be Mexican American women who had experience of, were currently holding, or aspired to leadership roles who resided in El Paso County, Texas. The researcher, by virtue of having worked for the same organizations, knew some of the participants.

To participate in the qualitative phase, identified participants were required to have participated in the quantitative phase. Participants were asked if they would be interested in participating in the qualitative phase when they were solicited to participate in the quantitative phase. Eleven Mexican American women expressed interest in participating; however, one participant had not participated in the quantitative phase and was excluded from the qualitative phase of the study. Ten Mexican American women

who participated in the quantitative phase of the research were asked to participate in the qualitative phase; all 10 agreed to participate. Table 3 indicates the position each women held and the respective industry.

Table 3

*Qualitative Phase: Participant Position and Industry*

| Title/position | Industry |
|---|---|
| Director of Workforce Development | Higher education |
| Director of Records | Higher education |
| Vice President, Information Technology/CTO | Higher education |
| Manager, Classification and Compensation | Higher education |
| Chief Deputy, Tax Assessor Collector | Government |
| Instructor | Higher education |
| Associate Vice President, Information Technology | Higher education |
| Finance Coordinator | Higher education |
| Manager, Grants Management | Higher education |
| Senior Administrative Associate | Higher education |

*Data collection*. Data collection for the qualitative phase spanned four weeks during the month of December 2008. Participants selected the interview sites. Sites selected included participants' offices at their place of work or a restaurant. A copy of the interview protocol, which included an introductory paragraph and informed consent form, was provided to each participant at beginning of the interview (see Appendix C). Each participant reviewed and signed the informed consent form prior to commencing the interview. Two participants requested copies of the interview protocol in advance of the face-to-face interview. One interview, at the participant's request due to her schedule, was conducted electronically via e-mail. A follow-up phone call was placed with the

individual to clarify the intention and interpretation of her e-mailed responses. Her informed consent was signed, scanned, and emailed. Participants were notified of the option to audio record the interview. The option was not exercised; instead, interview responses were transcribed directly into the digital copy of the interview protocol on a lap top computer. The electronic copy of the interviews were printed, reviewed, and signed in acknowledgement of their accuracy by each respective participant.

*Interviews*. After participants reviewed and signed the informed consent, the interview began. Each participant was provided with a copy of the interview protocol to use as a guide and point of reference during the interview. The purpose of the study was shared and an opportunity was provided to participants to pose any questions before proceeding with the interview. The interview consisted of four demographic questions to ascertain that the participant was eligible to participate in the qualitative phase of the study. Thirteen open-ended evaluative questions were posed to participants. Evaluative questions required participants to use refined cognitive and emotional judgment, multiple logical and affective thinking processes, and when required, comparative frameworks (Creswell, 2007; Erlandson et al., 1993).

Participants selected the interview sites. Five interviews were conducted in participants' offices at their work locations, one interview was conducted electronically via email, and four interviews were conducted in a restaurant. The environment of the restaurant did not inhibit discussion because seating was provided in a quiet area. The electronic interview did not inhibit appropriate evaluative responses. The informed consent was reviewed and a scripted introduction read (see Appendix C). Throughout the interview and as required, participants were invited and encouraged to seek clarity.

Participants' responses were recorded directly into the electronic copy of the interview protocol using a laptop computer. Responses to the interview protocol were reviewed with each participant at the conclusion of the interview to ensure answers were recorded accurately. The electronic copy of the interviews was printed, reviewed, and signed in acknowledgement of the accuracy by each respective participant.

*Data analysis*. The *NVivo 8.0* qualitative analytical software and triangulation were used for the content data analysis. *NVivo 8.0* organizes data for easy access and identifies themes not predefined by the quantitative phase the study (QSR, 2007). *NVivo 8.0* was used to organize, collate, and code the qualitative data. The software facilitates the creation of a computerized process involving the following steps:

1. Horizonalization of the data, which ensures that every statement is viewed initially as having equal value.
2. Reduction and elimination by evaluating each expression for two elements: (a) contains sufficient information of the experience to gain an understanding, and (b) the information can abstracted and labeled. Expressions not meeting the criteria were eliminated.
3. Data were clustered and coded into core themes.
4. The invariant themes were evaluated against each respective participant's completed record. Data that did not reflect or have an association with the invariant themes was deemed not pertinent to the study (QSR, 2007).

## Validity and Reliability

Valid research provides credible and responsible data. Reliability involves an assessment of the degree to which a particular assessment or procedure will generate

equivalent results in various circumstances (Roberts et al., 2006). Combined, reliability and validity communicate the trustworthiness of the processes and results. The mixed explanatory method applied placed emphasis on the qualitative phase. In the study, the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ was used to apply a quantitative measure, adding to the scientific rigor. The mixed explanatory study is not a replication of Hofstede's (2001) original study and, in the quantitative phase, compared cultures and not individuals, making reliability measures such as Cronbach's alpha futile. The results from the quantitative phase identified and selected the dimension for explanation in the qualitative phase. Each participant's responses provided in the qualitative phase were reviewed with the participant to ensure an accurate factual description of the data collected.

Triangulation enhanced the significances of the experience, providing a substantial portrayal of relevant information. Findings were compared to the data collected in the quantitative phase using the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™. Of concern was the limited literature available about the research topic. Comparing findings from the qualitative and quantitative data collected provided a link where gaps in literature existed. Rejection of the null hypothesis identified areas for further exploration in the qualitative phase. Relationships between cultural preferences and workplace behaviors were evident among the themes documented during the qualitative phase, and the research questions could be answered.

The study addressed the challenge of reflexivity by maintaining the collection, analysis, and presentation of data transparent. The independent collection and collation of the quantitative data by ITAP International reduced the possibility of researcher bias in

the first quantitative phase of the data analysis. Bracketing was applied in the second qualitative phase of the study to avoid influencing the data collection and analysis. The *NVivo 8.0* qualitative analytical software used pre-programmed rules and standardized data coding for creating consistency and validating the data collected.

## Discussion of Invariant Themes

The quantitative phase of the study identified two themes that warranted further exploration. The interview protocol was designed to solicit information that would provide probable explanations of the results from the quantitative phase. The themes addressed the individualism and achievement dimensions.

The individualism score reflects the extent to which in an individual makes a decision for his or her own benefit versus the benefit of the group (Hofstede, 2001). Participants did not exhibit characteristics closely associated with the either the United States' individualistic or Mexico's collectivist cultural values. The achievement score indicates a culture that prefers a quality of life orientation with a healthy balance between work and personal life or an achievement orientation in which gender roles are distinctly identified (Hofstede, 2001). Mexico and United States share similar scores for achievement orientation but differ significantly from the mean score for the study participants.

## Textual Descriptions of Identified Themes

The intent of the interview protocol was to solicit responses from participants that provided a probable explanation for the rejection of the null hypotheses when applied to the individualism and achievement dimensions. The protocol consisted of 15 questions, including one demographic question to verify that participants were eligible to participate

in the study. A closing question, not directed at either theme, offered participants an opportunity to provide additional information.

*Theme 1: Individualism*

Individualism reflects the extent to which in an individual makes decisions for his or her own benefit versus the benefit of the group (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). A collectivist society is predisposed to create family-like ties with individuals and preserve close contact with immediate and extended family members, unlike members of an individualistic society (Hofstede, 2001). Table 4 reflects the behavioral traits associated with members of individualistic and collectivist societies.

Table 4

*Behavioral Traits of Collectivist and Individualistic Societies*

| Collectivist societies | Individualistic societies |
|---|---|
| Participative | Outspoken |
| Non-confrontational | Confrontation is a means to a higher truth |
| Organizations are an extension of the family | A business agreement defines the relationship between individual and organization |
| Poor performance is not grounds for termination | Terminating poor performers is socially acceptable |
| Provides circuitous and unhurried responses | Provides straight-forward and rapid responses |
| Participative decision-making approach | Individual decision-making approach |
| Focal point for solutions and activities is the common interest of all | Focal point for solutions and activities is one self |

*Note*: Adapted from Hofstede (2001), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) and ITAP (2007c).

*Theme 2: Achievement*

Achievement is the degree to which an individual concentrates his or her efforts on the task or quality of life and caring for others (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). On a scale of 1-100, the lower the score, the stronger the quality of life orientation is. Individuals with an achievement orientation demonstrate ambition, meet deadlines, respond immediately, go beyond expectations, work under all types of favorable and unfavorable conditions, and enjoy working. Individuals who exhibit a quality of life orientation avoid self-display, favor a quality of work-life environment, approach tasks in a consultative manner, and emphasize interdependence (ITAP International, 2007a).

*Participant Responses*

Textual data were coded and queries performed to determine frequencies using *NVivo 8.0*. The textual frequencies and number of references are reflected in Table 5. The textual breakdown of participants' responses, organized by question, follows.

Table 5

*Textual Frequencies and Number of References within Participant's Interview Responses*

| | Frequency (number of references) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Individualism dimension | | Achievement dimension | |
| Participant | Individualism | Collectivism | Goal-orientation | Quality of life |
| 1RO20-18 | 4.28% (1) | 12.38% (7) | 15.56% (9) | 17.70% (10) |
| 1T34-30 | 1.55% (3) | 2.52% (2) | 7.40% (8) | 5.93% (5) |
| 2F24-9 | 0% (0) | 5.62% (5) | 10.13% (8) | 8.88% (4) |
| 2G29-25 | 0.12% (1) | 13.44% (5) | 6.01% (9) | 7.95% (7) |
| 2H30-20 | 1.92% (2) | 15.32% (10) | 2.64% (5) | 3.98% (6) |
| 2L30-10 | 4.54% (3) | 6.19% (2) | 17.94% (12) | 13.11% (5) |
| 2RU37-26 | 7.21% (7) | 12.78% (6) | 11.22% (10) | 13.52% (6) |
| 2S30-10 | 7.64% (4) | 10.96% (6) | 17.11% (7) | 20.96% (12) |
| 3P34-17 | 13.90% (6) | 10.24% (9) | 8.90% (7) | 12.14% (7) |
| 4E25-10 | 1.86% (3) | 17.94% (7) | 100% (1) | 100% (1) |

*Question 1.* The first question asked about the five aspects participants take into consideration when making a career decision. Participants were asked to rank a self-generated list of items. Each participant's items are placed in the order in which they were ranked, with the first item mentioned being considered the most important.

Participant 1R020-18 listed self-satisfaction, professional development, community impact, compensation, and flexibility as the five most important items. She noted that she did not have any children, and if she did, her "choices and ranking may be different." Participant 1T34-30 listed the most important aspects as job satisfaction, congruence between the organization's values and philosophy and her values and

philosophy, being able to make a difference, the salary and benefits, and a work and family balance. Participant 2F24-9 listed the most important aspects as challenging, rewarding, opportunities to move up in rank, her pay, and her benefits/retirement plan.

Participant 2G29-25 listed the most important aspects as location in terms of how her location would affect her family, the organization's size and stability, money, career mobility, and responsibilities. Participant 2H30-20 listed the organization itself, as well as its political correctness and ethics, leadership, standing in the industry, and pay. She said she was "afraid to move away from where family is located," having been uprooted from Michigan to return to El Paso. She continued, "Had I thought of it more, [I] would do things differently and not put so much emphasis on culture. Family came first, being around mom." Furthermore, she wished one could assimilate rather than acculturate.

Participant 2L30-10 listed, "How happy I will be, what can I bring to the position, will I be able to accomplish something (a job I want to work at)" as well as salary and comfort with the position, confidence in the position, and whether she would want to work with a team. Participant 2RU37-26 listed her "family, how will it affect my family; however, at the stage, where [the] kids are grown, family is not at the top of the list, [so] advancement, salary, job fulfillment, and location." Participant 2S30-10 listed money and the functions involved in the position. She said, "I have to like the job" and included location, benefits, and the reputation of the company. She continued, "Family falls under the money and benefit aspect, as I need to know if there is going to be enough to support my family."

Participant 3P34-17 listed knowledge of the work and the quality of the work life as well as sharing her knowledge with others, working with others to achieve common

goals, and to responding in a timely manner to the tasks. Participant 4E25-10 listed money, stability, and leave time to attend to her family, as well as benefits and location in terms of her family as the most important aspects.

In summary, participants' responses do not favor characteristics definitively associated with either the Mexican or American culture and the dimensions identified for further exploration and explanation, namely, individualism and achievement. Values identified show a mixture of characteristics associated with individualism and collectivism, as well as achievement and quality of work-life orientation. The values expressed by the participants suggest a level of acculturation with respect to American society.

*Question 2*. The focus of the second question was on identifying the source of the significant difference for the achievement dimension. More specifically, while the United States and Mexico had similar scores related to achievement, or the degree to which people focus on goal achievement versus work or quality of life and caring for others, 69 and 62 respectively, the average score for participants was significantly lower (44), even lower than the world average (64). In response to the inquiry, Participant 1R020-18 said as follows:

> Gender; women tend to direct our passion into our work for the purpose of family. We choose our occupations based on things we believe in; we're helping others, and it is going to make a difference. Goal focus and quality of life—they intertwine.

Participant 1T34-30 answered, "Significantly lower because [participants are] female. Mexican culture [emphasizes] caring for others. Mexican American/US culture

emphasizes taking care of elders at home." Participant 2F24-9 claimed, "It may be the difficulty to get past some of those ingrained thoughts, beliefs, and the stigma that we, as Mexican Americans, are inferior to our American counterparts." Participant 2G29-25 thought it was lower because of "Border issues and the cultural" aspects. Participant 2H30-20 stated the "state of the economy, perception on the state of affairs, [and the] emphasis was not on work" as reasons for the significant difference. Participant 3P34-17 said, "There seems to be no accountability."

Several participants responded at some length. Participant *2L30-10* suggested the average score for participants was significantly lower for the following reasons:

> Because that is what is more important—achievement (certificates, medals), so it is not important as to how you feel, but how you are treated by your family and friends, which is more important. The paper on the way [diplomas, certificates, records of accomplishments] is not going to be there for you. Quality of life is more important to feeling good about yourself, being comfortable with yourself. You weigh up every morning. You are happy. You have people who like you. Achievement? If I was the president of the university, would I be happy? This is a high Catholic population, strong faith, and religion is more important. Power is what men want. Mexico does not have a middle class. It is a male-dominated society. The change and advancement of women in Mexico was not as prominent in the past as it is now. These changes are only recent, and there are still challenges. While it has changed, it is possible that during the time the survey [Hofstede's study] was conducted, those predominantly surveyed were male.

Participant 2RU37-26 suggested as follows:

> Focus on the quality of life. We come from a culture where they do not worry where the next meal is coming from. The government is always going to be helping, [so there is] more of a reliance on social services. Too much social services do not encourage work. They do not have a desire to work; therefore, [they] do not have a desire for leadership services.

Participant 2S30-10 suggested the following:

> When I go to work, I am working for family. It could be culture. My dad was doing his taxes and asked me [if] I wanted to go to college. I said no, so they [parents] never pushed. We [my family] grew up to be happy with what you have, not wanting what you do not have. I did not know about these things (financial aid, etc.), as these things were never shared. These were the values shared. My father would not let us accept assistance. My mother's feelings were to "get [a] job [and] have a family."

Finally, Participant 4E25-10 responded as follows:

> Our society as a whole pushes you towards a goal-centered existence. Evident in professional development, evaluations, all of these things are regular to our environment. Each person has to define for themselves as to what their institution defines. Differences in the kind of goals we are talking about, as personal and professional goals do not always coincide. I separate my personal and professional goals. Gender does influence our goals.

In summary, participants believe that gender and society influence an individual's goals. Work and family are identified as distinct and separate entities, demanding different efforts and characteristics in navigating the respective environments.

Participants express the importance of achievement but also believe that a quality of work life is equally important.

*Question 3*. Participants were asked about the degree to which they, on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being to the lowest degree and 10 being the highest degree, personally focus on goal achievement and work versus quality of life and caring for others.

The purpose of having participants rate their preference for goal achievement and quality of life was to demonstrate alignment with the findings of the quantitative phase. The higher the ranking, the more the participant was focused on or valued the item in question. Table 6 reflects participants' rankings. When comparing each participant's ranking of her preference for goal achievement or quality of life, the rankings supported a rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 6

*Ranking of Focus on Goals Compared to Preference for Quality of Life*

| Participant | Focus on goal achievement and work | Preference for quality of life and caring for others |
|---|---|---|
| 1R020-18 | 10 | 10 |
| 1T34-30 | 10 | 10 |
| 2F24-9 | 10 | 10 |
| 2G29-25 | 10 | 10 |
| 2H30-20 | 7 | 10 |
| 3P34-17 | 10 | 9 |
| 2S30-10 | 8 | 7 |
| 4E25-10 | 8 | 8 |
| 2L30-10 | 4 | 10 |
| 2RU37-26 | 10 | 10 |

Some participants provided additional comments in response to the question. Participant 1R020-18 said, "We want it all, we can focus on both at the same time." Participant 1T34-30 offered a similar comment: "Can focus on goal achievement and work, both. Work does not define the individual." Participant 2H30-20 stated, "I wish I could say 10 but no leadership, no mentor. What I have achieved and experienced has been on my own, with no model or mentor to assist me." Participant 2RU37-26 suggested the following:

> It is my life; everything I do is terms of achievements: I plan, measure goals, have goals for every year. [I] learned a big lesson in the last few years; without your family and God, you do not have anything. Family comes first. When problem at home [occurs], take care of family first.

Participant 3P34-17 claimed, "I have a realistic view, but do the best I can whenever I can; this goes for animals as well." Participant 2S30-10 commented as follows:

> Lately, it has changed to an 8 because I decided to pursue my Master's. Before, it might have been a 10. The primary reason for me going for my Master's is my current working environment. I will gain more independence, be able to make choices, and have more opportunities. The kids are older, and I want stability. Family needs are different. Money is not the main driving force, but it is important. I want both—money and happiness.

In summary, participants identified a relation between achievement and quality of life, confirming participants' responses to question two. Participants believe by achieving

their goals, they are improving their quality of life. Participants voiced the need to approach both goal achievement and quality of life, keeping family.

*Question 4*. The fourth question enquired about what traits participants valued more, efficiency or loyalty and why. Participant 1R020-18 said, "Loyalty, I think loyalty speaks to commitment of a person and following their beliefs. Loyalty is more important because if someone is loyal, it says something about the person's consistency. Efficiency is not as personal as loyalty."

Participant 1T34-30 responded, "Loyalty; you cannot teach loyalty, but you can teach people how to be efficient." Participant 2F24-9 suggested, "Loyalty; it is important to able to trust those who surround you, whether at home or at work." Participant 2G29-25 claimed, "Loyalty, because loyalty is something you earn and is hard to come by. Efficiency, you can get anyone and train them to be efficient that is part of caring for others, the quality of life." Participant 2S30-10 responded, "I value loyalty more because it is important to believe in what you are doing. Loyalty will help you through rough times and will make the good times even better," and Participant 3P34-17 said, "Loyalty, you can train for efficiency. I need to count on that person." Participant 2RU37-26 made the following statement:

> Loyalty is the number one trait that leaders look for in their subordinates. You do not want to be second-guessed, or backstabbed, as these things create a dysfunctional unit. It is hard to work and achieve your goals when employees are not loyal.

Participant 2H30-20 said, "Loyalty—just me—how loyal are you to getting the job done. Not sure if I would go with an employee who is loyal but probably the one who

is efficient," while Participant 2L30-10 responded, "Efficiency at work but loyalty in personal relationships." Participant 4E25-10 suggested, "Professionally, efficiency because the bottom line is to get things done and loyalty is an emotion and efficient is not. Loyalty would be a personal trait."

In summary, participants value loyalty more than they do efficiency. Loyalty is seen as inherent personality trait. Participants also believe that efficiency can be learned.

*Question 5*. The fifth question asked participants to explain why they may or may not agree with the following statement: Business is business and personal is personal—the two should never mix.

Participant 1R020-18 disagreed with the statement, saying, "As human beings, we don't divide ourselves. You have to carry who you are at all times, your values, what you believe in; you cannot turn it off. I try to have a win-win, an attempt to help them." Likewise, Participant 2G29-25 suggested, "It is hard to separate them. There are certain things, our personal lives, [which] affect the way we function." Participant 2H30-20 responded with "True, because to run a business, you have to be successful as to what your objectives and goals are. Personally, we go through different phases in life and [a phase] may interrupt."

Several participants agreed with the statement. Participant 1T34-30 suggested as follows: "There should be a clear distinction between what is personal and what is professional. When this does not happen, much conflict arises." Participant 2F24-9 wholeheartedly agreed with the statement:

> You should never mix personal with business. That is why I will not hire friends or family members of employees in our department. Business is pretty much cut-

> and-dry, and personal gets muddled up with emotional feelings, which will always cloud the issues.

Participant 2RU37-26 also agreed on the following grounds: "We have to keep personal separate from business. The organization pays us to be business-oriented. I understand that this is not the environment, we need to be tolerant, but it cannot be overwhelming or dominating." Participant 2L30-10 also agreed that one's business and personal life should be separate:

> I mean as far as the way I am. For example, at work, I am not going to get upset because someone did not say good morning. I do not take these things personally. They talk to you fine. We are there to work.

Participant 4E25-10 agreed with the statement on the following grounds: "You were hired to do a job, [so] do it. At the same time, I don't want to talk about work during my personal time, as it is my time and vice versa."

Participant 2S30-10 suggested the issue is not cut and dry: "I do not believe in this philosophy, but as much as I do not like it—it happens a lot—it is a fact of the work environment. You cannot spend as much time as you do in a work environment without the two mixing." Finally, Participant 3P34-17 responded, "I believe there is a fine line separating the two; you have to know a certain amount of the person to make sound decisions."

In summary, participants express an understanding that an individual's personal life influences that individual's work life. Participants believe that business and personal life should be separate, but the two can often overlap in a work environment. Participants believe that when aspects of an individual's personal life present in the work

environment, the work environment can become tenuous and a lack of focus on work occurs.

*Question 6*. The sixth question was designed to elicit explanations about why participants may or may not agree with the following statement: It is not what you know but whom you know. Two participants noted a shift in their beliefs, but in opposite directions. For example, Participant 1R020-18 described her experience as follows:

> If you asked me this 10 years ago, I would say definitely. I have always approached my job, my pursuit of a job opportunity, based on what I know. It is not about "he brought me in" or "she brought me in" because they are my buddies, and [I] always prided myself in doing things because of what I know.

In contrast, Participant 2RU37-26 suggested, "In the old days, [I] did not agree, but [I] agree now. Politics are inherent in our lives."

Some participants were clear that the statement reflected the reality. For example, Participant 2H30-20 suggested, "In this town, it is who you know." Likewise Participant 4E25-10, who claimed, "Consistently, in any organization, going up as high as the federal government, it is going to be who you know that gets you in." The same was true for Participant 2F24-9 for the following reasons:

> Unfortunately, I find that most places still operate on the basis of who you know and not what you know. I, however, personally feel that an individual should be hired or promoted based on what they know not who they know.

Several participants accepted who one knows as more important than what one knows as a reality, but pointed toward the limitations of initial success based on who one knows. For example, Participant 3P34-17 said, "You get only so far by that theory, and it

always catches up with you. It is the lazy way in life." Likewise, Participant 1T34-30 suggested, "Whom you know will only get you so far. Ultimately, what you know enables you to continue riding the wave regardless of who you know." Likewise, Participant 2S30-10 claimed the following:

> I do believe it has a lot to do with the world at work today. When we are able to get a good reference, we tend to rely on that more than instincts: Who you know that you gets in, but what you know keeps you there.

Participant 2G29-25 echoed the same sentiment:

> You need to be astute enough to work that relationship. How to use your connection is important, do not drop them [names] just to drop them. Use wisely. I agree with "who you know gets in the door but what you know keeps you there." Lack of a mentor is part of the issue. Who is going to mentor women; [there are] assist type roles but not mentoring them.

Finally, Participant 2L30-10 responded, "In certain positions, yes. I guess the higher you go, the better it is for you to know someone but for the mid and lower levels, it would be what you know."

In summary, participants responses reflect agreement with the belief that it is often who an individual knows that provides the opportunity and the not the knowledge an individual possesses. Participants also suggest that the validity of the belief is based on the level of position in question. Participants clarified that their belief is based more on personal observations than the beliefs they possessed or endorsed, thus recognizing the existence of organizational politics in decisions concerning leadership roles.

*Question 7.* The average individualism score for those who participated in the study is 50, which is significantly above Mexico (30) and below the United States scores (91). Participants were asked what they believed the reason for the difference in scores was. Participant 2G29-25 gave no answer.

The remaining participants offered explanations in terms of their Mexican heritage and proximity to Mexico. For example, Participant 1R020-18 responded, "Talking with Mexican Americans, culture, proximity of El Paso to Mexico. People do come over here, [for] generations, stereotypes influence the retention of the culture." Participant *2F24-9* claimed the reason was, "Possibly the fact that we are raised to take care of our own. The Mexican culture and most families are extremely close knit."

In several instances, participants pointed toward socio-cultural and personal changes. For example, Participant 2G29-25 suggested, "A level of acculturation versus assimilation" was taking place. Participant 1T34-30 described how the, "culture, group thinking is stressed; [we] adhere to no man as an island; part of what we grew up to believe." Individualism was viewed as having consequences. For example, Participant 2L30-10 said the following:

> That is why the U.S. is hated all over the world. We think of ourselves first. If you read someone else's perspective, we are not liked because we are arrogant. Women are smart, and they know how to say, "Wait a minute. I need to be able to balance the two lives and requirements." I think it is because they [quantitative phase participants] have to explore and experience both.

Focusing on the gender more specifically, Participant 2S30-10 explained as follows:

> I believe that it is significantly lower because the role of the woman has changed, allowing more availability for the women to pursue their career goals. They don't worry as much about the home life because the husband or significant other is supporting them in these career goals. They still care about their families, but they are not frowned at because they are trying to achieve their career goals.

Changes that are more personal were reflected by Participant 2RU37-26, who offered the following explanation:

> Because of the fact that we have a mixture, here in El Paso, is a big underlying reason. I am the first individual in family who graduated from college; I am female, and I live in the US where we have been taught it was a land of opportunity, so the hard work is going to get you where you want to be. I see influences still looking at where an individual deserves stuff because of association. We do not forget who we are or where we came from. If you do that, you will never know where you are going.

One participant suggested the individualism and collectivism were not necessarily mutually exclusive in her own interaction. For example, Participant 4E25-10 suggested as follows:

> If you look at the characteristic of both, there is an obvious intertwining. It depends upon the project and type of work. There are times when there are tasks I want to be individualistic, but then there are tasks that have to do with the whole college and I take on a collectivist attitude.

In summary, participants suggest that a balance of characteristics provides them with the ability to navigate their work and personal environments successfully. The

characteristics displayed depend on both environment and task. Possessing characteristics from both individualism and collectivism supports a level of acculturation in American society.

*Question 8*. The eighth question asked participants to rate the degree to which they give preference to belonging to the "we," where individuals are loyal and contribute to the group, family, clan, and organization in exchange for reciprocal group support versus the belief that individuals are expected to take care of themselves, their needs, and seek little help from others. Each belief was rated on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 the lowest degree and 10 the highest.

The purpose of having participants rate their focus on behaviors associated individualism versus collectivism was to investigate the extent of alignment with the findings of the quantitative phase. The higher the number, the more the participant favored the behavioral traits. Table 7 reflects participants' simple rankings. When comparing each participant's simple ranking of her behavioral preferences for individualism and collectivism, the simple rankings supported a rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 7

*Rating of Preference for Collectivist and Individualistic Behaviors*

| Participant | Collectivist behavioral traits | Individualist behavioral traits |
|---|---|---|
| 1R020-18 | 8 | 5 |
| 1T34-30 | 10 | 3 |
| 2F24-9 | 8 | 5 |
| 2G29-25 | 8 | 8 |
| 2H30-20 | 9 | 3 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2L30-10 | 8 | No answer |
| 2RU37-26 | 10 | 4 |
| 2S30-10 | 8 | 5 |
| 3P34-17 | 1 | 5 |
| 4E25-10 | 4 | 9 |

Some participants chose to provide additional comments in response to the question. Participant 2G29-25 responded as follows:

> Assimilation; people should think of themselves. At some point, from a sociological standpoint, we are so focused on the "we" as a minority that sometimes the group may restrict movement. With location and family being important, some people will pass up a job. Family ties keep us from individualistic tendencies.

Several respondents pointed toward the merits of a collectivist emphasis. For example, Participant 2H30-20 claimed, "Togetherness is necessary. Team is very important. We need to put them under our wing, make sure they get off in the right direction, and provide the necessary support." Likewise, Participant 2L30-10 suggested as follows:

> You need to have someone else. You need to be part of a social environment. I have a coworker who needs help; she should be able to do it. It is good she has someone to do it for her.

Finally, Participant 3P34-17 responded as follows:

> Honesty is much more important to me to grow and be a better person. To feel good about you, it is best to work hard for your own self-esteem and help others instead, whenever you can, but I understand everyone needs help now and then.

In summary, participants' responses aligned with the findings of the quantitative phase. Participants communicated an understanding of the influence of characteristics associated with individualistic and collectivist behaviors on their lives, but still favored collectivistic traits. Some participants suggested the study score for Individualism (57), when compared to Mexico's country score (30) and the United States' country score (91) suggests a level of assimilation into American society versus acculturation.

*Question 9*. The ninth question focused on the five cultural values participants recalled and still practiced in some form in their daily lives, as well as the extent to which these values influence participants' professional lives. Participant 1R020-18 responded as follows:

> Family is important, is the key, most important; that children are to be cared for and are the center of the family; music—*allegra*—enjoying life, which involves dancing, music, and singing; hard work gets you to your goal, hard work pays off; and, spirituality. They influenced greatly because in my office environment; I like to foster a feeling we are there for each other, trusting each other, working hard as a team to get our goal, and always having fun.

Participant 1T34-30 said, "Honesty, integrity, respect for age, importance of family, and spiritual harmony." Participant 2G29-25 suggested, "Loyalty, trust, community, work ethic (work hard), and faith, very much so. Loyalty, trust, all helped

me achieve what I have now. [I] stayed focused, loyal to bosses and [the] organization. Expect trust and trustworthy." Participant 2H30-20 responded with the following:

> Family first, togetherness, do right over wrong, education, and religion. My values influenced my professional life a lot, big time. The instilment of my parents making sure we got an education and always do right, help others, [and] don't forget to pray. Fight for the underdog as people do not give the opportunity; we can learn from these individuals.

Participant 2F24-9 claimed, "Family is first, be respectful of others, help those less fortunate, be a person of your word, be that person people can count on." Participant 2L30-10 stated the following:

> Importance of being honest not only to others but yourself; not hurting anyone, if you cannot say anything nice, don't say it all; having courage to do what you need to do; having resources, saving money; and mother always your way of being, never wore tight clothes, not showy, conservative. Very valuable because these are values I exhibit at work.

Participant 2RU37-26 said, "Honesty, integrity, loyalty, trustworthy, and dependable. These are part of my professional life. I cannot do anything without them, inherent every day." Participant 2S30-10 suggested, "Food (tamales at Christmas), religion, mother is the dominant caregiver, taking care of elders (i.e. parents), and family togetherness. I am not sure how these values affected me. I have not seen an effect but [I have] nothing to measure against." Participant 3P34-17 claimed, "Follow God's laws, do the best you can, be honest, be direct, and try not to hurt others." Finally, Participant 4E25-10 responded as follows:

> Fiscal responsibility; help people who are important to you; don't have to like them but love them; find time to laugh; and, whatever you do, try to enjoy it. These values influenced my professional life big time. My teaching and management style involves a lot of human interaction. As a budget head, my department was always in the black. I made sure that employees knew they were important, recognized their hard work, and they knew they always could come to me.

In summary, participants share values associated with individualism, collectivism, an achievement orientation, and a quality of work orientation. Participants identified specifically the importance of family. The emphasis on family favors a quality of work-life orientation. Participants did not distinctly associate the values expressed with a specific ethnicity.

*Question 10*. The tenth question asked participants to list the five personal characteristics that helped them succeed in leadership and relate the characteristics to their values. Participant 1R020-18 responded as follows:

> Team builder, dedication, flexibility, fun, and integrity. Keep your word, people are going to respect. If you are consistent, you can be trusted. To be fair, they are going to feel confident in the work that they do and the recognition that they will get. The inclusion, they will feel people are not going to be disrespected, feel valued, and looking forward to coming to work.

Participant 1T34-30 said, "Honesty, integrity, competence, sense of human [emotional intelligence], respect for those with whom I work." Participant 2F24-9 suggested, "Lead by example, earns people's respect, empower those around you,

compromise but not at the cost of your principles and integrity, be fair and forthright." Participant 2G29-25 claimed, "Goal-oriented, work hard, loyal, task-oriented, planner (life planned out). They are closely tied, extensions of my values; interdependent." Participant 2H30-20 responded, "Listen, communication, plan, organizations, and ethics (integrity)." Participant 2L30-10 said, "Sense of human [emotional intelligence], common sense, ability to break down the problem, i.e. problem solving, ability to communicate efficiently, listen. These characteristics are extensions of my value." Participant 2RU37-26 listed the characteristics as follows:

> Hardworking, educated, tolerant, good character, and person of their word. Characteristics are very important to my values. Everyone has a choice in the method of living their life. I choose to life down the road the right way. It appears that these are derivatives of my values. My job defines me. I have to do the best that I can.

Participant 2S30-10 suggested, "Humility, team player, honesty and integrity, respect for all, and strong work ethic." Participant 3P34-17 claimed, "What a person values, what she or he thinks defines that person and reflects in all they do and how they treat others." Finally, Participant 4E25-10 responded, "Analyze all angles of a situations before making a decision; the human part; willingness to be flexible; dedication to deadlines; and commitment to the very best. These characteristics directly correlate to my values."

In summary, the focus on characteristics shared favors an achievement orientation, which aligns with the country scores for both Mexico and the United States. Participants recognize the influence of their personal values and characteristics on an

individual's work behavior. In addition, an individual's quality of work-life influences an individual's personal development.

*Question 11*. The eleventh question asked participants to explain how they believe their gender and ethnicity presents challenges in their leadership roles or desire to be in leadership roles.

Several participants focus on gender to the exclusion of ethnicity. For example, Participant 2S30-10 responded, "Gender—male dominated. No, I do not believe ethnicity has played a part because of my physical appearance. People believe I am Anglo." Likewise, Participant 1T34-30 pointed out the following:

> In many instances, throughout my years in the world of work, the good old boy network predominated; however, I believe that my gender and ethnicity worked to my benefit in other instances to get me through the door. The rest was up to my level(s) of competence.

Participant 2RU37-26 responded as follows:

> Very important. I am the only female Hispanic [on the senior management/ leadership team] and not taken as seriously as a man [is]. So, I have do things twice as good. I feel that gender has more of an influence. Ethnicity has helped me.

Participant 2G29-25 responded as follows:

> Yes, more gender-related than ethnicity. I was raised in a segregated community: School for Blacks, Whites, and Latinos. Parents taught us to work at/for everything. Race was not an issue. So, if it was an issue, you never knew it was.

> Gender has been a real issue [when] wanting to aspire to the leadership roles and graduate programs. Ethnicity—Latino men do not help Latinas.

Other participants consider the intertwining of gender and ethnicity to present a challenge to their leadership roles or desire to be in leadership roles. For example, Participant 2H30-20 claimed, "Definitely, big—could care less how much education but still made a bag impact. Being an outspoken female has not helped," while Participant 1R020-18 responded as follows:

> I feel from a young age, I decided that as a woman I was not going to depend on a man, that I would be educated, self-sufficient, and not ask permission. I am bilingual and bicultural. I have worked in jobs that took me to different places. Working nationally, stereotypes have been promoted by White America that Latinos have bought into it. Mexicans were at the bottom of the Hispanic group. Chicana movement represented Mexican Americans gaining civil rights. Leaders such as Jose Gutierrez, Dolores Huerta, are proud of the indigenous people.

Participant 4E25-10 implied the same when she responded as follows:

> I think even in our town, Hispanics are influenced by the stereotypical characterizations such as, "You know she won't leave town; you know she will put family first." During an interview, I stated getting my Master's was more important than the job, which blew them away. They did not expect that coming from a Hispanic woman. They thought I would want the job to take care of my family.

Still other participants suggest that neither gender nor ethnicity present a challenge. For example, Participant 2F24-9 said, "I truly believe that I was very lucky in

that neither my gender nor my ethnicity was ever a factor. While people may have noticed my gender and ethnicity, it is my work and abilities that stand out." Likewise, Participant 2L30-10 claimed, "I do not feel either had any influence. Challenges experienced are self-inflicted," and Participant 3P34-17 responded as follows:

> For me, very little. I seem to be accepted by most people, except for my own ethnic group for whatever reasons that may be; I've not placed too much effort into understanding, "why." I have always been able to work with men; most of my life has been dealing with men. I understand them better than I do women for the most part.

In summary, participants had mixed experiences with gender and ethnicity affecting their leadership roles or opportunity for leadership roles. Participants' ethnicity had opened doors that they might not otherwise have due to an organization's need to sustain a diverse workforce. A few participants addressed working through ethnic stereotypes but most participants found the bigger challenge to be their gender.

*Question 12*. The final question asked if participants had any comments or thoughts they would like to share. Only five participants responded to the question. Participant 1T34-30, who had spent 15 years caring for her parents, responded as follows:

> Although I was born in Juarez, Mexico, I have always been an American citizen because of my El Paso-born mother. In order to retain my American citizenship, I had to live in El Paso for five years after my 18th birthday. I am still an American citizen, but Mexican by birth.

Participant 2F24-9, suggested, "We are captains of our ship, therefore we make of our lives whatever set our minds to regardless of gender or ethnicity." Participant 2G29-25 said as follows:

> I am very goal oriented. I do not have a family. Since I finished my Ph.D., I feel slightly lost. I have my degree. I do not desire to be a President of a college. I achieved my positional rank. Family is from [small city in New Mexico – population just under 15,000]. Parents had a restaurant. My mother still lives there. Sold the restaurant when my father died recently.

Participant 3P34-17 suggested, "Father's side wanted to live the American culture. Emigrated for a better life. I am bicultural. Raised to believe no handouts, not be subservient, put our own mark, and education was valued." Finally, Participant 4E25-10 responded, "Always have a family issue [I am needing to attend to]. Wishing I could put myself first, but I can't. When I go over [to see family], they are so happy to see me."

In summary, participants could not directly associate the values expressed with their ethnicity. Participants saw gender more as an influencing factor in challenges experienced in the work environment. Participants do not deny that ethnicity may have presented challenges but believe these to be perceptions projected onto them and not their own personal perceptions.

## Discussion

The mixed explanatory method involved data collection using the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ in the quantitative phase and a combination of closed and opened-ended questions during semi-structured interviews in the qualitative phase that followed. The purpose of the study was to identify and explore the influence of Mexican

cultural factors on Mexican American women who had experience in, currently held, or aspired to leadership roles. This section contains summative findings based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected.

The rejection of the null hypotheses for both the achievement and the individualism dimensions determined the themes the qualitative phase of the study explored. The focus of the participants appeared to be more on themselves than their Mexican American culture. Participation in the study, for some participants, was the first time they had personally evaluated the possible effects of cultural factors on their professional lives.

The challenges experienced by participants were gender based and based on the lack of viable mentors rather than ethnicity. Ethnicity, for those participants who reflected on the concept, was viewed as an asset, providing opportunities they would not otherwise have had. One participant shared that she was unaware of ethnic-related issues because no behaviors exhibited by or toward her indicated a problem. Gender, on the other hand, proved to be more challenging in terms of the lack of support and recognition from male peers and supervisors. One participant cited the need to put forth twice the effort that her male counterparts did to receive comparable recognition for her efforts. Participants identified a lack of available and viable mentors as a contributing factor to the gender-based challenges experienced.

A question was raised by a couple of participants about the timing of the study that served as the basis for comparing scores in so much as the country scores for Mexico were obtained when the role of women in Mexican business was less visible as compared to men. There is no information available to either support or refute the concern

expressed by participants. Cultural factors, while identified, received minimal focus as contributing factors to participants' challenges. Participants viewed cultural factors as contributing to their success as leaders because the cultural factors reflected abilities associated with transformational leaders, specifically building relationships and working together for a common good.

## Summary

Fox-Genovese (2001) suggested that the source of the glass ceiling effect experienced by women was based on culture, citing the historical role of women in society and the delayed entry of women in to the workforce as compared to men. In the study, the focus was a single culture and gender, Mexican American women, and the purpose of the study was to explore the influence of Mexican cultural factors on Mexican women with experience in, currently holding, or aspiring to leadership positions. In chapter 3, a detailed account of the methodology used to achieve the purpose of the study was given. In chapter 4, both the quantitative and qualitative data gathered was reported. Forty individuals completed the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ during the quantitative phase. The hypothesis tested the statistical mean of participants' scores as compared to the country scores for Mexico and the United States. The rejection of the null hypothesis for the achievement and individualism dimensions defined the themes to be explored in the qualitative phase. The rejection of the null hypotheses also indicated that participants did not exhibit characteristics closely associated with either Mexico or United States, but exhibited the characteristics of both equally.

Participant scores for the quantitative phase were aligned with the United States and world averages. The exception was the time orientation dimension, but Mexico

country scores were not available for comparison on that dimension. The qualitative phase explored pre-defined themes based on the quantitative findings using both closed and open-ended discussions in a semi-structured interview. Responses to the closed-ended questions demonstrated alignment with the quantitative findings. The qualitative phase attempted to explore cultural factors, but the focus of participants was on gender rather than ethnicity or culture. Cultural factors were evident but apparently added to participants' success as leaders. In chapter 5, the study is concluded by addressing the problem, purpose, and limitations of the study. Chapter 5 is also focused on the implications of the study and recommendations for future research.

# CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The global market and increased immigration demand that organizations cultivate diverse leadership. At the same time, the glass ceiling is believed to present challenges for women in the workplace (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2002). Fox-Genovese (2001) and Hite (2007) suggested the source of the challenge might relate to culture rather than gender. More specifically, Hispanic women have demonstrated their viability in the workplace as a source for leadership positions. "Between 1990-2000, Hispanic women seeking a bachelor's degree increased 150% and those seeking a Master's degree increased 164%." Despite their viability, only 25 of the 10,092 corporate leaders among the Fortune 500 companies were Hispanic in 2002 (Catalyst, 2003, p. 2).

Hofstede (2001) identified five cultural dimensions using the data from a cross-cultural study that explored the correlation between culture and workplace relationships on several dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation (ITAP International, 2007d). The Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™, derived from Hofstede (2001), facilitates individuals' cultural understanding in an effort to create effective cross-cultural working relationships (ITAP International, 2007a). An accurate and thorough cultural understanding provides the first building block for cultivating and sustaining a diverse workforce that ensures organizational success.

In the study, a mixed explanatory method was used to identify the cultural preferences exhibited in the workplace by Mexican American women. Using the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™, the quantitative phase isolated themes for further exploration in the qualitative phase of the study. Ten Mexican American female leaders responded to open and close-ended questions in semi-structured interviews. The purpose

of the closed-ended questions was to examine the alignment between the results of the quantitative and qualitative phase. The open-ended questions explored cultural factors that challenge Mexican American women who have inexperience in, currently hold, or aspire to be in leadership positions. Participants' responses focused more on gender than ethnicity or culture. Participants acknowledged the influence of cultural factors, but believed the factors added to their success as leaders rather than interfered or affected them negatively.

## Conclusions

Fox-Genovese (2001) suggested that the culture is the source of the challenges women experience with the glass ceiling. The purpose of the mixed explanatory study was to explore this belief and evaluate the influence of Mexican cultural factors on Mexican American women who had experience of, were currently holding, or aspired to leadership roles in El Paso County, Texas. A mixed explanatory method provided the opportunity to explore human behavior in a cultural context through the qualitative phase but began with a quantitative method to identify starting points for exploration. Contact with participants was through professional networking and participant referral, specifically previous employers, members of the El Paso Society for Human Resource Management, and e-mail addresses available on the Worldwide Web of individuals employed by major companies in El Paso, Texas.

The data from the quantitative phase identified the dominant themes based on the Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. The dominant themes were determined by the rejection of the null hypotheses when comparing the scores for participants for each

dimension to the scores for both the United States and Mexico. Hofstede cautioned researchers when comparing individual scores to the original country scores because samples may not share the important characteristics required for reliability measures. The mixed explanatory study used the dimensional model as a paradigm and did not replicate the original study, making the Hofstede's concerns irrelevant. Literature about Mexican American women in leadership roles was limited, and this mixed explanatory study provided a starting point for further research.

The limitations of the study were the truthfulness and sincerity of participants' responses, the congruency of participants' perceptions, and the time restrictions for conducting the study. The accessibility to and knowledge of the technology involved in collecting the data did not prove as challenging as originally anticipated. The integrity of the study was also proportionately limited to the researcher's ability to prevent her personal experiences and background from affecting the collection and interpretation of the data. The researcher, through previous professional experiences or associations, knew the participants involved in the qualitative phase of the study. As the study progressed, however, it became apparent that personal knowledge and experience of participants was more limited than anticipated, thus reducing the effect of the limitation on the study.

Two other limitations presented during the study: the time available for interviews and the perception on the part of participants that the challenges to their achieving leadership positions were not culturally but gender based. The study was conducted in December 2008 at the onset of the holiday season. Participants not only had familial and community obligations, but year-end activities in their professional lives. Participants, when solicited to participate, were advised of the purpose of the study. The

perception that culturally based factors may not be the source of their challenges may have discouraged participation in the study because the value of the study to the participants was not immediately apparent.

The mixed explanatory study used purposive sampling, a non-probability method, for both the quantitative and qualitative phases. Mexican American women with experience of, currently holding, or aspiring to leadership roles residing or working El Paso County, Texas, were invited to participate in the study; of those who participated in the quantitative phase, 10 women were invited to participate in the qualitative phase. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data permitted corroboration of the results, which the literature reviewed in chapter 2 supported. The anonymity of the data collected in the quantitative phase and the emphasis the research design placed on the qualitative phase did not provide the opportunity to conduct some of statistical manipulations associated with mixed studies.

*Quantitative Phase*

Hofstede (2001) conducted a cross-cultural study that examined the relationship between culture and workplace relationships between 1967 and 1973 (ITAP International, 2007d). The results of Hofstede's (2001) study yielded five cultural dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and, time orientation (ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). Hofstede's (2001) study provided the bases for the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™, an instrument used in individual and organizational development; the instrument was used to conduct the quantitative phase of the mixed explanatory research conducted. The Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ produces a cultural profile that provides individuals and organizations

with insights about how individuals approach and are affected by culture in the workplace (ITAP, 2007a).

A global marketplace, the diverse population the United States hosts, and the rapidly growing Hispanic population provide a context ripe with cultural challenges. The Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ was the first step in identifying areas for exploration. Appreciating the value of the instrument in the mixed explanatory study necessitated an understanding of the dimensional scores for Mexico and United States.

*Dimensional scores for Mexico.* Mexico's most notable dimensional scores were individualism (30); masculinity, also referred to as achievement, (69); and power distance (81). Mexico's low ranking on the individualism dimension suggests a collectivist society (ITIM International, 2007b). Collectivist societies exhibit close family ties with immediate and extended family members, foster strong relationships within social circles, and value loyalty (ITIM International, 2007b). Mexico has elevated scores in the masculinity or achievement dimension, reinforcing the culture's gender role separation, which holds that achievement, control, and power are masculine roles (Peek et al. 2007). The belief in the inequality of women in Mexican society is further evidence of Mexico's high masculinity score. Mexican women, within their gender and social strata, tend to exhibit self-assured and competitive behavior. Mexico's power distance score is congruent with a society with high levels of power and wealth inequality—an inequality that is perceived to be culturally accepted. Hofstede (1984, as cited by Peek et al., 2007) identified the following societal characteristics associated with cultures that have a high power distance score:

1. Individuals with power are justified in having special privileges

2. Subordinates are uncomfortable with challenging superiors
3. Employees lack solidarity and are cautious about trusting coworkers.

*Dimensional scores for the United States.* The United States' high ranking for the individualism dimension suggested a culture that cultivates individualistic attitudes, which are characterized by casual social relationships, a focus on the individual, and an upbringing that dictates that an individual be self-reliant (ITIM International, 2007c). The United States' masculinity dimension score and ranking reflects distinctive gender roles where men still dominate societal and political structures despite the advances women have made. The United States low ranking on the power distance dimension reveals a society where greater equality exists among societal levels, in terms of government, organization, and family unity, which supports a stable cultural environment.

Reviewing and understanding Mexico and the United States' country scores might lead some individuals to believe that more of an alignment with Mexico exists, especially between El Paso County, Texas, and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. The cities are separated by a narrow navigable and multiple-bridged river, the majority population is Mexican American, and the Mexican culture is visible on almost every city block. Reproduced from Table 2 in Chapter 4, Table 8 presents the results of the mixed explanatory research in comparison to the country dimensional scores for Mexico and United States; the results suggested a degree of assimilation in American culture among participants. Overall, the average score for the Mexican American women indicated a moderate preference for each dimension, with an alignment of scores with the United States on two dimensions.

Table 8

*Comparative Dimensional Scores for Participants, Mexico, and the United States*

| Dimension | Participant group average score | Mexico country score | United States country score |
|---|---|---|---|
| Individualism | 57 | 30 | 91 |
| Power distance | 38 | 81 | 38 |
| Certainty | 44 | 82 | 46 |
| Achievement | 44 | 69 | 62 |
| Time orientation | 55 | N/A | 29 |

*Note:* From *Culture Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations* (2nd ed.) by G. Hofstede, p. 500. Copyright 2001 by Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Reproduced with permission from the author.

*Individualism*. The individualism score of participants compared to the country dimensional scores for Mexico and United States, suggesting Mexican American women practice bicultural behaviors versus behaviors associated with either acculturation by retaining their Mexican culture as their primary culture or assimilation into American society by placing their Mexican culture second. Participants preferred to embrace both cultures, evidenced by the average scores. Participants' average scores suggested they pursued the interests of their employers when their employers' interests aligned with their own. Participants looked forward to direct feedback that rewarded and recognized individual efforts. Participants valued honesty, challenging work, and the ability to apply their own approach to their work and to express their thoughts. Participants expected to take individual responsibility for their work performance.

*Power distance*. The power distance score for participants was aligned with the United States; therefore, participants perceived greater equality exists among the various societal structures, suggesting a participative orientation and a rejection of Mexico's societal status that places emphasis on wealth, family name, and education (Merrell, 2003). Participants showed evidence of a moderate participative orientation and looked for practical relationships between superiors and subordinates but did respect the need to follow a supervisory chain. The inequality that existed between superior and subordinate depended on role definition only. Participants required a participative decision-making approach, and they valued and expected initiative.

*Certainty*. Participants' average score and the score for the United States were similar on the certainty dimension, supporting a tolerance for ambiguity. Participants' characterized their behaviors as welcoming individuals to think beyond established boundaries, rejecting the status quo, accepting conflict as part of doing business, and remaining flexible with rules for practical reasons (ITAP International, 2007c). Participants preferred an entrepreneurial environment less constricted by organizational bureaucracy. Participants, when faced with such structures, might create a sub-environment that protected them from excessive organizational bureaucracy. Participants also possessed a "just do it" attitude.

*Achievement*. Participants appreciated environments that fostered and supported a positive balance between their work and personal lives. The work environment for participants reflected one of a sense of employment security and cooperative and good working relationships between superiors and subordinates, creating a sense of a secondary family. Participants' quality of life took preference over achieving goals.

Participants were motivated by incentives and benefits that might improve their quality of life. Participants sought compromise when resolving conflict. Participants' preferences for quality of life differed from the scores obtained for Mexico, which focused on goal achievement and success, and participants might be as accused of lacking ambition. The scores for the United States were less pronounced for this dimension but were significantly achievement and goal oriented, unlike the scores of participants.

*Time orientation*. The dimensional score for participants (55) is clearly elevated above the United States dimensional score of 29. The dimensional score for the participants implies that participants have a moderate long-term orientation. Behaviors associated with an individual who prefers a long-term orientation include valuing success for the long term, accepting delayed fulfillment of needs, being careful with resources, investing in lifelong personal networks, and keeping commitments, all of which are characteristics associated with a collectivist society (Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; ITAP, 2007c).

In summary, the null hypotheses were rejected for the following dimensions: individualism, achievement or masculinity, and time orientation. The rejection of the null hypotheses when applied to the dimensional scores for both Mexico and United States deemed the dimensions worthy of further study because the results indicated that participants' responses did not align with either Mexico or United States country scores. The uniqueness of the dimensional scores suggests an area for future study not anticipated at the onset of the study, specifically acculturation versus assimilation. The area could not be addressed in this study because the research design required would be one that favors a cross-cultural study. Dimensional scores for time orientation for Mexico

were not available; for that reason, time orientation was not explored further. The characteristics associated with individualism and achievement constituted the themes explored in the qualitative phase of the research design.

*Qualitative Phase*

A temptation to explore all dimensions existed because each score presented an interesting point to begin expanding the literature on an area where literature is very limited, namely, Mexican American women in leadership roles. Not selecting one or two dimensions would be counter to Hofstede's (2001) suggestion when using the dimensional model as a paradigm. The quantitative phase identified the dimensions that shaped the qualitative phase. Explanations were sought for the differences between the participants' scores for individualism and achievement dimension as the null hypotheses were rejected when applied to both Mexico and the United States' country scores. The time orientation dimension did present as a possible theme but because no country scores were available for Mexico, making a qualitative conclusion on the dimension would be less reliable. The participants also explored self-identified factors that might provide an explanation or source for the rejection of the null hypotheses. The self-identified factors, in some cases, reflected the characteristics showing preferences for individualism, collectivism, goal achievement, and quality of life.

*Individualism dimension*. Interviews with participants, as identified in the quantitative results, suggested acculturation versus assimilation, or the possibility participants were bicultural. Table 9 reflects the characteristics associated with individualists and collectivists.

Table 9

*Individualist and Collectivist Characteristics*

| Individualist | Collectivist |
|---|---|
| Speaks one's mind in an effort to seek a higher truth | Uses participative non-confrontational approach |
| Relationship with employers is a business agreement | Employer and fellow employees is an extension of the family |
| Poor performance is an acceptable reason to terminate an individual | Poor performance not valid reason to terminate an individual |
| Provides direct and swift answers | Provides indirect and unhurried responses |
| Accepts individual approaches to decision-making | Uses a participative approach to decision making |
| Looks for solutions that appeals to one's self-interest | Look for solutions to serve the common interest |

*Note*: Adapted from Hofstede (2001), Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) and ITAP (2007c).

Participants shared the characteristics of both individualism and collectivism equally. Participants identified family and familial relationship as the most important or focal point of their lives, with one participant stating, "Without family and God, you do not have anything." In their work environments, participants demonstrate collectivism through their emphasis on team effort, acceptance of groupthink, empowerment of employees, nurturing relationships, sharing knowledge, and use of a collaborative approach to decision-making and conflict resolution. Participants believe that individuals need to be part of a social environment, working together and making better common goals. The characteristics shared also support an environment that would welcome and thrive under transformational leadership. Transformational leadership requires leaders to

build relationships, effectively communicate, build consensus, and work together for a common purpose (Trinidad & Normore, 2005).

*Achievement dimension*. Achievement is the degree to which an individual concentrates his or her efforts on the task or quality of life and caring for others (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). Traits associated with an achievement orientation include being ambitious, meeting deadlines, responding immediately, going beyond expectations, working under all types of favorable and unfavorable conditions, and enjoying working (ITAP International, 2007a). Traits associated with a quality of life orientation include avoiding self-display, favoring a quality of work-life environment, approaching tasks in a consultative manner, and emphasizing interdependence.

Participants shared a sense of self-accountability, identifying with meeting deadlines, being a person of their word, and hard work, but also valued benefits that provided a work-life balance. Participants listed both achievement and quality of life oriented traits when ranking the five aspects they considered in making career decisions. Participants career and goals were central to their values but not at the sacrifice of family. Quality of life traits were ranked first 70% of the time. Participants, in general, consistently listed family and tangible items such as money, benefits, flexibility, and location. Participants valued loyalty in the work environment more when compared to efficiency, believing efficiency is something that learned, whereas loyalty is an intrinsic quality.

Interviews with participants did not yield a clear extreme toward individualism, collectivism, achievement, or quality of life. The lack of extreme responses supported the

rejection of the null hypotheses. Participants, when asked about the sources of their challenges, more often identified gender and mentoring issues, which aligned with research conducted by Catalyst (2003), a nonprofit organization working with organizations to build and expand opportunities for women. Participants contemplated the challenges they experienced because of culture and ethnicity but could not identify any specific examples, focusing more on the gender-related challenges. A few participants did share that their ethnicity assisted them in gaining access to leadership roles. Once participants gained access to leadership roles, gender-related challenges became more important.

Participants, while not pointing toward specific dimensions, provided insightful perspectives that supported the quantitative results. Participant 4E25-10 stated the following:

> Our society as a whole pushes you towards a goal-centered existence. [This is] evident in professional development, [and] evaluations; all of these things are [standard] in our environment. Each person has to define for themselves as to what their institutions define. The difference in the kind of goals we are talking about, as personal and professional goals, do not always coincide. I separate my personal and professional goals. Gender does influence our goals.

Participant 1R020-18 implied the same:

> Women tend to direct our passion into our work for the purpose of family. We choose our occupations based on things we believe in, we're helping others, it is going to make a difference. Goals focus on quality of life—they intertwine.

The purpose of the qualitative phase was to seek an explanation for the quantitative results. The qualitative phase confirmed the quantitative results but did not support Fox-Genovese's (2001) belief that cultural reasons are at the source of some of the discriminatory challenges experienced by women in the workplace. Participants supported the belief that gender differences are the source of the glass ceiling effect. Participants, throughout the interviews, did not focus on ethnicity or the Mexican culture unless prompted. Even when prompted, participants appeared to have challenges visualizing the influence of ethnicity or the Mexican culture on their leadership opportunities. Participants agreed that cultural factors have influenced their career decisions, but participants did not specifically label their culture as Mexican, American, or Mexican American.

## Implications

Creating a work environment that is inclusive and supportive of a diverse population can influence an organization's success (Lockwood, 2005). Studies exist for addressing diversity among ethnic groups in general, such as Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians; however, within these general groups, ethnic groups exist that, while sharing similar social positions, are so unique that broad studies may not provide an accurate picture. Hispanics are an example of a broad label. The Hispanic label encompasses individuals from a number of races and multiple countries of origin: Puerto Rico, Cuba, Portugal, Spain, Mexico, and countries located on the continent of South America where a dialect of Spanish is spoken (Cafferty & Engstrom, 2003). The cultures share similar characteristics, but also possess distinct differences.

Participants were comfortable and confident with their ethnicity, demonstrating great pride in their history, but clearly communicated that their environments, including their culture, did not define them. Participants wanted to be evaluated based on what they knew and brought to the executive table, not by their ethnicity. One participant stated that her ethnicity opened doors for her and, once inside, her ethnic affiliation was no longer a focal point for the organization. Culture appeared to be more an institutional concern among participants than an individual concern, but this perspective has yet to be researched rigorously.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (Title VII) is a law enacted in 1964 that prevents discrimination against a number of protected classes to include race and country of origin. Asking organizations not to focus on an individual's ethnic or cultural affiliation could create Title VII issues. Not respecting a person's ethnic culture could create grounds for a harassment claim against an organization. It is important that organizations find the balance among respecting a person's culture, the management of a business, and the available human resources. Also important is that diversity programs continue focusing on behaviors of respect and inclusion, include understanding the source of discriminatory behaviors and effects of discrimination on individual's work-related behavior, and address cultural diversity, in general, because often the behaviors exhibited outside of work originated in an individual's personal environment and culture. Individual beliefs and feelings cannot be dismissed either; rather, the beliefs require exploration and understanding. Organizations cannot effectively change behavior until they understand the source of the behavior.

The values espoused by participants supported a transformational leadership style; however, a number of individuals, while they possess transformational leadership skills, did not necessarily know how to apply the skills. Moreover, while reliable and effective leadership training programs are available, the cost of more reputable programs can be prohibitive. Catalyst (2003) as well as the participants noted the limited number of career mentors. Participants shared that much of their success in leadership positions occurred without the help of mentors. It is important that leadership programs a method for encouraging graduates of the programs to mentor prospective leaders are determined and developed. Organizations can pool their mentors and offer mentoring lunches, such as those offered by the European Life Scientists Organizations (2008). Such meetings would provide opportunities to mentor individuals who may not have had the opportunity for mentoring. The pooling of mentors could create a diverse foundation of knowledge, skills, and abilities to which even those who have mentors would not otherwise have access.

## Recommendations for Future Research

Fox-Genovese (2001) suggested that if the glass ceiling existed, the source was not necessarily gender but culture (Fox-Genovese, 2001; Hite, 2007). Hofstede (2001) explored how a person's culture affects his or her work place behavior. This mixed explanatory study explored Fox-Genovese's (2001) assertion using Hofstede's (2001) dimensional model as a paradigm. The mixed explanatory study does not support Fox-Genovese's (2001) assertions. The study also leaves some questions to answer with future research.

*Mexico Country Scores*

Study participants raised the question about the period in which Hofstede (2001) gathered the data to support Mexico's country scores. Study participants expressed concern that the number of women who participated in Hofstede's study may be minimal in comparison to the number of men who participated; and in turn, the results of Hofstede's study may not be an appropriate point of measurement to use for evaluating their responses because of changes in the Mexican culture itself. Study participants believed that role definitions had changed, as perceived by each participant based on her experience.

The time orientation dimension was not included in the country data for Mexico and, based on the average score for participants, time orientation is a dimension requiring further exploration for the study population. Conducting a cross-cultural study inclusive of Mexico would provide data for the time orientation dimension. One option for a future study could evaluate the dimensions using populations from both Mexico and United States, stratifying the sample by gender, generation, and geographic regions. Stratifying the sample study by region would also illuminate levels of assimilation versus acculturation due to Mexico and United States sharing a border. The study could continue to build literature focusing on women of Mexican ancestry living and working in the United States.

*Acculturation versus Assimilation*

The results of the quantitative phase that were explored in the qualitative phase suggest a greater level of assimilation versus acculturation. The result confirmed previous research that suggested member of the Hispanic cultures have been shown to acculturate

rather than assimilate (Dolan, 2004). A future study evaluating the level of assimilation versus acculturation of a population of Mexican ancestry using both generational membership and specific geographical distances from the Mexican border would not only identify populations where cultural factors may influence an individual's behavior more keenly, but also, the influence of the country of origin, namely, Mexico. If the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ were used in the study, the data would provide knowledge about the culture-specific influences in the personal and professional lives of individuals, determining if an influence or disconnect exists from the country of origin.

*Exploring the Differences between Organizational and Individual Perceptions*

The study focused on individual perspectives as opposed to the organizational perspective; the latter emphasis is often the case in studies about diversity. Participants, while acknowledging their ethnic backgrounds, did not credit it for their successes or challenges. One might say that organizations focus on ethnicity and culture, not individuals. This type of assertion requires empirical evaluation. A study evaluating possible differences in the way an organization perceives and approaches cultural diversity as compared to individuals, both male and female, may prove fruitful. The results of such a study could provide the basis for reconciling inconsistencies and ineffective elements of organizational diversity programs.

## Chapter Overview and Summary

Hispanic women held only 0.34% of corporate leadership positions in 2005 (Catalyst, 2005). Various barriers continue to exist, barring advancement in the workplace. Some of the barriers experienced by Mexican American women include access to the networks required for advancement, pay inequities, and perceived abilities

that feed stereotypes that affect working relationships. The lack of distinct correlations between inequalities, gender, and leadership effectiveness led Fox-Genovese (2001) to suggest that cultural factors were at the source of the challenges. The purpose of the study was to assess the influence of Mexican cultural factors on Mexican American women in leadership roles in El Paso County, Texas.

A crucial challenge for the study was the limited literature available that addressed the effects of Mexican cultural factors on Mexican American women in leadership positions. In chapter 2, literature relating to elements of the study were examined, namely, diversity and diversity practices, the Mexican culture, women in leadership, Mexican American culture, and the acculturation of Mexican Americans. In addition, Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions were explored, especially as the dimensions relate to Mexico and the United States. Hofstede's work, which laid the groundwork for the Cultural in the Workplace Questionnaire™, was instrumental for exploring the influence of culture in workplace relations and the focus was on cultures in over 70 countries worldwide (ITIM International, 2007a).

Organizations continue to evolve in the global economy, embracing national, global, cultural, and ethnic identities. In the literature, the estimated Mexican-origin population would comprise approximately one third of the United States population by the year 2100 (Vélez-Ibáñez, 2004). Hofstede (2001), and subsequent replications of his research, suggested a relationship between cultural factors and an individual's behavior in the workplace (Kirkman et al., 2006). A belief exists that individuals of Mexican ancestry tend to acculturate versus assimilate into the United States, which may result in some of the challenges experienced (Dolan, 2004). The mixed explanatory method used

sought to explain the role of Mexican cultural factors in the performance of Mexican American women in leadership roles who work or reside in El Paso County, Texas.

The study used purposive sampling to identify participants for both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study. Participants for the quantitative phase were women of Mexican ancestry who resided or worked in El Paso County, Texas, and were 18 years or older. Participants, for the quantitative phase, had completed the web-based Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™. The quantitative phase predefined the themes for the qualitative phase that explored the dimension of achievement and individualism. The qualitative phase used a smaller sample, a subset of the original sample. The study results provide groundwork for future studies and insight that will assist individual participants in their personal career development and the Mexican American community at large.

Participant scores for the quantitative phase were significantly close to the United States score and the world average, with the exception of the achievement, individualism, and time orientation dimensions. A significant relationship did not exist between participants' average score and the Mexico country score for achievement and individualism, and Mexico did not have a country score for the time orientation dimension. The findings suggested a level of assimilation. The qualitative phase explored the predefined themes in an effort to identify cultural factors that influenced the workplace behaviors of participants. The focus of the participants, despite prompts to focus on ethnicity or culture, was related to gender. While participants agreed that cultural factors challenge them in leadership positions, cultural factors were not decisive nor were the challenges necessarily associated with their ancestral background.

From the study results, it can be inferred that while cultural factors may exist and affect participants' work behaviors, the perception of their existence is on the part of the organization and not the individuals who hold positions of leadership in the organization. Participants based their career decisions on their personal values, but their values were not necessarily associated with their ancestral background. Participants did not denounce or deny their ancestral background and, in fact, spoke proudly about it, but shared that the most basic values, such as family, are universal values and not unique to the Mexican or Hispanic culture. The participants' beliefs do not support Fox-Genovese's (2001) opinion that cultural factors contribute to discriminatory behaviors exhibited in the workplace towards women. The study results encouraged further exploration of the diverse perspectives about cultural factors that affect workplace behavior, especially from employee and organizational perspectives. Participants acknowledged that gender-related beliefs, traits, and behaviors served as the primary source of challenge to women achieving and performing in leadership roles.

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# APPENDIX A: SIGNED PERMISSION TO USE EXISTING SURVEY AND HOFSTEDE'S COUNTRY SCORES


The Atrium 4 Terry PA 18940USA

Tel: 1.215.860.5640 Fax: 1.215.860.5676

itap@itapintl.com

November 26,2007

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to verify that Ms. Monica L.

has permission to use International's Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™ in her doctoral research at the University of Phoenix.

Sincerely,

John W. Bing, Ed.D.
Chairman
Chairman International,

----- Original Message -----
**From:** Hofstede
**To:** 'Monica L. Galante'
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2010 9:31 AM
**Subject:** RE: Request to Use Country Scores in Doctoral Dissertation

Dear Monica, for a non-commercial dissertation you are welcome to include some of our scores, as long as you cite the full source. Good luck, yours Geert Hofstede

**Van:** Monica L. Galante
**Verzonden:** dinsdag 12 januari 2010 16:27
**Aan:** xxxxxx@bart.nl
**Onderwerp:** Request to Use Country Scores in Doctoral Dissertation
**Urgentie:** Hoog

Good Morning Dr. Hofstede:

My name is Monica Galante and I am doctoral candidate with the School of Advanced Studies with the University of Phoenix. My program of study is a Doctorate in Management in Organizational Leadership.

I am requesting permission to use the following figures in my dissertation. I do understand the implications of the country scores but it is not my intent to replicate your study but to use the dimensional model as a paradigm.

I find in searching the literature, little is available as it relates to women in leadership roles, working and living in the United States of Mexican ancestry. Being of Mexican ancestry and living in a community that is 78% Mexican-American, the topic was of great interest to me and was further fueled by an article that suggested the glass-ceiling was a result of culture and not gender. ITAP International has assisted me collecting data using the *Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire (TM)* but I would like to reference the scores. I have read your concerns expressed in *Culture's Consequences* beginning on page 463, but as stated I in no way intend to replicate your study for this particular study but hope to create a starting point in expanding the literature. I am using a mixed explanatory method, using the CWQ2 to help identify dimensions to explore in a qualitative follow-up with the sub-sample. With the growing Hispanic population and the US' projections that Mexican-Americans will become the largest minority group in the near future, creating literature that will assist future researchers and organizations with this particular population is important.

Below is the table of figures in questions that I am considering replicating in my study. Your permission to use these figures will be greatly appreciated.

| | World averages | Mexico | | United States | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Index | Rank | Index | Rank |
| Power distance | 55 | 81 | 5-6 | 40 | 38 |
| Uncertainty avoidance | 43 | 82 | 18 | 46 | 43 |
| Individualism | 50 | 30 | 32 | 91 | 1 |
| Masculinity/femininity | 64 | 69 | 6 | 62 | 15 |
| Long- & short-term orientation | 45 | Not available | Not available | 29 | 27 |

Monica Galante, SPHR, MBA
Doctoral Candidate
University of Phoenix School of Advanced Studies

# APPENDIX B: CULTURE IN THE WORKPLACE QUESTIONNAIRE™

| Number | Questions |
|---|---|
| 1 | The individual who pursues his or her own interest makes the best possible contribution to society as a whole. |
| 2 | The main reason for having a hierarchical structure is so that everyone knows who has authority over whom. |
| 3 | Most organizations would be better off if conflict could be eliminated forever. |
| 4 | When people have failed on the job, it is often their own fault. |
| 5 | Perseverance is the secret of success. |
| 6 | Staying with one employer for a long time is usually the best way to get ahead. |
| 7 | Employees should participate more in decisions made by management. |
| 8 | One can be a good manager without having precise answers to most of the questions that subordinates may raise about their work. |
| 9 | Good personal relationships at work are more important than a high income. |
| 10 | Success is in the lifestyle you can afford. |
| 11 | Individual recognition and rewards are preferable to team recognition and rewards. |
| 12 | An employee should always defer to someone in authority. |
| 13 | A company or organization's rules should not be broken—not even when the employee thinks it is in the company's best interests. |
| 14 | When a manager's career demands it, the family should make sacrifices. |
| 15 | Good government encourages saving. |
| 16 | The employee who quietly does his or her duty is one of the greatest assets of an organization. |
| 17 | It is desirable that management authority can be questioned. |
| 18 | Rules and regulations hinder creativity and innovation. |
| 19 | Competition between employees usually does more harm than good. |
| 20 | You can't run today's business on tomorrow's profits. |
| 21 | The best way to secure the success of an organization is to promote the interests of each employee. |
| 22 | Telling an employee how to accomplish a particular task is more effective than explaining the desired outcomes. |
| 23 | A large corporation is generally a more desirable place to work than a small company. |
| 24 | Competition between employees makes for a better organization. |
| 25 | Building a company's market position is more important than quarterly profits. |
| 26 | The success of the organization is more important than personal achievement. |
| 27 | A good manager doesn't make decisions before consulting with subordinates. |
| 28 | In business, change is generally better than status quo. |
| 29 | A job with better benefits is preferable to a job with a higher salary. |
| 30 | In organizations, short-term results almost always lead to long-term benefits. |
| 31 | When hiring someone, you should only consider their skills and capabilities, not their background and connections. |
| 32 | Most managers are more motivated by obtaining power than by achieving objectives. |
| 33 | An organization structure in which certain subordinates have two bosses should be avoided at all costs. |
| 34 | Winning is most important in both work and games. |
| 35 | In business, it is important to have precedents for most decisions. |
| 36 | It is more important to have challenging work than to have training opportunities to improve or increase my skills |
| 37 | In order to have efficient work relationships, it is often necessary to bypass the hierarchical lines. |
| 38 | Frequent changes in policies and practices are usually harmful. |
| 39 | Those who have been successful on the job should help those who have been less successful. |
| 40 | Profit-based measures such as profit growth and ROI (Return on Investment) are more important in evaluating business performance than measures such as sales growth and customer satisfaction. |
| 41 | In a meeting with colleagues, it is important to express your opinion when it is different from the opinions of others. |
| 42 | It is not acceptable to offer your superior suggestions and solutions to work issues if they have not asked you. |
| 43 | The better managers in a company are usually those who have been with the company the longest time. |
| 44 | Performance will suffer if work life and family life are out of balance. |
| 45 | Patience is important because things will happen when the time is right. |
| 46 | The best organizations are those that are like a large family. |
| 47 | Employees should tell managers their views even if those views challenge those of the manager. |
| 48 | There is value in innovation as long as all contingencies are planned for in advance. |
| 49 | Gaining consensus is more important than decisive action. |
| 50 | What is right and wrong in business depends on the circumstances. |
| 51 | I perform my best work when I am part of a group |
| 52 | The people who are best suited to give advice are those who do the work. |
| 53 | In order to minimize risks, it is important to think through all possible scenarios and outcomes before making a decision. |
| 54 | Exploring issues from a variety of perspectives is more important than hurrying to meet a deadline. |
| 55 | The ability to synthesize different ideas is more important than having the right answer. |
| 56 | It is more important to maintain group harmony than to make quick decisions. |
| 57 | The best employees are those who can accomplish their work with little supervision. |
| 58 | If you want a competent person to do a job properly, it is often best to provide him with very precise instructions on how to do it. |
| 59 | In a job interview, it is better to be modest rather than assertive in stating your accomplishments and qualifications |
| 60 | Consumer spending rather than consumer savings is the engine of a prosperous economy. |

# APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENTS

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

**STUDY TITLE**: The Influence of Cultural Factors on Mexican American Women in Leadership Roles in El Paso County, Texas.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**: In the study, the influence of the Mexican cultural values on Mexican American women's access to and performance in leadership roles in El Paso County, Texas, will be examined. A two-phase design will be used. The results from phase 1 will provide a cultural profile of participants. The cultural profile identifies attitudes and values that may affect participants' interaction in the workplace. The profiles will also be compared to the original data collected by Hofstede (2001) between 1967-1973 in a comprehensive study focused on how values in the workplace are influenced by culture. Phase 2 of the study consists of semi-structured interviews. The follow-up interviews are designed to provide insight into the possible ways that Mexican cultural values may be affecting participants' access to and performance in leadership roles.

**DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION:** The data will be collected in the two phases. ITAP International will facilitate the collection of data in phase 1. The data collected by ITAP International during the first quantitative phase will remain confidential and be used only for aggregate statistical analysis. ITAP International will provide a spreadsheet composite of the data collected. The data collected during phase 2 will use an interview protocol and the participants' identities will be coded. This data will not be released without proper authorization and will be maintained in a locked filing cabinet located in a home office. Access will be limited, and the data will be maintained for 3 years. After 3 years, the audio tapes will be removed from the storage device. Both paper documents and the audio tapes will be shredded. The use of a cross-cutter shredder will prevent the piecing together of either the paper or audio tapes.

**DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANT'S INVOLVEMENT:** The interview questions for phase 2 will be constructed after the results of phase 1 have been evaluated. The questions will focus on the themes identified in phase 1. Participants will also be permitted to share any lived experiences relating to the questions that will facilitate understanding their responses.

**PARTICIPANT RISK:** The risk to participants during phase 2 is minimal and no more than that which an individual is exposed to in the course of his or her daily life.

By signing this form I acknowledge that I understand the nature of the study, the potential risks to me as a participant, and the means by which my identity will be kept confidential. My signature on this form also indicates that I am 18 years or older and that I give my permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in the study described.

_____ _____

Signature Date

_____

Name Printed

# APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL FACTORS ON MEXICAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S ACCESS TO AND PERFORMANCE IN LEADERSHIP ROLES

Reference Code: _____ Interviewer's Name: Monica L. Galante

Participant Name: _____ Date of Interview: _____

Method of Interview:

( ) Face-to-face ( ) Telephone Interview ( ) E-mail ( ) Written

Place of Interview:_____

Opening Script

My name is Monica Galante, and I am conducting a mixed explanatory study about the influence of Mexican cultural factors on Mexican American women in leadership roles. The study will be conducted in two phases. In the first phase, you participated in the completion of the Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire™. You have chosen to participate in the second phase of the study. The questions for the interview are designed to gain understanding of the results obtained in the first phase of the study.

As stated, the questions that follow address the themes elicited from the first phase of the study. If there comes a time when you wish to discontinue the interview, please say so, and further questioning or discussion as it relates to the data will cease. I will ask, at this time, if I can include the data collected to that point or if you wish me to disregard it altogether. To ensure the accuracy of the transcription of the interview, I am requesting to audio record your interview. Do I have your permission? Do you have any questions before we begin?

( ) Participant signed consent to audio tape
( ) Participant signed informed consent agreement

**Demographics:**

1. Are you currently in or do you aspire to be in a leadership position?

   **Response:**

2. Reflecting on your work history, which spans _____ years, how many of those years were you in leadership roles?

   **Response:**

3. Are you 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or later generation Mexican American?

   **Response:**

4. What is the highest level of education you attained? What professional designations or certifications do you hold?

   **Response:**

**The following questions relate directly to the results of the quantitative phase and purpose of this study.**

1. What are the five most important things you take into consideration when making a career decision? How would you rank these?

   **Response:**

   *Background on Achievement Dimension: Achievement is the degree to which an individual concentrates his or her efforts on the task or quality of life and caring for others (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). Individuals with an achievement orientation demonstrate ambition, meet deadlines, respond immediately, go beyond expectations, work under all types of favorable and unfavorable conditions, and enjoy working (ITAP International, 2007a). Individuals who exhibit a quality of life orientation avoid self-display, favor a quality of work-life environment, approach tasks in a consultative manner, and emphasize interdependence (ITAP International, 2007a).*

   *Note: On a scale of 1-100, the lower the score, the stronger the quality of life orientation.*

2. While people in the United States and Mexico have similar scores, 69 and 62 respectively, for the achievement dimension (the degree to which people focus on goal achievement and work or quality of life and caring for others), the average score of those who participated in the survey is significantly lower, even lower than the world average, which is 64. What do you believe is at the source of this significant difference?

   **Response:**

3. On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being to the lowest degree and 10 being the highest degree), to what degree do you personally focus on goal achievement and work?

   **Response:**

4. On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being to the lowest degree and 10 being the highest degree), to what degree do you personally focus on quality of life and caring for others?

**Response:**

5. What trait do you value more, efficiency or loyalty, and why?

**Response:**

6. Explain why you may agree or disagree with the following statement: *Business is business and personal is personal, the two should never mix.*

**Response:**

7. Explain why you may agree or disagree with the following statement: *It is not what you know, but who you know.*

**Response:**

*Background on the individualism dimension: The measure of individualism is the degree to which an individual's action is taken for the advantage of the individual or a group (Hofstede, 2001; ITAP International, 2007a, 2007b). A collectivist society has a tendency to create family-like ties with individuals and maintain close contact with immediate and extended family members, whereas members of an individualistic society do not maintain familial ties (Hofstede, 2001). The following are characteristics associated with members of individualistic and collectivist societies:*

| *Collectivist* | *Individualistic* |
|---|---|
| • *Seeks participative non-confrontational approach* | • *Speaks his or her mind, and confrontation is seen a means to a higher truth* |
| • *Views the organization as an extension of the family* | • *Sees the relationship between the individual and organization as a business agreement* |
| • *Poor performance is not a valid reason for dismissal* | • *Poor performance is a socially acceptable reason for termination* |
| • *Will not provide the direct and quick responses* | • *Provides direct and quick answers* |
| • *Trusts the participative decision-making approach* | • *Accepts individual as opposed participative decisions* |
| • *Looks for solutions or activities that address common and their own interests* | • *More Attracted towards items that appeal to their self-interest than the interest of the group* |

*Note: On a scale of 1-100, the higher the score, the stronger the preference for individual orientation. (ITAP International, 2007c).*

1. The average individualism score for those who participated in the study (50) is significantly above Mexico (30) but below the U.S. score (91). What do you believe might be the reason for the score?

   **Response:**

2. On a scale of 1-10, (with 1 being to the lowest degree and 10 being the highest degree) to what degree do you give preference to belonging to the "we," where individuals are loyal and contribute to the group (family, clan, organization) in exchange for reciprocal group support?

   **Response:**

3. On a scale of 1-10, (with 1 being to the lowest degree and 10 being the highest degree) to what degree do you give preference to the belief that individuals are expected to take care of themselves, their needs, and seek little help from others?

   **Response:**

4. What are five cultural values you recall and still practice in some form today? How do you feel these values influence your professional life?

   **Response:**

5. What do you believe are five personal characteristics that helped you succeed in leadership? How do these characteristics relate to your values?

   **Response:**

6. How do you believe your gender and ethnicity presented challenges in your leadership role or desire to be in a leadership role?

   **Response:**

7. Do you have any comments or thoughts you would like to share at this time?

   Response:

# APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANT E-MAIL SOLICITATION

Hello _____,

My name is Monica Galante. I am a student at the University of Phoenix working on a Doctorate in Management. I am conducting a research study entitled The Influence of Cultural Factors on Mexican American Women in Leadership Roles in El Paso County, Texas. The purpose of the study is to examine the influence of the Mexican cultural values on Mexican American women's access to and performance in leadership roles.

By means of this email, I am inviting you to participate in the study. Your participation will involve responding to a web-based questionnaire hosted by ITAP International, which will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The questionnaire is anonymous, but some basic demographic information such as age, ethnicity, and gender will be collected. The demographic information (age, gender, and ethnicity) collected with the web-based survey will be encrypted. Records, upon completion of the study will be maintained in locked in a file cabinet located in the researcher's home office.

Your participation in the study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used, and your individual results will be maintained in confidence. There are no foreseeable risks to you for participating other than those risks you would be exposed to in daily life.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, the possible benefit of your participation will not only add to the culture-specific literature but also assist organizations as well as individuals to create effective employee development programs and succession plans that are inclusive and supportive of Mexican American women who aspire to or are in leadership roles but guided by cultural factors.

Your completion of the web-based survey will serve as your acknowledgement that you understand the nature of the study, the potential risks to yourself as a participant, and the means by which your identity will be kept confidential. Your completion of the web-based survey also indicates that your are 18 years or older and give your permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in the study described.

I would appreciate it if you could reply to this email to indicate whether you will be able to participate. I will then forward to you another email that will outline the process in further detail. If you know of anyone else who would like to participate, please let me know her name and email address.

Monica Galante, SPHR, MBA
Doctoral Candidate
University of Phoenix School of Advanced Studies

# APPENDIX F: PARTICIPANT E-MAIL SURVEY NOTIFICATION

Hello _____:

I would like to thank you once again for participating in the doctoral research study: The Influence of Cultural Factors on Mexican American Women in Leadership Roles in El Paso County, Texas. The study is part of my pursuit of a Doctorate in Management in Organizational Leadership with the University of Phoenix School of Advanced Studies. The purpose of the research study is to examine the influence of the Mexican cultural values on Mexican American women's access to and performance in leadership positions.

Your participation will involve responding to a web-based questionnaire hosted by ITAP International. You will receive an email shortly, either today or tomorrow, from ITAP International with the specific email address: CWQadmin@itapcwq.com. Please make sure your email security settings permit an email from this address and does not reject it as spam.

The questionnaire is anonymous but some basic demographic information such as age and gender will be collected. You may also be asked to participate in a follow-up interview that would focus on your perspectives, opinions, and lived experiences as it relates to the findings yielded by the web-based questionnaire. If you participate in the follow-up interview, you will be asked prior to the start of the interview to sign a second consent form that will outline the interview protocol and procedure. If you are interested in participating in the follow-up interviews, please contact me at (XXX)-XXX-XXXX or let me know via e-mail response.

Your participation in the study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used and your results will be maintained in confidence. In this research, there are no foreseeable risks to you for participation in web-based survey (phase 1 of the study) or in the follow up interviews (phase 2 of the study), and no harm will occur to any participant other than that which might occur in daily life.

The demographic information collected during the web-based survey will be encrypted. The information generated from the web-based survey cannot be traced back to an individual participant. Should you participate in the second phase of the study, the only identifiable information that will be retained is your name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address. The information will be secured in a locked filing cabinet.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, the possible benefit of your participation will not only add to the culture-specific literature but also assist organizations as well as individuals in creating effective employee development programs and succession plans that are inclusive and supportive of Mexican American women who aspire to or are in leadership roles and guided by cultural factors.

Your completion of the web-based survey will serve as your acknowledgement that you understand the nature of the study, the potential risks to yourself as a participant, and the means by which your identity will be kept confidential. Your completion of the web-based survey also indicates that you are 18 years or older and give your permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in the study described.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me at (XXX)-XXX-XXXX.

Monica Galante, SPHR, MBA
Doctoral Candidate
University of Phoenix School of Advanced Studies