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The Impact of Assertiveness and Religiosity on the Expression of Dissent Among U.S. Immigrant Nigerian Workers

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Abstract

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MPhil, Walden University, 2019

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Scholars have studied dissent in general, but few have focused on the impact of cultural contexts and characteristics on dissent. Literature on the influence of cultural factors on expression of disagreement in organizations, by immigrant Nigerian workers in the US has not received adequate attention. There is therefore a compelling need to bridge this gap. This quantitative nonexperimental correlation study examined the impact of assertiveness and religiosity (variables that may be influenced by culture), on expression of minority dissent among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. The inquiry was based on two theoretical models: Bourhis et al.'s interactive acculturation model on adaptive and acculturative behavior of immigrant workers and Hirschman's exit-voice-loyalty model of employee dissatisfaction. This study examined whether immigrant Nigerians in the United States are assertive and religious and if these cultural characteristics influence their choice of dissent strategy using these models. An online questionnaire based on Kassing's Organizational Dissent Scale, Rathus' Assertiveness scale and Blaine and Crocker's Religious Belief Salience Measure were used to collect data from 58 participants in a multicultural organization in Houston, Texas. Correlational analyses were conducted. The results were mixed. Whereas, assertiveness was found to predict the choice of dissent strategy, no similar significant relationship was found between religiosity and choice of dissent styles among immigrant Nigerian workers in the United States. The findings of this study may be used for positive social change by organizational leaders in the US to achieve a better understanding of the adaptive behavior of immigrant workers in the United States and may aid minority group members' employability, workplace engagement and diversity.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my father, Pa George Azorji, who loved education dearly, and knew the power therefrom. You will forever be missed.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my wife, Yele, for believing in me and for her love and support. To my children for their understanding, patience and sacrifice. To my mother and siblings for sticking with me, and to my friends and colleagues who kept asking, “When will you finish this, your study?!”

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Increasing public scrutiny has added impetus to the need for transparency in organizational leadership and the need to conduct business within ethical standards (Blair, Helland, & Walton, 2017; Newman, Round, Bhattacharya, & Roy, 2017). These needs have been accentuated by recent public disclosures of unethical leadership behaviors in several countries (Blair et al., 2017; Downe, Cowell, & Morgan, 2016). Although societal expectations are that companies and their employees are responsible and ethical, employees' abilities to openly express disagreement regarding unethical behaviors has been sporadic at best (Miska & Mendenhall, 2018; Mowbray, Wilkinson, & Tse, 2015). According to the 2011 U.S. National Business Ethics Survey, an overall weakening of business ethics and an increasing tendency for organizational leaders to retaliate against dissenters are matters of concern (Ethics Resource Center, 2011).

Speaking up against ethical concerns can lead to outcomes such as reprisals and career retardation (Ötken & Cenkci, 2015). As a result, there is a growing tendency for employees to keep quiet when faced with ethical dilemmas (Bashshur & Oc, 2015; Westin, 1986). Research on dissent behavior has shown that even when employees disagree with organizational policies and practices and the moral behavior of leaders, they usually prefer internal and external audiences with no capacity to bring about change to observed problems (Kassing, 2011; Sollitto & Myers, 2015).

Retaining employment is a critical factor in whether employees will openly express dissent (Wang, Lu, & Siu, 2015). As such, employees may express dissatisfaction

with organizational policies more covertly via absenteeism and other withdrawal behaviors. Kassing, Fanelli, and Chakravarthy (2018) found that employees increasingly favor covert forms of dissent expression, such as whistle blowing, as a means of attracting attention to perceived organizational malaise. They may opt to ignore the unethical behaviors altogether (Garner, 2013). Others may take collective actions such as protests (Kassing, 1998; Kassing et al., 2018). Cultural background may influence how dissent is expressed (Day, Grabicke, Schaetzle, & Staubach, 1981). Whether such factors as differences in assertiveness and religiosity may predict the choice of dissent strategies among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States was the focus of this study.

In Chapter 1, I present the study background and purpose. I also present a brief background of the study and the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study. I state the study purpose and describe the nature of the study and its significance. The chapter ends with a summary and transition to Chapter 2.

Background

The U.S. unemployment rate was 5.3% in 2014 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Comparatively, the unemployment rate for African Americans was 9.6%, although it varied significantly by state. These figures represent a 4.3% difference between overall U.S. unemployment rates and unemployment rates among African Americans during the period under review (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). It is known that most minority groups have fewer employment opportunities compared to other groups, even when they are better educated (Zhou, 1993). Specific to the present study's focus, although Nigerian immigrants in the United States were shown to have higher levels of

educational attainment than White Americans (37%, 17%, and 4% of Nigerians in the United States had bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, respectively, compared to 19%, 8%, and 1% of White Americans), high unemployment among U.S. Nigerian immigrants remains of grave concern (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).

According to Adewunmi (2015), Nigerian immigrants in the United States, particularly women, face enormous social, cultural, and psychological challenges. However, Nigerian immigrants in the United States may not be aware of support systems available to support their acculturation experiences and may suffer psychological trauma. The result is that many Nigerian immigrants may not be able to understand how best to maximize their educational and employment potentials, or worse still, not fully engage within organizations in the host environment.

As a conscious acculturation strategy, immigrants consistently evaluate the issues of cultural identity and may alter behavior as a coping mechanism (Driscoll & Torres, 2013). Specific to the present study's focus, immigrants from West African countries frequently choose integration or separation acculturation orientations (Souiden & Ladhari, 2011). According to Souiden and Ladhari (2011), the choice of either of these acculturation strategies is influenced by culture. Day et al. (1981) stated that national culture influences acculturation pattern choice. However, experts disagree about the impact of national culture on several variables that may affect dissent strategy. For instance, Bouda (2015) identified a significant divergence of opinion on whether a national culture can be identified for West African immigrants considering the variations in their colonial experiences. Yet, Hofstede and Hofstede (2001) insisted that

collectivism is the dominant cultural orientation of West African societies. Findings such as these provide a basis for West African immigrants' inclinations to use alternative dissent channels rather than voice their dissent openly and directly (Souiden & Ladhari, 2011). However, what is not known is how Nigerian immigrants might use acculturation as a coping mechanism and whether religiosity and assertiveness, two variables that may be influenced by culture, play a part in their choice of dissent strategy.

Several variables can predict the choice of dissent strategies. Ng and Feldman (2013) identified a link between perceived supervisor embeddedness and employee voice behavior, whereas Brimeyer, Perrucci, and Wadsworth (2010) examined employee levels of commitment and agency (feeling of control) in the workplace. Other researchers have proposed organizational, relational, individual, and even peripheral constructs as triggers for employee dissent. Although culture's role in employee dissent expression has been recognized (Kassing, 1997), there is still a gap in what is known about the impact of certain variables such as assertiveness and religiosity on the choice of dissent expression.

How differences in assertiveness and religiosity levels may predict the choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States was the focus of the present study. The Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS), the Religious Belief Salience Measure (RBSM), and the Organizational Dissent Scale (ODS) were used to examine the identified dissent strategies. This study was needed because unemployment among immigrant Nigerians is a significant problem. Having a solid understanding of this population's adaptive behaviors and coping mechanisms in their host culture is important for employee integration and engagement.

Problem Statement

Research on organizational dissent has gained currency in organizational communication studies (Rebbitt, 2013). It has focused on various aspects of organizational dissent such as the definition and measurement of dissent (Kassing, 1997, 1998), factors influencing dissent (Packer, 2010; Umar & Hassan, 2013), and the impact of dissent on employees and organizations (Ng & Feldman, 2013). Several peripheral constructs related to dissent have also been examined (Kassing, 1998). For instance, Saunders, Sheppard, Knight, and Roth (1992) used the 11-item Supervisor as a Voice Manager Scale to measure how managers support employee voice. An interesting finding from this study was that employees who saw their supervisors as effective voice managers were generally more likely to share their feeling with their direct managers. However, results did not show variations in the choice of voice strategy or which employees were more likely to choose what forms of dissent compared to others (Saunders et al., 1992).

Gorden (1978) used the 45-item Employees' Right Scale to measure how employees perceived their organization's tolerance of employee expression of contrary opinion. The study results showed that although organizations are striving toward being egalitarian, leaders still fear the impact of freedom of speech on conformity, routine, and control, findings similar to those in Curşeu, Schruijer, and Boroş (2012). Although the results from both studies showed that freedom of speech was a significant predictor of dissent, it is not clear how freedom of speech conflates with other organizational and

cultural factors. A lack of operational consistency and variances in validity and reliability scores are common denominators in these studies.

Kassing's ODS offers a multidimensional approach to dissent as a complex behavior process. The original ODS measured dissent behavior and variations in choice of dissent strategies using three dimensions: articulated, antagonistic (latent), and displaced. In one of three studies Kassing reported on in 1998, 347 questionnaires were administered in seven different organizations representing a diverse range of industries, states, and demographics such as manufacturing, public service, marketing, production, and higher education as well as a federal agency. One hundred and ninety-one questionnaires were returned. Results showed alphas for each of the three dimensions of .84, .76, and .71, respectively, and a Kaiser's measure of sampling adequacy of .88. Even with high coefficients such as these, can the ODS offer a uniform approach for measuring dissent across different populations such as minority groups? Researchers have challenged the ODS's use to generalize to non-U.S. populations given its lack of consideration of the impact of cultural contexts (Borsa, Damásio, & Bandeira, 2012).

Although the impact of minority dissent on group performance has been documented, expression of dissent by minority groups tends to be suppressed through socio-affective processes that involve relationship conflict and feelings of social rejection by minority group members (Curşeu et al., 2011). Research has suggested that expressing minority viewpoints can be risky and may result in social rejection (Curşeu et al., 2012). Expressing contrary opinions to group consensus may lead to conflict, therefore providing a disincentive for dissent expression (Mugny & Papastamou, 1982).

Assessing dissent in organizations has engaged the attention of various scholars; however, I found few studies on the impact of cultural contexts and characteristics on dissent. Existing measures of dissent assessment lack general applicability, especially to minority groups, given their lack of focus on cultural perspectives (Borsa et al., 2012). As a result, research on immigrant workers in general, and on Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States in particular, has been scant (Bouda, 2015).

In the present study, I examined the impact of assertiveness and religiosity, two variables that might be influenced by culture, on the choice of dissent strategies by minority groups. Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States were used as a test case. Among several other characteristics influenced by culture, Aluaigbe (2013) found that religion is important to Nigerians and plays a crucial role in determining patterns of individual and collective behavior in organizations. Ogbaa (2003) found that Nigerian workers, both in Nigeria and in other countries, have assertive personality and communication styles arising from the cultural nuances of the Nigerian society. According to Wood and Mallinckrodt (1990), assertiveness connotes the ability to freely and honestly express one's feeling through socially appropriate means while taking the needs of others into consideration. Wood and Mallinckrodt stated that assertive personality must be distinguished from aggressiveness, which usually involves hostility, coercion, and neglecting others' needs and feelings.

What is not known is whether assertiveness and religiosity predict certain dissent strategies among immigrant Nigerian workers' expressions of contrary opinions to group consensus in organizations. Specifically, I examined the question of whether choice of

dissent strategies by Nigerian immigrant workers reflects the notion of cultural appropriateness as an acculturation process and to what extent choice of dissent strategy is predicted by variables such as assertiveness and religiosity, which may be influenced by culture.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the impact of assertiveness and religiosity, variables that may be influenced by culture, on the expression of minority dissent among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. I investigated whether assertiveness and religiosity predict forms of dissent strategies. My goal was to understand the impact of these variables on the ability of minority groups to express contrary opinions in intergroup relationships in a dominant host culture. Specifically, I examined whether Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States are assertive and religious and if these variables, which may be influenced by culture, predicted variations in their choice of dissent strategy.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following questions and hypotheses guided this study:

RQ1: Do assertiveness levels predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States?

$H1_0$: Assertiveness levels do not predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

$H1_a$: Assertiveness levels do predict choice of dissent strategy among immigrant Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

RQ2: Do feelings of religiosity predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States?

$H2_0$: Feelings of religiosity do not predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

$H2_a$: Feelings of religiosity do predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

The overall null hypothesis for this study was that assertiveness and religiosity levels do not predict choice of various forms of dissent strategies among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. The alternative hypothesis for this study was that assertiveness and religiosity levels do predict choice of various forms of dissent strategies among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. Study variables were measured using the RAS, the RBSM, and the ODS. These measures are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Theoretical Framework

Research on employee dissent has been influenced by several theoretical orientations that explain the nature of inquiry into organizational processes. For instance, Pauksztat, Steglich, and Wittek (2011) stated that dissent and voice studies have focused on the antecedents of dissent expression. Considerable research has focused on the attributes of either speakers or recipients while neglecting the dyadic character of employee dissent. The acculturation behaviors of immigrant workers have been studied through a variety of perspectives. While some scholars have treated immigrant adaptive behavior as decidedly unidirectional (Ngo, 2008), determined by the compelling need to

assimilate the dominant culture, other scholars have viewed the acculturation process of immigrant workers as an exchange (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997; Ngo, 2008); an interplay between the cultural characteristics of immigrant workers and those of the host culture.

Bourhis, Barrette, El-Geledi, and Schmidt (2009) posited that examining the interactive nature of exchange between immigrants and host cultures is an important dimension to understanding immigrant acculturation behavior. Adopting a social psychological orientation, Bourhis et al. espoused the interactive acculturation model (IAM) as a vehicle for understanding the adaptive and acculturative behavior of immigrant workers in key organizational processes, including expression of contrary opinions to widely held norms. Among the central themes of this framework is that acculturation behaviors of immigrant workers can be better understood as relational intergroup relationships between immigrants and their host cultures. Interactive acculturation therefore provides a veritable lens for understanding Hirschman's (1970) exit-voice-loyalty (EVL) model of employee dissatisfaction as a theoretical basis for examining employee choice of dissent strategies in organizations.

The EVL model is a framework for understanding the variations in expressed dissent (Kassing, 1997). The model's central tenet focuses on employee behavior when faced with dissatisfaction in an organization (Bourhis et al., 1997). The model posits that the employee must assess how best to provide feedback and that this determination may involve choosing from among various dissent strategies (Bashshur & Oc, 2015).

Hirschman (1970) held that employees sensing dissatisfaction in an organization is a prelude to either voicing dissent or exiting.

According to the model, an employee's degree of loyalty (correlated to employee involvement), moderates the voice or exit decision (Morrison, 2011). Employees with higher levels of involvement (loyalty) are said to be likely to use voice as a means of constructively changing the situation (Morrison, 2011). On the other hand, employees with lower levels of loyalty are said to be more likely to seek exit strategies such as withdrawal, absenteeism, or quitting (Farrell, 1983).

Seen from an interactive acculturation perspective, understanding immigrant workers' expressions of contrary opinion to mainstream policies and leadership behavior in an organization necessitates exploring the exchange between the immigrant culture's characteristics and the dominant host culture as an intergroup relationship rather than the host culture's singular impact on immigrants. Further, it is necessary to understand how cultural factors among immigrant workers predict the choice of dissent strategies and the meaning of loyalty from the cultural prism of these employees (Ngo, 2008).

The IAM and the EVL were used in the current study to explore the adaptive behaviors of Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. Specifically, the models provided the theoretical lens for understanding variations in employee choice of strategies when expressing dissatisfaction with organizational policies and practices. The models were particularly useful given the cultural variations between the general U.S. population and Nigerian immigrant workers. The models also provided the means to understand how Nigerian immigrant workers choose normative options for adaptation

(see Ng & Feldman, 2013). In addition, the models helped to explain the extent to which culture and the influence variables of religiosity and assertiveness may predict choice of dissent strategies compared to other predictor variables in the general U.S. employee population. The theories relate and apply to various patterns of worker response in organizations. These theories are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

Quantitative nonexperimental survey design was adopted for this study. This design was appropriate because a quantitative description of the attitudes and opinions of Nigerian immigrant workers through examining a sample of the population could be achieved through this method (see Reio, 2016). Results from examining the sample's opinions were used to generalize about the dissent behavior of Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States by drawing inferences from the questionnaire responses. Furthermore, conducting a survey was a suitable approach for this study because it is less expensive, less time consuming, and easier to administer (Reio, 2016).

Nigerians represent the largest population of African immigrants in United States, with the majority living in Texas, California, New York, Maryland, and Virginia. (Immigration Policy Center, 2012). A nonprobability convenience sample was used in the present study. The data for this study were collected from individuals living in Texas, given the predominance of the Nigerian immigrant population in this state. Participants were recruited from a Nigerian multicultural organization in Houston, Texas. Specifically, the study sample was drawn from Nigerian immigrant workers after careful

consideration of criteria such as minimum number of years living in the United States and age (only participants 18 years of age or older were selected).

G* power was used to estimate an adequate sample size and power. Based on an effect size of .15, $\alpha = .05$, and power = .95, a sample size of 107 or more was determined sufficient for generalizing study results to the Nigerian immigrant worker population in the United States. Thereafter, I explored if variables such as religiosity and assertiveness, which may be influenced by culture, predict forms of dissent strategies in this population and if Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States choose similar or different dissent strategies than individuals in the general U.S. population. Additionally, I examined if gender and age predict differences in the frequencies of choice of dissent styles in the Nigerian immigrant employee population in the United States.

Definitions

The RAS, RBMS, and ODS authors have provided various definitions for the variables in their tests. These definitions are included in the descriptions of these tests in Chapter 3. In addition to their definitions of the variables of assertiveness, religiosity, and dissent, these variables have been operationally defined in various studies. For the purpose of this study, I provide the following definitions:

- The antagonistic (latent) dissent strategy involves dissenters voicing disagreement in an organization to people who may not have the capacity to bring about the desired change; for example, peers and subordinates (Kassing, 1997).

- Assertiveness is operationally defined as “behavior which enables a person to act in his own best interest, stand up for himself without undue anxiety, to express his rights without destroying the rights of others” (Alberti & Emmons, 1976, p. 2).
- Displaced dissent involves voicing employee disagreement to people outside the organization who have no capacity to bring about change, such as family members and friends (Kassing, 1997).
- Religiosity has been indexed by several approaches, including measures of affiliation, denomination, behavioral measures such as frequency of attendance, or more personal measures such as the importance one places on religion (King & Crowther, 2004).
- Upward dissent describes an employee’s choice of expressing disagreement internally to a superior in order to find a solution to a perceived organizational condition (Kassing, 1997).

Assumptions

Survey research methods are premised on the assumption that respondents will truthfully provide answers that reflect their unique conditions. This research approach affords easy and cost-efficient means to access information from respondents (Fowler, 2013). However, it also presents some risks. Among several ways of reducing the risk of false declarations and increasing participant confidence, the questionnaires must be concise, direct, and easily worded in order to reduce response bias and increase response rate. In addition, participant data confidentiality and anonymity must be guaranteed as

outlined in the informed consent form. Also, participants must be ensured ease of exit from the study at any time (Krosnick, 1999).

For the present study, it was assumed that participants would offer true responses to the questionnaire. Close-ended questions were used to improve response rates. Another assumption in this study related to sampling. Given that it would be impossible to collect data from every member of the Nigerian immigrant population in the United States, a portion of this population was selected through nonprobability convenience sampling. It was assumed that this sample represented the population. Lastly, it was assumed that higher or lower scores on the scales would represent higher or lower frequencies of the various scales. For example, it was assumed that higher scores on the ODS's upward dissent dimension represented greater choice of upward dissent. This would not be completely true if respondents decided to skip questions they felt reflected socially undesirable beliefs or actions.

Scope and Delimitations

This study hinged on identified gaps in the existing literature. As a result, only very limited and specific dimensions of the research problem were examined. Specifically, the research problem related to scant literature on the impact of certain variables influenced by culture, such as assertiveness and religiosity, on the choice of dissent strategy among Nigerians immigrant workers in the United States. Although U.S. minority groups have been well studied, there has been little research exists on the adaptive behaviors of Nigerian immigrants in the United States. I sought to explore if Nigerian immigrant workers' dissent strategy choices reflect the notion of cultural

appropriateness as an acculturation process and to what extent choice of dissent strategy is predicted by variables such as assertiveness and religiosity.

According to existing research, based on influences of gender, national culture, and ethnicity, African American women are more assertive than African American men in the United States (Parham, Lewis, Fretwell, Irwin, & Schrimsher, 2015). This finding represents an interesting dimension and suggests further exploration given that males are traditionally expected to be more assertive than women in the culture of origin. I specifically examined if Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States are more or less assertive and religious. I also focused on gender's possible influence on the relationship between assertiveness and religiosity and choice of dissent strategy.

The study sample consisted of members of a Nigerian multicultural organization in Houston, Texas. Inclusion criteria were age 18 years or older and legal residency in the United States. The sample was recruited through several engagements with the organization's executive committee during which I sought approval to attend the o's monthly general meetings. In the general meetings, I approached members and solicited their interest to participate in the study by completing a questionnaire in print or online form. As a corollary, exclusion criteria included nonmembers of the association, individuals younger than age 18 years, and nonlegal residents.

This study's generalizability could have been affected by the sampling procedure and choice of location. For instance, Houston's educational and economic conditions compared to other U.S. cities influenced the choice of the study setting. The residency criterion may have affected the sample size as well as the study results. Survey responses

from individuals who were unemployed or who were nonlegal residents may have differed from those who were employed and legal residents. The environment was not controlled, and no laboratory was used in this study. It was assumed that the results would be representative and could be generalized to the larger population of Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. The study population is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Limitations

Difficulty in recruiting participants may have limited this study's validity. Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States are spread across all 50 states. Finding a platform from which to draw a representative sample limited the ability to make adequate inferences and generalization to the larger Nigerian immigrant worker population in the United States. Secondly, choosing just two variables (assertiveness and religiosity) could not possibly represent the large cultural variations in this population and could have precluded other confounding cultural factors.

Significance

By examining the impact of cultural contexts on dissent behavior in a specific minority group, the study results provided useful insights into patterns of acculturation behavior among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. As Borsa et al. (2012) noted, existing assessments of dissent behavior in minority groups have not incorporated different cultural contexts in understanding dissent strategy choices. The present study's results therefore extended the scant knowledge on organizational dissent behavior of Nigerian immigrant workers. Second, a greater understanding of the impact of variables

that may influence the choice of dissent strategies was a useful addition to what is known about the acculturation behavior of Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

Results from this study may help organizational leaders address issues related to organizational leadership, human resource management, employee coaching, and organizational culture, especially in multicultural organizations. I hoped that by focusing on Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States, the study results could provide better understanding of the adaptive behavior of immigrant groups in the United States. Specifically, the study results could provide organizational leaders better understanding of Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States and therefore improve individual employability through better understanding of the influencing factors of assertiveness and religiosity. Ultimately, the results could help to address continuing underemployment of minorities, specifically Nigerian immigrants, in the United States.

Summary

Unemployment remains a significant issue for Nigerian immigrants in the United States (Smith & Fernandez, 2017). Therefore, examining this population's acculturative behaviors in their host culture is crucial. Specifically, greater understanding of the relationship between assertiveness and religiosity (variables that may be influenced by culture) and choice of dissent expression is warranted. I detailed the present study's key elements in Chapter 1, including the main research problem; methodology; and study assumptions, scope, and limitations. In Chapter 2, I review and synthesize the literature used to inform this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Organizational leaders are increasingly interested in transforming their organizations into open and ethical entities (Huang & Paterson, 2017; Nayır, Rehg, & Asa, 2018). The prevailing view is that these leaders are generally interested in the impact of employees' voice and their abilities to openly critique corporate policies as a potent force for growth (Kaptein, 2011; Ötken & Cenkci, 2015; Rebbitt, 2013). Although the impact of minority dissent on performance outcomes has been documented, researchers have found that expression of dissent by minority groups tends to be suppressed through socio-affective processes (Curşeu et al., 2012; Curşeu & ten Brink, 2016). Abundant evidence suggests that expressing minority viewpoints can be risky and may result in social rejection (Curşeu et al., 2012; Ritov & Baron, 1992), therefore resulting in the use of various dissent options. Organizational dissent researchers have paid scant attention to the adaptive behavior of immigrants as minority groups and how certain variables, such as differences in levels of assertiveness and religiosity, predict the ability to hold and express contrary views and how these variables may influence the dissent strategies immigrants use.

Specific to the present study's focus, it is not known how Nigerian immigrants use acculturation as coping mechanism and whether religiosity and assertiveness play a part in the choice of dissent strategy. This information gap formed my objective to examine the impact of cultural contexts on Nigerian immigrant workers' choices of dissent options and if these choices could be explained using an interactive acculturation

model. Specifically, I investigated if variations in levels of assertiveness and religiosity (as a reflection of culture) among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States predicted their choice of dissent strategies. I also sought to answer whether their dissent strategy choices related to their age and gender. Through this investigation, I hoped to fill the gap in knowledge of how Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States respond to organizational conditions and how they express their disagreement regarding policies, rules, and processes they do not agree with.

The following chapter has three main sections. The first section is an overview of the literature search strategy. In the second section, I focus on the theories that have influenced research on organizational dissent and acculturative behavior of minority groups and specifically on immigrant populations. Lastly, the third section is a broad review of dissent as a growing organizational phenomenon. In this section, I present an overview of the various perspectives on dissent and explore various aspects of the concepts that have engaged the attention of scholars, including the utilitarian contexts, definitions, and assessments of triggering factors of minority dissent. I also explain the broader issues related to acculturation orientations of Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States and the cultural characteristics of the immigrant Nigerian population. I close with a summary on assertiveness and religiosity as a reflection of the culture of Nigerian immigrants and Nigerians in general, a discussion of the study implications, and an identification of gaps in the existing research suggesting further study.

Literature Search Strategy

Delineating the relationship between the key variables in the existing research was my first task in this review. Therefore, I focused on various combinations of cultural characteristics such as assertiveness and religiosity and immigrant dissent behavior. I also explored various nuances of immigrant adaptive and acculturative behaviors in the extant literature.

I focused my search on studies related to acculturation, minority dissent, organizational dissent, and cultural characteristics of Nigerian immigrants in the United States. Given that research on organizational dissent and immigrant behavior touches on several disciplines, a broader search for articles by topic, subject areas, and various databases was adopted. As a result, I used the following databases: PsycINFO, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, and SocINDEX with Full Text. I used several combinations of key words and concepts to perform the search: immigrants, customs, cultural characteristics, religion, assertion, assertiveness, dissent, and disagreement. The search produced several articles, most of which were not suitable for the current study. For instance, articles that were written in other languages other than English and for which translations were not available were dropped. In addition, I specifically limited the search to articles published between 2013 and 2018. However, in some instances, the date range was expanded to include other relevant articles published prior to 2013 to increase the number and range of articles available for review.

Furthermore, due in part to the dearth of current and up-to-date peer-reviewed articles on acculturation behavior of Nigerian immigrants in the United States, I used

other scholarly websites and databases such as Google Scholar to search for articles. I reviewed several resources from abstracts and references in several articles, which formed the basis for further searches of relevant studies.

In general, I found few studies that directly related to the impact of cultural characteristics on the expression of dissent among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. Although studies on minority and organizational dissent are resulting in a growing body of literature, research on cultural contexts as they relate to dissent expression remains relatively scant.

Theoretical Foundation

Research on organizational dissent has evoked varied perspectives and definitions. Ötken and Cenkci (2015) posited that dissent is a specific form of employee voice and represents the ability of employees to express disagreement or hold contrary opinions about organizations. Adopting a similar position, Croucher, Parrott, Zeng, and Gomez (2014) clarified that organizational dissent must be expressed to someone, defined by Kassing (1997) as a recipient. Kassing (2008) defined organizational dissent as holding opposing views against organizational practices, policies and commonly held norms. Although Garner (2013) shared the notion that expressing disagreement is a defining theme of organizational dissent, scholars have tended to concentrate on the employee dissenter without a corresponding focus on other actors, such as the recipients of dissent, in this important organizational process. I next discuss the two models of employee dissent that were used as the theoretical basis for the present study.

Exit–Voice–Loyalty Model of Employee Dissatisfaction

Among the earliest theories that explained employee response to organizational situations, especially when employees are faced with dissatisfaction with organizational policies, is the EVL, propounded by Hirschman in 1970. As posited by Hirschman, when confronted with a dissatisfactory situation in a workplace, and/or when employees do not agree with organizational policies, they must consciously review the conditions and make rational decisions on a probable course of action (Sexsmith, 2016).

The EVL has been adopted as a veritable framework for explaining several other organizational processes such as participative leadership, job insecurity, unemployment (Berntson, Näswall, & Sverke, 2010), and dissent expression (Kassing et al., 2018), among others. The model provides a theoretical lens for understanding several variations of employee dissent. According to the model, when employees experience dissatisfaction with organizational policies and practices, they must choose from a range of possible options of expression. Hirschman (1970) argued that employees vary in the manner they experience dissatisfaction. Specifically, when confronted with a dissatisfactory condition, employees may choose between leaving an organization (the exit strategy) and staying, which may provide them the opportunity to voice observed concerns (the voice strategy). Hirschman noted that the exit strategy reflects an employee's effort to avoid a dissatisfactory situation by leaving an organization. On the other hand, choice of voice involves an employee electing to stay in an organization in order to correct the perceived dissatisfactory situation (Sexsmith, 2016).

According to Hirschman (1970), the level of an employee's loyalty to an organization moderates the choice between exiting and staying. Specifically, employees low in organizational loyalty are said to more likely choose the exit strategy compared to employees with higher levels of loyalty, who are more likely to choose the voice option (Sexsmith, 2016). Related to employee loyalty and work engagement is the concept of intention to leave, which has been shown to be a strong indicator of the exit strategy. Researchers have argued an association between employee turnover and intention to leave (Kassing, Piemonte, Gorman, & Mitchell, 2012). Results of a study by Kassing et al. (2012) showed several variations in the relationship between intention to leave and expressed dissent. According to Kassing et al.'s results, there is a positive relationship between expression of dissent to nonmanagement and peers and intention to leave.

Building on the EVL theory, Graham and Keeley (1992) found that the exit strategy is dichotomous and involves either leaving or staying whereas the voice strategy usually involves several iterations from which an employee may choose. The variability of the voice choice therefore requires that employees weigh the various courses of action and possible consequences of each choice. A limitation in Graham and Keeley's research is that they did not provide other possible factors that an employee may consider when faced with a discomforting situation other than the passive choice of exiting the organization or continuing to stay in the organization.

Providing further elucidation on the voice option, Farrell (1983) stated that the neglect factor is an important element of the EVL model. According to Farrell, the neglect dimension signals various passive forms of organizational decline such as

tardiness and sabotage that may manifest in organizational behavior. Farrell therefore conceived a more complex and multidimensional approach that views voice as a constructive response to employees' perceived dissatisfaction with organizational conditions and policies.

Further development of the EVL model followed Farrell and Rusbult's (1992) assertion that the model can be better understood from the perspective of destructive/constructive and active/passive dialectics as underlying employee expression and response to dissatisfactory organizational conditions. The modified EVL model (EVLN, with the N reflecting neglect) therefore provides the following possible configurations: (a) voice/loyalty equals to constructive behavior (b) exit/neglect equals to destructive behavior, (c) exit/voice equals to active behavior, and (d) loyalty/neglect equals to passive behavior. According to Kassing (2011), extant research has presented dissent only as an active voice. Kassing held that employees essentially express disagreement as active members of an organization who are desirous of positively altering the conditions that they disagree with. As a corollary, employees may exit an organization as an active form of expressing dissent but with no desire to correct the organizational conditions that resulted in the organizational malaise.

Kassing (1997) used the EVLN model and argued that dissent not only involves the voice but may also include the exit and neglect factors. According to Kassing's extended model, employees may choose the exit strategy as a process of ameliorating a dissatisfactory organizational situation. In some cases, the employees may opt for the neglect strategy, which further downgrades the unsavory organizational condition.

Kassing classified the two circumstances as active–destructive and passive–destructive behaviors, respectively; categorizations Hirschman (1970) had warned do not stimulate recuperative mechanisms compared to voice. Another distinctive character of Kassing's addition to the EVL model is that contrary to earlier scholars who treated the active–constructive, active–destructive, and passive–destructive behavior as isolated behavior choices, Kassing found that, in several instances, employees may concurrently display variations or combinations of the scheme.

As previously stated, although the EVL has provided a useful lens on several organizational processes, I found little research in which this model was used to study immigrants and their adaptive behavior. Among the very few studies in which the model was used is Sexsmith (2016), who studied undocumented Mexican and Guatemalan migrant farm workers in New York dairies. Sexsmith used the EVL to explore patterns of expression of dissatisfaction regarding organizational conditions among undocumented Mexican and Guatemalan immigrants. Sexsmith argued that, with no institutional structures to address grievances, undocumented immigrants resorted to a variety of individual adaptive behaviors including entrapment, constrained loyalty, exit, and voice.

Sexsmith (2016) provided useful insights on how the EVL can explain the adaptive behavior of immigrants. However, her study was limited to a specific population of interest: undocumented Mexican and Guatemalan immigrants in New York dairies. She also did not specifically examine the impact of culture on the dissent behavior of documented immigrants.

Interactive Acculturation Model

Acculturation relates to the coming together of people of different cultures and backgrounds. As stated by Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936), acculturation defines the complex set of processes that results from the ongoing interactions between people from different cultures and variations that result in the cultural characteristics of not just the immigrants but also in the members of the host culture. The perspective that host cultures are impacted by the acculturation process represents the interactive acculturation paradigm and contrasts with the earlier posture of unidirectional view of acculturation (Berry, 2005; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987). For instance, Berry (2005) argued that acculturation studies should focus mainly on the cultural mix's impact on immigrant groups and the impact of host cultures on immigrants' ensuing behavioral patterns.

Berry (2005) held that two key dimensions are critical to understanding immigrant acculturation behavior. First, cultural adaption is the degree to which immigrants may be willing to adapt to and blend into the host culture. Second is cultural maintenance, which refers to the extent immigrants that wish to retain the essential cultural characteristics of their native culture in the dominant society (Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010). Berry found that cultural maintenance requires that immigrants keep a link to their community and foster intragroup relations with members of the same cultural society. Some of the ways immigrants do this include formation and alliance to cultural organizations and attending town meetings, churches or mosques, which indicate a strong attachment to cultural ties. Based on the two dimensions, Berry postulated four discernible cultural orientations:

- Integration, which involves immigrants retaining aspects of both origin and host cultures.
- Marginalization, in which immigrants elect to discard aspects of both the origin and host cultures and develop an entirely new mode of behavior.
- Assimilation, involving the outright abandonment of immigrants' origin cultures in preference to the host culture, which they adopt as a new way of life.
- Separation, which Bourhis et al. (2009) defined as when immigrants reject some elements of the host culture while maintaining aspects of their culture of origin.

To illustrate, Souiden and Ladhari (2011) found that immigrants from West African countries frequently choose integration or separation acculturation orientations. According to their study results, culture influences the choice of either of these acculturation strategies. Their results paralleled those from earlier research such as Day et al. (1981), who also found that national cultures influenced acculturation pattern choice. Bouda (2015) stated that there is a significant divergence of opinions on whether a national culture is identifiable for West African immigrants considering the variations in their colonial experiences. Hofstede and Hofstede (2001) insisted that collectivism is the dominant cultural orientation of West African societies. This finding provides a basis for West African immigrants' inclinations to use alternative dissent channels for open and direct voicing (Souiden & Ladhari, 2011).

Specifically, the hallmark of earlier acculturation theories was the focus on the impact of host cultures on immigrants and the emergent immigrant behavior patterns. The theories viewed the impact as unidirectional, to the extent that any effect of the interaction on the host culture was excluded (Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010). In these theories, immigrants are seen only from the prism of their reactions to the dominant cultures of the host society and are therefore incapable of affecting the host culture. Most proponents of the unidirectional approach deny immigrants any agency in the interaction between the two cultures, arguing that immigrant cultures are merely subsumed into the host culture's overarching dominance.

As an acculturation theory, the IAM specifically faults this assertion and holds that immigrant cultures may impact host cultures in the course of their interactions (Bourhis et al., 2009). Bourhis et al. (2009) argued that acculturation is not a unidirectional phenomenon but rather an interactive process. Their study results showed that acculturation involves interaction between immigrant cultures and host cultures and can be better understood by examining different acculturation orientations in the host group as well as in the immigrant population. In contrast to the unidirectional model, proponents of the IAM argue that different actors in the acculturation exchange can and do hold varying acculturation orientations, including the extent to which immigrants would want to integrate into the host culture and the degree to which the host group expects immigrants to retain their original culture in the host cultural exchange (Sam, Jasinskaja-Lahti, Horenczyk, & Vedder, 2013).

As posited by Bourhis et al. (2009), the IAM's central theme is that members of the host culture also hold acculturation orientations, just like immigrants. The IAM contrasts with earlier theories that argued that only immigrants hold acculturation orientations. According to the Bourhis et al.'s results, members of the host culture not only develop expectations of the behavior required of immigrants but also set mental boundaries regarding how much immigrants can practice their culture in the host culture.

The IAM has been adopted in research on several organizational phenomena, such as intergroup work–relations quality (Schalk & Curşeu, 2010), organizational diversity (Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010), acculturation behavior of immigrant workers (Berry, 2005) and the impact of organizational assimilation on employee dissent strategies (Goldman & Myers, 2015).

Although I found no studies that directly used acculturation theories in exploring the dissent behavior of immigrants in general and Nigerian immigrants living in the United States in particular, these theories can be useful for explaining the general behavior of immigrant workers in the United States given its indications on the impact of culture on the acculturation preferences immigrants make at a group level (Ward, Fox, Wilson, Stuart, & Kus, 2010)

For instance, using the IAM, Oerlemans and Peeters (2010) found that the degree of discordance between immigrant and host group acculturation orientations relates to and defines how intergroup work relations are impacted. In their study on Dutch employees and non-Western immigrant workers, Oerlemans and Peeters found that "higher discordance in preferred acculturation orientations between host community and

immigrant workers related to a poorer quality of intergroup work-relations" (p. 463). Though Oerlemans and Peeters's work is useful for understanding the gap in literature on non-Western populations, it is specific to Dutch immigrants. The impact of acculturation as a predictor of intergroup attitudes may be better understood from the perceived discrepancies in the acculturation orientations between the minority and dominant groups in a complex work environment (Sam et al., 2013). As a corollary, acculturation may provide a lucid understanding of the choice of dissent strategies as an intergroup work behavior.

Similarly, Christ, Asbrock, Dhont, Pettigrew, and Wagner (2013) used the IAM to examine the relationship between intergroup climate and immigrant acculturation preferences. The results showed that a negative intergroup climate was significantly related to a strong inclination of immigrants to choose cultural maintenance (an inclination toward cultural identity) relative to other acculturation orientations (see Vedder & van Geel, 2017). Christ et al.'s results resonate with similar findings suggesting that, at the individual level, conditions in the host environment, especially attitudes, significantly contribute to choice of acculturation options by immigrants and influence immigrant behavior (Green & Staerklé, 2013; Ward et al., 2010; Ward & Geeraert, 2016).

Christ et al.'s (2013) study was a significant effort to extend the scant literature on immigrants. The study was conducted in Germany and adopted a cross-sectional survey on respondents from the German host group and on various other immigrant groups. However, the small sample size did not allow the researchers to provide a deeper

differentiation between different immigrant groups. Other scholars had argued that demographic properties such as gender, age, and social status in addition to several other psychosocial factors predict acculturation choices at the individual level (Kassing et al., 2012). Christ et al. therefore provided further evidence that cultural variables determine immigrant acculturation preferences at the group level. Yet, whether demographic factors and other individual predictors act with cultural variables to predict the degree to which immigrants may desire cultural maintenance or adaption and integration requires further elucidation.

Organizational Dissent

Growth in the numbers of organizations worldwide has resulted in increasingly diverse workforces and accentuated the need for recognizing varying shades of opinions. The ability of employees to speak up and express views about organizational issues and problems has become an important indicator for organizational learning, conflict resolution, and improvement (Hirschman, 1970; Morrison, 2011; Pauksztat et al., 2011). For instance, Shahinpoor and Matt (2007) presented a case for a categorization of employee dissent and argued that "principled dissent" represents a constructive feedback mechanism for organizations through the ability and conscientious determination of employees to challenge existing conditions and bring about change. Employees' abilities to express contrary opinions have therefore remained a crucial aspect in the definition of dissent in general and in organizations in particular.

Among several early definitions of dissent, Hegstrom (1990) conceptualized dissent to mean a verbal expression of contrary viewpoints about an organization's

policies, norms, and cultures. Specifically, dissent implies the ability of an employee or group to verbally disagree with an ongoing consensus. As posited by Kassing (2008) and other scholars, dissent involves holding contrary and divergent opinions on current organizational conditions. The notion of verbal expression is underlain by the earlier categorization of dissent as an active medium through which employees express dissatisfaction with organizational situations. Even though other passive forms of dissent, such as exit, have been incorporated in recent studies, the voice component continues to dominate dissent literature (Garner, 2013; Redmond, Jameson, & Binder, 2016).

According to proponents of the active voice of dissent, verbal expression of disagreement regarding current organizational processes provides a veritable source of employee engagement while also enabling them to negotiate roles and become more active members of the workspace (Payne, 2014). Payne (2014) argued that as a form of effective employee communicative vehicle, expression of contrary opinion or what Kassing (1997) described as "feeling apart from one's organization" (p. 312) positively affects employees' overall job satisfaction (Lutgen-Sandvik, Riforgiate, & Fletcher, 2011) and general workplace conditions.

Supporting this frame of research, Rebbitt (2013) held that organizations can use employee expression of dissatisfaction with organizational policies to increase safety in organizations and improve organizational culture in unexpected ways. In a way, employees who can express their views and hold contradictory positions to mainstream organizational posture help to unravel latent organizational conditions that could rob organizations of constructive ideas.

At the individual employee level, employee dissent has also been characterized as a self-serving mechanism through which individuals seek survival in organizations and as a process for advancing self-interest (Alford, 2001). Examples of this mechanism include how dissent may be experienced and expressed in performance appraisals and in disciplinary, hiring, and promotion/demotion processes. Using dissent as an adaptation has been noted as crucial to immigrant employees' coping mechanisms and provides a social context for the acculturation orientation of immigrant workers in the ever-changing and increasingly diverse cultural workspace (Brown & Zagefka, 2011). Hegstrom (1990) argued against the distinction between personal and social utility of dissent and instead viewed an employee's decision to dissent as a culmination of personal and social interests that provides the basis for behavior. In a more recent goal–conflict model of dissent behavior, Packer, Fujita, and Chasteen (2014) found that employee dissent does in fact relate to conflictual conditions between what they referred to as shorter-term group stability and longer-term group change needs.

For the present study's purpose, organizational dissent was limited to the vocal expression of disagreement by an employee to conditions in an organization that the employee finds unsatisfactory. The vocal dimension finds expression in various ways and may be directed to recipients in or outside of organizations.

The literature reviewed here demonstrates the utility of the vocal dimension of the expression of disagreement as a central theme in the dissent discourse. Although none of these researchers directly examined dissent from a cultural perspective, these studies were relevant to the current study to the extent that they helped me to extend what is

known about minority expression of dissent and, importantly, helped to illuminate the impact of culture on different variables that may predict dissent behavior. The findings from these studies show the utility in encouraging divergence of ideas in the context of a culturally diverse workforce. They also underscore the need to incorporate culture's impact in understanding choice of dissent strategies among immigrants and in minority groups in general.

The Nature of Organizational Dissent

Extant research has demonstrated the utility of employees holding divergent opinions in today's organizations. Even so, holding and expressing contrary views in some organizations can be risky (Kassing, 1997; Payne, 2014). Garner (2013) found that difficulties in openly expressing dissent might be related to the employees' inabilities to correctly gauge their supervisors' reactions to such behavior. Garner argued that the expression of dissent by employees is usually affected by how they perceive their supervisors' reactions, especially based on past experiences.

Viewed against the backdrop of the utilitarian value of organizational dissent, organizations are probably likely to welcome dissent as a crucial aspect of employee agency and engagement. However, the available research does not consistently support this assertion. According to Payne (2014), while on the one hand some organizations welcome and encourage employees to openly express dissatisfaction through various forums, other organizations frown at and even punish employees for expressing dissent.

An underlying characteristic of organizational dissent, however, is that it must be expressed to someone (Kassing, 1997). In other words, expression of disagreement may

be to an authority figure with the power to effectively bring about the desired change (described as upward dissent by Kassing, 1997). In some cases, employees may opt to demonstrate disagreement to coworkers (antagonistic/latent) or to people or groups outside the organization (displaced dissent). In addition, actions such as whistle blowing represent other forms of dissent and may include reporting a perceived organizational wrongdoing to public authorities that the dissenter believes can bring about sanctions to the wrongdoer (Zhuang, Thomas, & Miller, 2005).

Though essentially characterized by the same basic elements, Croucher et al. (2014) described variations of employee dissent as upward (similar to Kassing's articulated dissent), lateral (similar to antagonistic), and displaced dissent as ways of drawing attention to the various forms and choices employees make when faced with dissatisfying conditions at work. In each of these forms of expression, the dissenter reflects either an exit or voice strategy (Redmond et al., 2015). In line with earlier findings from Hirschman (1970), Redmond et al. (2015) stated that employees who feel dissatisfied with organizational policies may choose to exit from the organization, express perceived unsavory situation through either of the various forms of dissent previously noted, or elect to remain silent and not express dissent.

Not surprisingly, earlier researchers on organizational dissent tended to focus on the dissenter and choice of dissent strategy, with little or no attention on the recipients of dissent (Pauksztat et al., 2011). Pauksztat et al. (2011) argued that employee dissent is a dyadic process, involving the speaker and a recipient. Further, employee dissent is a communicative process with the speaker providing the initial basis for the interactive

process. Employees sensing organizational conditions may opt to communicate to their supervisors, coworkers or subordinates. When confronted with such organizational situations, employees not only have to decide whether to speak up or not but also must decide where to channel the disagreement (Detert & Treviño, 2010; Pauksztat et al., 2011).

Therefore, extant studies on employee dissent have focused on the speaker and the antecedents to dissent, with recent research paying only scant attention to the crucial role of other actors in the dissent process (and the interplay between them), in coconstructing dissent (Garner, 2013). For instance, Pauksztat et al. (2011) adopted a relational model and argued that the characteristics of the dissenter, recipients, and the speaker–recipient dyad are crucial in understanding employee expression of disagreement in the workplace. As earlier found by Detert and Treviño (2010), addressing organizational problems, including reducing the risks associated with speaking up, is impacted by who the dissenters express their dissatisfaction to. Researchers have argued that the more a recipient can deal with the problems a speaker identifies, and the lower the recipient's disposition to sanctioning dissenters, the more effective the dissent process would be (Detert & Treviño, 2010). Employees may be more disposed to speak up when they can freely access supervisors they perceive can bring about the desired solution than to supervisors who lack the ability to resolve the identified problem and who are more likely to invoke punishment for dissenters (Pauksztat et al., 2011).

Organizational Dissent: An Interactive Process

The dissent process's interactive nature is now recognized (Garner, 2013). Garner (2013) argued that dissent goes beyond the discrete behavior of individuals or groups involved in the process and instead involves an interactive process that includes the various iterations of the individuals or groups and the consequences of these iterations. Simply stated, recipients of dissent are not passive but instead active participants in changing the dissent process through an integrative feedback mechanism (Garner, 2013). Previous research did not recognize the important roles other actors play in shaping effective expression of disagreement and in harnessing its crucial benefits for employees and organizations (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2011; Ng & Feldman, 2012).

Expressing contrary views on organizational policies is a process (Garner, 2013). Garner (2013) found that organizational dissent as a process incorporates complex causal relationships that emanate from the interactions between dissenters and recipients, shaped by the past experiences of both actors and the probability for future action. In other words, dissent is not only about the actions of individuals in the dissent process but includes the experiences of all actors in the past and how future behavior is impacted. This process requires an understanding of the causes and effects of the social relations, including the organizational structures that incorporate who speaks, to whom, and about which organizational processes (Pauksztat et al., 2011).

Relational Nature of Organizational Dissent

The process approach ties with the relational approach to dissent and underscores an important perspective in understanding employee expression of disagreement. Packer

et al. (2014) stated that dissent can be a group behavior, contrary to previous views on dissent as an individual and personal activity. Packer et al.'s position supports a proposition by Cleveland, Rojas-Méndez, Laroche, and Papadopoulos (2016) that when viewed from an intergroup perspective, dissent is an expression of ethnocentric estrangement between two groups: a dominant subgroup and other less powerful subgroups. According to this line of thought, the ability of subgroups to survive largely depends on their capacity to adapt through reducing estrangement between them.

Reducing estrangement can be difficult (LeVine & Campbell, 1972). This is because expressing disagreement can be risky in organizations. Whereas organizational leaders may see expression of dissent as an affront to their authority, dissenters may be at a loss on how best to express disagreement, to whom, and for what organizational conditions. In other words, reducing estrangement may be difficult and requires developing greater capacities for dealing with contrary viewpoints.

Findings from recent studies in which social identity theories were used have challenged the position that group identification mediates how other factors impact dissention in a group. Packer (2010) found that collective identification did not moderate the effect of personality on group members' willingness to differ from group norms. Packer's results showed that social identity and personality usually can and do operate independently in determining whether group members agree with the group's established rules.

Packer and Chasteen (2010) agreed that strong identification with group norms can motivate group members to dissent, provided that members construe such behavior as

beneficial to the group. The results of their study on the impact of social identification showed that other factors are necessary to enhance group member expression of divergent opinions. These factors include the ability to generate, articulate and hold an alternative perspective on an issue and the drive to express an alternative perspective given the risks involved in dissent expression (Bang & Frith, 2017; Packer & Chasteen, 2010).

Further regarding the intergroup perspective on employee responses to organizational conditions, research on depersonalization has added a crucial element to the dissent discourse as a group process. Bennett and Sani (2008) stated that a critical aspect of depersonalization relates to changes in self-concept. The results of their study showed that when individuals identify with a significant social group, there is an inclination to perceive oneself as reflecting more group characteristics and fewer personal traits. Packer et al. (2014) challenged the assertions of depersonalization theorists as eroding individual agency and an individual's ability to make decisions when faced with organizational situations. Packer et al. argued for an enlarged theory that incorporates motivational factors with changes in self-conception for understanding the assimilative process related to depersonalization.

Packer et al. (2014) used a goal–conflict model to explore the motivational dynamics of dissent decisions and found significant differences between strong and weak identifiers and construal levels. The study sample was 47 students (mean age 20 years) who were attending the University of Toronto. Hierarchical regression analysis was used to examine the interaction between construal levels and identification with group norms. The results showed that strong group identifiers dissented more from group norms than

weak identifiers did at higher construal levels. A notable element in Packer et al.'s findings is that people who strongly identify with a group are more likely to exercise personal agency, can act based on personal appraisal of group norms vis-à-vis the conditions at hand, and can make conscious decisions to deviate when such decisions would serve the group better (see also Reicher, Haslam, & Smith, 2012).

Packer et al.'s (2014) results represent a major contribution to the multilevel approach in studying organizational dissent (Parham et al., 2015). The results underscore the importance of considering individual and other contextual factors to better understand the intricate motivational dynamics that trigger individuals in groups to act in a given way. The results showed that neither construal levels nor identification produced main effects on individual motivation to express disagreement of interest. While this was a study of students, not employees, Packer et al.'s findings are useful for examining the effect of culture on agency in a social group.

Scholars have studied the effect of self-control on individuals' perceptions of the world around them. They have argued that individuals at higher construal levels have the capacity to overlook short-term group and individual objectives in favor of broader long-term group goals (Malkoc, Zauberman, & Bettman, 2010). However, it is still not known how a group's social position and the intricate relationships involved in these relationships impact construal-level thinking, dissent behavior, and group outcomes.

Minority Dissent

How minority dissent affects group and organizational-level outcomes has been well studied (Curşeu et al., 2012). Earlier studies on minority dissent date to the work of

Janis (1972), who demonstrated the disadvantages of excessive convergence and agreement on group decisions (groupthink), especially during the nascent stages of decision-making. Following the classic work on groupthink, Nemeth, Brown, and Rogers (2001) stated that groups that encourage using the "devil's advocate" are more likely to make better decisions.

Relative to decision-making, minorities with group members willing and capable of expressing contrary opinions produce higher-quality decisions because they are better able to influence the way the group as a whole approaches decision-making through better information processing (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). Groups that encourage divergent thinking and opinions are more likely to have dissonance in their group processes, which can lead to more detailed assessment of the group's objectives and better consideration of varied perspectives (Matz & Wood, 2005).

The argument on the notion of improved group performance through minority influence on group decision-making has not been a monolith. Butera, Darnon, and Mugny (2011) argued that dissent in groups does not always lead to better performance given the incessant conflicts and argumentation during decision-making that may undermine concentration on group tasks. Contrary to Kenworthy, Hewstone, Levine, Martin, and Willis's (2008) earlier findings, Butera et al. noted that argumentative individuals who reflect minority membership in groups could sway teams from their initial objectives, which may result in overconcentration on issues pertinent to the minority members but with limited relevance to group tasks. Kenworthy et al. showed that individual dissenters assigned to numerical minority groups produced more original

ideas through their ability to advocate their positions than individuals assigned to numerical majority groups. Clearly, minority dissent can influence majority positions on team decisions. However, minority dissent's effectiveness depends on the majority members' capacities to consider alternative perspectives and other team processes (de Dreu, 2010).

The impact of minority influence on decision-making and group outcomes is also believed to improve group cognition. Curşeu, Schalk, and Schruijer (2010) found group cognitive complexity a prime ingredient for superior group performance, especially in complex and high cognitive activities. Curşeu, Schalk, et al.'s (2010) results lent credence to further developments in teamwork quality (Curşeu, Kenis, Raab, & Brandes, 2010) in general and improved group outcomes in particular (Curşeu et al., 2012).

It is known that minority group members' abilities to express contrary opinions is instrumental to the search for more data and information by the larger group membership and promotes detailed reviews of various perspectives before arriving at decisions (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014; Schulz-Hardt, Jochims, & Frey, 2002). Nemeth et al. (2001) also argued that the search for and consideration of varied alternatives in perspectives improved the quality of group decision-making through creative information processing.

Results from recent studies on group cognition have shown that the cognition of majority group members is impacted when the views of minority members are encouraged and harnessed. Curşeu et al. (2012) found that during decision-making, groups are better able to process information when they consider minority member views and are willing to reduce opposition to such views and the negative consequences of

dissonance. In particular, Curşeu et al. found that groups that lost dissenters as a result of dissonance had the highest levels of cognitive complexity. In the same vein, groups in which minority dissenters do not leave had the lowest level of cognitive complexity.

Researchers have argued that minority dissent's effects on several group outcomes may be indirect and are usually mediated by other organizational and group processes. For instance, de Dreu (2010) found that the top management's disposition mediated the impact of minority dissent on innovation. Other factors such as reflexivity (de Dreu, 2010; Konradt, Schippers, Garbers, & Steenfatt, 2015), organizational climate (Iqbal, 2008), and transformational leadership (Nijstad, Berger-Selman, & de Dreu, 2014) have been found to positively mediate the impact of minority dissent on organizational outcomes. Specifically, Nijstad et al. (2014) found that transformational leadership provided a vehicle for employee expression of disagreement and helped to stimulate team innovation. According to their study results, transformational leadership provided a veritable psychological environment that encouraged employee expression and searching for alternative perspectives, which in turn produced innovative ideas and solutions for team performance.

The review of literature so far on minority dissent, although not directly related to the cultural dimension of employee expression of disagreement, demonstrates the complexity of the dissent process and, specifically, the importance of group members' abilities to innovate, which is a vital element for group and individual survival. As shown by the results of Curşeu et al.'s (2012) study, the ability of the minority members in a group to express disagreement improves group creativity and problem-solving behaviors.

Curşeu et al.'s study sample was 161 students from a Romanian university. A study limitation is that Curşeu et al. did not extensively examine the motivational dynamics responsible for the ability to express dissent beyond controlling for the influence of confederates on cognitive mapping. It is not known how other factors such as group culture influenced the willingness to dissent among study participants. Yet, this study's results are useful additions to non-U.S. data and what is known about minority dissent in general.

Variables Influenced by Culture and Impact on Dissent

Few researchers have examined the role of culture (defined as a people's way of life) on organizations. Organizational scholars have focused specifically on culture and other organizational dimensions such as cultural diversity and innovation (McLeod & Lobel, 1992) and decision-making (Ely, Padavic, & Thomas, 2012) among others. Literature on culture's impact on organizational dissent remains scant. Because of the limited recent research on culture and organizational dissent, older seminal studies in this subject area are also discussed in this section. Among the few researchers who have focused on this subject, Oerlemans and Peeters (2010) argued the importance of understanding the role of culture in work outcomes, given the transformation of modern-day organizations into vastly diverse cultural entities. Results of earlier studies on the effects of cultural characteristics on organizational performance have been mixed and even confusing. For example, whereas McLeod and Lobel (1992) found very positive and significant relationships between workplace cultural diversity and enhanced work

group creativity, Ely et al. (2012) found that cultural diversity negatively affected workplace relationships.

Scholars have examined the effects of people of diverse cultures coming to live together, or acculturation. Redfield et al. (1936) stated that "Acculturation comprehends those phenomena, which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (p. 149). Following from Redfield et al., findings from acculturation studies using the IAM have demonstrated two types of outcomes emerging from this contact. On the one hand, Bourhis et al. (1997) found that consensual relations can emerge from a concordance between the acculturation orientations of the dominant host group and immigrant group orientations. This can occur where, for instance, both groups favor assimilation or integration as a preferred acculturation strategy. On the other hand, problematic relations can ensue where there is discordance between the groups' acculturation orientations.

Adopting the IAM, Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, Horenczyk, and Schmitz (2003) found that variations between immigrant and host group orientations produced more discrimination for the immigrants than in situations where there was concordance in orientations. Jasinskaja-Lahti et al.'s results supported earlier research by Zagefka and Brown (2002), who found that differences in orientation preferences between the two groups produced increased feelings of in-group bias among immigrants, resulting in perceptions of lower intergroup relations with the host group.

At the contextual level, a negative intergroup climate can relate to a need for cultural maintenance among immigrants (Christ et al., 2013). In general, studies on workplace freedom of speech have demonstrated a stronger linkage between organizations that promote freedom of speech and a tendency for open dissent and argumentation (Croucher et al., 2014; Gorden & Infante, 1991). Garner (2013) found that employees in organizations perceived to promote freedom of speech reported higher levels of organizational commitment, engagement, and involvement, resulting in a higher propensity for their openly expressing disagreement.

Jasinskaja-Lahti et al.'s (2003) study sample was 570 individuals from the former Soviet Union residing in Finland, Germany, and Israel. As such, the findings provided useful insights on populations other than that in the United States, which has remained the dominant population of interest. The samples were drawn from secondary school students ages 12–20 years and showed demographic variations between the different countries studied as demonstrated in results from one-way analysis of variance and Chi square tests. These findings were useful additions to what is known about immigrant populations and were therefore relevant to the present study.

Existing literature on organizational climate and the nexus between freedom of speech and employee ability to express dissent is skewed in favor of U.S. populations. Very little research has been conducted with non-U.S. populations. For instance, Croucher et al. (2009), using a comparative study, showed that Indians systematically preferred latent and displaced forms of dissent expression compared to Americans, who more frequently chose upward dissent strategies. Croucher et al.'s seminal work was

another useful addition to research on populations outside of the United States. Its findings regarding in-group perceptions of bias and discrimination provide a fertile ground to argue for at least an indirect effect on dissent behavior.

Assertiveness as a Variable Influenced by Culture

Differences in national cultures and even in host cultural orientation affect conversation styles and may impact choice of dissent strategies. Cultural differences can define how group members relate to and perceive workplace freedom of speech and willingness to dissent (Croucher et al., 2014). Research on conversation styles has tended to adopt cross-cultural and comparative approaches and have led linking national cultures to ways of speaking. For instance, House (2006) showed that Britons and Germans are more direct in conversational style compared to the French and Americans. Similarly, Croucher et al. (2014) demonstrated that directness in conversational style leads to more willingness to discuss content in conversations. Directness in conversation has been ascribed to assertiveness, which relates to a broader psychosocial attribute of national cultures.

Very few researchers have directly studied assertiveness as a cultural dimension of national cultures (Parham et al., 2015). Recent researchers have found significant relationships between key cultural classifications such as collectivistic/individualistic cultures and minority dissent behaviors. In particular, Curşeu and ten Brink (2016) found a negative relationship between collectivistic cultures and willingness to express disagreement and vice versa. Group norms in collectivistic cultures require group members to consider to group's goals and interests when speaking openly and directly.

Alberti and Emmons (1976) conceptualized assertiveness to mean "behavior which enables a person to act in his own best interest, stand up for himself without undue anxiety, to express his rights without destroying the rights of others" (p. 2). Based on this definition, assertiveness and the ability to speak up openly seem to have a direct relationship with a conversational style that promotes the ability to address organizational issues in a direct and factual manner. Culture's effects on assertiveness and group members' abilities to ask questions, explore organizational conditions, and openly critique conditions they do not agree with has been the focus of recent research (Curşeu & ten Brink, 2016). Parham et al. (2015) found significant variations in assertiveness levels among group members from individualistic or collectivistic cultures. It is expected that members of individualistic cultures will be more assertive than those from collectivistic cultures (Hofstede, 1980a).

Parham et al. (2015) administered the 30-item Rathus Assertiveness Schedule to 231 undergraduate students at four universities, three in the United States and one in Vietnam. Data analysis included Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric tests, factor analysis, and reliability tests. The results showed that White American men perceived themselves as most assertive, followed closely by African American females. Parham et al. recognized their using an older instrument (the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule [RAS], developed in the 1970s) as a fundamental study limitation. However, this study also has several strengths. Parham et al. provided insights into current issues in assertiveness studies as a key component of cultural dimensions. Secondly, the researchers offered a better understanding of assertiveness as a communication skill, especially within the purview of

increasingly diverse workspaces. Finally, the study results helped to broaden the examination of minority dissent and underscored the importance of understanding other cultural attributes.

Religiosity and Assertiveness as Cultural Variables Among Nigerian Immigrants in the United States

Research on African immigrants in general, and on Nigerians in particular, in the United States is scant (Bouda, 2015). Even less attention has been paid to dissent behavior of Nigerian immigrants in the United States as an important minority group (Abla, 2012). According to Abla (2012), limited research on immigrants of African descent in the United States stems from a tendency for researchers to confuse the African population with literature on Blacks in the United States in general. What is more, the literature that does exist on African immigrants has tended to treat African populations as a monolith. For instance, Bouda (2015) studied organizational dissent behavior among sub-Saharan Africans in the United States and found that the dissent methods they used were not predicted by perceptions of White racial superiority. Yet, Bouda did not provide any concrete validation of the factors that directly instigate such behavior or any cultural imperatives worthy of further exploration.

Other scholars had recognized cultural variations among African immigrants. Bleich (2005) noted varied colonial experiences of several African societies as the result of different colonial policies adopted by the British and French colonizers. These experiences have given rise to discernible cultural, demographic, and educational characteristics worthy of attention.

Among several variables that may be influenced by culture, Nigerians are said to be religious (Aluaigba, 2013). Paralleling a 2004 BBC survey that found Nigerians as the world's most religious people, Aluaigba (2013) found religion to be a central driver in most behaviors of Nigerians. Though Aluaigba's assertions tend to be at variance with the postulations of earlier theorists like Weber and Karl Marx on the decline of religion as capitalism and rational thinking deepened in society, support for Aluaigba's findings are supported by Huntington's (1996) comment that in the modern world, religion is the central force that motivates and mobilizes people. Berger (2011) similarly argued that religion, rather than being on the decline, is experiencing a resurgence because of the impact of modernization, which has produced individuals who are psychologically adrift and culturally dislocated.

Asubiaro and Fatusi (2014) advised a more circumspect view of religiosity's impact on Nigerians. The results of their study on religiosity's protective effects on sexual initiation among adolescent Nigerians showed the effect of generalizing the impact of religion on personal and group behavior of Nigerians, especially those living in other social environments. Asubiaro and Fatusi's study was based on self-administered questionnaires collected from 1,350 in-school adolescents in Nigeria. Study results showed a positive correlation between religiosity and sexual behavior, especially sexual debut). Although these two studies on religiosity did not directly link to dissent behavior per se, they were useful in informing my exploration of culturally determined religiosity of Nigerians. They also suggested how such behaviors may impact cultural variations in actions such as expressing disagreement of socially predominant conditions in a host

cultural environment such as the United States (for further discussion, see Barnett, Bass, & Brown, 1996).

Ogbaa (2003) found that Nigerians, including those living in the United States, America) are assertive. Ogba posited that as a cultural factor, assertiveness is related to the ability of individuals to freely express opinion but with due consideration for the feelings of others. Later findings from Kammrath and Dweck (2006) agreed with Ogbaa regarding responses to dissatisfaction in close relationships. Kammrath and Dweck's study findings showed a very small positive association between assertiveness and loyalty; however, how assertiveness correlates to various forms of dissent expression is not clear from their discussion of findings, reflecting a gap in the knowledge of how variables such as assertiveness and religiosity can influence and predict choice of dissent strategies.

In a seminal study, Arigbabu, Oladipo, and Owolabi-Gabriel (2011) studied the impact of gender, marital status, and religious affiliation on assertiveness levels among preservice science teachers in western Nigeria. The study authors administered the RAS to 367 preservice science teachers ages 17–53 years. The study results did not show any significant differences in assertiveness levels when all factors were considered. Arigbabu et al.'s results contradicted earlier findings of Eskin (2003) and Hersen, Eisler, and Miller (1973), which showed significant differences in assertiveness levels between men and women. They also contradict later findings from Parham et al.'s (2014) study on the influences of gender, national culture, and ethnicity on assertiveness, which showed, among other things, that African American women were more assertive than male

African Americans in the United States. Parham et al.'s finding represents an interesting dimension and requires further validation, given that, as Eskin (2003) noted, in the culture of origin, males are traditionally expected to be more assertive than women. What is not known is how host culture acculturation orientation may have affected Parham et al.'s findings.

An important confounding factor in Arigbabu et al.'s (2010) study may have been exposure to higher education, which might have instigated changes in cultural beliefs and reductions in gender bias. Feingold (1994) argued that cultural values learned through socialization promoted cultural traditions to ensure that males are generally more assertive than females. Supporting cultural and subcultural impact on conversational styles, Hofstede (1980a) argued that individual differences in assertiveness surveys show strong linkages to whether the individual is from an individualistic or collective culture. As this relates to the present study, countries such as the United States that are individualistic are expected to support assertiveness compared to collectivistic cultures such as Nigeria.

Researchers have argued that cultural norms influence group members' willingness to ask questions, openly challenge widely held positions, express contrary opinions, and directly seek information (Ashton et al., 2003). Therefore, it does seem that the ability of individuals to express dissent through various forms may reflect differences in assertiveness levels.

Dissent Styles and Predictors

What triggers employees' decisions to take a position against those of their superiors despite the risk involved in such a behavior? When employees decide to disagree, what factors account for the dissent styles they choose or how they present the disagreement? Among the early researchers who explored the subject of dissent styles and predictive factors of choice of dissent strategy, Alford (2001) stated that dissent is essentially a consequence of self-interest. According to this line of thought, expressing contrary opinion may be a survival technique, one that results from an overarching need to meet one's personal interests. Similarly, Ewalt (2001) argued that dissent, as a product of personal interest, may reflect a faulty socialization process. In sum, it is the dissenter's self-interest that drives the choice of dissent strategy.

In contrast, Rebbitt (2013) posited that the expression of disagreement and choice of dissent style may be consequences of social consciousness. Expression of contrary views may involve choosing between ethics and the greater good of a group. Researchers in this school of thought hold that employees or group members consistently weigh personal interests against common good and are more likely to express alternative perspectives, through the most appropriate dissent style, if such expression serves the greater good (Rebbitt, 2013). However, Hegstrom (1999) earlier argued against the distinction between personal and social factors, noting that personal and social interests culminate to form the basis for dissent decisions.

Studies on employee dissent behavior have focused on three key factors that influence how disagreements over organizational policies or practices are expressed.

Kassing (1997) stated that dissent expression is a multifaceted and complex organizational process that may be triggered by individual, relational, and organizational factors. In other words, dissent approaches may be influenced by prevailing individual, relational, or organizational conditions. I discuss each condition in more detail next.

Individual Factors and Dissent Styles

Individual factors that influence dissent styles include personal traits, personality characteristics (Ötken & Cenkci, 2015), and personality variables such as openness to experience and conscientiousness (Packer, 2010). Ötken and Cenkci (2015) found that personality traits account for variations in organizational dissent levels. Ötken and Cenkci's study was based on a convenience sample of 527 Turkish participants, who completed questionnaires. The researchers used a multilevel approach that integrated personal and group-level factors in analyzing individual predictive factors and expression of dissent. Their study results demonstrated three levels of dissent options. First, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience significantly relate to variances in levels of upward dissent. Second, extraversion and emotional stability account for variations in the levels of displaced dissent. Finally, emotional stability predicts latent dissent levels.

To further clarify their findings, Ötken and Cenkci (2015) stated that when employees have high levels of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience, they are more likely to express disagreement directly to superiors and organizational leaders they believe have the capacity to address the observed conditions. On the other hand, employees who have high levels of extraversion and emotional

stability frequently choose to express disagreement to peers and even subordinates in the organization. A cardinal factor in this mode of expression is that the employees fear retribution and may not have confidence in the superiors' abilities to correct the observed conditions without repercussion to the dissenter (Kassing, 2008).

Ötken and Cenkci (2015) noted that individual and personality characteristics do not act alone in accounting for variations in levels of dissent form. According to their study results, the relationship between personality and dissent expression is moderated by organizational climate. However, Bryan and Vinchur (2012) argued that, as has been proven by personality theorists, a keen insight into organizational behavior relates to individual differences in personality. As earlier theorized by Kassing (2008), considering that dissent is an individual and personalized act, individuals appraise their personal ability to articulate on organizational issues, in addition to social and organizational conditions before choosing a dissent strategy. Therefore, understanding employee dissent behaviors requires an understanding of their personality characteristics at work.

Similarly, the results of Packer's (2010) study on individual influencing factors on dissent involving individuals in a group context showed two key elements that influence an employee's decision to express contrary opinion and mode of expression. First, the employee must have the ability to form and articulate alternative views on issues. Second, the employee must possess the necessary motivation to express these alternative perspectives (see also Morton, Postmes, & Jetten, 2007). What is not clear, however, are which factors affect or influence the capacity to form alternative perspectives and correspondingly affect the motivation to express dissent (Packer, 2010). The normative

conflict model provides some insight. According to the model, variations in levels of group identification determine the levels of incentive for employees to express alternative viewpoints.

Although research on social identification has consistently shown that strong identifiers with group norms are less likely to deviate from the group or hold contrary opinions, Packer and Chasteen (2010) showed that when group norms are generally perceived by strong identifiers as detrimental to the overall good of the group, they are more likely to deviate from and form alternative perspectives than weaker identifiers. Identifying with a group follows from the broader process of depersonalization, which involves individual members of a group who share similar social categorization transitioning from an individualistic interest to a collective one, one which the individuals perceive as overarching and under which their personal interests are subsumed (Terry & Hogg, 1996). Packer (2010) stated that it is inconceivable that these behavioral codes would include every possible shade of behavior even though groups generate behavioral prototypes that guide the conduct of group identifiers. According to Packer, it is probable that individuals can and do formulate personal behavior patterns while adhering to group norms.

Organizational Factors and Dissent Styles

Organizational factors relate to how employees perceive their organizations and how they are treated by organizational leaders (Kassing et al., 2018). To facilitate employee feedback, employees evaluate the organizational climates that their leaders create. Accordingly, communication processes that encourage expression of

dissatisfaction and divergent views on organizational policies, procedures, and programs promote employee involvement, engagement, and overall job satisfaction (Kassing, 2011).

At the heart of the literature on the impact of organizational characteristics on employee behavior is organizational climate, which Reichers and Schneider (1990) defined as "shared perception of organizational policies, practices, and procedures" (p. 11). Supporting this line of thought, Nystrom (1990) posited that organizational climate comprises the feelings, attitudes, and behavioral tendencies that characterize organizational life. Therefore, organizational climate is an essential determinant of employee behavior and provides employees a mental compass for what is organizationally acceptable.

Kheng, June, and Mahmood (2013) studied the influence of climate on employee innovative behavior and found that coworkers' perceptions provided the impetus for creative solutions to organizational problems (see also Carnevale, Huang, Crede, Harms, & Uhl-Bien, 2017) and highlighted what actions are espoused or discouraged in an organization. Kheng et al.'s results showed that climate spurs employee innovation regarding new ways of doing things, including the willingness to suggest different ways of acting, and to a large extent determines to whom disagreement will be expressed.

Kassing (2006) found that feelings regarding freedom of speech in an organization were significantly linked to employee choice of upward dissent. The results of Kassing's study on employee expression of upward dissent and relationship to past work experiences showed that employees seem to act based on their perceptions and

evaluations of previous organizational leadership's response to previous employee actions. Employees are likely to reenact a behavior if the organization allows and encourages an action more than when an action is treated negatively. Similar to Gorden and Infante's (1991) study findings, Kassing found that organizations that provided opportunities and were receptive to argumentation and diverse opinions measured significantly higher on a measure of workplace freedom of speech. Similarly, employees in organizations that favor higher participative decision-making and provide opportunities for freer communication have reported higher levels of work satisfaction, organizational identification, and engagement (Blader, Patil, & Parker, 2017).

Ötken and Cenkci (2015) strengthened the literature on organizational climate and its impact on employee ability to express contrary views on organizational policies and on reporting channels. They argued the role of supervisor response to employee dissent as a significant precursor to future expression of employee disagreement with organizational processes. Kang and Berger (2010) had earlier argued that managerial tone when responding to employee disagreement to organizational issues provides a guide to what management is likely to allow in the future and becomes a benchmark for future expression of dissent in an organization. Accordingly, managerial response to dissent not only gauges what is said but also the strategies employees adopt to minimize conversation risks and the ensuing relationships with subordinates.

Relational Factors and Dissent Styles

Recent research on the antecedents of employee dissent in organizations has largely focused on relational factors and dissent modes of expression (Pauksztat et al.,

2011). In contrast to the speaker being the primary focus, more and more attention is being directed at the nature of dissent as a relational process. Though the study results have been mixed, researchers are now focusing on the recipient's equally important role and the complex relationships that ensue (Detert & Treviño, 2010; Kassing, 2009).

Good social relationships between employees and employers and between employees and coworkers are crucial factors in employees' abilities to freely express dissent (De Ruiter, Schalk, & Blomme, 2016). As previously noted, studies on the nature of relationships between relational elements and voice patterns have yielded mixed results. For instance, although Burris, Detert, and Romney's (2013) and Liu, Song, Li, and Liao's (2017) studies on the impact of high-quality relationships between subordinates and supervisors and upward expression of dissent proved significant, Premeaux and Bedeian (2003) found no significant effect.

Researchers are continuing to identify linkages between employee voice and dissent expression. Pauksztat et al. (2011) found that formal organizational structures, defined as authority levels and team comembership, positively affected the likelihood of employee expression of disagreement if there was a higher relationship quality between the speaker and the occupants of the formal structures. Although study results showed a positive relationship between hierarchical levels and the likelihood for voice (expressing one's opinion), the recipient's centrality produced no significant effects. In a study on social networks in organizations, Brass (2005) found that employees who are central to the organization and who wield informal authority can avoid the risks of speaking up because they are popular in the organization, can gather recipient support, and can exert

informal pressure on the recipients to act. Pauksztat et al. stated that informal authority may provide social support, which can limit the risk of directly speaking up given the relationship between the speaker and the recipient.

Specifically related to formal authority structures, Payne (2014) found a linear relationship between employee trust in their supervisors and an upward expression of dissent in an organization. According to their study results, the more employees perceive that they can trust their supervisors, the more they are willing to talk directly to their supervisors regarding organizational issues. Using other forms of dissent expression such as latent or displaced dissent also decrease significantly.

Sollitto and Myers (2015) found that relationship quality among coworkers can significantly affect employee dissent strategy choices. Specifically, higher quality peer–coworker relationships increased the use of lateral dissent. According to Sollitto and Myers, high-quality relationships among coworkers produce environments conducive to freely discussing coworker disagreements and sentiments about organizational issues. These findings resonate with Gailliard, Meyers, and Seibold's (2010) in their study on the impact of high-quality coworker relationships on employee desire to remain in an organization.

Kassing (1997) studied 191 employees (53% male, 47% female) drawn from organizations in several U.S. states. He noted that the relationship between organizational leadership and subordinates is not always linear and argued that variations in dissent forms and relational factors point to a more diverse phenomenon. Specifically, that choosing one's mode of expression represents many facets and may involve

organizational, personal, relational, and other factors, including cultural variables. Kassing noted the limited nature of the variables that were selected—individual, organizational, and relational factors—in a study on a multifaceted phenomenon such as dissent as a study limitation.

Validation of Dissent Styles

Organizational dissent is a complex phenomenon and has evoked varied conceptualizations. Whereas some scholars have focused on measuring and assessing ways organizations promote or control employee expression of disagreement, others have explored employees' perceptions of their organizations' dissent tolerance (Kassing, 1997). For instance, Gorden, Infante, and Izzo (1988) developed a scale for assessing employee rights as a tool for measuring how organizations deal with freedom of speech. The scale was premised on the need to effectively gauge various forms of employee perceptions of freedom of speech in the workplace and the ability to communicate dissatisfaction with organizational processes (Kassing, 1997). Similar to Gorden et al.'s scale, Schultz (1992) designed a measurement scale to assess employees' perceptions of organizational capacity to accommodate employee dissent expression.

Each effort to develop a meaningful scale for assessing organizational dissent has tended to skew toward organizations and organizational dynamics, with less attention to employees. Although organizational processes affect dissent, earlier researchers did not recognize dissent's individual nature (Kassing, 1997). Therefore, in attempting to address and concretely codify dissent as an individual behavior, the tools reflect variations in reliability and validity.

In assessing dissent behaviors, some scholars have focused on peripheral constructs and variables that describe rather than measure employee dissent. For example, Saunders et al. (1992) assessed how organizational leaders facilitate employee voice through their actions. The researchers developed two related scales: the 37-item Supervisor as Voice Manager and the eight-item Likelihood to Voice Scale. The 37-item scale measures managers' actions in promoting employee voice. The eight-item scale assesses the likelihood of employees voicing concerns on organizational conditions to their supervisors. Similar to these scales is Schultz's (1992) 25-item scale for measuring employee perceptions of organizational capacity to accommodate employee dissent.

As previously noted, although these measures assess aspects of dissent, they do not focus on dissent as an individual behavior (Kassing, 1997). To address this lack of focus, Kassing (1997) developed the 20-item ODS. The ODS is intended to measure key aspects of dissent: upward, lateral, and displaced. Its development was based on the results of a two-part study with 191 and 195 participants from seven organizations across the United States.

The ODS measures responses using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. The scale has consistently produced reliability coefficients ranging from .63 to .95 (Goldman & Myers, 2015; Johnson, Meyers, & Williams, 2013). The scale is multidimensional, addresses the complex nature of dissent, and underscores that employees adopt various styles in expressing dissent.

Several researchers have used the ODS to study organizational issues, with study results showing satisfactory test–retest reliability and validity coefficients. Goldman and

Meyers (2015) adopted the ODS in their study of the relationship between organizational assimilation (with acculturation as one key dimension) and employees' upward, latent, and displaced dissent. Results of an online self-report completed by 186 full-time employee participants showed a positive correlation between seven key dimensions of organizational assimilation, including acculturation, and upward dissent style. Interestingly, only two of the dimensions, including acculturation, showed a negative correlation to latent dissent. None of the seven dimensions of organizational assimilation showed any significant relationship with displaced dissent.

A notable limitation of Goldman and Meyers's (2015) study is the heavily skewed participant demographics. The sample was more than 95% Caucasian and 75% male. Goldman and Meyers acknowledged that the disproportionate demographics may have resulted from the network sampling method. However, the limitation raises concerns regarding the applicability of study findings for non-Caucasian populations.

Bouda (2015) also used the ODS to explore how sub-Saharan African immigrants in the United States express dissent in organizations. The study sample was 72 sub-Saharan African immigrant employees in the State of Minnesota. The results showed that the study participants had a greater propensity to use upward (articulated) dissent compared to latent and displaced dissent styles. Bouda asserted that cross-cultural adaption (acculturation) accounted for this tendency and noted that sub-Saharan African immigrants tend to adapt to their new environment while maintaining aspects of their culture of origin. Bouda's findings are significant and require further validation, especially given the Cronbach's alphas of .71, .54, and .51 on the ODS's articulated,

displaced, and latent dissent dimensions compared to Kassing's (1997) .88, .87, and .76, respectively.

Summary and Conclusions

Research on organizational dissent has primarily focused on sources of dissent. Some researchers have studied the complex set of relationships that result from the dissent process. However, very limited attention has focused on minority groups and particularly on Nigerian immigrants in the United States.

Researchers have studied the antecedents of employee dissent by examining key variables such as individual, organizational, and relational factors. Little attention has been paid to understanding the role of variables influenced by culture, such as assertiveness and religiosity, on the dissent behavior of immigrants, and specifically on these behaviors among Nigerian immigrants in the United States.

As succinctly stated by Croucher et al. (2014), "Exploring organizational dissent in non-US settings can help our understanding of dissent by illustrating if dissent functions in the same way (for) different cultures" (p. 302). However, as expressed by Hofstede (1980a), applying research findings universally is ill advised because variations in cultural contexts can affect the potency of the policies. As such, studies such as the present that focus on variables that are influenced by culture are important and necessary for helping to extend what is known about employee dissent. In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodology used to conduct the present study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

Chapter 3 is a discussion of study methodology. It consists of an introduction and an overall description of the study design, sample, instrumentation, and data analysis techniques. I explain the study's importance and provide the rationale for pursuing this research. In addition, the chapter includes an overview of the sample and methods used to determine sample size. Lastly, I describe the instruments used in this study and discuss data collection and analysis. I conclude with a section on ethical considerations.

Research Design and Rationale

I designed this study to offer an understanding of the adaptive behavior of Nigerian immigrant workers living in the United States; specifically, in Houston, Texas. I sought to explore if variations in religiosity and assertiveness levels among these workers predict differences in choice of dissent styles. In other words, I explored if immigrant Nigerian workers living in Texas are religious and assertive and if there are relationships between these behaviors and methods they use to express disagreement. I also examined if gender and age play a role in the direction of the relationships between variations in levels of these behaviors, which may be influenced by culture, and modes of disagreement expression among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

I used a correlational research design to explore the relationship between levels of religiosity and assertiveness and choice of dissent strategy. A correlational method was suitable for the current study for several reasons. First, although I made basic hypotheses about the nature of these relationships, I did not seek to draw conclusions of cause and

effect. As such, I did not seek causality, and I had no intention to manipulate any of the study variables. Second, taking this approach helped to reveal the strength and direction of relationships between levels of religiosity and assertiveness and dissent style. Lastly, I did not randomly assign the participants to groups when evaluating the scores from the measures used in this study: the Organizational Dissent Scale (ODS), the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS), and the Religious Belief Salience Measure (RBSM). These instruments were used to measure participant choice of dissent strategy, levels of assertiveness, and levels of religiosity, respectively. The coefficients showed any variations in the relationships between levels of religiosity and assertiveness and choice of dissent expression.

Research on the expression of dissent by minority groups is relatively new. Previous studies have shown varying degrees of relationships between organizational, individual, and relational factors and choice of dissent options. However, research on cultural influences on variables that may impact the expression of dissent by immigrant population reflects newer interests and approaches (Borsa et al., 2012; Bouda, 2015). Borsa et al. (2012) advocated for moving away from focusing on the organizational, relational, and individual factors prevalent in extant literature on correlational research in future research on the impact of cultural contexts on dissent behaviors. In other words, he advocated for exploring the direction and strength of the relationships between variables such as religiosity and assertiveness that may be influenced by culture and the dissent strategies immigrants choose.

The present study centered on whether Nigerian immigrants are assertive and religious and whether these variables, which may be influenced by culture, predict the choice of dissent strategy. Specifically, I examined assertiveness and religiosity levels among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. I used the RAS and RBSM to measure their assertiveness and religiosity levels, respectively. I used the ODS to measure how they express disagreement in organizations and the methods they use to express disagreement.

Methodology

Population

The population for this study consisted of Nigerian immigrants who are legal residents of the United States, who lived in Houston, Texas, or the surrounding counties, who had lived in the United States for at least 1 year, and who were 18 years of age or older. All participants were members of a Nigerian multicultural organization in Houston. This organization was formed in 1982 as a nonprofit advocacy group representing the interests of Nigerians in Houston. At the time of this study, the organization had over 2,000 members who work and live in the greater Houston area. Prior to conducting this study, I provided a copy of Walden University's institutional review board approval to the organization's leadership, in line with the organization's subsisting policies.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

In general, the participants were recruited using nonprobability sampling; specifically, a convenience sampling strategy that facilitated collecting data through online and paper questionnaires. Nonprobability sampling can be useful when a

researcher wants to demonstrate that certain characteristics are prevalent in a population (Reio, 2016). Importantly, this approach was useful for the present study given the limited resources available for this study. Yet, I recognized some of the drawbacks of this sampling approach, including that the sample may not be representative of the entire population and may not be used to generalize to the entire population. Among the inclusionary and exclusionary criteria, participants were only eligible if they were registered members of a Nigerian multicultural organization in Houston and legally permitted to live and work in the United States. They also had to be 18 years of age or older. Nonlegal residents were excluded as was anyone younger than 18 years of age.

Sample Size

Statistical power is a critical method for ensuring that researchers do not neglect or fail to detect an effect when one exists. For instance, it helps to avoid making Type II errors, which can occur when researchers may conclude that no effect exists when in fact an effect may exist. The higher the statistical power, the lower the risk of such errors.

I used G*Power to calculate the effect sizes for the present study. Based on the recommendations of Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, and Lang (2009), the G*Power developers, an effect size of 1.5, an alpha of .05, and a power of at least .95 are suitable to provide a statistical power of .80. Statistically speaking, a power of .80 will provide an 80% chance of detecting effect where one exists.

The G* Power tool enabled me to calculate sample size for the *z* tests and the necessary two-tailed tests. With an effect size of 1.5, an alpha level of 0.05, and a statistical power of .80, it was initially determined that sample size of 209 was adequate

for the study. However, VanVoorhis and Morgan (2007) recommend that researchers seeking evaluation of relationships, such as regression, should aim at using about 50 participants. In addition, Harris (1985) supports this and recommends that participants should exceed the number of predictors by at least 50. Therefore, based on this literature, I needed a minimum of 52 participants for this study. A post hoc was conducted to assess the actual power given the actual number of participants who responded with a modification of the effect size (see Appendix A for this analysis). The actual power achieved was 0.84 (see Appendix K). This aligned with Van Voorhis and Morgan's and Harris's recommendations that participants should exceed the number of predictors by at least 50. Given the total predictors for this study, I reasoned that a minimum of 52 participants was enough for my analysis, even though the size is smaller than the initial expectation.

Data Collection Methods

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

With permission from the Nigerian multicultural organization to contact its membership, I attended several monthly general meetings to introduce myself and canvass for participants. The organization's subsisting constitution does not cover this type of exercise. As a result, members individually decided to participate or not. Also with permission, I directly approached members of the organization during these meetings to solicit their participation. I offered them the option of completing the questionnaire online or in paper form. During my interactions with the members, I

requested the cards or email addresses of those who expressed the willingness to participate.

I also received permission to post flyers (see Appendix B) on the organization's notice boards and in the lobby and reception areas. The flyers highlighted the study purpose and detailed why organization members should support the study. In addition, the flyers showed the various options for completing the questionnaire.

For administration of the paper questionnaires, I received permission from the organization executive to distribute questionnaire packages to members attending the monthly general meetings. I positioned myself in the lobby and reception areas and handed out these packages to members. Members who expressed interest in participating were given a complete set of documents, including guidelines for completing the questionnaires (see Appendix C). There was also a cover letter (see Appendix D) that detailed the study background and its purpose. Confidential and anonymous treatment of participant responses were detailed. The study's voluntary nature was stated, and how participants could obtain generalized results at the end of the study was noted. The informed consent form (see Appendix E) was also provided. There was also an instruction sheet with clear and unambiguous instructions for completing and returning the questionnaires, including completion datelines and drop-off points. Participants were reminded to ensure that the envelopes were sealed, and contact information was provided should further clarification be desired.

For members who expressed interest in participating online by providing their email addresses, I provided a SurveyMonkey link in introductory emails to them sent by

the association president. SurveyMonkey is an online survey software package that enables participants to complete online surveys. The software is compatible with SPSS, which I used for data analysis. The link took participants directly to the various sections of the questionnaire with items drawn from the ODS, the RAS, and the RBSM. The online information also detailed the study purpose, participant rights and privileges, and any possible risks. Informed consent was also included. By completing and submitting the questionnaire, the participants acknowledged that they had read and agreed to the informed consent. Therefore, no separate informed consent was required from these participants. They could print and retain copies of the form if they wished. Participants were deemed to have exited the study upon completion of either the paper or online questionnaire. There was no need for follow-up once the questionnaire had been completed and submitted.

In view of the nature of this study, a short demographic form (see Appendix F) was a critical element of the questionnaire. The form included important information related to gender, age, educational attainment, duration of stay in the United States, and if the respondent was a legal resident. This requirement, similar to the age element, was an exclusion criterion.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

In this study, the independent variables of assertiveness and religiosity were measured by the RAS and the RSBM, respectively. Both instruments are available for noncommercial use. The RAS is a 30-item scale with a Likert scale that ranges from –3 (*very much unlike me*) to 3 (*very much like me*). The RAS's test–retest reliability and

validity were reported at 0.77 and 0.93, respectively (Rathus, 1973). The RBSM is a five-item instrument with a Likert scale that ranges from 1 (very *strongly disagree*) to 7 (*very strongly agree*)..

Dissent strategies, the dependent variable, were measured with the ODS. The ODS, developed by Kassing (1998), is available for use by scholars and for noncommercial purposes. It consists of 20 questions reflecting three dimensions: articulated dissent strategy (nine items), displaced dissent strategy (six items), and latent dissent strategy (five items). Each of the items is measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Item scores reflect general tendencies in the choice of various dissent strategies. A higher score on the scales reflects a higher propensity of participants to choose articulated, displaced, or latent dissent strategies. For example, Bouda (2015) used the ODS to examine expression of organizational dissent among sub-Saharan Africans and found Cronbach alphas of .71, .54, and .51 for the articulated, displaced, and latent dissent strategy dimensions respectively, all reflecting good internal reliability.

Multinomial regression analysis was used to examine whether there is relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This analysis is suitable for analyzing samples where the dependent variable has more than two categories (Reio, 2016), as was the case in the present study (choice of dissent strategies). According to Riggs (2008), multinomial regression analysis is a useful tool given that it is amenable to small sample sizes in addition to helping to minimize redundancy of repeated tests. In addition, to improve the psychometric strength of the items, several scale items are reverse coded.

For example, on the ODS, Items 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9,14, 17, and 18 are reverse coded to reduce acquiescence bias (see Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001; Nunnally, 1978) and to check outlier effects.

Measuring Assertiveness Levels

As previously noted, I used the RAS to measure respondents' assertiveness levels. Among direct/positively worded items that assess these levels are "I am open and frank about my feelings," "I am quick to express an opinion," "If a famed and respected lecturer makes a comment which I think is incorrect, I will have the audience hear my point of view as well," and "I enjoy starting conversations with new acquaintances and strangers." Sixteen items are reverse coded to check acquiescence bias (Nunnally, 1978); for example, Item 1 ("Most people seem to be more aggressive and assertive than I am"), Item 2 ("I have hesitated to make or accept dates because of "shyness"), Item 3 ("To be honest, people often take advantage of me"), and Item 4 ("I have avoided asking questions for fear of sounding stupid"). All statements are measured on a 6-point Likert scale where –3 = *very much unlike me* and 3 = *very much like me*. When summed, the aggregate scores of the scale range from –90 to 90, with high scores indicating higher assertiveness levels and low scores indicating lower assertiveness levels.

Assertiveness is operationally defined as "behavior which enables a person to act in his own best interest, stand up for himself without undue anxiety, to express his rights without destroying the rights of others" (Alberti & Emmons, 1976, p. 50). Several researchers have used the RAS to study assertiveness as a predictor for various organizational processes. For example, Arigbabu et al. (2011) studied the impact of

gender, marital status, and religious affiliation on assertiveness levels among Nigerian preservice science teachers in the western part of the country. Arigbabu et al. used the RAS as a primary instrument for to measure assertiveness. The study results showed no significant differences in assertiveness levels on all factors. In addition, the results contradicted earlier findings from Eskin (2003) and Hersen et al. (1973), who found significant differences in assertiveness levels between men and women. As another example, Parham et al. (2015) examined how differences in assertiveness levels related to gender, culture, and ethnicity and reported moderate to good internal reliability of the RAS with a coefficient of .63.

Measuring Religiosity Levels

I used the RBSM to measure religiosity. As previously discussed, this instrument is a self-report with five items that measure levels of religiosity; specifically, how individuals view the concept of God and how this belief affects their other behaviors. These five items are:

1. My religious beliefs are what lie behind my whole approach to life.
2. My religious beliefs provide meaning and purpose to life.
3. I am frequently aware of God in a personal way.
4. I allow my religious beliefs to influence other areas of my life.
5. Being a religious person is important to me.

These statements are scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 7 (*very strongly agree*). When summed, aggregate scores of the scale range

from 5 to 35, with high scores indicating higher religiosity levels and low scores indicating lower religiosity levels.

Measuring Dissent Strategies

Several researchers have used the ODS in studying organizational issues. Results from these studies show satisfactory test–retest reliability and validity coefficients Goldman and Meyers (2015) used the ODS to study the relationship between organizational assimilation, with acculturation as one key dimension, and employees' upward, latent, and displaced dissent. Study results indicated a significant positive correlation between the seven key elements of organizational assimilation and upward dissent style. Interestingly, only two of the dimensions, including acculturation, showed a negative correlation to lateral dissent.

As previously mentioned, I used the ODS to measure dissent strategies among the study participants. The ODS consists of 20 items, divided into three dimensions: articulated (upward dissent), latent (antagonistic), and displaced. Upward dissent describes the choice of expressing disagreement internally to a superior in order to find a solution to a perceived organizational condition. Antagonistic dissent involves dissenters voicing disagreement in the organization to people who may not have the capacity to bring about the desired change; for example, peers and subordinates. Displaced dissent involves voicing employee disagreement to people outside the organization who have no capacity to bring about change such as family members, and associates. Examples of the statements used to assess the use of each type of dissent are

- "I am hesitant to raise questions or contradictory opinions in my organization," "I do not question management," and "I bring my criticism about organizational changes that aren't working to my supervisor or someone in management" (articulated dissent).
- "I refuse to discuss work concerns at home," "I make it a habit not to complain about work in front of my family," and "I rarely voice my frustrations about workplace issues in front of my spouse/partner or my non-work friends" (displaced dissent).
- "I criticize inefficiency in this organization in front of everyone," "I join in when other employees complain about organizational changes," and "I let other employees know how I feel about the way things are done around here" (latent dissent).

The statements are scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Some of the statements are reverse coded for data analysis. When summed, high scores on each dimension indicate choice of the indicated strategy, and low scores indicate choice of other dissent strategies.

Data and Statistical Analysis

SPSS v25 was used to analyze the impact of the differences in levels of religiosity and assertiveness on the choice of dissent strategies by Nigerian immigrants in the United States and to answer the following research questions and hypotheses:

RQ1: Do assertiveness levels predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States?

$H1_0$: Assertiveness levels do not predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

$H1_a$: Assertiveness levels do predict choice of dissent strategy among immigrant Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

RQ2: Do feelings of religiosity predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States?

$H2_0$: Feelings of religiosity do not predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

$H2_a$: Feelings of religiosity do predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

The overall null hypothesis for this study was that assertiveness and religiosity levels do not predict choice of various forms of dissent strategies among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. The alternative hypothesis for this study was that assertiveness and religiosity levels do predict choice of various forms of dissent strategies among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

I conducted multinomial regression analysis to test for the relationship between religiosity and assertiveness and dissent strategies. I examined regression coefficients to see whether there were relationships between religiosity and assertiveness and choice of dissent strategies. Specifically, I examined what dissent strategies participants with high scores on the RBSM and RAS frequently used. Multinomial regression is suitable for analyzing and predicting samples where the dependent variable has more than two categories (Riggs, 2008), such as choice of dissent strategies in the present study. Also,

multinomial regression analysis is a useful tool for analyzing small sample sizes as well as minimizing redundancy among repeated tests.

Lastly, the Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness of fit test was used to determine if significant differences existed in the frequencies of choice of dissent styles in categorical data from groups, such as gender and age. This test is suited for small sample sizes and helps to reduce the chances of false rejection of the null hypotheses. Similarly, I assessed the validity of the multinomial regression analysis by comparing log ratio values to values from a normal distribution (see Garson, n.d.).

Threats to Validity

The nature of nonprobability sample study designs is that they are prone to several biases. One of the prominent biases is that this approach does not guarantee equal chances of being selected for the study. Therefore, a major threat to validity lies in the inability of the sample to provide an adequate representation of the population. This therefore reduces the ability to generalize findings to the entire population based on the data from the sample. To minimize the bias of representation, as recommended by Witte, Amoroso, and Howard (2000), I also collected demographic data such as age and gender to ensure that various segments of the population were represented in the sample.

Another threat to validity relates to the nature of the subject and the issues of social desirability. In other words, how does a researcher guarantee that respondents will be truthful in answering questions? Specifically, dissent is seen as antagonistic in some extant literature, and dissenters are therefore seen as poor team players. It then seems reasonable that some participants may have been reluctant to self-report on this variable. I

mitigated this by using anonymous questionnaires, which shielded the participants' identities.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical considerations in research of this nature require that adequate safeguards are in place to protect participant data, from data collection through analysis/interpretation and storage. To this end, I complied fully with all Walden University ethical guidelines and procedures, including specific IRB standards. All necessary IRB approvals were sought to guarantee and minimize risks to all human participants in this study.

Participants in this study were anonymous and their questionnaire responses confidential. Participant consent was sought and obtained prior to data collection. All participants were deemed to have validated the informed consent upon acceptance to participate in and completion of the survey. To ensure that all participants understood purpose of the research, initial cover letters (see Appendix D) clearly specified the voluntary nature of participation and that every participant had the right to withdraw from survey at any point in time during of the survey. The informed consent form clearly stated that responses would be anonymous and that no identifying information would be collected. I diligently adhered to my data collection plan as approved by Walden University's IRB.

Another key element of the ethical considerations was the exclusionary/inclusionary criterion that all participants had to be at least 18 years of age. This ensured that all participants were fully and individually responsible and could attest

that they acted under no compulsion whatsoever. This also helped to ensure that the participants were able to fully understand the study rationale and the likely benefits to them as individuals and the organization in general.

Although study participation did not portend any identifiable risks to the participants, I informed them that they could suffer some discomfort in terms of time and the probing questions on religiosity, assertiveness, and ability to express contrary opinions. I provided contact information for counsel and assistance if they felt any form of discomfort in the course of completing the questionnaire. All written data will be stored in a secure cabinet for at least 5 years. All electronic data were password protected and will be digitally stored for the same period, after which all data will be destroyed.

Summary

I described the research design, purpose, and methodology in this chapter and detailed the assessments that were used. I also discussed the population, sampling approach, recruitment, data collection and analysis, and threats to validity. I concluded with a discussion of ethical concerns and how they were addressed. In Chapter 4, I further describe the data analysis and present the results.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine whether levels of religiosity and assertiveness predict choice of dissent strategies among a sample of Nigerian immigrant workers who belong to a multicultural association in Houston, Texas. The Rathus Assertiveness Scale (RAS), the Religious Salient Belief Measure (RSBM), and the Organizational Dissent Scale (ODS) were used to measure the variables. I explored whether or not Nigerian immigrant workers are assertive and religious and whether these variables, which may be influenced by culture, predict choice of dissent strategy. I focused on assertiveness and religiosity to understand if there are relationships between these predictive variables, which may predict choice of dissent strategy.

The following questions and hypotheses guided this study:

RQ1: Do assertiveness levels predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States?

$H1_0$: Assertiveness levels do not predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

$H1_a$: Assertiveness levels do predict choice of dissent strategy among immigrant Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

RQ2: Do feelings of religiosity predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States?

$H2_0$: Feelings of religiosity do not predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

$H2_a$: Feelings of religiosity do predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States.

The overall null hypothesis for this study was that assertiveness and religiosity levels do not predict choice of various forms of dissent strategies among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. The alternative hypothesis for this study was that assertiveness and religiosity levels do predict choice of various forms of dissent strategies among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. Study variables were measured using the RAS, the RBSM, and the ODS. These measures were discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Data Collection

Data were collected from members of a multicultural Nigerian organization in Houston, Texas. The members were asked to complete questionnaires consisting of three scales (the RAS, RSBM, and ODS) and several demographic questions for a total of 58 items. On average, the questions took approximately 15 min to complete.

As originally designed, the data collection timeline was 2 months, and I anticipated collecting at least 90 responses by the end of this period. However, it was necessary to extend this time frame to 3 months, from November 2018 to February 2019, as data collection did not go as planned. I had envisaged that organization members would opt to complete the paper questionnaires, which were handed out at several organizational meetings. However, no members chose this option. I made several efforts to reach out to members during the December 2018 and January 2019 general meetings to discuss the option of completing the paper questionnaires, but without success. The

members saw the paper questionnaires as time consuming and cumbersome. It was decided that I would work with the organization's secretary regarding further communication about the study. I expected this would give me some control over the process compared to the eventual transmittal of emails to members by the organization's president.

Secondly, as was agreed during the engagement sessions with the organization's leadership, the organization president was responsible for forwarding the survey link to the members to safeguard their personal information. However, as became obvious, depending on the president to send these emails meant I had no direct access to the members to solicit timely completion of the questionnaire. I had to depend on the president's availability and his willingness to perform the role as was agreed.

The Nigerian organization did not have an internal IRB process. Power to grant permission to me to collect data was therefore vested in the executive, expressed through the organization president. In exercising this power, the president made it clear that the final decision to allow me collect data was with members in a general meeting. I was granted permission to attend the October 2018 general meeting to canvass for support from members individually and to present the various options open to them. As a result, I attended the November 2018 general meeting, displayed my flyers, and made personal contact with some members.

I followed up with some members through personal emails and thanked them for agreeing to participate in the study. I clarified in the mails that members could choose between online and paper questionnaires. Only eight members replied to my emails.

Subsequently, following the launch of the online survey in December 2018, the total number of responses received by the end of December was 43.

In January 2019, I attended a second general meeting of the organization due to the low response rate. I secured the executive's permission to use the building's lobby to display flyers and set up a small meet and greet platform in front of the access to the meeting pavilion. By the end of January 2019, participant response increased marginally to 56.

Because of difficulties in obtaining sufficient responses from my data collection efforts through the organization, I sent several reminders to the organization through the president and to members who provided individual email addresses. All efforts to get members to complete paper questionnaires were unsuccessful. No member used this option. However, no calls were placed to any participant as this was not an agreed-upon option. A total of 62 responses were received by February 2019. Of the 62 responses, 58 were found to be valid. Four responses had more than 99% missing values and were excluded from the cases.

The questionnaire was available on SurveyMonkey through February 11, 2019, after which it was deactivated. In view of the low response rate relative to the sample size of 90 that was envisaged in Chapter 3, I used the bootstrap method in SPSS to check the robustness of the sampling method used and to aid the inferences from the sample means given its moderate size.

Data Treatment

Of the 62 responses received, four were more than 99% incomplete and were excluded. The 58 valid responses were adjudged as a sufficient sample based on the post hoc test conducted to assess the actual power. The results of the G Power post hoc analysis yielded an actual power achieved of 0.84 (see Appendix H), which is sufficient based on Van Voorhis and Morgan's (2007), and Harris' (1985) recommendations that at least 50 predictors (participants) are sufficient.

Data analysis and write up therefore included the difficulties encountered and efforts to deal with them. In general, there were some missing response values, incomplete information, and incomplete responses. Because of the questionnaire's close-ended nature, it was not possible for respondents to provide responses outside the inclusionary data. For example, age range was an exhaustive list and did not provide respondents the option of selecting an age range other than what was provided.

In all, there were 48 missing values from the various questionnaire items. A breakdown of the values by the various scales showed that the RAS had 31 missing values of 1,740 values (1.8%), with 1,709 complete values (98.2%). The ODS had a total of 17 missing values of 1,160 values (1.5%), with 1,143 complete values (98.5%). Lastly, the RSBM had no missing values among the 290 values (100%). The other demographic questions had no missing values.

Overall, there were 48 missing response values of 3,364 total questionnaire values (1.4%). In view of the number of missing values, it was necessary to replace the missing

values using the series mean function in SPSS in order to not significantly affect the dataset and responses.

Analysis Results

Descriptive Statistics

The study sample consisted of Nigerian immigrants who were members of a Nigerian organization in Houston at the time of this study, were age 18 years or older, and were legal U.S. residents. Sixty-four questionnaires were gathered; however, as previously noted, only 58 were valid. Although data were gathered reflecting six age ranges, I recategorized the respondents into two broad age groups (under 45 years of age and over 45 years of age) for ease of analysis. Of the 58 valid responses, 23 respondents (39.7%) were under 45 years of age, and 35 (60.3%) were age 45 years or older. Further, 14 male respondents were under age 45 years, and 24 were over 45 years of age. Nine female respondents were under 45 years of age; the other 11 were over 45 years of age (see Appendix G).

Assumptions

Organizational dissent, the dependent variable, was categorical with three levels: upward, latent, and displaced. I examined the assumption of multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is used to indicate the level of redundancy of variables. As indicated by Alin (2010), one way of measuring multicollinearity is by examining the variance inflation factor (VIF). Generally, a VIF greater than 10 indicates the presence of multicollinearity. The test yielded a VIF of 1.04, which indicated the absence of multicollinearity of the predictor variables.

Statistical Analysis Findings

Data analysis of organizational dissent style. The three ODS dimensions were assessed using the scale responses *strongly agree* and *agree* (coded as use the dissent style), and *undecided*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* (dummy coded as use other dissent styles). For example, for the upward (articulated) dimension, items such as "I tell management when I believe employees are being treated unfairly" and "I speak with my supervisor or someone in management when I question workplace decisions" were aggregated. The aggregate values for *strongly agree* and *agree* and for *undecided*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* were then dummy coded to form two groups: use upward dissent style or use other dissent styles (latent or displaced dissent) for purposes of performing a multinomial logistic regression analysis.

Figure 1 shows the percentages for choice of *strongly agree* and *agree* (coded into use upward dissent style), and *undecided*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* (coded into use other dissent styles) to responses reflecting the upward dissent dimension. When aggregated, the scores showed that 69.2% of the participants chose *strongly agree* and *agree* compared to 30.8% who chose *undecided*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* (coded into use other dissent styles).

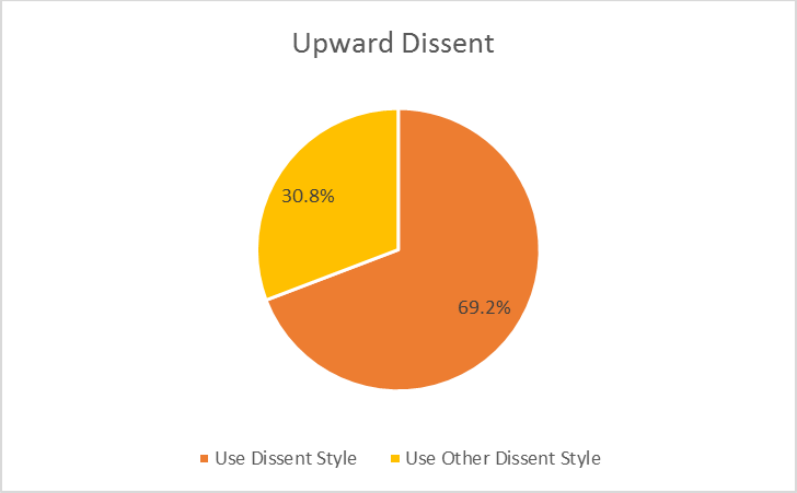

Figure 1. Percentages for upward dissent choice frequency.

Figure 2 shows the percentages for choice of displaced dissent style. When aggregated, the scores showed that 23.9% of the participants chose *strongly agree* and *agree* compared to 76.8% who chose *undecided*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* (coded into use other dissent styles).

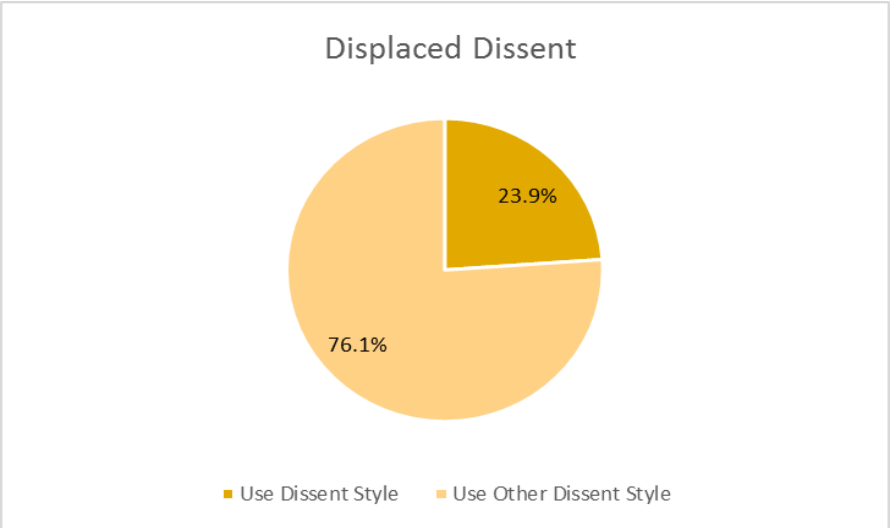

Figure 2. Percentages for displaced dissent choice frequency.

Figure 3 shows the percentages for choice of latent dissent style. When aggregated, the scores showed that 16.5% of the participants chose *strongly agree* and *agree* compared to 83.5% who chose *undecided*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* (coded into use other dissent styles).

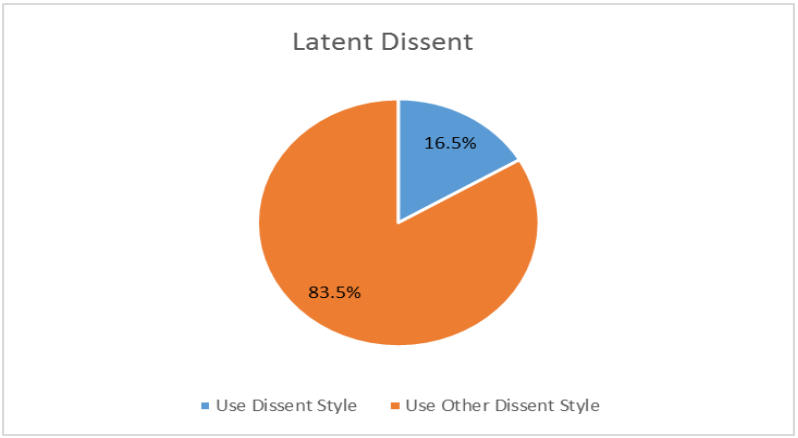

Figure 3. Percentages for latent dissent choice frequency.

Age, religiosity, assertiveness, and choice of dissent style. Percentages and frequencies for religiosity, assertiveness, and choice of dissent style were calculated for the two participant age groups. For participants under 45 years of age, the majority chose *very strongly like me*, *strongly like me*, *and agree somewhat* (coded as religious), most frequently (n = 16, 69.57%). On the assertiveness scale, participants under 45 years frequently chose that they were not assertive (n = 15, 65.22%), and upward dissent style was mostly chosen by participants under 45 (n = 13, 41.94%). From the frequencies as presented, more participants under age 45 years self-reported to be religious, not assertive, and frequently chose upward dissent style compared to other dissent styles (displaced and latent).

Percentages and frequencies for religiosity, assertiveness, and choice of dissent style were also calculated for participants in age group over 45 years of age. The majority of the participants 45 years and above chose *very strongly like me, strongly like me, and agree somewhat* (coded as religious) most frequently (n = 28, 80%). On the assertiveness scale, participants over 45 years of age frequently chose that they were assertive (n = 17, 48.57%), and upward dissent style was mostly chosen by participants over 45 years of age (n = 18, 58.06%). From the frequencies as presented, more participants over 45 years of age self-reported to be religious, assertive, and frequently chose upward dissent style, compared to other dissent styles (displaced n = 10, 71.43%; latent n = 7, 53.85%). Table 1 shows all data for both age groups.

Table 1

Frequency Table for Nominal Variable: Age

	Under 45 years		Over 45 years	
Variable	*n*	%	*n*	%
Religious	16	69.57	28	80.00
Nonreligious	7	30.43	7	20.00
Assertive	8	34.78	17	48.57
Nonassertive	15	65.22	18	51.43
Upward dissent	13	41.94	18	58.06
Displaced dissent	4	28.57	10	71.43
Latent dissent	6	46.15	7	53.84

Note. Due to rounding errors, percentages may not equal 100%.

Gender, religiosity, assertiveness, and dissent style descriptive. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for gender, religiosity, assertiveness, and dissent style.

Males in the gender variable (*n* = 38, 65.5%), religious (*n* = 26, 59.10%), nonassertive (*n* = 22, 66.70%), and upward dissent (*n* = 20, 64.50 %) were the most frequent descriptive in the data. Females in the gender variable (*n* = 20, 34.50%), religious (*n* =18, 40.90%), not assertive (*n* = 11, 38%), and upward dissent (*n* = 11, 35.5%) were the most frequent descriptive in the data. Frequencies and distribution of sample by gender, religiosity, assertiveness, and dissent styles are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Frequency Table for Nominal Variables: Gender, Religiosity, Assertiveness, and Dissent

	Males[a]		Females[a]		Total[a]		Males[b]	Females[b]
Variable	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	%	%
Gender	38	65.50	20	34.50	58	100		
Religious	26	59.10	18	40.90	44	100	68.42	90
Nonreligious	12	85.70	2	14.30	14	100	31.58	10
Total % (category)							100.00	100
Assertive	16	64.00	9	36.00	25	100	42.11	45
Nonassertive	22	66.70	11	38.30	33	100	57.89	55
Total % (category)							100.00	100
Upward dissent	20	64.50	11	35.50	31	100	52.63	55
Displaced dissent	11	78.60	3	21.40	14	100	28.95	15
Latent dissent	7	53.80	6	46.20	13	100	18.42	30
Total % (category)							100.00	100

Note. Due to rounding errors, percentages may not equal 100%. [a] = within gender; [b] = category.

The data showed that in general, more male participants reported to be religious compared to female participants. Male participants also reported to be nonassertive and more frequently chose upward dissent strategies. Among female participants, more reported to be religious (90%) than nonreligious (10%). In addition, more females reported being assertive (45%), compared to males (42.11%). Females showed more than an average percentage choice of upward dissent style (55%) compared to males (52.63%). On the other hand, male participants showed a relatively high level of assertiveness and chose upward dissent (52.63%) 2 times more than the other dissent strategies (displaced and latent). Finally, males chose upward dissent strategy (64.5%) about 1.5 times more often compared to females (35.5%).

In general, the majority of the participants reported moderate to high levels of religiosity and assertiveness and frequently reported choosing upward dissert styles relative to other strategies such as displaced and latent dissent.

Assessment Statistics

The RSBM and RAS consist of five and 30 items, respectively. The ODS consists of three dimensions with nine, six, and five items each. These instruments were used to measure religiosity, assertiveness, and dissent respectively, and the results from analyzing the questionnaire responses were used to address this study's two research questions. I checked for accuracy of data in SPSS relative to the inclusionary and exclusionary criteria and found all data satisfactory. I also checked for and identified missing at-random values. The RSBM had no missing values; there were 28 item

nonresponses for the RAS. The three ODS dimensions had a total of 20 items missing values.

Considering that the missing cases were significant, I could not omit them. I used series mean to correct the missing data in order not to affect the overall reliability and validity of the scales. Tables 3 shows the ranges and standard deviation scores for the RSBM, RAS, and ODS scales.

Table 3

Range and Standard Deviations for the Religious Salient Belief Measure (RSBM), the Rathus Assertiveness Scale (RAS), and the Organizational Dissent Scale (ODS)

			Scale range	
Variable	*M*	*SD*	Min	Max
Religiosity (RSBM)	27.34	9.517	5	35
Assertiveness (RAS)	26.32	16.257	–8	57
Upward dissent (ODS)	34.85	6.977	12	45
Displaced dissent (ODS)	17.52	5.128	6	27
Latent dissent (ODS)	13.35	4.664	5	24

Reliability of the Coefficients

Generally, reliability measures the consistency of an instrument. There are several ways reliability can be measured. One generally accepted measure of reliability is coefficient alpha (George & Mallery, 2016). To assess the Cronbach's alpha of reliability in SPSS, I conducted reliability analyses for the RAS, the RSBM, and the ODS. For the RAS, the 30 scale items yielded an alpha of 0.73, which indicated an acceptable

reliability according to DeVellis (2012). For the RSBM, internal consistency and intercorrelation among the measure's five items yielded an alpha of 0.96. indicating an excellent reliability as recommended by George and Mallery (2016).

Chi-Square Test for Gender, Age, Dissent Style, Religiosity, and Assertiveness

Descriptive statistics and chi-square goodness of fit tests were used to examine if significant differences existed in the frequencies of choice of dissent styles in categorical data for gender and age. The Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness of fit test is more suited for small sample sizes and helps to reduce the chances of false rejection of null hypotheses. Cross tabulations and chi-squares were performed with the categorical and nominal data, using frequencies from the descriptive statistics to analyze the association between gender and dissent styles and between age and dissent style as additional predictor variables for the study. There were two levels for each of the additional independent variables: females and males, under 45 years of age and 45 years of age or older. There were three levels in dissent styles: upward, displaced, and latent.

Expected cell sizes were reviewed and were found to have values more than 0. Kim (2017) recommended that expected cell values should be at least 5. In addition, in this study, the chi-square cross-tabulation on gender and dissent style produced expected frequencies greater than 5 for at least 80% of the cells. Therefore, the Pearson chi-square test was used as per Kim. As shown in Table 4, observed values did not significantly vary from the expected frequencies.

Table 4

Crosstabulation of Gender, Age, and Dissent Styles

Variable		Dissent style			
		Upward	Displaced	Latent	Total
Gender					
Female	Count	11.0	3.0	6.0	20
	Expected count	10.7	4.8	4.5	20
Male	Count	20.0	11.0	7.0	38
	Expected count	20.3	9.2	8.5	38
Total	Count	31.0	14.0	13.0	58
	Expected count	31.0	14.0	13.0	58
Age					
Under 45 years	Count	13.0	4.0	6.0	23
	Expected count	12.3	5.6	5.2	23
Over 45 years	Count	18.0	10.0	7.0	35
	Expected count	18.7	8.4	7.8	35
Total	Count	31	14	13	58
	Expected count	31	14	13	58

The results of chi-square analysis showed a nonsignificant association between gender and dissent style: $\chi^2(2, N = 58), = 1.84, p = .40$. This indicated no significant association between gender and dissent style. Therefore, I concluded that there was no statistically significant relationship between gender and how Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States express dissatisfaction in organizations, and, specifically, that gender and dissent styles are independent. On the other hand, results of chi-square analysis showed a nonsignificant association between age and dissent styles: $\chi^2(2, N = 58), = 1.02,$

p = .60. This indicated no significant association between age and dissent style. Therefore, I concluded that there was no statistically significant relationship between age and how Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States express dissatisfaction in organizations and that age and dissent styles are independent. Table 5 shows the cross tabulations and chi-square results for dissent style by gender and age.

Table 5

Cross Tabulation and Chi-Square Results for Dissent Style by Gender and Age

Variable	Dissent style			Total	χ^2	*df*	*p*
	Upward	Displaced	Latent				
Gender					1.854	2	.396
Female	11	3	6	20			
Male	20	11	7	38			
Total	31	14	13	58			
Age (in years)					1.016	2	.602
Under 45	13	4	6	23			
Over 45	18	10	7	35			
Total	31	14	13	58			

Multinomial logistic regression is used when dealing with more than two variables. It is used to examine the association between categorical and nominal dependent variables and independent variables, which may be nominal, categorical or ordinal. Multinomial logistic regression aids in understanding how independent variables discriminate dependent variables. Using this analysis method, I wanted to analyze the

independent variables religiosity and assertiveness to see the likelihood in the choice of upward, displaced, or latent dissent strategies by Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. I examined regression coefficients to see whether there were relationships between religiosity and assertiveness and choice of dissent strategies.

Regression coefficients were examined to estimate how variations in religiosity and assertiveness predict choice of dissent strategies by Nigerian immigrants in the United States. The overall model fit was determined by examining goodness of fit, pseudo *R* squared, and the case processing summary. The model fit helped to estimate the overall fitness of the study model with the full complements of predictive factors in relation to a null model without predictors. Multinomial logistic regression was used to examine whether religiosity and assertiveness had significant predictive impact on the odds of choosing upward, displaced, and latent dissent. The reference category for dissent choice was upward dissent.

Before the analysis, I examined several assumptions and undertook several steps in fitting the regression model. This included calculating multicollinearity and VIF as per Theobald, Aikens, Eddy, and Jordt (2019). This analysis provided a VIF of 1.028 for religiosity and assertiveness, which is less than 5 as recommended by Menard (2010). This showed that the model had low multicollinearity, which is desirable.

Answer to Research Question 1

RQ1 asked if assertiveness levels predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. Multinomial logistic regression was conducted to examine whether assertiveness had a significant impact on the log odds

ratio of assertiveness groups for every unit change in the choice of latent or displaced dissent strategy compared to upward dissent (set as reference category) if other variables were held constant. The results of the parameter estimates showed that the log odds of individuals who identified themselves as not assertive and chose the displaced dissent strategy was –2.774 times less compared to the odds of selecting upward dissent strategy (reference category). The *p* value was 0.01, which was higher than the 0.05 alpha level preselected and therefore showed a significant impact on choice of dissent strategy: $\chi^2(1) = -2.78$, $p = .01$.

On the other hand, log odds of individuals who identified themselves as nonassertive and who chose the latent dissent strategy was –3.205 times less, compared to the log odds of selecting upward dissent strategy. The *p* value was 0.01, which was lower than the 0.05 alpha level and therefore showed a significant impact on choice of dissent strategy: $\chi^2(1) = -3.205$, $p < .01$.

The results of the parameter estimates showed a consistent outcome. The overall model fitting shows that the model was significant: $\chi^2(2) = 20.755$, $p < .01$. However, the classification information demonstrated that the model could only explain 60.3% of the variance and therefore could not adequately account for the variation between assertiveness and choice of dissent strategy. I rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis for RQ1, given that the overall model fitting was significant. Table 6 shows the results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis of assertiveness and choice of dissent style.

Table 6

Multinomial Logistic Regression With Assertiveness Predicting Choice of Dissent Style

Variable	Model fit	χ^2	*df*	*p*
(Intercept)	16.881	.000	0	–
Assertiveness	37.637	20.755	2	.01

Answer to Research Question 2

RQ2 asked if religiosity levels predict choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. Multinomial logistic regression was conducted to examine whether levels of religiosity had a significant impact on the change in log odds of the religiosity groups for every unit change in choice latent or displaced dissent strategy, compared to upward dissent (set as reference category) if other variables were held constant. The results of the parameter estimates showed that the log odds of individuals who identified themselves as nonreligious and chose displaced dissent strategy was –.306 times less compared to the odds of selecting upward dissent strategy. The *p* value was 0.74, which was higher than the 0.05 alpha level preselected and therefore showed no significant impact on choice of dissent strategy: $\chi^2(1) = –.306$, $p = .74$. On the other hand, the log odds of individuals who identified themselves as nonreligious and chose latent dissent strategy was .795 times less compared to the odds of selecting upward dissent strategy. The *p* value was 0.53, which was higher than the 0.05 alpha level and therefore showed a nonsignificant impact on choice of dissent strategy: $\chi^2(1) = .350$, $p = .53$.

The overall model fit showed that the model was not significant: $\chi^2(2) = 17.749$, $p = .65$. Furthermore, the classification information demonstrated that the model could only explain 60.3% of the variance and therefore could not adequately account for the variation between religiosity and choice of dissent strategy. I therefore accepted the null hypothesis and rejected the alternate hypothesis for RQ2. Table 7 shows the results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis of religiosity and choice of dissent style.

Table 7

Multinomial Logistic Regression With Religiosity Predicting Choice of Dissent Style

Variable	Model fit	χ^2	*df*	*p*
(Intercept)	16.881	.000	0	–
Religiosity	17.749	0.867	2	.65

Single Model Analysis

I ran a single model analysis by including all predictive variables into the model. The overall model proved significant: $\chi^2(4) = 24.28$, $p = .01$. This indicated that assertiveness and religiosity had a significant impact on the odds of choosing latent and displaced dissent strategies compared to upward dissent. I then examined McFadden's and Nagelkerke's pseudo *R* squared to determine overall model fit (Pituch & Stevens, 2016; Field, 2018). The values showed .39 and .21 respectively, which indicated a good model fit. In addition, I also examined the classification table and found that when combined, the two variables could only explain 60.3% of the variance. I therefore concluded that assertiveness and religiosity were not enough to predict choice of dissent

strategy. More variables may be required in order to further test the relationship. Table 8 summarizes the results of the single model analysis.

Table 8

Multinomial Logistic Regression With Assertiveness and Religiosity Predicting Choice of Dissent Style and Confidence Intervals (CIs)

Variable		*B*	*SE*	χ^2	*p*	*Exp(B)*	95% CI lower	95% CI upper
Displaced	Intercept	.55	.91	.36	.55			
	Assertiveness	–2.77	.91	9.24	.01	.06	.01	.37
	Religiosity	–.31	.94	.11	.74	.74	.12	4.64
Latent	Intercept	–.43	1.23	.13	.72			
	Assertiveness	–3.21	1.13	8.01	.05	.04	.01	.37
	Religiosity	.79	1.25	.40	.51	2.22	.19	25.75

Note. $\chi^2(4) = 24.28$, $p = .01$; McFadden pseudo $R^2 = 0.21$.

In view of the sample size to the overall population recruited for this study, the confidence intervals (CI) were examined, as reported in Table 8. As an instance, from the overall model analysis performed jointly, the log odds ratio for assertiveness, Exp(B) = .06, = (.01, .37), $p < .02$; and Exp(B) = .04, = (.04, .37), $p < .05$; did not exceed 1, showing that assertiveness, when combined with other predictive variables, did provide a consistent outcome but cannot conclusively predict the choice of dissent strategy. On the other hand, when the CIs of the overall model was analyzed for religiosity, the log odds ratio for religiosity Exp(B) =.74, = (.12, 4.64), $p = .74$; and Exp(B) = 2.22, = (.19, 25.75), $p = .51$; exceeded 1. This may indicate that religiosity could predict choice of

dissent strategy when examined jointly with other predictive variables, even though the *p* values showed no significance.

Post Hoc Analysis

Initially, I used the following parameters to perform data analysis for this study: two-tailed, alpha of 0.05, and power of 80%. The covariates were set at 0. I had planned, based on G* Power analysis, to use a sample of 209 and a medium effect size corresponding to 1.5, in line with the recommendations of Hsieh et al. (1990). However, I could not obtain this sample size, even after several efforts.

Based on the results from these calculations, I performed a post hoc analysis to assess the achieved power. I computed the analysis using a sample size of 58 and the following parameters; P0 0.05, odds ratio 2.5, and *R*-squared set at 0.25. An odds ratio of 2.5 approximates a medium effect size (Lenhard & Lenhard, 2016). The actual power achieved was 0.84 (see Appendix I), and overall prescribed sample size of 53. As recommended by Van Voorhis and Morgan (2007), analysis evaluating relationships, such as regression, requires at least a sample size of 50 participants. Therefore, based on the recommendations of Harris (1985) who recommend at least 50 participants plus the total number of predictive variables as sufficient sample size for testing relationships, I reasoned that a minimum of 50 participants was sufficient for my analysis. Post hoc analysis was indicated in Chapter 3.

Summary

Multinomial logistic regression was used to examine levels of assertiveness and religiosity and their ability to predict choice of dissent strategy. The significance of each

variable was tested individually and found significant for assertiveness and not significant for religiosity. In other words, whereas levels of assertiveness were predictive of choice of dissent styles in the study sample, levels of religiosity did not show a similar significant relationship. However, when the variables were combined in a single analysis, the overall model fitting provided an overall significance, indicating that combined, gender and age and levels of assertiveness and religiosity may predict choice of dissent strategy. However, in view of the research questions, which required treating each predictive variable individually, the null hypotheses were therefore rejected for RQ1 but accepted for RQ2.

Furthermore, the model fit for each variable was examined using McFadden's and Nagelkerke's pseudo *R* squared and were found to be adequate for the assertiveness variable but poor for the religiosity variable. The Hosmer-Lemeshow chi-square goodness of fit test was used to examine differences in the frequencies of choice of dissent styles by age and gender, and no statistically significant association between either was found. For example, the results indicated no association between group membership for either gender or for age with choice of dissent styles. The results were not significant and showed that for this sample, age, gender, and choice of the upward dissent strategy were independent, indicating that no association exists.

In conclusion, the study outcomes were mixed. I rejected the null hypothesis for RQ1, having found a significant relationship between assertiveness and choice of dissent strategy by Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. I accepted the null hypothesis for RQ2, having found the relationship between religiosity and choice of

dissent strategy not significant. In Chapter 5, I present an overall summary of the findings, discuss the study implications, present recommendations for future research, and a conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

I conducted this quantitative correlational nonexperimental study to examine the impact of assertiveness and religiosity (variables influenced by culture) on the expression of minority dissent among a sample of Nigerian immigrant workers who were members of a multicultural association in Houston, Texas. The purpose was to determine if assertiveness as conceptualized by Rathus (1973) and religiosity as defined by Blaine and Crocker (1995) predicted choice of dissent strategy using the Organizational Dissent Scale (ODS). I sought to examine whether immigrant Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States are assertive and/or religious and whether these variables, which may be influenced by culture, predict choice of dissent strategy.

Study data were collected through SurveyMonkey. The study results were mixed. Whereas there was no statistically significant association between levels of religiosity and choice of dissent strategy, the results showed a significant association between assertiveness and choice of dissent strategy.

I conducted this study because I theorized that examining the impact of cultural contexts on assessments of minority groups may provide useful insights into patterns of acculturation behavior among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. Existing assessment of dissent behavior of minority groups has not incorporated different cultural contexts (Borsa et al., 2012). The study was therefore crucial for extending what is known about this population.

The study results provided a better understanding of Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States, which may therefore improve individual employability. In addition, through better understanding of this population, the results may help to reduce disparities in wages and hiring between immigrant and native workers, concerns noted by Smith and Fernandez (2017).

Multinomial logistic regression was used to examine whether religiosity and assertiveness had a significant predictive impact on the odds of choosing upward, displaced, and latent dissent. Regression coefficients were examined to estimate how variations in religiosity and assertiveness may predict choice of dissent strategies. The overall model fit was conducted and found to be adequate. The overall significance of the multinomial logistic regression was tested, with mixed outcomes. Therefore, the null hypothesis for RQ1 was rejected as a significant relationship between assertiveness and choice of dissent strategy was found. The null hypothesis for RQ2 was accepted as no significant relationship between religiosity and choice of dissent strategy was found.

Interpretation of the Findings

Analysis and Interpretation of Research Question 1

Data analysis showed a statistically significant relationship between assertiveness and choice of dissent strategy, $\chi^2(2) = 20.755$, $p < .01$. This result is in tandem with a previous cross-cultural study by Croucher et al. (2014) regarding the ability to speak out (assertiveness) and dissent style. Croucher et al. examined significant variations in levels of freedom of speech and choice of dissent strategy among five European societies, evaluating 1,184 surveys from participants in Finland, France, Germany, Spain, and the

United Kingdom using self-administered online questionnaires, similar to the procedure used for the present study. Croucher et al. focused specifically on the association between differences in national conversational styles and organizational dissent. To measure the ability to speak out, these researchers used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) that asked questions such as whether participants felt they had freedom of speech in their workplace. Croucher et al. found a statistically significant relationship between speaking out and variations of dissent choices in all sample using multivariate analysis of covariance.

The present study is similar to Croucher et al. (2014) in several ways. First, the impact of culture differences, such as individualism, on speaking out and modes of expression was evaluated in both studies. Second, expression of dissent in organizations was the focus of both studies. Lastly, the impact of nationality on organizational dissent was shown in both studies. However, the inclusionary criteria were different. For instance, while the participants in Croucher et al. were drawn from five European countries, I focused only on Nigerian immigrants living in the United States. Also, although I did not specifically evaluate the impact of workplace freedom of speech on speaking up, as was the case with Croucher et al., I assumed that the host culture would have some effect on conservational modes and expectations, in keeping with the interactive acculturative model (IAM) used in this study. Furthermore, Croucher et al. emphasized the need to go beyond using U.S samples in the study of acculturation patterns in organizations, similar to the conclusion I also drew from the present study's results. In the case of Croucher et al., the need to see how organizational dissent is

impacted outside the U.S. sample, and for this study, the impact of the ability to speak out and various modes of speaking in a minority immigrant sample. Like Croucher et al., I sought to proffer answers to the call by Kassing and Avtgis (1999) and Kwon and Farndale (2018) to examine the impact of individual influences and cultural dimensions on dissent expression.

Specifically, like Croucher et al. (2014), the present study's findings drew attention to the impact of cultural differences on organizational dissent and freedom of speech and emphasize on how variations in conversational styles may give rise to differences in choice of dissent strategies, especially in a cross-cultural landscape. Croucher et al. specifically looked at several nationalities with discernable economic and cultural dimensions such as individualism, collectivism, and power distance. In the present study, I leveraged existing literature on how individuals from a collectivist migrant culture react in an individualistic host culture. Unlike Croucher et al., I looked only at a homogeneous sample of Nigerians immigrants in the United States. I believe a more prudent approach would be to compare the behavior of individuals in the host society with individuals in the immigrant society. Researchers have reported variations in assertiveness levels among Nigerians in the United States and in Nigeria. Examining these propensities in a cross-sectional study may also yield valuable insights into how the ability to speak up may predict choice of dissent strategy for this population.

Another study of interest is Sigler, Burnett, and Child (2008), who examined the impact of acculturation differences in assertiveness on communication patterns. Specifically, Sigler et al. used the RAS to evaluate cultural variations in assertiveness and

their impact on communication styles among university students in two U.S. regions: 148 students from the Upper Midwest and 159 students from the New York metropolitan region. The participants responded to an RAS-based questionnaire intended to measure assertiveness levels and communication styles. The New York metropolitan area participants reported higher levels of assertive behaviors than participants from Upper Midwest (Sigler et al., 2008). Sigler et al. also found that males in the Upper Midwest demonstrated significantly higher assertiveness levels in speaking styles than females in the same region. These findings are similar to those regarding gender in the present study.

Sigler et al. (2008) and I both examined cultural differences and orientations. Furthermore, we both evaluated the impact of differences in assertiveness levels on modes of speaking. There were differences in the study samples, but my results are consistent with Sigler et al.'s. Findings from both studies build on and extend the knowledge gap on cultural lenses in the study of assertiveness and communication styles. However, a major limitation in both studies is that more research is likely needed to test the nature of the association between assertiveness and choice of dissent styles.

Analysis and Interpretation of Research Question 2

The present study's results did not show a statistically significant relationship between feelings of religiosity and choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States, $\chi^2(2) = 17.749$, $p = .65$. This finding is consistent with the results of the study by Arigbabu et al. (2011) regarding the association between religious affiliation and ability to express one's opinion. Specifically, Arigbabu et al. examined, among other variables, the impact of religiosity on assertiveness behavior among 367

education students. Study participants were randomly selected from two institutions of higher education in Southwest Nigeria and were ages 17–53 years, an age range similar to present study's. Arigbabu et al. did not find religious affiliation as a significant predictor of assertiveness among education majors, which implies that an individual's religious affiliation does significantly predict one's ability to speak up. Put differently, it is possible that other variables apart from religious affiliation may be more associated with and predict assertiveness among students.

Arigbabu et al. (2011) did not examine modes of speaking up or who received the participants' comments on organizational issues. However, Arigbabu et al.'s findings were important to this present study as we both evaluated scantly researched cultural dimensions such as religiosity and how they impact the ability to speak up. Assertiveness was measured with the RAS in both studies. Logistic regression analysis was used to study associations in both studies. Finally, the results in both studies seem to contradict mainstream views that religiosity underlies most behavior in this population (Aluaigba, 2013; Asubiaro & Fatusi, 2014). However, Arigbabu et al.'s study differed from the present study in certain key aspects: (a) the participants were student teachers, (b) participant location was the origin country rather than the United States, (c) and participants were drawn from two institutions. Some of the inclusionary criteria that differed included that, for the present study, participants had to be a minimum of 18 years of age, permanent residents of the United States, and had to belong to the identified multicultural organization. Also, I used the ODS to measure dissent style.

Results from both studies emphasize the need for using a cultural lens in understanding the ability to speak up. Like Arigbabu et al. (2011), I found that religiosity alone could not explain or predict the ability to disagree on organizational issues. More variables may be required to accurately predict this behavior. Cultural differences may be important in accounting for whether individuals will speak up, but more studies may be required. For instance, a qualitative study may offer the opportunity to interview participants to better understand the meaning and antecedents to a feeling of religiosity.

Put together, the present study's findings show that current knowledge on the impact of certain characteristics such as assertiveness and religiosity, which may be influenced by culture, on choice of dissent strategy remains mixed. In general, researchers have studied several predictors of dissent styles in organizations. For example, Bouda (2015) examined expression of organizational dissent among sub-Saharan Africans and found predominate use of articulated dissent style. Goldman and Meyers (2015) studied the relationship between organizational assimilation (with acculturation as one key dimension) and employees' upward, latent, and displaced dissent. The present study's outcomes were mixed on the impact of assertiveness levels and feelings of religiosity on choice of dissent strategy among Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. While the study results showed a significant relationship between assertiveness levels and dissent expression choice, there was no significant association between religiosity and choice of dissent expression.

Findings Related to Study Models

The Exit-Voice-Loyalty Model of Employee Dissatisfaction. Hirschman's (1970) EVL model focuses on employee responses to organizational situations, especially when employees are faced with dissatisfaction with organizational policies. The model posits that when employees are confronted with a dissatisfactory situation in a workplace and do not agree with organizational policies, they must review the conditions and decide how to react (Sexsmith, 2016).

Hirschman's model was chosen as a theoretical basis for the present study because it provides a framework for explaining organizational processes such as dissent expression, among others. The model provides a lens for understanding several variations of employee dissent. According to the model, when employees experience dissatisfaction with organizational policies and practices, they must choose from a range of possible expression options. Hirschman (1970) posited that employees vary in their approach to and the way they experience dissatisfaction. The model holds that employees can choose between a range of behaviors when faced with unsavory situations. One discernable approach is staying back, which may provide an opportunity to voice observed concerns.

Hirschman's model related to the present study and aided the choice of variables measured in the study. My focus was on understanding how religiosity and assertiveness might relate to choice of dissent strategy. Evaluating these relationships were important given that previous researchers had indicated the need to examine cultural contexts to better understand dissent behaviors. The EVL therefore guided my understanding of how

these choices were made and any relationships between them and preselected independent variables that may be influenced by culture.

Extant literature on the present study's independent variables—feeling of religiosity and assertiveness levels—has identified these variables as characteristics influenced by culture that may predict modes of expression of disagreement. The results from this study therefore advanced the knowledge of how religiosity and assertiveness relate and predict choice of dissent. For instance, this study's outcomes are mixed. On the one hand, the study results showed a statistically significant relationship between levels of assertiveness and choice of dissent strategy. On the other hand, no significant relationship was found between religiosity and mode of expressing dissent. These results reflect those in other studies that assertiveness levels may predict choice of dissent and that religiosity may not. The results reflect a mixed outcome and therefore require further examination. Yet, the results add to and extend the body of knowledge on the EVL model as very few researchers have used the model to study the adaptive behavior of immigrants.

The Interactive Acculturative Model. Bourhis et al.'s (2009) IAM posits that members of the host culture also hold acculturation orientations, just like immigrants. This theory contrasts with earlier theories that immigrants alone hold acculturation orientations. I chose the IAM for this study because it elucidates several organizational phenomena, such as intergroup work–relations quality (Bourhis et al., 2009; Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010; Schalk & Curşeu, 2010), organizational diversity (Oerlemans & Peeters, 2010), acculturation behavior of immigrant workers (Berry, 2005), and the impact of

organizational assimilation on employees' dissent strategies (Goldman & Myers, 2015). Although the IAM has not been used to examine modes of dissent expression by Nigerian immigrants living in the United States outside of the present study, this theory was useful for exploring immigrant workers in the United States and the impact of culture on the acculturation orientations of this population at a group level.

Researchers have shown that, at the individual level, organizational conditions in host environments are significantly influenced by acculturation and conditioned by immigrant behavior such as communication styles (Green & Staerklé, 2013). The IAM contributes to the understanding of the influence of cultural orientations and the impact of behavior. It related to the current study because it shines further light on a minority group's acculturation pattern in a dominant host culture.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. Among them, difficulties recruiting participants posed a validity problem. With the diverse nature of the immigrant Nigerian population in the United States, which is spread across all 50 states, finding an organization from which to draw a representative sample may have limited the ability to make adequate inferences and generalization to this population. This posed a major problem given that finding organizations that have the multifaceted Nigerian culture, especially Nigeria being a multiethnic society, was very difficult. Getting the leadership of the preidentified multicultural Nigerian organization to agree to participate was challenging. The organization's leadership structure made it difficult for the executives to obtain approval to take part in the research. It seemed that participating in academic

research was not their usual practice, especially as a group. Approval for group members to participate required my appearing at several of their monthly general meetings to clarify the study purpose and how their personal data would be used. Of note, there were instances when I was not on the agenda for the meeting, necessitating another appearance.

The poor response rate is another limitation. As discussed in Chapter 3, I initially envisaged that a minimum of 90 participants would be adequate for statistical purpose, based on a revised a priori G*Power analysis which prescribed sample size of 82, and power of 95% (see Appendix K), with a medium effect size (odds ratio) of 2.5 (Demidenko, 2007). However, even with two time extensions, only 62 individuals responded to the questionnaire. I made several efforts to improve the response rate, including several follow-up mails and reminders to the organization's president as was agreed, but these made little difference. I visited the monthly meetings several times to solicit completion of the paper questionnaires, to no avail. The questionnaire was open on SurveyMonkey for over 3 months. Upon consultation with my dissertation committee, it was agreed that recruitment would be suspended at 62 participants.

Another limitation relates to the small sample size. A larger sample would have been most appropriate given the use of multinomial logistic regression analysis (Field, 2013). Although bootstrapping was adopted to augment the small data size, reliability of the results may have been affected. In addition, a post hoc analysis was performed given the low sample size relative to the revised a priori G* Power analysis that recommended 82 participants at 95% power based on medium effect size of 2.5. The post hoc with

actual 58 (less than the a priori size of 82), with a medium effect size (odds ratio) of 2.5, yielded an actual power of .84. Although an acceptable statistical power, this is clearly a further limitation to the study. Future researchers in this area should endeavor to recruit a larger sample in order to test this study's results with a higher statistical power.

Using only two variables (assertiveness and religiosity) did not fully represent the significant cultural variations and characteristics of this population and may not have precluded other confounding cultural factors. Although extant literature seems to portray Nigerians as religious (Asubiaro & Fatusi, 2014), some available evidence, including the present study's findings, may not fully support this.

Another limitation relates to response bias. According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2008), response bias occurs when respondents deliberately refuse to offer a true response to a questionnaire question. This may be as result of social desirability. For example, religious questions are usually seen as sensitive and may elicit incorrect responses or outright refusal to respond. Also, there may have been a tendency for respondents to misconstrue assertiveness as aggression. It is possible that these participants may have offered biased responses, which may have affected the validity of the study results. It is probable that response bias contributed to the missing data recorded in this study.

In addition, I did not control for other cofounding variables such as educational levels and employment status. These are critical variables that could alter participant responses regarding dissent behavior. For example, it is probable that unemployed respondents may choose a different recipient of their dissent compared to employed. As

Smith and Fernandez (2017) noted, with the preponderance of immigrants in low-wage occupations, higher paid workers and those in the professional cadre may express dissent differently from those in low-paying clerical and low-skill occupations. Future researchers might focus on controlling for these variables as a way of improving reliability.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are several recommendations for future research that could consider other angles and options and extend this study's findings. First, adding other variables beyond religiosity and assertiveness to the cultural characteristics may provide a more holistic view of the cultural dimensions. As previously noted, Nigeria is a diverse and multiethnic society. Although choosing religiosity and assertiveness was driven by the literature reviewed for this study, more variables such as employment status, educational levels, and even immigration status may yield more compelling results.

Second, in view of the nature of the subject matter, a qualitative study may also provide more insights into the nature of dissent expression. Through interviews, participants may be better able to express deeper meaning attached to dissent, religiosity, or even assertiveness. It might therefore be useful for future researchers to conduct a similar study but using a qualitative approach. Such a study might provide insights into the meaning participants attach to organizational life and rationales for action rather than seeking relationships between variables alone.

Third, future researchers should endeavor to improve on the sample size through increased response rate. For a society like Nigeria with a diverse population and cultural

orientations, a small sample size such as the one in this study may not provide a robust opportunity to fully understand the subject matter. As Field (2013) noted, logistic regression analysis is better with larger sample sizes and helps to improve the validity and reliability of study results. Future researchers should focus on improving the participant recruitment process and consider using more than one organization.

Lastly, future researchers could conduct a comparative study of dissent expression of Nigerians in their origin and host domains. One of the present study's challenges was the dearth of comparative literature on Nigerian immigrants on religiosity, assertiveness, and dissent expression. There is therefore a need to explore and compare the behavior of Nigerian immigrants in the United States with their peers in their origin society to see what impact acculturation may have on each population. Such a study may offer better insights into cultural and acculturation orientations to further the understanding of Nigerian immigrants in the United States and may aid in designing diversity, human resources, talent development, and leadership training for this population.

Implications for Positive Social Change

The findings from this study contributed in several ways to uncovering new ways to promote more sustainable communities. The study results showed that assertiveness levels are statistically associated with the mode of dissent expression among the study sample. This finding is an insightful extension to existing knowledge and builds on what is known about cultural contexts in dissent expression. This is a useful finding given the increasing need for employee engagement and participative decision-making in organizations.

The finding that there is no statistically significant association between religiosity and choice of dissent strategy is also a useful extension of the knowledge base and a call for future research in this area through adopting other research methods to better explore the linkages. Findings from additional research may help to inform interventions for increasing assertiveness in immigrant workers and inform talent development initiatives to harness this potent force.

Another positive social change ensuing from this study is the increased understanding of the influence of cultural characteristics on choice of dissent strategies. This is a useful addition to the literature on the acculturation behavior of Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States. Specifically, it is hoped that the study findings may help organizational leaders address issues, such as organizational leadership, human resource management, employee coaching, and organizational culture, thereby improving employee engagement and better productivity.

Lastly, by focusing on Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States, the study results provided a better understanding of the adaptive behavior of small groups in the United States. In particular, the study results may provide organizational leaders a better understanding of Nigerian immigrant workers in the United States, which may improve individual employability. Ultimately, the results may help to address the rising unemployment of minorities and particularly Nigerian immigrants in the United States.

Conclusion

There remains a disturbing weakening of business ethics and a heightened penchant for employees to acquiesce, due in part to the tendency for supervisors to

retaliate against dissenters. It has become more and more obvious that speaking up against organizational policies can and does have consequences, such as reprisals and career retardation. The tendency therefore is a growing inclination for employees to look the other way. Previous researchers have explored antecedents to dissent expression, but little effort has been directed at cultural contexts. An inclusive study on the influence of variables such as assertiveness and religiosity that may be shaped by culture on dissent expression was therefore warranted.

Organizations in the United States and elsewhere can use the diverse potentials of both immigrant and host workers as they strive toward employee engagement. Researchers have reported dissent expression as related to several organizational and relational factors, but not much has been done to extend the research focus to cultural contexts. The result of this study therefore is an answer to this clarion call to explore if some cultural characteristics such as religiosity and assertiveness predict how immigrant Nigeran workers in the United States express disagreement in organizational contexts.

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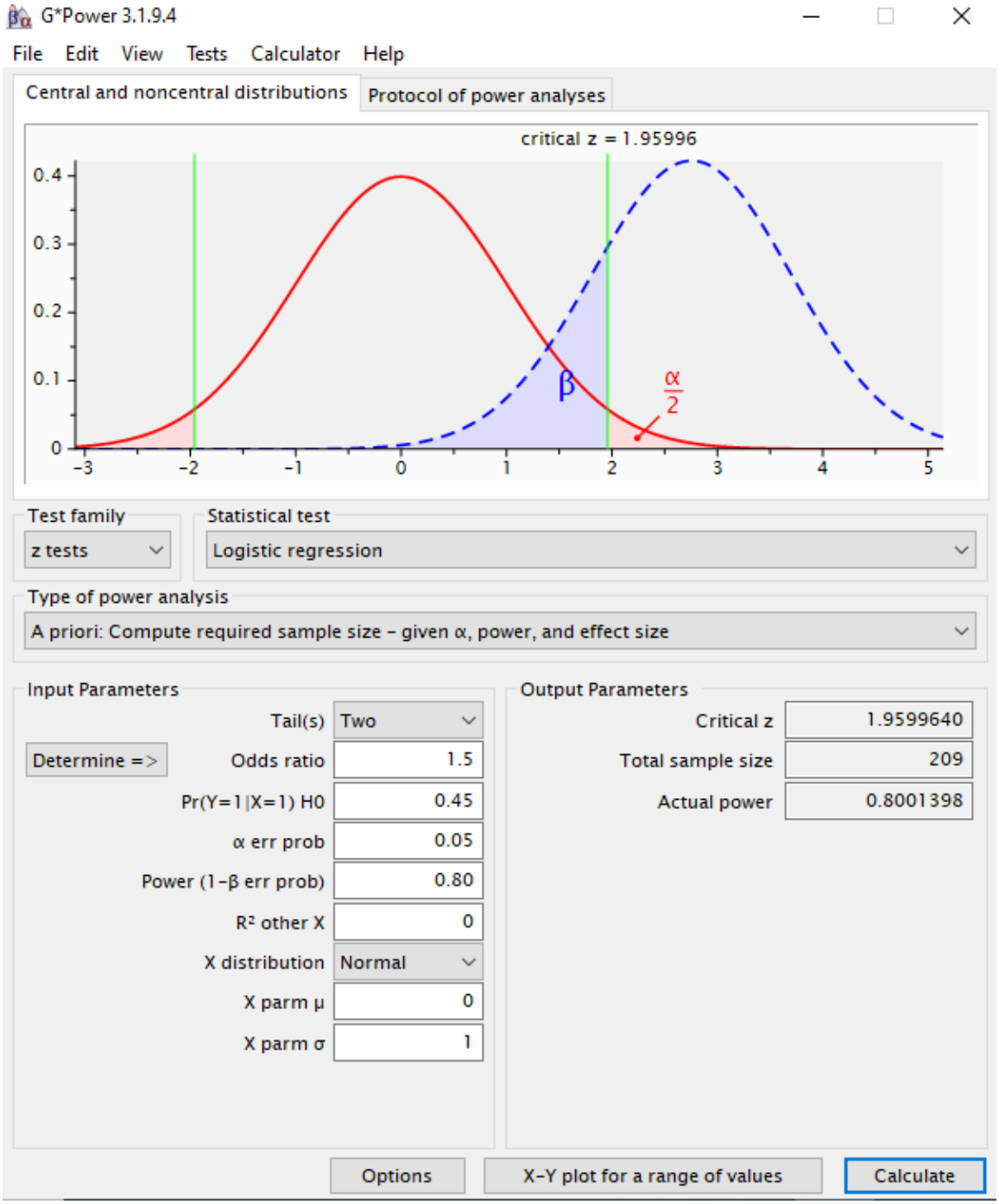
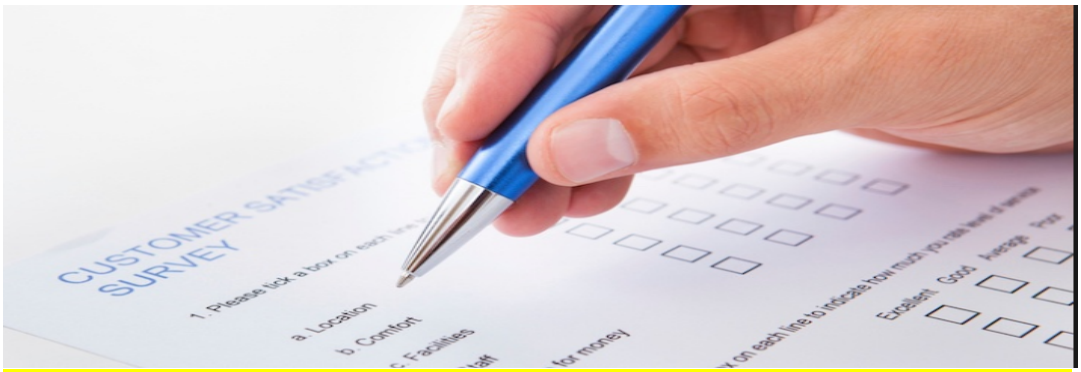
Appendix A: Initial Power Analysis



Appendix B: Flyer

A SURVEY ON IMPACT OF ASSERTIVENESS & RELIGIOSITY ON CHOICE OF DISSENT STRATEGY AMONG IMMIGRANT NIGERIAN WORKERS IN THE US

PARTICPANTS NEEDED!



The purpose of this study is to Examine if there is a relationship between Assertiveness and Religiosity (Variables influenced by Culture) and Choice of Dissent Strategy

Are Immigrant Nigerians in the US more or less assertive and religious. Do these variables which may be influenced by Culture predict how they express disagreement in the workplace?

IF YOU WILL LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS ANONYMOUS SURVEY

Appendix C: Guidelines for the Completion of Questionnaires

Thank you for accepting to participate in this Paper or Online Survey. Please note that participation in this survey is completely voluntary and that you can exit from the exercise at any time. Please do not under any circumstance provide your name or any remarks that can identify you in the course of completing this survey.

There are three sections (Assessment Scales) combined in this Survey (RAS, RBSM, & ODS). Each scale has a different scaling process as below:

RSBM

Considering how you believe religion is important to you, indicate your degree of agreement with each statement by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the left of each item. (1 = very strongly disagree; 2 = strongly disagree; 3 = disagree somewhat; 4 = neither agree nor disagree; 5 = agree somewhat)

RAS

Directions: indicate how well each item describes you by using this code below. Kindly indicate your agreement or not with the following statement by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the left of each item. 3= very much like me; (2= rather like me; 1= slightly like me; −1= slightly unlike me; −2= rather unlike me; −3= very much unlike me)

ODS

Guideline: The following is a series of statements about how people express their concerns about work. There are no right or wrong answers. Some of the items may sound similar, but they pertain to slightly different issues. Please respond to all items.

Considering how you express your concerns at work, indicate your degree of agreement by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the left of each item. (5= strongly agree; 4= agree; 3= undecided; 2= disagree; 1= strongly disagree).

Appendix D: Cover Letter

To WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for showing interest to participate in this survey for my doctoral study. The purpose of this study is to examine the dissent behaviors of Immigrant Nigerian workers in the US. Specifically, I seek to examine if variations in the levels of assertiveness and religiosity (variables influenced by culture) of Nigerian Immigrants in the US predict the choice of dissent strategy.

In other words, are Nigerian Immigrants in the US more or less assertive and religious? Are there variations in their choice of methods through which they express disagreement in the workplace because of the difference in the levels of these variables which are influenced by culture?

As a critical part of the doctoral dissertation, I seek for participants in a paper or online survey to assess these variables. Participation is voluntary, and completely anonymous. The questionnaires take roughly 20 minutes to complete.

The following documents are attached to aid your decision to participate:

Informed Consent

Letter of Cooperation

Guidelines for the completion of the questionnaires

A short demographic form

Thanks

Truly,

Peter Azorji

Appendix E: Informed Consent Form

I am pleased to invite you to participate in a research that seeks to explore the relationship between variations in the levels of assertiveness and religiosity of immigrant Nigerian employees in the US and choice of dissent strategies. The research is significant for many reasons. Among which is the need to understand the acculturation behavior of immigrant Nigerians in the US as they adapt within a host culture. The researcher is inviting members of this Nigerian Organization to participate in this study given that they are registered members of this Nigerian association, who are above the legal age of 18 years. This form constitutes a critical part of the part of the informed consent process which enables participants to fully understand the study, its purpose, and rationale, to be able to make decision to participate or not in the study.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Peter Azorji, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:

The current study is designed to provide an understanding of the adaptive behavior of U.S. immigrant Nigerian workers. This study will examine if variations in the levels of religiosity and assertiveness of immigrant Nigerians in the US predict differences in choice of dissent styles. In other words, the study will examine if U.S. immigrant Nigerian workers are religious and assertive, and if there is a relationship between this and the methods, they use in expressing disagreement. This study will further examine if gender and age play a role in the direction of the relationship between variations in levels of these behaviors (which may be influenced by culture) and the mode of expression of disagreement among U. S immigrant Nigerian workers.

Procedures:

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

- Complete a one-time 15-minute survey

Here are some sample questions:

- "I don't tell my supervisor when I disagree with workplace decisions.
- "I'm hesitant to question work policies even when they clearly affect me?"
- "I would rather talk about my job concerns at home than at work?"
- "I allow my religious beliefs to influence other areas of my life"
- "I am open and frank about my feelings"

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary and you are completely at liberty to refuse to participate. Additionally, even if you accept now to participate in this study, you can elect at your sole discretion to opt out at any time. Your membership of the organization will not be negatively affected by accepting or refusing to participate in this study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Participation in a study of this nature may involve minor risks, including discomforts in completing the survey. The risks may also involve a feeling of pressure to disclose your personal dispositions and beliefs. This may result from the nature of the subject matter and variables which may be influenced by cultural orientation and belief systems. However, participation will in no way adversely affect your individual safety and well-being. If you experience any distress or discomfort, you are encouraged to contact me directly on [redacted] to arrange for a free counseling assistance.

There are several potential benefits from this study to the Nigerian immigrants as individuals and as a community in understanding among others, the adaption behavior of immigrants within a host culture. In addition, organizations may gain better understanding of the communicative skills of immigrant Nigerians in the US, and therefore improve employability of this population.

Payment:

Participation in this study will not involve any form of incentive nor payments.

Privacy:

The privacy of the participants of this study is treated very seriously. Specifically, no identities of participants will be shared nor disclosed at any stage of this study. Individual identities will not be required on the questionnaires neither in any ensuing results or publication from this study. Reports coming out of this survey will not share the identities of individual participants. All information provided during the course of this study shall be used strictly for the study and shall never be used outside the research. The researcher will not be privy to the actual participants who may take part in the study. Participants will not be expected to complete or sign any informed consent since completion and submission of surveys shall imply consent to participate in the study. As required by Walden University, all data will be password protected and store for 5 years. All data will however be expected to be destroyed after the period of 5 years.

Contacts and Questions:

Should you have any questions before, during and after participation in this study, kindly contact the student researcher through email or phone at [redacted] or

[redacted] Should you, however, wish to speak directly to a Walden University Research Participant Advocate, kindly call [redacted] on issues related to your rights as a research participant. Please note that contact number is available till 0x/11/2018.

Obtaining Your Consent

By completing and returning the survey, you consent to participate in the study and have consciously read and understood your rights, benefits, risks, and purpose of the study. Note also that as an additional privacy measure, you are no consent signature will be required.

Thank you very much,

Peter Azorji

This researcher certifies that he has no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest in the subject matter.

Appendix F: Short Demographic Form

As part of this process of completing this survey, kindly provide the following demographic information. Please note that this data will only be used for analysis of the results.

Please do not add your name or any identity remarks whatsoever.

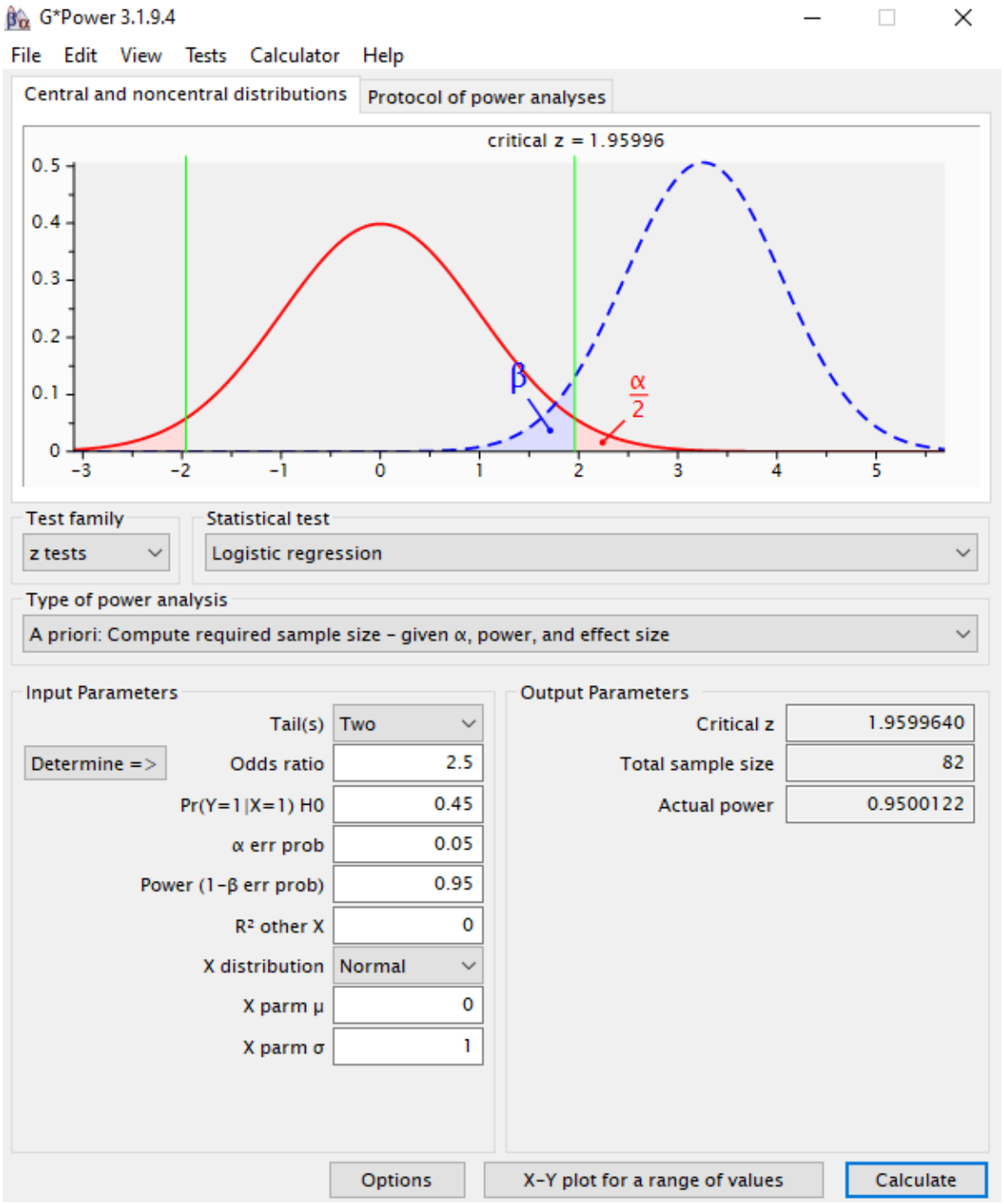
Please circle or indicate as relevant

Age: 18-30_____; 31 – 50____ ; 51 and above_____ (Years) **Gender:** Male / Female

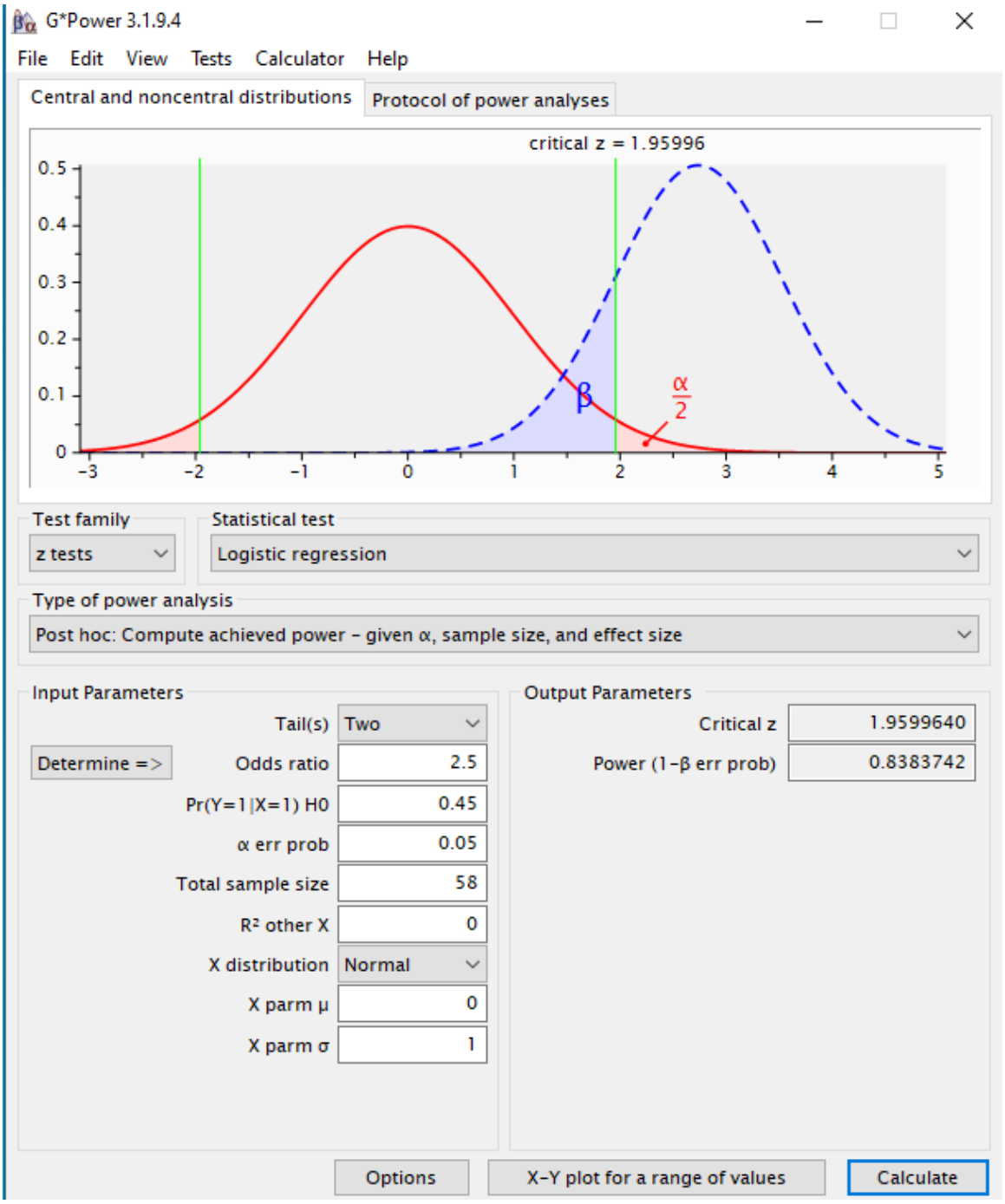
Legal Resident: Yes / No

Are you currently Employed: Yes / No

Appendix G: Revised A Priori G*Power Analysis With Odds Ratio at 2.5



Appendix H: Post Hoc G*Power Analysis



Appendix I: SPSS Outputs

```
NOMREG ODS_Cat (BASE=FIRST ORDER=ASCENDING) BY RelCategory
AssertivenessCat
  /CRITERIA CIN(95) DELTA(0) MXITER(100) MXSTEP(5) CHKSEP(20)
LCONVERGE(0) PCONVERGE(0.000001)
    SINGULAR(0.00000001)
  /MODEL
  /STEPWISE=PIN(.05) POUT(0.1) MINEFFECT(0) RULE(SINGLE)
ENTRYMETHOD(LR) REMOVALMETHOD(LR)
  /INTERCEPT=INCLUDE
  /PRINT=CLASSTABLE FIT PARAMETER SUMMARY LRT CPS STEP MFI.
```

Nominal Regression

Warnings

There are 1 (8.3%) cells (i.e., dependent variable levels by subpopulations) with zero frequencies.

Case Processing Summary

		N	Marginal Percentage
Dissent Cat	Upward Dissent	31	53.4%
	Displaced Dissent	14	24.1%
	Latent Dissent	13	22.4%
Religiosity Cat	Religious	44	75.9%
	Non Religious	14	24.1%
Assertiveness Cat	Assertive	25	43.1%
	Not Assertive	33	56.9%
Valid		58	100.0%
Missing		0	
Total		58	
Subpopulation		4	

Model Fitting Information

Model	Model Fitting Criteria -2 Log Likelihood	Likelihood Ratio Tests Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	41.161			
Final	16.881	24.280	4	.000

Goodness-of-Fit

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	.422	2	.810
Deviance	.643	2	.725

Pseudo R-Square

Cox and Snell	.342
Nagelkerke	.394
McFadden	.207

Likelihood Ratio Tests

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria -2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Likelihood Ratio Tests Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept	16.881[a]	.000	0	.
Religiosity Cat	17.749	.867	2	.648
Assertiveness Cat	37.637	20.755	2	.000

The chi-square statistic is the difference in -2 log-likelihoods between the final model and a reduced model. The reduced model is formed by omitting an effect from the final model. The null hypothesis is that all parameters of that effect are 0.

a. This reduced model is equivalent to the final model because omitting the effect does not increase the degrees of freedom.

Parameter Estimates

Dissent Cat[a]		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B) Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B) Upper Bound
Displaced Dissent	Intercept	.548	.914	.359	1	.549			
	[Religiosity Cat=1]	-.306	.939	.107	1	.744	.736	.117	4.636
	[Religiosity Cat=2]	0[b]	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	[Assertiveness Cat=1]	-2.774	.912	9.244	1	.002	.062	.010	.373
	[Assertiveness Cat=2]	0[b]	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
Latent Dissent	Intercept	-.433	1.225	.125	1	.724			
	[Religiosity Cat=1]	.795	1.252	.404	1	.525	2.215	.191	25.752
	[Religiosity Cat=2]	0[b]	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	[Assertiveness Cat=1]	-3.205	1.133	8.007	1	.005	.041	.004	.373
	[Assertiveness Cat=2]	0[b]	.	.	0	.	.	.	.

a. The reference category is: Upward Dissent.

b. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

Classification

Observed	Predicted			
	Upward Dissent	Displaced Dissent	Latent Dissent	Percent Correct
Upward Dissent	22	1	8	71.0%
Displaced Dissent	2	2	10	14.3%
Latent Dissent	1	1	11	84.6%
Overall Percentage	43.1%	6.9%	50.0%	60.3%

```
FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Gender Age RelCategory AssertivenessCat ODS_Cat
  /NTILES=4
  /STATISTICS=STDDEV MINIMUM MAXIMUM MEAN MEDIAN SUM
  /ORDER=ANALYSIS.
```

Frequencies

Statistics

		Gender	Age	Religiosity Cat	Assertiveness Cat	Dissent Cat
N	Valid	58	58	58	58	58
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		.34	.60	1.24	1.57	1.69
Median		.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Std. Deviation		.479	.493	.432	.500	.821
Minimum		0	0	1	1	1
Maximum		1	1	2	2	3
Sum		20	35	72	91	98
Percentiles	25	.00	.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	50	.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
	75	1.00	1.00	1.25	2.00	2.00

Frequency Table

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	38	65.5	65.5	65.5
	Female	20	34.5	34.5	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Under 45 Years	23	39.7	39.7	39.7
	45 Years and Over	35	60.3	60.3	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Religiosity Cat

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Religious	44	75.9	75.9	75.9
	Non Religious	14	24.1	24.1	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Assertiveness Cat

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Assertive	25	43.1	43.1	43.1
	Not Assertive	33	56.9	56.9	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Dissent Cat

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Upward Dissent	31	53.4	53.4	53.4
	Displaced Dissent	14	24.1	24.1	77.6
	Latent Dissent	13	22.4	22.4	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	