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Beyond the Enclave: Success Strategies of Immigrant Entrepreneurs

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Abstract

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MBA, Belmont University, 2001

BS, Accounting, Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, 1993

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

In the United States, immigrant entrepreneurs start almost one third of all new businesses. However, many immigrant entrepreneurs lack the knowledge or expertise to evolve their businesses beyond the ethnic enclave where the businesses are located. This multiple case study captured the strategies used by 5 Latino immigrant business owners who successfully expanded their business beyond their ethnic enclave. The conceptual framework for this study was dynamic capabilities theory. Data were collected from interviews, company documents, and observations of the operation of businesses and owners. Member checking and transcript reviews were used to enhance the reliability and credibility of the data. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's data analysis method was used to identify 6 themes that yielded 3 possible strategies to help Latino immigrant business owners expand outside of their enclave: (a) adopt a multicultural hybridism model changing the internal make-up of the employee base to include more interethnic labor and managerial resources; (b) achieve language and cultural proficiency of the host community; and (c) seek and nurture professional development and mentorship relationships to obtain access to advice, opportunities, and financial resources. Also noted was the importance of individual readiness to seize opportunities and being tenacious in their business efforts. The study findings may contribute to positive social change because strategies that help immigrant entrepreneurs succeed have benefits that extend beyond their immediate family to the broader communities in which they operate by increasing job creation, wealth accumulation, and the development of society.

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Dedication

To my children, Eduardo and Ana Claire, I wake up every day thankful to have you in my life. Never stop learning. To my wife, Claire, I am nothing without your support. Thank you for embarking on this journey with me; you are my rock, love you *molcas*. To my parents, Delfin (RIP) and Amalia, who sacrificed so much to provide me with a strong educational foundation that continues to pay off, thank you for instilling in me the importance of hard work and education. To my grandparents, Melita, Pepito, and Abue Bertha, who lived full, productive lives and were the ultimate teachers- teaching me about determination, humility, and compassion. I miss them every day.

To the many immigrant entrepreneurs I have met on my journey - those who participated in this research, and those who did not - because their resilient work ethic and creativity, despite the challenges that they encounter, makes them a source of inspiration. Our country and our communities are better because of your contributions.

Thank you to anyone that has ever believed in me, despite my many shortcomings.

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I would like to thank Dr. Doug Campbell for not giving up on me. His guidance, advice, and encouragement kept me going, even in the most difficult moment of this journey. To my colleagues at Belmont University, your words of encouragement, and your advice have been invaluable. To Dean Pat Raines, thank you for your support and advice over the years. To Renata and Maria Clara, mis queridas compañeras de viaje; con todo mi respeto, admiración, y agradecimiento por todo lo que me han enseñado. To my colleagues at Conexión Américas, no words to express my gratitude and admiration for your commitment. Thank you for being part of my *familia.*

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Background of the Problem

Immigrants who come to the United States bring hope, energy, and, in many cases, an entrepreneurial desire to partake in the dream of owning their own business (Agius & Canizales, 2016; Kwon, Heflin, & Ruef, 2013). These immigrants' pursuit of entrepreneurial endeavors provides them with opportunities for social integration and personal financial prosperity (Moon, Farmer, Miller, & Abreo 2014; Poschke, 2013). The personal prosperity ends up benefiting the country's overall economy (Mandelman & Zlate, 2012).

However, immigrant entrepreneurs often face roadblocks as they grow their businesses (Ndofor & Priem, 2011). They often have limited capital to invest in their ventures and are held back from success in their endeavors by their lack of understanding of how to establish, run, and grow their enterprises in a modern nation with many legal and safety requirements (Moon et al., 2014). Many of these immigrants, especially the poorest ones from Latin American nations, have limited formal education and limited English language skills (Pandya, Batalova, & McHugh, 2011; Salcido & Menjívar, 2012). Sometimes, the owners of these microbusinesses become successful enough to support themselves and their family's modest lifestyles (Kallick, 2015). However, due to their skill set and knowledge base, they often lack effective strategies for growing and expanding their businesses (Moon et al., 2014).

Problem Statement

In 2011, immigrant entrepreneurs were responsible for more than 28% of all U.S. businesses founded in the United States (Fairlie, 2012). However, relatively few immigrant business owners have expanded their businesses outside of their immigrant enclave or achieved financial independence (Ndofor & Priem, 2011; Riva & Lucchini, 2015; Xie & Gough, 2011). The general business problem was that some Latino immigrant business owners in Nashville, Tennessee are failing to successfully expand their businesses outside of the ethnic enclave in which they operate, resulting in limited growth opportunities. The specific business problem was that some Latino immigrant business owners lack strategies to expand their businesses outside of the ethnic enclave where they are located.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case exploratory study was to explore the strategies used by five Latino immigrant business owners residing in Nashville, Tennessee to expand their businesses beyond their ethnic enclave where the businesses are located. I collected data by interviewing the owners of these businesses, reviewing documents, and observing the characteristics and operations of these businesses.

With this study, I contributed to social change because I was able to expand the body of knowledge concerning which strategies and practices may help some Latino immigrant business owners to be more prosperous. Specifically, findings contain additional information on the challenges that some immigrants face in becoming business owners and guidance on how they can grow and run their ventures beyond their ethnic enclave. The study findings may lead to social change because the success of immigrant entrepreneurs extends to the broader communities in which they operate, strengthening them through job creation and wealth accumulation.

Nature of the Study

This section contains the research method and design for this study. The validity and the reliability of a research study depend on the proper fit between the topic under inquiry and the research methodology and design (Bluhm, Harman, Lee, & Mitchell, 2011). In this research, I used the qualitative method. Qualitative studies are designed to explore patterns or themes in data that are not easily revealed in numerical formats (Yin, 2014). Using a qualitative method permits researchers to delve into a problem from the perspective of the study population (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2012).

There are several qualitative research designs, yet all qualitative researchers, no matter their design, intend to systematically describe facts and characteristics of relationships between events and phenomena (Smith, 2011). I chose to use a multiple case exploratory study as the design for this study. The study involved a purposeful sample of five Latino business owners who have experienced success growing their businesses outside their ethnic enclave. The need to explore the difficulties that Latino business owners face when they expand their businesses outside their enclave warranted the use of a case study method. By using this method, I was able to hear from business owners who have experienced some level of success venturing out of their ethnic enclave; this enriched the understanding of the issue under investigation. Capturing insights directly from Latino business owners allowed me to develop a holistic, complex, and complete picture to identify the strategies they used to expand such business beyond an ethnic enclave. I selected a case study design because of my desire to explore in depth the strategies that Latino business owners use while expanding their businesses outside of their enclave.

The use of a quantitative method was not appropriate for this study. The need to understand the problem from the views of the participants precluded the use of such method since the quantitative method would have required a predictive hypothesis (Yin, 2014). I also considered other study designs. For example, I considered ethnographic and grounded theory designs. While the study included a cultural group, ethnography was not appropriate in this instance, as this is not a study about culture; instead it was a study of a business problem. Ethnographic design requires ongoing observation over a long period of time, by gathering data thorough interviews and observations (Kriyantono, 2012). Ethnography allows researchers to study a cultural group of people in a natural setting (van Maanen, 2011). Grounded theory would also not have been an appropriate design for this study. The grounded theory design would not be helpful in addressing the specific business problem. Grounded theory is an inductive methodology used to develop theories. Since my purpose was not to develop a theory, I opted not to use grounded theory. Grounded theory would also have required organizing, analyzing, and using numerous data collection techniques over a long period of time (Hutchison, Johnston, & Breckon, 2010). This approach was also not ideal because of the time limitations to conduct this study.

Other researchers who have studied immigrant entrepreneurship have used the qualitative method and similar designs to conduct their studies. Taylor, Caseey, and Oviatt (2016) studied Korean enclaves in Atlanta, Georgia using the qualitative method. Elo and Hieta (2017) used a case study to explore the growth of Finnish entrepreneurs in Oregon. Despite some of the limitations and shortcomings of a qualitative method and case study design, the method and design I chose enabled me to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Research Question

The specific research question was as follows: What strategies do Latino immigrant business owners in Nashville, Tennessee use to expand their businesses outside of the ethnic enclave where their businesses are located?

The research question generated a critical review of the existing literature on immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurship. By reviewing this literature, I was able to craft appropriate interview questions for participants. The three profile questions and 11 open-ended interview questions that I used are listed below.

Interview Questions

The three demographic profile questions were

1. How long ago did you move to the United States?
2. Would you consider your English proficiency to be basic, intermediate, or advanced?
3. Did you own or run a business in your native country before moving to the United States?

The investigative open-ended questions were

1. What is your business and why did you start it?
2. What factors influenced your decision to start this particular type of business?
3. Please describe who your typical customers are and what strategies you use to market your business to your customers.
4. What factors played a role in allowing you to grow your business outside of serving Latino customers?
5. How are your family members involved in the business?
6. How, if at all, did the composition of your employees change as your business grew outside of the enclave?
7. What organizational capabilities do you think were helpful to grow your business outside the ethnic enclave in which you started?
8. In your business you have two core resources that you have to manage as you make decisions about operating and growing your business, human capital and financial capital. Can you share how you think human capital played a role in your ability to grow your business outside of your ethnic enclave?
9. What about financial capital? Did you have the financial capacity to do it, or did you have to seek outside sources of financing to grow?
10. What advice would you offer an aspiring Latino business owner who wants to grow his/her business by offering his/her services to a broader market outside of his/her ethnic enclave?

11. Is there anything else you would like to share with me that you think is important and relevant to understanding the realities of business owners seeking to expand their business outside of their ethnic enclave?

Conceptual Framework

For this study, I adopted the dynamic capabilities conceptual framework as the lens for studying the adaptation strategies that participants of this study have used to break away from just serving the ethnic enclave in which they operate. Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (1997) were the first ones to offer dynamic capabilities as an abstract framework to study competitive advantage in enterprising firms. Dynamic capabilities are the distinct skills, processes, organizational structures, decisions, and rules that determine a firm’s ability to reconfigure its internal and external competencies to respond to external business environments (Teece, 2012).

The dynamic capabilities conceptual framework was a good fit for this study because I used this framework to analyze the responses with which business owners identify and formulate responses to market opportunities. The prevailing view among students of Latino business owners in Nashville, Tennessee is that they operate small unsophisticated businesses that primarily cater to the Latino immigrant community (Chaney, 2010). Entrepreneurship can be thought of as an asset *orchestration* process where the business owner is continuously finding new value-enhancing combinations inside and outside the enterprise (Shuen, Feller, & Teece, 2014). Understanding how Latino business owners in Nashville, Tennessee have adapted their business models to work outside their enclave provided meaningful insights to other business owners wanting to grow their businesses outside their enclave.

This conceptual framework was also fitting as researchers have used the dynamic capabilities framework to explain a firm's sources of competitive advantage over time (Shilke, 2014; Teece et al., 1997). This paradigm has been used to explain how businesses gain competitive advantage by becoming aware of changes in the environments in which they operate.

Operational Definitions

Researchers often use the terms *small business, self-employment, microenterprises*, *entrepreneurial ventures*, and *microbusinesses* interchangeably in the literature (Bauchet & Morduch, 2013; Teece, 2014). In general, all these terms refer to commercial enterprises, with very simple management structures, where the owner is usually the one responsible for running the venture and where the owner makes all decisions regarding how to run the business (Calderon, Iacovone, & Juarez, 2016; Helen, 2011). These enterprises have minimal division of labor and typically less than 10 employees.

Entrepreneur: An entrepreneur is a person who runs a business with the objective of making profit, while also assuming all the risks associated with operating the business (Miskin & Rose, 2015; Spivack, McKelvie, & Haynie, 2014).

Ethnic enclave: An ethnic enclave is a community where immigrant groups settle in a distinct geographic location and typically organize a range of business enterprises serving their own ethnic market and/or the general population (Wang, 2013). The basic characteristic of an ethnic enclave is that a significant proportion of workforce in the business is also immigrant (Ndofor & Priem, 2011). Enclaves offer protected access to labor and markets as well as informal sources of credit (Li, Lyons, & Brown, 2012).

Immigrant entrepreneurs: Newcomers who have yet to embed themselves within and adapt to the fabric of their respective host countries (Neville, 2014).

Immigrant entrepreneurship: Immigrant entrepreneurship is the entrepreneurship of recent migrants that involves starting a business or engaging in self-employment (Neville, 2014).

Immigrant-owned business: Those businesses with 51% or more foreign-born ownership (Wang & Liu, 2015).

Latino: Latino is the term used mainly in the United States to people of at least partial Latin American extraction. The United States Census uses the ethnonym *Hispanic or Latino* to refer to "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race" (Jaime, Londono, & Halpern, 2013, p. 274).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

In this subsection, I focus on important factors in a research study. Assumptions are elements of a study assumed to be true, limitations represent inherent weaknesses in a study, and delimitations provide boundaries for the study.

Assumptions

Qualitative research assumptions are the internal beliefs that the researcher brings to the research effort (Seidman, 2013). An assumption is a realistic expectation, something the researcher accepts to be true without concrete proof (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). For this study, the first assumption was that the study could offer value to immigrant entrepreneurs by identifying strategies that help them build successful businesses.

A second assumption that guided the research study was that a multiple case exploratory study was the most appropriate design to explore the strategies that immigrant entrepreneurs employ to grow their businesses outside their enclave. A final assumption was that the study participants would participate on a voluntary basis and would provide accurate answers to the interview questions.

Limitations

Limitations are inherent in any type of research and represent the weaknesses of the research study (Svensson & Doumas, 2013). The focus of this multiple case exploratory study was on exploring effective strategies for Latino immigrant microbusiness owners who operate in Nashville, Tennessee, to grow and expand their businesses beyond the boundaries of their immigrant enclave. The fact that the research was specific to an ethnic group, Latinos, and geographic region, Nashville, Tennessee, could yield findings that are not applicable to other defined groups, operating other types of business, or in other locations.

The limited number of study participants was an important limitation that could weaken the findings of the study. Van den Bergh and Du Plessis (2012) posited that small sample sizes might limit the transferability of the research results.

Bias is inherent in a case study sampling method. A purposeful, nonrandom sample for the research study included some selection bias. Finally the lack of a mechanism to corroborate the veracity of the information that the participants provided was a limitation of the study. I shared with all study participants a document assuring the confidentiality of their information. Sharing this document with the study participants mitigated the risk of not having veracity in the answers they provided.

Delimitations

Delimitations define the scope or boundaries that the researcher sets for the research study (Svensson & Doumas, 2013). The initial delimitation of the study was the geographical location in which it was conducted. Only immigrant entrepreneurs based in Nashville, Tennessee were able to participate. The second delimitation of the study was the use of purposeful sampling to identify the participants of the study. This delimitation constrained the study participants to business owners who have in fact grown their businesses outside their enclave. An additional delimitation of the study was that while there are immigrant entrepreneurs of diverse ethnicities and countries of origin, the study was limited exclusively to Latinos.

Significance of the Study

In this doctoral study, I explored strategies used by five Latino immigrant business owners residing in Nashville, Tennessee to expand their businesses outside of their ethnic enclave. The study is of value to businesses seeking to expand their market share and their financial results by growing beyond the initial ethnic enclave where they operated. Included in this section are contributions to business practice and implications for social change.

Contribution to Business Practice

In 2014, Tennessee ranked number two in growth of the Latino community in the United States (Stepler & Lopez, 2016). In the entire state, the Latino population increased 134% between 2000 and 2010, then an additional 17.6% between 2010 and 2015 (U.S. Census, 2015). By 2012, Latinos in Nashville, Tennessee represented 10% of the Nashville population (Nagle, Gustafson, & Burd, 2012). This population growth has supported the increase of immigrant-owned businesses in the region. According to the Immigration Policy Center (2012), immigrant entrepreneurs in Tennessee generated $1.8 billion in sales.

The significance of this study is that identified strategies to help immigrant entrepreneurs improve the financial performance of their entrepreneurial endeavors. Since immigrant-owned businesses play a significant role in the development of many communities, including Nashville, Tennessee, the findings from this research might help other immigrant-owned businesses deploy business practices and strategies to help their own businesses grow and expand beyond their immigrant enclave.

While the research was specific to an ethnic group, type of business, and region, the findings provide insights that might be useful to other defined groups, operating other types of business, or in other locations. By identifying such insights, I contribute to helping budding immigrant entrepreneurs have a better opportunity to achieve a greater measure of prosperity.

Implications for Social Change

The study contributed to positive social change because the results are helpful to immigrant business owners while they try to grow and expand their businesses. Business endeavors provide ethnic minorities a catalyst for social integration and economic progress (Agius & Canizales, 2016). Identifying strategies that help immigrant entrepreneurs succeed have benefits that extend beyond their immediate family to the broader communities in which they operate by increasing job creation, wealth accumulation, and the development of society. The results are also helpful to policy makers as they can aid in crafting policies that advance the support of immigrant businesses as an immigrant integration strategy.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The review of the literature for the study included a broad selection of books, journals, and research studies. In researching and conducting the literature review, the primary sources were peer-reviewed journal articles accessed from Google Scholar and a combination of the databases available through Walden University, Belmont University, and Vanderbilt University. The primary databases used were ABI/Inform, Business Source Complete, Science Direct, and ProQuest. An in-depth review of databases searches used key words and phrases including *immigrant entrepreneurship, Latino/Hispanic enterprises, immigrant enclaves, dynamic capability, SMEs, small business growth, transnational entrepreneurship, immigrant business enterprises, Latino/Hispanic business ownership, entrepreneurship theories, success factors in business ownership, socioeconomics,* and *immigratio*n. I used variations of terms (e.g., *business owner, micro business, entrepreneur, entrepreneurship, micro enterprise, manager*, etc.) to assist in locating additional articles.

In total, I identified 201 sources for this research. Of those sources, 96% are peer reviewed and 90% have a publication date of 2011 or beyond. When using sources that were not peer reviewed, a total of nine, I decided to use them because they came from established and reputable entities, such as Pew Research, the Census Office, the Small Business Administration, or the Migration Policy Institute.

Immigrant entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth and social renewal of host countries in which it happens (Arrighetti, Bolzani, & Lasagni, 2014). Immigrant businesses create employment, competition, social returns, and wealth (Perera, Gomez, Weisinger, & Tobey, 2013). Research into ethnicity and entrepreneurship has its roots with classic works such as those of Weber (1930), Sombart (1914), and Simmel (1950). In general, immigrant entrepreneurship researchers support the notion that immigrant entrepreneurship lays at a particularly important juncture between economics and sociology (Ibrahim & Galt, 2011; Ilhan-Nas, Sahin, & Cilingir, 2011). Although economists and business scholars have dominated the study of entrepreneurship, scholars in fields as diverse as sociology, demography, or urban planning have studied immigrant entrepreneurship (Jennings, Greenwood, Lounsbury, & Suddaby, 2013). Because management is a multidisciplinary field of research that draws from finance, business, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and several other disciplines to examine phenomenon, the study of immigrant business entrepreneurs might benefit if undertaken under an interdisciplinary lens.

Immigrants have been highly industrious in finding alternative ways of earning a livelihood, including informal self-employment (Ortiz-Walters, Gavino, & Williams, 2015). Carter (2011) noted that business ownership is frequently a vital alternative to wage and salary employment for making a living, and thus has important implications for earnings and wealth inequality. Researchers have studied this field of immigrant entrepreneurship for more than 3 decades (Aliaga-Isla & Rialp, 2013; Lofstrom 2011). Much of the research on why immigrants pursue entrepreneurial endeavors has mostly focused on the factors that incentivize or hinder immigrant start-ups (Chand & Ghorbani, 2011; Curci & Mackoy, 2010). For example, research undertaken when exploring immigrant entrepreneurship includes the loss of human capital gained when moving abroad, such as foreign-earned credentials (Creese & Wiebe, 2012) and individual network contacts (Buzdugan & Halli, 2009), or English proficiency issues that become a hindrance to business venture formation and integration (Wang, 2011).

Immigrant entrepreneurship is a topic that has been widely studied by scholars around the world (Braymen & Neymotin, 2014; Chrysostome & Lin, 2010; Curci & Mackoy, 2010; Ndofor & Priem, 2011; Pisani, 2012; Zolin & Schlosser, 2012). There has been much research on the role of immigrant entrepreneurship in host-country economies. This research has yielded a large body of literature on the start-up and development of immigrant-owned businesses (Huerta, 2011; Kim, 2012; Ndofor & Priem, 2011). The topic is more common in countries that have experienced visible growth in immigrant communities because of global migration patterns, particularly those societies where business entrepreneurship is a means to benefit the economic stance of low-income immigrants (Raijman & Kemp, 2009).

Much of the literature on immigrant entrepreneurship focuses on the choice of self-employment as an alternative to the poorly paid labor market (Ilhan-Nas et al., 2011). However, a new vein of research has gotten attention from researchers who are focusing on studying the engagement of immigrant businesses catering to mainstream segments of the economy and who increasingly serve markets with nonethnic products and services (Arrighetti et al., 2014). In this study, I explored the adoption of strategies that allow immigrant entrepreneurs to cross boundaries beyond enclave markets. Immigrants' business pursuits are frequently the result of a tangled web of legal, cultural, and demographic influences (Hanson, 2010). Many immigrant-owned businesses are launched within ethnic enclaves (Ndofor & Priem, 2011). Ethnic enclaves offer a safe and easy space for immigrant businesses to operate when they launch their ventures. Enclaves provide an environment shielded from competition of those nonethic businesses, yet they also offer limited profit potential (Arrighetti et al., 2014). The enclave creates opportunities but also marks the boundaries of an economic space that ethnic firms cannot easily overcome. The nature of their product or service offering, the lack of articulation of the business model, and the limited managerial experience make the ethnic firms noncompetitive in mainstream markets, despite the fact that venturing in mainstream markets may provide a platform for achieving better financial returns (Ma, Zhao, Wang, & Lee, 2013).

The focus of this multiple case study was to explore businesses started and managed by Latino immigrant entrepreneurs in Nashville, Tennessee that have ventured out of their ethnic enclave and to understand if there is a common set of strategies, capabilities, or approaches that can be recommended to other immigrant entrepreneurs as they pursue their own business endeavors.

The immigrant entrepreneur paradigm has emerged in an attempt to understand how immigrants access business ownership (Chrysostome, 2010; Lofstrom, 2011). Curci and Mackoy (2010) recommended researchers should consider personal, economic, and institutional factors to understand the immigrant business entrepreneurship phenomenon. Ndofor and Priem (2011), for example, conducted a study of 103 immigrant-owned business ventures in the Midwest and concluded that a range of capital endowments and social identities influenced their choice of venture strategies as well as their outcomes.

Today a few prominent views have emerged from the literature that explain why and how immigrants pursue entrepreneurial activities (Fitzgerald & Howe-Walsh, 2009; Kirkwood, 2009; Lofstrom, 2011). These views recognize that different immigrant groups have very distinct entrepreneurial journeys based on social class, geography, education level, or other stratifying differences (Krittayapong, 2012). Three major perspectives have emerged in the literature: blocked mobility, cultural predisposition, and ethnic enclaves. These approaches detail various conceptual frameworks that explain why and how immigrants pursue entrepreneurship, primarily focusing on the dynamics that incentivize or hinder business endeavors undertaken by immigrants.

However, despite the fact these three constructs have emerged after researchers have looked at the various views of immigrant business entrepreneurship and factors that impact these, few researchers have focused on the exploration of how immigrant entrepreneurs who begin their ventures by focusing on selling in ethnic enclaves evolve and adapt their strategies as a way of competitive survival by expanding their customer base to a broader market.

A limited amount of contemporary scholarship in this area seems to suggest that immigrant entrepreneurs who eventually abandon their ethnic identity are favored by earning better returns on their ventures as they target superior mainstream customers (Braymen & Neymotin, 2014; Ensign & Robinson, 2011; Trevizo & Lopez, 2016). In 2013, Braymen and Neymotin, using Kauffman Foundation data from 2004 to 2008, found a statistically significant negative effect on firm profitability for businesses that were located in immigrant enclaves. Ndofor and Priem (2011) used field study data on immigrant entrepreneurs who have high levels of economic capital and weak social ties to conclude that these businesses are better configured to succeed outside an enclave. Trevizo and Lopez (2016) also found that immigrant firms that are located in immigrant enclaves tend to experience more difficulty achieving higher levels of success measured by a lower number of paid employees they hire. In a study conducted with Mexican immigrant-owned storefronts in Los Angeles, Trevizo, and Lopez concluded that performance of these ventures was hindered precisely by the spatial segregation created by operating in enclaves.

To explore how immigrant entrepreneurs have successfully crossed outside their ethnic enclave, in this study, I used the dynamic capabilities framework first coined by Teece et al. (1997). Dynamic capabilities are a firm's abilities to integrate and to reconfigure their own competencies to address their changing environments (Teece, 2012). While dynamic capabilities have been used extensively to explain how large corporations and technology-driven firms innovate and sustain competitive advantage (Cabanelas, Omil, & Vázquez, 2013), I used the same framework but through the lens of a small immigrant-owned venture to analyze how immigrant-owned businesses integrate their external organizational skills, resources, and functional competences to succeed when selling beyond their ethnic enclave. I identified distinguishable and explicit strategies that immigrant business owners use to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal resources to match the opportunities of the marketplace.

Immigrant Entrepreneurship

Is immigrant entrepreneurship a key toward upward mobility? Many authors have endorsed the idea that entrepreneurship is indeed a realistic tool to achieve upward mobility (Moon et al., 2014; Rosales, 2012). However, the literature does not include conclusive evidence. Research on the impact that pursuing entrepreneurial endeavors has on income and wealth creation is mixed, and it appears to vary depending on the socioeconomic group, the industry, and perhaps even gender. For example, Browne et al. (2011) indicated that the majority of microentrepreneurs who begin their ventures while they are poor remain poor over time. The same lack of skills and the barriers that prevent these entrepreneurs from finding jobs (language barriers, low educational background, or even legal status) keep them from creating successful businesses.

In a study examining the factors affecting performance, Lerner, Brush, and Hisrich (1997) posited the reasons why individuals pursue entrepreneurship. They described five theoretical perspectives that explain the performance of the firms created by entrepreneurs: (a) individual motivations and goals, (b) social learning (entrepreneurial socialization), (c) network affiliation, (d) human capital (level of education, business skills), and (e) environmental influences (location and social and political variables; Lerner et al., 1997). Each perspective has been studied extensively.

Of these major perspectives, three have emerged within the immigrant entrepreneurship literature that explain how and why immigrants pursue entrepreneurship: blocked mobility, cultural predisposition, and ethnic enclaves (Choi 2010; Huerta, 2011; Vries, 2012; Xie & Gough, 2011). Incorporating all three prevailing constructs into the interview questions helped to better understand how entrepreneurship emerges within immigrant communities.

Blocked Mobility

The first rationale for why immigrants pursue entrepreneurship is known as *blocked mobility*. Blocked mobility refers to the notion that immigrants pursue business entrepreneurship because a lack of upward mobility exists in the traditional labor markets, and there is no better option for them (Huerta, 2011; Vries, 2012). The choice of entrepreneurship is mostly situational and arises when the options for external job mobility is limited (Katila & Wahlbeck, 2012; Sørensen & Sharkey, 2014). This rationale suggests some immigrants may pursue entrepreneurship because it is the only way to earn a living (Lin & Tao, 2012; Poschke, 2013).

Another term for this rationale is the middleman minority perspective (Robertson & Grant, 2016). Factors such as host country hostility, racial discrimination, and labor constraints, sometimes rooted in immigration status, may prevent immigrants from participating in traditional labor settings (Baltar & Icart, 2013). In these cases, middleman minorities move in and serve as economic liaisons in lines of work that may not be immediately productive. They tend to rely on the in-group for resources such as loans, credit, and business tips (Batnitzky & McDowell, 2013).

Market disadvantage theory provides a strong theoretical grounding for the blocked mobility rationale. First explained by Light in 1979, market disadvantage theory may be used to explain how immigrants and minorities who encounter social discrimination, low wages, and rejections by the labor market turn to business ownership as an outlet for financial aspirations (Aldrich & Yang, 2013; Bird & Wennberg, 2016). Rocha, Carneiro, and Varum (2015) used disadvantage theory to conduct their research and concluded that the social uniqueness, lack of broad networks, and other cultural factors are responsible for lack of meaningful business success. Chaumba and Nackerud (2013) suggested that these social and cultural forces create institutional hurdles that hinder business growth.

Necessity Versus Opportunity

The structuralist approach suggests that external factors in the host environment, such as discrimination or entry barriers in the labor market due to education or language deficits, are what pushes immigrants into business ownership. Chrysostome and Lin (2010) offered a typology that aligns with the blocked mobility paradigm. This rationale distinguishes between necessity immigrant business entrepreneurs and opportunity business entrepreneurs. Opportunity entrepreneurship in capitalist societies has an intrinsic link to the availability of markets and occurs as a result of methodical strategic planning. Markets are crucial components of the opportunity structure (Beckers & Blumberg, 2013). If there is latent demand for a product or service, then a business opportunity exists for entrepreneurs to capitalize on it and to create value derived from exploiting such opportunity (Chrysostome & Lin, 2010).

In contrast, necessity entrepreneurs are individuals who begin their enterprises because they see no better alternative or have no better alternative in the wage sector (Poschke, 2013). Circumstances force necessity entrepreneurs to undertake business ventures as they encounter obstacles that hinder them from participating in the traditional labor market. Necessity business entrepreneurship prevails primarily in developing countries with limited economic growth and prosperity (Ensign & Robinson, 2011) but also prevails in host communities when labor markets are restricted or scarce. Some have suggested necessity entrepreneurship does not create value for entrepreneurs or for society because it takes place in marginalized economic conditions and is a form of hidden unemployment (Román, Congregado, & Millán 2013). Rosales (2012) validated this assertion and reported an increased rate of entrepreneurial business activity in the form of street vendors in Los Angeles during periods of scarce jobs and plentiful cheap labor. Despite higher education levels, a growing number of necessity business entrepreneurs come from developed countries (Chrysostome, 2010; Ensign & Robinson, 2011). This occurs with the penalty many immigrants pay because employers in the host country do not recognize the immigrants' foreign educational credentials (Arbeit & Warren, 2013; Creese & Wiebe, 2012). Dawson and Henley (2012) described the two facets of entrepreneurship (necessity and opportunity) when discussing push and pull factors. Browne et al. (2011) noted that workers may choose to become self-employed because they see entrepreneurship as providing better opportunities (pull factors). Moreover, major barriers in the wage/salary sector might force some workers into self-employment (push factors).

Cultural Predisposition: Is It in the Blood?

The second rationale for why immigrants start businesses encompasses cultural predisposition characteristics. This view espouses that immigrants participate in entrepreneurial business activities because they have a set of cultural, ethnic, and class characteristics that cause them to be more apt than other ethnic groups to pursue entrepreneurship (Choi, 2010). Supporters of this culturalist approach defend the theory that immigrant groups have culturally determined features that favor entrepreneurial traits (Eijdenberg, Paas, & Masurel, 2015). According to this culturalist perspective features such as dedication to hard work, acceptance of risk, compliance with social value patterns, communal solidarity, and loyalty provide the impetus that facilitates entrepreneurial behavior (Farmer, 2011; Matricano & Sorrentino, 2014). These cultural attributes supposedly support members of minority ethnic groups' participation in entrepreneurial business endeavors. In a study of Chinese and Indian communities in the

United States, Chand and Ghorbani (2011) explored the role of culture in the formation and management of entrepreneurial business ventures. By using a combination of national culture frameworks, Chand and Ghorbani concluded that different dimensions of culture play a role in venture formation and performance among different ethnic groups.

Ethnic Enclaves

The third rationale, at the center of this doctoral study, is the existence of opportunity structures in which immigrants take advantage of economic and social settings, for example, the existence of an *ethnic enclave* or other social networks (Curci & Mackoy, 2010). The study of enclaves as networks of support offers a solid and well-researched theoretical perspective. This perspective may be used to explain how entrepreneurs who can refer to a broad and diverse social network of support when launching their businesses increase the probability of survival and success (Newbert, Tornikoski, & Quigley, 2013). Portes (1981) was the first one to describe ethnic enclaves as “immigrant groups which concentrate in a distinct spatial location and organize a variety of enterprises surviving within their own ethnic market” (pp.290-291). This view supports the idea that in ethnic communities that share similar characteristics, the communities consist of tightly embedded and closely connected networks. This closeness generates trust and cohesiveness among the community members, allowing for members of these communities to hire from, and sell to other members of the community (Curci & Mackoy, 2010; Xie & Gough, 2011). The social ties in these enclaves are critical channels that help immigrant entrepreneurs establish and grow their entrepreneurial activities (Corno, Lal, & Colombo, 2014; Gomez et al., 2015).

Connections in embedded networks simplify the way information flows. There is ample research on how immigrant entrepreneurs use these embedded networks to develop their ethnic enterprises. Examples include Iranian entrepreneurs in Los Angeles, Israeli entrepreneurs in New York, Filipina entrepreneurs in Washington DC, or Japanese entrepreneurs in New York (Fong & Shen, 2011; Min & Bozorgmehr, 2000; Wang & Altinay, 2012; Zhang & Hosler, 2000).

Little Havana in Miami (Feldman & Jolivet, 2014) and Boston's Chinatown (Zhou, 2013) are additional examples of well-developed enclaves. In these studies, market advantages- such as the exclusion from job opportunities in the general market- and the existence of specific ethnic resources were central to the understanding of the development of immigrant businesses. The lower costs of labor, the embedded social support and ethnic solidarity, the captive market, and the cultural and language literacy provide conditions where the enclave becomes a space where transactions costs and risk to start a business are reduced and constitute good opportunities for entrepreneurs to gain economic advantages (Zhou, 2013).

Middleman Theory

Middleman theory is among the main economic explanations on why immigrant entrepreneurship flourishes in enclaves (Garg & Phayane, 2014). Businesses that cater to the cultural preferences and needs of the residents such as travel agencies, garment shops, specialized grocery shops, and food stands rapidly pop up when ethnic enclaves are established. A main prerequisite for the long-term sustainability and financial success of these firms is a sufficient number of potential consumers; otherwise the community may be too small to develop the necessary demand for sustainable growth. When there's not enough demand within the enclave, a strategy that businesses can deploy to become viable and respectable is to expand into offering their products or services to the broader local population, outside their enclave (Ma et al., 2013).

In addition to providing a captive market, ethnic enclaves are usually the primary source for coethnic employees for the ventures (Carter, Mwaura, Ram, Trehan, & Jones, 2015). Securing employment outside ethnic enclaves tends to be difficult for enclave residents because they have fewer connections outside of the enclave (Andersson, Musterd, & Galster, 2013). Being part of an enclave makes it more difficult to receive information about jobs and reduces the probability of securing jobs outside the enclave (Patacchini & Zenou, 2012).

Expanding Beyond the Enclave: Is It Worth It?

There are several benefits for immigrant entrepreneurs who establish their ventures within immigrant enclaves. When immigrants sell to, or source from, their own ethnic communities their ventures also gain strategic advantages that remain unavailable to many potential competitors. Light (1972) proposed the protected market hypothesis to describe how niche conditions within an ethnic community may lead to the fostering of successful ventures. These advantages include access to financial capital via "unorthodox but effective means," access to coethnic human capital, and a sense of solidarity towards the entrepreneur (Ndofor & Priem, 2011, p. 792). The social identity that entrepreneurs feel towards their enclaves, often yields coethnic advantages that are difficult for outsiders to replicate. Self-esteem and position can become inextricably tied to prestige that becomes a motivator for individuals serving their ethnic communities to continue to operate within the enclave. Being part of the enclave enhances the entrepreneur's identity, reputation and ultimate feeling of success as an entrepreneur (Nnabue, 2016).

Despite the benefits of operating in an ethnic enclave, some researchers have observed that dependence on coethnic customers may restrict the long-term viability and growth potential of the business venture (Perera et al., 2013). The benefits of ethnic enclaves often vary by the enclaves' national origin, education, poverty, level, gender and even geography in which they operate. Enclaves do create opportunities but also mark boundaries of an economic space that firms cannot easily overcome. Consequently, pursuing integration into the mainstream community may lead to better financial performance value creation while the businesses benefit from access to broader markets (Ibrahim & Galt, 2011).

Trevizo and Lopez (2016) cautioned that although in-group ties or enclaves can provide a positive effect by facilitating entrepreneurial business activities, excluding other markets can have a constraining role. Bouk, Vedder, and Poel (2013) used the closure argument by noting that these ties, if not expanded beyond the immigrant enclave, can constrain entrepreneurs and make them vulnerable because of their limited access to outside information, and thus business opportunities outside the network.

Other researchers have studied immigrant businesses across multiple levels of development, from small start-ups focusing on ethnic enclaves to businesses fully integrated into the mainstream economy (Jennings et al., 2013; Ndofor & Priem, 2011; Sørensen & Sharkey, 2014). Curci and Mackoy (2010) for example, proposed an immigrant business enterprise classification framework and suggested criteria based on the market they serve (ethnic vs. nonethnic) and the products and services they offer (ethnic vs. nonethnic). They concluded that there are multiple factors such as education, culture, language, traditions and supplier characteristics that impact their integration into a mainstream business community.

Latino-Owned Businesses: The Landscape

Although a robust body of research exists on ethnic entrepreneurship, researchers have paid little attention to Latino immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States (Kim, 2012). This is despite the fact that many recent Latino immigrants pursue small business start-ups and self-employment as strategies (Martinez, Avila, Santiago, & Buntin, 2011).

Currently, it is difficult to assess the size, incidence and other particular metrics of the immigrant business segments, Latino or otherwise, because immigrant-owned businesses are often categorized under the category of *minority* businesses by the Small Business Administration. The immigrant and the ethnic entrepreneurship literatures are somewhat interwoven, making it difficult to clearly differentiate between immigrant entrepreneurs and ethnic entrepreneurs (Light & Dana, 2013).

The results of the 2012 Survey of Business Owners (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015) provided a glimpse at the entrepreneurial activity undertaken by Latino business owners in the United States. The results show Latino businesses nationwide are among the fastest growing in the nation. In general, from 2007 to 2012, the growth rate of Latino businesses was 46.9%, representing 86% of all growth in small businesses in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). After the release of the census, researchers such as

Ortiz-Walters et al. (2105) and Savage (2013) explored the conditions and patterns under which the expansion of Latino business ownership occurred. The expansion was noteworthy; during the 5-year period from 2007 to 2012 the number of Latino-owned firms in the United States grew from 2.3 million to 3.5 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

The economic census lists the primary industries in which Latino-owned firms operate as construction (15.1%); repair and maintenance and personal services (14.9%); support, waste management, and remediation services (13.9%); and transportation and warehousing (10.4%). California has the largest number of Latino-owned businesses: 815,304. However, New Mexico has the largest share of total Latino businesses 30% of all businesses (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Latinos own approximately 21% of businesses in Florida and 25% of them in Texas (Fairlie, 2013). The growth of Latino businesses has been most dramatic in the South, especially in Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina, all of which experienced increases greater than 91% (Moon, Farmer, Abreo, & Miller, 2013; U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Small firms that do not have employees best represented this significant growth. These ventures remain predominantly sole proprietorships or family partnerships All but 287,501, or only 8.1% of Hispanic owned firms were nonemployers in 2012 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

Between 2002 and 2007, the number of Latino owned businesses increased by 44% compared to an 18% increase for non-Latino businesses. On average, however, the revenues for Latino businesses lagged those of non-Latino businesses during that period. Latino businesses made an average of $153,000 a year, compared to $179,000 for other minority-owned businesses and three times less than the $490,000 made by white-owned businesses (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).

In the United States, almost eighty percent of business enterprises in the United States operate as sole proprietorships (Beesley, 2013). In the case of Latino businesses, the percentage is even higher. Eighty-nine percent of Latino businesses do not have any paid employees, which is considerably higher than the 78.8% of total firms in the United States (Hipple, 2010). While Latino firms are increasingly making important contributions to the communities in which they operate, their economic potential remains unrealized (Martinez et al., 2011). These firms provide income and independence to the owners, but their ventures do not provide the same level of income to them as firms with employees (Martinez et al., 2011).

Martinez et al. (2011) noted that ownership of a firm that has employees indicates a greater leadership role in the community at large, as well as better integration into the local community. They also maintained that the overrepresentation of businesses without employees among Latino businesses implies barriers and challenges, despite the large growth patterns in absolute numbers. Moreover, they recommended that pursuing true integration into the mainstream economy by pursuing models and strategies that could take them beyond the ethnic enclave in which they operate, would be beneficial to Latino businesses' long term returns.

The role of minority-owned businesses goes beyond generating income for their owners. The often underserved communities in which they operate gain valuable benefits from their existence as well (Browne et al., 2011).

Dynamic Capabilities

Dynamic capabilities are intangible factors that differentiate the ability of an organization to successfully purse sustained competitive advantages (Schilke, 2014). An extensive body of literature on dynamic capabilities emerged to explain how the redeployment of a firm's assets to match changing environments benefit the long term returns of a business. Teece et al. (1997) were the first ones to offer dynamic capabilities as an abstract framework to study competitive advantage in enterprising firms. Later, Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) expanded our understanding of dynamic capabilities as the routines that enable business enterprises to create, deploy and protect the intangible assets they possess that enable them to achieve long-term sustainability.

Strategy changes that require reorganization or restructuring when exploring new markets, involve an array of complex dynamics (Chreim, Williams, & Coller, 2012). The dynamic capabilities paradigm closely associates with innovative performance and profitability sustainment (Nolsoe-Grünbaum & Stenger, 2013) concepts at the core of this doctoral study. Arend (2014) posited that dynamic capabilities are antecedents to functional competences, which in turn have a significant effect on performance. This view of dynamic capabilities has its origins on the Schumpeterian *innovation based competition* model that proposes that competitive advantage comes from *novel recombination of resources* into new capabilities. These ideas were further developed in academic literature by Abernathy and Clark (1993) when they wrote about *architectural innovation* and Henderson and Cockburn (1994) when they explored *combinative capabilities* all in the same line of reasoning that competitive advantage is built by organizational processes by which firms acquire and synthesize knowledge resources resulting in the generation of new applications.

Teece et al. (1997) proposed the seminal framework of *dynamic capabilities* still used today. It was Augier and Teece in 2009 who integrated into the framework notions of opportunity sensing, seizing and transforming as the essential process for sustained competitive advantage (Augier & Teece, 2009). However, the characterizations ascribed to this framework are varied and continue to evolve. For example, the definition proposed by Helfat and Winter (2011) focused on an organization's capacity to purposefully create, extend, or modify its resource base. Foss, Heimeriks, Winter and Zollo (2012) also expanded the definition by incorporating the continued recrafting of core competencies of an organization to gain a sustained competitive advantage.

More recently, Nieves and Haller (2014) explained that dynamic capabilities consist of patterned organization behaviors that companies invoke on a repeated base to adapt to rapidly changing conditions. Protogerou, Caloghirou, and Lioukas (2012) espoused that dynamic capabilities are crucial to shaping the ecosystems they occupy, developing new products, and processing, designing, and implementing viable and successful business models.

At its core, dynamic capabilities allow a small business to accentuate its entrepreneurial capabilities (Teece et al., 1997; Teece, 2012). The talent, the entrepreneurial orientation, the informal heuristics, and competencies of a small firm that operates informally are similar in nature to much larger organizations (Oliver & Holzinger, 2008), yet dynamic capabilities stress the incorporation of technology, data systems, process and techniques that give organizations the ability to move from the *informal to the formal way* of managing and operating a business. This extension yields an extended entrepreneurial capability, and sustained competitive advantage (Lin & Wu, 2014).

The fundamental contribution of dynamic capabilities is the understanding that if an organization is to grow from resident experiential knowledge and capability, to one with complex operational and social networks, it requires documentation, infrastructure, routines, information technology, and the development of complex operational and social networks that enable an organization to institutionalize and extend their basic entrepreneurial capabilities (Argote & Ren, 2012). Dynamic capabilities in ever changing environments are likely to be ongoing improvement processes that allow the firms to gradually alter their resource base (Schilke, 2014). In the case of this study, dynamic capabilities in the end may be what allowed immigrant-owned firms to expand their customer base beyond their ethnic enclave.

Teece et al. (1997) recommended organizational reconfigurations and alteration of functional competencies in response to changing environments. In the case of this study, I consider changing environments the expansion outside the enclave in which businesses originally operated. Other researchers have also used this framework to give practitioners a guide to compete more effectively in ever-changing business environments (Arend, 2014; Protogerou et al., 2012; Teece, 2014; Wilden, Gudergan, Nielsen & Lings, 2013).

Dynamic capabilities enhance the capacity of an organization to purposefully create, extend, or modify its resource base to address rapidly changing markets. (Helfat &

Winter, 2011). Arend (2014) depicted dynamic capabilities as the firm's specific human, physical and organizational assets that can be used to implement value-creating strategies.

An extensive body of literature on dynamic capabilities has emerged to explain how the redeployment of a firm's assets to match changing environments benefits the long term returns of a business. Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) expanded the understanding of dynamic capabilities as the routines that enable business enterprises to create, deploy and protect the intangible assets they possess that enable them to achieve long term sustainability. More recently, Foss et al. (2012) explained that dynamic capabilities consist of patterned organization behaviors that companies invoke on a repeated base to adapt to rapidly changing conditions. Protogerou et al. (2012) espoused that dynamic capabilities are crucial to shaping the ecosystems they occupy, developing new products, and processing, designing and implementing viable business models.

Some authors had criticized the value of dynamic capabilities as a means for understanding strategies for promoting business growth (Peteraf, Di Stefano & Verona, 2013; Winter, 2003; Wollersheim & Heimeriks, 2016). Winter (2003) criticized the construct of dynamic capabilities for the lack of a precise definition or empirical grounding. Wollersheim and Heimeriks (2016) objected the construct for being vague and elusive, while Peteraf et al. (2013) disapproved it for being abstract, and causally ambiguous. While over the last few years significant attempts have been made to offer clarity to the construct and expand its definition further, (Arend 2014; Peteraf et al., 2013; Protogerou et al., 2012), still some authors have recommended the need for a clearer conceptualization and theoretical grounding. Pavlou and El Sawy (2011) developed a model to address the weaknesses espoused by a few of the critics.

Pavlou and El Sawy (2011) asserted that because dynamic capabilities have been viewed as hidden and intangible assets, a *black box* measure of success, it is difficult for managers to apply intentional and strategic growth decisions when managing their businesses. To address this limitation, in 2013, they proposed a measurable model of dynamic capabilities that go beyond conceptualizing, instead it operationalizes these capabilities. The framework proposed by Pavlou and El Sawy offers a simpler, more straightforward model of dynamic capabilities. The model is anchored on the proposition that dynamic capabilities are combinations of simpler foundational routines that can easily be understood and operationalized into more complex tasks. For example, in response to the "need to combine new knowledge in operational capabilities," the capacity to integrate is made possible by embedding "new knowledge into operational capabilities with collective sense-making" (p. 243).

Pavlou and El Sawy's 2011 model draws on existing dynamic capabilities literature by identifying a set of capabilities. These are (i) sensing the environment, (ii) learning, (iii) integrating, and (iv) coordinating - that help reconfigure the operational capabilities of firms into new ones that better match the environments in which businesses operate. This reconfiguration, while not exhaustive in nature, is posited as enabling logical links which in effective coordination shape firm performance and yield strategic competitive advantage. The proposed dynamic capabilities include sensing, learning, integrating, and coordinating (p. 247). The authors outline a definition for each capability and demonstrate that many of the routines discussed in the dynamic capabilities literature can be categorized under each capability. This suggests that Pavlou and El Sawy's proposed construct of dynamic capabilities is closely linked to the dynamic capabilities literature through their underlying routines. This is consistent with Pentland, Feldman, Becker, and Liu (2012) who viewed dynamic capabilities as complex combinations of simpler routines.

Sensing Capability

A sensing capability is the ability to spot, interpret and pursue opportunities in the environment. Sensing new opportunities is very much a scanning, learning and interpretive activity (Roberts & Grover, 2012). Teece (2012) notes that sensing activities involve investing in research, probing customer needs, understanding latent demand and assessing supplier and competitor responses. Reconfiguration of business strategies to gain competitive advantage requires a scanning and understanding of market trends to recognize and capture opportunities. The basic routines of the sensing capability are 1) generating market intelligence, 2) disseminating market intelligence and 3) responding to market intelligence (Pavlou & El Sawy, 2011). Effectively distinguishing opportunities within gathered market intelligence is what enables firms to innovate and better meet customer needs.

Learning Capability

Learning capabilities are understood as the ability to revamp existing operational capabilities with new knowledge (Altinay, Madanoglu, De Vita, Arasli, & Ekinci, 2015). Knowledge is the most important intangible asset; therefore, business managers and owners try hard to use this asset to create the highest possible value (Shu-Mei & Pei-Shan, 2014). The learning capability of a firm is determined by how a firm *learns* and uses that which it learns. Once a market opportunity is identified, it must be addressed with new products, new experimentations of knowledge, and new skill accumulation (Nieves & Haller, 2014). If a market opportunity is identified through the *sensing* process, this opportunity must be exploited with a new product or service.

The routines associated with leaning capabilities are: 1) acquiring information, 2) assimilating the information, 3) transforming the information into innovative problem-solving, and 4) exploiting the new knowledge by pursuing new initiatives (Pavlou & El Sawy, 2011). Much of the literature on learning capabilities affirms that for organizations to take advantage of market opportunities they must engage in learning to find new solutions. Organizations must be intentional about creating new knowledge and reconfiguring processes and capabilities to adjust their product offerings (Alrubaiee, Alzubi, Hanandeh, & Ali, 2015; Aminu & Mahmood, 2015). The literature confirms that *learning* helps firms increase their creative capacity and increases their ability to reconfigure existing operational capabilities to gain competitive advantage. Research by Lee, Lin, Chen, and Shyr (2011) revealed that learning intent (intentional vs. incidental learning), and embedded learning are important antecedent drivers of dynamic capabilities exploitation in medium and small size enterprises. Hung, Yang, Lien, McLean and Kuo (2010) tested how firms build dynamic capabilities by creating an organizational learning culture. They tested the interrelationship between organizational performance and organizational learning culture. They posited that a positive learning culture is critical for sustained organizational performance, and that fostering deliberate organizational learning yields positive impact on competitive advantage. The findings of their study strongly supported the notion that a learning organization contributes to dynamic capabilities and ultimately performance.

Ng and Hung-Kee (2012) categorized the learning factors that influence success in enterprises into tangible and intangible factors. In their research, they evaluated primarily how intangible factors- those that cannot be expressed in monetary terms- affect the success of enterprises. They crafted a conceptual framework that included leadership style, image and reputation, organizational innovation, and entrepreneurial competence. They found that organizations that build on these intangible factors achieve better enterprise success.

Integrating Capability

Integration of knowledge by reconfiguring the operational capabilities of a firm is a foundation of dynamic capabilities (Nieves & Haller, 2014). If the goal is to improve firm performance, the knowledge acquired by developing learning capabilities must be integrated at a collective level of the enterprise (Teece, 2012). The reconfiguration of knowledge relies on integrating what is learned during the learning process into new resources and assets (Di Stefano et al., 2014). This reconfiguration of organizational assets requires the interaction of collective systems into new configurations of operational capabilities (Pavlou & El Sawy, 2011).

A key element in integrating capabilities is to recognize that learning is owned by individuals, and that for comparative advantage to be created, the learning needs to be integrated at a collective level, and it needs to be institutionalized (Teece, 2012). Recent work involving studies with small business enterprises confirms what other authors have posited in earlier studies when evaluating integration capabilities. Rice, Liao, Galvin, and Martin (2015) revealed in their study of Australian firms that the effectiveness of integrating capabilities relies upon integrating individual knowledge and patterns of interaction into a collective system, and deploying new configurations of operational capabilities.

The common routines of integrating capabilities are closely aligned to the dynamic capabilities literature: (a) colleting individual inputs, (b) building a shared understanding and creating common grounds, and (c) deploying new routines of reconfigured operational capabilities executing collective activities. Rice et al. (2015) demonstrated that active management of both endogenous and exogenous knowledge significantly affects the dynamic capabilities of the organization. They confirmed that the formalization and resource transformation that comes from integrating capabilities confers an advantage in the market, which in turn leads to superior firm performance. If we are to understand integrating capabilities as the ability to combine individual knowledge in to the firm's new operational capabilities after digesting that which is *learned*, immigrant-owned businesses might benefit from understanding the reconfiguration process that developing integrating capabilities may bring.

Coordinating Capability

Coordinating capability is the ability of a business to orchestrate task, resources, and activities in a new reconfigured operational capability (Yu, 2014). The coordinating capability when applied produces a reconfiguration of organizational assets and their redeployment by carrying out an effective reallocation of resources (Aminu & Mahmood, 2015). A firm's coordinating capability, involves processes for gathering and interpreting data, allocating resources and tasks, and communication decisions and information. (Pavlou & El Sawy, 2011). Helfat and Winter (2011) are the first to explain that coordinating capabilities synchronize tasks and activities in a way that yield competitive advantage.

An organization's coordinating capabilities allows the organization to orchestrate and institute new operational capabilities by deploying task, resources, and activities in new learned manners. The firm's coordinating capabilities enables firms to recognize and develop assets of highest strategic value in competitive environments.

Coordinating capability facilitates the reconfiguration of operational capabilities, and allows organizations to recognize, assemble and allocate resources and facilitated the dissemination of market intelligence (Tseng & Lee, 2014). An effective coordinating capability accomplishes three main objectives. First, it enables the firm to disseminate the newly acquired market intelligence across the firm. Second, it assigns the right person to the right task. And third, it better synchronizes the task and activities of those involved in the firm.

While some authors have criticized the relevant impact of dynamic capabilities, the literature on dynamic capabilities over the last decade overwhelmingly agrees that dynamic capabilities are valuable assets that yield competitive advantage, value creation and firm growth. By exploring the strategies and circumstances by which Latino immigrant entrepreneurs have successfully expanded their businesses outside their enclaves, this study provided an insight or lens by which, dynamic capabilities were at play and provided a construct by which the study subjects undertake the growth of their businesses, even if they might not be aware.

Transition

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case exploratory study was to explore the strategies used by five Latino immigrant business owners residing in the Nashville, Tennessee region to expanding their businesses outside of their ethnic enclave. The study was undertaken by interviewing the owners of these businesses, collecting data and reviewing documentation and observing the characteristics and operations of these businesses.

Section 2 includes details about study participants and the recruitment criteria used. The section includes a detailed explanation of the research methodology and the research design including a look at the data collection instrument, organization of information and analysis, and the procedures for ensuring reliability and validity.

Section 2: The Project

I begin Section 2 with an expanded explanation of the purpose for this research, providing further justification for studying the ways in which Latino immigrant entrepreneurs, who start their businesses operating within an ethnic enclave, make decisions to expand beyond such enclave to serve the broader market, bringing with it higher financial returns to their ventures. This section also contains a description of the manner in which I identified and recruited study participants and an explanation on how I created the research instrument.

Section 2 includes a discussion on the methodology chosen to collect, organize, and analyze the data in such a way that I could extract significance from the answers provided by participants. The use of this methodology advanced the understanding of the strategies that Latino immigrant entrepreneurs follow to expand their businesses beyond ethnic enclave and realize better financial returns and economic prosperity.

An important step in any qualitative study is identifying the strategies used to validate the accuracy of the findings and demonstrate the reliability of all procedures followed. I conclude this section by addressing such strategies regarding validity and reliability used in this study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case exploratory study was to explore the strategies used by five Latino immigrant business owners residing in Nashville to expand their businesses outside of the ethnic enclave where their business was originally located.

I contributed by interviewing the owners of these businesses, reviewing documents, and observing the characteristics and operations of these businesses.

The study contributes to positive social change because the results may be helpful to immigrant business owners while they try to grow and expand their businesses. Identifying strategies that help immigrant entrepreneurs succeed may have benefits that extend beyond their immediate family to the broader communities in which they operate by increasing job creation, wealth accumulation, and the development of society.

Role of the Researcher

The specific research design for this study was an exploratory case study. Merriam (1998) believed that qualitative researchers seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved in a research project. This paradigm was appropriate for this study because it was exploratory and nonexperimental, and while not exclusively, I relied primarily on interaction with participants.

My role as the researcher was to serve as the interviewer of the five study participants. I had direct interactions with the study participants during the face-to-face semistructured interviews that were audio recorded. Each interview consisted of three profile questions and 11 open-ended interview questions. The interview questions allowed me to observe the participants’ demeanor, facial expressions, and body language. This technique of face-to-face audio recorded interviews provided the dependability a structured interview offers, together with the flexibility of unstructured interviews (Son, 2014).

As the researcher, one of my roles was also to eliminate bias in the research process, as described by Marshall and Rossman (2016). A strategy for minimizing bias is to standardize the process of data collection (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012). As such, I followed strict protocols to capture the content of the interviews and my own observations to mitigate any possible bias I might have had. As recommended by Tufford and Newman (2012), I used journals to collect my own personal reflections as tools that aided in the reduction of bias during the research process.

The interview protocol was exploratory in nature and aligned effectively with the research question under consideration for this study. Johnson and Christensen (2004) explained qualitative research relies on the collection of nonnumerical data and involves studying a phenomenon in an open-ended way, without prior expectations. In qualitative studies, researchers are concerned with process, context, interpretation, and understanding what they observe (Yilmaz, 2013).

The Belmont Report, created by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects and Biomedical and Behavioral Research, provides guidelines for ethical practices in research involving human subjects (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). The Belmont Report includes instructions for researchers to practice respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. I treated all study participants as independent agents, protecting them from any harm related to the research process, and worked diligently to reduce risks related to the research. I followed the Belmont Report recommendations on how to conduct research with a fair distribution of burdens and benefits (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979).

As a researcher, I had professional knowledge of the topic under study. I was already familiar with the geographic area in which the research took place. I am the cofounder of an organization that, among many programs, offers a small business development program for Latino entrepreneurs in Nashville. As a bicultural professional, having worked in the field of immigrant integration for over a decade, interacting frequently with Latino business owners, this work allowed me to be in a unique position because it gave me access and legitimacy within the subject population. Over the years, I had met and advised many business owners as they have launched their ventures. Because of my role as an instructor at a local university, I was well aware of the business and entrepreneurial ecosystem in the city. The professional relationship between the study participants and myself established a foundation for mutual trust and honesty, safeguarding the quality of the data.

Participants

This was an exploratory multiple case study that involved interviewing five Latino business owners in an effort to identify patterns, relationships, and experiences that brought clarity and understanding to the topic under exploration. In this case, the objective of the study was to understand the strategies that have proven successful to grow their businesses beyond their original ethnic enclave. I used a purposeful sampling technique to identify the subjects for the collection of pertinent data of immigrant business owners who are knowledgeable and have the lived experiences to inform the research goals. By using purposefully chosen participants, the researcher is often able to achieve depth of understanding of the experiences being researched (Palinkas et al., 2015). Eriksson, Nummela, and Saarenketo (2014) used a similar approach identifying a purposeful sampling technique to explore how dynamic capabilities contributed to the success of factories focused on growing their operations globally. I invited the participants to take part in a 1.5 hour interview. I conducted the face-to-face interviews, which included three profile questions and 11 open-ended interview questions.

To participate in the study, subjects had to meet the following criteria:

1. Participants had to be Latino business owners and must have been actively involved in the daily management of the operations of the venture.
2. The venture must have been in existence for over 1 year.
3. Participants must have lived in the United States for at least 5 years.
4. The venture must be making a meaningful economic contribution to the subjects' household income.
5. The venture must have had its origins by serving in an ethnic enclave but must have expanded its sales footprint outside the enclave, deriving more than a third of its revenue from the nonethnic enclave market.

I was well aware of the entrepreneurial landscape in Nashville because of my professional work. Since 2001, I have been actively involved working with the Latino immigrant community in Nashville, Tennessee. Prior to the research, as the cofounder of an agency that provides services to the Latino population, I had been able to interact with hundreds of families who have accessed many of the services offered through the agency. One such service is an entrepreneurship program taught to individuals seeking to start their own business. While I excluded entrepreneurs who participated in the entrepreneurship program as participants in the program to avoid bias, I drew on the personal and professional connections developed over time to help me identify and recruit participants for the study.

Since the sample size was small, I did not anticipate any challenges identifying participants for the study. As per the IRB approval, once a potential candidate was identified, I reached out via phone or email to invite them to take part in the study. I followed up with a letter that highlighted the scope of the research study and included a statement guaranteeing the privacy and confidentiality of the answers they provided if they participated. I did not offer any incentives to participate, and participants were notified they were free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

Options for research methodology included quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Hair, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser 2014). Each method has strengths and weaknesses, and each method has different designs to accomplish the research objectives. Quantitative research consists on analyzing variables to determine relationships, significance, or correlation (Bhattacharya, 2011). A quantitative study did not align with the intent of this study as the focus was not anchored on known variables. Mixed methods research incorporates a substantial quantitative component during the research process, which was not the case with this study since the key data collection instrument for this study was an interview.

The research method for this study was qualitative. Qualitative researchers explore a phenomenon without measuring any variables (Bergh, Thorgren, & Wincent, 2011). The purpose of this doctoral study was to explore the strategies that a small sample of Latino owned businesses use to grow beyond their enclave. The collection of data was primarily done during face-to-face interviews. As such, direct contact with study participants was preferable since the intent of the research was to find insights and understand the complexities of issues (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), in this case navigating business growth.

Using a qualitative approach allows a researcher to delve into the motives behind the problem being studied from the perspective of the studied population (Luo, 2011). A quantitative study would have been inadequate for this study. It would not have addressed the purpose of this study, which is to explore the strategies that have been used by the subjects to expand their businesses beyond their ethnic enclave. Moreover, in a quantitative study, the voice of the entrepreneurs would not have emerged because the study would have only included statistical information, thereby placing more significance on the data than on the lived experiences of the participants.

Despite some of the limitations of a qualitative approach, this methodology aligned with the expressed purpose of gaining an in-depth understanding of the strategies in use (Bluhm et al., 2011). Qualitative research was a better fit than a quantitative approach for the study. Qualitative research honors the cultural value of *personalismo*, or interpersonal connections, which is a distinct cultural trait in the Latino community (Ojeda, Flores, Meza, & Morales, 2011). Qualitative methodology, when conducted with culturally competent designs, may be useful in conducting research in environments that include complex social contextual factors (Lyons & Bike, 2010) as was the case in this study.

Research Design

The design for this study was a multiple case exploratory study. The study involved a purposeful sample of five Latino business owners who have experienced success growing their businesses outside their ethnic enclave. The study consisted of semistructured interviews, observations, and historical documentation, such as operating manuals, strategic plans, marketing materials, or other documents available from study participants. The case study design allowed me to ask the why and what of the study to obtain in-depth information about the phenomenon (see Yin, 2014). This design also allowed me to gain a broader understanding of a specific complex problem thorough interviewing, observing and documentation techniques (see Petty, Thomson, & Stew, 2012).

A culturally competent design is crucial to gaining insights to Latino immigrants (Ixa Plata-Potter & de Guzman, 2012; Quigley et al., 2016). Ojeda et al. (2011) posited that when carrying out research that includes Latino immigrants, the research process is as critical as the outcomes of the study.

The study included a small number of subjects in an effort to underscore patterns, relationships, and experiences to the topic under exploration. Bernard (2013) posited that the close collaboration between the researcher and participants enables participants to tell their stories, describing their views of reality. This approach enabled me to better understand the participants' actions and ultimately bring clarity and understanding to the topic under exploration. The need for in-depth exploration of the strategies that Latino business owners employ to expand their businesses outside of their enclave, as indicated in the problem and purpose statements, substantiates the selection of a multiple case study design (Yin, 2014).

Case studies typically include multiple sources of data such as interviews, observations, artifacts, and documentation (Yin, 2014). The incorporation of multiple sources of data is what researchers refer to as triangulation. Triangulation is a methodology used to corroborate evidence obtained during a research process (Heale & Forbes, 2013). Of these sources, the most common means of data collection in case studies is interviews (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2010). Using multiple case research sources reinforces the credibility of a study as it allows the researcher to obtain a better understanding of a specific research problem (Petty et al., 2012). While I anticipated the primary source of data for the study would be the interviews, I also relied on other sources of evidence to conduct the study. Using multiple sources of evidence add depth and breadth to a study (Yin, 2014). Some of these sources may include documentation (i.e., financial statements, tax returns, or marketing materials), archival records, or direct observation.

I gave careful consideration to the strengths and weaknesses of other designs available, and I concluded the multiple case exploratory study was appropriate for the research under consideration. I could have used a single case study. Researchers tend to be skeptical of research studies based on single cases. In contrast, studies designed using multiple cases offer increased likelihood of study replication and more persuasive findings (Cruzes et al., 2015; Yin, 2014).

Ethnographic and phenomenological designs were not suitable for this study. In an ethnographic design, the researcher gets involved in field observations of behavior and daily activities of a community, usually conducted over an extended period of time (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Researchers who use ethnographic or phenomenological designs interpret a group's culture through observation of social behaviors (Fetterman, 2010).

Ethnographic research focuses on patterns of action that are sociocultural as opposed to cognitive (Wägar, 2012). Based on the characteristics of the ethnographic design, the purpose of the study did not align with an ethnographic layout. Part of the reason why ethnography was not suitable in this case is that researchers use ethnography in an attempt to fully understand as much as possible about an entire society. Because this study included a limited number of participants, constrained to a geographic area, it would not be appropriate to generalize the findings across other geographic areas, or across industries that may not be representative of those of the participants. A second drawback from using ethnography in this case was the cost and the time. Ethnographic researchers often live and work amongst a group or society for a year or more in order to learn about those being studied (Patton, 2014). This fully immersive, long-term approach was not feasible in the case of this research.

The phenomenological design would not have been fitting either. The objective of phenomenological design is to delve into the participants' experiences and perspectives (Moustakas, 1994). This study was an exploration of what strategies have been successfully used by Latino business owners to grow outside their enclave.

In qualitative studies, data saturation is of often used as a method to indicate rigor and validity. Data saturation occurs when no new information surfaces during the data collection process (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). In the case of case studies, where the number of participants is small, an inherent challenge exists to positively achieve data saturation. The use of focused interview questions produces a higher probability of data saturation (Suri, 2011). Accordingly, limiting the interview protocol to 11 questions balanced the resources available to conduct this study, and the limited number of subjects, with collecting sufficient data to achieve data saturation.

Member checking is a frequently used technique for establishing the credibility in a qualitative inquiry. Member checking is a quality process used for reinforcing accuracy and validity when using interview data (Harper & Cole, 2012). Member checking refers to the process by which participants in a study are given the opportunity to approve the interpretation of the data obtained from a study (Harvey, 2015). I used member checking to assure data as recorded reflected the perspective of the participants. Member checking allowed participants to validate the findings of studies they participate in. Member checking allowed study participants to review and agree or disagree with the conclusions reached in the report of the study they participated in. Member checking authenticates that these results are credible to them (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). During member checking, I shared the results of the study with the participants once the data had been collected and interpreted to assure that their perspectives had been adequately represented. Participants were able to review the transcription of the interviews and had the opportunity to clarify their answers.

Population and Sampling

The research population was comprised of five business owners located in Nashville, Tennessee who have been in business for more than a year, and have expanded their sales footprint beyond their ethnic enclave. The specific criteria required to participate in the study necessitated the use of a nonprobability sampling technique, specifically a purposeful sample. Qualitative researchers should use sampling methods that aid the goals of the study (Griffith, 2013). Purposeful sampling involves selecting participants to the rather unique group of small businesses which was the focus of this study because of their common characteristics, in this case involvement in business ownership, length of business ownership, and expansion beyond the ethnic enclave. Although this type of sampling has some weaknesses, it is common in qualitative studies (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, & Nigam, 2013). For example, one of the limitations of purposeful sampling is that it does not support theory development, and statistical generalizations or inferences about the population are not appropriate (Lewis, 2015). However, the purpose of this study is not theory development. Purposeful sampling is appropriate for studies with a limited availability of subjects who meet the criteria for the topic under study, or when identification of the subjects is otherwise difficult (Lahman, Mendoza, Rodriguez, & Schwartz, 2011). This view is in line with the position of Robinson (2014), who argued that, in a study like this one, researchers should select all participants purposely to meet the selection criteria. Following such purposely selection resulted in rich contextual insights.

If I had not been able to identify enough participants by using purposeful sampling, the study would have also involved snowball or chain sampling to grow a prospective list of study participants. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) encouraged snowball sampling as a technique that allows participants who have been part of a study to refer researchers to potential participants to contribute to the study. The study could have included a combination of the two techniques if finding and accessing study participants had become more difficult than anticipated. Employing both techniques improves the chances of obtaining a quality sample. Since I interviewed all the people in each business directly involved in formulating and implementing the strategies to grow the business beyond the ethnic enclave, data saturation was achieved within the boundaries of the five businesses.

Ethical Research

Adherence to ethical guidelines is paramount for developing accurate research (Gatrell, 2009). Research that involves human beings requires that the researcher develop procedures and protocols guaranteeing the confidentiality, the safety and the security of the participants and the businesses involved in the research (Lahman et al., 2011; Damianakis & Woodford, 2012). Yin (2014) asserted that any research problem guiding a study should ultimately be beneficial to the participants.

Once I received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I selected the participants for the research study based on the specific criteria detailed earlier. The approval number from the IRB is 03-28-17-01886620. The participants in this needed to have a clear understanding of the research question, objective of the study, and their role within the study (Lahman et al., 2011).

Each participant received a written document of invitation and explanation. This document consisted of two sections: (a) the invitation to participate in the study, and (b) the informed consent to participate. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions as they considered their participation. The document provided a specific invitation to participate, the explanation of the study itself, as well as my contact information. The informed consent section of the letter outlined the intent of the study, offered sample interview questions and clearly identified myself as the researcher for the study. The document also contained assurances of safety from harm, a statement of their right to withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason, and instructions on how to withdraw (See Appendix B).

Participants did not receive any incentive, monetary or otherwise, for participating in the study. The informed consent form clearly stated that participation in the study was purely voluntary and did not include monetary remuneration of any kind. I informed participates of their right to discontinue participation in the study at any time and for any reason, by contacting me. I explained that if any participant decided to withdraw from the study, I would destroy any and all data that may have been provided by the participant up to that point.

I notified the participants of the study about the measures that I instituted to assure their protection as they agreed to participate in this study. To ensure the ethical protection of participants, confidentiality was paramount. Researchers have used pseudonym coding or numerical differentiators to ensure confidentiality of data. (Carlström & Ekman, 2012; Carmeli, Atwater, & Levi, 2011; Searle & Hanrahan, 2011). Accordingly, my study did not include any real names of the participants, nor did I use company names or identifying information in any of the findings or conclusions. I assigned numerical differentiators to all collected data. Since the study was a case study, I also collected some documents and made notes from my own observations. Data storage and protection measures are paramount to protect the confidentiality of the study participants (Luo, 2011). I have retained all records, including written notes, and documents in a secure locked cabinet. I have stored all digital files created during this research in a password protected cloud service where they will be stored for 5 years. All these records will be destroyed after 5 years. Only I have access to the locked cabinet.

Data Collection Instruments

The qualitative research study involved semistructured personal interviews using a set of predetermined questions. The use of an interview protocol assures the consistency during an interview process (Bititci et al., 2011). Every participant responded to the same initial questions, and I was the only person collecting data. The instrument consisted of three profile questions and 11 open-ended interview questions designed to obtain rich responses (see Appendix A). This format allowed participants to reflect of personal experiences and freely express their personal ideas, insights and reflections (Bititci et al., 2011; Searle & Hanrahan, 2011).

I drafted the questions in a way that allowed the interviewees to talk about their experiences starting and growing their businesses placing special emphasis on the strategies they have used to grow their business ventures outside of their ethnic enclave. The semistructured interviews offer sufficient flexibility to approach different respondents differently, yet allowed common themes addressed in the data collection to still emerge in the answers given. Accordingly, the intent if this study was to explore the topic of which strategies might be used by business owners to growth beyond their ethnic enclave. Moustakas (1994) proposed the use of face-to-face interviews to see if the emergence of common themes explains a phenomenon. Rollins, Nickell, and Ennis (2014) studied how companies carry out their marketing efforts during recessionary periods. They recommended conducting semistructured interviews that are flexible in order to maximize the utility of information, especially when dealing with small samples in case study research.

To analyze the data in a way that allowed me to identify such strategies, I used thematic analysis. This method provided a systematic and organized approach to search for common themes and descriptions pertaining to the research problem. The method involved seven steps: 1) preliminary grouping, 2) reduction and elimination, 3) clustering of related ideas, 4) formal identification of themes, 5) developing textural descriptions for each participant,6) developing structural descriptions for each participant,7) and incorporating identified themes into the participant descriptions (Moustakas, 1994).

I created the questions after reviewing prior similar studies, which also included immigrant entrepreneurs. I reviewed a study conducted in Las Vegas by Shinnar and

Young (2008), a study by Pechlaner, Giulia, and Volgger in 2012 targeting minority entrepreneurs operating in the tourism industry, and Kumar (2014), who explored new venture success among Indian American immigrant entrepreneurs. The list of questions is included in Appendix A of this study, as noted in the Table of Contents.

One of the important considerations for the instrument that was used in the proposed study was the possibility that not all the subjects might speak English fluently. Accordingly, the face-to-face interviews could be conducted in Spanish if the participant preferred, and then translated to English. Although I was capable to conduct the interviews in English, I considered it might be possible that some subjects would be more comfortable speaking Spanish, and conducting the study in Spanish would be a strategy to increase validity and reliability. Moreover, it would not have been enough to construct the data collection instruments in English and simply translate them literally into Spanish. Adapting to participant's vocabulary usage and reading comprehension level is crucial when developing interview protocols that involve Latino immigrants (Ojeda et al., 2011). I paid great attention to ensure the translations of both instruments were culturally competent and communicated the essence of what was the intent of the probing.

I had a detailed and clearly defined protocol for conducting the interviews. As recommended by Simola, Barling, and Turner (2012), I used a recording device during the interviews to ensure accuracy of the content. In fact, I used two recording devices simultaneously as a backup in case one failed. Transcription of the interviews increases the accuracy of the data collected and allows for the identification of shared meanings and ideas (Moustakas, 1994; Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Accordingly I transcribed each interview and shared with the study participants a copy of the transcription once finished and asked them to review it for accuracy.

Data Collection Technique

The technique to collect the data consisted of interviews conducted face-to-face. After the process of identifying and recruiting the study participants, and upon the receipt of a signed informed consent form, I contacted each participant to schedule the face-to-face interview.

Specifically, the process I followed with each participant was (a) receiving of signed informed consent form that included detailed information about the study, (b) scheduling date, time and place for interview, (c) conducting face-to-face interview with open-ended questions, (d) translating (if needed) and transcribing the interview data, and (e) reviewing the transcript by the participant.

Participants chose the place where they felt comfortable and that was suitable for conducting the interview. A comfortable and familiar environment to conduct the interviews encourages better responses (McDermott, Kidney, & Flood, 2011). Participants had the option to participate in the interview at their place of business, at their residence, or at a community center. Interviews took place at times most convenient time for the participants of the study, including weekends.

Before commencing the interviews, participants received an outline of the interview questions and they had an opportunity to ask questions to clarify the expectations for their interview. When the researcher is able to providing clarity to participants, the quality responses provided by the participants improves (Kim, 2012).

Conducting the research via face-to-face interviews with semistructured questions is beneficial. Semistructured questions encourage participants to provide detailed responses needed in qualitative studies (Bergh et al., 2011). Also, during face-to face interviews it's easier to engage with the participant, and to develop rapport while maintaining the full attention of the participant. In face-to-face interviews, the researcher can observe mannerisms and nonverbal cues (Irvine, 2013).

Offsetting disadvantages to conducting the interviews face-to-face, instead of via internet technologies or telephone, include increased time required to coordinate and conduct the interview (Hanna, 2012). While minimal, there may also be increased costs when trying to set up face-to-face interviews (Irvine, 2013). An additional possible notable disadvantage of gathering the data on a face-to-face protocol is the potential for researcher bias in the interview (Vogl, 2013). As the researcher, I may have felt a tendency to interject my own thoughts and biases as the participants provide answers during the interview. The design and methodological procedures to conduct the interviews minimized the possibility of bias from intruding into the interview answers.

Kim (2012) recommends the use of trial interviews to help identify issues related to quality, ease of understanding, and relevance of the phenomenon under study. Shortly after I received approval from the IRB, I conducted a pilot of the interview with a mock study participant, someone that had contextual knowledge of the topic under study and that was able to provide feedback. This pilot helped assess the relevance of the content of the interview questions and support the validity of the interview.

Member checking is a quality process used for reinforcing accuracy and validity when using interview data (Harper & Cole, 2012). Member checking is a recommended action when conducting qualitative research of the kind this study encompasses. Member checking allows an opportunity to elicit feedback from the participants and supports the credibility of the results (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Accordingly, after finishing the formal interview process, the next step involved transcribing the audio recordings. I disseminated the transcribed documents among the participants for their review and approval. Member checking allows study participants to agree with the conclusions reached in the report they participate in, and authenticate that these results are credible to them (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I shared the results of the study with the participants once the data had been collected and interpreted to assure that their perspectives had been adequately represented. Two of the participants had follow up comments and clarifications upon the review of the transcriptions. The additional data gathered during member checking was recorded and incorporated as part of the interview context for the analysis.

Data Organization Technique

Hays, Wood, Dahl, & Kirk-Jenkins (2016) emphasized that proper organization of research information promotes an effective research process. During the study, I used Microsoft Word to store research data because of the reliability of the format and ease of use. I am proficient in the use this software application and used it to record forms, scheduling information, and transcripts of the interviews. The use of cloud technologies applications such as Google Drive or Dropbox have made electronic file storage secure and affordable (Quick, 2014). I stored digital audio files and other participant materials using cloud services. I made copies of the electronic files and stored them in two cloud locations. These locations are accessible only by passwords that are only in my possession. Specifically, I used Dropbox setting up a password protected account to store all files related to the study, and Google Drive. All digital files created during this will be stored for 5 years.

Secondary sources of information were also protected and stored. I have retained all tangible files such as records, written notes, and documents in a secure locked cabinet. Tangible files will remain in an organized filing system to protect them from potential damage. Only I have access to the locked cabinet. All these records will be destroyed after 5 years.

Data Analysis

Five semistructured interviews of business owners in Nashville, Tennessee provided the primary data for this study. The analysis of the interview data began by transcribing the interview digital recordings and organizing the raw data. Using a combination of methods suggested by Denzin and Lincoln, (2011) such as keyword repetitions, cross tabulations by keyword similarity, and cluster analysis, I used a software tool to analyze the data. I looked for distinct concepts and categories in the data; these concepts become first level concepts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). As suggested by Yin (2014) before beginning the data analysis process, I selected the pattern-matching analytic technique which helped in identifying and analyzing patterns of the explanations reported by each study participant. By pattern-matching the reports from each interview, question by question, I was able to identify topics, themes and issues relevant to understanding the strategies that Latino business owners carry out to expand their business beyond their ethnic enclave.

Computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) is helpful for importing transcribed interviews and analyzing the transcripts by conducting theme coding (Klaus & Maklan, 2012). Yin (2014) suggests the continued playback of the audio files as a strategy to aid the researcher identify meaningful patterns. I listened to the audio recordings multiple times in hopes that I could identify the emergence of such common patterns to help me understand the research question.

Specifically, I used NVivo Pro 11 for Windows. NVivo is a leading software package used for data analysis in qualitative studies (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011). Researchers can benefit from using such tools to conduct analysis when using case study designs. For example, Gely (2015) ascertained the benefits of using computer assisted qualitative data software when conducting research on the business formation strategies used by entrepreneurs working in the microbrewery space in Alabama.

For this study, after the interviews with the subject participants were conducted, the translated verbatim transcription all five interviews were used by being transferred to NVivo Pro 11 to create nodes for the emergent themes. By using NVivo, I was able to import, analyze and codify the data for the study and I was able to look for patterns in the information provided by study participants. I used these emergent themes to construct a coding tree based upon the initial code development, iteratively reviewing the themes within the context of each individual interview to ensure a good fit between the coding schema and the data. I made necessary revisions and additions based upon this iterative review.

Reliability and Validity

Street and Ward (2011) argued that reliability and validity is assurance that actions derivable from the conclusions of the study do not include bias. Reliability in qualitative research refers to the rigor instilled in the process to obtain, organize and analyze the data in a research study. Two common recommended strategies to instill reliability in the research process are member checking and transcript reviews. I used member checking to enhance the dependability and the credibility of the findings. Allowing participants to review transcripts, the analysis, and the interpretations of the interviews they conduct, are recommended steps that allow participants to confirm data and to ensure data are complete (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). Member checking is a preferred strategy to transcript reviews. In a transcript review, participants are given verbatim transcripts of their interviews for the purpose of verifying accuracy, correcting errors and providing clarifications. This method is considered to be not as rigorous as member checking.

Validity refers to the credibility and accuracy of the study results (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010). Hansen, Draborg, and Kristensen (2011) explained that it is the researcher’s responsibility to ensure the accuracy of the findings. External validity refers to the extrapolation of the research findings beyond the immediate to the general and is not applicable to this qualitative study (Silverman, 2010). Thus, validity gauges the strength of the design and the methods in a research project and refers to the degree to which it is possible to make legitimate inferences from the findings in the study to the theoretical constructs that comprise the basis of those findings (Silverman, 2010). The objective of a qualitative study is to be able to make conclusions incorporating different perspectives to increase the validity of the results (Sikahala, 2011). Conducting the interviews in controlled settings supports external validity (Moustakas, 1994).

Morse (2015) argued that trustworthiness adds to validity of research. The professional relationships I enjoy with the study participants provided a foundation for mutual trust and honesty, thereby safeguarding the quality and validity of the data. Lincoln and Guba (1986) proposed a framework including four criteria to enhance the reliability of qualitative research studies: credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability.

Credibility implies the researcher's presentation of the results contained in the study accurately reflects the experience and interpretation of the participants (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Triangulation is a common strategy used to establish credibility. Data triangulation involves using different sources of information to increase the credibility of a study, by allowing researchers to analyze a research question from multiple perspectives (Fielding, 2012). In this study, in addition to the interviews, I also relied on my own observations, and other documents to conduct the study. These multiple lines of evidence, add depth and breadth to the study (Yin, 2014).

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of an inquiry apply to other contexts (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). To increase transferability, Noble and Smith (2015) noted it is essential for qualitative studies to describe as many steps research protocol as possible, and to document these steps thoroughly and consistently. Making sure others can repeat both the operations and the procedures undertaken during the proposed study and achieve similar findings increases the reliability of the proposed study (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Accordingly, I set up a detailed and clearly defined protocol for conducting the interviews and created a database with the responses.

Dependability is achieved when other researchers are able to follow the trail used in the research process (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). The more consistency in the process of collecting the data, interpreting the findings and reporting results, the more dependable the results are. To assess the dependability of a study, others should be able to follow the dependability audit, where a researcher records the activities of the study. Not keeping an audit trail diminished the dependability of the study (Houghton et al., 2013). I achieved dependability by keeping specific and accurate notes of the process for identifying the subjects, conducting the interviews, and analyzing the data during the research process. Documenting every step in a well-crafted document assured the dependability of my study.

Confirmability is achieved by establishing robust audit trails and by outlining the decisions made thought the research process and providing a rationale for the methodological and interpretative judgment of the researcher (Houghton et al., 2013). By documenting thoroughly with comprehensive notes and being organized in my research, I was able to review every step of the process as needed for clarity during the study and then again in writing about it, reducing any potential bias that may result for less formal documentation. Confirmability occurs once a researcher has established credibility, transferability, and dependability (Khorsan & Crawford, 2014). The use of an interview protocol, electronic recording devices and computers to capture data, member checking, and methodological triangulation contributed to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of the qualitative multiple case exploratory study was to explore the strategies used by five Latino immigrant business owners residing in the Nashville, Tennessee region to expanding their businesses outside of their ethnic enclave. The study was undertaken by interviewing the owners of these businesses, collecting data and reviewing documentations and observing the characteristics and operations of these businesses.

In Section 2, I included details about study participants and the recruitment criteria used. The section offered a detailed explanation of the research methodology and the research design including a look at the data collection instrument, organization of information and analysis, and the procedures for ensuring reliability and validity.

Section 3 of the study contains the presentation of the findings and recommendations for practical usage of these findings that may be applicable to immigrant business owners seeking to expand their businesses beyond their ethnic enclave and augment their possibilities of financial returns.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case exploratory study was to explore the strategies used by five Latino immigrant business owners residing in Nashville, Tennessee who have successfully grown their customer base beyond the ethnic enclave where their businesses were initially located. I carried out the research by conducting a review of relevant literature, composing an interview protocol, recruiting business owners, interviewing the owners of these businesses, reviewing documents, and observing the characteristics and operations of these businesses.

In Section 3, I present the data analysis of the results of the research with six different themes that were identified through qualitative analysis. This section also includes observations concerning the applications for professional practice, implications for social change, and further research recommendations.

Presentation of the Findings

The central research question was as follows: What strategies do Latino immigrant business owners in Nashville, Tennessee use to expand their businesses outside of the ethnic enclave where their businesses are located?

I selected a purposive sample; I recruited five participants for this research who were immigrant business owners who met the participation criteria and who started and ran their businesses in Nashville, Tennessee. After conducting and transcribing the interviews, I conducted a thematic analysis of the five interviews and reviewed documents provided by the participants. The first three questions of the interviews were demographic questions intended to understand the profile of the participants of the study in terms of time lived in the United States, self-described language proficiency perception, and experience running a business in their country of origin. (See Appendix A for Questions 1, 2 and 3). The responses to these questions are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant ID	Years in the U.S.	English proficiency	Business experience in country of origin
P1	18	Conversational	Yes
P2	13; 11	Advanced, Advanced	Yes
P3	56	Advanced	No
P4	29	Conversational	Yes
P5	45; 47	Advanced; Conversational	No

I assigned each participant a code, P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5, and replaced the names with these codes. Two of the companies interviewed had cofounders who are husband and wife. As such, when I conducted the interviews for these two businesses, there were two individuals present, the husband and the wife, yet for purposes of the analysis, I considered those interviews each as one participant. The results show that study participants have lived in the United States for an average of just under 35 years. In general, participants seemed to be comfortable enough in their English language skills to conduct business in English. While a couple of participants commented that their English was not perfect, they all felt that for matters related to their business operations, they had the necessary skills to carry out negotiations. As P4 stated, “It is between basic and conversational, enough for a basic conversation, and well developed to operate in a business level, but no advanced.” This participant went on to say: “With no problem, I can make business, deals, agreements, read documents, in fact I can read important documents and contracts with lawyers, and all that, I almost understand the 100%.” While none of the participants had owned a business in their countries of origin, most participants had prior business experience, and for three that was prior to moving to the United States. For example, P1 said the following about her business experience prior to moving to the United States: “I didn’t have a business but my parents had a restaurant and I loved to help them.”

For the thematic analysis, I performed a primary read through the deidentified data and transcribed interview data, noting emergent themes. I used these emergent themes to construct a coding tree based upon the initial code development, iteratively reviewing the themes within the context of each individual interview to ensure a good fit between the coding schema and the data. I made necessary revisions and additions based upon this iterative review. I then created an NVivo file, using NVivo Pro 11 for Windows to upload all five interviews and to create nodes for the emergent themes. Using the NVivo software, I conducted a qualitative analysis of the data, coding each interview for each theme. I compiled the resulting findings using NVivo's analysis tools.

The interview responses provided insight on the strategies that these Latino immigrant business owners have used to grow their businesses and to expand their customer base outside the ethnic enclave in which each originally started the business. The six themes that emerged from the research were (a) opportunity readiness; (b) multicultural hybridism; (c) proficiency in English language; (d) access to training, mentorship, and professional networks; (e) connectedness to financial resources; and (f) tenacity in the business.

Emergent Theme 1: Opportunity Readiness

As discussed by the participants of these interviews, opportunity readiness was necessary for the successful expansion of their businesses outside the enclave. Opportunity readiness has a unique meaning in the context of a small business ready to expand into new territory; the interview data speak to this narrative. P3 stated,

> I was doing some work for a collision center, they found up I was doing some work in a back yard, he came to me with numerous little things from his shop to repair… and he had property. He said, "Man you did so well over here why you don't look for some building, I got a building that is empty and I can pay six

> hundred dollars a month for two thousand square foot." I said, "Damn, a ten by ten going to a two thousand square foot and six hundred." I wasn't ready to pay for that because I didn't have enough clients to take over it, but I solicited somebody. A friend of mine was looking for a business so we shared the building, so I went a thousand square feet for a thousand square feet for three hundred dollar. So we moved in. He was a painter, so he cleaned and painted the place…I started in the Joelton area in the country because that was where I started. Opened in Joelton I was up there for eight years, in the first two years I bought the guy out. I told him – listen you are not doing anything in your half and I need the space, do you want me to buy you out?

The theme opportunity readiness is comprised of several components. Some of these factors include the degree of articulation of one's business model, the entrepreneurs' possession of sufficient managerial experience to recognize the need for strategic shifts, and the utilization of break-out strategies that represent an accumulation of entrepreneurial attitudes. Opportunity readiness was discussed by 100% of the interviewees, a total of 42 times across all interviews – see Table 3 for additional descriptive statistics regarding Theme 1.

P2 stated,

> Having said that, there are a lot topics in business that as business person you know. If you are an entrepreneur, you have the "touch", so you can have a analyst doing all the analyzing you want, but you have a certain feeling of where you want to go, but little by little we have learned to take that information, and data to

> enrich our discussions, so we can discuss with basis and not just opinions. We value all the pro and cons. But we look at sales, support, trends, etc. The use of information technology, market information certainly helps us decide. Before it was yes, no, yes, no. At the end, we cannot force the market to consume something, we don't get to dictate what a market wants-- the consumer rules the market. Our job is to give them what they want. For example, I like a line of cookies that are from Costa Rica but I know I won't sell one single one here- because people don't like them. I'm not going to convince anyone to buy. But if in contrast I bring la rosquillita made in wood oven, with a lot of butter, and the other one with cheese, of course they buy it.

I observed a revealing example of how a participant strategically used information to identify opportunities to grow outside their enclave. During my visit to interview P2, I reviewed a strategic marketing plan that the firm developed several years ago. The plan specifically identified different existing emerging markets for their product lines. When I asked P2 how he was able to identify these different markets, P2 explained how, using point of sale technology, the company can easily create a consumer behavior profile where each point of sale moves a different basket of products. This profile highlights purchasing patterns in different stores. Access to this information has allowed him to strategically place products that appeal, dependent upon the market demographic of each point of sale.

Taken together, the patterns of responses to these questions suggest that the study participants were intentional in the opportunity recognition process as they undertook growing their ventures. They did not launch their ventures as a result of limited human capital of blocked opportunities. Even in cases where the initial financial and human capital where minimal, all participants started their venture using an opportunity lens and not a necessity paradigm.

The emergence of this theme contrasts the two approaches to entrepreneurship espoused by Chrysostome and Lin (2010): necessity entrepreneurship vs. opportunity entrepreneurship. Opportunity entrepreneurship has an intrinsic link to the availability of markets and occurs as a result of methodical strategic planning (Beckers & Blumberg, 2013). Under this construct, immigrant entrepreneurs leverage their accumulated human capital--education, experience, family connections, and individual learning initiatives--for business creation. Several responses by study participants substantiate the tenant of this approach that explains that if there is latent demand for a product or service, then a business opportunity exists for entrepreneurs to capitalize on and to create value derived from exploiting such opportunity.

In contrast, necessity entrepreneurs are individuals who begin their enterprises because they see no better alternative or have no better alternative in the wage sector (Poschke, 2013). Circumstances force necessity entrepreneurs to undertake business ventures as they encounter obstacles that hinder them from participating in the traditional labor market. This approach of necessity entrepreneurship was not observed in any of the participants interviewed. See Table 2 for the frequency of the theme opportunity readiness as discussed in the interviews.

Table 2

Frequency of Opportunity Readiness Discussed in Interviews

Participant ID	Times discussed	% coverage
P1	5	18.38%
P2	7	28.16%
P3	10	26.98%
P4	11	58.02%
P5	9	23.32%
Across all participants	Total: 42	Average: 30.97%

Emergent Theme 2: Multicultural Hybridism

This theme captures each business owner's discussion of how their firm's evolution to become a multicultural firm helped them grow outside their original enclave. The term *multicultural hybridism* has emerged in recent research of immigrant entrepreneurship to explain the increasing managerial competences, human capital, and level of entrepreneurial commitment necessary to sustain the exploration and exploitation of business opportunities (Arrighetti et al., 2014). Immigrant entrepreneurs crossing the boundaries of enclave markets need the capacity to attract assets and resources to their firms, such as management skills, market information, and technological knowledge (Baycan Levent, Masurel, & Nijkamp, 2003).

Topics related to this theme discussed by the participants were the professionalization of the firm, the development of innovative organizational configurations, and the formalization of operations. Professionalization of the firm was said to involve hiring professionals with increased managerial expertise such as skills in financial management, marketing, or logistics. The professionalization process represented a move away from family-based labor in an attempt to increase the venture's access to professional skills or English language skills. P1 stated,

> [The type of employee I hire] has changed a lot because I started working with people that weren't necessary bilingual…basically, yes, they speak English... I thought it was better for the business to hire professional chefs' that had experience and allow me to book more events. I wanted to hire people with experience where I could simply give them a sheet with the vocabulary, and they immediately knew what they had to do. I wanted to just give them a sheet with the instructions so then I wouldn't be worried about that event and go ahead with the next. And [it] was very important to me they have experience.

P4 stated,

> I am professionalizing the staff. . . . That's the idea, to professionalize and to train in all the aspects. For example, a bartender won't be just trained in serve a drink; he will be trained to solve a problem, for an emergency, first aid, health, hygiene.

> Those are the steps to follow to guarantee a better service and solidify our footing in the industry as a company with a name and reputation at all levels.

This participant later stated,

> To make other cultures be part of your business, you have to improve the service level, you have to improve the product you offer, you have to improve the direct interaction with the client. I've seen is there where many fail. . . . When you give a good service, good product, and good customer service, everyone will grow even with their personal limitations.

Other comments were consistent with previous research that addressed boundary-crossing activities that help their businesses outside the enclave (Kloosterman, 2010; Zolin, Chang, Yang, & Ho, 2015), confirming that increasing managerial competences and expanding human capital by hiring outside talent allows immigrant-owned firms to explore different territories and grow in different industries (Arrighetti et al., 2014; Parzer, Rieder, & Wimmer, 2016). Likewise, Mayer-Haug. Read, Brinckmann Dew, and Grichnik, (2013) found that growth and venture scale is connected to talent diversification and talent quality.

During member checking, two participants provided examples of how the hiring of professional management into the business enhanced their ability to enter new markets and in some cases even venture into new industries. For example, as described to me in a communication outside of the study interview, one participant is developing a digital technology to manage warehouse inventories that can be sold to businesses with similar operations (P2, personal communication, May 22, 2017). P5 pointed directly to the hiring and deployment of a professionally run information technology department as the step that allowed him to systematize his production and delivery schedules. P5 credited the computerized logistics to acquisition of new customers: “We were able to start delivering outside Nashville and even acquired new customers in Georgia and Kentucky” (P5, personal communication, June 8, 2017).

In general, the findings in this section are consistent with findings of Arrighetti et al. (2014), who posited that the adoption of multicultural hybridism is a key antecedent to the adoption of growth strategies outside ethnic enclave. Multicultural hybridism was discussed by 100% of the interviewees, a total of 30 times across all interviews – see Table 3 for additional descriptive statistics regarding Theme 2.

Table 3

Frequency of Multicultural Hybridism Discussed in Interviews

Participant ID	Times discussed	% coverage
P1	8	26.71%
P2	7	17.72%
P3	3	11.67%
P4	7	40.67%
P5	5	16.34%
Across all participants	Total: 30	Average: 22.62%

Emergent Theme 3: Proficiency in English Language and the Predominant Culture Outside the Enclave

When discussing reasons that they were able to grow outside the enclave and cater to other customers, all participants emphasized the importance of proficiency in the English language. Participants discussed the ability to communicate effectively in all business aspects as a necessity for expansion outside the enclave, whereas lacking language skills were named as a barrier to business growth. Participants underscored the need to be proficient not just in the English language, but also in the predominant culture outside the enclave, so as to understand the desired experience of larger markets.

Responses by most participants seemed to substantiate the conclusions of prior researchers (Anastasia, Dimitrios, Anastasios, & Andreas, 2014; Shields & Price, 2004), who found that immigrant entrepreneurs with proficient English skills earned better economic returns. P2 spoke to the necessity to be proficient in not just the English language, but also in aspects of American culture: "Obviously the language plays a very important role because you have to explain about the product. We've learned when you deal with the Americans, you have to make presentations. You sit with them, take samples and everything very well structured and the requirements are different."

P1 stated, "In México I learned to prepare, here I learned to make and read recipes so, I started to write my own recipes in English so it was very important or me to hire someone that spoke English to develop my recipes. [Interviewer: Your employees who interact with your customers are bilingual?] Basically, yes they speak English." P1 went on to state, "One time when I wasn't at the business, I was taking a break and one of my clients came and the employee didn't speak English. My customer said that nobody was in charge and that was not okay."

Wang (2011) studied the role that the ability to communicate in English plays in business formation and integration, and confirmed what other more recent studies have also concluded (Kushnirovich, Heilbrunn, & Davidovich, 2017) that lack of proficiency is a hindrance to venture formation and integration. During member checking, P5 shared an example of a competitor who had started his business a couple of years after P5 had started theirs. He stated, "When distributors wanted him to sell his products in Nashville, his English wasn't good and couldn't communicate with them, and we could. We started a relationship with them and, and they have been a really good customer."

The lack of English proficiency seems to be one of the most important factors shaping the ability of immigrant entrepreneurs to venture outside their enclave. Proficiency in English language and in the predominant culture outside the enclave" was discussed by 100% of the interviewees, a total of 11 times across all interviews – see Table 4 for additional descriptive statistics regarding Theme 3.

Table 4

Frequency of Proficiency in English Language and in the Predominant Culture Outside the Enclave Discussed in Interviews

Participant ID	Times discussed	% coverage
P1	5	15.9%
P2	2	2.48%
P3	1	0.61%
P4	2	5.46%
P5	1	1.18%
Across all participants	Total: 11	Average: 5.13%

Emergent Theme 4: Access to Training, Mentorship, and Professional Networks

Participants discussed the important role of accessing nonfinancial resources, specifically training and educational opportunities, formal and informal mentorship, and professional networks, in growing their businesses outside of the ethnic enclave.

Three of the participants provided examples of how networking and mentorship has impacted their ability to do business in a positive way, by being able to tap into other markets outside their original enclave. P1 commented how she attends “every single opportunity to learn.” After asking a follow up question, where I asked what kind of advice P3 would give to a younger version of himself, he replied:

> I would say let me help you. Because I think that most Latinos they just don’t trust people helping and if you don’t work on that you will always be by yourself - you have to trust people. Look for a network you can trust, someone that you can always can learn from. I’m always looking for a mentor. I’m always looking out for help. Anytime when I need something I’m like, “Hey, do you want to go for lunch?” and is because you got to continue the seeking. I think one of the things I told somebody in the business is to get out and believe in people that they are willing to help. There is good people, the thing is is that you have to do the first step. Sometimes we are so afraid to seek help.

Some participants considered that intentional connectivity and participation in formal and informal peer and mentorship networks enhances their ability to grow. These ideas align with common recommendations in findings from researchers who have explored growth entrepreneurs (Almobaireek & Manolova, 2012; Brush & Cooper, 2012; Emrich, 2015). In relation to pursuing training opportunities, P1 stated,

> Something really helped me a lot that transformed my business was to take an event certification. The education was basic in this case, to invest in education to help me to grow, not just because you learn more. It is because you realize in what level you are exactly in that moment. And helped me so much. So the education, attending workshops and getting the certificates all was basic to keep growing.

Regarding the importance of establishing professional networks, P4 stated,

> The bigger deals, those are the ones that we definitely want to be connecting, growing into that kind of stage. Once you get into that level, everybody in that level feeds from one another. Because they related on accountability on product, on people, just, they don't want to have any problems. So they're going to hire somebody that is recommended, that they can get it done, but highly recommended. And at this level of tier, you just can't make a call; you have to proof yourself. We have a proven record, alright. And then once we started to access higher and higher rated customers, we just have to tell them who we have done work for, and from there we don't even have to try to reach them, they call us.

This theme aligns well with findings of other recent research that highlights the benefits of establishing spaces that expand the opportunities to learn about American business practices (Kallick, 2015; Wingfield & Taylor, 2016).

Access to training, mentorship, and professional networks was discussed by 100% of the interviewees, a total of 20 times across all interviews – see Table 5 for additional descriptive statistics regarding Theme 4.

Table 5

Frequency of Access to Training, Mentorship, and Professional Networks Discussed in Interviews

Participant ID	Times discussed	% coverage
P1	7	24.74%
P2	3	6.69%
P3	5	26.95%
P4	3	10.23%
P5	2	1.27%
Across all participants	Total: 20	Average: 12.98%

Emergent Theme 5: Connectedness to Financial Resources

Participants discussed the significance of their level of connectedness to financial resources and the ways in which this type of connection has changed over the lifespan of their businesses, allowing each business to successfully grow outside of its original enclave. Interview protocol Question 9 addressed the way in which financial capital played a role in the participants' ability to grow outside the ethnic enclave. Follow up questions to the study participants probed more deeply the degree to which relationships with financial institutions have impacted the ability of the business to grow beyond the enclave.

Aspects of this theme discussed by participants included lack of access to, or trust in, financial institutions, the degree to which they relied upon loans for initial operating cash flow, and the increased ability to rely on financial institutions as the business grew. This section represents a theme that emerged about how participants enjoyed strong relationships with financial institutions as they grew outside the enclave. Notwithstanding the challenges that participants had accessing financial resources when they launched their businesses initially, all five participants commented that when it was time to expand their business beyond the enclave, they enjoyed solid relationships with financial institutions, and that their ability to invest in reaching markets outside the enclave has been enhanced by having those solid relationships. Regarding meeting cash flow needs during the early stages of the business, P5 stated,

> The financial part was so awful. There were about 6 months before we were able to open the tortilleria and the business. So the money we had left from the sale of the house, we were spending and spending. We had to spend in plumbing and other things, the licenses and everything else. And the landlord told us, "Where is the recommendation letter from previous business you have had, where is the reference letter?" So, we told him, "We don't have one, we are just getting started." So he told us he would rent to us, but we needed a $5,000 deposit. So we had to put down the money and deduct it from the money we had left. It was

> scary. We weren’t that kind of people; we came just with our own effort, but nothing else. At that time it was unrealistic to think about banks, we were able to get the money because we had the equity in the California house. But I remember one day was about the time we should open and we still don’t open the business. I was so sad and anxious because we had nothing left to eat.

Notwithstanding the challenges that participants had accessing financial resources when they launched their businesses, all five participants commented that when it was time to expand their business beyond the enclave, they enjoyed solid relationships with financial institutions, and that their ability to invest in reaching markets outside the enclave has been enhanced by having those solid relationships. The importance of developing strong financial relationships with banks has been suggested by Yazdanfar, Abbasian, and Brouder (2015), and Emrich (2015). All participants in the study appear to be at a phase of their business, where they are growing outside the enclave and are at a phase of their business development wherein they enjoy robust relationships with financial institutions. P5 stated:

> Yes, [today] we have a good relation with our bank, they have supported us a lot. In fact next week we having a meeting to talk about how the business is going and what areas we need investment to grow. For now we are thinking to grow a little more in the tortilla factory business to be more modern.

P2 said:

> We had some banking relationships with a bank for our truck loans, we had a $50,000 revolving line, and when we closed it was up to $100,000 dollars, every

> year was growing because they could see we had equipment, inventory and everything. [Interviewer: so you do think your baking relation are good?] Yes. Definitively, we have a good relation with our local bank, because they open you the doors because they see the development of the business, the biggest jump we did was to buy this building so we had multiple meetings with banks and got the loan and got the 80% we needed to buy it from them. Now that we have this building and the company has grown, our lines of credit have been growing too. Whenever we have needed in terms of financing, we never have had problems at all in the financing situation.

Several researchers (Alden & Hammarstedt, 2016; Emrich, 2015; Fairlie, 2012) have found that immigrant entrepreneurs have difficulty connecting with financial institutions and lack the minimal knowledge of how to do business with banks. This lack of connectivity to financial tools and players happens primarily because access to banking services may be limited during the startup phase of a business (Haus, Steinmetz, Isidor, & Kabst, 2013; Sullivan & Meek, 2012), yet the findings of this study seem to indicate that once the business is established, access to banking services is not a hindrance to growth outside the enclave. In fact, the results show that strong banking relationships aided each participant in developing their business outside the ethnic enclave.

Connectedness to financial resources was discussed by 100% of the interviewees, a total of 14 times across all interviews – see Table 6 for additional descriptive statistics regarding Theme 5.

Table 6

Frequency of Connectedness to Financial Resources Discussed in Interviews

Participant ID	Times discussed	% coverage
P1	3	9.23%
P2	3	9.72%
P3	2	11.94%
P4	2	5.09%
P5	4	20.76%
Across all participants	Total: 14	Average: 11.35%

Emergent Theme 6: Tenacity and Resilience in the Business

The ability to push an idea forward through hardship and obstacles is one of the most common characteristics of entrepreneurs. Not surprisingly, participants in this study frequently discussed this theme, who communicating that a key to the successful expansion of their businesses outside the enclave was the willingness and ability to be persistent in fostering the growth of the business, despite hardships or challenges.

The participants discussed this theme in terms of hard work, resilience, and the refusal to accept failure as an option. P2 stated,

> The truck we used, it was kind of mobile warehouse. That truck we had because [of] the dairy products. We did not have a refrigerated place, I looked everywhere

> for any company who could rent me a cold storage to stock and bring products, but it was very complicated, so the truck we had it in a storage facility. We left it parked there during the week and in the weekends, I used to stop by and check it because we need it to keep it on and off constantly with all the products inside. If that truck broke, all the product was damaged, and it would have been a terrible loss. It happened a couple of times actually, when we sometimes stopped and go to check on it, it was turned off, one day was raining so hard and it turned off during a blackout by itself, or sometimes when the weather was so hot, overheated. That was part of what we lived at the beginning. Very difficult.

The findings from this study compare to stories of tenacity and resilience that other researchers who have studied Latino immigrants have encountered (Allen & Busse, 2015; Pisani et al., 2017; Price, 2012; Wilson & Portes, 1980). Moreover the spirit of tenacity and resilience revealed by most participants when discussing growing outside the enclave align with claims made by Fisher, Maritz and Lobo (2014), who concluded that entrepreneurs are more resilient than non-entrepreneurs, and that resilience does predict entrepreneurial success.

Hardiness and persistence are concepts associated with tenacity. I found multiple examples during the interviews that illustrate these concepts. For example, P5 stated,

> We had troubles with codes at the beginning because the codes officers had never seen a tortilleria, so that made harder the process to open the business. It took 6 months so we were wondering, “How are we going to make a living for 6 months before we can open? We have to do something to survive.” So we started to sell

> burritos. We used to ask to the neighbors if the wanted to buy burritos and they said yes, so we used to make them and deliver them to their job sites. And people used to tell us, “Why don’t you guys don't open a market?” So we heard from so many people that we should, so we opened a market and it wasn’t until 6 months later that we opened the tortilleria.

In discussing a major setback he faced in business, P3 shared:

> To do these big jobs we did, [business name omitted] is a company that is been around for a hundred years, we do work for them. We partner with them on jobs in Hawaii, Puerto Rico and Florida. We partner with them, we did all the work, because we can deliver because we have all the stuff needed. This is a huge company, but two years ago, no, a year ago, we found out that we did a mistake on one of their malls in Florida. He had to redo everything, it cost us fifty thousand dollars but we owned it. We went in and faced it. We almost went bankrupt, but we faced it and owned it. You’ll just tell them, “Hey, don’t worry we’ll take care of it.” That’s all we did, and got it fixed. The ripple effect, we still feel it today.

The findings based on the ideas incorporated in this theme are consistent with accepted tenets of characteristics of successful entrepreneurship. Participants saw the prevalence of resilience and tenacity as a condition necessary to grow their businesses beyond their initial enclave and into expanded markets.

Tenacity and resilience in the business was discussed by 100% of the interviewees, a total of 19 times across all interviews – see Table 7 for additional descriptive statistics regarding Theme 6.

Table 7

Frequency of Tenacity and Resilience in Business Discussed in Interviews

Participant ID	Times Discussed	% Coverage
P1	1	2.93%
P2	5	9.73%
P3	3	3.84%
P4	2	5.84%
P5	8	19.68%
Across all participants	Total: 19	Average: 8.40%

Applications to Professional Practice

Entering mainstream markets means immigrant-owned firms integrating within the broader business economic, organizational, and cultural capabilities of the host community. The findings of the study provided some relevant strategies that immigrant business owners have followed to grow their businesses beyond their ethnic enclave. The findings suggest that growing outside the enclave is indeed a strategy that can be used to impact the success and profitability of the firm.

The study supports the idea that adopting multicultural hybridism as a business strategy offers firms a path towards sustainable growth outside their enclave. Within the context of multicultural hybridism, my analysis indicates that Latino immigrant-owned businesses should be as proficient as possible in the English language to be able to reach a broader customer base. Their language skills do not need to be perfect, but they have to feel confident in their abilities to communicate with non-Spanish speakers to be able to lead, negotiate, and serve different venture stakeholders.

An additional finding points to the importance of being connected to a broader network of stakeholders that offers mentorships or peer-interactions, which could be central to aiding Latino immigrant entrepreneurs in their quest for accessing broader markets.

Finally, the results do not seem to support the notion that a lack of relationships with financial institutions and financial services in general is a detriment to growing the businesses during the startup phase. This finding is at odds with the literature and common perception that banks and other financial institutions do not serve the needs of immigrant-owned businesses on a growth pattern (Bates & Robb, 2013; Carter et al., 2015). While participants resorted to personal savings, and friends and family when they started their businesses, and did not use banks until the businesses had already been established, the study results reflect that once established on a growth pattern, when the businesses started growing outside of the enclave, participant immigrant entrepreneurs enjoy solid banking relationships.

If put to action, some of the recommended strategies resulting from this study, such as adopting multicultural hybridism, seeking professional development and mentorship relationships, and making sure to have lingual and cultural competency, may help immigrant business owners reach higher levels of success as they expand their businesses outside an ethnic enclave. Knowledge gained in this study could lead to programming in the form of workshops and making resources available in the area of mentorship and networking to immigrant business owners seeking to improve their market position and financial performance.

Implications for Social Change

Immigrant entrepreneurs are playing an important role in the development of the Nashville, Tennessee. More broadly, immigrant entrepreneurs make a direct contribution to the economy of the communities in which they operate and are increasingly seen as key players in enhancing the prosperity of the broader community. Immigrant business owners who understand the strategies to operate outside the enclave in which their operate initially, can become better corporate citizens, provide a broader tax contribution and employment base, and play a role in economic development within the communities in which they operate.

The findings of this research might assist business advisors and community supporters that want to assist immigrants to expand their business beyond their enclave, thereby helping them achieve greater prosperity, security for their families, social integration and influence within the greater society. To the extent that immigrant owned businesses are able to successfully grow their businesses outside their enclave, the outcomes can have positive ramifications for these immigrant entrepreneurs, their families, and society at large.

Recommendations for Action

Immigrant entrepreneurs in general, not only those of Latino heritage, should pay attention to the findings of this study. While the participants in this research were Latino immigrant entrepreneurs, the findings may be relevant to other immigrant entrepreneurs desiring to expand their business outside of their ethnic enclave. The following are specific recommendations that may be useful to such entrepreneurs.

At the end of this section, I discuss the ways in which I plan to disseminate the findings of this study so that others may have access to them.

The first is recommendation is that immigrant business owners desiring to expand beyond their ethnic enclave consider revising their business model, specifically their products and services, to a more multicultural model. Changing the internal make-up of the employee base to a more interethnic labor and managerial resources helped firms that participated in this study grow outside their enclave. Businesses who expanded their external networks of stakeholders to have a more multicultural profile also seemed to grow outside their enclave more visibly. A reliance on a multicultural model within the firm seems to leverage the benefits of diversity and to increase the success of such firms, promoting not only integration within the business domain, but within the broader economic ecosystem in which they operate.

A second finding from the study is that language proficiency is paramount to be able to operate and do business successfully outside ethnic enclave. Immigrant entrepreneurs could take steps to become proficient in the primary language of their host community. While it appears from the study that 100% proficiency is not necessary, immigrant entrepreneurs who are able to conduct business, negotiate terms, and provide customer support in English tend to be more successful in expanding beyond the enclave. It's clear from the experiences shared by the study participants that their language skills have been an important tool for integration into the host community.

A final recommendation for action is that entrepreneurs seeking to grow their business outside their enclave seek, find, and nurture professional development and mentorship relationships. Mentors act as sounding boards in evaluating ideas and providing feedback on major business decisions. They often offer helpful perspectives as they share their knowledge and experience. A finding from the study is that immigrant entrepreneurs have a desire to engage with peers and mentors. A recommendation that emanates from this finding is the importance of learning from strategies that others have followed, and also from mistakes that others have made. This reduces the obstacles of growing outside the enclave (Mitchelmore & Rowley, 2013). Having the opportunity to learn from other peers and mentors can help with the financial success of their own businesses. The membership in both ethnic and nonethnic groups such as professional organizations, business groups, trade groups, chambers of commerce, and cultural and recreational entities may extend the opportunities of these businesses.

Table 8 summarizes specific recommended strategies and implementation actions for immigrant entrepreneurs wishing to expand their businesses outside their enclave.

Table 8

Recommended Strategies and Implementation Actions

Recommended strategies	Recommended implementation actions
Adopt a multicultural and flexible business model that allows the business to be ready to assess and capitalize on expansion opportunities.	• Craft a flexible business model so the business can react to market opportunities; • Foster entrepreneurial commitment and thinking within the business.
Strengthen proficiency in English language and in the predominant culture outside the enclave.	• Increase managerial competence by focusing on talent development; • Implement strategies that allow for the professionalization of the venture; • Work toward acculturation in host community's business and economic practices; • Acquire proficiency in the English language and in the predominant culture outside the enclave.
Seek, find, and nurture professional development and mentorship relationships.	• Participate in professional membership groups, such as chambers of commerce or professional networks; • Get involved in mentorship programs; • Intentionally seek help from other professionals; • Join entrepreneurs' organizations; • Acquire relevant certifications; • Develop a relationship with a banker early on, even if financing is not yet necessary; • Understand the financing and investment landscape within the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

I intend to disseminate the findings of this research by sharing the findings with existing community programs and organizations that work with immigrant entrepreneurs available in the Nashville area. For example, I will reach out the Latin American chamber of commerce, and to other immigrant- and refugee-serving groups, and offer to share the findings of the study. I will also share with other researchers both locally and across the country that are interested in this topic. I will volunteer to write opinion pieces in the local business journal, and I will use my classroom in my current university job to disseminate this information.

Recommendations for Further Research

In this study, I focused on the growing Latino immigrant entrepreneurial community in Nashville, Tennessee. The study highlighted some of the strategies that Latino, immigrant-owned businesses have undertaken to grow outside their enclave. and it set the stage for future research opportunities.

For example, the themes that emerged as success strategies in this research could be subjected to further scrutiny. In order to ascertain their validity in measuring successful practices, both the sample size and profile could be expanded conducting additional qualitative research. Similar studies could be carried out to discover whether the suggested strategies have been used in other parts of the country by successful immigrant entrepreneurs to expand beyond an ethnic enclave. Future research could explore the relevance of other institutional factors, such as particular industry, gender roles, or immigration status, and their impact on success strategies that help business owners grow outside their enclave.

This study focused exclusively on Latino immigrant entrepreneurs. A comparative study of multiple immigrant groups would be further illustrative and provide insights as to whether the findings produced in this study have been used among additional ethnic groups. The geographic delineation of the study limited the research to one physical location; future research could expand the study to other cities in order to explore how other comminutes with presence of immigrant-owned businesses incorporate these businesses into their own communities.

Given the participants' perceived importance of mentoring and access to professional networks, research that explores the impact of intentional and active participation in such activities on the success of businesses would be meritorious.

Despite its interesting and relevant findings, this study has important limitations. The results of this study cannot be applied as foundational knowledge about business development in other ethnic communities without further research.

Reflections

Several years ago, my professional and personal life ignited in me a strong interest in the topic of immigrant entrepreneurship. I saw the important role that immigrant-owned businesses have played in the community where I live, and I wanted to study various facets of how immigrant-owned businesses operate, and fail or succeed. My original idea for this doctoral study proved to be less than ideal to be able to complete this program successfully; the timing, the topic, and the steps that I would have had to take would not have allowed me to complete this program in a successful manner. That's when I turned to explore the topic that I ultimately settled on for this study. I wanted to understand how immigrant-owned firms entering the mainstream market changed their internal structures, networks, and overall strategies to grow outside their enclave.

Upon receipt of the IRB approval, the data collection took less than two weeks, yet the transcription (and translation in a couple of cases) took an enormous amount of time; I underestimated the amount of time that process would take. However, I enjoyed conducting the interviews tremendously. I learned how much pride and hard work has gone into the entrepreneurial journeys of the interviewees. It was difficult to keep the interviews to the allotted hour, as the participants loved talking about their businesses.

The process of coding the data and synthetizing the information was rewarding. I did not anticipate extracting the richness of information that I did from just one-hour conversations. I now have a much better understanding of what qualitative research is about, and certainly appreciate the strengths and the weaknesses that this method offers. I had some preconceived ideas about what some of the findings might be before conducting the study, and did not anticipate the importance of digging beyond the original questions in the interviews. In 2017, Nashville, Tennessee is enjoying an economic boom. The growth of the population and economic vitality of the city are well documented. The results of this study convinced me that there are tremendous opportunities for immigrant-owned businesses- not only Latino- to grow, thrive, and prosper. I trust the findings of the study will be useful for such businesses that want to grow and expand their customer base beyond their original ethnic enclave and enter the mainstream markets.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case exploratory study was to explore the strategies used by five Latino immigrant business owners residing in Nashville, Tennessee, who have successfully moved beyond the ethnic enclave where the businesses were initially located. I undertook the study by interviewing the owners of these businesses, conducting a thematic analysis, reviewing documents, and observing the characteristics and operations of these businesses. Using NVivo software, I conducted a qualitative analysis of the data. I compiled the results of the findings and six themes emerged: (a) opportunity readiness; (b) multicultural hybridism; (c) proficiency in English language; (d) access to training, mentorship, and professional networks; (e) connectedness to financial resources; and (f) tenacity in the business.

By implementing some of the recommended strategies of the findings of this study, such as adopting multicultural hybridism, seeking professional development and mentorship relationships, and making sure they have language and cultural competency, immigrant entrepreneurs may be able to adjust, and deploy new strategies that will help them grow their businesses outside their enclave. Adopting these strategies will ultimately result in higher levels of success, profitability, and economic impact in the communities in which these immigrant business owners operate. The potential economic impact on society in terms of job creation, economic vitality, and diversity in the business base cannot be overstated.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

The three demographic profile questions were

1. How long ago did you move to the United States?
2. Would you consider your English proficiency to be basic, intermediate, or advanced?
3. Did you own or run a business in your native country before moving to the United States?

The investigative open-ended questions were

1. What is your business and why did you start it?
2. What factors influenced your decision to start this particular type of business?
3. Please describe who your typical customers are and what strategies you use to market your business to your customers.
4. What factors played a role in allowing you to grow your business outside of serving Latino customers?
5. How are your family members involved in the business?
6. How, if at all, did the composition of your employees change as your business grew outside of the enclave?
7. What organizational capabilities do you think were helpful to grow your business outside the ethnic enclave in which you started?
8. In your business you have two core resources that you have to manage as you make decisions about operating and growing your business, human capital and

financial capital. Can you share how you think human capital played a role in your ability to grow your business outside of your ethnic enclave?

9. What about financial capital? Did you have the financial capacity to do it, or did you have to seek outside sources of financing to grow?
10. What advice would you offer an aspiring Latino business owner that wants to grow his/her business by offering his/her services to a broader market outside of his/her ethnic enclave?
11. Is there anything else you would like to share with me that you think is important and relevant to understanding the realities of business owners seeking to expand their business outside of their ethnic enclave?

Interview Questions in Spanish

Las tres preguntas de perfil demográfico son:

1. ¿ Hace cuantos años vive en los Estados Unidos? How long ago did you move to the United States?
2. ¿Cuál considera usted que es su nivel de inglés: elemental, conversacional o avanzado?
3. Antes de venir a vivir a los Estados Unidos, ¿usted era dueño de su propio negocio en su país de origen?

Las preguntas de investigación son:

1. ¿Describa cuál es su negocio y por qué lo empezó?
2. ¿Qué factores influenciaron su decisión para empezar este negocio en particular?

3. Describa por favor quién es su cliente típico, y cuáles son las estrategias que usa usted para mercadear su negocio a sus clients?
4. ¿Qué factores considera usted que influyeron en el hecho de que haya podido crecer su negocio para tener clientes que no son Latinos?
5. ¿Cómo están involucrados sus familiares en el negocio?¿Son empleados suyos?
6. ¿Ha cambiado la composición de sus empleados de cuando empezó el negocio? Si es así, ¿cómo cambió conforme el negocio creció fuera del enclave?
7. ¿Qué capacidades operativas y organizacionales piensa que han sido útiles para poder crecer su negocio fuera del enclave en el que inició el negocio?
8. En su negocio, usted tiene dos recursos principales que tiene que manejar conforme hace decisiones sombre como operar y crecer el negocio: capital humano y capital financiero. Cuénteme como considera usted que el capital humano influyo en su habilidad de crecer su negocio fuera del enclave étnico?
9. ¿Y qué me dice del capital financiero? ¿Tuvo usted el dinero para empezar el negocio, o tuvo que acudir a fuentes externas de financiamiento?
10. ¿Qué consejos le dará usted a emprendedores Latinos que quieran crecer su negocio ofreciendo productos o servicios a un mercado más amplio fuera de clientes Latinos, e incorporar un enclave más amplio?
11. ¿Hay alguna otra idea que le gustaría compartir conmigo, que crea sea importante y relevante para entender las realidades de emprendedores que quieran expander su negocio fuera de su enclave étnico?