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Psychological Well-Being and Acculturation of Mexican Alumni of U.S. Colleges and Universities

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Abstract

Psychological Well-Being and Acculturation of Mexican Alumni of U.S. Colleges and

Universities

by

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The Hispanic population is the largest and fastest growing population in the United States, which necessitates research on the acculturation process, especially because of the current events regarding the Texas–Mexico border. Although research has indicated the need to develop coping skills to support positive mental health during acculturation, there is a lack of empirical information regarding acculturation and mental health among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. Based on social identity theory and acculturation theory, this quantitative, correlational study was conducted to examine the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being (PWB) among Mexican alumni of colleges and universities in the United States. Forty-seven participant surveys were obtained via an online survey on acculturation, as measured by the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II, and PWB, as measured by the Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being. An ANCOVA was implemented with a hierarchical multiple regression with gender and amount of time spent at the U.S. college or university as covariates. However, the results were statistically nonsignificant regarding relationships between levels of acculturation and PWB, gender, and number of years at the college or university. Thus, the results promote positive social change by encouraging the development of updated instruments and inclusion of additional demographic information in the research of Mexican alumni.

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Dedication

Life is influenced by so many factors that there is rarely a clear view of what a person's future will entail. Emotions set priorities and limitations structure the lives of members of the neighborhood. No matter the age, grade, or level of education, society often has a template of what a person is to become. Even with hope, dreams, and faith, people always have to deal with life's pressures along with the differences living in a culturally diverse community. There are often choices that cause an individual to do things differently from what they learned while being reared within their own culture. Success is dependent on how well individuals handle these choices to be different.

I was influenced by such things as music of the contemporary popular life, love, and topics of the time. My Hispanic culture influenced my development of both my inner being and how I expressed myself. My culture became the network for engaging, and to some extent, assimilating into other cultures. I acted and thought according to who I was. The determining factor of what I successfully conformed to was the fluency of any culture's compatibility or my willingness of adaptations to my self-identity. I associated myself with the aspects of the environment as well as maintaining self. My self-identity supported my stability and contentment. I continue to cultivate myself with the appropriate mannerisms that make me feel comfortable and assist me in my daily life endeavors. I am a good example of an acculturation process that led to fulfillment and success.

This research is dedicated to the individuals who have shown the perseverance, courage, and love of life to continually adapt to and manage life.

Acknowledgments

I want to acknowledge the guidance and strength Father God provides for me as I always attempt to follow His lead in my life. I also want to acknowledge the love and support my family constantly provides during the continuing endeavors of my life. My husband, Kenneth, provides me the companionship of a best friend, confidante, and love of life that helps me repeatedly rejuvenate my confidence. My children, Kenneth, Diana, and Lisa, allow me to challenge our relationships that have proven to be both enriching and enjoyable, especially bringing Meghan, Gus, and Thomas into our lives along with my grandchildren's joy. I have been given uncommon favor and am whole-heartedly grateful.

Table of Contents

iii

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The topic of this study is the relationship between acculturation and PWB of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. There is much social and personal pressure among immigrants in the United States, especially with recent political movements and legislation from the U.S. government, including attempts to regulate issues related to both American and Mexican populations (Gomez & Agren, 2017; Longoria & Gonzalez, 2017). Hispanics in America represent the fastest growing population, with over 60% of Mexican descent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014), which suggests the need for support in the acculturation process. For instance, individuals need to develop coping skills for challenges to their perspectives, ideals, and expectations to support positive mental health during acculturation (Strubler, Park, Agarwal, & Cayo, 2012; Texas International Education Consortium, 2017; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). However, there is a lack of research regarding acculturation and mental health among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. Therefore, this study has positive social change implications by providing guidance on developmental life skills that will best meet the needs of alumni as American colleges and universities continue to participate in acculturation processes.

This chapter includes a background on the topic followed by the problem statement, the purpose of the study, and the research questions and hypotheses. Then the theoretical framework is introduced followed by the nature of the study, definitions of relevant terms, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance of this

study. This chapter closes with a summary and a concise preview of Chapter 2.

Background of the Study

There is much research to improve acculturation for immigrants, including those who are current students and employees (Berry, 2011; Valencia-Garcia, Simoni, Alegria, & Takeuchi, 2012; Yoon et al., 2013). For example, researchers have studied the need to develop coping skills for challenges to perspectives, ideals, and expectations (Strubler et al., 2012; Texas International Education Consortium, 2017; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). Multiple social, academic, cultural, and psychological facets of society and self-identity are affected by acculturation whether individuals change societies within their own country or relocate to foreign countries. Researchers have identified adaptations necessary within acculturation to handle the effects of changing environments (Berry, 2005; de Kruijf, 2007; Greenaway, Cruwys, Haslam, & Jetten, 2016; Miller et al., 2013; Yahav & Cohen, 2008; Yoon et al., 2013). However, there is a gap in acculturation research on acculturated individuals who are alumni of U.S. colleges and universities from Mexico. Yet research shows that social conditions, mental status, and strategies of acculturation can have negative effects on Hispanics in the United States, and it is important to monitor these aspects of acculturation (Berry, 2011; Haack et al., 2014; National Alliance for Hispanic Health, 2015; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012; Yoon et al., 2013). Additional research could lead to better preparations of social environments to support adaptations of personal, familial, and social restructuring during acculturation processes that can encourage positive social changes (Berry, 2011; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012; Yoon et al., 2013). Therefore, I conducted this study on the PWB of Mexican

alumni of U.S. colleges and universities.

Statement of the Problem

There were 54 million Hispanics in the United States as of 2013 after an annual increase of 2%, and it is projected that there will be 128.8 million Hispanics by the year 2060 with 60% being of Mexican descent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). In addition, there has been heightened awareness of immigration surrounding the Trump administration that has presented uncertainties about policies and enforcements leading to violence, restrictions, and speculations (Gomez & Agren, 2017; Longoria & Gonzalez, 2017; US-Mexico Relations, 2016). Further, there is evidence that retaining foreign students calls for culturally sensitive environments and understanding of the effects of the acculturation processes students are experiencing (Crede & Borrego, 2014; Suh et al., 2016). Thus, escalating Mexican population growth estimates, growing uncertainties of immigration policy within the United States, and increasing awareness of cultural sensitivity necessitates research to support acculturation processes (Berry, 2011; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012; Yoon et al., 2013). The current study addressed these issues with an investigation on acculturation and PWB among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities.

Researchers have studied the PWB of college students in general, in the university community, and among immigrants who have relocated to the United States, and they have found that there is a need to develop coping skills for challenges to perspectives, ideals, and expectations (Texas International Education Consortium, 2017; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). Researchers have also specified important acculturation

factors that should be accounted for to support positive mental health adaptations such as support for new social environments, possible familial restructuring, and healthcare provisions (Li & Wen, 2015). However, there is a lack of research regarding acculturation and mental health among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. Mental health research about acculturated Mexicans from U.S. colleges and universities is valuable in monitoring their success and maintenance of proper acculturation processes as well as ensuring their PWB (Berry, 2011; Haack et al., 2014; Yoon et al., 2013). Furthermore, research on PWB after acculturation will continue to support successful acculturation processes for Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between levels of acculturation and the PWB of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. The participants' level of acculturation was the predictor/independent variable, as measured by the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II (ARSMA-II; American Psychological Association [APA], 2016; Cuellar, Arnold, & Gonzalez, 1995; Cuellar, Harris, & Jasso, 1980; Jimenez et al., 2010). The ARSMA-II includes the categories of (a) very Mexican, (b) Mexican-oriented to approximately balanced bicultural, (c) slightly Anglo oriented, (d) strongly Anglo oriented bicultural, and (e) very assimilated or Anglicized to identify levels of acculturation. The criterion/dependent variable was the participants' current level of PWB, as measured by the Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being (RSPWB; Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005). The covariates were gender and amount of time spent at the U.S. college or university.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study was conducted to answer the following three questions and associated hypotheses:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between acculturation and PWB of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities, after controlling for gender and number of years spent at the U.S. college or university?

$H_0 1$: There is not a significant mean difference between the acculturation level, as measured by the ARSMA-II, and PWB, as measured by RSPWB, of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities.

$H_1 1$: There is a significant mean difference between the acculturation level, as measured by the ARSMA-II, and PWB, as measured by RSPWB, of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the genders of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB?

$H_0 2$: There is not a significant mean difference between the genders of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

$H_1 2$: There is a significant mean difference between the genders of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB?

$H_0 3$: There is not a significant mean difference between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB, as measured by

RSPWB.

$H_1$3: There is a significant mean difference between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

Theoretical Framework

The first theory of this study's framework was social identity theory, which supports the idea that an individual's self-development is guided by relations to others (Tajfel, 1982). Tajfel and Turner posited that interpersonal and intergroup compromises of values and emotions are necessary due to the many different individual and group needs and desires within a group that can guide motivations and behavioral outcomes (Chowdhury, 2012; Tajfel, 1982). For example, as immigrants from Mexico become acculturated and experience discriminatory actions, high stress levels and instability result from lack of trust in the American health system (Orozco & Lopez, 2015). Research has also revealed that social support, sensitivity to discriminatory practices, and protective policies are important to positive social identity development (Burford, 2012; Yoon et al., 2013). Thus, many programs continue to be developed to prepare international students and corporate America for successful adaptions to the continual demands of the American society, implementing and monitoring social interactions within groups and providing support to ensure positive adaptations (comexus.org; Texas International Education Consortium, 2017).

The second theory for this study's framework was acculturation theory (Berry, 2001, 2005, 2011), which provides a basic conceptualization of the cultural changes individuals experience as they live and work among people who have different attributes.

Acculturation theory provides an explanation of the development of motivations and the maintenance of self during the transition of cultures, as acculturation can affect an individual's self. Additionally, productive relationships constructed during the acculturation process between the new and the original cultures can be determined by the amount of adaptations made to both cultures (De La Cruz, Lao, & Heinlein, 2013; Greenaway et al., 2016; Haack et al., 2014). Determining the levels of acculturation individuals select to adapt to when joining new and differing societies in the workforce and communities provides guidance for organizations responsible for assisting in positive, productive, cultural awareness programs (Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group, 2018). The continual development of self and the influences of the originating Hispanic culture play major roles in the development of perceptions and motivations. The acquisition of life fulfillment can be driven by needs and desires developed by these perceptions and motivations leading to positive mental health and well-being (Crede & Borrego, 2014; Li & Wen, 2015; Melendez, Bauman, & Guillory, 2012).

Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) and acculturation theory (Berry, 2001; 2005; 2011) have been used in research to quantify outcomes of well-being and happiness and were appropriate for this study involving surveys to determine the relationship of Mexican alumni acculturation with current levels of PWB. The alumni from Mexico who were surveyed in this study have undergone acculturation as they participated in academic studies throughout the United States. Acculturation theory suggests that individuals adapt in several different ways to a new society and often have varying outcomes. These varying outcomes can include the amount of Mexican cultural activities

retained or abandoned and how many new cultural activities are adopted or rejected (De La Cruz et al, 2013; Greenaway et al., 2016; Haack et al., 2014). Social identity theory explains how the events in new social settings could have effects on the outcomes of Mexican alumni while they are students in the United States (Chowdhury, 2012; Tajfel, 1982). The survey in this study determined the levels of American and Mexican cultural activities in which the alumni were currently participating, and the current PWB status of each participant was measured. The acculturation levels were correlated with the PWB status of each participant to discover any relationships with any levels of acculturation. As this correlation did not determine causal effects, it did provide the levels of PWB that accompany any specific levels of acculturation.

Nature of the Study

This quantitative study involved a correlational design to statistically examine the extent of the relationships between acculturation levels and PWB, which was appropriate to test this study's hypotheses because it allowed for measuring the strength and direction of any association between acculturation levels and PWB. An online survey was used to collect anonymous data to determine current levels of life fulfillment, satisfaction, and well-being in relation to the acculturation levels chosen by the participants. Surveys were administered via e-mail for quick response rates and contacting a large number of participants in a large variation of residencies globally. The survey instruments were useful in describing the characteristics of a large population of Mexican U.S. alumni to ensure accurate samples. Anonymity should have encouraged participants to answer with honesty, which increased the validity of data collected (Cherry, 2016).

Acculturation levels were determined using the ARSMA-II (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Jimenez et al., 2010), and PWB was assessed using the RSPWB (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005). The ARSMA-II measures the amount of cultural activity the participant is currently participating in, whether Anglo oriented or Mexican oriented or both. The RSPWB determines current levels of life fulfillment, satisfaction, and well-being. Demographic questions included age range, gender, and number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university.

Participants were of Mexican origin, 21-64 years of age, and alumni of U.S. colleges or universities. The alumni sample was recruited from a binational organization in charge of administering programs of scholarships between Mexico and the U.S. administration via e-mail. The e-mail included a link to the study in SurveyMonkey. The predictor variable was acculturation level and the criterion variable was PWB. Covariates included gender and number of years spent at the U.S. college or university.

To answer Research Question 1, an ANCOVA was used to determine the relationship between acculturation level and PWB. To answer Research Question 2 and 3, a multiple linear regression model for continuous outcome was fit to further assess the relationship between acculturation level and PWB, controlling for gender and number of years spent at the U.S. college or university.

Definitions

Acculturation: The term *acculturation* is a process an individual experiences when mingling or adapting to another culture that can change perceptions, values, and behaviors (Jimenez et al., 2010).

Cultural aspects: Cultural aspects refer to aspects that an individual shares with a culture such as the language they speak, their religious basis, any hierarchy levels they recognize, or the specific race of that culture (Berry, 2001).

Levels of acculturation: The quantification of cultural constructs. Factors used to measure the acculturation levels include such aspects as the use of favored language, how many aspects with either culture the individual identifies with, or the amount of and differing cultural activities (Jimenez et al., 2010).

Maintenance of self: Maintenance of self includes shaping individual values as social identification is developed (Yampolsky & Amiot, 2013).

Psychological well-being (PWB): *PWB* is defined as a conceptualization of the subjective, social, and psychological conditions of an individual (Seifert, 2005). These conditions include a sense of shared wants and needs as well as outcomes and successes in life (Smith & Woodworth, 2012). It is the state of a series of positive conditions an individual is experiencing that can include: (a) the level at which the person accepts themselves, (b) belonging, (c) cognition and behavior, (d) adaptation capabilities, (e) desires and meaningfulness, and (f) continuity of self-development (Rathi & Rastogi, 2008; Seifert, 2005).

Assumptions

The first assumption was that the participants honestly answered either the English or Spanish version of the survey. Second, it was assumed that the participants understood the questions asked. Third, it was assumed the participants' responses reflect their current mental health status in regard to their acculturation experience and not their

mental health status during the actual acculturation experience.

The methodological assumptions relevant to this study are that an ANCOVA assumes an independent relationship between the differing levels of acculturation (Cuellar et al., 1995). Additionally, multiple linear regression analysis makes several key assumptions including a linear relationship between predictor/independent variables and criterion/dependent variable, normal distributions for the criterion/dependent variable, and distributions for the residuals from the outcome variable, little to no multicollinearity between residuals of criterion/independent variables, and equality of variances in the residual distribution (Abbott, Ploubidis, Huppert, Kuh, & Croudace, 2010). It is important that the survey instruments actually measured acculturation levels and PWB to determine if there was actually a relationship between the two factors. Reliability and validity on both questionnaires have been tested in previous studies, which allows for confidence in their use (Abbott et al., 2010; Cuellar et al., 1995).

Scope and Delimitations

No participants from other countries other than Mexico were surveyed in this study to attain information specific to acculturation levels of Mexican alumni and the relationships to PWB after experiencing acculturation in U.S. colleges and universities. The survey instruments were provided in English and Spanish to avoid uncertainty of language use. No evidence was found of statistical analysis on the extent of the English and Spanish versions' equivalency, although the RSPWB exhibited good internal reliabilities with Cronbach alpha's ranging from .83 to .68 (Cuellar et al., 1995; Diaz et al., 2006). This study did not use general populations because of the increase of cultural

aspects that differ within multiple cultures that could further complicate the study.

However, the results of this study have the potential of generalizability with populations

of similar demographics that include individuals of Mexican origin who are alumni of

U.S. colleges and universities and range in age between 21 and 64.

Limitations

One of the limitations was that there was low initial participation, so I sent an

additional invitation of participation and changed the minimal amount allowed of surveys

used for this research, from the original 107 calculated with GPower statistical power

analysis (Harrell, 2015; Walker & Ziegel, 2003) to 40. Another limitation is that this

type of design does not permit causal inferences between acculturation and PWB.

Previous researchers have also done interviews and polling to target factors affecting

participants' acculturation levels and PWB. However, the current study did not

determine current environmental focal points to consider in participants' current PWB.

Further, limitations using agencies with membership affiliates included the possibilities

of the members being different from the nonmembers; therefore, the results may not be

generalizable to Mexicans who are not alumni of U.S. colleges and universities.

Correlational survey research also has limitations of recall bias, self-report bias,

and social desirability bias. There was a possibility of self-selection and sampling bias

because it was a sample of convenience. Researcher bias was also monitored to prevent

my making judgments or deterring from stating empirical data within the context of this

study in addition to implementing objectively scored instruments such as the ARSMA-II

(APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Jimenez et al., 2010) and the

RSPWB (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005). However, several participants responded that the surveys had outdated jargon, style, and vocabulary, which may bring about validity and reliability concerns. To reduce response bias, social desirability, and self-report bias, the data were collected anonymously. The ARSMA-II and the RSPWB addressed possible confounding variables such as intracultural variances, differing conflict and stress levels, or differing rates of acculturation within the Mexican population due to a wide variety of criterion included in both survey instruments (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Haack et al., 2014; Jimenez et al., 2010; Ryff, 1989; Yeh, Viladrich, Bruning, & Roye, 2009). To address any researcher bias, participants were gathered from a dense population of Mexican alumni from many different colleges and universities throughout the United States for a representative sample.

Significance

The data collected from Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities adds to the current body of literature regarding the outcomes of acculturation with its focus on the alumni population. There are programs that not only bring students to the United States but are designed to prepare them for the continual demands of America (Texas International Education Consortium, 2017). Sensitive approaches to the needs and appropriate measures of individuals' experiences of acculturation are necessary for the successful development of life skills within an adopted culture (Alvarez-Rivera, Nobles, & Lersch, 2014; Archuleta & Perry, 2016; De La Cruz et al., 2013; Sun, Hoyt, Brockberg, Lam, & Tiwari, 2016; Yoon et al., 2013). Thus, there is a need for empirical information on how to support acculturation affecting an individual's PWB. This study

addresses this need by measuring acculturated individuals' PWB. The findings may provide information about the mental health outcomes that tend to accompany specific levels of acculturation, resource needs, and inadequate aspects of the acculturation process of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. The results of this study may also help host societies provide more cooperative and valuable input to ensure positive PWB outcomes as they provide support for immigrants entering the United States who will experience acculturation.

The social implications of this study include increasing the potential of positive mental health outcomes of acculturation processes for Mexican individuals attending U.S. colleges and universities. Acculturation practices have already been developed because of research having PWB as a measure of successful acculturation (Jimenez et al., 2010; Haack et al., 2014; Yoon et al., 2013). Because of the continual increase of the Mexican population in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014), information on acculturation and PWB of Mexican alumni can contribute to the development of psychologically healthy individuals who experience opportunities in American societies.

Summary

Hispanics in America represent the fastest growing population, and over 60% are of Mexican descent (U. S. Census Bureau, 2014). With escalating Mexican population growth estimates and current immigration issues, there is a need to support acculturation (Berry, 2011; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012; Yoon et al., 2013). In this study, the ARSMA-II (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Jimenez et al., 2010) and the RSPWB (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005) were used to

assess the relationship between levels of acculturation and PWB, respectively. Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) and acculturation theory (Berry, 2001; 2005; 2011) provided the framework of this study. This study adds to the literature regarding the outcomes of acculturation within the alumni population of Mexicans experiencing acculturation in the United States, instead of the common research focus on the student population.

      Chapter 2 provides a review of the research on the processes of acculturation and its outcomes. It includes the historical development of the definition of acculturation and its connections to PWB. The purposes of acculturation are presented with the outcomes that were reported by those impacted by the process. Chapter 2 closes with implications and the significance of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Individuals need to develop coping skills for challenges to their perspectives, ideals, and expectations to support positive mental health during acculturation (Strubler et al., 2012; Texas International Education Consortium, 2017; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). But there is a lack of research on acculturation and mental health among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. Therefore, this research was focused on Mexican alumni who were given scholarships to attend colleges and universities throughout the United States. The purpose of this study was to add to the literature of the acculturation levels of Mexican alumni and PWB supported by empirical data.

The U.S. Census Bureau (2014) projected that by 2060, the Hispanic population in the United States will be 128.8 million, which equates to 31% of the population. Hispanics in America represent the fastest growing population, and over 60% are of Mexican descent (U. S. Census Bureau, 2014). Additional information is necessary to support the acculturation process, especially because of the social and personal pressure among immigrants in the United States due to recent political administrative movements attempting to regulate issues related to American and Mexican populations (Gomez & Agren, 2017; Longoria & Gonzalez, 2017). Additional research on the results of acculturation in the United States could promote better preparation and acculturation for Mexican alumni. Support is necessary for changes in individuals or societies for adaptations to social environments, familial restructuring, and even healthcare provisions to ensure positive social change (Berry, 2011; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012; Yoon et al.,

2013).

 This chapter includes the literature search strategy proceeded by a review of foundational theories composing the framework to this study. Subsequently, a literary review is presented to explain research pertaining to this study on acculturation and PWB. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary.

Strategy Used in Literature Search

 The search strategy used in this literature review was the Boolean System, using keywords and phrases such as *acculturation, PWB, social identity theory, acculturation theory, self-identity*, and *J.W. Berry*. Initial search dates were not specified to recover historical information of acculturation. Specific date selection included time frames between 1936 up to 2017. The server databases included Academic Source Complete, Business Source Complete, CINAHL Plus, ERIC, MEDLINE, PsyARTICLES, PsycINFO, SocINDEX, and liberalarts.wabash.edu. There were thousands of studies pertaining to post acculturation health status in general populations and students. There were also hundreds of articles on populations researched for PWB; however, there is a gap in the amount of PWB research after acculturation of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities. Each article's abstract was reviewed before a full-text article was reviewed. Criteria were composed from past research using similar survey instruments generally used in acculturation and PWB research performed in the United States and was selected in regard to Mexican populations. Finally, to target the gap, criteria were specific to Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities.

Theoretical Foundation

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory is the grounding theoretical framework of this study, originating with the ideas that much of a person's self-development is guided by relations to others (Tajfel, 1982). Group interactions guide change and development both within the group and the individual (Tajfel, 1982). There is evidence of interpersonal and intergroup compromises of values and emotions that are necessary due to the many different individual and group needs and desires within a group. These values and emotional compromises can guide motivations and behavioral outcomes (Chowdhury, 2012; Tajfel, 1982). For example, on university campuses, individuals begin to work among others within and outside of their culture. However, challenges arise when an individual's integrity or motivations are stressed and decisions for changes can become necessary. The networking of self and social assets for the process of changes in self and society can be orchestrated to a point that the potential for change or enhancement of a society can be reached because of acculturation (Smith & Woodworth, 2012).

As a part of acculturation, an individual defining his or herself and mingling into a group can both satisfy a person's need to have individuality and a place or a role among a culture. An individual's established perception of the original culture can guide self-development as a person realizes who they are and what their needs and desires are within a new culture (Tasdemir, 2011; Yoon et al., 2013). Developed guidelines within the ego provide directions for transitions from one state of being to another (or in this case, one culture to another). As a person's goals or perceptions are redirected by the

conscious, there should be a cautious retreat of the previously driving motivations of the ego. When necessary, the subconscious level of an individual can compensate for any lack of realignment by repressing concerns, misunderstandings, or discomforts; however, this can create psychological stress that can misdirect perceptions and behaviors (Winer, 2007). But as a person's desires for success in relationships are realized, the regulation of perceptions and values can lead a person to be content with themselves and their decisions, which align with their goals and lead to happiness and fulfillment (Tasdemir, 2011; Yampolsky & Amiot, 2013; Yoon et al., 2013).

During acculturation, there are also positive correlations between an individual's attitudes toward the receiving culture and the resulting levels of interaction with the receiving culture (Stoessel, Titzmann, & Silbereisen, 2012). However, as this social identity is developed, an individual's inner self can become vulnerable (Winer, 2007). As the individual continues to develop higher levels of identity to a specific group, there are additional outcomes such as social status and using the group as a measurement of success (Chowdhury, 2012). There are also unwritten rules that can influence groups and group members' reactions (Tajfel, 1982). For example, social boundaries accompanying roles within a culture set limitations of relationships between men and women, husband and wife, or even government to citizens that can disrespect a member of the society or help develop healthy fellowship and self-development. Dependent on the results of the experiences developing the social identity, the individual may be either encouraged or discouraged in social participation to develop and maintain a healthy perception of self and other members of the society (Amiot & Sansfacon, 2011). Behaviors and feelings

can also be influenced by the connections of ethics and personal feelings within the group, meaning an individual develop a self-model that is characteristic of a particular social group, be it positive or negative (Chowdhury, 2012; Tasdemir, 2011).

Based on social identity theory, as individuals connect to a new cultural group and become comfortable with their transforming self, the changes that occur can benefit self-esteem, as social identification has positive mental and physical outcomes (Yampolsky & Amiot, 2013). With lessened stress also comes the health benefits and decreases in negative emotional conditions that can support a higher mental awareness. Social identity theory also supports the need of strategic processes to further enhance the possibility of individual as well as societal productivity using characteristics specific to the culture. As individuals transform their inner selves and attain different identities, society should be able to experience productive changes for successful and fulfilling lives within the group (Smith & Woodworth, 2012).

The rationale behind selecting social identity theory for this study was based on the acculturation levels that individuals adapt to and the levels of mental health that they are currently experiencing. Compromises made within acculturation can either support or deny needs and desires that can lead to a fulfilling life and happiness. Delineation of any assumptions appropriate to the application of social identity theory to this study would include the necessity for the Mexican alumni to report truthfully to the factors relevant to their current acculturation levels and the current PWB status for data collected to be as reliable as possible. The research questions relate to the social identity theory in that the relationships discussed within this theory affect the self-development and mental health

status of the individuals as they experienced adaptation to new cultures.

Acculturation Theory

Acculturation theory originated with some of the same ideas mentioned in the discussion of social identity. For instance, defining the self and mingling into a group can both satisfy a person's need to have individuality and a place or a role among a culture (Tasdemir, 2011; Yoon et al., 2013). Members of a society have established perceptions of their culture that guide people as they realize who they are and what their needs and desires are (Orozco & Lopez, 2015; Tasdemir, 2011; Yoon et al., 2013). As a person's desires for success in relationships are realized, the regulation of perceptions and values can lead a person to be content with themselves and their decisions (Tasdemir, 2011; Yampolsky & Amiot, 2013; Yoon et al., 2013). Many of the decisions during acculturation depend on what new cultural aspects the individual relates to and the amounts of original cultural aspects that are affected. Productive relationships assembled during acculturation are determined by the amount of adaptations made to both the new and original culture (Berry, 2001). If sincere relationships are not made to provide care and encouragement through hardships, misfortunes, and harm, resiliency could be impaired (Abendroth, 2015; Tanaka, 2011). For example, research has monitored students on the results of acculturation and the capacity of these students to successfully engage in social and academic demands (Abendroth, 2015; Miller et al., 2013). Thus, it is necessary for a society to provide support for individuals as they acculturate themselves to a new society.

A definition of acculturation dating back to 1936 from *American Anthropologist*

Journal is that it is the experience of individuals who are in direct contact with other cultures resulting in cultural pattern changes (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). The necessary adaptation is dependent on the conflicts and negotiations involved in the process (Berry, 2005). John Berry, a prominent expert in cross-cultural psychology, stated that acculturation is the process of reconstruction through the interactions of cultures, an individual's cognition and behavior, or both (Liu, 2011). This idea of acculturation is based on factors of the cultures involved, the psychological impact, the differing processes taken to acculturate, and the multitude of influences on the outcomes of acculturation (Yoon et al., 2013). The adaptations that accompany these changes affect behaviors and outcomes.

Several different factors within an individual's life and society must be regarded in the discussion of acculturation. De Kruijf (2007) remarked that globalization is a main contributor to the changes of social and personal foundational ideations that effect individual's frames of references. De Kruijf also remarked that because of the infiltrating nature of globalization and the changes that accompany it, there has been evidence of cultural compartmentalization that affects traditions, roles, and identities—all acts of acculturation. The importance of research on the implications of such cultural changes has taken a considerable position of importance in cross-cultural psychology. Major factors of the process of acculturation is regarding the degree to which an individual becomes involved and participates in an additional culture and how much of the original culture is actually retained (Berry, 2001). Health implications have also been regarded in the fast pace social and personal changes that occur (Eliassen, Braaten, Melhus, Hansen,

& Broderstad, 2012).

To develop a good understanding of this cultural adaptation or self-transformation, namely acculturation, a discussion about culture is necessary. Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, and Szapocznik (2010) defined *culture* as the characteristics a group of people share, whether these characteristics are cognitive or behavioral, political or social, or even personal. Additionally, Jimenez et al. (2010) discussed culture as having three main components similar within a group of people that entails the way they behave, emotional impact, and the way they rationalize the perceptions of self and the society they are part of. For example, a cultural group may share a specific genre of music or art, language, history, and even life's interpretations.

As individuals find themselves in different or new cultures, certain aspects of their lives and who they are become vulnerable to change and adaptation. Berry's (2001, 2005, 2011) acculturation theory provides basic factors to review as researchers study the phenomenon of acculturation. These factors include the reasons individuals acculturate, whether they choose to adapt to a new or differing culture, the manner in which they acculturate, and the relationships involved during the process (Schwartz et al., 2010; Yoon et al., 2013). The manner in which individuals proceed with acculturation influences the outcomes and success of the change. Regarding the essential factors of psychological adaptation while going through successful or positive transitions can be definitive of successful acculturation. These adapting factors influence the perceptions, behaviors, feelings, and strategies within a cultural framework (Berry, 2005; Bianucci, Charlier, Perciaccante, Lippi, & Appenzeller, 2017; Bierwiaczonek & Waldzus, 2016;

Jimenez et al., 2010; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012). Berry suggested that distinguishing

factors of a culture and the manner in which individuals relate to each culture as a result

of acculturation is important. Fulfillment can be an outcome of successful acculturation

(Yampolsky & Amiot, 2013).

Berry (2001) described different methods of acculturation that include (a)

separation, (b) integration, (c) assimilation, and (d) marginalization. Within the context

of each of the methods, there are opportunities to both keep an individual's original

cultural aspects and refrain from adopting or participating in the new culture (separation)

or implementing characteristics from both original and the new culture (integration). An

individual can completely disassociate from their original culture and become as involved

as possible in the new culture, which is assimilation. And lastly, the individual may both

deter from both their original culture and the new culture, which is marginalization.

Miller et al. (2013) tested these differing methods of acculturation and found that

individuals may take advantage of all different types of methods according to the

situations and the environments that are at hand and can obtain differing results.

Berry's (2001) acculturation methods of separation, integration, assimilation, and

marginalization can be influenced by the conditions of social resources. It is important

for individuals to balance their social resources with the barriers that an outsider can

experience such as discrimination, lack of social status, vulnerable self-esteem and

identity, and the lack of development of trust and support from the receiving culture.

Berry found that satisfying the needs of societies and individuals through the integration

mode of acculturation would produce the best results. Youths who have undergone

acculturation through the integration process have experienced less discrimination and societies with multicultural awareness developed more supportive and healthy communities (Berry, 2010; Liu, 2011). There are also studies that have shown positive outcomes when adolescents are trained with coping skills and challenged with their use after training (Yahav & Cohen, 2008).

Entities involved in acculturation processes of foreign students suggest preparation for the challenges of corporate America (comexus.org; Texas International Education Consortium, 2017). Efforts to develop culturally sensitive processes of acculturation within American universities that support Mexican students' personal and social development is a continual project between the United States and Mexico (comexus.org). Joint efforts in establishing collaborative curricula and cultural experiences including student trades, field work, and culturally sensitive environments for students both in the United States and in Mexico have been enhanced (Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). Encouraging cultural diversity awareness can increase the chances of solving problems in an ethical manner at the workplace (Strubler et al., 2012). With differing cultures present in the workplace, freedom to present new ideas results in productive work strategies from diversified input. It is also an invaluable practice to ensure ethical training as a part of acculturation so that immigrants can be informed of the expectations they face in a new culture (Strubler et al., 2012).

As globalization continues, the intertwining of cultures at all levels and with all cultural aspects will continue and the influences will determine the conditions of global societies (Wettstein, 2010). The stress and prevalence of Latinos migrating into a group

is characterized with lack of positive direction. For example, research has suggested the effects of criminal logistics among the Latino immigrants coming to the United States (Alvarez-River et al., 2014). There tends to be extreme differences that Latinos have to experience when acculturating in the United States that other offenders have not experienced.

Mental health concerns also carry significant purpose for both immigrants and receiving cultures to be aware of cultural differences, especially where ethics are concerned and how it may affect PWB. The main research question of this current study asking of the relationships between varying levels of acculturation and PWB outcome is supported by studies in many realms of society. Gottlieb, Handelsman, and Knapp (2008) supported training psychology students on differing cultural aspects in order to provide a broader understanding and realization of the reasoning or logic supporting patients' behaviors. As psychologists develop therapeutic agendas, balancing personal ethical perspectives with a patient's ethical perspectives can result in virtuous, beneficent treatment plans, which follows the guidance of the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA, 2017). Handelsman, Gottlieb, and Knapp (2005) suggested training students as if entering the field of psychology is an acculturation experience. This provides supportive and adaptive information needed to meet the challenges of working with a diverse population and possibly protect PWB. Retrospectively, clients have experienced insensitive and misinterpreted dialogues with their therapists that were detrimental to their healing.

Some of the cultural aspects and personal perspectives that should have been

regarded significant to healing were overlooked or inappropriately used in therapy. Handelsman et al. provided a training strategy based on Berry's (2005) acculturation framework that promotes practicum and internship experience having an ethically challenging and interpretive environment. This training suggested that the supervision should make purposeful efforts to create an inviting, supportive and less stressful atmosphere for the new, acculturating students joining the world of psychological therapeutic practice.

Additional studies concerned with alumni satisfaction and fulfillment have focused on opportunity, options, marketability, and preparedness for life in general and in the workforce. These studies vary from participants in other countries as well as the United States. Surveys were taken in reference to the participants' homeland and how they viewed their educational experiences as well as possible suggestions for additional necessary academic provisions that would have enhanced their education and preparedness (Abendroth, 2015; Cabrera, de Vries, & Anderson, 2008; Davern, et al., 2010; Dumford & Miller, 2015; Vila, Garcia-Aracil, & Mora, 2007).

Acculturation research has transcended into a helpful avenue for supporting the success of this potentially life changing process. An individual's level of emotions, self-esteem, responses to original and new culture along with many additional factors have been measured in order to reveal the effects of acculturation on a person's PWB (Yoon et al., 2013). Measuring the amount of acculturation is helpful in the investigation of the acculturation process. Cuellar et al. (1995) posited that acculturation not only effects cultural behaviors but also includes emotional and perceptual viewpoints.

Measures of acculturation should include factors such as the use of the favored language, how many aspects with either culture the individual identifies with, or the myriad of cultural activities that have included the connections made between the original culture and the new receiving culture. The ARSMA-II was used to assist in providing helpful information to provide individuals undergoing acculturation (Haack et al., 2014; Jimenez et al., 2010). Additional studies involving acculturation levels used instruments such as A Short Acculturation Scale for Filipino Americans (De La Cruz et al., 2013), Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (Nguyen, 2008), and Living in Two Worlds Survey (LaFromboise, Albright, & Harris, 2010). Other such projects in measuring acculturation have been processed when health issues were involved in the outcomes. Individuals' strategies were studied in order to determine causal effects and develop proactive processes to monitor for positive acculturation outcomes (Grossi, Blessi, Sacco, & Buscema, 2012).

The rationale behind selecting acculturation theory (Berry, 2001, 2005, 2011) for this particular study was based upon the several different ways Mexican students coming to the United States for higher level education experience acculturation to different degrees. The differing factors of how much the Mexican alumni are active with either their original culture or the American type of culture they experienced at the college or university they attended before becoming alumni can have differing outcomes that may affect their current mental health. Therefore, delineation of any assumptions appropriate to the application of acculturation theory would include the necessity for the Mexican alumni to report truthfully to the factors relevant to their current acculturation levels and

the current PWB status in order for data collected to be as reliable as possible. The

research questions relate to the acculturation theory in that the adaptations and self-

development discussed within this theory affect the way in which the alumni may interact

currently within U.S. societies or how they currently feel about themselves and their life

fulfillment, happiness, and overall well-being (De La Cruz et al, 2013; Greenaway et al.,

2016; Haack et al., 2014).

Literature Review Related to Key Variables

One of the two key variables of this study was acculturation. Berry (2001, 2005,

2011) provides a basic conceptualization of acculturation as the cultural changes

individuals experience as they live and work among people who have different attributes.

Methodology and methods that are consistent with the scope of this study were involved

with searching for maximum benefits from the acculturation process. Such studies

focused on finding ways to better prepare receiving societies involved with immigrants

and providing a community equipped to support cultural needs for positive acculturation

outcomes. Other studies focused on the specificities of PWB. Confounding variables

that may be relevant to an individual's current PWB or acculturation experience, but are

not included in this study include residency, whether or not residency was taken in

United States or alumni returned to Mexico, and the diversity within the Hispanic

population.

Another relevant variable not included in this study was the amount of

acculturation history before attending the U.S. college or university the alumni

experienced. Specificity of variables included in this study was initiated by acculturation

literature and the experiences of acculturation that research participants reported as

significant to their self-development and adaptation to new cultures or environments

(Abendroth, 2015; Cabrera et al., 2008; Davern, et al., 2010; Dumford & Miller, 2015;

Stephens, 2016; Vila et al., 2007). Although this current study focuses on alumni, most

studies in literature were performed within universities and general populations of

immigrants.

Abendroth (2015) performed a case study focused on the results of training

alumni teachers from urban school districts on cultural competency in order to enhance

cultural competency related to the cultural aspects related to the Black, White, and

Hispanic students they taught. Interviews provided information on important cultural and

value related perceptions and actions that were missing in the curriculum and deterred the

development of critical thinking skills. Aguinaga and Gloria (2015) surveyed different

generations of Latino graduate students in order to gather information regarding culture

and values related to the environment of the universities they attended. The use of

surveys in the study assisted in gathering both administrative and student information.

The Cultural Congruency Scale was administered to determine university and student

values, the University Environment scale was administered to determine differing

perceptions of the university environment, and the Multi-Ethnic inventory was used to

measure ethnic attitudes, behaviors, and values. The ARSMA-II was used to determine

acculturation levels along with the Persistence/Voluntary Dropout Decisions Scale, used

to assess decisions on academic persistence. Positive relationships between men and

women's perceptions of the university environment and the degree of decisions to stay

with their academic pursuits were included in the results.

Positive acculturation experiences that men and women needed to enhance the chances of completing graduate school were determined using the Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics, the Hispanic Stress inventory , and the Family and Cultural Conflict subscale (Archuleta & Perry, 2016). Results showed evidence such as university support of White students being much more salient than the support provided to the Latino population. Results of Archuleta and Perry's study suggested the importance of university relationships and resources, along with support of adaptation of men and women roles in order to help sustain and enhance Mexican students' academic endeavors. Another university based study was performed by Crede and Borrego (2014) in order to determine students' needs and preferences that support their completion of graduate school. Surveys of international participants were used to gather data. Environments that led to feelings of ownership and belonging along with value and cultural acceptance were discovered to be main factors reported by the participants supporting the continuation and completion of graduate degrees.

Additional studies of the possible effects of acculturation processes discriminated between types of strategies individuals felt necessary to engage in while experiencing internal and external adaptations. Meta-analysis of studies were conducted with the intent to determine factors that affect decisions of immigrants to seek help from mental and health professionals and to aid with ways to express emotions appropriately and accurately. Results included the importance of emotional competency, development of skills for expressing emotions, especially using the English language, and development of

skills necessary to successfully transmission from a Mexican collectivistic culture to a primarily individualistic American culture (Sun et al., 2016).

Humanitarian agreements were found to be necessary in order to rescue immigrants from inevitable stressors when coming to new cultural settings by a study performed by Bianucci et al. (2017). These agreements were only one of many suggestions in the history of such places as Sweden, Germany, Italy, and Spain after realizing host countries were not equipped to provide immigrants with support and opportunities to assist with the resulting negative mental and health results they were experiencing, such as nervousness, tension, lack of sleep and appetite, and overall discomfort. Bianucci et al. revealed that these symptoms were leading to psychosomatic symptoms when chronic and severe negative situations entailed through acculturation. Thomas-Ruzic and Prudencio (2015) reported on collaborations between arriving cultures and hosting cultures that have also been successful in acculturation processes. U.S. and Mexican foundations have collaborated within their universities to enhance the exchange programs they developed and have been successful for over ten years. The literature review performed by Strubler et al. (2012) involved cultural studies of values, systems, politics, language, and organizational practices in order to determine necessary factors to assist and support ethical decision making skills for immigrants in the host areas.

The second key variable of this study was PWB. PWB is defined as a conceptualization of the subjective, social, and psychological conditions of an individual (Seifert, 2005). These conditions include a sense of shared wants and needs as well as outcomes and successes in life (Smith & Woodworth, 2012). PWB is the state of a series

of positive conditions an individual is experiencing that can include: (a) the level at which the person accepts themselves, (b) belonging, (c) cognition and behavior, (d) adaptation capabilities, (e) desires and meaningfulness, and (f) continuity of self-development (Rathi & Rastogi, 2008; Seifert, 2005). PWB was used as a variable in this study specifically because of the current level of mental health, well-being, and overall happiness levels reported by research participants in research focused on well-being (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005; Smith & Woodworth, 2012; Rathi & Rastogi, 2008).

Several measurements of basic well-being have been researched that assisted in the measurement of PWB. When regarding an individual's general well-being, personal, communal, cognitive, and physiological conditions and conducts should all be regarded (Boehm & Kubzansky, 2012; Seifert, 2005). Studies of basic well-being of individuals focused on the relationships of the self with the identification an individual makes to a culture's defining characteristics. A favorable identification with a group has a positive effect on a person's well-being. It can create increased vitality, pleasurable experiences, status, heightened moods, and a more positive world view. An individual could even experience positive feedback from the surrounding culture when it comes to social reciprocity involving distress or fears (Yampolsky & Amiot, 2013).

In attempts to define PWB more specifically, Rathi and Rastogi (2008) formulated a description of the components reflective of the current state of an individual's PWB. These components include operative mental capacity and its efficacy along with one's impression of how well their life exhibits evidence of purpose. The resulting existence of happiness, a greater degree of elated affect rather than deflated

affect, and a continual perception of their life being whole or fulfilled is a projection of PWB. Rathi and Rastogi summed it up as basically being satisfied with one's self and current condition.

Much research has been completed on the effects on PWB during changes of cultural aspects, acculturation, and the differing levels of change. Adapting to differing or new cultural patterns in small amounts or as complete transformations of lifestyle can be very significant to PWB in the span of a lifetime. Limitations on such factors as economic gain or immediate provision of any social services can be responsible for negative PWB (even if the immigrant only thought they were limited) among Mexican American women in the United States (Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012). Individuals can acculturate or adapt at differing levels depending on the conditions of the hosting culture or the capabilities of the immigrants to adapt (Jimenez et al., 2010; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012). The cultural conditions may impose negative unwritten rules about social status and behaviors. The immigrant's capabilities may be limited because of the lack of language fluency or education levels. If discrimination or other negative racial practices are perceived or actually present, immigrants can face a multitude of additional detriments to successful acculturation (Jimenez et al., 2010; Yoon et al., 2013).

Research history provides much evidence of mental health concerns related to self-identity, employment, and health wise behaviors (De La Cruz et al., 2013; Haack et al., 2014; Jimenez et al., 2010; Yoon et al., 2013). Having to sacrifice the stability of either personal feelings or career opportunities could significantly affect one's PWB (Haack et al., 2014; De La Cruz et al., 2013). In order to measure components of PWB

separate from general well-being, Boehm & Kubzansky (2012) gathered information on participants' amount of gratification, levels of functionality, and positive outlook. Other efforts in measuring PWB include the work of Grossi et al. (2012) that included directing their measurements toward both health and PWB.

Carol Ryff (Seifert, 2005) based her research and measurement of PWB regarding mental health. She focused on selected representations of PWB from mental health literature and developed the RSPWB that include (a) self-actualization, (b) optimal functioning, (c) maturity, and (d) developmental life span. The main elements that construct the scales Ryff developed are: (a) autonomy, (b) environmental mastery, (c) personal growth, (d), positive relations with other, (e), purpose in life, and (f) self-acceptance. Items were then carefully selected for correlation significance to the scales. All of these steps were significant to the definitions of Ryff's selected elements from mental health literature for PWB (Seifert, 2005) and have been tested for their validity and reliability (Abbott et al., 2010; Lindfors, Berntsson, & Lundberg, 2006).

PWB was the focus of Garcia-Alendete (2015). In reference to Spanish undergraduates, Garcia-Alendete rated students' perception of their purpose in life and how that correlated with their PWB. The research implemented the Spanish version of Crumbaugh and Maholic's purpose in life test to determine life satisfaction and purpose. The RSPWB were used in order to measure PWB. Results of significant relationships between purpose in life and PWB supported the hypothesis that meaning of life is significantly important to PWB.

Additional research by Greenaway et al. (2016) noted that university provisions

for global psychological needs were inherent for successful, positive acculturation experiences. Using undergraduate participants, Greenaway et al. used a combination of standardized items to assess identity gain and a depression, anxiety, and stress scale to measure satisfaction of psychological needs. The use of surveys, interviews, and literature review has been very helpful in acculturation research. The use of acculturation outcomes and host sensitivity has provided much valuable information for the continual processes of acculturation involved with Mexican immigrants to the United States.

This current study benefits from the concept of PWB (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005) in that the effects of acculturation tend to be dependent upon the influences of new cultural factors and individuals' release or disconnection from the original culture (Bianucci et al., 2017; Bierwiaczonek & Waldzus, 2016; Yoon et al., 2013). Because culture has been shown to have great impacts on an individual's PWB, as many of the factors involved in the impact of changes to one's cultural aspects as possible should be considered. The impact of the changes or adaptation must be positive or productive as the process of acculturation takes place (Grossi et al., 2012). Berry (2001, 2005) posited that individuals experiencing differing levels of acculturation can experience changes with their PWB. As immigrants are exposed to the stresses of such factors as discrimination, entry to new cultures and different levels of acceptance by receiving cultures, limitations placed upon immigrants in the new culture, or transitions that immigrants must decide upon, the results on PWB have been shown to be affected (Greenaway et al., 2016; Schwartz et al., 2010).

Several strengths and weaknesses inherent in acculturation and PWB research

have become evident using protocols and interviews. Limitations and shortcomings due to the use of cross-sectional surveys can include the limitation of data to a single moment of the experienced acculturation outcomes such as current stress levels and participation of host cultural activities. The study supported the assumptions that individuals actually use differing strategies during acculturation when necessary (Miller et al., 2013).

A longitudinal survey conducted using factors such as future thoughts of cigarette, alcohol, and sexual behaviors of Hispanic adolescents was conducted. Using a mixed method to gather information instead of only a cross-sectional method, the results were significant for possible causality. Preserving original values and sensitivity to changes involved with readjusting from individualistic life views to collectivistic life views were included in the results (Schwartz et al., 2014).

Patel, Clarke, Eltareb, Macciomei, and Wickham (2016) noted shortcomings of their study parallel to many acculturation and PWB research outcomes. Familial factors were used in order to concentrate more on possible causal factors. A longitudinal, mixed method using self-rated surveys and semi-structured interviews of immigrant children and their family's stressors during the acculturation processes they experienced was used. The outcomes of their report included evidence of increased stressors to the families due to separation problems and/or internal familial problems that existed during the adaptations the children were having to make. They also reported that grade point averages were apparently effected negatively and family problems were individually personalized by the students, increasing the amount of stress the students had to deal with.

Bierwiaczonek and Waldzus (2016) strategized a review that included outcomes of specific dimensions of cultural populations. They included sociocultural coping skills of international students. Although little causality was apparent in the results, they did report the need for additional cultural factors that would enrich future acculturation research.

Burford (2012) realized the need to use social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) to support the effects of differing perceptions nurses would be involved with when working with immigrant clientele. He emphasized on culturally connected connotations guiding immigrants' health ideas and decisions. De La Cruz et al., (2013) collected information from Filipino Americans and found that body fat perceptions and dietary decisions were culturally linked and guided this immigrant population. In order to be able to provide empirical information comparing participants' level of activities of the new or host culture, De La Cruz et al. also used A Short Acculturation Scale for Filipino American.

Li and Wen (2015) decided on a study correlating the age of the participants when they migrated to the United States and number of years living in the U.S with information on related substance use. Even though aware of possible group and recall bias when using self-reports, Li and Wen reported significant results correlating adult immigrants' age and years in United States to smoking and binge drinking. Miller et al. (2013) also dealt with limitations within their study of differing uses of acculturation strategies. Along with Berry's acculturation theory (Berry, 2001; 2005; 2011), in order to account for underrepresented factors historically absent from acculturation research, they implemented the use of multiple instruments such as the revised ARSMA-II to determine

levels of acculturation, the Asian Values Scale to determine the levels of subjective ideals

from culture of origin, European American Values Scale for Asian Americans to

determine behavioral patterns, Multidimensional Acculturative Stress Inventory, and the

Riverside Acculturation Stress Inventory.

The main focus of this current study was the PWB of Mexican alumni of U.S.

colleges and universities. In order to justify the rationale of the variables for this study, it

is necessary to review literature focused on maximum benefits of acculturation processes.

Having one of the fastest population growth percentage rates in the United States (United

States Census Bureau, 2014) sanctions research of Mexican immigrants in order to assist

in the development, maintenance, and enhancement of acculturation outcomes relative to

the United States. Alvarez-Rivera et al. (2014) reviewed Hispanic immigrant data from

arrest records that provided evidence of delinquency rates related to Hispanic immigrant

residency, behaviors, socioeconomic status, and drug abuse in order to determine points

of interest and need for assistance and improvements with the acculturation process.

Melendez et al. (2012) sought to uncover behavioral attitudes of Mexican-

Americans and Mexican immigrants in reference to bullying within and between these

two groups in order to provide information relevant to acculturation stressors. Orozco

and Lopez (2015) homed in on the effects of legislative movements and the possible

stressors for immigrants relative to the acculturation process experienced. They found

that not only were the regulations and limitations restricting the Mexican population in

the United States detrimental to an amicable, stabilizing environment, there was a lack of

concern and assistance for the discrimination and self-sacrifices that would entail.

Yampolsky and Amiot (2013) discovered information pertinent to self-motivation as undergraduate students restructured their personal attitudes and perceptions about their own groups and those they were becoming a part of as they pursued their academic goals. The motivations they reported were involved with personal aspects such as guilt, rewards, identity, acceptance, and were dependent on the social characteristics of the university communities they were participating in.

Eliassen et al. (2012) assessed a slightly different factor of acculturation. With climate and social changes that continually pursue over the extreme regions of the Arctic, Eliassen et al. studied how these changes in the environment effected the health of its primitive population instead of immigrants. The Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic was used as an interview to determine participant's perception of their own health conditions. Results of the study were supportive of inverse correlations between self-health ratings and the amount of changes the individuals experienced.

Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) and acculturation theory (Berry, 2001; 2005; 2011) are evident in much of the research relevant to acculturation and PWB. Tajfel and Turner (Tajfel, 1982) developed viewpoints of social identity leading to subjective perceptions of groups and their identities. They posited that there is evidence of interpersonal and intergroup compromises of values and emotions that guide group and individual motivations and behaviors (Chowdhury, 2012; Tajfel, 1982). Yampolsky and Amiot (2013) discovered the potential remedy for lack of self-esteem and personal needs from group participation interrelated with social rewards from newly joined groups individuals find themselves adapting to. They used social identity theory as a framework

that explained the results of social dynamics effecting decision making and personal satisfaction and correlated this theory with the empirical evidence gathered from emotional ratings and measurements of vitality amongst undergraduate students in Quebec.

Many studies have provided empirical evidence of correlational significance between such factors as mental health and self-development (De La Cruz et al., 2013; Grossi et al., 2012; Haack et al., 2014; Jimenez et al., 2010; LaFromboise et al., 2010; Nguyen, 2008). Mexican students coming to the United States for higher level education experience acculturation to different degrees that can have effects on their post graduate experiences of PWB (Abendroth, 2015; Cabrera et al., 2008; Davern, et al., 2010; Dumford & Miller, 2015; Vila et al., 2007).

Surveys used in acculturation literature are very salient in many studies (Aguinaga & Gloria, 2015; Patel et al., 2016; Sun et al., 2016). Valencia-Garcia et al. (2012) used surveys in their study in order to collect an array of information to provide in depth understandings of multiple acculturation factors including mental health issues, academics, employment, and socioeconomic status. The results of their study supported the use of multiple surveys which allowed them to suggest the need for continual in depth social capital research of Mexican immigrants. Getting the surveys via email to the participants has been sufficient. Crede and Borrego (2014) were very successful in emailing surveys to potential participants and had the opportunity of easily sending reminders and additional invitations.

The use of alumni participants has been a major gap found in acculturation

research. Dumford and Miller (2015) received significant results using the alumni from universities in order to compare their desires of a campus environment to those of current students' desires for campus improvements in order to attempt to capture the alumni's more worldly perspective. They used the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project online survey to gather information on alumni formal studies, campus resources, and updates on career status. The results were compared to the same data gathered from current students. Significant correlations with additional expressions specific to the alumni were collected. The alumni information enriched the study with workforce experienced perspectives.

Studies related to the key independent, dependent, and covariate variables for this current study are found amongst the acculturation and PWB research literature. Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982), acculturation theory (Berry, 2001; 2005; 2011), and PWB have been used in quantitative research using surveys to gather empirical information in order to correlate current PWB status with factors such as acculturation levels and gender. Haack et al. (2014) researched the relationships of Latino parents and their adolescent children by way of measuring the levels of acculturated activities using the ARSMA-II (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Jimenez et al., 2010). They also determined what values were significant to their acculturation experiences. The results of their study revealed possible recruitment and retention essentials that may enable immigrants to reach academic goals. Stoessel et al. (2012) were also focused on changes to immigrant cultural identification and the effects of these changes related to the host culture. They implemented a Likert-scale survey to determine differing identification levels within and between differing generations acculturated to the host culture.

Suggestions to use additional factors when determining the acculturation and identification levels included religion and amount of time spent in the host culture along with more specific interviews in applicable languages. The National Alliance for Hispanic Health (2015) is continually monitoring factors effecting the Hispanic population to ensure best practices.

Implementing social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) in the framework of acculturation studies is a strategy often used to support the effects of acculturation. Smith and Woodworth (2012), based on a social identity theoretical framework, conducted a case study in order to determine significant factors effecting students' motivation in the workforce. The results of their study promoted future student participation in entrepreneurship programs and community involvement. Stephens (2016) emphasized the need for sensitivity relative to the efforts of refining self-esteem and stabilizing original and new cultural aspects. Additional studies using alumni have been successful in providing suggestions for more opportunities, increased marketability, and preparedness for life in general (Abendroth, 2015; Cabrera et al., 2008; Dumford & Miller, 2015; Vila et al., 2007).

The main research question of this dissertation study is: What is the relationship between acculturation and PWB of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities, after controlling for gender and number of years spent at the U.S. college or university? Studies related to the research question include research on acculturation and PWB of students and the general population. There is, however, a gap in literature relevant to Mexican alumni that have already experienced the acculturation process. As far back as

Berry (2001, 2005), levels of acculturation have played a major role in acculturation research. Berry posited that individuals experiencing differing levels of acculturation can experience changes with their PWB. The focus of Aguinaga and Gloria (2015) was specifically on acculturation and Hispanic stress, joining other studies with the same interest (Greenaway et al., 2016; Schwartz et al., 2010). Grossi et al. (2012) also stressed the importance of capturing as many factors as possible involved with the adaptations relevant to acculturation as did Valencia-Garcia et al. (2012) because of the effects on PWB.

This dissertation study is focused on Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities in order to add empirical information of PWB relevant to acculturation. Information regarding effects of acculturation is valuable to coalition efforts such as those of international consortiums (Texas International Education Consortium, 2017) and particularly of COMEXUS (comexus.org), that maintains support and successful environments for students to cross cultural boundaries in academics between Mexico and the United States. Continuing research efforts to understand the complexities of acculturation and necessary provision will hopefully continue to be helpful to the Mexican population that is currently and will prospectively be significant participants in U.S. societies.

Summary and Conclusions

Major themes in the literature have included the use of acculturation and identity theory, the correlations to PWB, and results suggesting maintenance and enhancement of acculturation processes. The key elements of social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) are

used to explain the development and maintenance of identity as individuals continue to develop and adapt to differences in their social environments. What is known and what is not known about the acculturation process relevant to PWB has been provided by many research studies to provide a better understanding of the personal effects and social conditions brought about from this transforming process. Fortunately, research has also determined the need for future studies that would attempt to find causal factors of both positive and negative correlations between acculturation outcomes and mental health (Boehm & Kubzansky, 2012; De La Cruz et al., 2013; Haack et al., 2014).

Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) was applied to this study to explain the successes and failures of the acculturation of immigrants into the U.S. society from Mexico. Acculturation and mental health can both thrive in a well-structured, ethically sensitive, and pro-active stage as the continual process of acculturation in many facets of life are challenged with the need for adaptation (Smith & Woodworth, 2012; Tasdemir, 2011; Yampolsky & Amiot, 2013; Yoon et al., 2013). Investigations of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and their current status of PWB outcomes appears to be one of the gaps in the literature.

The empirical data provided from this current study is potentially helpful for the continuation of monitoring and determining the effects of acculturation in the United States. Cultural awareness is very important to groups putting forth efforts to ensure quality, positive acculturation efforts looking for supportive evidence of successful efforts (Strubler et al., 2012; Texas International Education Consortium 20172; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). This current study will hopefully initiate further investigation

of the continual development of proficient acculturation practices in the United States.

Much of the literature cited previously provided little information of acculturation effects

on PWB of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities. Because of the

continual increase of the Mexican population in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau,

2014), it is important to help ensure that the United States benefits from psychologically

healthy individuals of successful acculturation processes in order to promote positive

social change. A quantitative, correlational design was implemented with the use of a

cross-sectional survey and is discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between acculturation and PWB of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities to add to the literature. Based on the literature, acculturation and PWB have not been given sufficient attention in regard to how mental health relates to the experiences of acculturation within the population of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities. The main sections of this chapter include the research design and rationale, methodology and participant recruitment, instrumentation, operationalization of constructs, and data analysis plan. Threats to validity are discussed followed with an explanation of ethical procedures. This chapter closes with a summary of the study's design and methodology.

Research Design and Rationale

I selected a quantitative design to address the research question and quantify acculturation levels and PWB. The variables for this quantitative study included the predictor variable, participants' level of acculturation, the criterion variable, current level of PWB, and the covariates gender and number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university. The main research question is "What is the relationship between acculturation and PWB of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities, after controlling for gender and number of years spent at the U.S. college or university?" The focus on PWB in this study contributes to the efforts in the field of psychology to support psychologically healthy individuals of successful acculturation processes.

A survey with two instruments, the ARSMA-II (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995;

Cuellar et al., 1980; Jimenez et al., 2010) and the RSPWB (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005),

was used to gather data on acculturation and PWB, respectively. These instruments have

been used to measure acculturation levels and psychological mental health (Cuellar et al.,

1995; Haack et al., 2014; Jimenez et al, 2010; Rathi & Rastogi, 2008; Ryff, 1989; Seifert,

2005; Smith & Woodworth, 2012). The anonymity of the surveys also increases the

validity of data collected. Cross-sectional surveys were provided via e-mail to facilitate

quick response rates, reduce cost, and contact a large number of participants in a variety

of locations (Cherry, 2016).

Methodology

Population and Sampling Procedures

Cultural awareness is important to support acculturation efforts and looking for

supportive evidence of successful efforts (Strubler et al., 2012; Texas International

Education Consortium 2017; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). There is an increasing

rate of the U.S. Mexican population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) and lower rates of

social, financial, and academic achievement that accompany this population in the United

States (Zambrana, Zoppi, & De Anda, 2010). The target population for this study was

107 Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities. Participants were recruited via

e-mail from a scholarship agency providing scholarships for Mexican residents to attend

U.S. colleges and universities. A convenience sampling from membership affiliates of a

binational organization between Mexico and the U.S. administration was used due to the

availability of contact information. Participation was voluntary and remain anonymous.

Compensation was not offered for participation. The sampling frame included only

participants born in Mexico who are alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and range in age from 21 to 64. Demographic information was collected on age range, gender, and number of years of attendance at a college or university in the United States.

An alpha level of 0.05 and a 0.80 power are the recommended levels in the scientific literature for significance level and degree of power (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007; MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996). An a priori power analysis was calculated using G*Power 3.0.10. A multiple regression was performed with the predictor acculturation and the criterion PWB. With a .05 effect size, confidence level of .95, an alpha level of .05, and a power of .80, a necessary sample size of 107 participants was calculated. A post hoc was necessary because of a response of 47 participants. A post hoc analysis presented a power level of .40 using a .20 effect size, confidence level of .95, an alpha level of .05.

Procedures for Recruitment and Data Collection

A representative from a binational organization in charge of administering programs of scholarships between Mexico and the U.S. administration sent out an e-mail to scholarship recipients who are alumni of U.S. colleges or universities requesting participation of the online study administered through SurveyMonkey. The representative responsible for this correspondence screened prospective participants for Mexican origin and alumni status. The e-mail contained a consent form informing each person that the study is examining acculturation levels and PWB. The consent form also included background information of the study, procedures, voluntary nature of the study, risks and benefits of being in the study, privacy, and contacts. Indication of consent was

replying and submitting the survey by accessing a link to SurveyMonkey provided in the

e-mail. Individuals were able to exit the study at any time by closing the survey. The

survey concluded with a note of appreciation for the participant's contribution to

acculturation research and a reminder of contact information if any questions or concerns

arose. Completed survey instruments were secured as per contracted with the survey

engine, SurveyMonkey, using Secure Sockets Layer encryption, which is a protocol

developed for private document transmission via the Internet.

Instrumentation

The two instruments for this current study were the ARSMA-II (APA, 2016;

Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Jimenez et al., 2010) and the RSPWB (Ryff,

1989; Seifert, 2005). Permission was granted to use the ARSMA-II from the Dartmouth

Centers for Health and Aging. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Institute on Aging

was contacted and granted permission to use the RSPWB and copies of this

correspondence can be found in Appendix A.

The ARSMA-II (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Jimenez et al, 2010) is an

instrument that determines acculturation levels for Mexican Americans in the United

States using aspects such as culturally connected feelings or ideals, cultural behaviors,

and perceptions of culture. The ARSMA-II measured the participants' amount of current

cultural activities from both the original Mexican tradition and the differing American-

based cultural traditions. The ARSMA consists of 20 questions scored on a 5-point

Likert scale ranging from *Mexican/Spanish* (1) to *Anglo/English* (5). The level of

acculturation was measured, and the total raw score is on a continuum between high

acculturation scores of Anglo orientations and low acculturation scores of Mexican

orientations. Samples of the statements included for both Anglo orientation and Mexican

orientation, respectively, are "I enjoy English language T.V." and "I enjoy reading in

Spanish (e.g., books)" (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Jimenez et

al., 2010). In supporting literature, Mexican orientation showed split-half reliability and

coefficient alphas of .84 and .88, respectively, and the Anglo orientation showed .77 and

.83, respectively (Haack et al., 2014; Kim, Soliz, Orellana, & Alamilla, 2009). This

instrument was previously used with Mexican-Americans. Acculturation scores taken

from studies using ARSMA-I and ARSMA-II were measured and correlated and were

found to have strong construct and concurrent validity along with high convergent

validity (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Haack et al., 2014, Jimenez, 2010; Ojeda,

Flores, & Navarro, 2011). The APA provided a bilingual version of the ARSMA-II that

was used in this study (Cuellar et al., 1980).

PWB can be conceptualized as the subjective, social, and psychological

conditions of an individual (Seifert, 2005). The RSPWB (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005)

measures states of PWB used to measure overall happiness (Rathi & Rastogi, 2008; Ryff,

1989; Seifert, 2005; Smith & Woodworth, 2012). In this current study, PWB was

measured using the RSPWB developed from the investigation of Carol Ryff in reference

to well-being and how a person feels about self and life (Seifert, 2005). The Spanish

version of the RSPWB was provided by Dr. Feliciano Villar of the University of

Barcelona, Spain (Villar, 2018). It is comprised of six dimensions of well-being using

nine items from each dimension to form a self-report instrument of 54 scales. The six

dimensions used within the RSPWB to derive the one total raw score are: (a) autonomy, (b) environmental mastery, (c) personal growth, (d) positive relations with others, (e) purpose in life, and (f) self-acceptance (Kallay, & Rus, 2014). The dimensions are presented using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (6) *strongly agree.* A high score on the continuum scale represents mastery of that dimension whereas a low score indicates struggle and discomfort in that area (Seifert, 2005). The following are some examples of the statements included in the RSPWB: "I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus"; "In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live"; and "I like most aspects of my personality" (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005). This instrument was previously used with adults over 25 years of age and more specifically, in studies of acculturation, Spanish and Columbian participants. The RSPWB have shown to have reliability ranging from $\alpha = 0.83$-0.91 (Chiang, Chien, Lin, Yeh, & Lee, 2013). Validity was confirmed providing values of 0.95 or above which indicate a good fit (Dierendonck, Diaz, Rodriguez-Carvajal, Blanco, & Moreno-Jimenez, 2008; Seifert, 2005). The UW-Madison Institute on Aging was contacted and granted permission to use the Ryff Scale of Psychological Well-Being and copies of this correspondence can be found in appendix B.

Operationalization

The operationalization of acculturation levels was based on the resulting level of Mexican or Anglo orientation that Mexican alumni are currently experiencing after attending a U.S. college or university. The operationalization of PWB (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005) was based on the resulting current state of the individuals subjective,

social, and psychological conditions in regard to self, behaviors, and overall happiness.

Data Analysis

The statistical test used was an ANCOVA using IBM SPSS version 25. Standard procedures for assuring normality, linearity, multicollinearity, homogeneity of variances, and for describing the population were performed. Data cleaning was achieved by running data twice and running a correlation to check entry of data by two columns (Van den Broeck, Cunningham, Eeckels, & Herbst, 2005). Also, analysis was performed for locating patterns and outliers in order to remove extreme or influential cases. A conservative approach was used in data analysis such that only participants who completed all instruments were included in the analysis. Descriptive statistics and univariate correlations were also run.

Gender was requested in the study due to literature in acculturation research regarding differences in men and women's roles (Amiot & Sansfacon, 2011; Archuleta & Perry, 2016; Jimenez et al., 2010; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012). The second covariate, the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university, was used because of the literature in acculturation research regarding different generations and time spent in the United States being of importance and having significant effects (Aguinaga & Gloria, 2015; Stoessel et al., 2012).

The survey requested demographic information including age range, gender, and time spent at the U.S. college or university to analyze the significant relationships of these covariates with PWB and acculturation levels. Step 1 used PWB as the criterion/dependent variable with gender and number of years Mexican alumni spent at

the U.S. college or university as the covariates. Step 2 used acculturation level as the predictor/independent variable with gender and number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university as the covariates. Step 3 used PWB as dependent variable with acculturation level as independent variable. It was necessary to code gender as 1 for male and 2 for female (Cuellar, Bastida, & Braccio, 2004; Le, 2005). As previously noted, a post hoc analysis presented a power level of .40 using a .20 effect size, confidence level of .95, an alpha level of .05.

The research questions and hypotheses are:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between acculturation and PWB of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities, after controlling for gender and number of years spent at the U.S. college or university?

$H_0 1$: There is not a significant mean difference between the acculturation level, as measured by the ARSMA-II, and PWB, as measured by RSPWB, of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities.

$H_1 1$: There is a significant mean difference between the acculturation level, as measured by the ARSMA-II, and PWB, as measured by RSPWB, of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the genders of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB?

$H_0 2$: There is not a significant mean difference between the genders of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

$H_1 2$: There is a significant mean difference between the genders of Mexican

alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB?

$H_0 3$: There is not a significant mean difference between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

$H_1 3$: There is a significant mean difference between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

Threats to Validity

The internal validity of the results of PWB measurement may be affected by outside interventions such as unexpected events contributing to an individual's PWB at the time of the survey or the amount of time for adaptation experienced by the participant. External validity may be compromised by non-generalizability to non-graduates and time bound results not represented within the cross-sectional survey (Atkins et al., 2011). Specificity of the variables poses a threat to external validity when examining theoretical relationships (Henderson, Kimmelman, Fergusson, Grimshaw, & Hackam, 2013). There is also an external validity threat from self-selection bias because of the possibility that those who choose to participate may be different in some way from those who choose not to participate. Those differences could be meaningful.

Ethical Procedures

Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of the research proposal was necessary before participant recruitment and data collection was initiated.

The IRB approval number is 05-31-18-0136518. Careful consideration was given to the nature of this study and its possible effects on the participants. The informed consent was included in the opening letter of SurveyMonkey and was e-mailed to all potential participants discussing background information, procedures, voluntary nature of the study, risks and benefits of being in the study, payments, privacy, contacts and questions, and obtaining consent. It was clearly stated in the informed consent that all participants will remain anonymous. Participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time during the process without consequence. Additionally, their decision as to whether or not to participate in this study in no way effected their relationship with the exchange commission or Walden University. There were no conceivable direct physical risks or benefits for participation in the study. However, there was the potential for minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue, stress, or becoming upset. Participants were notified that there was no obligation to complete any part of the study in which they felt uncomfortable. Completed survey instruments were anonymous and secured as per contracted with the survey engine, SurveyMonkey, using Secure Sockets Layer encryption. Any necessary subsequent email requests for participation started with "If you have already participated in this survey, thank you for your help". The survey instruments were provided in English and Spanish to avoid uncertainty of language use. The data will be stored for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university. The anonymous data was collected through SurveyMonkey for statistical analyses. There was no personal information requested that could identify participants in the study.

Summary

This quantitative study used the survey method to examine the relationship between acculturation and PWB among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. Researchers have determined that individuals at universities and within the general public need to develop coping skills for challenges to their perspectives, ideals, and expectations to support positive mental health during acculturation (Strubler et al., 2012; Texas International Education Consortium, 2017; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). There is a lack of empirical information regarding acculturation and mental health among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. The empirical information gathered on the relationship of acculturation and mental health from this study should carry positive social change implications by providing guidance on developmental life skills that will best meet the needs of alumni as American colleges and universities continue to participate in acculturation processes.

The theoretical framework of this study invoked social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) and acculturation theory (Berry, 2001; 2005; 2011) to support the influences of acculturation outcomes on mental health. The ARSMA-II (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Jimenez et al., 2010) and the RSPWB (Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005) was administered to determine if the predictor variable of acculturation level has a significant correlation with the criterion variable of PWB. It is with high ambition that this study will initiate further investigation of the continual development of proficient acculturation practices in the United States. Chapter 4 will include the data collection and results of this study and will support final discussion and conclusions.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

There is a lack of research regarding acculturation and mental health among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. Social conditions, mental status, and strategies of acculturation are only a few factors of acculturation processes that are important to monitor for potential negative effects on Hispanics in the United States (Berry, 2011; Haack et al., 2014; National Alliance for Hispanic Health, 2015; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012; Yoon et al., 2013). Therefore, the purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between levels of acculturation and the PWB of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities in order to add to the literature with empirical data. Additional empirical literature on the effects of acculturation on mental health can potentially support processes that specifically equip Mexican students with coping skills, social environments supporting adaptations, and positive identification with new and different societies. Because of the condition of turmoil, unrest, and personal tragedies on and surrounding the Texas–Mexico border that has been of current highlighted political U.S. topics, research that assists in assuring positive outcomes through processes of acculturation that increase vitality, pleasurable experiences, status, heightened moods, and more positive world views which are inherent of positive feedback and positive social change, must continue (Gomez & Agren, 2017; Longoria & Gonzalez, 2017). Surveys were used to collect data from Mexican alumni to explore the following three research questions and hypotheses:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between acculturation and PWB of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities, after controlling for gender and number of years spent at the U.S. college or university?

$H_0 1$: There is not a significant mean difference between the acculturation level, as measured by the ARSMA-II, and PWB, as measured by RSPWB, of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities.

$H_1 1$: There is a significant mean difference between the acculturation level, as measured by the ARSMA-II, and PWB, as measured by RSPWB, of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the genders of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB?

$H_0 2$: There is not a significant mean difference between the genders of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

$H_1 2$: There is a significant mean difference between the genders of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB?

$H_0 3$: There is not a significant mean difference between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

$H_1 3$: There is a significant mean difference between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB, as measured by RSPWB.

This chapter describes the data collection and results conducted to address this study's three research questions. It consists of four major sections. The introduction section briefly reviews the purpose of the study and presents the three research questions with the corresponding hypotheses. The second section, data collection, describes the time frame, recruitment, and response rates for actual data collection and contains a review of any discrepancies from the data collection plan presented previously in chapter 3. Baseline descriptive and demographic characteristics are provided as well as the results of basic univariate analyses that justified the inclusion of the covariates. The third section, results, provides the descriptive statistics characterizing the sample, an evaluation of statistical assumptions, and statistical analysis findings. Finally, the summary provides a summarization of the research questions' answers.

Data Collection

The time frame for data collection was eight weeks, July 11—August 5, 2018, with a second request for participation lasting three weeks to attain the required number of submitted surveys meeting the criteria. Recruitment e-mails for participation were sent out to scholarship recipients by a representative of a binational organization in charge of administering programs of scholarships between Mexico and the U.S. administration via e-mail. The sample was a convenience sample of individuals who responded to the recruitment emails meeting the following criteria: (a) born in Mexico, (b) alumni of U.S college or university, and (c) in the range of 21-64 years of age, making this a representative sample of the population of interest for this study. A total of 181 responses were collected and 47 of the surveys fit full criteria and were complete.

Discrepancies in data collection from the original plan include a change in the participant level of 107 participants, following the suggested statistical power analysis program of GPower (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). A second attempt to increase the number of submitted surveys meeting the required criteria was necessary. However, only 47 of the 181 participants met the criteria. Regression model strategist Harrell (2015) supports the use of a minimal requirement of 40 participants for this study using 10-20 participants for each variable (Walker & Ziegel, 2003). The four variables; gender, years of U.S. university education, and raw scores of the two survey instruments ARSMA-II and RSPWB were used for evaluation with a minimal of 10 surveys per variable. It was necessary to delete and assure absence of several participants' IP addresses from the SurveyMonkey exported data due to temporary deactivated anonymous option.

Baseline demographic characteristics of the participants include alumni status from a U.S. college or university, born in Mexico, and were in the age range of 21 to 64 years old. The total sample ($n = 47$) consisted of 28 males (60%) and 19 females (40%). Descriptive characteristics include total ARSMA score ($M = 39.81$, $SD = 4.74$), total RSPWB score ($M = 193.72$, $SD = 12.28$), and number or years at university ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.62$). A conservative approach was used in data analysis so only participants who completed all instruments were included in the analysis. The independent scholarship organization providing the participants for this study requested that all demographic information of the larger population be omitted. Therefore, information of how representative the sample is of the larger population is unknown.

Results

Evaluation of statistical assumptions included examination of a normal P-P plot in Figure 1 with regression residuals in a normal distribution, which supports the assumption of normality. Homoscedasticity and linearity were checked with the scatterplot of the residuals in Figure 2, which also presented equal distribution.
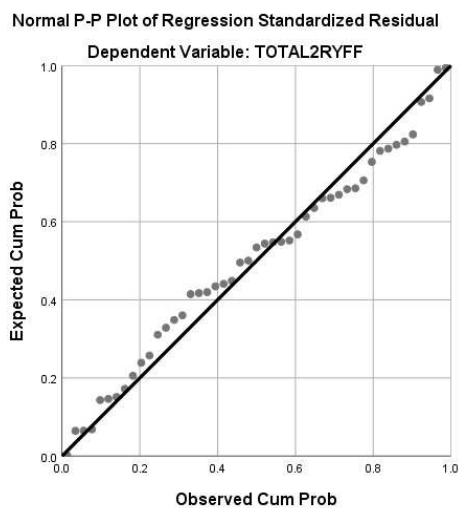

Figure 1. Normal P-P plot of regression standardized residual.
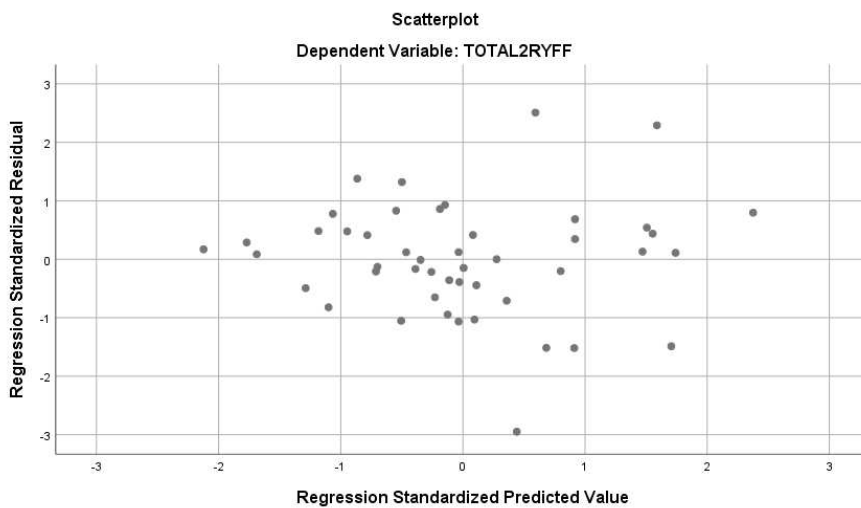
Figure 2. Regression standardized residual.

The correlation coefficients are in Table 1, which presented the three predictor variance inflation factor values—ARSMA (acculturation level), gender, and number of years spent at the U.S. college or university—with PWB (RSPWB total score) as the dependent variable, which indicates that the assumption of the absence of multicollinearity was met. Basic univariate analyses presented in Table 2 and 3 justify the inclusion of the covariates showing no significant correlations and no significant multicollinearity.

Table 1

Coefficients for Collinearity of Variables

Model	Collinearity Statistic	
	Tolerance	VIF
ARSMA	0.99	1.01
Gender	0.99	1.01
Education	0.98	1.03

Note. Dependent Variable: RSPWB (Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being).

Table 2

Correlations of Variables and Covariates

	Gender	Education	ARSMA	RSPWB
Gender				
Pearson Correlation		-.15	.05	.23
Sig. (2-tailed)		.33	.73	.12
N	47.00	47.00	47.00	47.00
Education				
Pearson Correlation	-.15		.08	-.24
Sig. (2-tailed)	.33		.58	.10
N	47.00	47.00	47.00	47.00
ARSMA				
Pearson Correlation	.05	.08		-.21
Sig. (2-tailed)	.73	.58		.15
N	47.00	47.00	47.00	47.00
RSPWB				
Pearson Correlation	-.23	-.24	-.21	
Sig. (2-tailed)	.12	.10	.15	
N	47.00	47.00	47.00	47.00

Note. ARSMA = Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans; RSPWB = Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being.

Table 3

Collinearity Diagnostics [a] Justifying Covariates

				Variance proportions		
Model Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition index	(Constant)	ARSMA	Gender	Education
1	3.79	1.00	.00	.00	.01	.01
2	.15	5.0	.00	.00	.26	.59
3	.06	8.18	.04	.06	.71	.39
4	.01	23.73	.96	.93	.02	.01

Note. [a] Dependent Variable: RSPWB (Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being).

Measures of central tendency and effect sizes for the independent variable acculturation [as measured by ARSMA-II; (M = 40.0, SD = 4.70)], the dependent variable PWB [as measured by RSPWB; (M = 194, SD = 12.30)], and the two covariates, gender and education (M = 3.81, SD = 1.62) are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

Test of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III sum of squares	*df*	Mean square	*F*	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Corrected model	1928.47	19	101.50	.55	.91	.28
Intercept	62229.64	1	62229.64	335.44	.00	.93
Gender	257.77	1		1.39	.25	.05
Education	111.42	1	111.42	60	.45	.02
ARSMA	1259.51	17	74.09	.40	.97	.20
Error	5008.94	27	185.52			
Total	1770789.00	47				
Corrected total	6937.40	46				

Note. Dependent Variable: RSPWB (Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being);
ARSMA = Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II.
[a] *R* Squared = .28 (Adjusted *R* Squared = -.23)

This study was conducted focusing on the relationship of acculturation level with PWB with the significance presented in Table 4. The ANCOVA analysis addressed the following three questions with the probability of p < .05 level with confidence intervals at 95%:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between acculturation and PWB of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities, after controlling for gender and number of years spent at the U.S. college or university?

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the genders of Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB?

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB?

The hypotheses were evaluated with an ANCOVA, with the covariate, number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB as the dependent variable. Findings from this test were not significant $F(1,27) = .60, p = .45, n^2 = .02$, so the null hypotheses were retained.

Summary

The Introduction section in Chapter 4 reviewed the purpose of the study and presented the three research questions with the corresponding hypotheses. Evaluation of the assumptions and central tendencies were provided. Data collection was reviewed along with any discrepancies from the original plan. Baseline descriptive and demographic characteristics were provided as well as the results of basic univariate analyses that justified the inclusion of the covariates. The results section provided

sample characteristics and statistical analysis findings. Hypothesis testing was performed with ANCOVA to address the hypotheses in regard to PWB dependent variable with acculturation level as the independent variable. The ANCOVA returned nonsignificant findings for acculturation levels in regard to PWB and therefore the null hypotheses failed to be rejected leaving the alternative hypotheses unsupported. Chapter 4 briefly presented a review of the purpose and questions with corresponding hypotheses of the study in addition to the data collection time frame, recruitment, and response rates with any discrepancies from the original plan presented in Chapter 3. Population characteristics, evaluation of statistical assumptions, and statistical analysis findings with a summarization of the answers to the research questions in reference to corresponding hypotheses, followed. Chapter 5 includes a concise review of purpose and nature of the study along with interpretation of all the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations and implications for potential positive social change and closes with a presentation of conclusions.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Because of the current events regarding the Texas–Mexico border (Gomez & Agren, 2017; Longoria & Gonzalez, 2017), research is needed to support assuring positive outcomes to acculturation processes in the United States (Gomez & Agren, 2017; Longoria & Gonzalez, 2017). However, there is a lack of empirical information regarding acculturation and mental health among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities. Based on social identity theory and acculturation theory, the purpose of this quantitative, correlational study was to examine the relationship between acculturation and PWB among Mexican alumni of colleges and universities in the United States. This study was conducted in order to measure subjective cultural factors significant to Hispanic acculturation processes and mental health conditions (Aguinaga & Gloria, 2015; Haack et al., 2014; Miller et al., 2013; Rathi & Rastogi, 2008; Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005; Smith & Woodworth, 2012; Stoessel et al., 2012) to determine the current PWB of Mexican alumni who experienced acculturation as they engaged with colleges and universities in the United States. The main findings from this study indicated no significant difference between levels of acculturation and PWB using the ARSMA and the RSPWB. This chapter includes the findings of this study in addition to the related limitations, recommendations, implications, and the potential impact for positive social change.

Interpretation of the Findings

The statistical findings of this study did not yield a significant mean difference between the acculturation level, as measured by the ARSMA-II, and PWB, as measured by RSPWB, of Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities. Gender was also not significant among Mexican alumni of U.S. colleges and universities and PWB. Finally, there was not a significant mean difference between the number of years Mexican alumni spent at the U.S. college or university and PWB.

Research has been focused on emotional and perceptual viewpoints of the general population and enrolled students and how they were affected by acculturation, with little discussion of the alumni population's acculturation experience. This study was conducted focused on the idea that acculturation level has an effect on the PWB within the Mexican alumni population of U.S. colleges or universities. Research has suggested that environmental and situational factors during the acculturation process can affect ethical decision making, psychosomatic conditions, mental health, or overall ideals of success in life (Bianucci et al., 2017; Smith & Woodworth, 2012; Strubler et al., 2012; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). Historically, participants have reported experiences significant to their self-development and adaptation to new cultures or environments during acculturation (Abendroth, 2015; Cabrera et al., 2008; Davern, et al., 2010; Dumford & Miller, 2015; Stephens, 2016; Vila et al., 2007). Based on the idea that individuals experiencing differing levels of acculturation can experience changes with their PWB (Berry, 2011, 2005), I chose to measure Mexican alumni acculturation level and correlate it with the current measure of PWB. The population surveyed in this study

was comprised of alumni born in Mexico who attended U.S. colleges or universities and were within the working age of 21-64.

Cultural awareness is important to groups working to ensure acculturation efforts (Strubler et al., 2012; Texas International Education Consortium 20172; Thomas-Ruzic & Prudencio, 2015). Because of the significant relationship between acculturation levels and PWB, previous literature supports social identity theory regarding the possible influence of societal factors on the acculturation process such as questioning or adapting to new viewpoints, levels of societal support during the acculturation process, and personal, familial, or societal restructuring (Bianucci et al., 2017; Bierwiaczonek & Waldzus, 2016; Yoon et al., 2013). Research has also supported acculturation theory (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Jimenez et al., 2010) regarding the idea that the amount of cultural activity within a new culture influences the outcomes to an individual as well as the new society. The theoretical frameworks of social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982), and acculturation theory (Tasdemir, 2011; Yoon et al., 2013), along with PWB (Seifert, 2005) supported the relational ideas between acculturation and mental health well-being.

This study was conducted to correlate Mexican alumni PWB with acculturation level using a small self-selected sample of the target population. However, the findings of this study did not support the idea of significant correlations postgraduation. Therefore, the information may not be generalizable to all individuals who have experienced acculturation given the minimal self-selected sample. Though these results may suggest less significance of long-term effects of acculturation on students after they

leave universities, the acculturation process does not end at a set time. The PWB of the participants of this study could also have many other significant factors that were not within the scope of this current study such as unknown environmental conditions alumni experience when they join the general public or workforce, reach a certain age, spend more time spent in the United States, stay in the United States or return to Mexico, or they are in visa or in naturalization status (Cogley, Doces, & Whitaker, 2019; Ewell, 2005; Mathur et al., 2018; Shuster & Williams, 2018; Weerts & Cabrera, 2017). These factors are more established correlates and should be used in future studies of alumni research regarding acculturation outcomes.

As mentioned, there are currently issues at the Texas–Mexico border regarding immigration status and personal safety (Chuang, 2019; Gomez & Agren, 2017; Leddy, 2018; Longoria & Gonzalez, 2017). The organization from which the participants for this study were recruited is located in Juarez, Mexico, a border town between Mexico and the United States. It is possible that these conditions had a negative impact on the participation level and responses to this study. Additionally, even though ARSMA and RSPWB have provided information in acculturation literature, several participants reported that the survey had outdated jargon, style, and vocabulary, which may bring about validity and reliability concerns (R. Gonzalez de la Lama, personal communication, July 13, 2018; M. Olivera, personal communication, July 11, 2018). Also noteworthy is that with the effect sizes resulting in small to medium (.02, .05, .20), there is an indication that the results were following a pattern leading to evidence of significant correlations. With more precise surveys and additional known correlates in future acculturation

research, significant findings of relationships between acculturation levels and PWB within the Mexican alumni population may be possible.

Limitations of the Study

This correlational type of design did not permit causal inferences between acculturation and PWB because variables could not be randomly assigned. Additionally, confounders such as current student status, specific age, the total time spent in the United States, and visa and naturalization status were not controlled for in this study. Further, this current study did not use additional interviews or polling of current environmental or situational conditions. Another limitation was that the political environment within the Mexican population both in the United States and in Mexico during the distribution of the surveys could have affected the return rate, as 47 out of 181 returned surveys met the required criteria. The data analysis of such a small sample size limits the view of the effects sizes and confidence intervals substantially. Conclusions and implications of findings may be skewed and limited.

Self-report measures like the ones in this study carry limitations of recall bias, self-report bias, and social desirability bias, which can diminish the internal validity of collected data due to inaccuracy or incompleteness of recollections. There is a possibility of self-selection and sampling bias because of convenience, nonprobability sampling, which does not guarantee that the sample chosen is representative of the population. All participants were Mexican alumni who had been granted a scholarship from an entity in Mexico for education in the United States. Generalizability is therefore limited because other Latin American countries were not included in this study. In addition, the results

may not be generalizable to Mexicans who are not alumni of U.S. colleges and
universities.

Researcher bias has been closely monitored to prevent making judgments and
ensure implementation of objectively scored instruments such as the ARSMA-II (APA,
2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Jimenez et al., 2010) and the RSPWB
(Ryff, 1989; Seifert, 2005). Using only one variable such as age, gender, or time spent at
the U.S. college or university would not provide a standardized measurement of
acculturation levels or PWB, so both ARSMA-II and RSPWB were used to measure
acculturation level and current PWB, respectively, with gender and time alumni spent at
the U.S. college or university as covariates. To reduce response bias, social desirability
and self-report bias, the data were collected anonymously. The ARSMA-II and the
RSPWB addressed possible confounding variables such as intracultural variances,
differing conflict and stress levels, or differing rates of acculturation within the Mexican
population due to a wide variety of criterion included in both survey instruments (APA,
2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Cuellar et al., 1980; Haack et al., 2014; Jimenez et al., 2010;
Ryff, 1989; Yeh, Viladrich, Bruning, & Roye, 2009). Participants were gathered from a
dense population of Mexican alumni from many different colleges and universities
throughout the United States for a representative sample.

Recommendations

Border unrest can influence ethics and personal feelings because of differing
conditions of social group characteristics having both positive and negative outcomes
(Amiot & Sansfacon, 2011; Chowdhury, 2012; Gomez & Agren, 2017; Longoria &

Gonzalez, 2017; Smith & Woodworth, 2012; Tajfel, 1982; Tasdemir, 2011). Continuing

investigations of relational information in regard to acculturation levels and PWB should

attempt to include more information describing the participants and expand the

boundaries of environmental factors as covarions. The ARSMA and RSPWB are only

two of the many instruments available for use to measure acculturation and mental health

well-being. Rigorous review of current research should take place and the

recommendation for updates of instruments used in regard to the relationship between

acculturation and PWB should be considered. The responses received in this current

study from participants about outdated surveys should be considered. Research regarding

immigrants should continue including how they fare in the United States as they

experience acculturation and after reaching a point of establishment in the cultural

activities and views in which they participate. Much larger sample sizes should be

gathered in order to have increased representation of the targeted population of Mexican

alumni of U.S. colleges and universities born in Mexico and currently within working

age. Qualitative data from participants would provide a tremendous wealth of

information concerning explanations and background information of acculturation

experiences.

Implications

Opportunities to support positive social changes can occur as members join or

cause a change in the characteristics of a society in order to enhance self and social assets

that enhance the environment through the process of acculturation (Smith & Woodworth,

2012). There was no evidence of significant relationships between acculturation levels

and PWB found in this study using instruments provided from previous studies on

acculturation and PWB such as the ARSMA and the RSPWB. Positive social change at

organizational levels of universities using the insignificant results of this study could be

in regard to heightened awareness of the importance of foreign students' input on the best

ways to significantly monitor mental health outcomes after leaving school. The attention

to this awareness alone could serve as an invitation for positive interaction between the

alumni and the administrators of universities.

This study was conducted with a minimal participation level. Unfortunately,

there is no way to determine why there was a lack of participation but the current

upheaval on the Texas–Mexico border is a highly possible deterrent due to this border

unrest. Increasing the evaluations of direct impacts from the services provided to foreign

students from Mexico could be viewed as a supportive move on the part of universities or

any other entities from the United States having the opportunity for acculturation

processes. The confounds presented in literature as current students, not alumni, were

evaluated included additional demographic information such as specific age, the total

time spent in the United States, and visa and naturalization status. These factors were not

taken into consideration in this study and could provide helpful information in the

assurance of an all-encompassing evaluation and correlation of as many prominent

factors in the environment or society committed to successful acculturation processes.

The PWB of the participants of this study could have many other excluded factors

effecting the current PWB as well, especially because of the unlimited environmental

factors alumni experience once they leave the campus environment, security, and

regulations. This study was conducted focused on alumni direct correlation of current mental health and the established level of acculturation instead of current students because alumni no longer have the institution's support and guidance provided to current students. As Greenaway et al. (2016) posited, positive acculturation outcomes present as coping skills for challenges to perspectives, ideals, and expectations are developed. Support of positive mental health during acculturation, social environments supporting adaptations of personal, familial, or social restructuring, ensured quality, and positive continued acculturation efforts have been determined as positive outcomes to acculturation (Berry, 2011; Valencia-Garcia et al., 2012; Yoon et al., 2013). Pursuit of supportive evidence of successful efforts, positive and productive impact of the ensuing changes or adaptation, and favorable identification with a new group can also be apparent in successful acculturation processes (Greenaway et al., 2016). The conduction of this study provided measures of acculturation and measures of PWB from Mexican alumni. This information could be used in future studies to compare to data collected with additional possible confounds.

As a result of the findings of this study, using a correlational survey method was an appropriate method to gather data on Mexican alumni of U.S colleges and universities. There were no significant relationships between acculturation and PWB after controlling for gender and number of years spent at the college or university. The theoretical frameworks, social identity theory and acculturation theory, and the conceptual framework of PWB, supported the content of the chosen instruments. ARSMA, which included items related to culturally connected feelings or ideals, cultural behaviors, and

perceptions of culture (APA, 2016; Cuellar et al., 1995; Jimenez et al, 2010), and RSPWB, which implemented items related to autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Kallay, & Rus, 2014) all corresponded with the ideals of social identity theory, acculturation theory, and the concept of PWB.

Using the survey method in this particular study allowed for the use of instruments inclusive of intracultural variances, differing conflict and stress levels, and differing rates of acculturation within the Mexican population with a wide variety of criterion. The social identity theory and the acculturation theory with which this study was grounded provided background and clarification of the importance of monitoring self-development and mental health status of individuals as they experience adaptation to new cultures. The empirical implications within the findings of this study can be used in the search for explanations and advancements in acculturation outcomes. These findings can promote answers to questions such as "How can relationships be enhanced to be more significant between acculturation levels and mental well-being?" or "How does gender effect the acculturation process?" and "What are the main factors involved with differing amounts of time spent in the acculturation process?"

It is recommended that the Mexican alumni population from the United States be given the opportunity to express, through interviews or surveys, the positive and negative factors of their acculturation experiences in order to serve this population with positive and purposeful acculturation processes.

Conclusion

There is a lack of empirical evidence of the relationship between Mexican alumni acculturation levels and PWB. Hispanics in America represent the fastest growing population with over 60% of Mexican descent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Political and personal unrest on the Texas-Mexico border is taking its toll on both Mexican and American populations involved with immigration issues (Gomez & Agren, 2017; Longoria & Gonzalez, 2017). These environmental conditions may have deterred participation and/or sincerity in the survey. This situation adds to the urgency of monitoring acculturation processes ongoing in U.S. colleges and universities because of the continual recruitment of international students, including students from Mexico. COMEXUS and the Texas International Education Consortium are only a few entities that are continually inviting foreign students to U.S. colleges and universities and have been successful in developing acculturation processes useful to the students' successful endeavors. With increasing immigration concerns, research data on Mexican alumni from U.S. colleges and universities is needed to facilitate the unlimited environmental factors alumni experience once they leave the campus environment, security, and regulations. The nonsignificant findings of this study suggest that the instruments used to measure either the acculturation levels or the PWB of Mexican alumni from the United States were not updated sufficiently for alumni studies from the original instruments used for active students. Several responses were received from the participants regarding outdated terminology in the Spanish version of the survey (R. Gonzalez de la Lama, personal communication, July 13, 2018; M. Olivera, personal communication, July 11,

2018). The results from this quantitative study showed evidence of potential significant correlations regarding effects on the perspectives of members of the Mexican population who participated in this study, which can be addressed in future research. These results suggest that there is a lack of empirical evidence of acculturation outcomes in the Mexican alumni population because of the lack of qualitative research collecting lived experiences, especially because of the current political climate. Therefore, future research can help provide Mexican alumni an acculturation process that pursues positive outcomes of coping skills, social environments supporting adaptations, and favorable identification with new group interactions so that the potential for increased vitality, pleasurable experiences, status, heightened moods, and more positive world views are inherent of positive feedback and positive social change.

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Appendix A: Permission for Use of ARSMA

Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican-Americans
PsycTESTS Citation: Cuellar, I., Harris, L. C., & Jasso, R. (1980). Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican-Americans [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: 10.1037/t08333-000
Test Shown: Full
Test Format: The Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican-Americans consists of 20 questions scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Mexican/Spanish (1) to Anglo/English (5).
Source: Cuellar, Israel, Harris, Lorwen C., & Jasso, Ricardo. (1980). An acculturation scale for Mexican American normal and clinical populations. Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, Vol 2(3), 199-217, © 1980 by SAGE Publications. Reproduced by Permission of SAGE Publications.
Permissions: Test content may be reproduced and used for non-commercial research and educational purposes without seeking written permission. Distribution must be controlled, meaning only to the participants engaged in the research or enrolled in the educational activity. Any other type of reproduction or distribution of test content is not authorized without written permission from the author and publisher.

Re: ARSMA survey
Daniel E. Jimenez █████████████████████
6/11/15
Dear Cynthia,

Attached you will find a copy of the ARSMA. If you want information regarding the measure and how it was constructed, please refer to this article:

Cuéllar I, Arnold B, Maldonado R. Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II: A revision of the original ARSMA scale. Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Science. 1995;17:275–304.

You may or may not be aware of this, but the researcher who developed the ARSMA, Cuéllar, passed away a number of years ago. I do not have authority over the use of this measure. If you wanted to use this measure in an official capacity (i.e. if you were to publish your research paper), you would have to speak with the publisher of the Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, where the measure was originally published.

I hope this has been helpful. Good luck.

Daniel E. Jimenez, Ph.D.
Research Associate
Dartmouth Centers for Health and Aging

Appendix B: Permission for Use of RSPWB

Ryff Scales:
This straightforward inventory is easy to access and administer.
The Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being is a theoretically grounded instrument that specifically focuses on measuring multiple facets of psychological well-being. These facets include the following:

- self-acceptance
- the establishment of quality ties to other
- a sense of autonomy in thought and action
- the ability to manage complex environments to suit personal needs and values
- the pursuit of meaningful goals and a sense of purpose in life
- continued growth and development as a person

This straightforward inventory is easy to access and administer.
  You have her permission to use the scales. They are attached in the following files (both are Word 97-2003 documents):

- "14 Item Instructions" lists all 14 items for each of the six scales of well-being (14x6=84 items), and includes information about shorter options, scoring, and psychometric properties, plus a list of published studies using the scales. (See the publications by C. D. Ryff if you need more background information about the scales.)

- "14-item Questionnaire" is a formatted version of the full instrument with all 84 items. (This file can be modified if you choose a shorter length option- see the "14 Item Instructions" for which questions to include.)

Please note, Dr. Ryff strongly recommends that you NOT use the ultra-short-form version (3 items per scale, 3x6=18 items). That level of assessment has psychometric problems and does not do a good job of covering the content of the six well-being constructs.

There is no charge to use the scales, but we do ask that you please send us copies of any materials you may publish using the scales to ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ and ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Best wishes for your research,
Theresa Berrie
Administrative Assistant