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Haciendose un Líder: Leadership Identity Development of Latino Men at a Predominantly White Institution

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FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
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HACIENDOSE UN LÍDER: LEADERSHIP IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF
LATINO MEN AT A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTION

By

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For Danielle, my partner who is my everything

Por Latinidad
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ABSTRACT
Research on college student leadership is evolving, with more scholars studying the influence of social identities on the development of student leaders. Gaps exist in the literature on how race influences leadership identity development for many social identities in numerous institutional contexts, including for Latino men at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). Using a case study methodology, this dissertation studied the influence of race on the leadership identity development of Latino men at a PWI at Southeastern University using the Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model (Komives et al., 2005) and Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Orientations as a conceptual framework. The study also used Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit) to honor the voices and experiences of the participants and disrupt the dominant narrative on leadership identity development for college students. A sample of 13 Latino men at a PWI in the Southeastern U.S. were selected and interviewed. Though the participants indicated their racial identity did not influence their views of themselves as leaders, they did share their respective cultures (Mexican, Colombian, Puerto Rican, etc.) did have an influence on how they saw themselves as leaders. Based on the themes that emerged, the study illustrated a merged leadership identity development process for Latino men at SU. The LID Model was mostly applicable to participants, with Yosso’s (2005) cultural wealth and cultural heritage identified as missing components in the Developmental Influences and Developing Self categories, respectively.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The low retention and graduation rates of historically underrepresented populations are a critical concern to higher education administrators (Smith, 2009). Students of color – including Latino/a students – are historically underrepresented in higher education, and continue to be retained and graduate at lower rates than their peers (Harper & Quaye, 2007, 2009; Page, 2013; Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009a, 2009b, 2011; Sáenz, Ponjuán, & Figueroa, 2016; Smith, 2009). Students of color have also historically persisted and graduated from higher education institutions at rates much lower than their White peers (Harper & Quaye, 2009; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Smith, 2009). Latino men have much lower persistence and graduation rates when compared to their racial and gender peers (Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009b, 2011; Sáenz et al., 2016). This problem is of great concern to higher education administrators and researchers, with some classifying it as a crisis (Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009a). This dissertation seeks to identify methods higher education administrators can employ to increase the persistence and graduation rates of Latino men.

Higher education institutions have the potential to increase Latino men’s persistence and graduation rates through involvement in leadership positions in campus student organizations or groups. Research suggests involvement in leadership positions can have numerous positive outcomes for all college students, including students of color (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Harper & Quaye, 2007, 2009; Komives, Longerbeam, Mainella, Osteen, Owen, & Wagner 2009). These positive outcomes include increased student learning inside the classroom (Astin, 1984), enhanced student identity and cognitive development (Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004), and
improved academic performance, along with increased persistence and graduation rates (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

While important, increasing students’ persistence and graduation rates is not the only incentive for higher education to understand students’ participation in formal leadership positions. Higher education as a field has also identified the growth of students as future global leaders to be a core value, from institutional websites to their mission statements (Chunoo & Osteen, 2016). How higher education institutions encourage students to grow and mature into leaders has been studied in the literature (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Ewing, Brooks, & Ricketts, 2009; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Guthrie & Osteen, 2012), however, research on leadership identity development often overlooks the importance or potential influence of social identities such as race, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. With mounting literature identifying social identities as an important contributor in leadership identity development (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Guthrie, Bertrand Jones, Osteen, & Hu, 2013; Onorato & Musoba, 2015; Renn, 2007; Renn & Ozaki, 2010; Rosch, Collier, & Thompson, 2015), it is increasingly necessary to understand how social identities, such as race, influence leadership identity development in college students. Knowing this information can allow higher education professionals to facilitate leadership programs and experiences that will maximize at-risk student populations such as Latino men leadership development, which in turn can have a positive influence on their retention and graduation rates (Astin, 1984, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Though there are a few works discussing the leadership development of Latinos/as (Bordas, 2012, 2013), including in the higher education setting (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Lozano, 2015a), one social identity rarely discussed in detail regarding leadership is of Latino men. How
can higher education administrators optimize the leadership opportunities Latino men participate in to maximize their potential academic gains and increase their persistence and graduation rates? One approach is to better understand the leadership identity development of Latino men involved in college student organizations. Though college student leadership (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Ewing et al., 2009) and leadership identity development (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005; Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006) has been discussed in the literature, little is known about the influence of race on college student leadership and leadership identity development, particularly for Latino men.

The purpose of this dissertation research is to identify how race influences leadership identity development for Latino men in college, particularly at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI). First, the problem statement and purpose of the study are established. Next, the conceptual framework and research questions are introduced, followed by a discussion of the limitations of the research. Following that section, the significance of the research is detailed. Finally, a discussion of key terms and a brief summary of the remaining chapters of this dissertation are outlined.

In Spanish el líder is the masculine definition of “the leader” (spanishcentral.com, 2016). This term linguistically embodies the intersections between leadership, race, and gender identity I am investigating. It also uses the Spanish language, which some literature cites as an essential part of Latino/a culture (Bordas, 2012, 2013; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Ortiz, 2004; Torres, 2003, 2004; Valverde, 2007). I believe it is important for this study to have Spanish in the title to clearly demonstrate how the content of this study is connected to the identities and culture it explores.
Problem Statement

Institutions of higher education are looking for methods to retain and increase the likelihood of graduation of students from historically underrepresented populations (Harper & Quaye, 2009). One historically underrepresented population research has identified needing more support to persist and graduate from higher education is Latino men (Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009b, 2011; Sáenz et al., 2016). Research in higher education consistently indicates involvement in formal leadership positions increases the likelihood students, including Latino men, will stay and graduate from postsecondary institutions (Astin, 1993; Dugan & Komives, 2007; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Harper & Quaye, 2009; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). If this research is correct, better understanding the ways Latino men engage in leadership positions on college campuses can potentially increase the retention rates and likelihood of Latino men to graduate from higher education institutions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this dissertation research is to identify how race influences leadership identity development for Latino men in college. This study will fill a significant gap in the literature regarding how Latino men develop their identities as leaders and how understanding these dynamics can benefit higher education institutions and their goals of retaining and graduating more Latino men.

I recognize using el líder (leader) is a gendered term, as it is masculine. While this dissertation proposal focuses on Latino men, gender identity, while important, is not a central concentration of this study. This is not because I wish to minimize the importance of gender identity in leadership identity development. However, trying to fully understand all the nuanced ways gender identity also influences leadership identity development in addition to race is too
big a scope for this study. Literature has identified gender identity as an area for future research on leadership identity development (Lozano, 2015a; Onorato & Musoba, 2015; Komives et al., 2009; Rosch et al., 2015).

**Conceptual Framework**

Based on the literature review, I have developed a conceptual framework to guide the study. There are two theories that form the conceptual framework. The first is Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Identity Development, also known as the Latino Orientations. This theory is very useful in identifying where Latino/a students are in their racial identity development. Beyond identifying which Orientation a student may be in, the study also identifies additional dynamics influencing students’ identity development, including culturally-specific qualities such as language or familial relationships (Torres, 2003, 2004; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004). As part of Latino identity development, I look at Latino masculinity and how any added reasons, such as relationships with women, sex, and *machismo*, influence students’ identity development. The second theory forming the conceptual framework is the Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model (Komives et al., 2005, 2006), which outlines how college students develop their identities as leaders. The study also looks at additional dynamics related to the LID Model, which include students’ definition of leadership, their student organizational involvement, and any other intersections between social identities and leadership. Analyzed together, I anticipate identifying how Latino men form their leadership identity, how race influences the process, and the LID Model’s applicability to this student population. This includes a culturally-based definition of leadership, its influence on racial identity development, implications for masculinity, and applicability and placement of students within the LID Model. Below is a visual representation of the conceptual framework:
The approach I am taking in this study is the best one for my purposes because frameworks related to racial identity (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Torres, 2003) and leadership identity development (Komives et al., 2005, 2006) already exist. Using these established frameworks allows me to best analyze how racial identity influences leadership identity development and answer the research questions.

**Research Questions**

Racial identity has not been explored extensively as a part of understanding Latino men’s leadership identity development in the campus environment. I am focusing this study on Latino men for several reasons. First, while literature does exist about the implications of race in leadership and leadership identity development (Dugan, Kodama, & Gebhardt, 2012; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Kodma & Dugan, 2013; Lozano, 2015a; Onorato & Musoba, 2015; Rosch et al., 2015; St. John, Rowley, & Hu, 2009), little research exists in leadership scholarship focused on
Latino men (Sáenz et al., 2016). Also, if higher education administrators can understand how racial identity influences leadership identity development, they can design experiences that better retain and graduate Latino men, who are considered an at-risk population in postsecondary education (Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009a, 2009b, 2011; Sáenz et al., 2016). Additionally, I identify as a Latino man, which makes the study very personal to me. Recognizing this connection also means identifying ways to minimize or eliminate potential biases in data collection and analysis.

I will utilize the Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model (Komives et al., 2005, 2006) as a framework to investigate if and how Latino men see their race as influencing their leadership identity development.

The research questions for this study are:

1. How does race influence the leadership identity development for Latino men at a predominantly White institution?
2. How do participants define leadership, based on their experiences and perspectives?
3. How does the LID Model apply to Latino men? What elements emerge that contribute to Latino men’s leadership identity development?

**Limitations of the Study**

There are limitations associated with this study. First, making generalizable claims of the findings from the sample to the larger population must be done with caution (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, as this dissertation research will be a case study, the findings from this research will be directly connected to the context of this case and could look different if the case boundaries were different based on institutional type, geographic location, composition of the sample, and any other related considerations (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). Finally, as the data collection instrument, I as the researcher have both conscious and unconscious biases that
could influence the study, from the sample selection, data collection, or data analysis to the reporting phases (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Merriam, 2009). These limitations, however, do not diminish the strengths of the project, which is the ability to use this case to investigate the intersecting dynamics of race and leadership identity development.

**Significance of the Research**

This study focuses on how race influences Latino men’s leadership identity development. Until recently, most of the literature on Latino men, leadership, and leadership identity development has been segmented into three areas: Latino identity development, Latino masculinity, and leadership. Latino identity development tends to focus on how the collegiate environment, cognitive development, and unique cultural qualities interact with Latino students’ racial self-concept (Beatty, 2015; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Lozano, 2015a, 2015b; Suarez, 2015; Torres, 2004; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004). Literature about Latino masculinity has kept racial and gender identity coupled together, focusing on how these identities collectively influence Latino men in a variety of contexts (Figueroa, Pérez, & Vega, 2016; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Harris, Wood, & Newman, 2015; Saez, Casado, & Wade, 2009; Sáenz et al., 2016). Knowledge of leadership and leadership identity development has often situated the process without investigating deeper potential associations to social identities such as race (Ewing et al., 2009; Fischer, Overland, & Adams, 2010; Komives et al., 2005, 2006, 2009).

Recently, scholarship has indicated social identities such as race influence how college students engage in leadership experiences, campus organizations, and leadership identity development (Dugan et al., 2012; Dugan & Komives, 2007; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Guthrie et al., 2013; Jones, Castellanos, & Cole, 2002; Kodama, & Dugan, 2013; Lozano, 2015a; Onorato & Musoba, 2015; Rosch et al., 2015; St. John et al., 2009). This dissertation seeks to establish if
an influence exists for Latino men leaders. With no literature discussing the influence of race on leadership identity development for Latino men, I believe this investigation fills a crucial gap, already identified as meriting further research (Lozano, 2015a; Onorato & Musoba, 2015; Rosch et al., 2015; Sáenz et al., 2016).

Additionally, implementing this study may make it possible for higher education administrators to create an environment which nurtures Latino men’s leadership identity development and allows administrators to shape leadership experiences that can potentially boost retention and graduation rates for Latino men (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2011).

Lastly, there are numerous benefits for society as a whole that happen as a result of more Latino men graduating from higher education institutions. More people of color graduating with a college degree can increase a racial group’s socioeconomic status (St. John, 2003). Latino men graduates are less likely to commit crimes and be incarcerated, and they are also more likely to be self-reliant and not need social services, both of which drain societal resources (Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009b; St. John, 2003). Additionally, research indicates people with a college degree can improve the nation’s economy and lower numerous societal costs such as health care or the need for emergency services (St. John, 2003).

**Important Terms**

For this research study, it is helpful to define a few terms. I define Latino as individuals who are descended from places that were at one time possessions of Spain, Portugal, or France and have a connection to the Spanish language (Oquendo, 1995). There is some contention about whether Latino or Hispanic is a racial or ethnic identity, and within the Latino community there is debate about which term is more appropriate, “Hispanic” or “Latino.” This study classifies this
population as a race because, as Roth (2012) explains, the evolution of the Latino population in the U.S. has created a Hispanicized schema where more Latinos/as classify themselves as a racial group. This study also adopts the term Latino for three reasons elucidated by Oquendo (1995). First, it denotes a term of empowerment by those who identify as Latino in the U.S. Second, the word “Latino” asks individuals who identify with the community to reflect on what membership within the race means to them. Finally, “Latino” is a Spanish word, which is a better, more inclusive association to the members of this racial identity that the word “Hispanic” does not give. Thus, this study employs the term Latino when referring to members of this racial community. Nationalities referenced when using the term Latino include, but is not limited to, Spain, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, El Salvador, the Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina. This is important for this study as it allows for a wide range of potential participants, experiences, and voices to be included.

Another helpful term is identity development. The identity development of college students, including cognitive, psychosocial, and other dimensions, is a subject of significant research in higher education literature (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010; Jones & Abes, 2013; Torres, Jones, & Renn, 2009; Wijeyesinghe, 2001; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001). For this dissertation research, identity development is defined as the process by which an individual’s identity is treated “as socially constructed and located in larger structures of privilege and oppression” (Jones & Abes, 2013, p. xxi) and approaches identity development “as the intersection of context, personal characteristics, and social identities” (Jones & Abes, 2013, p. xxi). This will be operationalized in this study by using the
LID Model and Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Orientations to understand the influence of race on how Latino men develop their identities as leaders.

This chapter introduced the dissertation research study, which examines how race influences leadership identity development in Latino men at a Predominantly White Institution. The research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the research, and potential limitations of the study were described. The following chapters for this study reviews the relevant literature related to this dissertation research, discusses the methods utilized to analyze this topic, provides a short biography of the participants, presents the study’s findings, and discusses implications for future practice and research.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

This study seeks to understand how race influences leadership identity development in Latino men at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) in the Southeastern U.S. Traditionally, research on Latinos, particularly Latino men, college student leadership, and leadership identity development has been segmented into three different, fairly large areas: the identity development of Latinos, an in-depth look at Latino masculinity, particularly the concept of *machismo*, and college student leadership as a whole, with leadership identity development being a subsection of this area.

Identity development for Latino/a college students tends to focus on how the collegiate environment, an individual’s cognitive development, and the unique cultural qualities of Latinos/as influence students’ racial self-concept (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Torres, 2004; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004). Latino masculinity research traditionally does not treat racial and gender identity as separate; instead, literature concentrates on how these identities converge and influence Latino men in a variety of contexts, such as in higher education, local communities, and how social identities such as gender, gender identity, or sexuality are expressed (Carrillo, 2013; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Harris et al., 2015; Peña-Talamantes, 2013; Saez et al., 2009; Sáenz et al., 2016). Knowledge on college student leadership and leadership identity development traditionally views leadership as a process or experience, only recently investigating deeper potential associations to social identities such as race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, or age (Ewing et al., 2009; Fischer et al., 2010; Komives et al., 2005, 2006).
Recent research on leadership and social identities indicates dynamics related to social identities influence how students in higher education institutions engage in formal and informal leadership positions, campus organizations, and leadership identity development (Dugan et al., 2012; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Kodama, & Dugan, 2013; Lozano, 2015a; Onorato & Musoba, 2015; Renn, 2007; Renn & Bilodeau, 2005; Renn & Ozaki, 2010; Rosch et al., 2015). Research on college student leadership and social identities is most substantive regarding race (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Jones et al., 2002; Kodama, & Dugan, 2013; Komives et al., 2009; Lozano, 2015a; Onorato & Musoba, 2015; St. John et al., 2009) and sexual orientation and/or gender identity, pioneered by the work of Kristen Renn (Renn, 2007; Renn & Bilodeau, 2005; Renn & Ozaki, 2010).

Research such as those listed in the previous paragraph show how important social identities are in trying to understand college students’ participation in leadership experiences and campus organizations. They also demonstrate how influential these involvements can be in the identity development of students and call for more research analyzing these connections. While more literature has emphasized how race influences leadership development for Latino/a students (Lozano, 2015a), with Guardia and Evans (2008) being an exception, no articles focus on the links between race and leadership identity development for Latino men, and none use a PWI as the context. This literature review will discuss known literature about the Latino/a population, particularly in a higher education context, issues related to Latino masculinity, involvement in campus or student organizations, and various dimensions of college student leadership, including the definition of leadership, the Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model, and the connections between race and college student leadership.
*Latinidad: A Pan-Ethnic Look at the Latino/a Population*

This section will take a macro-level look at the Latino/a population in the U.S., what is meant by the term Latino, and describe general characteristics related to this population.

**Defining Latino**

It is important to acknowledge there is disagreement on if the Latino/a community is a racial or ethnic group. The conversation of whether or not Latino/a is a separate race has been ongoing for a long time (Lozano, 2015a; Hinojosa, Reiman, & Bishop, 2016), and will likely continue in the future. There are a couple of reasons for the divide. First, some scholars argue the Latino community is not a race, but an ethnic group underneath bigger racial categorizations such as Caucasian/White, African-American/Black, or Asian-American/Pacific Islander (Bordas, 2013; Guardia, 2015; Hinojosa et al., 2016). Beltrán (2010) indicates using Latino or Hispanic as a racial categorization tool is not helpful because of the vagueness of the label and using such a broad umbrella term treats all members of the community in a pan-ethnic way that dilutes the nationalities found in the community. There is also some evidence to indicate generational status plays a role in the debate. Individuals who are older are more likely to think of the Latino or Hispanic label as an ethnicity or nationality rather than a unique racial category (Roth, 2012).

Other scholars believe Latino/a is a separate race (Lozano, 2015a; Oquendo, 1995; Roth, 2012). Recent research indicates an evolving view of Latinos/as as a race (Renn & Reason, 2012; Roth, 2012), with Renn and Reason (2012) sharing there is substantial evidence in favor of viewing Latino/a as a race. Roth (2012), in a study of Puerto Rican and Dominican migrants, explained the necessity for a distinct Latino racial category:

The Hispanicized U.S. schema, which treats White, Black, and Latino as mutually exclusive racial groups, is becoming culturally dominant over a binary U.S. schema . . .
Latinos fit into a distinct racial group that tries to differentiate itself from Blacks and is not accepted into the realm of Whiteness. Continued Latin American immigration perpetuates this middle tier, fueling public perception of a distinct Latino group and keeping the group identity alive (p. 189).

Roth follows this up by stating, “It is clear that many Latinos, in both the first and later generations, consider their race to be Hispanic, Latino, or a particular Latino-origin category” (p. 195). I believe the Latino/a community is unique from other races and is treated in society as a unique racialized group, with its own language, history, and culture (Morales, 2002; Roth, 2012; Valverde, 2007). While the debate on Latino as a race continues, I classify Latinos as a race; thus, Latinos/as in this study will be considered a race.

There is also discussion of whether the term Latino or Hispanic is most appropriate when referring to this community. No definitive answer exists, and Gracia (2000) makes a case for and against both terms. Morales (2002) illuminates that the dispute over the correct term has plagued the community for many years, as those within and outside of the community have grappled with how to refer to this group of people. Morales (2002) writes, “While Hispanic became the preferred term of assimilationists (although it is often used by working-class Latinos who identify less with their home countries than with the Spanish language they still speak), Latino became the preferred term of the intelligentsia, identity politicians, and young urbanites” (p. 2). He further asserts Latino indicates individuals who are a mixture of Spaniards, Africans, and indigenous people, not just Spaniards (Morales, 2002).

I determined Latino is the appropriate term for this study, which is in line with literature on this issue. Oquendo (1995) defined “Latino” as “people who are descended from the onetime possessions of not only Spain, but Portugal and France” (p.97). Oquendo (1995) explained
Latino/a underscores “the fact the noun describes women as well as men” (p. 99) and gave several reasons why Latino is the most appropriate term. First, Latino denotes the struggle for empowerment undertaken in the U.S. by the group, particularly during the 1950s-1990s. Next, Latino asks people to re-conceptualize their understanding of what membership in this racial community truly means, as the Latino/a community has grappled with where it fits in U.S. society throughout its history. Finally, Latino is a Spanish word organically created by the members of the community it describes, giving appropriate and necessary cultural ownership to the group (Oquendo, 1995).

Usage of Latino is different than the meaning associated with Hispanic, which is an ethnic label given to this community by the White U.S. culture in 1971 for census and data collection purposes. For the reasons Oquendo (1995) described, this research study refers to participants as Latino/a unless quoting a participant, research study, or literature source using another term.

I acknowledge the terms Latino and Latina are gendered; most of the Spanish language is gendered, with masculine and feminine prefixes and articles throughout the language. In recent critical scholarship the term Latinx has emerged as an all-gender descriptor of individuals of Latin American descent whose gender identity and expression exist outside of the masculine and feminine binary (Gómez-Barrias & Fiol-Matta, 2014; Monzó, 2016). For simplicity, I will not use the term Latinx unless a specific literature source or participant references it during the research process, however, I felt it important to acknowledge this critically-relevant term.

**The Latino Population in the United States**

Numerous pieces of research provide insight into the Latino population in the U.S., including indicating the Latino/a population in the U.S. is growing and will continue to grow in
the future (Ortiz, 2004; Page, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015; Roth, 2012; Sáenz et al., 2016; Valverde, 2007). Page (2013) shared in 2008 Latinos/as comprised 15.4% of U.S. population as of 2008 and is expected to be 21% by 2025, with the Pew Research Center (2015) reporting that in 2013 Latino/as numbered over 54 million people and made up 17.1% of the total U.S. population. Several literature sources expect the Latino/a population to be the largest racial group in the U.S. by mid-century (Pew Research Center, 2015; Roth, 2012; Sáenz et al., 2016; Valverde, 2007), with others pointing to the significant impact this growing population will have on the U.S in the future (Ortiz, 2004; Pew Research Center, 2015; Roth, 2012; Valverde, 2007).

**Latino/a Students in Higher Education**

This section discusses the enrollment and graduation patterns, student experience, and additional considerations when studying Latino/a students in U.S. higher education institutions.

**Latino/a Enrollment and Graduation Rates in Higher Education**

This section examines the trends related to higher education enrollment and graduation rates for Latino/a students.

**Enrollment rates.** One of the first considerations in studying the experience of Latino/a students in higher education in the U.S. is to understand this population’s enrollment patterns. Historically, Latino/a students have participated in higher education in small numbers from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, mostly located in western states (Mueller & Broido, 2012; Renn & Reason, 2012). From the 1920s through World War II, Latino/a student enrollment was modest, with sizable enough pockets of students to see student organizations and newspapers focusing on Latino/a issues (Mueller & Broido, 2012). The 1960s and 1970s saw a dramatic increase in Latino/a student enrollment, though there were still substantial enrollment
gaps between Latino/a students and their White peers (Mueller & Broido, 2012; Renn & Reason, 2012).

As the Latino/a student population has grown, research about the enrollment patterns of Latino/a students in higher education in the U.S. has also grown. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries Latino/a students have continued to grow in enrollment numbers in the U.S. (Ortiz, 2004; Page, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015; Renn & Reason, 2012; Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009b; Sáenz et al., 2016; Valverde, 2007). Page (2013) indicated higher education institutions have seen a steady progression in enrollment for Latino/a students, as it has been increasing for the last 20 years (Page, 2013). Page’s (2013) research affirms some literature sources (Ortiz, 2004; Sáenz et al., 2016; Valverde, 2007) indicating Latino/a student enrollment is going up at all different types of higher education institutions, but the Pew Research Center (2015) upholds statistics showing the majority of Latino/a students overwhelmingly attend public institutions and have had enrollment patterns that have remained relatively stagnant over the last 20 years. Also noteworthy is 25.8% of Latino students age 18-24 enroll in college, with 62% starting college right out of high school despite Latino/a adults having the lowest U.S. high school completion rates of all racial or ethnic groups at 62% (Page, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015). Renn and Reason (2012) indicate that based on the geographic concentration of Latinos/as in the U.S., higher education institutions in the western U.S. are likely to see the most enrollment growth.

Nuñez and Kim (2011) used a macro lens in examining the role student-, school-, and state-level characteristics play on Latino students’ college enrollment patterns. They found gender matters, as Latinas are significantly more likely to enroll in 4-year colleges than their
male counterparts, and Latino students from Central & South American countries have twice the odds of enrolling in 4-year colleges than their Mexican counterparts (Nuñez & Kim, 2011).

Research also indicates Latino/a college students often start enrollment at two-year institutions (Ortiz, 2004; Sáenz et al., 2016; Valverde, 2007), which the National Center for Education Statistics (2013), Page (2013), and the Pew Research Center (2015) affirms. Additionally, Page (2013) found 81% of Latino/a students attended public institutions, while 11% attended private institutions. These research studies also suggest gender, state characteristics, and previous educational opportunities may impact Latino men’s enrollment at four-year institutions.

**Graduation rates.** Page (2013) analyzed the graduation rates of Latino/a students, noting the number of bachelor’s degrees awarded to Latinos/as rose by 105% in the last decade; though not an exact match, the Pew Research Center (2015) also indicates degree attainment by Latino/a students has been rising. Page (2013) also shared retaining Latino students meant facilitating cultural acceptance among campus constituents, but there has been little improvement in college completion rates. Finally, most concerning for Latino men, Latinas have higher rates of degree attainment, which warrants further investigation (Page, 2013; Sáenz et al., 2016).

**Latino Student Experience**

It is imperative to understand the experience Latino/a students are having once enrolled in higher education that can promote or inhibit academic, cognitive, and social development.

**Academic development.** Saunders and Serna (2004) conducted a qualitative study of ten first-generation Latino/a students from one southern California high school who participated in a college access/intervention program to understand how they navigated the transition from high school to college. The researchers primarily concentrated on how students maintained their
capacity to access academic and social support while in college, and the authors also focused on how these students sustained a college-going identity. Saunders and Serna (2004) discovered a pedagogy infusing a sense of trust or community might assist first-generation Latino students to be successful in the college environment and obtain a postsecondary degree. This investigation affirms other research (Astin, 1984, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) indicating engagement and interpersonal connections can boost first-generation Latino students’ academic success in college.

**Cognitive development.** One aspect of Latino/a cognitive development influenced in higher education is self-efficacy, which is the internal belief Latino/a students have in their ability to be successful academically. Lopez (2014) found Latino men had stronger social and academic coursework self-efficacy at the start of the academic year, but it eroded as the year progressed. He found the opposite to be true for Latinas, as they reported low self-efficacy at the start of the academic year but had stronger self-efficacy by the end. Torres (2003) also showed cognitive gains the Latino population had while in college, including having a greater sense of ethnic identity and a stronger sense of their own perceptions of their status in society. Torres and Baxter Magolda (2004) conducted a longitudinal study of Latino/a college students to illustrate how ethnic identity is influenced by the individual’s cognitive development, arguing as Latino/a students continue to grow, learn, and evolve cognitively, they also evolve their ethnic identity. They found “the construction of more complex ways of thinking was key to decreasing susceptibility to stereotype vulnerability and creating positive images of their ethnicity” (p. 345).

**Social development.** One finding that emerged from Lopez (2014) is first-generation Latino college students’ ability to create, negotiate, and sustain social networks influences their college experience as well as their ability to remain in college. Beatty (2015) also found Latina@
student organizations eased the difficulty many Latino/a students faced in trying to grow their social skills. Latin@ organizations, Beatty (2015) shared, provided a space where Latino/a students could be themselves and support each other in navigating the higher education environment.

**Other Considerations Unique to the Latino/a Population**

This section analyzes some of the additional considerations unique to the Latino/a population. These considerations include *familia* (family), common challenges, and issues particular to Latino men.

*Familia (family).* An important element when thinking about Latino/a college student success is the role of family. Parental involvement has a significantly large positive effect on college enrollment (Nuñez & Kim, 2011). Research also indicates familial relationships have a significant impact on the ability for Latino/a college students to achieve academically (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Nuñez & Kim, 2011; Torres, 2004). Additionally, Cerezo, Lyda, Beristianos, Enriquez, and Connor (2013) noted educational and family systems as well as pressures and expectations in their local neighborhood communities impacted Mexican American males’ college access and retention. Overall, research indicated the better the relationship Latino/a students have with their family and community, the more likely they were to enroll, have strong academic achievements, and graduate from higher education institutions (Torres, 2004).

*Common challenges.* Literature also discusses some unique difficulties Latino/a students in higher education must confront. Salas, Aragon, Alandejani, and Timpson (2014) found all Latino/a students had “common challenges” in the higher education environment, such as experiencing culture shock, being a first-generation college student, and navigating financial
issues. Gloria, Castellanos, Scull, and Villegas (2009) affirmed the difficulties of being a first-generation college student Salas et al. (2014) identified, as they also found first-generation students perceive more barriers to staying in school than second-generation students. The common challenges Salas et al. (2014) recognized have been affirmed in other literature as issues many Latino/a students enrolled in higher education face (Ortiz, 2004; Torres, 2004; Valverde, 2007). Other common challenges literature notes Latino/a students confront included complications transferring from two-year to four-year institutions, financial hardships while enrolled, and various difficulties adapting psychosocially to the higher education environment, particularly at PWIs (Harper & Quaye, 2009; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Ortiz, 2004; Torres, 2003, 2004; Valverde, 2007). Several of the unique challenges to Latino/a students identified in this literature could be articulated by the participants in this study.

**Issues particular to Latino men.** A few studies explored the collegiate experience of Latino men. One is Cerezo et al. (2013), in which part of the findings indicated participants had pre-college factors that led to their success. One was other peers creating a “culture of college” that set an expectation they all would go to college when they graduated high school. The participants also shared important application process information from which everyone was able to benefit. Cerezo et al. (2013) also indicated these Latino men overcame significant obstacles previously identified in the literature (Salas et al., 2014) to get to and succeed in college, including financial obstacles, being discouraged by teachers from enrolling in higher education, and receiving messages from their local communities to engage in non-college activities. Several of the participants in this study also overcame obstacles like the ones described in this literature to be successful in higher education.
Cerezo et al.’s (2013) research findings also included a psychosocial component, with participants noting the positive contributions romantic relationships played in their retention. Participants were more likely to study and were more motivated to be academically successful thanks to encouragement from their romantic partners. Gloria et al. (2009) also found having an emotional outlet where Latino men can in a relaxed fashion address their reactions to educational stressors is critical to their success in persisting in higher education institutions.

Affirming much of what Cerezo et al. (2013) and Gloria et al. (2009) discovered, Sáenz et al. (2016) dedicated an entire book to trying to understand how to make Latino men successful in higher education. Their work highlights several issues, including how to make Latino men successful in high school, in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math majors, how to persist to graduation, and what additional research, policies, and practices must be engaged to further illuminate knowledge about this population and support their academic success. Sáenz et al. (2016) also provide practical ideas such as mentorship programs and smoother transfers from two-year institutions to four-year institutions to higher education administrators to support Latino men’s postsecondary success. The book is one of the first attempts at expanding the body of knowledge about this specific student population, of which they indicate there is a dearth of knowledge (Sáenz et al., 2016).

As these studies show, the literature has provided a better understanding of the context of issues Latino/a students face while enrolled in higher education as well as the influences on Latino college students’ success, both academically and socially.

**Latino Identity Development**

This section focuses on literature related to the identity development of Latino/a students. This will include how the collegiate environment influences the identity development of Latino/a
students and any unique cultural issues to consider regarding Latino/a student identity development.

Definition

When discussing Latino identity development, it is helpful to begin by describing what is meant by a Latino identity, of which, several possibilities arise. Tammello (2011) gives a historical overview of what constitutes a Hispanic or Latino ethnic identity, using three other authors’ writings as the basis for his conclusions. He indicates the identity of individuals from a Hispanic or Latino background have had the description of the identity evolve in three time periods: Colonial Hispanic from the 1550s until the 1820s, when the majority of Latin American countries gained independence; National Hispanic, initiated by the wars of liberation; and Latin American immigrants which formed communities and engaged in collective projects that contributed to the formation of Latino/a identity.

Gracia (2011), one of the three authors Tammello cites in his article, responded to Tammello directly, wanting to share his own perspective on his writings and the formation of a Hispanic/Latino identity. While he did not disagree with Tammello in a hostile way, he did dispute some of Tammello’s characterizations, finding him reading identity more narrowly than he did. Gracia (2011) also referred to his earlier text (Gracia, 2000) and indicated he did not refer to Conquest as a necessary condition of Hispanic Identity, and he does not consider first encounters in 1492 a sufficient condition of Hispanic Identity. Gracia (2011) elaborated on his concepts and opened the idea for his point of view with which to be disagreed. These articles demonstrate a continued conversation about the very definition of a Hispanic/Latino identity and its meaning in society.
Identity Development of College Students

This section explores numerous dynamics related to the identity development of college students. These dynamics include the foundations of college student identity development, the identity development of college students of color, Latino/a college student identity development, and identity development of Latino men.

Foundations. The identity development of college students has been a well-studied subject in the research literature. In looking at college student identity development from a macro-level, Evans et al. (2010), Jones and Abes (2013), and Renn and Reason (2012) discuss the various factors and relevant theories regarding college students’ identity development. These texts are considered essential works in understanding identity development in the higher education environment. Torres et al. (2009) conducted a meta-analysis of numerous identity-related theories in higher education (psychosocial, sociological, human ecological, etc.), sharing their history, standing in current research within the field, and potential directions for the future. They suggest there are some commonalities in the approach to researching psychosocial theories, including racial identity development, of which higher education needs to be aware. These commonalities include “focusing on identity as a developmental progression from simple, conferred ideas about oneself to more complex understandings of what makes up identity . . . and consideration of the environment or context, a complex system that influences behaviors, attitudes, and cognition” (p. 582). Evans et al. (2010), Jones and Abes (2013), Renn and Reason (2012), and Torres et al. (2009) all cover potentially relevant theories related to students of color, mostly identity development theories, which offer some insight into how students of color psychosocially develop and grow.

Research demonstrates racial identity development is one consideration that influences the campus experience of students of color. Maramba and Velasquez (2012) discovered students’ racial identity had an impact on their campus experience. They found before college, most students had made no effort to learn about their ethnic identity, however, they were aware of discrimination against their group. The majority of the students in the study reported spending time during college learning about their ethnic group, and most of the students said the development of their ethnic identity made a strong impact on their sense of competence (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012).

Latino/a college student identity development. Identity development is an important part of the collegiate experience for Latino/a students. One of the most prominent Latino/a identity development theory is Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) orientations toward Latino identity. Table 2.1 better elaborates on the different aspects of their theory. Ferdman and
Gallegos (2001) explained this theory is not a stage model or a straightforward, sequential process, as understanding a Latino/a identity is like trying to navigate a labyrinth. Rather, to understand the complexity of Latino/a identity, a good Latino identity development theory should look at patterns and viewpoints. Thus, Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) theory is presented as a lens for how individuals in the Latino/a community see their ethnicity and the bigger “issues and context of racial groups in the United States” (p. 50). In other words, as an individual evolves and grows, they change the orientation they use to see their ethnicity and racial identity.

Table 2.1 is reproduced from p. 49 of Ferdman and Gallegos (2001).

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


Beyond Ferdman and Gallegos (2001), Torres and Baxter Magolda’s (2004) found creating positive educational environments where students can explore and express their identity is vital in creating an internal sense of identity and personal belief system. They also discuss how
cognitive dissonance and construction of gradually complex ways of thinking was essential to decreasing students’ proneness to stereotype vulnerability and creating positive images of their ethnicity.

Additional information in understanding Latino/a college students’ identity development is found in Alvarado and Hurtado (2012), who cultivated a sample of over 4,000 students representing a great cross section of multiple social identities within the Latino/a community. They found 47.3% of Latino/a students often or very often think about their race, and first-generation Latino/a students have a higher level of racial identity salience than their non-first-generation counterparts. Alvarado and Hurtado (2012) also discovered less privileged identities were more salient than privileged ones across all social identities, regardless of gender, which is insightful when trying to understand which aspects of Latino/a students’ identities are most relevant to their postsecondary experience.

In contrast to Alvarado and Hurtado (2012), Hungerford-Kresser & Vetter (2012) did an in-depth qualitative study with one Latino student in central Texas to understand how he handled his transition from an urban high school to a large state school. They found in this context there was more to Latino/a adolescents’ transition to college than an acquisition of academic skills, as powerful shifts in identities occur throughout the collegiate experience. This participant shared he was positioned by daily interactions with other students, faculty, and staff while he struggled to author himself in a new college environment (Hungerford-Kresser & Vetter, 2012).

Two culturally specific aspects of Latino/a identity development identified in the literature, the Spanish language and the influence of family, have implications for college students. Torres (2004) identified how students that speak Spanish are more likely to identify as Latino/a. Additionally, students’ perceptions of identity can be influenced by their family,
particularly based on generational status. Students can understand their cultural heritage while maintaining connections to the Anglo culture (Torres, 2004). Students may also say they are from the U.S. despite identifying as a Latino, and students, even ones who might be acculturated to American culture, can experience cultural conflicts when in the higher education environment.

**Identity development in Latino men.** In looking specifically at the ethnic identity development of Latino men Guardia and Evans (2008) used Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory of human development as a guiding framework for understanding how membership in a Latino fraternity at a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) enhanced their ethnic identity development. Factors that positively influenced the participants’ ethnic identity development included: family, which had two subcategories, home family and fraternity *hermandad*; the HSI campus environment and how it embraced and promoted the Latino/a culture; and language, which indicated how speaking and knowing Spanish provided an additional connection to each other. This study found involvement in a Latino/a-based organization can have numerous positive impacts on Latino/a students’ ethnic identity development.

Identity development in college students, particularly in terms of race and ethnicity, is complex to describe and understand. These studies identify some of the considerations influencing Latino/a students’ identity development. Understanding Latino/a identity will help me recognize ways racial identity for the Latino men in this study may be influencing their leadership identity development. Next, it is important to understand how masculinity relates to race in Latino men, as these two identity constructs are linked.

**El Macho: Latino Masculinity**

When analyzing the experience of Latino men in higher education, it is important to understand what dynamics of Latino masculinity may be influencing identity development and
the higher education experience. This section will cover literature related to Latino masculinity, as well as place it in the higher education context.

**Masculinity Ideology**

Understanding and describing Latino masculinity can be intricate, as there are many layers and nuances to consider. Abreu, Goodyear, Campos, and Newcomb (2000) aimed to compare and contrast traditional masculinity ideology amongst a sample that included Latino men. Abreau et al. (2000) found ethnic belonging was the best predictor of traditional masculinity ideology, while ethnicity was the second best predictor of traditional masculinity ideology, with Latinos endorsing the highest level of traditional male gender roles. Saez et al. (2009) assessed the relative contributions of three factors to Latino men’s endorsement of hypermasculinity (an extreme form of traditional masculinity ideology): ethnic identity, male identity, and early childhood gender role socialization. Saez et al. (2009), whose study’s sample had a majority of undergraduate students, found Latino men who identify more with their own ethnicity are inclined to favor negative stereotypes usually associated with Latino masculinity. They also found the home environment a powerful source for messages about gender role norms for males (Saez et al., 2009).

**Machismo.** Trying to understand the machismo construct, Liang, Salcedo, and Miller (2010) studied how perceived racism and masculinity ideology created or inhibited gender role conflict among Latino men. They defined machismo with many of the stereotypically negative connotations with which it is connected: mysognistic, domineering, heteronormative, and hypermasculine. Liang et al. (2010) offered a counter to machismo with caballerismo, which is essentially the exact opposite: caring of women, thoughtful, and emotionally open. One of the most interesting findings from the study is “in high levels, academic racism may heighten
feelings of needing to demonstrate success among men who hold *caballerismo* ideology” (p. 211).

Peña-Talamantes (2013) looked at the concept of *machismo* as a social symbol individually defined by Latino men identifying as gay trying to create new male identities. Peña-Talamantes (2013) identified three overall themes. One theme was having a deeper understanding of the concept of *machismo*. Most participants first heard the term *machismo* in early childhood in connection with the word macho, which led to developing a sense of fear and respect toward the concept of being macho. This fear kept them from coming out to parents. In defining *machismo*, many participants drew on understanding the counterpart to a macho man, *el maricón* (which the authors translated as “a sissy”).

**Other Masculinity Issues**

This section discusses other masculinity issues as it relates to Latino men. They include masculinity and academics and masculine identity.

**Masculinity and academics.** Harris, Wood, and Newman (2015) conducted an exploratory investigation of the effect of racial and masculine identity on community college men’s action control, which they defined as “the directed focus or effort that men placed on academic matters” (p. 62). The authors examined men of color from various racial identities, including Latino and used data from the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM), finding the more men were willing to seek out help without perceiving such actions as being weak or feminine, the more likely they were to be focused on academic matters in college. Additionally, Harris et al. (2015) found for Mexicano and Latino men (they differentiated these populations in their sample), healthy perceptions of the role of men as breadwinners are a positive indicator of action control.
In the same way Cerezo et al. (2013) tried to understand the expectations their participants had on them in attending higher education institutions, Figueroa, Pérez, and Vega (2016) attempted to discern the gender expectations Latino men faced while pursuing a higher education. They found the intersection of race/ethnicity, class, and gender all greatly influenced Latino students’ education experience.

**Masculine identity.** Carrillo (2013) examined the role of “home,” defined as a sense of security, well being, and comfort, not just a physical location, and how the barrio past for Mexican-origin “high achievers” informed their masculine identities. Participants articulated masculinities do not conform to hegemonic (White, male, middle – upper class) masculinities and culture, and there is a nuanced negotiation between excelling in mainstream schooling spaces while remaining committed to the identities more closely aligned with one’s working-class “home.”

Hurtado and Sinha (2008) explored the definition of manhood amongst a sample of feminist identified, working class Latino men, and their purpose was to examine the role of Latino culture and its effects on the perceptions of manhood they had as individuals identifying as feminists. All participants referenced their race. They shared feeling racialized by families, communities, and society in general and being aware of their subordinate status in society based on racial categorization (Hurtado & Sinha, 2008). Participants referenced explanations of manhood as being a developmental process unfolding as they matured, with the endpoint being marriage and raising kids, and they also mentioned positive ethnic positions in their definitions of manhood, meaning they felt manhood entailed being ethical and standing behind one’s word and not cheating or being untruthful, being a good human, and respecting others. Other participants rejected aspects of hegemonic masculinity in their responses, feeling definitions of
manhood are in flux because of the intense questioning of gender and sexual roles; as a result, definitions need to go beyond biology and the objectification of women as basis for manhood (Hurtado & Sinha, 2008).

One theme in Peña-Talamantes (2013) findings was formulating a fluid masculinity spectrum while integrating domains of gender and sexuality. Participants felt a sense of masculinity and sexual orientation pulling them along a spectrum, and it was hard to find where they fit. Another theme was participants forged gendered sexual identities allowing them to reconstruct components of the label of macho, a process called machoflexibility (Peña-Talamantes, 2013). The amount of machoflexibility students allowed themselves was constrained by a range of identity performances, allowing them to continue to appear as men to others. This information is insightful in understanding how Latino men may construct and perform their masculinity in different contexts, as well as illuminates their ideas about the concept of machismo.

Guardia and Evans (2008), mentioned earlier, also looks at masculinity in higher education. The researchers examined several factors influencing the identity development of Latino men involved in fraternities. One other finding involved gender. Participants in the study suggested fraternity membership made students feel manlier and were able to engage with other Latino men and form a hermandad, or brotherhood, where they could explore masculinity and how they individually and collectively defined and expressed it (Guardia & Evans, 2008). Similar themes to these and potential connections to previously outlined Latino identity development (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Torres, 2003, 2004) may emerge in this research study of Latino men in leadership positions or involved in campus and student organizations.
Latino masculinity plays a role in how Latino men participate in the campus environment. Views about Latino masculinity are formed in various ways, particularly in the environment where Latino men grow up. It also has a role in how Latino men concentrate on their academics and form connections with other men and express their masculinity. For this study, analyzing the ways Latino masculinity is exhibited and expressed will help me understand how Latino men form their leadership identity.

**College Student Involvement**

Since this study looks at how Latino men’s leadership identity develops, it is imperative to understand how campus and student organizational involvement influences students’ collegiate experience. This section will outline literature that discusses the experience Latino/a students have with campus and student organizational involvement, including at four-year Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs).

**Collegiate Environment**

The effect higher education and the collegiate environment has on students has been researched for decades (Astin, 1993, Evans et al., 2010; Harper & Quaye, 2009; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2010; Renn & Reason, 2012; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Strange & Banning, 2015). Three works stand as foundational research analyzing and describing the impact postsecondary education has on students. The first is Astin (1993), who discusses how college has a substantive, positive influence on individuals who attend higher education institutions in the U.S. He also shares students who were involved in extracurricular activities in college were more academically successful and more likely to graduate.

The seminal article by Astin (1984) details what he calls involvement theory. Astin (1984) described involvement as numerous things, including academic work, participating in
extracurricular activities, and interactions with university personnel. He indicated, “the greater
the student’s involvement in college, the greater will be the amount of student learning and
personal development” (Astin, 1984, pp. 528-529).

The final work, from Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), presents and synthesizes over three
decades of research on college students. Among their many findings, Pascarella and Terenzini
(2005), like Astin (1984, 1993), expounded empirical research demonstrating the positive link
between college, student learning, and student outcomes. The researchers also indicated
involvement in student organizations and formal leadership positions on college campuses lead
to better academic success and increase the likelihood of graduation.

**Campus and Student Organizational Involvement**

This section analyzes dynamics related to campus and student organizational
involvement. These dynamics include student involvement, students of color, and Latino/a
college student involvement.

**Student involvement.** Ewing, Bruce, and Ricketts (2009) conducted a study to
understand the importance of participation in college organizations in providing effective
leadership development opportunities for undergraduate students. The researchers final sample
focused on College of Agriculture students at the research site. The study found a higher
percentage of students who held officer positions were more likely to respond positively than
those who did not hold officer positions to statements where students felt participating in a
collegiate organization allowed them to take part in activities that wouldn’t have been available
otherwise (Ewing et al., 2009). They also were more likely to respond positively that they
reflected on the importance of activities in which they participated, learned about their individual
strength, and realized the impact beyond themselves their participation had. Participants also
were able to take learning from the organization’s activities and apply them to other areas of life, build relationships with people having similar interests, and prepare for a future career. Ewing et al. (2009) did not give a racial demographic breakdown of their sample, making it difficult to extrapolate as to how involvement in a collegiate organization might differ between different students of different racial backgrounds.

**Students of color.** Before concentrating on literature that looks at leadership and leadership identity development, it is critical to review literature that describes and better understands the experience of students of color on college campuses. This is important because Latino men in this study may, depending on where they are in their leadership identity development process, believe they are involved on campus but not identify as a leader. Jones, Castellanos, and Cole (2002) conducted a case study investigating the experience ethnic minority students have in predominantly White, four-year, research institutions. The authors used a sample of 14 males and 21 females, 11 of which were Latino, and while some students felt their race or ethnicity did not play a big role in their experience, others did. Jones et al. (2002) discovered involvement was considered by students to be a critical aspect of the college experience, with Latino students stressing involvement in the overall campus community as imperative. Latino students also “expressed the ‘importance of being a change agent and being influential in a PWI’” (Jones et al., 2002, p.30). Latino students in this study also expressed a responsibility to be a voice to represent “the underrepresented” in the campus community.

As Jones et al. (2002) found, Maramba and Velasquez (2012), mentioned earlier, analyzed how students of color’s ethnic identity development is influenced by the campus experience. Almost half of the students indicated their involvement in ethnic student
organizations was the most influential part of their ethnic identity development, affirming the importance of involvement on identity development.

Affirming the importance of involvement in identity-based student organizations Jones et al. (2002) and Maramba and Velasquez (2012) studied, Arminio, Carter, Jones, Kruger, Lucas, Washington, Young, and Scott (2000) interviewed 106 traditional age college students of color regarding their leadership experiences and involvement in student organizations, including 12 Latinas and 17 Latino males. Their findings affirmed the importance of involvement in identity-based student organizations like Jones et al. (2002) and Maramba and Velasquez (2012) did. Many students whose involvement was mainly in same-race groups named a predominantly White organization as “ideal,” yet many students sought involvement in same race-groups to express their cultural heritage and also sought out “mainstream” groups to gain traditional leadership experience. Understanding the experience of students of color in student organizations is imperative in thinking about how they might engage in the campus environment and be academically successful.

**Latino/a college student involvement.** In looking at the campus involvement of Latino/a students specifically, Hurtado and Carter (1997) explored how the effects of the college transition and Latino/a students’ perceptions of the campus’s racial climate influence their sense of belonging in college. The researchers tested Tinto’s theoretical model of students’ departure. Using data from the National Survey of Hispanic Students, the authors discovered several key findings. One is memberships in student organizations happening later in students’ time in college may have different levels of effect on their sense of belonging (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). Also, membership in an ethnic organization did not suggest a higher sense of belonging than students involved in non-ethnic organizations. A slightly related yet unsurprising finding was
students who are members of racial-ethnic student organizations might have the adverse effects of campus climates mitigated as opposed to those who are not members of these types of organizations (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). One final finding was one essential part of the transition to college Latino students included the ease of their separation and ability to maintain familial relationships (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). This article provides helpful perspectives to consider when studying how and why Latino students get involved on campus.

As the research in this section demonstrates, involvement on campus and in student organizations is beneficial to college students’ success, particularly for students of color. Formal positions in campus and student organizations is one way Latino men in this study may develop their leadership identity, so understanding the influence of organizations on Latino students’ collegiate experience is imperative. After looking at literature related to overall involvement on campus and in student organizations, it is necessary to review leadership and leadership identity development in contexts appropriate for this study.

**Leadership and Leadership Identity Development**

This section concentrates on leadership and leadership identity development and is divided into four parts: definition of leadership, college student leadership, the Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model, and intersections between race and leadership.

**Definition of Leadership**

Defining leadership has been a significant exploration in research (Rost, 1993). In scanning numerous different bodies of scholarship, the most significant leadership definition comes from Rost (1993), in which he outlines the history of the concept and definition of leadership and how both have evolved over time. He offers what many consider to be one of the best definitions of leadership. He defines leadership as "an influence relationship among leaders
and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 102). Thus, college student leadership is when students, playing the role of either leader or follower, depending on the context, engage in this relationship process. This is the definition I will use in conducting this study, and I am interested to see if participants’ definition of leadership aligns with or connects to Rost’s (1993).

In trying to understand the definition of leadership and a leader, Arminio et al. (2000) asked students of color if they considered themselves leaders. Most participants did not consider themselves “leaders,” and some resented it as a descriptor, as they felt it separated them from others in their racial group. Arminio et al. (2000) did not expand on why these students felt this way. This resentment to the idea of being a leader may be based on the students’ definition of leadership and a leader and a possible cultural disconnect to how they perform leadership.

**College Student Leadership**

The literature regarding college student leadership is a continuously expanding body of knowledge, with lots of studies discussing the potential impacts and outcomes of college student leadership. One foundational article by Dugan and Komives (2007) reported findings of the results of the multi-institutional study (MLS) on leadership development and leadership capacity in college students, one of the largest studies ever conducted on college student leadership. The researchers found male and female students generally had confidence in their overall leadership efficacy. Dugan and Komives (2007) also shared pre-college experience matters in the development of students. One intriguing finding is women's leadership competence was higher than men’s, but men reported more self-confidence in their leadership abilities than women. Similarly, Fischer, Overland, and Adams (2010) examined the leadership attitudes and beliefs of incoming first-year college students within the context of ecological leadership in order to
determine if gender in leadership attitudes and beliefs exist and found incoming college males had a higher affinity for hierarchical leadership compared to females.

Also noteworthy is Dugan and Komives’ (2007) claim racial and ethnic groups differed in their leadership efficacy, but they did not elaborate on this point beyond saying openness to change is greater for marginalized students. Fischer et al. (2010) also tried to find if ethnic differences existed in leadership attitudes and beliefs, and they discovered students of color had a greater affinity for both systemic and hierarchical leadership beliefs than their White peers. Also noteworthy was international students and students of color possess leadership attitudes and beliefs most associated with effective leadership (Fischer et al., 2010). Other findings suggested effective leaders within student organizations need to have the attitudes and beliefs needed to be both a systemic and hierarchical leader (Fischer et al., 2010) and positional leadership roles develop leadership capacity (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

These studies further affirm literature (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) about the influence of leadership positions and leadership programs on college students. The findings about the difference between men and women are definitely worth further investigation and may come up as interviews are conducted with the sample.

The Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model

The most prominent literature detailing how a leadership identity is developed is Komives et al.’s (2005) article on the Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model. The leadership identity theory had numerous categories emerge: Developmental Influences (adult influences, peer influences, meaningful involvement, and reflective learning); Developing Self (deepening self-awareness, building self-confidence, establishing interpersonal efficacy, applying new skills, and expanding motivations); Group Influences (engaging in groups, learning
from membership continuity, and changing perceptions of groups); Changing View of Self with Others; Broadening View of Leadership; and Leadership Identity. These categories reflect all of the different ways a leader can learn and grow through the leadership identity development process. The Leadership Identity category was the central category of the LID Model and developed in six stages: Awareness, Exploration/Engagement, Leader Identified, Leadership Differentiated, Generativity, and Integration/Synthesis. Figure 2.1 is a visual representation of the model found on page 599 in Komives et al.’s (2005) article. This is one of the best studies to describe the process college students go through in creating their own sense of who they are as leaders and is a useful frame of approach in trying to understand how Latino men form their identity as leaders.

Komives et al. (2009) outlined a few potential shortcomings associated with the LID Model and describe how it can be used practically by higher education administrators. The researchers discussed how the LID Model interacts with other social identities, including race.
Komives et al. (2009) indicated students of color might experience the LID Model differently than their White peers. Additionally, the researchers found students of color at Stage 3 of the Leadership Identity category are more likely to describe collectivist ways of leading than other study participants. “Whether students of color are in conformity, immersion, emersion, internalization, or integration statuses of racial identity development may affect the experiences that shape their leadership development” (p. 25). Komives et al. (2009) end by calling for more research on intersections of race, culture, and leadership identity.

Other scholars have studied the LID Model for its connections to social identities. In 2005, Renn and Bilodeau studied the leadership identity development of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT) student leaders using the LID Model in its early stages. Renn and Bilodeau (2005) found the context of involvement with LGBT student activities provided rich opportunities for development at each of the six stages of the Leadership Identity category of the LID Model. Also of note was that, overall, involvement in leadership and activism specific to LGBT identity promoted development of leadership identity.

In 2010, Renn and Ozaki utilized the LID Model to see how student leaders from identity-based organizations described their experiences. Two of the three themes they discovered indicated student leaders of identity-based groups referenced a heightened salience of the psychosocial identity in the domain specific to that group, and most student leaders were in the first three stages of the LID Model (Renn & Ozaki, 2010). I hope to ascertain the stages of the Leadership Identity category of the LID Model in which the study’s participants identify.

Beyond Renn, a few scholars have attempted to tackle how the LID Model is connected to race, mostly with Latina students. Beatty (2015) analyzed the LID Model and found it ignored a few key elements in how Latinas grew as leaders. Onorato and Musoba (2015) conducted a
qualitative study to determine the applicability of the LID Model to Latina leaders at an HSI. The researchers found “the LID model is incomplete, as it does not include an understanding of the influences of gender, ethnicity, and culture on leadership identity development” (p. (29). This research study indicates how vital this research study is in filling these crucial gaps in the literature about the LID Model.

**Intersections of Social Identities and Leadership**

This section highlights research in the college student leadership literature focused on how social identities and their connections to student leadership may have implications for this study.

**Gender identity and sexual orientation.** One social identity connected to college student leadership in the literature is gender identity and sexual orientation, mostly due to the work of Kristen Renn. First, Renn (2007) analyzed what ways gender and sexual orientation and leadership identities interacted with LGBT identifying students. Renn (2007) found a common pattern emerged: as students entered their LGBT campus involvement, took on leadership positions, and increased their level of involvement, they also increased the degree to which they were out on campus and in other spaces. In other words, a mutually reinforcing cycle of increased leadership leading to increased “outness.” While this may not directly correlate to the racial identity development process, it will be interesting to see if the participants in this study see an increase in the salience of their racial identity as part of their leadership involvement.

As noted earlier, Renn and Ozaki (2010) explored the connection between LGBT and leadership identities. They noted three themes emerged, and it was interesting that other than the LGBT student leaders, the researchers did not see much interaction between leadership and psychosocial identities. Also interesting was Renn and Ozaki (2010) found two paths of
involvement as it related to psychosocial development and leadership identity. The parallel path is when psychosocial and leadership identity does not connect despite involvement, and the other path, merged, is when psychosocial and leadership identity merges because of involvement (Renn & Ozaki, 2010). While racial identity development may not mirror the development of an LGBT identity, I will be looking to see if either a parallel or merged identity path is formed between race and leadership identity.

Race. As leadership research grows, more studies are being conducted analyzing the connections between race and leadership. Some literature has tried identifying how racial identity influences students as campus leaders. In their 2013 article, Kodama and Dugan analyzed the idea of Leadership Self-Efficacy (LSE), which is a students’ belief in their ability to be a leader. Using quantitative data from MLS, the authors found sociocultural conversations with peers and holding a positional leadership role in campus organizations were significant, positive predictors for a higher LSE. This study indicates LSE plays a substantial role in how students see themselves and their capabilities as leaders. It also discusses how, for Latinos/as, participation in formal leadership programs was significantly positive. Kodama and Dugan (2013) also address how LSE is pivotal to the leadership development process, as it is one of the foundational pieces necessary for leadership growth.

Dugan et al. wrote a 2012 article focused on understanding collective racial esteem (CRE), which is how the racial identities of individual students are impacted by their feelings as part of an overall racial group. The authors wanted to determine if there was an influence in how students grow and develop as leaders based on their CRE. Dugan et al. (2012) studied CRE in the context of the Socially Responsible Leadership Development model. The outcome variable was if students engaged in socially responsible leadership. Dugan et al. (2012) found identity
salience is a significant negative predictor of socially responsible leadership. Private CRE is a significant positive contributor to students of color, and peer mentoring is a significant positive predictor of socially responsible leadership for Latinos/as (Dugan et al., 2012). This article discusses how students’ connection to an overarching racial identity may influence their leadership development, which may be a theme emerging in this study.

St. John et al. (2009) discuss high-achieving, low-income students of color engaged in leadership activities and how this relationship connected to financial aid. The researchers posited, and eventually found evidence to suggest, the more financial aid a student received, the more likely they were able to be involved in leadership positions and have a positive impact on their involvement on campus. The researchers also found academic and social engagement were positively associated with holding leadership positions. While this study is specifically focused on Black/African American students, there are overall applications for what dynamics influence students of color, such as Latinos/as, in their ability to engage in leadership activities.

As discussed earlier, Arminio et al (2000) wanted to determine if leadership programs were meeting the values and experiences of students of color, and if not, identify ways leadership programs could better support these students. When asked if there were differences between male and female leaders of color, students said “no” and then discussed differences anyway. This article highlighted how positively leadership positions influenced the experience of students of color in college.

**Latinos/as and leadership.** Before delving deeper into studies focused on college students, it is important to look at literature connecting Latinos/as and leadership. There are numerous examples throughout history of Latino/a individuals cultivating their leadership skills and identities through civic engagement experiences (Beltrán, 2010; Morales, 2002; Novas,
From the 1920s to the 1960s, Latino/a leaders created and joined organizations such as the American G.I. Forum, the Pan American Progressive Association, and the League of United Latin American Citizens. These organizations often had leadership development and youth leadership programs as part of their purpose and work (Beltrán, 2010).

One of the most prominent and influential examples of Latino/a leadership in action was the 1960s Chicano movement in California, which worked to improve the socioeconomic and working conditions of Chicano farmworkers. This movement, which led to the creation of the United Farmworkers Association, was led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta (Beltrán, 2010; Morales, 2002; Novas, 2003). Another influential political movement that engaged Latino/a leaders was the Young Lords. The Young Lords were a group of Puerto Ricans in the 1960s with the goal of making Puerto Rico independent from the perceived imperialism of the United States (Beltrán, 2010; Novas, 2003). It is worth noting a few scholars argue the role of Latinas in the history of Latino/a leadership experiences is either diminished or excluded entirely (Beltrán, 2010; Montoya, Hardy-Fanta, & Garcia, 2000).

Bordas (2013) in her book The Power of Latino Leadership tried to detail what elements unique to the Latino/a culture influence the community’s leadership practices. Though not specific to college students, she identified values from the Latino/a culture she believes are embodied by all Latino/a leaders. They include “treating people like familia, being generous, having respeto [respect] for everyone regardless of status or position, always keeping one’s word, and being of service” (p. 110).

Beyond providing the elements of leadership unique to the Latino/a culture, Bordas (2013) also highlighted the importance of connecting Latino/a leadership to social activism and building coalitions for the advancement of the Latino/a population. She also encouraged focusing
Latino/a leadership on the positivity found in the celebration of life, faith, and diversity. She calls on future Latino/a leaders and their allies to collaborate together to build a more humanistic world.

**Latino/a college students.** Studies focusing specifically on Latino/a college students are a recent emerging body of knowledge. Lozano (2015b) built on and referenced Bordas’ (2013) work when conducting a study to better understand the leadership development of Latino/a students at a large, public, research university in the Midwest. The participants appreciated different leadership styles, but they viewed leadership as being holistic and action-oriented (Lozano, 2015b). Participants also saw themselves as role models and focused their leadership energy outwardly more than inwardly, focusing on collaboration, community, and empowerment. The view of leadership Lozano (2015b) found is very similar to how Bordas (2013) described the social activism and unique elements of Latino leadership. Like Arminio et al. (2000) and Bordas (2013), Lozano (2015b) notes how Latino/a students in this study resist the hierarchical structures many traditional leadership programs and models utilize, preferring to be flatter and community-oriented in their approach.

In a research study to better understand Latino/a college students and leadership, Suarez (2015) engaged in a LatCrit analysis at the site of her study and found whitewashing leadership development activities to be “colorblind” made Latino/a students feel erased and their voices silenced. Beatty (2015) found practical ways to ensure Latin@ student voices were heard and their leadership development encouraged. Some of these suggestions included ensuring students, faculty, and staff, particularly at PWIs, understand Latino/a students’ needs, having higher education administrators engage directly with Latino/a students, create mentoring opportunities for Latino/a students, and teaching students how to address injustices on campus (Beatty, 2015).
These studies (Beatty, 2015; Lozano, 2015a, 2015b; Suarez, 2015) call on higher education scholars and practitioners to reinsert Latino/a student experiences into all aspects of higher education, including scholarship, leadership development practices, and in the training and consciousness of the faculty and staff who work with these students.

Summary

This research study seeks to identify the influence of race on the leadership identity development process for Latino men at a PWI. The proceeding literature review pulled from numerous bodies of scholarship to synthesize the information known about the different aspects of this topic, including Latino/a students in higher education, Latino identity development, Latino masculinity, campus and organizational involvement, college student leadership, and leadership identity development. This information contributes to a conceptual framework approach that will allow me to best understand the problem and its context, and it also will provide a guide for how to methodologically design the study to answer the research questions. By understanding how race influences Latino men’s leadership identity development, higher education administrators might better retain and graduate these students.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This chapter discusses the methodological approach, as well as the conceptual frame, the analytic approach, the context of the study, the data collection, the sample, and strengths and potential limitations of the study. I want to acknowledge the work of Onorato (2010), as she conducted a study similar to this dissertation research, with a few notable differences. Onorato (2010) focused on Latinas at a Hispanic-Serving Institution, while this research study focused on Latino men at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI). I credit Onorato (2010) with contributing to the approach taken in this study, as it was adapted for the goals of this research.

Research Design

The purpose of this research project was to identify how race influences the leadership development process in Latino men at a PWI. With this objective in mind, the research began by focusing on two separate, broad constructs. The first concentrated on Latino identity development, using Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Orientations as a frame. My analysis focused on how the men in this study identified racially, how they identified ethnically, and which Latino Orientation (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001) participants identified.

The other construct observed was leadership identity development using Komives et al.’s (2005) Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model as a frame. This included getting participants’ definition of a leader and leadership, seeing in which stage of the LID Model the participants fell, and how race influenced participants’ leadership identity development. Once the data were collected and analyzed, I identified how the LID Model was applicable to the Latino men in this study as well as what elements were missing from the LID Model.
Qualitative Case Study

Due to the nature of this investigation, I conducted a qualitative research study. Numerous literature sources detail the unique characteristics of qualitative research studies (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Merriam, 2009). In qualitative research, the primary data instrument is the researcher. In most qualitative research, the principal investigator is in the field, having direct interaction and contact with the research subjects, utilizing a number of data collection methods, including interviews, focus groups, observations, field notes, journaling, and current and historical document reviews (Creswell, 2013; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Merriam, 2009). Additional characteristics of qualitative research include using non-statistical methods as the primary form of data collection and analysis, an inductive research process, and creating a final report with a rich description. A qualitative research design allowed me to get rich descriptions directly from the participants to answer the research questions.

While numerous qualitative research designs can be utilized, this study employed a case study design. In qualitative research, a case study is “an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system” (Merriam, 2009, p. 40). Merriam (2009) explains a bounded system as “a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries . . . the case then, could be a single person who is a case example of some phenomenon, a program, a group, an institution, a community, or a specific policy” (p. 40). Case study research allows the researcher to investigate a phenomenon or process using a single or multiple cases as the analytical tool (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Merriam, 2009). Knowledge created from a case study is also concrete, contextual, developed by reader interpretation, and tends to be more based on reference populations determined by the reader (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009).
A case study methodology was most appropriate for this research project because the bounded system I investigated were Latino men’s leadership, and the context in which the case study occurred was a PWI in the southeastern U.S. I studied this system at a single institution to gather and analyze information related to Latino male leadership identity development, which was appropriate given the bounded nature of case study methods (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). While numerous types of case studies can be conducted, I chose an instrumental case study. Stake (2005) expounds on instrumental case study, noting it “is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalization. The case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates our understanding of something else” (p. 437, as cited in Merriam, 2009, p. 48). An instrumental case study of Latino men in leadership positions at a PWI in the southeastern U.S, now referred to as “Southeastern University (SU),” allowed me to gain a better understanding of how race influenced the leadership identity development of Latino men at a PWI, much like how Onorato (2010) was able to begin to understand the nature of how Hispanic women at an HSI lived and developed their leadership identity.

Additionally, like Onorato (2010) and Onorato and Musoba (2015), this study used a constructivist epistemology. This means both the researcher and participants worked together to help create the meaning from the data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Torres, 2003, 2004). Having the participants work with me to create the data’s meaning aligned with the goals of Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit), which was used as part of the analysis process, and allowed me to honor the voices and experiences of the men who participated in the research study.
Setting and Sample

This section discusses the setting in which the research project was conducted, as well as how the sample was selected and recruited.

Setting

The site where I collected data was Southeastern University (SU), a large, four-year, public, research extensive university in the southeastern U.S. I chose SU because this institution fit the Carnegie (2015) classification of the institutional type in which I wanted to situate the study, and it also had a sizable Latino population from which to sample. I wanted to conduct my study in a PWI because numerous research studies cited this institutional type as a setting where students of color generally, and Latino men particularly, struggle to persist and graduate (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000; Dahlvig, 2010; Franklin, Smith, & Hung, 2014; Harper & Quaye, 2007, 2009; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Jones et al., 2002; Sáenz et al., 2016). By using SU as a case study, I believed I would be able to give suggestions to higher education administrators at this institutional type about how to provide leadership opportunities that increased Latino men’s retention and graduation rates. I also felt using this context would help fill a crucial gap in the literature about Latino men at PWIs.

According to SU’s Institutional Research website (2015), the largest racial group on campus were White students at 62.4%, and the Hispanic population made up 16.9% of the student body. SU’s Hispanic enrollment closely matched the college enrollment percentage of Hispanic students nationally, which is 16% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Additionally, SU had many leadership programs, student organizations, formal leadership positions, and informal leadership opportunities Latino men could engage in through a variety of means, including the Leadership Center, the Student Government Association, and the Student
Activities Center, among other departments on campus. I believed this institution gave the potential participants numerous opportunities to practice and hone their leadership identity. Recruiting students through these campus offices gave me a sample that had experience with and articulated how their race influenced their leadership identity development.

Sample

The population for this study was all Latino men enrolled at SU. However, conducting a study with the entire population was not feasible, so I used a sample of the population for this research study. Regardless of research method, a good sample should be identified and used to maximize efficiency and validity (Morse & Niehaus, 2009). The composition of this sample included Latino men from different ethnic backgrounds, countries of origin, class standings, ages, educational pathways, majors, and other social identities. Though there are different types of samples a qualitative researcher can use (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Merriam, 2009; Silverman, 2014), I chose to use a purposeful sampling technique for this study. Purposeful sampling is identifying and selecting information-rich cases in order to most effectively use limited resources (Patton, 2015) and involves choosing individuals or groups who are informed of or have extensive familiarity with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). I believed purposeful sampling was most appropriate for this research project because, as Silverman (2014) writes:

Purposive sampling allows us to choose a case because it illustrates some feature or process in which we are interested. However, this does not provide a simple approval of any case we happen to choose. Rather, purposive sampling demands that we think critically about the parameters of the population we are interested in and choose our sample case carefully on this basis (p. 60-61).
While there are many types of purposeful sampling techniques that exist (e.g., Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015; Suri, 2011), I used a typical cases sample, which was to choose a sample that typifies or highlights cases considered normal or average (Patton, 2015). In this study, I identified a typical case sample as a Latino man involved in a formal or informal leadership position in a student organization within SU’s Division of Student Affairs. I chose this criteria because it is consistent with research conducted on college student leadership and involvement (Astin, 1984, 1993; Dugan & Komives, 2007, Komives et al., 2005, 2006). I recruited this typical case sample of Latino men involved in leadership positions and organizations on SU’s campus through a variety of means. I asked colleagues who worked in various campus offices, such as the Leadership Center, the Student Government Association, the Student Activities Center, the Campus TRIO Office, and Campus Housing, if they could identify for me Latino men in their respective areas to participate in the study (see Appendix A for a sample email invitation). If they agreed, they sent me back an email letter with permission to communicate with participants and a list of names, emails, and phone numbers to contact (see Appendix B for a sample email response). To ensure I received an adequate number of participants, I also used snowball sampling, where research participants identified other participants who would be ideal for and contribute to this research study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Palinkas et al., 2015; Suri, 2011); see Appendix C and D for potential participant email invitations. I recruited six participants from campus partners and seven from other participants. By sending out an email through campus partners and having initial research participants identify others who would be ideal participants, I recruited the sample size I was hoping for in this study.
Sample size. In qualitative research, there is disagreement on what is considered an appropriate sample size for any study, since the researcher has to decide and justify how the sample size appropriately aids their understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Merriam, 2009). Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) argue for qualitative research, the appropriate number of interviews to be conducted should not be fixed; instead, the researcher should conduct the interviews necessary to reach saturation – where the phenomenon being studied can be analyzed and described in detail without needing more interviews. However, Guest et al. (2006) do suggest a reasonable target, noting, “If the goal is to describe a shared perception, belief, or behavior among a relatively homogeneous group, then a sample of twelve will likely be sufficient” (Guest et al., 2006, p. 76). While Guest et al. (2006) say 12 is sufficient, I selected a sample of 13 students from SU who identified as Hispanic/Latino men. I believe this sample size allowed me to reach saturation and ensured I had enough data to identify relevant codes and themes and to appropriately answer the research questions of this case study.

The reason for including “Hispanic” as an identification term in the study is that, depending on where students were in their racial identity development, students from this racial/ethnic group used the term Hispanic instead of Latino to identify themselves. Additionally, the sample included students involved in different types of leadership opportunities at SU. My goal was to have a diverse selection of students from different backgrounds and leadership involvements to generate a sample with the knowledge and skills to provide rich data to answer my research questions.

I obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to any data collection, and I obtained a signed informed consent form from each participant prior to the first interview (a copy of the informed consent form, IRB approval letter, and demographic sheet can be found in
Appendices E, F, and G). The informed consent form notified participants there were no identified risks associated with participation in this research study. The benefits linked with participation in the study included self-exploration for the participants and the creation of new knowledge beneficial to higher education administrators and society overall. I ensured the written informed consent was revisited prior to the second interview with each participant so they were reminded of their rights during the research process.

Data Collection and Analysis

This section details how the data for this research was collected and analyzed.

Data Collection

I employed individual participant interviews as the primary data collection method. Two semi-structured interviews with each participant were conducted (see Appendix H for the interview protocols) over the course of two weeks, with the total data collection process lasting approximately four months from January to April 2017. Semi-structured interviews were utilized because while the questions and format for each participant were uniform, I still asked follow-up and probing questions as necessary based on the direction of the interview (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). Interviews were scheduled for one hour for each participant, and most interviews lasted 40 minutes to one hour. There was some variation in the length of the interviews because some participants shared little information while others shared more, resulting in shorter or longer interviews. Additionally, there was slightly more time given between first and second interviews for a few participants, as life circumstances required an alteration in scheduling.

The first interview focused on the student and his life story up to that point, getting a better understanding of what influenced him and his cognitive and racial/ethnic identity
development. Between the first and second interview, I began data analysis using the constant comparative method (Creswell, 2013; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014), which allowed me to identify first categories and possibly themes, which may have required asking different follow-up questions. I scheduled at least two weeks between each interview and scheduled the second interview during the wrap-up of the first interview. I scheduled each interview two weeks apart so I would have an opportunity to reflect, revisit my notes, check for potential thematic connections with other participants, and prepare for the second interview. The second interview focused on the participant’s campus involvement and leadership experiences, personal definition of leadership, and how his racial/ethnic identity influenced his leadership identity development. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. I transcribed 10 interviews myself and used a transcription service in transcribing the other 16 interviews.

**Considerations for research with specified populations.** Since qualitative research was engaged, I used sound qualitative research practice during the data collection process. As the sample comprised Latino men, there were several qualitative research best practices to exercise. Ojeda, Flores, Meza, and Morales (2011) advised qualitative researchers working with Latinos, and though their experience and advice was particularly focused on Latino immigrants, several areas to consider, such as having researchers who identify as Latino and researchers who speak Spanish so as to get the full context of responses, could be applied to the broader Latino population and were considerations for me during this study. As a Latino man, my interactions with the participants during each interview seemed to make them more comfortable sharing with me than they might have with other researchers who do not identify as a Latino man.
Additionally, Sallee and Harris (2011) shared useful advice for male researchers conducting research with men about masculinity issues. They noted when interviewed by a male researcher, male participants focused more on women’s physical and sexual attributes, talked more freely and in a franker manner about sex, and expressed more stereotypical views about gender and masculinity. They suggested male researchers establish a rapport with male participants in a manner different than a female researcher, and as a result, the male participants engaged in more traditional and stereotypical gender performance during interviews. During the course of interviews two participants were very frank and honest with me in how they talked about their romantic relationships with women, which I believe, as Sallee and Harris (2011) found, was due in large part to my identity as a man.

Since I identify as both Latino and male, the dynamics discussed in these articles were important to keep in mind so as to minimize bias during the research process. I felt I was able to effectively minimize bias through my researcher’s journal and consistent conferrals with my doctoral advisor.

**Data Analysis**

Analysis in a case study can take many forms. I engaged the constant comparative method of data analysis, which involves coding and analyzing the data while the data collection process was still going on (Creswell, 2013). There are numerous techniques to coding qualitative data, some of which are described by Miles et al. (2014).

Initially I used provisional coding as the coding technique. This means approaching the coding process with a few predetermined codes that might appear once all of the data has been collected and analyzed (Miles et al., 2014). My predetermined codes were the Latino Orientations Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) outlined in their theory. I believed once I analyzed
the data I would be able to code each participant into one of the Latino Orientations. Once I had coded each participant into one of Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Orientations, I then engaged in descriptive coding of the rest of the data. Descriptive coding, as Miles et al. (2014) indicate, is when the researcher uses words or short phrases, generally nouns, to then describe codes that emerge from the data. I created and identified numerous codes in the data, some of which included leadership, leadership identity, motivation to lead, masculinity, and student organization involvement. Once I generated some codes and categories, I then revisited and refined my analysis, engaging in axial coding. This means looking at the relationship between codes to further understand what elements, dynamics, and themes were emerging from the data (Miles et al., 2014).

Based on the literature review, I expected themes related to family, machismo, representing the voices of the Latino/a community, wanting to grow leadership skills, and growth in students’ Latino identity to emerge from the data. I also utilized NVivo 11 Pro, a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software, to assist with data analysis during the data collection process. I utilized the initial themes identified to appropriately tailor interviews being conducted with participants, particularly between the first and second interviews. As the research process progressed, I began pinpointing trends and patterns emerging, which were then used to narrow coding categories. This process continued until I identified, constructed, and described how race influenced leadership identity development for Latino men at the PWI in this case.

**Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit).** Merriam (2009) shares, “one could . . . analyze the data in a case study from a critical theory perspective” (p. 42). I also used Critical Race Theory (CRT), particularly Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit), as a means for data analysis and reporting. LatCrit is a “branch of critical theory that considers issues of concern to Latinos/as, such as
immigration, language rights, and multi-identity” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p.166). Gonzalez and Morrison (2016) state four primary purposes of LatCrit:

- The production of knowledge to create understanding of Latino culture, the advancement of transformation in the form of social change, the expansion of connection of the struggles of all subordinated groups, and the cultivation of community and coalition of scholars and activists (p. 89).

Beyond these four functions, LatCrit acknowledges White supremacy and its effects, tries to disrupt the dominant racial conversation focusing on the Black-White binary, and looks at people of color in position to Whiteness (Gonzalez & Morrison, 2016).

There were several reasons for using a LatCrit lens in this study. First, in higher education, CRT scholars center their work on several themes, which include campus racial climate (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015). Since the literature indicates campus racial climate is a consideration in Latino identity development (Jones et al., 2002; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Salas et al., 2014), using a LatCrit lens provided a better understanding of how the campus racial climate played a role in the racial identity development, and by extension, the leadership identity development, of Latino men at PWIs. Using LatCrit also allowed the authentic Latino/a student experience to be told, filling a significant literature gap and honoring the voices of those historically silenced (Suarez, 2015).

Additionally, Delgado Bernal (2002) argued using a Eurocentric approach to qualitative inquiry perpetuates the oppressive system often found within educational research, continuing a cycle of attempting to present information without bias while ignoring issues of racism, classism, sexism, and heteronormativity. Delgado Bernal (2002) further asserted using a LatCrit lens allows qualitative researchers to value and recognize students of color and their experiences as
creators and holders of knowledge and is a more inclusive, intersectional form of educational research inquiry. By utilizing LatCrit in a constructivist epistemology, I believe I honored the voices and experiences of the participants and engaged in more intersectional qualitative research and thoughtful analysis by considering how their racial and gender identities may have influenced their leader identity, which generated richer descriptions and a more authentic, descriptive case study.

**Considerations for credibility.** In addition to the coding method used, I conducted member checks to verify accuracy of the interview transcriptions and ensure the participants’ voices and experiences were properly represented. I sent the transcripts to the participants via email, and I sent the transcripts to participants after all interviews had been completed. This allowed me time to get all of the transcriptions done efficiently and allow member checks to be conducted comprehensively. While not all students responded to my email asking for feedback, several did, saying their transcripts accurately exhibited their recollection of our conversations.

I also kept a researcher’s journal for reflection and analysis. Keeping a researcher’s journal had many potential benefits. Some included making my thoughts and feelings about what I was hearing the participants say about their racial, gender, and leader identities a part of the research design, (which is appropriate for a constructivist approach), helping to check any biases I had, making positive changes to the research design and methods, and making the at times chaotic qualitative research process more coherent, focused, and thoughtful (Ortlipp, 2008). I answered guided questions after each interview to ensure I reflected and recorded in a similar fashion throughout the process. My reflection questions, adapted from the Connecticut Office of Higher Education (2014), included: What did I learn during this interview? What were my thoughts or feelings about what I heard and why did I think or feel that way? What does the
information they shared mean in the context of college student leadership? What other perspectives, concepts, or theories could be applied to what I heard? These questions helped me better understand my data and how to analyze it more effectively.

**Role of the Researcher**

The role of the researcher in qualitative research is important, as the researcher is the primary data collection instrument, using text, interviews, observations, and documents for analysis (Creswell, 2013; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2015). Merriam (2009) suggests the researcher “explain their biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the research to be undertaken . . . such a clarification allows the reader to better understand how the individual researcher might have arrived at the particular interpretation of the data” (p. 219).

I believe my role as a researcher was to be as objective as possible while also recognizing I analyzed and reported the data from my perspective. I am passionate about this topic for several reasons. First, I recognize the criteria for the sample of this study is one I would have met. I acknowledge my identities as a Latino man who attended a PWI influenced my interest in this topic and how I designed this study. But I also believe this allowed me to better connect with the research participants and more fully analyze and describe their experiences. Next, I believe as a Latino man it was my responsibility to contribute to the scholarship and information known about the experience of Latino men in postsecondary education. This is one of the ways I felt like in the academy I fulfilled the social activism form of leadership Bordas (2013) discusses. I also feel through this research study I provided higher education practitioners with practical suggestions that can potentially increase the retention and graduation rates of Latino men in postsecondary education.
As the data collection instrument, I have both conscious and unconscious biases that could have influenced the study, from the data collection to data analysis to the reporting phases (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Merriam, 2009). I used techniques such as member checks and a researcher’s journal, which literature indicated helps minimize bias (Ortlipp, 2008).

Finally, I was personally and professionally changed through this dissertation process. I was honored to have been allowed to hear and then share the stories of these men. How I relate to the students I work with, particularly Latino men, is different. I am more thoughtful and empathetic, and I now feel like each meeting or interaction I have with a student is an opportunity to get a small piece of their story. I have a passion for generating new knowledge and scholarship about Latino men so higher education institutions can better support their retention and graduation. And as a person, I believe I have honored myself, my family, and my culture by doing this research project.

Limitations

One of the biggest limitations of this research study was its design as a qualitative case study. By its nature, qualitative research designs, including case studies, are ordinarily not generalizable to larger populations (Creswell, 2013, 2014; Merriam, 2009). Thus, attempts to apply the findings and implications presented here to other populations should be done with great caution.

This case study was conducted at a single large, research-extensive, public institution in the Southeastern U.S.; the findings would almost surely look different at another institutional type in another geographic location in the U.S. or if more institutions had been included in the study. Additionally, at 13, the sample size for this study was quite small when considering Latino/a students at SU comprises 16% of the student population. While I firmly believe
saturation for this study was achieved, having a larger sample size could have potentially somewhat altered the findings.

Another limitation from the sample was that all of the participants had semesters of enrollment at SU of either four or less or seven or more; there were no participants with five to six semesters of enrollment at SU, leaving the voices of that experience absent from this study. Many of these limitations are addressed in the implications for future practice and research. An additional limitation is this study only included men as participants. The results of this study would likely be different if women were included in the sample, or, as in Onorato and Musoba’s (2015) study, the sole participants in the research project. Despite this study’s limitations, the information gleaned from this study provides valuable information for higher education practitioners and scholars, both at and beyond SU, to consider and utilize moving forward.

**Procedures for Protecting the Rights of Participants**

As mentioned earlier, IRB approval for conducting this dissertation research was obtained prior to any data collection. I created an informed consent document, found in Appendix E, detailing all of the rights and responsibilities of the participants. Participants were notified their participation was voluntary, they could withdraw from the study at any time, and they would not receive compensation for partaking in this study. I also had participants fill out an additional demographic sheet, found in Appendix F, to collect specific information, such as age, major, ethnicity/country of origin, number of semesters enrolled, and the names of any student organizations in which they are members or hold formal leadership positions. This demographic sheet allowed participants to select a pseudonym as their identifier for the study. This pseudonym is how each participant is referred to throughout the study, and all efforts were made
to remove any potentially identifying information regarding the participants from the research data and analysis.

I kept all audio recordings, handwritten notes of my interviews with the participants, my researcher’s journal, and all paperwork and documentation related to this study locked in my private off-campus office. I also kept a digital copy of all interview recordings in a personal external hard drive. After a period of three years, I will delete the audio files from the external hard drive and destroy all handwritten notes, my researcher’s journal, and my participants’ informed consent forms and demographic sheets.

**Summary**

By utilizing the research design and methods outlined, I utilized a qualitative investigative and analysis process aimed at conducting an instrumental case study to identify how race influenced the leadership identity development of Latino men at a PWI. I then used NVivo 11 Pro to assist with identifying relevant codes and themes, and I utilized LatCrit to convey the experiences of the participants to provide a counter narrative to the dominant discourse on leadership identity development and provide better information on how race influenced the leadership identity development of Latino men at a PWI.
CHAPTER 4
PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

This chapter focuses on the biographical information of the Latino men who participated in this dissertation study. This information was gathered through individual interviews and on the additional demographic sheet in Appendix D. To qualify for participation in this study, participants had to identify as a Latino man and be involved in a campus organization in either a formal or informal leadership position. To appropriately utilize Latino critical theory (LatCrit) and honor the voices and experience of the participants in this research study as noted in Delgado Bernal (2002) and Gonzalez and Morrison (2016), all of the biographical information listed in this chapter is conveyed as the participants shared with me. When listing class standing, note the designation is based on credit hours and not necessarily how long the participant has been at Southeastern University (SU); information regarding how long a student has been at SU is shared separately as the number of semesters (including summer) each student has completed. Appendix I gives a quick summary of the demographic information of the participants in this study.

The information in each biography discusses impactful people, events, and experiences both before and during the participants’ time at SU that arose during each conversation. These biographies were member checked to ensure participants were aware of the information shared.

Alfredo

Alfredo is a 22-year old junior double majoring in Accounting and Finance. He identified his ethnicities or countries of origin as Hispanic/Mexican. He was born and raised south of Tampa, Florida to two undocumented Mexican parents, with his mom having him at 17 years old shortly after his parents illegally crossed into the U.S. He shared his parents became documented citizens in 2014. He said his family moved around a lot; he attended nine elementary schools,
one middle school, and one high school. He said middle school was his favorite years because he went to a school for longer than a year. He grew up in low-income, high crime, high violence areas. He was a friend with gang members without being in a gang himself because, from his perspective, in his neighborhood, if you were not friends with gang members you did not have friends.

In high school, Alfredo got more involved with his academics and extracurricular activities, focusing on sports such as soccer and cross-country. In high school, he wanted to be a good role model to his brother and sister, who are five and ten years younger than he is, respectively.

Alfredo has completed seven to eight semesters at SU, and at the time of his interview he was a member of Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated. He had also been a member of the Mexican American Student Association and involved with the Student Government Association and the Hispanic/Latino Student Union. During the summer of 2016, he interned with PricewaterhouseCoopers to expand his professional involvement and experience.

Alkaios

Alkaios is an 18-year old sophomore who is a Pre-Media Communications Studies major. He grew up in lots of places, as his family moved back and forth from Texas to the Orlando, Florida area, finally settling in Kissimmee, Florida during his upbringing. He listed Colombian, Puerto Rican, and Black as his ethnicities or countries of origin. He said his family lived humbly and in not the best places. He shared when he would tell people the specific neighborhoods in Orlando he lived, the reaction was not positive and based on negative stigmas others associated with those places.
Alkaios mentioned he was able to explore some of his heritage growing up by engaging in folklore dancing at a local Puerto Rican club in Texas. He also stated because of his multiple ethnicities or countries of origin, there were times when he wondered if he was Black enough to hang out with other Black kids, Spanish enough to hang out with other Spanish kids, or Colombian enough to hang out with other Colombian kids. This tension makes him feel like he is still finding his own identity amongst those heritages.

Alkaios has completed one to two semesters at SU. He explored different types of involvement when he arrived at SU, looking at opportunities within the campus TRIO program. He knew he wanted to be involved in Greek Life, and eventually became a member of Sigma Lambda Beta International Fraternity, Inc., where he serves as the Public Relations-Social Media Chair. He also shared he was the captain of a competitive cheer squad in high school, where he cultivated many of the leadership skills he has learned.

Camilo

Camilo is a 20-year old Junior double majoring in Political Science and Media Communications. He listed his ethnicity or country of origin as Colombian, and he was born in Colombia. He and his mom immigrated to the U.S. in 2005, moving to the West Palm Beach, Florida area when he was halfway through second grade; they joined his stepdad, whom his mom married about three years prior to moving from Colombia. Camilo did not speak English, so he was enrolled in the English as a Second Language (ESOL) program. He did have some peers growing up who also spoke Spanish, so they were able to help translate for him and help him with his English and to connect socially. Camilo learned English in six months, and by fifth grade, he had the highest points in a reading program at his elementary school. Two years after
moving to the U.S., Camilo and his family moved to another small town in south Florida, which he described as having lots of fields and not many people with which to interact.

Camilo indicated in middle and early high school, he was a pretty shy individual. During his high school experience, he resolved he wanted to push himself to get out of his comfort zone, so he decided to get involved and take formal leadership positions in numerous organizations, such as the National Science Honors Society and the National Hispanic Honors Association.

Camilo has completed three to four semesters at SU. While at SU, he again decided to push himself and has been involved in his residence hall council, had a position with the Colombian Student Association (known as Por Colombia), the Homecoming Executive Council and Sigma Pi social fraternity.

Carlos

Carlos is a 24-year old senior Philosophy major with an Anthropology minor. He was born and grew up in a small south Florida for his childhood, and then moved to a smaller town at 12 years old. His first language is Spanish, and he indicated his ethnicities or countries of origin are Ecuadorian and Panamanian. Carlos’s dad worked for his mom’s dad in illegal drug trafficking and was sentenced to 15 years in prison, serving four years before being released early for good behavior. Upon his father’s release, he indicated his parents were a good team until they decided to divorce when he was 17 years old, an event he said was unexpected and made him reexamine the idea of marriage, his role as a man, and potential future relationships in his life.

Carlos attended an arts high school before moving to north Florida to attend a local community college. While in community college, Carlos struggled financially, so he decided at 19 years old to get a license to sell annuities, spending two years in south Florida saving money
to go to college. Once he had the money he needed, he moved back to north Florida and transferred to SU after receiving his Associate of Arts degree at a local community college, and he has completed three to four semesters at SU. He indicated he was the Vice President of Recruitment for the SU chapter of Sigma Lambda Beta International Fraternity, Incorporated. He also shared he attended the Atlantic Coast Conference Leadership Symposium and cited a leadership development seminar for which he paid and completed in high school with furthering his leadership development.

**Henry**

Henry is a 21-year old senior Biology major who has completed nine to ten semesters at SU, identifying his ethnicity or country of origin as Peru. He indicated his racial heritage is Peruvian American, but more American than Peruvian, as he feels like an American with Peruvian blood in him. He was born in New Jersey, where his parents moved to from Peru due to the strong Peruvian population. About one month after he was born, he and his parents moved to south Florida, which is where he lived until moving for college. Growing up, he wanted to be involved in things like sports, but his parents’ working prohibited that from being possible. While in elementary school, he would stay in afterschool care until 5pm when his parents were able to pick him up.

In middle school, Henry got very involved with music, playing the trumpet and bass guitar. He kept this focus when he got to high school. He said in high school, he did not really have Spanish friends because he thought they were very much a clique and did not want to embarrass himself since he learned Spanish later in life and was concerned about speaking the language correctly; he ended up having lots of Black, African American, and Haitian friends, as that racial demographic was predominant in his high school.
Henry shared he decided to become a dentist because he was made fun of for his smile, as he wore braces for six years and had jaw surgery and did not want anyone else to feel the way he felt. While at SU he was involved in the Peruvian Student Association, the Pre-Dental Society, and campus Medlife. He also cited a mission trip to Peru as a key leadership experience in college.

Ignacio

Ignacio is a 19-year old junior double majoring in Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies. He identified Cuban American as his ethnicity or country of origin. His parents divorced when he was young, which though he considered the best decision for his mom, was difficult for him and his brother and resulted in him managing depression. He saw a counselor who helped him understand the divorce and what was going on, and he shared it made him feel like he was and still is part of the reason they fight, whether it is due to his dad not paying child support or something else with the family. At one point when he was young he threatened to kill himself and was Baker Acted (the Baker Act is a law in the State of Florida where an individual can be involuntarily taken and held for up to 72 hours at a medical facility after being deemed a threat to themselves or others due to their mental state). His father came to the medical facility and fought for Ignacio to be released early, despite his mom thinking he needed to be hospitalized for a longer time. Ignacio shared this was one of the only times his father did anything positive for him.

For most of his upbringing he and his mom lived in poverty. His middle school was predominantly composed of Hispanic and African American students, and it is there he learned and became fluent in Spanish through an international Spanish academy. This was significant for
him because he had felt out of touch with his culture by not knowing the language. He also shared that being light skinned, he was often considered White, not Hispanic.

In high school Ignacio shared his mom worked her way out of poverty, which led to him attending a better school. This school was predominantly made up of White individuals from Jewish, German, and Italian descents that considered him to be Hispanic. This surprised him because, in his mind, his whole life to that point he was White.

Ignacio has completed one to two semesters at SU. The organizations he listed as being involved or holding a leadership position in are his Hall Council, Peace Jam, Service Leadership Seminar, the Freshman Leadership Institute, the Bill Nelson Outreach Office, and the Global & Public Affairs Living-Learning Community. When he was a sophomore at high school he went to American University for the political sciences and public policy leadership program. Ignacio met Jay Johnston from Homeland Security, Congressman Don Young of Alaska, and the President of the National Organization of Women. This trip helped him realize politics was something into which he wanted to go.

**Ivan**

Ivan is a 19-year old senior double majoring in Management and Marketing. He identified his ethnicities or countries of origin as Peru and Chile; his mom is from Peru and his dad is from Chile. He was raised in south Florida and felt for the most part he had what would be considered a normal upbringing. Though he feels like his parents have very traditional views, he believes he has a more modern and contemporary perspective of the world, which includes LGBT rights, feminism, and equality for all.

Ivan went to both public and private elementary and middle schools for different portions of time, and in each school, he was a part of the gifted program. He attended a special college
academy school for high school, which allowed him to earn his Associate of Arts degree. He thoroughly enjoyed his experience and feels this prepared him for college.

Ivan is involved in the Hispanic/Latino Student Association and the Peruvian Student Association, having completed three to four semesters at SU. In high school, he was a member of the soccer team, and at one point became team captain and an assistant coach. He said he learned a lot about leadership from that experience.

**Julian**

Julian is a 22-year old senior double majoring in Psychology and Biology. Julian listed Hispanic and Cuban American as his ethnicities or countries of origin. He was born and raised in south Florida to parents of Cuban descent. His dad immigrated to the U.S. from Cuba when he was 22 years old, and his mom immigrated to the U.S. from Cuba when she was seven years old.

His parents got divorced when he was 15 years old, which had a profound impact on his life, as he felt he was put in the middle of their separation. During their divorce, which took his four years in a charter high school to finalize, he got more involved in school, attending from 6am to 6pm each day and participated in several extracurricular activities, including Student Government and the Chess Club. He said high school became a second home to him during this time.

Completing seven to eight semesters at SU, Julian is involved in the Medical Response Unit, the Oscar Arias Sanchez Hispanic Honor Society, the Student Activities Center, and is the Student Chair for the Edu K-8 Foundation. In the summer between high school and college, Julian got an executive internship with the company that does Information Technology for all charter schools in Monroe and Broward counties in Florida, the first of its kind. He did so well the CEO of the company decided to establish a regular summer internship program and asked
Julian to serve as a board member on the foundation in the interviews to select each summer’s intern, an experience he continues to this day.

Ken

Ken is a 19-year old sophomore Studio Art major who has completed three to four semesters at SU. He claims Puerto Rico as his ethnicity or country of origin. Ken was originally born in Puerto Rico before his family moved to central Florida. He indicated his family moved back and forth from Florida to Puerto Rico several times in his life, attending second, eighth, and tenth grades in Puerto Rico. He said the moving back and forth, his dark skin, speaking Spanish, and his identity as a gay man, made him feel like he was treated as an outcast, particularly while living and attending school in Puerto Rico.

Ken listed his involvement as the Puerto Rican Student Association, for which he served as the president. He also shared he was very involved in a Gay-Straight Alliance group in high school. Ken is also a member of SU’s Pride Student Union, where he participated in an amateur drag show on SU’s campus, which he said was a very positive experience.

Luis

Luis is an 18-year old junior Finance major with a Philosophy minor that has completed one to two semesters at SU. His listed his ethnicity or country of origin as Honduras. He said he considers himself Hispanic and Arabic, as his great grandparents are from Lebanon. He was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey to parents who were immigrants from the Honduras. At six months old, he and his mother moved to the Honduras, where they lived until he was seven years old. At seven, he and his mom rejoined his dad in south Florida, where he lived until attending SU.

Luis’s parents worked a lot, and he saw his mom more than his dad since his mom would get home around 7pm or 8pm while his dad would not return until 1am or 2am. He indicated his
parents’ relationship was rocky, with lots of fighting and screaming between the two. He said his dad would tell his mom and him that Luis was the reason for their fighting.

Luis listed his involvement as the Student Government Association and is a member of Phi Gamma Delta social fraternity. He was also a participant in the Center for Leadership and Social Change’s Service Leadership Seminar. In high school, he did an internship with a State of Florida Senator.

**Manuel**

Manuel is a 21-year old senior double majoring in Finance and Marketing with a minor in Hispanic Marketing Communications. He listed Colombian as his ethnicity or country of origin, and Colombia is where he lived for almost the first nine years of his life. While living in Colombia, he lived in a house with many of his extended family, including cousins, aunts, and his grandmother. Shortly before turning nine years old, he and his mom, dad, and brother moved to northeast Florida, joining an aunt already in the U.S. They lived with her for a short time before moving into an apartment of their own. He did not speak much English prior to moving to Florida, so he was enrolled in ESOL classes until he became proficient. He indicated growing up he had friends from numerous backgrounds, including Brazilian and Syrian. He and his brother were often on their own because of the long hours his parents would work, which he felt contributed greatly to his developing his own sense of independence.

Manuel has completed nine to ten semesters at SU. He was a Resident Assistant for University Housing and a member of the Catholic Student Union. He has been involved in different extracurricular activities throughout his schooling, having been involved in Safety Patrol in elementary school and Cross Country in high school.
Omar

Omar is a 20-year old sophomore double majoring in Political Science and Economics. Omar shared he considers his ethnicity or country of origin to be the United States and Dominican Republic. He was born to a military family (his dad served in the Army) in Fort Hood, Texas to Dominican parents. He indicated his family moved around a lot growing up, including living in South Korea for a year at three and six years old. His family lived in Kentucky for his first, second, and third grade years. During his time in third grade, his dad decided to retire from the Army after 21 years of service; his family then moved to the Dominican Republic. His dad took a job with the U.S. Embassy and State Department in the Dominican Republic, a job he has to this day.

Omar lived in the Dominican Republic from fourth grade through his high school graduation. Before moving to the Dominican Republic, his parents established residency in Florida and participated in the Florida prepaid college tuition program. He got an offer to attend a University in New York, but financially his family would still have needed to pay money for tuition, so he decided to research schools in Florida with good political science programs. This led him to enroll at SU, which he said was the best decision of his life.

Omar has completed three to four semesters at SU. He shared he is involved in the Student Government Association. He also listed involvement in the United Nations Association of SU, the SU Academic Honor Policy Committee, and is a member of Pi Kappa Alpha social fraternity.

Peter

Peter is a 23-year old senior majoring in Environmental Studies. He identified his ethnicity or country of origin as Hispanic/Cuban, as his family came to the U.S. from Cuba in the
1960s. His mom immigrated to the U.S. when she was two months old, so he feels she grew up very Americanized as compared to her Cuban heritage. Raised in south Florida, Spanish was the primary language spoken in his house growing up, which resulted in him starting to speak English in the second grade and being enrolled in ESOL classes.

He indicated he grew up in a single parent household, as his dad wasn’t around; it was him, his mom, and his grandparents. He saw his mom work really hard to make sure he had a fine upbringing, which he felt he had. He also felt he learned the value of a dollar, which in part influenced his decision to want to be a pharmacist. He feels by having a career in that field, he can earn enough money to support himself, a family, and his mom, if needed.

In high school Peter was involved with Student Government, National Honor Society, and completed over 300 hours of community service. “I did it all in high school.” He has completed nine to ten semesters at SU, and while enrolled he has been involved in Alpha Phi Omega national co-ed service fraternity (where he has held three different formal leadership positions), the Cuban American Student Association, the campus Autism Speaks U group, and Dance Marathon.

**Summary**

As demonstrated in this chapter, the participants in this research study represent a multitude of backgrounds, life experiences, and family structures. They include ten different ethnicities or countries of origin, a variety of birthplaces and primary languages, and are involved in a broad spectrum of involvement opportunities. A brief look at their demographic information is included in Appendix I. The diversity of their experiences provides a rich range of stories to explore the research questions under investigation. Using a LatCrit approach based on the information they shared, the next chapter details the findings from this research study.
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

The purpose of this research project was to utilize a case study to identify how race influences the leadership identity development of Latino men at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI). Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Orientations and Komives et al.’s (2005, 2006) Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model were used as the conceptual framework to understand this topic. Thirteen individuals, all of whom identified as Latino men involved in either formal or informal leadership positions at Southeastern University (SU), a PWI in the southeastern U.S., participated in this study. The research questions for this study are:

1. How does race influence the leadership identity development for Latino men at a Predominantly White Institution?
2. How do participants define leadership, based on their experiences and perspectives?
3. How does the LID model apply to Latino men? What elements emerge that contribute to Latino men’s leadership identity development?

This chapter details the findings from this research project using Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit) as an epistemological method for honoring the voices and experiences of the participants and using them as a source of credible information which provides a counter-narrative to dominant conceptions of college student leadership (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Gonzalez & Morrison, 2016). Findings are presented in order of relevance to the research questions, including: race, leadership identity development, and Latino men; perspectives on leaders and leadership; and the LID Model’s applicability to Latino men at SU.
Race, Leadership Identity Development, and Latino Men

To appropriately share how race influences the leadership identity development for Latino men at SU, it is first necessary to discuss how participants identify themselves racially and ethnically based on their own definitions of Latino and Hispanic, as well as categorize in which of Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Orientations participants are at currently; a table summary of the participants’ racial and ethnic identities, along with their Latino Orientation placement, can be found in Appendix J. From there, participants’ responses to the question of race or ethnicity mattering for leaders will be discussed. The participants’ racial and ethnic identity, which they refer to as their cultural heritages, along with whether or not they believe race or ethnicity matters for leaders, is crucial to understanding how they see the intersection of their identities as Latinos and leaders. The section continues with participants sharing how their cultural heritages influences how they see themselves as leaders and concludes with a discussion of what elements other than race participants felt shaped their leader identity.

Participants’ Racial/Ethnic Identity

Participants were asked to share how they identified racially and ethnically and why they chose to describe their heritages as they did. When asked, several participants were confused or struggled to differentiate racial identity from ethnic identity; some participants asked me to define race and ethnicity for them prior to answering. I decided not to do so and instead asked the participants to use their own definitions of race and ethnicity to answer. I wanted the participants to use their personal understanding of race and ethnicity as the basis for how they identified themselves and to get as unbiased a response as possible, which would also assist me in identifying Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Orientations. To further illuminate participants’
sense of self, how they identified racially and ethnically will be shared, with a discussion of which of Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Orientations participants had follows.

**How participants identify racially.** Five participants, Alfredo, Camilo, Henry, Luis, and Manuel, used their country of origin as the way they identified racially. Three of those five participants, Alfredo, Camilo, and Manuel, were either immigrants or the child of immigrants; this is worth noting because the dynamic of immigration status can play a major role in how immigrants form their identity, particularly in the U.S. (Kaplan & Chacko, 2015).

Four participants, Carlos, Ivan, Julian, and Ken, used Hispanic or Latino as their racial identifier, although at one point Julian also mentioned White as his racial identity. These participants also made a connection between their specific ethnic culture and the overall Latino population. Three participants, Alkaios, Peter, and Ignacio, identified themselves as Black, White, and White, respectively. Alkaios indicated he sees himself as Afro-Latino, sharing his racial identity is Black while his ethnic identity is more connected to his sense of feeling Latino as a Colombian and Puerto Rican. Peter saw race and ethnicity as two separate constructs and chose White for his race. Ignacio first indicated he considered himself Mestizo, however, he explained due to his skin tone he considered himself White.

Omar described his racial heritage more unconventionally, identifying as a mixture of European, Native, and African descents. He said he is often referred to as the “White boy” or “Blanquito” of the family due to his light skin tone. As these responses demonstrate, participants’ views on their racial identities are varied. They indicate participants are still learning what the concepts of race and ethnicity are, and are trying to distinguish what those terms mean to them. This negotiation of race and ethnicity continued when participants were asked to describe their ethnic heritage.
How participants identify ethnically. Eight participants, Alkaios, Camilo, Carlos, Henry, Ignacio, Ivan, Julian, and Peter, used their country of origin as their ethnic heritage description; Julian also defined his ethnic heritage as White. Three participants, Alfredo, Ken, and Luis, described their ethnic heritages as Hispanic or Latino, mostly due to uncertainty of the distinction between race and ethnicity.

For two participants, Manuel and Omar, they chose to describe their ethnic heritages outside of conventional constructions of race or ethnicity. Manuel described his ethnic heritage as of European descent, specifically Spanish and Italian. Omar chose to describe his ethnic heritage in the same way as his racial heritage. Similar to racial identity, participants’ views on their ethnic identities are wide-ranging.

For Latinos/as, their realities and perceptions of Latino/a identity are complex, varied, and multifaceted, making the reality of Latino/a identity complex in nature (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). The participants’ struggle to define race and distinguish it from ethnicity mirrors the literature detailing the ongoing conflict within the Latino/a population as to whether or not Latino/a is a race (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Lozano, 2015a; Hinojosa et al., 2016; Roth, 2012). Many participants were still defining how they identified racially and ethnically, and a few indicated they had never thought about how or why they would describe their racial and ethnic heritages as they did. It became clear conventional usage or conceptualizations of the words race and ethnicity were not how participants described themselves. Instead, most participants chose to describe their racial and ethnic identities using the word culture, which they expressed captured and embodied how they saw themselves, their upbringings, and their backgrounds.
Cultural heritage. Many reasons were given for how the participants chose to describe their cultural heritage as they did. The most common reason was their upbringing, as their families and home lives played a significant role in how they saw themselves culturally. Also of importance was where their family origin was from, as several participants connected their cultural heritage to their country or countries of origin. Other reasons given for descriptions of cultural heritage were having a light skin tone, having pride in their identity, and being told what their cultural identity was after immigrating to the U.S., with one participant, Luis, unsure of why he defined his heritage as he did.

There were also several participants who indicated they had an “Americanized” upbringing, where though they knew or had a connection to their cultural heritage, that connection was also affected by American norms as a result of growing up in the U.S. Other participants indicated they were raised in predominantly White neighborhoods; as such, they felt like their perspectives of their cultural heritage were shaped by White norms. Julian summed up some participants’ feelings about their cultural heritages and how they felt about it best:

I never really thought about this question but you could say because I'm Cuban American and mostly my race is Hispanic, but I was born in a pretty much prominent White society. Yeah. I still had Hispanic norms but I still also was experiencing white norms from the environment I was around.

Julian discussed how living in and being surrounded by a White society shaped how he thought about and described his cultural heritage. The home environment, along with other factors, played a significant role in how participants were able to define and articulate what their cultural heritage was and how it had been constructed. Many participants connected their cultural heritage and how they identified themselves with their country or countries of origin. As a result,
this made identifying which of Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Orientations the participants had easier.

**Latino identity development model.** Once participants shared how they identified racially and ethnically and described their cultural heritages, I identified which Latino Orientation (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001) in which each participant fell. I believed this would help me better understand how, if at all, their cultural heritage influenced their leader identities.

Based on their descriptions of their racial and ethnic heritages and how they see themselves, six of the participants, Alfredo, Camilo, Henry, Ivan, Luis, and Manuel had a Subgroup-Identified Orientation (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). This means they “think of themselves primarily in terms of their own ethnic or national-origin subgroup, which is the focus of their identification … subgroup identified Latinos do not have the broad pan-Latino perspective of Latino-identified or Latino integrated persons (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 52). These participants often talked about their own ethnicity or country of origin without much regard for the larger Hispanic/Latino group, nor did they discuss commonalities they had with other ethnicities or countries of origin. For example, Camilo said, “I was born in Colombia, and I’m Colombian . . . I still consider myself Colombian.” Like Camilo, these participants, when speaking about their cultural heritages, focused on their ethnicity or country of origin.

Four participants, Ignacio, Julian, Omar, and Peter, had an Undifferentiated/Denial Orientation, characterized by using “a lens that is relatively closed in comparison to other patterns. They prefer to identify themselves and others as ‘just people’ … they do not share the focus on racial categorization that many people have in the United States and they live their lives relatively oblivious to differences” (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 53). These participants referenced how race was not important in their lives and were influenced by White standards, yet
they also articulated some difference between their cultural norms and dominant White norms. A common feeling shared was how anybody who worked hard could achieve their goals regardless of racial or ethnic identities, and they felt individual behavior and choices were most important.

Three participants, Alkaios, Carlos, and Ken, held a Latino-Identified Orientation, meaning they “maintain a pan-Latino identity but in a relatively nonrigid fashion that places culture, history, and other ethnic markers in a relatively prominent place” (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 51). They discussed the Latino/a population in a broader, holistic way as opposed to rigidly along ethnic lines, however, they still also strongly identified with their specific ethnic culture. They also shared how important the overall Latino/a culture was important for them personally and its implications for their experience as students and leaders at SU.

As seen in how the participants identify and which Latino Orientation they fell (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001), how the participants conceptualized and defined their racial and ethnic identities are still being developed. This evolution is consistent with literature indicating racial identity construction continues during and after college (Evans et al., 2010; Torres, 2003, 2004; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004; Torres et al., 2009; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001). Their Latino Orientation and feelings about their culture has a direct connection on whether their understanding of race matters for leaders and how they feel their culture has influenced how they see themselves as leaders.

Race’s Importance for Leaders

Each of the participants were asked if they felt race or ethnicity mattered for leaders and if so, why, and if not, why not. This question was asked not only to reaffirm which Latino Orientation (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001) each participant fell, but also to discern if they felt
there was a connection between race and ethnicity and leadership. A breakdown of how and why participants felt about race and its importance for leaders follows.

**Race does not matter.** Most participants, nine total, said race does not matter for leaders. However, based on how the participants responded, six of these nine responded as they did because they were still struggling to define and articulate the concept of race and its meanings for them. This struggle for connecting the connotations and meaning associated with the term “race” has been affirmed in the literature (Roth, 2012) and is consistent with the Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) Orientation they held. Rather than use the word race, these participants, along with most of the four participants who said race did matter for leaders, used the term “cultural heritage” when describing the meaning and connotations traditionally connected to race.

Three participants felt the concept of race in all of the traditional meanings and associations of that term truly did not matter for leaders. This finding is not surprising, as these participants have the Undifferentiated/Denial Latino Orientation indicating race is not important to who they are and how they see themselves (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). Several reasons were given for why race does not matter for leaders. The most common reason given was because participants believed an individual’s personality, work ethic, and intellectual capabilities were more important for leaders. Julian elaborates on the perspective personality and work ethic matter more:

I don't think it matters . . . I think it’s just determined on your personality, on how determined you are. On how devoted you are to being a leader and how you want picture yourself to others as well . . . at the end of the day, it's about how passionate you are.

Peter shares a viewpoint similar to Julian in how an individual’s skills, intellect, and knowledge are more valuable than race:
I say no, it doesn’t matter for leaders . . . it’s about what you bring to the table knowledge and skill-wise, so for me, as long as you can take control of the project or you can complete it or you have the knowledge to do the project efficiently and successfully, I think that’s more important than your race or ethnicity.

As demonstrated by these perspectives, most participants said race was not important for leaders, which aligns with the Latino Orientations (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001) they currently have. However, many of the participants who said race did not matter for leaders indicated their cultural heritage mattered in how they saw themselves as leaders or why they chose to get involved on campus.

**Race does matter.** In contrast to the majority of participants, four said race mattered for leaders, although, as mentioned earlier, ten total participants indicated cultural heritage, which was the term they used rather than race to refer to racial identity, mattered for leaders. For the participants who said race mattered for leaders, they described the importance as connected to the idea of representation in some form; it was important to have leaders of various races, including Latino, represented in leadership positions because without diverse leaders of various backgrounds being represented, the dominant narrative of leaders being White men would get reinforced. Alkaios elaborates:

> When people think about leaders, the first thing that pops into their head is a White man, and so, it definitely matters for, to have way more multiracial leaders . . . representation matters and to be more focused on these Black leaders and your Spanish leaders and your Asian leaders, Latino leaders, there needs to be more of a focus on it because right now the only leaders that they’re showing people are your typical White American leaders.
These students shared how important having people of different racial identities in leadership roles helps represent voices and experiences that would otherwise be absent. Notably, these participants, like those who indicated race did not matter, more strongly identified with what they defined as their cultural heritage and articulated how it influenced their motivation to get involved and how they saw themselves as leaders.

Based on the total responses of the participants, the term “cultural heritage,” which has all of the connotations and meanings often associated with the word “race,” has an influence on their leadership identity.

**Cultural Heritage’s Influence on Participants’ Leadership Identity**

Participants were asked how they felt their racial or ethnic heritages influenced how they saw themselves as leaders. Ten participants’ responses indicated that initially their leadership identity and cultural heritage were separate, distinct identities. Their identities as leaders centered on positional leadership roles or titles, supporting or influencing others, and having or building self-confidence, while cultural heritage was described as including family, language, and specifics related to their country or countries of origin (food, music, art, celebrations). These two distinct identities began to converge through their involvement as a positional leader in a student organization on campus, and SU’s existence as a PWI contextually has important implications for how their leadership identity develops. Their new leader identity as a result of their involvement was clearly connected to their culture, which was characterized by holding a position or title, representing their cultural heritage, being a role model for people, connecting with others, pushing against stereotypes, and other personal influences.

For the participants in this study, their leader identity was never completely described as merged, as they did not embrace “Hispanic” or “Latino” as an identifier, however, they did
believe their cultural heritage was an important, inseparable part of who they were as a leader. This finding is similar to a study by Renn and Ozaki (2010) focusing on LGBT student leaders. In their study, which had a similar methodology, sample size, and institutional type, some of their students who had leadership in identity-based student groups merged their leadership identity and psychosocial identities to form a merged leadership/psychosocial identity. The ways participants in this study described their merged leadership identity included representing their cultural heritage, being a role model for people back home, allowing them to connect with others, including people from within their own ethnic group, and allowing them to push back against stereotypes. Descriptions for each of the parts of the merged leader identity follows.

**Representing cultural heritage.** Three participants indicated their cultural heritage influenced their leadership identity by seeing themselves as representing their respective cultural heritages in their on-campus involvements. Alfredo shared this idea within the context of his involvement as the Director of the Hispanic/Latino Student Union (HLSU):

I think it was very important for me to be close to my heritage, and be Mexican. It played a lot towards making sure that I understood a lot of the problems that were going on within HLSU at a larger level . . . my Mexican heritage really played a lot towards being able to learn and share those experiences.

Carlos extended what Alfredo said and talked about how being a leader who is Latino was important on the SU campus and provided him with an opportunity to represent Latinos/as to the SU Latino and overall SU communities:

The fact that I am Hispanic kind of makes my sense of leadership, in a way, more urgent for me, because we don’t have a lot of representation on campus, and so, since there isn’t
as much, I feel like somewhat of a higher responsibility to really exude that leadership and to be a good role model for people in my community, you know?

Alkaios talked about how the way Latinos are portrayed in the mainstream media is a motivator for him and then connected to a specific example of his involvement at SU.

Being Latino influences a lot of things that I do, just for the simple fact that representation of Latinos in the mainstream media is very low. I try to take on as many leadership opportunities as I can . . . being Latino pushes me more so that I can show that Latinos can do this and Latinos can do that just as well as anybody.

The participants, as these statements demonstrate, recognized the importance of having the Latino/a population represented at multiple levels. Whether in specific student organizations, to the SU community, or in the broader culture, participants felt representing their culture was critical to how they saw themselves as leaders.

**Role model.** A few participants indicated their culture influenced their leader identity in they felt like they were a role model, whether it was their home country, hometown, or both. For Omar, he felt like he had a responsibility to not be lazy after leaving the Dominican Republic:

I need to push forward, I shouldn’t be a slacker, like, there are enough of those back home . . . but if I get this opportunity not, not many people back home get, I should definitely make the most of it. So that drives me a lot, pushes me to go farther.

Like Omar, Alfredo sees his culture influence his identity as a leader not just because he is motivated to be a role model for his family in Mexico, but he also wants to be a role model for friends in his hometown:

I am very much proud of, I guess this legacy that I almost know that I will leave behind in Bradenton ... I wanted to go to college and be the example for people . . . it goes with
family, it goes with friends, family back in Mexico that see me doing things through like Facebook, and when I go see them in Mexico, although I don't know them like that, they're like “hey, I see that you're doing really good stuff at SU” . . . I want to create a better life for myself but also give that same representation to the people that I leave behind back home.

For participants, the desire to be a role model was important in their motivation to become positional leaders in student organizations at SU. The participants kept this notion of being a role model in mind as they did their work as a leader. As a result, being a role model was closely associated with how they saw themselves as leaders.

**Connecting with others.** Five participants indicated they saw their leadership opportunities and involvements as a way to connect with others, particularly people from their same cultural group, which in turn influenced how they saw themselves as leaders. Ignacio describes this feeling when meeting members of a Latino-based fraternity:

> When I got to Sigma Lambda Beta they were all about family, they were already like hugging me or like giving me high fives, and they were like, “Hey, do you want to go to this party, or do you want to come over for dinner, or do you want to like do this with them?” They felt like family, they felt like something that I felt like I hadn't had in a long time, because I just love being Hispanic and I love having that familiar feeling.

Alfredo also describes this connected feeling Ignacio talks about, as he experienced it within his involvement in HLSU:

> I just think my whole overall experience is a lot of students within HLSU are Mexican, and are Hispanic overall, and so I feel like we could share that common bond within each
other. Just because we knew the same things, there were a lot of students that followed almost the same traditions that my family has.

Both Ignacio and Alfredo describe this sense of social bonding within the context of specific student organizations. Ken expands the idea of connections with others in his leadership involvement to how he saw his cultural identity and his link to other Latinos:

So it’s definitely a strength in my identity as a Puerto Rican and then as a Latino because . . . being in a room full of people from other countries but still having this one thing that connects all of us has definitely strengthened my concept of who I am as a Latino . . . it’s definitely influenced me as I see myself as a leader, because I went so far as to start an organization based off of it.

As these quotes demonstrate, participants believed their culture influenced how they could connect with others, particularly within the Latino community on SU’s campus. It allowed them to find a sense of belonging and a home at SU. Being connected with others, particularly from their same cultural group, also motivated their involvement and enhanced how they saw themselves as leaders.

**Pushing against stereotypes.** Three participants said their involvement as a leader helped them feel like they could push back against stereotypes others have about Latinos, linking to their feeling of representing their cultural heritage. Alfredo alludes to the necessity of pushing back against stereotypes when he says, “Being that I am Mexican it makes me much more proud of it and where I come from just makes me just proud of what I represent and I'm proud to show others why we aren't the people that everyone thinks we are.” Luis expands on this statement and also identifies its connection to the dominant narrative of great leaders being White:
I feel like to a certain extent, it’s given me a lot of the prove-yourself attitude that I have, definitely just because I've regularly always just said, "Oh, I can be as good as him," or "I can be as good as this leader or that leader and the fact that I'm Hispanic doesn't change that" . . . no matter if I'm Hispanic, it doesn't matter that I'm not White.

Luis shares he actively pushes against the idea that for one to be considered a great leader one must be White. Carlos connects to what both Alfredo and Luis said by explaining why it is important to disrupt the stereotypes about Latinos and the dominant narrative constructed about leaders:

I feel like Hispanic and Latino men have certain stereotypes and reputations within our community that aren’t healthy and that I believe should be combatted . . . in the outer community, people don’t know us, and there’s probably certain prejudices or judgments that they have, and so to me, it’s just important that by, like, by living our principles, we dispel those stereotypes.

The participants showed how their culture has influenced how they feel a responsibility to push back against stereotypes about Latinos. Pushing back against stereotypes was important because of how they are viewed by others in the community, particularly in comparison to the idea of the dominant narrative of great leaders being White. This feeling served as a motivator for their own leadership involvement and highlighted the responsibility they felt in being leaders who educate others on how Latino men really behave.

Other personal influences. Participants indicated other personal influences beyond race, ethnicity, or culture had a role in how they saw themselves as leaders. These influences included social identities beyond race such as sexual orientation, leadership education programs, leadership positions, and formative experiences. Participants also discussed how personal
attributes and characteristics had a role in shaping their leadership development. These responses affirm other leadership literature indicating a variety of factors influence how college students see themselves as leaders (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Komives et al., 2009; Renn, 2007, Renn & Ozaki, 2010).

It is worth mentioning three participants shared they felt their culture had no influence in how they saw themselves as a leader. Peter said, “my ethnicity or background hasn’t really affected my leadership.” For some participants, their culture was not a factor at all in how they saw themselves as leaders, reinforcing what Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) shared about individuals who do not see race as important to their sense of self.

Participants’ cultural identities, along with their definitions of race and ethnicity, were still evolving and growing. Their identities as leaders are shaped by their involvement as positional leaders in student organizations on campus, with their cultural heritage having a big influence in how they see themselves as leaders. Leadership identity development for the participants involves representing their cultural heritage, being a role model for people, connecting with others, pushing against stereotypes, and other personal influences. The next section further illuminates participants’ leadership identity development by discussing their perspectives on leaders and leadership.

**Perspectives on Leaders and Leadership**

I attempted to capture a holistic view of the participants’ perspectives on leaders and leadership by asking during both interviews for their definitions of a leader and leadership. I also asked for their reactions when they are called leaders, as I felt their answers were helpful in providing more information in how they felt about themselves as leaders. Similarities and differences in their responses are detailed.
Definition of a Leader

Participants were asked for their definition of a leader in both interviews to see what, if any, changes would occur. Overwhelmingly, participants’ definition of a leader did not change. The themes emerging from participants’ definition of a leader included creating and supporting the work of a group towards a vision or goal, having an influence between leaders and followers, and having self-confidence.

Creating or supporting a vision or goal. The most common theme in the participants’ definition of a leader was a leader created or supported the work of a team toward a vision or a goal. As Ivan shared, “I feel like being a leader is being confident in a goal or a vision, enough that you can run it yourself.” Carlos sums up this big picture definition of how a leader supports a vision:

So a leader is someone who takes initiative, has a vision, and understands how to enroll others in that vision and who can connect with people on a genuine level in a way that would have them want to be a part of his vision, or her vision.

Three participants linked the definition of a leader who supports a group’s work toward a goal with another important characteristic of a leader. Alfredo connects to and expands on Carlos’s broad definition of a leader to include how a leader individually grows and then works with others to accomplish the vision or goal:

I think it should be an individual that first understands what they are doing, they understand the bigger picture of whatever goal they're envisioning, or whatever task they're going after, and making sure that they can lead by example . . . it's more about making sure that you can encourage, and help people reach their goal at a personal and at an overall, at a larger scale.
Though there are subtle differences between them, participants’ definitions have similar expressions of the importance of a leader to help create and support the work of a group towards a vision or a goal. This demonstrates how they think of leaders as people working collectively rather than singularly. This definition of a leader working with a group both aligns with how participants see themselves as leaders and with literature about how Latino/a leaders work (Bordas, 2012, 2013; Lozano, 2015a).

**Influence between leaders and followers.** Another commonality in participants’ definition of a leader was a leader and followers have some level of influence over each other. Ignacio shares:

> A leader is someone who in a historical sense has influence over people, but a leader can be a follower, because a leader needs to know when he or she must be present in the group in order to help that group achieve a common goal.

Ignacio’s response illustrates leaders’ influence over others without necessarily being a follower. Alkaios’s definition of a leader explains the way a leader can be both a leader and a follower:

> My definition of a leader is somebody that has influence, can maintain influence over, of other people, but at the same time is willing to follow and, and be led to do something. They’re able to take both parts of being a follower and a leader.

Both Ignacio and Alkaios realized how important influence is to the work and definition of a leader. They recognized, as Rost (1993) outlined in his definition of leadership, without having followers to influence, one cannot be a leader. As a result, influencing others was identified as an important part of the definition of a leader.

**Self-confidence.** Another perceptible theme in participants’ definition of a leader was being self-confident. Alkaios shares, “a leader is someone that’s confident in themselves and
knows how to carry themselves.” Ivan expands on the theme of self-confidence Alkaios touches on in his definition of a leader:

   For me, it means knowing enough about yourself that you can start guiding others with confidence . . . to me a leader is someone who knows themselves enough . . . and can clearly define themselves well enough that they can start to delegate and lead others with confidence.

   For Alkaios, Ivan, and a few other participants, having self-confidence as a leader allows that person to display strong leadership abilities and achieve results. They can use that self-confidence in the work they do and their interactions with others. Self-confidence helps build a person’s sense of self and identity as a leader.

   Participants’ definition of a leader created several themes, including supporting work towards a vision or goal, influence between leaders and followers, and having self-confidence. In coupling these themes together, the participants’ overall definition of a leader is someone who self-confidently influences and follows others to create or support the work of a group toward a vision or goal. This new definition of a leader best exemplifies participants’ views of themselves as leaders and of leaders in general.

**Definition of Leadership**

   Like the definition of a leader, participants were asked in both their first and second interviews for their definition of leadership to determine if there was any change. As with the definition of a leader, for the most part, participants’ definition of leadership did not change from the first interview to the second. Participants’ definition of leadership related to three themes: a connection with people or influence over people or a group; personal qualities or characteristics; and the role or title of a leader.
A connection with or influence over people or a group. Eight participants defined leadership in a way best described as a connection with or influence over people or a group. Alkaios defines it as “when you have the ability to show others how to do something, or show others a path and have others follow you, having other people follow you.” Alfredo expands on this idea by talking about the influence a leader can have: “What I would think is that leadership is kind of just the overall sense of taking, not taking order, but having almost like the power at something to where you can influence others.”

Similar to Alfredo, Ignacio discusses how leadership is interconnected with influencing people to a goal:

Leadership is just doing what it is you need to do for achieving that common goal.
Leadership can be influencing people to help you with that goal or leadership can also be stepping back because you realize that you're not suited in this group, or in this situation to continue on in achieving that goal.

Ivan builds off of Ignacio’s response and describes leadership as getting people to come together and utilizing their strengths to get things done:

Leadership to me, would probably be being able to guide others with the proper intelligence . . . being able to know when to give them a push in the right way, or when to let them go another way . . . it's learning everyone's personal strengths and weaknesses and letting them go in their own direction at certain times, to benefit from what they're good at.

These varied statements indicate several participants’ definition of leadership are similar to Rost’s definition of leadership (1993). Participants define leadership within a social context, with the focus on connecting with or having influence over people, particularly in a team or
This makes leadership a more relational process for them, which affirms previous research on college student leadership, particularly as connected to race (Bordas, 2012, 2013; Dugan & Komives, 2007; Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2013; Lozano, 2015a).

**Personal qualities or characteristics.** Six participants’ definition of leadership included having to do with personal qualities or characteristics. Henry gives a description of leadership qualities in broad terms, saying “leadership almost seems like a characteristic to me. What kind of leadership qualities does this person have?” Ignacio goes a little further and starts describing leadership with a few examples:

Leadership is the ability to observe and understand a situation where you feel your abilities, your expertise, and so everything that you bring to the table could help achieve a common goal within the group, whether it be politically, in a band, or in university housing, etc.

Camilo extends Henry and Ignacio’s definitions by identifying some of the necessary characteristics of demonstrating one’s leadership abilities:

Being strong, but being able to take charge, but also help others. Just having the ability to learn quickly from whatever situation they’re put in . . . following through, responsibility, accountability, but also, being able to interact with people in a way that they understand what you're saying but don't resent you for it or they're willing to learn and be active in their actions towards the goal.

As seen in these comments, some participants felt leadership is something one does, and as a result, they are skills or attributes people have. These definitions continue to show leadership as a relational process, however, in these definitions, leadership comes from within the individual rather than as a connection or influence outward with others.
**Positional leader.** Three participants tied their definition of leadership to a positional leader. Ken stated, “Leadership is just the act or process of being a leader.” Alkaios shared a similar sentiment, saying, “I guess leadership would just be being a leader. Being a leader you display leadership.” Peter echoed Ken and Alkaios, sharing, “Goes back to being a leader, but leadership is being in the actual role itself. Having the role of the leader, I guess the title, would be the leadership.” This pattern affirms how participants think of themselves, as well leaders and leadership generally, as interconnected with a position or title. For them, one cannot engage in the process of leadership without having a formal role, title, or position.

Based on the themes of the definitions given by the participants, a broad definition of leadership is a relational process by a formal or positional leader using their skills or attributes to connect with or exert influence over others. With the participants’ definition of leadership more developed, it is helpful to understand how participants reacted to being called a leader to give a richer picture of their perspectives on leadership.

**Reactions to Being Called a Leader**

I asked participants to share their reactions to being called a leader. Their responses were connected to feeling a sense of responsibility or being humbled, in some way feeling uncomfortable or not liking it, or not having any reaction at all.

**Feeling a sense of responsibility or being humbled.** The most common reaction to being called a leader was feeling some sense of responsibility or being humbled by the designation. Omar said his feelings about being a leader were of humility and its responsibility:

I think humility is a good way of putting it. I think that’s very important, for people to stay humble. But when I’m called a leader, I tend to embrace it. . . not take leadership as an honor but a responsibility.
Similar to Omar, Carlos discusses how the mixture of humility and responsibility generate his reaction to being called a leader:

If people designate me as a leader, I feel a responsibility to make whatever we’re working towards happen. And then if people were to tell me in conversation that they feel that I’m a leader, I just find it to be very humbling. . . I think being a leader is a very, very positive thing to be, because you can lead people and still not be a leader. . . you can lead others without being a leader.

Seven participants reacted to being called a leader with some sense of responsibility and humility. These reactions reflected some of the feelings talked about when discussing how their culture influenced their leader identity. Participants shared their desire to be a role model, to connect with others, or to take pride in representing their culture, all of which are done from a place of humility and a sense of responsibility (Bordas, 2012, 2013). Thus, it is not surprising then many of those participants expressed similar feelings when being called a leader.

**Uncomfortable with leader designation.** Four participants shared their reaction to being referenced as a leader as being uncomfortable or not liking the reference at all. Julian shared why he did not like being called a leader:

I actually don't like it when people call me a leader. . . when it comes time for people to call me a leader, I don't want them to see me like that. I want them to see me as like, I'm your friend. I'm not here to rule over your life. I'm just a person in charge of something.

Much like what Julian shared, Ken also indicated he did not necessarily see himself fitting into the idea he had of a leader as someone with a position in charge of others:

At first it was really strange because, I mean, I’ve been a leader and I can call myself a leader, but to be sort of acknowledged and considered a leader, at first is very much, it’s a
strange feeling . . . I guess like a confirmation that you actually are a leader to enough of a degree that people consider you one.

Unlike Julian and Ken, who expressed not being comfortable with being called a leader due to awkwardness in how that label made them see themselves, Alfredo attributed his discomfort with being called a leader to his personality and the way he grew up:

I've had a problem with it just because it's something that I was really never used to and I would consider myself a very humble person in terms of I don't really like attention like that . . . I was grown up to be more respectful . . . growing up with that mentality I just always grew up to be humble and be respectful, and really earn the things that you wanted to. So being called a leader is something that although I respect it sometimes I don't really know how to take it.

These sentiments are not surprising. As discussed earlier, the participants view leadership as connected to a position. As a result, some participants, such as Julian, Ken, and Alfredo, are not comfortable with that view of themselves. In line with how Bordas (2012, 2013) describes Latinos/as as a collective, “we” culture, the participants see themselves as leaders in a more collaborative and connected way, not as authoritarian or hierarchical.

No reaction at all. A few participants shared they did not have a reaction when called a leader. Peter shared, “I guess I don’t really react that much to it.” Similarly, Luis said, “generally, I just kind of laugh, and say thank you and leave it at that. And then I usually try to compliment them in return.” Henry also communicated his feelings: “I mean, I don’t have, like, any initial reaction . . . to me, like, being a leader doesn’t mean I know everything, you know?” Alkaios sums up why he does not have any real reaction to being called a leader:
If somebody is calling you a leader you obviously did something to prove that you are a leader, and so, you should, like, there’s no reason to react in any kind of way, you just kind of, appreciate it . . . if they say it in a way that you can thank them, then you thank them.

As these responses show, some individuals had no reaction to being called a leader, in contrast to the majority of participants who were humbled or uncomfortable. There was not much information given by the participants to provide more context as to why they did not have a reaction to being a leader. My assumption based on my conversations with them are that this reaction fit with their particular personalities.

The definitions the participants gave for a leader and leadership, along with their reactions to being called a leader, collectively give a glimpse into the perspectives they have about themselves as leaders and the outlooks they have about leadership. They see themselves as individuals with personal attributes who in their formal leadership roles work with or influence followers to accomplish a goal or vision. They have a great sense of humility and responsibility in being leaders, with some not being comfortable or liking the designation of being a leader. These perspectives will be helpful in moving forward when considering how the LID Model is applicable to them.

**The LID Model’s Applicability to Latino Men at SU**

The findings from this research study indicated the LID Model can be applicable to the Latino men at the PWI in this case study, however, there are two significant components missing. This section will detail the placement of the Latino men in this study in the Leader Identity part of the LID Model, how the LID Model is applicable to the Latino men, and the elements missing.
**Placement of Participants in the LID Model**

The participants in this study were all in the Leader Identified stage of the LID Model. This is similar to Renn and Ozaki’s (2010) findings in their study for students in their merged path to leadership in identity-based groups, as all of their participants were in the first three stages of the LID Model. When describing the Leader Identified stage of a Leader Identity, Komives et al. (2005) wrote, “participants perceived that groups were comprised of leaders and followers and believed the leaders did leadership – that leaders were responsible for group outcomes. In this leader-centric stage, one was a leader only if one held a leadership position; indeed, one was the leader” (p. 606)

All of the participants associated their definitions of a leader and leadership or their view of themselves or others as a leader to something done by a person with a position title who also has followers. For example, it was not until Ivan became Co-President of the Peruvian Student Association that he started realizing leadership was “something I can do, something I think I'm good at, I'm comfortable doing.” Peter shared the organization he felt most pride in and learned the most was “Alpha Phi Omega . . . it's also the one where I've had the most leadership experience. I've held three different titles on their executive board.” Omar shared in high school and in college, once he started attaining elected leadership positions in the organizations he was involved in, it changed how he saw himself as a leader:

People would always tell me that I was a leader, but I started feeling it more. I guess I was like, "Well, I guess I have the charisma. I guess I have the qualities my classmates or others are looking for in someone to look up to and give the responsibility of leading them too."
An overwhelming number of the participants’ responses about their view of themselves as a leader and their involvement in leadership positions mirrored Ivan, Peter, and Omar’s feelings. Their leader identity was in part constructed by the positions they held and how they worked with or managed other people in those organizations via that role. While many participants spoke abstractly during their definitions of a leader or leadership about influence or how a leader can also be a follower, when they described their own identity as a leader, it was always within the construct of a title or position in authority over others. This could be due to the fact many participants indicated on their demographic sheet they had no more than four semesters of enrollment at SU, resulting in not having had a lot of time or experience to grow their identities as leaders.

**How the LID Model is Applicable to Participants**

As seen in Figure 2.1, the LID Model has numerous categories which contribute to which stage in the Leadership Identity category of the LID Model college students are in: Developmental Influences, Developing Self, Group Influences, Changing View of Self with Others, and Broadening View of Leadership. The responses of the participants in this study indicated there are many components of the LID Model applicable to their experiences and identities as leaders. The next section discusses the ways each category in the LID Model is applicable to participants.

**Developmental influences.** In this category, the role of adults, specifically mentors, to the development of the participants’ identities as leaders is applicable. A couple of participants, Luis and Henry, listed figures often considered as historically great leaders as role models. Luis describes what he means:
For me, at least, people I consider leaders are people who I ... who are kind of out of this world . . . John F. Kennedy, Barack Obama, Napoleon Bonaparte. People that kind of are bigger than life itself . . . I feel like that's what a leader is. A leader is someone who inspires and ... makes himself great.

Some participants also shared how their experiences on campus were profound involvements for them. Peter demonstrates this dynamic when describing his involvement in the campus Autism Speaks U group:

I got involved in Autism Speaks U cause autism is something very close to me. I have two cousins who are autistic. I have like a puzzle piece tattoo. I, like, used to do the walks all the time in Miami. It’s just something, like, an organization, a charity, that, like, hits close to home, so it’s just something I’m very passionate about.

As these quotes demonstrate, participants had mentors and causes of significant meaning to them. Both of these dynamics were an important part of these participants lives, helping shape who they are and influencing the organizations in which they took leadership roles. These themes mirror the findings of the Developmental Influences category of the LID Model (Komives et al., 2005).

**Developing self.** Four participants talked about how part of being a leader has helped them with building self-confidence, one of the components of the Developing Self category of the LID Model. For Carlos, his confidence in himself and as a leader began in high school when he participated in leadership development workshops:

I find that those courses gave me a much stronger sense of confidence than I had at any time in my life previous. I’ve always been a pretty confident kid for the most part, and everyone has their insecurities growing up, but I was always very pretty confident in my
ability to succeed in life and what I can do, but those courses enhanced that and solidified that . . . I saw that my personal potential and ability went far beyond what I originally or initially thought of them and I had no idea I could be that much of a leader.

Similar to Carlos’s leadership development workshops, Ivan discussed how his involvement in the Peruvian Student Association at SU helped him build self-confidence:

> I think it got to the point . . . when I became the co-president of the Peruvian Student Association, when I had to start leading the people under me. . . at that point, I was like, okay, I'm good at communicating with people. I'm good at, you know, showing other people who I am, you know, just giving feedback, giving instructions, and just ultimately expressing myself more confidently than I would have the year prior when I wasn't the president and stuff like that, so it gave me more of a confidence boost.

Camilo echoes what Ivan shares about how his involvement helped build his self-confidence both personally and in his group:

> I started doing things that I normally wouldn't have. I joined this thing called hall council. And then I did that, which is literally my first time being in charge of something, or having my voice be significantly heard in planning something . . . it made me be a more outgoing person. It made me talk to other people . . . I've become better at working as a part of a team. I learned a lot of valuable skills that I would go to use in other leadership positions here on campus.

Whether learning through leadership education and development programs or through their own experiences as leaders in student organizations at SU, participants were able to build their self-confidence. As Komives et al. (2005) found, this dissertation project’s participants’
involvement made them feel better about their leadership skills and how they saw themselves as leaders.

Another aspect of the Developing Self category worth noting is how masculinity shaped the participants. Komives et al. (2005) included social identities such as gender as influential in this category in their study. In this research project, masculinity and its influence on the participants was demonstrated in several ways. First, at least three participants, Alkaios, Carlos, and Julian, mentioned the concept of machismo or machista being a message about masculinity they had received growing up. As noted in other literature (Liang et al., 2010; Peña-Talamantes, 2013), the concept of machismo to these participants only had negative connotations, particularly in regards to how women are treated. Each participant strongly rejected the feelings and connotations associated with machismo. As Julian said,

That term relates to how males are supposed to be controlling . . . You're supposed to not let women be their own selves . . . I know in Hispanic culture that's one of the things that always comes up for males and I never fell into that trap. I always told myself that if the day that if I get a girlfriend or I get married or whatever such thing, I will never treat a woman like that. I'll always treat a woman with dignity. It's more about being equal than being higher than her. It's about being the same level.

Another way participants described how messages about masculinity affected them was in closing them off emotionally and inhibiting their ability to be vulnerable. Three participants, Alfredo, Henry, and Luis indicated they do not fully express their emotions based on how they were taught about masculinity. Henry shared, “I definitely hide my emotions a lot, no crying, got to be tough.” Luis stated, “I find it very hard to open up emotionally to people. I don't like talking about my feelings.” How individuals engage in relationships is a critical element in the
process of being a leader (Komives et al., 2013; Wheatley, 1992), and several participants recognized themselves as being closed off emotionally in their relationships with others. Though most the participants did not refer to their masculinity or gender identity when discussing what influenced how they saw themselves as leaders, Carlos connected the messages he received about masculinity to how he engages with others in leadership experiences:

And so one of main changes that happened is that I’ve understood that it was okay to express emotion as a man and to be vulnerable. Actually, to take it a step further, I actually learned that expressing emotion and being vulnerable is the key to having successful relationships in life. Authenticity is the, probably single most important thing that we can have in our experiences as humans because that is what gets us to connect with other people.

Though not connected by most participants as influential to how they saw themselves as leaders, several participants clearly articulated ways their masculinity influenced how they interacted with and engaged with others.

**Group influences.** Most participants expressed how important Group Influences were to their involvement and leadership development, particularly in how they were participating in groups. In describing the importance of engaging in groups as a contributor to an individual’s identity as a leader, Komives et al. (2005) state, “Students sought a sense of belonging in groups . . . these core groups included identity-based groups such as LGBT organizations or the Black Student Union” (p. 602). Identity-based groups being sought as a sense of belonging was also true for these participants. Some were looking for connection within their specific cultural group, as Camilo explains:
With the Colombian Student Association one, yeah. Obviously, I joined it because I was Colombian, and because I really wanted to do something to make Colombians look good. I wanted to make the organization better, and have events that they could see us, we could all be proud of and happy with.

Henry, much like Camilo, was interested in connecting with other individuals from his own Peruvian background:

Tallahassee, well, SU campus, primarily, is a mainly White community and being from south Florida, I’m surrounded by diversity, surrounded by different cultures, and I just wanted to be around more Peruvians and just relate with someone more about home or the food or it could be anything really. . . I just want to form new friendships.

Alfredo wanted to interact with the overall Latino community, saying, “I really wanted to gain a further understanding of what it meant to be an influence within the Hispanic Latino community.” Similar to Alfredo’s feelings, Alkaios shares the reason he chose his fraternity was not just its connection to the Latino community, but to students of color more broadly, which reflected his multidimensional identity as an Afro-Latino:

I was exposed to another council, the Multicultural Greek Council, and that’s where I saw these Latin frats, and I was like, “Wow, that’s something I can really identify to” . . . it wasn’t just Spanish people, there was Spanish people, there was Black people, there was Asians, and so that was something I was more comfortable in, because it was still minorities, it was still all of us together.

One of the primary reasons the participants in this study got involved and wanted to be leaders was to connect with others and belong to a group. As Komives et al. (2005) found, in this study participants wanted to connect with individuals who shared their cultural background.
Involvement and holding formal leadership positions with student organizations affiliated with their cultural group was a primary form of involvement for many participants.

**Changing view of self with others.** In this category, Komives et al. (2005) indicated the Developing Self intermingled with Group Influences to impact how participants changed their view of themselves as it relates to others. As a result, students could engage in groups in one of two ways: independent, where they “aspired to be the positional leader or had a strong motivation to change something in a group or organization of which they were a part” (Komives et al., 2005, pp. 604-605); or dependent, preferring to be members or followers in their groups. Overwhelmingly, the students in this study often chose the independent path. For participants, they aspired to positional leadership positions or took pride in the positional leadership position they currently held, which had a big influence in how they saw themselves as leaders. An example the independent pathway was aspirational in nature, Luis shared why he wanted to be involved as a positional leader in the Student Government Association:

SGA just puts me in positions where I have the resources and the know-how, and I know the right people for me to be an effective leader . . . if you're involved in SGA and the people that are also involved in SGA know that you're involved in SGA, that's just more power to you. That just increases your power as a leader.

Ignacio described the great pride he has with his positional leadership involvement and how, in his opinion, this role afforded him the ability to make significant changes in the residence halls:

I got involved with Hall Council because I just felt like there was some changes to my hall which I've made currently and still working on. Felt like there were changes that I
could make as long as I was in a Hall Council and willing to advocate for the residents that are paying top dollar to live there as well.

In this case study, participants such as Luis and Ignacio consistently discussed how they wanted to be a positional leader and how they planned to change things in their organization of choice once they achieved a formal leadership position. They clearly indicated the independent pathway was often how they engaged in groups and the appropriateness of this part of the LID Model to this study’s participants.

**Broadening view of leadership.** Komives et al. (2005) explain, “In the early stages of leadership identity, the construction of leadership was not yet a personal identity. The initial view of leader was an external adult and it broadened to include an older peer” (p. 605). The participants in this study overwhelming were still in the early stages of leadership identity and described leadership as something external to them which could include an older peer. Ignacio mentioned working with the SU student body president on choosing SU’s new campus food service vendor as an important leadership experience. Other participants mentioned the names of previous and current student body presidents as leaders they aspired to be. Alfredo describes how his leader identity is greatly influenced by his friend and older peer Jorge:

> I first got involved when I met a man by the name of Jorge . . . and he talked to me about basically this fraternity that he was a part of. So, based off of that, I really didn't look more into the fraternity I looked more into Jorge being that he was very involved . . . through his guidance he basically gave me the resources and the direction to move forward and look at the things that I was looking to be involved in.

These responses clearly indicate participants’ view of leadership was influenced by an older peer. With all of the participants in the early stages of the Leader Identity part of the LID
Model, it is not surprising an older peer played a role in how they view leadership. It is likely as participants continue their involvement and grow their identities as leaders, their view of leadership will continue to broaden.

Components Missing from the LID Model

While most of the LID Model is applicable to participants, there are critical elements missing from the Developmental Influences and Developing Self categories. These missing elements include cultural wealth and cultural heritage. A discussion of these concepts and why they must be incorporated into the LID Model follows.

Cultural wealth. For the Developmental Influences category, the missing component is best described by Yosso (2005) as cultural wealth. Yosso (2005) defines cultural wealth as “an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression” (p. 77). Yosso (2005) expounds on this definition to share cultural wealth is best exemplified by six different forms of capital, including aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant. All of the participants alluded to or described one of the forms of capital as a developmental influence of their life experience prior to beginning at SU.

The most common form of cultural capital referenced by the participants was familial capital, which is described as “cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition” (Yosso, 2005, p. 79). Almost all of the participants discussed the importance of their families and the role their families played in how they learned about and cultivated their sense of self and culture. They then often connected the cultural heritage their families taught them as an important influence in how they saw themselves as leaders and how they sought out leadership opportunities. For example, Camilo
shared “My mom's always shown the importance of hard work and sticking with something,”
which he shared was important for how he saw himself as a leader. Ivan said, “I can look back
into my family to see what's important and what I can bring from them to this group on campus
who are trying to educate those who either are Hispanic or not even Hispanic at all,”
demonstrating how his family’s values and lessons are incorporated into his work with his
student organization. Alfredo connects all the elements of familial capital Yosso (2005)
describes when discussing how his family has and continues to shape his approach to being
involved and his leadership experiences to this day:

   It primarily has to do with my family background. Although I carry myself with pride
with my race and my ethnicity specifically, I think it's more the family aspects within that
Mexican culture that really influences me to move forward and do things that I do . . . I
call my parents often, and I always tell them about my experiences, and I always ask
them for guidance. Although they didn't go through the same experiences that I am, or
like they never been to college, they always had a lot of valuable things to say that really
add a lot of influence to my decisions.

The participants consistently discussed the strong influence of family on how their understanding
of their cultural heritage was formed and how cultural heritage is a huge part of how they see
themselves as leaders. The consistent references to familial capital, along with the importance of
family on how they view themselves and connect that view to personal leader identity expressed
by the participants and highlighted by Alfredo, is consistent with literature emphasizing the
importance of family on Latino/a students’ higher education aspirations and experiences (Torres,
The other form of cultural wealth participants most often discussed as important was linguistic capital. Yosso (2005) defines linguistic capital as “the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style” (p.78). Numerous participants discussed how the Spanish language influenced their experience, whether it was because Spanish was the primary language spoken when growing up (Carlos, Peter, Omar), they had to be in English as a Second Language classes during their K-12 schooling (Camilo, Manuel, Peter) or because they felt like learning Spanish helped them connect to their culture (Ignacio). Most of the participants shared how the linguistic capital helped shape who they are and their understanding of their culture, and Peter also described how important it is in achieving his current goals in higher education:

For me, Spanish is something to be proud of. It's something that helps me get to my final goal, which is a good career . . . I heard that from different professors here, teachers in high school, even people in job shadows that I've gone to. They're like, "Knowing more than one language is something that most employers look for" . . . it just reassured me that even though I come from a Spanish background . . . it's not something to be ashamed of, it's something to be proud of.

Much like familial capital, this finding of the importance of Spanish in shaping the experience of the participants in who they are and how they view their higher education experience is widely supported in the literature on Latino/a students (Ortiz, 2004; Torres, 2003; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004).

The four other forms of capital Yosso (2005) details when describing cultural wealth, aspirational, navigational, social, and resistant, are mentioned in some way by participants. Several described seeing college as something they aspired to via inspiration from family,
friends, or loved ones. A couple participants indicated they were a little unsure what the process was for going to college or how logistically they would afford college, but by relying on mentors or friends were given the needed encouragement or information to do so. Several participants indicated part of their motivation to get involved and be leaders was to find and create networks of friends in order to build their social capital. While many of these references to these other forms of capital are in passing or surface-level, the acknowledgement by the participants of their existence indicates these forms of capital are likely still being developed during participants’ experiences at SU and still make them a valuable component of their Developmental Influences.

The participants’ responses clearly indicate these various forms of capital are critically important to how they see themselves as leaders. It is appropriate to add cultural wealth to the Developmental Influences category, as these forms of capital were developed throughout the participants’ lives, not just during their time in college or as a result of their experiences as leaders. Adding cultural wealth to this category also ensures the participants’ knowledge, skills, approaches to leadership, and motivations for being involved are appropriately incorporated into the LID Model.

**Cultural heritage as part of the LID Model.** “The understanding of racial identity development is constantly evolving in response to changing social dynamics, ongoing research, and the fluidity of our understanding of both race and the experience of racial groups in the United States” (Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001, p. 2). In Komives et al.’s (2005) original description of the LID Model, they mention students of color identified race as a critical factor of Deepening Self-Awareness within the Developing Self category, with most White students not acknowledging race until asked. This description of racial identity’s importance for students of color is brief and lumped together with other social identities such as sexual orientation and
gender. Presented in this way, the LID Model unintentionally situates race as a superficial dynamic. It also understates the importance of cultural heritage in how the students in this study’s leadership identity develops. This makes the Developing Self category incomplete.

In their Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity, Jones and Abes (2013) position race and culture near the core of the individual, which includes personal attributes, personal characteristics, and personal identity. This model shows race and culture are central to who people are and how their multiple identities are developed and expressed, which was also true in this dissertation study. Participants talked about how their race, which they expressed as cultural heritage, was an important part of who they were, how they saw themselves, why they got involved in student organizations at SU, and their identities as leaders. Several also mentioned heightened awareness of themselves as racialized beings given the perceived racial divisions in the U.S. following the 2016 Presidential election.

Because of the importance of cultural heritage in how participants saw their identities as individuals and leaders, cultural heritage must be a separate bullet in the Developing Self category. Though most of the participants are in the Subgroup-Identified and Undifferentiated/Denial Orientations of Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) theory and the Leader Identified stage of the Leadership Identity category of the LID Model (Komives et al., 2005), there is information to suggest continued racial identity development will lead to a change in how the participants see themselves as leaders. Several participants mentioned the importance of culture to their sense of who they are. Many expressed wanting to learn more about their culture, expand and explore their definition of race and ethnicity, and connect further with their culture. One individual, Ken, said “I made my race my leadership.” These sentiments clearly demonstrate the importance of cultural heritage to the participants.
Adding cultural heritage to the Developing Self category is essential. It aligns with CRT’s goal of recognizing race’s centrality to society broadly and in college specifically to disrupt dominant narratives reinforcing whiteness. It also uplifts and honors the oppressed voices of communities of color (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Dixson & Rousseau, 2006) when discussing leadership identity development. It ensures the importance of cultural heritage as an indispensable college experience and encapsulates its potential relevance to the LID Model.

Summary

In this chapter, the findings from this research study on how race influenced the leader identity development of Latino men at a PWI were presented. Most participants did not feel race mattered for leaders, though this was likely due to their own identity development. Race, which they referred to as culture, influenced how they saw themselves as leaders, resulting in a merged leadership identity development process and resulted in numerous characteristics, including being a representation of the community, being a role model for people, connecting with others, pushing against stereotypes, and other personal influences. Participants also shared their definitions of a leader and leadership, and how they reacted to being called a leader, giving a holistic perspective on and demonstrating their belief leaders and leadership is tied to a position, role, or title. And while the LID Model is mostly applicable to the participants in this case study, adding Yosso’s (2005) concept of cultural wealth and cultural heritage adds necessary components. The next chapter provides a discussion of the implications of the findings from this chapter, tips for higher education practitioners, and suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER 6
IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

The purpose of this dissertation research project was to conduct a case study to identify the influence of race on the leadership identity development of Latino men at Southeastern University (SU), a Predominantly White Institution (PWI). In Chapter 5, the findings for this study were presented. These findings included detailing leadership identity development for Latino men at SU, describing their views on leaders and leadership, analyzing the applicability of the Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model (Komives et al., 2005, 2006) to the participants, and identifying missing components of the LID Model.

This chapter considers the implications resulting from the findings of this dissertation study. Additional considerations and future directions for research are detailed. It also shares how higher education practitioners can incorporate the knowledge learned from this dissertation study into practices, programs, and policies at higher education institutions.

Implications for Future Research

In addition to having implications for future practice, the findings from this study have implications for future research. These implications center on understanding Latino/a students and understanding leadership development.

Understanding Latino/a Students

There are many areas of research which, if undertaken, can improve higher education institutions’ knowledge about Latino/a students. In order to understand Latino/a students better, future research should be increased on Latino men in general, Latino as a race, Latino identity development, and cultural wealth.
**Latino men in general.** First, I strongly echo the words of Sáenz et al. (2016) in saying more research about Latino men as a whole must increase. One of the main reasons I engaged in this research project was the lack of information specifically regarding Latino men in higher education found in the literature. There are significant and substantial gaps in information about Latino men in general, along with a dearth of knowledge concerning factors which lead to their retention and graduation on college campuses, barriers to academic and extracurricular involvement, knowledge related to their psychosocial development, and scholarship regarding how they learn, grow, and develop as leaders (Lozano, 2015a; Sáenz et al., 2016). More higher education scholars need to prioritize Latino men and their multiple potential pathways to success at higher education institutions in their research agendas.

**Latino as a race.** Another important consideration for future research relates to the dialogue surrounding Latino as a race. As has been discussed in the literature and the participants in this research study indicated, the debate on whether or not Latino is a race and how Latino/a individuals define themselves racially and ethnically is still happening and needs to be researched further (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Lozano, 2015a; Hinojosa et al., 2016; Roth, 2012). Conducting more research on the Latino/a population’s perspectives on whether Latino is or is not a race, along with how Latino/a people define themselves racially and ethnically, is needed. This will help higher education scholars and practitioners effectively understand how Latino/a individuals’ constructions of race influence their sense of self, identity, identity expression, and sense of belonging, particularly in the United States (Hinojosa et al., 2016; Page, 2013; Roth, 2012).

**Latino identity development.** Similarly, one of the findings of this study was participants were actively engaged in and navigating their racial identity development, which
they referred to as their cultural heritage, with participants representing several different Latino Orientations as defined by Ferdman and Gallegos (2001). Future research must be done on the racial identity development of Latino/a students in college. Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Orientations model is over 15 years old. Future research should critique and analyze their model to determine its appropriateness and applicability to today’s Latino/a population; if not, new theoretical and conceptual frameworks to better understand Latino/a identity development must be generated. Additionally, future scholarship should include the different factors impacting Latino/a college students’ racial identity development, along with the intersectionality of other psychosocial identities (gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability status, socioeconomic status, immigration status, etc.) and Latino/a identity. This research should give a deeper understanding of how Latino/a people broadly and college students specifically develop their racial identity, which can sometimes be difficult to do (Evans et al., 2010; Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001).

Cultural wealth. Another part of Latino identity development to be researched further is Yosso’s (2005) concept of cultural wealth. In this study, participants had several forms of capital that were an essential part of the Developmental Influences category of the LID Model, particularly familial and linguistic capital. More research needs to be conducted on the influence and impact of cultural wealth on college students broadly and Latino men specifically. Higher education institutions can create programs and policies, such as making institutional websites or recruitment materials available in Spanish, nurturing familial relationships, and explaining how Latino men can successfully navigate the admissions process, which encourage Latino men to utilize these various forms of capital (Valverde, 2007).
Understanding Leadership Development

The literature on college student leadership continues to grow as it relates to students of color (Renn, 2007; Renn & Ozaki, 2010), particularly Latino/a students (Lozano, 2015a; Onorato, 2010; Onorato & Musoba, 2015). The findings from this research study indicate future research on understanding leadership development needs to include exploring and defining leadership, student involvement and leadership programs, and leadership identity development.

Exploring and defining leadership. How the Latino/a population, particularly at higher education institutions, define, understand, and engage in leadership must continue to be explored. While there have been some attempts to better understand and describe Latino/a leadership (Bordas, 2012, 2013; Lozano, 2015a), more research is needed to increase the understanding of how Latino/a individuals engage each part of the leadership process. Calls for future research on Latino/a leadership has also been emphasized by other scholars (Bordas, 2012, 2013; Dugan & Komives, 2007; Guardia & Evans, 2008; Komives et al., 2009; Lozano, 2015a).

Student involvement and leadership programs. Future higher education scholars should continue to grow the literature on the benefits of college student involvement and engagement in leadership programs, particularly for Latino men. This research study affirms many contributions to the literature on the numerous benefits of getting involved, especially for students from an underrepresented or historically marginalized population (Astin, 1984, 1993; Harper & Quaye, 2007, 2009; Lozano, 2015a; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Renn, 2007; Renn & Ozaki, 2010). Further research projects discovering and affirming the importance of involvement and engagement in leadership programs for Latino men can provide higher education administrators with information needed to develop institutional policies and programs.
known to lead to increased success for this student population (Ortiz, 2004; Sáenz et al., 2016; Valverde, 2007).

**Leadership identity development.** As Komives et al. (2009) recommend, much more research must be conducted on the LID Model and its applicability to various student populations. Though they make several suggestions, one of them includes further research on the implications and influence of race on and with the LID Model. A few research studies have attempted to better understand the connections to the LID Model and underrepresented or historically marginalized groups (Renn, 2007; Renn & Ozaki, 2010), including Latino/a students (Onorato, 2010; Onorato & Musoba, 2015). While this dissertation project has attempted to contribute to this particular area of the college student leadership literature, more work must be done to test, analyze, critique, and potentially improve the LID Model and its applicability to Latino men and other underrepresented or historically marginalized populations (Komives et al., 2009).

One of the principal findings of this study was the participants in this study had a merged leadership identity development process represented via several components. Figure 6.1 presents a visual representation of the leadership identity development process for Latino men at SU, adapted from a study by Renn and Ozaki (2010).

![Figure 6.1. Leadership identity development for Latino men at SU. This figure illustrates how Latino men at SU develop their leadership identity.](image)
As Figure 6.1 illustrates, participants vocalized numerous ways they felt their cultural heritage influenced how they see themselves as a leader. Future research studies, including longitudinal research, should be conducted to see if this finding is consistent with other participants in other institutional or geographical contexts.

A final suggestion for future research is to continue to discover how Latino men develop their identities as leaders. This research project was a case study with many limiting factors. One way to expand the knowledge in this area of the literature is to change any one or several considerations in a future case study, such as institutional type, institutional size, and geographic location. Future researchers should also consider using different qualitative methodological approaches (grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography). Additionally, this dissertation project was not a longitudinal study. Future research on Latino men, whether on leadership identity development or any other topic, should include longitudinal studies to better understand and determine effects over time. Changes in any of these ways might further illuminate how Latino men’s leadership identity develops.

This dissertation study has numerous potential implications for future research on Latino men, leadership, and higher education broadly. Future research projects could include studies on psychosocial identity development, leadership experiences and programs, and leadership identity development. It is imperative future scholars centering their work on the experiences of Latino men in college engage in research, particularly from a critical lens, which expands the body of knowledge on this population to ensure their success (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Sáenz et al., 2016).

**Implications for Future Practice**

The findings from this dissertation research provided numerous implications for higher education institutions and practitioners to be aware of in the future. The implications for Latino
men in higher education are focused on institutional diversity, psychosocial development, and leadership development.

**Institutional Diversity**

Diversity at all levels of higher education institutions has been identified as a key area for future improvement, and increasing the institutional diversity of faculty and staff has been identified as an important factor of future success (Harper & Quaye, 2009; Sandeen & Barr, 2006; Smith, 2009). Focusing on increased enrollment, familial engagement, and retention and graduation for Latino men can support improved institutional diversity.

**Increased enrollment.** Participants were asked for ways SU could improve in supporting their development as leaders. One suggestion was getting SU to have more diversity in the institution. How to achieve increased institutional diversity was articulated in several ways. Having a student body that reflected U.S. or State demographics for the Latino/a population was a common suggestion. Manuel shared, “Having a better, diverse university that better represents the whole United States, the State... it changes your perspective on what you can and cannot do within the university.” Alfredo indicated “it would teach me a lot more about myself if I saw other people performing and had the background that I had.”

Higher education institutions must strategically approach and prioritize the recruitment and enrollment of Latino men from a wide spectrum of life experiences. By having other Latino men on campus to relate to, interact and study with, and learn from, this student population can find others like them who can motivate them to succeed while in higher education (Cerezo et al., 2013). Higher education institutions should increase efforts to actively recruit and enroll Latino men in larger numbers, whether through the campus TRIO program or through the general admissions process (Ortiz, 2004; Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009b; Valverde, 2007). Setting up strategic
partnerships with high schools to ensure Latino men are academically prepared prior to applying for college is extremely helpful (Sáenz et al., 2016; Valverde, 2007). Additionally, educating Latino men and their families in applying for financial aid to ease concerns about college affordability and ensure this student population is appropriately engaged on campus (St. John, Rowley, & Hu, 2009). These strategies can assist higher education institutions in enrolling Latino men in larger numbers.

**Familial engagement.** One tactic higher education institutions can use to aid in the recruitment and enrollment of Latino men is to partner and engage with their families. Most of the participants in this study cited their families as a significant factor in their lives, indicating they still discuss major life events and decisions with them. Cultivating familial connections will allow higher education institutions to help families feel more comfortable enrolling these students in higher education institutions, which may potentially be located far away from home. It would also align with literature stressing the importance of institutional collaborations with Latino/a families and students (Lozano, 2015a; Ortiz, 2004; Torres, 2003; Valverde, 2007). Higher education institutions could hold new student orientation sessions completely in Spanish, or even host these sessions in areas with dense Latino/a populations. Campuses could host picnics or social events for students and families to come together and eat, talk, and laugh together. Higher education professionals can also eat and interact with students and their families during these gatherings so families can meet the individuals supporting their students’ postsecondary efforts. Also, having institutional materials available in Spanish, having Spanish-language staff available for consultation, engagement opportunities with institutional Latino/a alumni, and holding events specifically for Latino/a families during institutional parents and
family weekends would assist higher education institutions in building associations with Latino/a families.

**Retention and graduation.** Carlos extended the idea of having a diverse university student body by wanting SU to encourage more interaction amongst the Hispanic/Latino population at SU because “I think it would bring our community together more ... make those bonds stronger and help young Hispanic/Latino students feel even more empowered than we do now.”

Latino/a students find camaraderie and kinship with each other, particularly at PWIs, which can have a highly positive effect on their retention and graduation (Cerezo et al., 2013; Harper & Quaye, 2009; Lozano, 2015a; Salas et al., 2014). Higher education institutions should encourage Latino/a students to interact with each other and then the greater university community, as this improves persistence to graduation. One way this can be accomplished includes conducting social events, such as a “Welcome Home” picnic, programmatic efforts focused on Latino/a culture (dance nights, art exhibits, theatre productions), and opportunities to interact with local Latino/a leaders. Higher education institutions can also engage faculty from Modern Languages departments to provide tutoring in how to speak Spanish. Another suggestion would be for the broad Hispanic/Latino Student group to facilitate a peer-to-peer mentoring group so older Latino/a students can guide younger Latino/a students and provide them ideas for success, a program proven effective (Salas et al., 2014).

If higher education institutions take advantage of the suggestions listed in this section, all of which are referenced as effective in the literature, they could potentially substantially increase the recruitment, selection, engagement, retention and graduation of Latino men. This would also
help Latino men feel welcomed and engaged on campus, which positively contributes to their psychosocial and leadership identity development.

**Psychosocial Development**

Higher education institutions can support Latino men’s psychosocial development in a variety of ways. The findings from this research study focused on psychosocial development centered on identity development and personal growth.

**Identity development.** Research indicates for higher education institutions to better retain and graduate Latino men in higher education, they must create and implement policies and systems conducive to this population of students’ academic and psychosocial success (Ortiz, 2004; Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009a, 2009b, 2011; Sáenz et al., 2016; Valverde, 2007). There are several potential implications for practice higher education institutions and practitioners should consider incorporating on their campuses based on the findings of this study. One finding was participants were actively engaged in, navigating, and trying to understand their racial identity development, with participants representing several different Latino Orientations as defined by Ferdman and Gallegos (2001). Literature has affirmed the higher education environment can play a critical role in students’ psychosocial identity development (Evans et al., 2010; Torres et al., 2009).

As a result, higher education professionals working with Latino/a students must educate themselves about the racial identity development of this population, know the best practices related to supporting these students, and consistently engage best practices so Latino/a students feel safe and championed. Knowing this information will assist practitioners in designing programs and implementing policies that encourage Latino/a students’ identity development (Evans et al., 2010; Ortiz, 2004; Torres, 2003, 2004; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004; Valverde,
2007). Higher education professionals can read books and journal articles, attend national and regional conferences, and participate in webinars discussing Latino/a students’ identity development. They can also join in thoughtful dialogues with Latino/a students, faculty, and staff and mutually share their stories and perspectives to increase everyone’s knowledge.

A few participants mentioned a component of their identity development would be to know more about their cultures, cultural histories, and the context of their cultural histories in the U.S. One way to promote Latino/a students’ cultural awareness and understanding would be to expand Latin American studies programs. Latin American studies programs would not only provide Latino/a students a connection to their cultures, but it would also allow students who do not identify as Latino/a to learn more about the rich cultural history and diversity of this population.

If a full Latin American studies program does not exist or cannot be created, offering individual classes focused on Latino/a life experiences may also be helpful. If no academic courses about Latin American cultures are feasible, encouraging and facilitating institutional seminars on Latin American heritages where individuals can learn about these cultures would be ideal, particularly if they were held outside of Hispanic Heritage Month. Higher education institutions can also host events, such as cultural lunches, a speaker series, or Latin poetry or spoken word nights, that teach others about and celebrates Latin American cultures. Engaging in these strategies provides numerous opportunities for students of many racial and ethnic backgrounds to engage in learning with each other, and higher education institutions need to facilitate cultural learning between students of color and their White peers, as it is necessary for psychosocial development, particularly at a PWI (Harper & Quaye, 2009).
**Personal growth.** A frequent response from participants in this study was the institution contributed to their personal growth. Camilo described how invaluable SU has been to him:

I think [SU] has been one of the biggest influences in my life . . . I've become more confident in myself and how I view myself as a person, not just as a leader. I'm more clear in what I want to do with my life. I'm more aware of my abilities - of what I can do well, of what I need to work on, on how I can interact with other people.

Camilo was not the only student to share how important involvement at SU was to his growth as a person. Luis also indicated how he has personally grown due to his involvement at SU, saying, “I feel as though [SU] has done great things for my leadership . . . they've helped me find myself, helped me able to reflect on who I am . . . [SU] has exposed me to these people who think different than me, and I feel like it's given me more insight, and the ability to empathize and work more with people who don't agree.” Participants like Camilo and Luis articulated numerous personal contributions, such as confidence, a sense of purpose, and an awareness of abilities, they gained as a result of their involvement in opportunities SU offered.

**Leadership Development**

Higher education institutions can support the leadership development of Latino men in a variety of ways. These methods include involvement opportunities, connecting with others, institutional resources, marketing, and faculty and staff mentoring.

**Involvement opportunities.** To gain perspective on how higher education institutions can better work with Latino men, participants were asked how SU helped them develop as leaders. The most frequent response was SU gave the participants opportunities to be a leader. Ignacio shared he felt like “because there's a lot to do, I've been able to get my feet in a lot of different organizations which I'm really glad that I've done and I learned a lot more about
people.” Ken echoed Ignacio’s comments, saying “they give you a lot of opportunities to be a leader and to learn how to be a leader . . . I think it’s really easy and inviting to get involved in a lot of things here.” Omar agrees, sharing “SU has most definitely given me a million doors to leadership . . . and I’ve learned to garner the ones I’m interested in and have had the opportunity to pursue leadership in any way I wanted to.” By providing numerous opportunities and pathways to involvement and making Hispanic/Latino students feel like they can participate, participants felt SU had given them the experience necessary to pursue their leadership development and engage with students in their respective ethnic groups.

As other literature has found (Harper & Quaye, 2009; Lozano, 2015a; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Renn & Ozaki, 2010), there are numerous benefits for students of color when they are involved in leadership experiences at higher education institutions. Being involved has helped students better develop a sense of self, supported racial and ethnic identity development, improved inter- and intrapersonal skills, and helped students clarify their values (Arminio et al., 2000; Harper & Quaye, 2007, 2009; Komives et al., 2005, 2006, 2009; Torres, 2003, 2004). Students of color involved in leadership experiences also learn how to work with others on a team, work toward a common vision or goal, and how to serve their communities (Bordas, 2012, 2013). Higher education practitioners must ensure when working with Latino men on campus they are sensitive to and positively influencing their development.

Higher education institutions need to provide as many ways as possible for students to be involved and engaged on campus. This can be done via extracurricular activities, such as many of the ones the participants in this study were involved in, undergraduate research projects with faculty, professional internships coordinated from the campus career center or from a private entity such as the one Julian works with, or through community service projects. Participants in
this study represented a wide array of involvement at SU; having a vast variety of leadership and engagement opportunities will allow higher education institutions to support Latino men in learning more about leadership, leaders, working with others, and how they believe their cultural heritage influences how they see themselves as leaders. This suggestion is in line with other literature finding involvement in student clubs and organizations, particularly for students of color, has numerous positive benefits and supports their retention and graduation (Astin, 1984, 1993; Harper & Quaye, 2009; Lozano, 2015a; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

**Connecting with others.** Several participants mentioned one of their primary motivations for getting involved in student organizations at SU was to connect to other individuals who identified with their culture, whether that was based on their country or countries of origin or the broader Hispanic/Latino/a population. This study reaffirms literature indicating students of color get involved on college campuses, particularly with identity-based student organizations, to connect with others from a similar background, as it assists them with their success at higher education institutions (Arminio et al., 2000; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Jones et al., 2002; Lozano, 2015a; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). It therefore necessary higher education institutions not only continue to provide opportunities for students from similar backgrounds to socially interact, but to expand those efforts and make it easier for students, particularly at PWIs, to connect with peers from similar cultures and backgrounds. As some participants shared, it will be easier for Latino men to be successful in their higher education endeavors if they know and interact with others from a similar background.

**Institutional resources.** Another method for supporting the leadership development of Latino men is to provide more institutional resources for student organizations, particularly organizations tied to their cultural groups. Several participants mentioned their cultural groups
were functioning on small budgets within potentially restrictive institutional policies in which to operate.

Knowing how difficult it can be for institutions to acquire economic support (Goldstein, 2012), higher education institutions should work to provide a bigger budget to broad Hispanic/Latino Student groups as well as any affiliated ethnic subgroups (i.e. Puerto Rican Student Association, Por Colombia, Hispanic Honor Societies, Cuban American Student Association, Mexican American Student Association, etc.). Institutions should also review and update policies such as regulations in obtaining permits related to food, reserving rooms or spaces outside for students to meet, and hosting events on campus. Reviewing these policies and procedures will ensure they are inclusive for students representing a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. Including Latino/a students as a part of the review process will be integral to ensuring it meets the needs of the students and the associated requirements of the institution.

**Marketing.** Another significant way participants expressed SU could improve was sharing the multitude of involvement opportunities SU had with students. Omar stated SU needs to do better at “communicating ways to get involved.” Camilo expanded on this idea, saying he felt “the leadership opportunities that students receive are a huge, huge help to helping them become better people, but, the thing is, a lot of people really don't know that much about them,” so he suggested “reaching people that wouldn't necessarily step up naturally - like the shy people.” This exemplifies how some participants felt SU needed to advertise and encourage involvement more with students.

Institutions should review and update their marketing materials and strategies to ensure they are reaching Latino men in the most effective manners possible. One area to investigate increasing is marketing and outreach efforts via social media. The current generation of students,
particularly students of color, are highly connected on various social media platforms, and using these platforms to promote in- and out-of-class engagement has proven to have a positive effect on in-class performance and out-of-class development (Morgan Acosta, 2014). Social media has been shown to encourage students’ leadership development as well (Ahlquist & Endersby, 2017). Having a more robust marketing plan of involvement opportunities allows for higher education institutions to ensure as many Latino men as possible know what opportunities for involvement and leadership exist and how to utilize them.

**Faculty and staff mentoring.** Some participants expressed SU offered support by providing mentors to the students, which they felt helped their leadership identity development, and others indicated SU allowed them to practice their leadership skills. Higher education institutions should prioritize cultivating faculty and staff who can serve as mentors to this student population. Having individuals at the institution who can provide this type of support encourages Latino men’s academic and psychosocial growth (Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009a, 2009b, 2011; Sáenz et al., 2016).

Currently, Latino/a individuals make up a very small percentage of SU’s Nine- and Twelve-Month Administrative & Professional Full-Time Employees (FTE) and their Nine- and Twelve-Month Filled Tenured, Tenure Earning, and Instructional Faculty FTE (SUIR, 2016). SU needs to invest time and resources into increasing the percentage of these various employment categories that Latino/a individuals comprise. Having more Latino/a faculty and staff for Latino men, and the entire student body, to engage with will better recruit, retain, and graduate these students (Harper & Quaye, 2009; Ortiz, 2004; Sáenz et al., 2016; Smith, 2009; Valverde, 2007). It will also provide mentors to Latino men to help them be successful, a point mentioned by several participants.
Higher education institutions should also work to provide training to faculty and staff in how to interact with, advise, and supervise Latino men. Student affairs divisions can offer professional development workshops teaching faculty and staff best practices in working with Latino men. Registering for professional associations hosting webinars and attending regional and national conferences focused on working with Latino men can bolster the knowledge professionals have in advising and supervising this student population. Research indicates offering institutionally-sponsored institutional trainings, seminars, and workshops focused on working with Latino men can increase diversity awareness and highlight to the campus community the emphasis the institution has on Latino men’s success (Harper & Quaye, 2009; Sáenz & Ponjuán, 2009a, 2009b, 2011; Sáenz et al., 2016; Smith, 2009; Valverde, 2007).

Recommending attendance at sessions during new faculty and staff orientation and providing ongoing professional development sessions centered on working with Latino men will afford faculty and staff the opportunities to expand their knowledge of Latino men.

The findings from this dissertation study have numerous implications for future practice to which higher education institutions and practitioners should pay attention. By focusing on institutional diversity, psychosocial development, and leadership development, higher education institutions and practitioners can create, develop, implement, and evaluate policies and programs that support Latino men’s success.

Summary

This dissertation employed a case study methodology to investigate the influence of race on the leadership identity development of Latino men at a PWI in the southeast, using Ferdman and Gallegos’s (2001) Latino Orientations and Komives et al.’s (2005) LID Model to compose the conceptual framework. A vast amount of literature addressed issues related to the Latino/a
population, Latino/a students in higher education, Latino men and masculinity, involvement in higher education student organizations and clubs, and engagement in leadership programs. Literature has also looked at the intersections between social identities and leadership identity (Renn, 2007; Renn & Ozaki, 2010), and Latino/a students and leadership (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Lozano, 2015a). This research study adapted strategies and methodologies from Onorato & Musoba’s (2015) research on the LID Model and Latinas at an HSI to assist in answering the research questions.

Thirteen participants of various backgrounds, country/countries of origin, experiences, class standings, involvements, and perspectives contributed to the project. Most participants referred to their racial or ethnic backgrounds as their cultural heritage. Articulating a merged leadership identity development process, participants’ cultural heritage influenced how they saw themselves as leaders in several ways, including representing their culture, serving as a role model to people, connecting with others, and pushing against stereotypes. Participants’ definitions of a leader and leadership, which was always connected to a title or position, were detailed. The LID Model is mostly applicable to participants in this study, however, Yosso’s (2005) cultural wealth and the importance of cultural heritage are noticeably absent. Made up of six different forms of capital, Latino men come to higher education institutions with them all, particularly familial and linguistic capital. The cultural wealth and heritage of the participants are essential parts of the leadership identity development of Latino men. Adding these components to the LID model completes it and ensures its utility.

Although most participants felt SU was doing very well, they did suggest improvements to make in order to best support their leadership identity development. Future suggestions for practice and research, such as more resources for Latino/a students, diversifying the student
body, and increasing the amount and breadth of research on Latino men, are considerations for future work with this student population. Engaging in these strategies to promote the leadership identity development of Latino men will support the retention and graduation at higher education institutions of this important student population.
Dear University Administrator,

My name is Alan Acosta, and I am a Ph.D. candidate in the Higher Education Administration Program at Florida State University. I am writing to ask you for assistance in identifying students to participate in my doctoral research study.

The purpose of this study is to study and understand the influence of race on the leadership identity development of Latino men. I plan on interviewing 15 Latino men. Each man will participate in two individual interviews lasting approximately one hour.

As a university administrator who advises or supervises men student leaders, I am asking for your assistance in identifying positional and non-positional Latino men student leaders who may be interested in being a participant in my study. Ideally, I would like to have a group of participants who represent the diversity of positional and non-positional leadership roles.

There are three criteria for participation in this study:
1. Identification as a man of Hispanic/Latino heritage
2. Currently enrolled student at Florida State
3. Involved (i.e. member or position of leadership) with one of the following groups:
   a. Team athletics
   b. Student organizations
   c. Resident Assistants
   d. Counseling Peer Educators
   e. Fraternities
   f. Leadership Center initiatives
   g. Student Government Association
   h. Campus TRIO Ambassadors

Please speak with individuals you believe will best fit the criteria and ask if they will participate in this study. Then, please forward the names, emails, and phone numbers of individuals to me at your earliest convenience.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at EMAIL or PHONE.

Alan Acosta
Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education Administration Program
APPENDIX B

ADMINISTRATOR EMAIL TO ALAN PERMITTING HIM TO SEND INVITATIONS TO PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS

Dear Alan,

Thank you for contacting our office. By way of this email I give you permission to contact the below students as prospective participants in your proposed research study. I have listed their names, emails, and phone numbers so you can contact them directly. If you have any questions or need any further assistance, please let me know.

University Administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Student Email</th>
<th>Student Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Dear Student,

My name is Alan Acosta, and I am a doctoral student in the Higher Education Administration Program at Florida State University. As part of my dissertation, I am conducting a study examining the influence of race on how Latino men at a Predominantly White Institution see themselves as leaders. Gathering information about this topic is important because it could allow Florida State and other institutions to better support students like you.

You have been identified by a campus administrator as a potential participant in this study due to your identity and participation in a leadership position or student organization at Florida State. Participation in this study would include completing 2 individual interviews with me, with each interview lasting about 45 minutes to 1 hour. While there is no monetary benefit to participation, the information you share by participating in this study could benefit Florida State and higher education broadly.

A copy of my Institution Review Board approval from Florida State is attached to this email. If you are willing to participate, please reply to this email or call me at PHONE to schedule your first interview. Please let me know if you have any additional questions or concerns. Thanks!

Alan Acosta
Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education Administration Program
Gender Pronouns: he/him/his

Before printing this message, think about whether or not it is truly necessary to do so. This electronic mail transmission may be confidential and protected under the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act. It is not intended for transmission to, or receipt by, any unauthorized person. If you have received this electronic transmission in error, please delete it from your system without copying it, and notify the sender by reply email so that our address records may be corrected.
Dear Student,

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Alan Acosta
Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education Administration Program
Gender Pronouns: he/him/his

Before printing this message, think about whether or not it is truly necessary to do so. This electronic mail transmission may be confidential and protected under the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act. It is not intended for transmission to, or receipt by, any unauthorized person. If you have received this electronic transmission in error, please delete it from your system without copying it, and notify the sender by reply email so that our address records may be corrected.
Title of Study: *Haciendose Un Líder: Leadership Identity Development for Latino Men at a Predominantly White Institution*

Dear Participant,

You are invited to be in a research study on Latino men and their beliefs and attitudes about themselves as leaders. You were selected as a possible participant because you have identified as a Latino man involved in a campus organization at Florida State University in either a formal or informal leadership position. I ask you read this form and ask questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Alan Acosta, doctoral candidate in the Higher Education Administration program.

**Background Information:**
The purpose of this study is to see what, if any, influence of race on leadership identity development for Latino men at a Predominantly White Institution. It will ask participants for their own definition of leadership and how their experiences with campus organizations have shaped how they see themselves as leaders.

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:**
This study has no expected risks to you. The benefits are that by participating in this study, you will help share new knowledge on how to potentially support Latino men in their collegiate leadership experiences.

**Compensation:**
There is no compensation for participating in this study.

**Confidentiality:**
The records of this study will be kept private and confidential to the extent permitted by law. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. You will be audio recorded by me during the interview. These files will be kept secured by me. Only my major professor, Kathy Guthrie, Ph.D., and I will have access to these files and they will be destroyed in three years. However, research information that identifies you may be shared with the FSU Institutional
Review Board (IRB) and others who are responsible for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations related to research, including people on behalf of the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP).

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Your participation is totally voluntary and you may stop participation at any time. At any time during the interview, you may ask that the audio recorder be turned off. You are not obligated to answer any question and may feel free to decline to answer any question for any reason. The first interview will consist of questions that will gain information about your background. The second interview will consist of questions about the experiences you have had with leadership at Florida State University, interpretations of your successes and challenges, and your thoughts on how your racial identity has influenced your growth and success as a leader. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is Alan Acosta. You may ask any question you have now. If you have a question later, you are encouraged to contact me at UCA 4100, PHONE, EMAIL. You can also contact Dr. Kathy Guthrie at 1210K Stone Building, PHONE, or EMAIL.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the FSU IRB at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B, Suite 276, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742, or 850-644-8633, or by email at humansubjects@fsu.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

_________________________  ______________________
Signature Date

_________________________  ______________________
Signature of Investigator Date
APPENDIX F

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

Office of the Vice President for Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 11/09/2016

To: Alan Acosta

Address: 282 Champions Way, Suite 4100

Dept.: EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
Beside: University of Florida, Leadership Development of Latino Men at a Predominantly White Institution

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above has been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be Expedited per 45 CFR § 46.110(c) and has been approved by an expedited review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects.

If the project has not been completed by 11/09/2017 you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Kathy Guthrie <kguthrie@fsu.edu>, Advisor
HSC No.: 2016.191352
APPENDIX G

ADDITIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

Demographic Information

Name: __________________________________________________________
(your name will not be used in the research reporting)

FSU Email: ______________________________________________________

Phone Number: __________________________________________________

Pseudonym: _____________________________________________________

Current Class Standing, Based on Credit Hours (Circle One):
Freshman      Sophomore      Junior       Senior      Graduate Student      Non Degree Seeking

How many semesters including summers have you completed at FSU? (Circle one):
Have not completed a semester 1 to 2 3 to 4
5 to 6 7 to 8 9 to 10 More than 10

Age: _______       Major(s): _________________________________________

Ethnicity (ethnicities) or country (countries) or origin:
______________________________________________________________

Organization(s) you are involved or hold a leadership position in:
______________________________________________________________
APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Interview Protocols – adapted from Onorato (2010)

First Interview Questions:
1. Tell me your name and a little bit about yourself.
2. What is your definition of a leader? What is your definition of leadership?
3. How would you describe your racial heritage? Ethnic heritage?
4. Why do you choose to describe your heritage this way?
5. What does it mean to you to be that heritage?
6. How did you learn about your heritage?
7. Tell me about a key experience from elementary school.
8. Tell me about a key leadership experience in high school.
9. Tell me about a key leadership experience in college.
   a. If needed: What about those experiences were significant? How did that experience change how you saw yourself? Did being Latino influence those experiences?
10. What messages did you get about being a man and being your ethnicity growing up? How did these messages affect you?
11. Tell me about someone you admire and consider a role model.
12. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Second Interview Questions:
1. Tell me why you got involved and when.
2. How and when did you begin to think of yourself as a person who could engage with others and get things done?
3. Tell me about an involvement experience that went well. Who led that experience? What was your role?
4. Tell me about an involvement experience that did not go well.
5. Tell me about experiences you had learning to work with other people.
6. Does race or ethnicity matter for leaders? If so, how?
7. How has your racial identity influenced how you see yourself as a leader?
8. Has anything else influenced how you see yourself as a leader? If so, what?
9. When you are in a group, who gets things rolling and how do you know they are moving things forward?
10. How do you react to people calling you a “leader”?
11. What is your definition of a leader? What is your definition of leadership? Has it changed? If so, how?
12. How has this institution shaped your leadership?
13. Is there anything else you would like to share?
### APPENDIX I

**PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS AT A GLANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Class Standing (Based on Credit Hours)</th>
<th>Semesters Completed at SU</th>
<th>Major(s); Minors</th>
<th>Ethnicity(ies) or Country(ies) of Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfredo</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>7 to 8</td>
<td>Accounting; Finance</td>
<td>Hispanic; Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alkaios</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>Pre-Media Communications Studies</td>
<td>Colombian; Puerto Rican; Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camilo</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>Political Science; Media Communications</td>
<td>Colombian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>Philosophy; Anthropology (minor)</td>
<td>Panama; Ecuador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>9 to 10</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Peruvian American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignacio</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>Political Science; Middle Eastern Studies</td>
<td>Cuban American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>Management; Marketing</td>
<td>Peru; Chile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julian</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>7 to 8</td>
<td>Psychology; Biology</td>
<td>Hispanic; Cuban American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>Studio Art</td>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>Finance; Philosophy (minor)</td>
<td>Honduran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuel</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>9 to 10</td>
<td>Finance; Marketing; Hispanic Marketing Communications</td>
<td>Colombian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omar</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>3 to 4</td>
<td>Political Science; Economics</td>
<td>USA and Dominican Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>9 to 10</td>
<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Hispanic; Cuban</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX J

PARTICIPANTS’ IDENTITY PLACEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Racial Identity</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Latino Orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfredo</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>Subgroup-Identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alkaios</td>
<td>Black (also describes self as Afro-Latino)</td>
<td>Colombian &amp; Puerto Rican</td>
<td>Latino-Identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camilo</td>
<td>Colombian</td>
<td>Colombian</td>
<td>Subgroup-Identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>Panamanian &amp; Ecuadorian</td>
<td>Latino-Identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>Peruvian-American</td>
<td>Peruvian</td>
<td>Subgroup-Identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignacio</td>
<td>Mestizo (also said White)</td>
<td>Cuban-American</td>
<td>Undifferentiated/Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>Chilean &amp; Peruvian</td>
<td>Subgroup-Identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julian</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino (also said White)</td>
<td>White &amp; Cuban American</td>
<td>Undifferentiated/Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino (listed Puerto Rico as COO)</td>
<td>Latino-Identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis</td>
<td>Honduran</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>Subgroup-Identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuel</td>
<td>Colombian</td>
<td>European Descent – Spanish &amp; Italian</td>
<td>Subgroup-Identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omar</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Mixed (listed U.S. &amp; Dominican Republic as COO)</td>
<td>Undifferentiated/Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Cuban</td>
<td>Undifferentiated/Denial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COO=Country/Countries of Origin
REFERENCES


Mueller, J.A., & Broido, E.M. (2012). Historical context: Who we were is part of who we are. In V. Torres, J. Arminio, & R.L. Pope (Eds.), Why aren’t we there yet: Taking personal responsibility for creating an inclusive campus (pp. 57-102). Sterling, VA: Stylus.


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Alan A. Acosta is one of the Associate Deans of Students in the Dean of Students Department at Florida State University (FSU), supervising the Office of New Student and Family Programs and the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. His work includes managing campus and student crises, working with campus partners, chairing the FSU Public Safety committee, and helping create a safe, welcoming campus community. He believes in the necessity of growing college students into ethical global leaders for the future, and he thrives on weaving diversity and inclusion into the work he does.

Prior to becoming an Associate Dean, Alan worked for University Housing at FSU for eight years, first as a Residence Coordinator and then as Assistant Director for Residence Life, focusing on student staff recruitment, selection, and training, student conduct, graduate student recruitment and selection, and co-supervising the professional staff advisor to the FSU Inter-Residence Hall Council and the Garnet and Gold Chapter of the National Residence Hall Honorary.

Alan received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a major in Management from the University of Florida in 2004, and he earned his Master of Education in Student Personnel in Higher Education from the University of Florida in 2006. His passion for higher education began and was nurtured through his involvement in the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education as a Resident Assistant and chair of the Inter-Residence Hall Association movie committee.

Alan has been actively involved in ACPA – College Student Educators International, his professional home for over 10 years. He is currently the Chair of ACPA’s Commission for Student Conduct and Legal Issues, having previously served as the Vice Chair of Education and
a Directorate Body Member the previous four years. Alan was the coordinator for ACPA’s Voices of Inclusion medallions for four years, which recognizes the work of individuals and institutional programs dedicated to increasing inclusivity on college campuses. He also was a directorate body member of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals, co-chairing the convention case study competition. Alan has been involved in the Association for Student Conduct Administration, serving as the Educational Initiatives chair for the Association’s 2016 Annual Conference. He also is a past member of NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International.

Alan was born in the Bronx, New York before his family moved when he was three years old to Floral City, Florida. He grew up there with his parents, Alfred and Valerie, and his older sister, Stephanie. He credits his family with encouraging him to be a life-long learner.

Alan enjoys spending time with his partner, Danielle, and their two cats, Ninja and Buster. He loves watching professional wrestling and sports, cheering for the Golden State Warriors, Oakland Raiders, and San Francisco Giants. He also enjoys reading books and watching movies. Follow him on Twitter and Instagram at @alanacosta81. ¡Boricua!