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A Qualitative Study of Factors Promoting Doctoral Attainment of Second-generation
Mexican American Males from California.

A Dissertation by
Jorge Chavarin

Brandman University
Irvine, California
School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

February 2016

Committee in charge:

Dr. Jeneane Prince, Committee Chair

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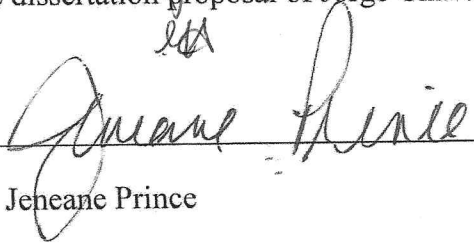
Dr. Maria C. Ayon

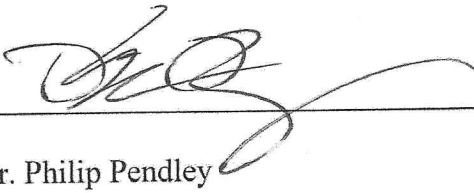
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Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

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Mexican American Males from California.

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males in pursuit of a doctorate. Because of you, I am now part of the elite group of Mexican American scholars.

ABSTRACT

A Qualitative Study of Factors Promoting Doctoral Attainment of Second-generation Mexican American Males from California.

by Jorge Chavarin

Research on second-generation Mexican American males who attain a doctoral degree is limited. Often, the data presented clusters Mexican Americans under the Latina/o or Hispanic ethnic group, focuses on factors that hindered educational attainment or details Latino male experiences in context of their Latina female counterparts. Mexican-Americans are the largest subgroup of this ethnic group yet little is known about their post-secondary educational experiences. Rather than focusing on barriers, this study concentrated on the factors that influenced eight Mexican American males from California who attained their doctorates from a doctoral-granting university within California.

Arguably, the self-efficacious men of this study believed in their academic prowess, but found ability was not enough. Numerous other strategies were needed to help facilitate degree attainment: 1) Being goal-oriented served as the central cause to remain relentless; 2) Interaction with various types of mentorship which came from all aspects of life (academic, home, work); 3) Involvement from a culturally aligned dissertation chair; 4) Surrounding oneself with an inner circle of family and friends and academic peers; and 5) Viewing student loans as an investment that facilitated future aspirations and not as an obstacle. These factors didn't clash against one another; rather, they complemented each other by providing different types of encouragement, support and direction at different times throughout their ascent. However, having a culturally

aligned dissertation chair was viewed as the most critical factor toward degree attainment.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

In today's global economy, a post-secondary education is no longer a pathway to opportunity; it is a necessity (President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence of Hispanic Americans, 2012). Traditionally, educational attainment has been viewed as one of the most efficient approaches to move up the socioeconomic ladder; however, an individual's race and gender have been known to grant certain members of society more opportunities and resources than others which can manifest into social inequalities including access to higher education (Ramirez 2013). It is predicted by 2050, the Hispanic/Latino population will account for 60% of the United States' growth and though college enrollment rates have increased to historic numbers, their college completion rate has remained stagnant with approximately 13% possessing a bachelor's degree in the United States (President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence of Hispanic Americans, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012; Snyder & Dillow, 2013). As the national level of post-secondary education rises, so too does the educational attainment gap between Hispanic/Latinos and non-Hispanic/Latino populations (Solorzano, 2012). Closing this gap requires students of this ethnic group be afforded the opportunity and tools needed to graduate from post-secondary institutions (President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence of Hispanic Americans, 2012); therefore, it becomes imperative to understand the factors that influence and promote the attainment of a post-secondary degree (Solorzano, Villapando & Oseguera, 2005).

Of the approximately 308 million people living in the U.S., more than 50 million (16%) are of Hispanic/Latino origin, 38 million (12.6%) are Black and 14 million (4.8%) are Asian. Research by Ryan and Siebens (2012) and Snyder and Dillow (2013)

concluded Hispanic/Latinos attained the lowest percentage of post-secondary degrees when compared to other ethnic and non-ethnic groups (Ryans & Siebens, 2012; Snyder & Dillow, 2013). These findings align with data published by the U.S. Census Bureau (2012) who reported on Hispanic/Latino post-secondary completion rates and population; Hispanic/Latino post-secondary completion rates are the lowest of all ethnic and non-ethnic groups yet they represent the largest populous race/ethnicity. Table 1 compares educational attainment by percentage of persons age 25 and over by race/ethnicity.

Table 1

Percentage of persons age 25 and over with a bachelor's or higher degree, by race/ethnicity: 2011

	White	Asian	Black	Hispanic
Educational Attainment	34.5	51.9	21.4	14.5

Note. Table adapted from U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, U.S. Census of Population:1960, Vol. I, Part 1; J.K. Folger and C.B. Nam, Education of the American Population (1960 Census Monograph); Current Population Reports, Series P-20, various years; and Current Population Survey (CPS), March 1970 through March 2012. Table 8, prepared October 2012 by Snyder and Dillow (2013).

According to Fry (2011), the Hispanic/Latino population has narrowed the college enrollment gap; however, as the number of Hispanic/Latino students attending college increased, the proportional representation of males continues to slide to their female counterparts (Castellanos et al., 2006) which arguably contributes to the educational differential between these two genders. Educational attainment data suggests Latina females began surpassing their Latino male counterparts at all levels of higher education in the late 1990s (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). These findings support what Solorzano et al.

(2005) argued; Latino males are more likely to drop out of high school, join the workforce, or leave college before graduating. Since 2000, Latina female enrollment has steadily increased as the Latino male is less and less frequently enrolling into college (Castellanos et al., 2006) , and if they do, they are having difficulty keeping up with their Latina female counterparts (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). The pressing truth is that Latino males lag significantly behind their Latina female peers in terms of both college enrollment and degree attainment (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). In 2010, “Hispanic females earned 62 percent of associate’s degrees, 61 percent of bachelor’s degrees, 64 percent of master’s degrees, and 55 percent of all doctor’s degrees awarded to Hispanic students” (NCES, 2012, p. 112).

Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Cubans comprise the three most populous subgroups of the Hispanic population (U.S. Census, 2012). However, as the degree-attainment gap between Latino males and Latina females continues to widen (NCES, 2013; Cerna, Perez, & Saenz, 2007), a closer look at the gender reveals “the most pronounced gender disparity exists within Mexican Americans where females outnumber males by a factor approaching 2 to 1 as of 2006” (Hurtado, Saenz, Santos, & Cabrera, 2008 as cited in Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009, p. 68). Data collected by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, administered by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, conclude “males have lost the most ground relative to females among Mexican American/Chicana/o students entering four-year institutions” (Hurtado et al., 2008, p. 1).

While Mexican Americans have been shown to aspire to the same high levels of educational attainment as other ethnic and non-ethnic groups, few actually realized these

aspirations as academic achievement among “Mexican Americans is anomalous” (Gandara, 1994, p. 1). Cerezo, Lyda, Beristianos, Enriquez, and Conner (2013) concluded “educational outcomes for Latinos and specifically Mexican Americans, the largest subgroup under this umbrella term, are a national issue. Data reveal that many Mexican Americans struggle with educational attainment, and this issue is even more pronounced for young men” (p. 352).

As Latina females become more prevalent at all levels of higher education, their Latino male counterparts, specifically Mexican American males, continue to erode from all levels of education. In fact, little is known about Latino doctoral experiences (Solorzano, 1993) and less about Mexican American doctoral experiences (Gandara, 1994; Heimlich, 2001; Rendon, 1999).

Background

Self-Identification of Latinos within the U.S.

How Latina/os select to self-identify is often at odds with how they are perceived and treated (Vasquez, 2010). Before discussing factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males attain a doctorate degree, it was essential to “unpack the term Latina/o” (Castellanos, Gloria & Kumimura, 2006, p. 20) and Hispanic. According to Cosmos-Diaz (2001) these terms bear a plural identity as this ethnic group is diverse with individuals tracing their heritage to more than 20 Spanish-speaking nations (Lopez, Gonzalez-Barrera, & Cuddington, 2013). “Hispanics, Latinos, Hispanos, Latins, Central Americans, or South Americans—to name a few—are some of the general terms used to designate this diverse ethnic collage” (Cosmos-Diaz, 2001, p. 115). Overall, the 10 largest Hispanic origin groups by nationality are Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans,

Salvadorans, Dominicans, Guatemalans, Colombians, Hondurans, Ecuadorians and Peruvians (Motel & Patten, 2012a). Therefore, throughout this study, the terms Latina/o and Hispanic are used synonymously.

The term *Hispanic*, officially created in 1970 by the United States Census Bureau, designated people of Spanish origin who identified themselves as such (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Alber, 2011). It was used to refer collectively to Spanish speakers or those with Spanish surnames, but connotes a lineage or cultural heritage related to Spain (Castellanos et al., 2006; Cosmos-Diaz, 2001). The diversity of this ethnic group influenced the U.S. Census Bureau to begin using the term *Latino* in 2000 to recognize the millions of people from Latin America who did not identify themselves as Hispanic. As such, many Latinos preferred this term over the term Hispanic “because it excludes Europeans such as Spaniards from being identified as ethnic minorities in the United States while it includes Brazilians, who do not qualify as Hispanics because their mother tongue is Portuguese” (Cosmos-Diaz, 2001, p. 116). Politically speaking, many prefer Latino because it reaffirms their native pre-Hispanic identity (Falicov, 1998). Therefore the term Latino was seen as a superset of many nationalities. However, more and more Latinos have identified with their family’s ancestry (Motel & Patten, 2012c).

According to the Pew Research Center (2009), most Latinos do not see themselves as fitting into the framework of the U.S. Census Bureau. Cosmos-Diaz (2001) argues that many individuals prefer to politically affirm their ethnic identity by acknowledging “their national origins to such terms as Mexicans or Mexican Americans, Cubans or Cuban Americans, Colombians, Dominicans, Peruvians, Salvadorans, or Venezuelans, among many others” (p. 115). This statement was reaffirmed by the Pew

Research Center who conducted a study and published their findings in an article titled *When Labels Don't Fit: Hispanics and Their View of Identity*. The study concluded that most Hispanics don't embrace the term *Hispanic* and even fewer prefer the term *Latino* (Pew Research Center, 2012). A national survey of Latinos concluded that Latino parents encourage their offspring to speak in Spanish (60%) versus speaking in English (22%) and when these signals are received from their parents, there is an increase in likelihood that offspring will self-identify with their parents' country of origin (Pew Research Center, 2009). This same study also concluded approximately 52% of Latinos ages 16-25 identify themselves by their family's country of origin (Pew Research Center, 2009). Among the 50.7 million Hispanics in the U.S., 33 million or 65% identify as being of Mexican origin (Motel & Patten, 2012b; Pew Research Center, 2009; Ortiz & Telles, 2012), suggesting Mexicans are the dominant subgroup within the Latino population. According to the Pew Research Center (2009) and Motel and Patten (2012c) Mexican, in the statistical profile, are those who self-identified as being of Mexican origin which means either they themselves are Mexican immigrants or they trace their family ancestry to Mexico. Therefore, "among the general population, Mexican is often used as a response to the question what is your race" (Ortiz, & Telles, 2012, p. 42)? This reflection is a "popular understanding that Mexican is a racial category distinct from Whites, Blacks, or Asians" (Ortiz, & Telles, 2012, p. 42).

Latino Population within the U.S.

Latinos are the largest ethnic group in the U.S. and also considered the youngest with a median age of 25 (Gonzalez-Barrera & Lopez, 2013). Since 1990, this ethnic group has grown at a rate faster than that of any other ethnic group (Motel and Patten,

2012a; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Between 1990 and 2000, the Hispanic population grew to 35.3 million with 20.6 million (58.5%) being of Mexican origin (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Between 2000 and 2010, the Hispanic population grew to 50.7 million, with 31.8 million (63%) being of Mexican origin (Ennis et al., 2011). Reports by the Pew Research Center (2009) and data from the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau concluded during this latter time frame, one quarter of all newborns in the U.S were of Hispanic descent.

The Latino population will continue to grow and will account for most of the United States' population growth through 2050 (Passel & Cohn, 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012b). Passel and Cohn (2008) predict the U.S. population will reach 438 million people, of which 127 million (29%) will be Hispanic. This population gain among Latinos "will account for 60% of the United States total population growth from 2005 to 2050" (Passel & Cohn, 2008, p. 9). According to Suro and Passel (2003), *second-generation* Latinos will also continue to grow as births and immigration have already taken place. It is estimated by 2020, "the number of second-generation Latinos in U.S. schools will double and the number in the U.S. labor force will triple" (Suro & Passel, 2003, p. 2). This fundamental change will produce an important shift in the makeup of this population with second-generation Latinos emerging as the largest component of the Latino population (Suro & Passel, 2003). By comparison the next largest ethnic group, Blacks, will grow to 59 million and account for 13.4% of the total U.S. population by 2050 (Passel & Cohn, 2008). These reported numbers suggest it is in the interest of the U.S. that Hispanics achieve educational excellence (President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence of Hispanic Americans, 2000) and

narrow the educational attainment gap as Hispanics are more likely to be among the working poor (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013).

A study prepared by Lopez and Velasco (2011) found the “nation’s Latino population experienced the largest single decline in net worth (assets minus debts) of any ethical/racial group during the recession” (p. 31 as cited in President’s Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence of Hispanic Americans, 2012) placing the median wealth of Whites 18 times that of Hispanic households (President’s Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence of Hispanic Americans, 2012). According to President’s Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence of Hispanic Americans (2000)

as their numbers grow, Hispanics will continue to become a more significant presence in school and college classrooms and in our workplaces. The academic success of the new wave of students entering our classrooms is vital to the nation's economic well-being and enriches our cultural and linguistic resources as a nation (p. 5).

The educational achievement gap for Latinos is of concern because studies have concluded that greater educational attainment is correlated to improved employment outcomes and future earnings (Grogger & Trejo, 2002; Ryan & Siebens, 2012 ; NCES, 2013; Cardenas & Kirby, 2012). In their report, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2013) noted “individuals who complete more years of education usually have greater access to higher paying jobs—such as management, professional, and related occupations—than those with fewer years of education (p. 3). A report by Cardenas and Kirby (2012) found an estimated 16% of the total U.S. workforce was Latino; of that portion, 58% were men

who were more likely to saturate low-skilled occupations and less likely to be in management professions related to higher-paying jobs. As Latinos continue to flood the workforce, it becomes vital to increase their educational attainment as “the role of Latinos in shaping our country’s political and economic climate is becoming more significant” (Cardenas & Kirby, 2012, p. 3). Despite continued growth by the Hispanic population, these members continue to lag behind all non-Hispanic groups in the attainment of post-secondary degrees (Hurtado et al., 2008; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011a; NCES, 2013). Moreover, “of all the Hispanic groups, Mexican Americans experience the greatest educational risk making their situation all the more urgent” (Gandara, 1994, p. 2). In fact, studies have found Mexican American men continue to struggle with educational attainment (Gandara, 2009 as cited in Cerezo et al., 2013).

Higher Education of Latinos Within the U.S. According to the Pew Research Center (2009) and Solorzano (2012) Latinos place a high value on education, hard work and career success. Focusing on Mexican Americans, Valencia and Black (2002) found Mexican American families have a “positive expression regarding the importance of the institution of education” (p. 99). In fact, more than 75% of Latinos expect to be better off than their parents, reaffirming their high aspirations for career success and recognizing that attaining a college degree will facilitate this expectation (Pew Research Center, 2009). Between 1990 and 2005 college enrollment for Latinos more than doubled (NCES, 2005) surpassing 1.8 million by 2010 (Fry, 2011). By 2012, enrollment in two and four-year institutions reached an all-time high of 2.4 million Latino students (Lopez & Fry, 2013). However, most of this growth came at the community-college level as

Latinos are more likely to attend this type of institution (Santiago, Galdeano & Taylor, 2015) which are disproportionately found in the lowest socioeconomic sectors of the U.S. (Solorzano et al., 2005). In fact, a study by Santiago et al. (2015) found that between 2012 and 2013, “62% of Latinos enrolled in a community college attended an institution in California or Texas” (p. 8). While Latino college enrollment rates have increased, educational attainment rates remain low at all levels of post-secondary education (NCES, 2012; Santiago et al. 2015)

Along the same lines, when comparing the three most populous subgroups of the Hispanic population (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban) amongst each other, those of Mexican origin lag behind their counterparts in the attainment of post-secondary degrees (U.S. Census, 2012; Solorzano, 2012). A study by the U.S. Department of Education (2001) found for every 100 students of Mexican origin, 46 will graduate from high school and eight will attain a bachelor’s degree. Of these, two will attain a master’s degree and 0.2 will attain a doctorate. By way of comparison, among Puerto Ricans, for every 100 students, 63 will graduate from high school and 13 will attain a bachelor’s degree. Of the 13, four will attain a masters’ degree and 0.4 will attain a doctorate. The attainment gap widens when Mexicans are compared to Cubans. For every 100 students of Cuban origin, 63 will graduate from high school and 21 will attain a bachelor’s degree. Of the 21, 10 will attain a master’s degree and 1.2 will attain a doctorate.

These earlier findings support latter findings by the U.S. Census Bureau (2012) who reported that individuals of Mexican origin continue to have the lowest educational attainment by those 25 years and over among the Hispanic population. Table 2 compares percentage of degrees conferred by Hispanic origin and degree: 2012.

Table 2

Educational Attainment of the Population 25 Years and Over by Hispanic Origin Type: 2012

	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban
Some College or Associate's Degree	18.2	25.9	22.7
Bachelor's Degree	7.7	12.2	17.6
Advanced Degree	2.8	5.3	9.3

Note. Table adapted from U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2012, Table 11. Retrieved on February 2, 2015 from <http://www.census.gov/population/hispanic/data/2012.html>

Focusing on gender, Cerezo et al. (2013) found among those 25 years and older, Mexican American males have the lowest college completion rates when compared to Puerto Ricans and Cubans.

Higher Education of Latinos Within California. In 2014, Latinos in California became the largest single racial/ethnic group surpassing Whites (Lopez, 2014). With approximately 38 million total California residents, it was estimated 14 million were Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; Lopez, 2014) of which 11.5 million were of Mexican origin (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

While California is home to the largest Hispanic post-secondary student population in the United States (Solorzano, 2012) it is also home to the largest community-college system; the California Community Colleges (CCC) (Solorzano, 2012). Solorzano et al. (2005) argue community colleges are less expensive but serve multiple purposes which include vocational certificates, associate's degrees and transfer

opportunities to four-year institutions. Along the same lines, Solorzano (2012) found while “community colleges are the primary postsecondary entry point for Latina/o students. Unfortunately, it is also the segment of the higher education pipeline where we lose the most Latina/o students” (p. 50).

According to Solorzano et al. (2005) within CCC, the likelihood of needing a remediation course in English or math is much higher than the likelihood of needing the same at a four-year university. It was estimated that between 70% and 95% of first-time CCC students required remediation or developmental courses in English and/or mathematics (Solorzano, 2012). In many cases, this overrepresentation resulted in the Latina/o student not being able to take additional courses because remedial courses served as prerequisites to more advanced courses. Despite growing trends of developing agreements between two-year and four-year institutions that identify specific classes and requirements that guarantee students’ ability to transfer to four-year institutions, such agreements still do not have a significant impact on Latina/o student transfer rates (Solorzano & Ornelas, 2004). Arguably, the negative community-college experience endured by Latina/o students contributed to low transfer rates, being part of the community-college system longer than expected or simply dropping out (Solorzano et al., 2005). According to Solorzano (2012), “in California, we lose eight out of every ten Latina/o community college student” (p. 50). A study by Moore and Shulock (2010) found for every 100 Latina/o post-secondary students, 80 students began their journey at one of California’s 112 CCC, while 16 initially entered the California State University (CSU) and five the University of California (UC). Of the 80 students, three received a Career and Technical Education (CTE) degree/certificate and 11 transferred to a four-year

university. Nine of the 11 transfer students transferred to a CSU and two to a UC institution (as cited in Solorzano, 2012).

Although enrollment at two and four-year institutions has increased for Latina/o students across the board, there are disparities between enrollment and matriculation rates (Cruz, 2012). The Campaign for College Opportunity (2013) concluded California adults 25 years and older with a bachelor's degree or higher had an education attainment level of 30.3%. When compared by ethnic group, Asians (47.9%) had the highest education attainment level, followed by Whites (39.3%), Blacks (23%) and Latinos (10.7%). This same report also concluded that California is on track to produce a generation that is less educated than its older population. Moreover, they found that the future and the strength of California's future economy and workforce will demand an educated Latino as Latinos will account for most of the state's future population growth. Specifically, California "will need significantly more Latino students to fulfill their academic goals and attain college degrees and credentials. This will not only make their lives better, but ensure a strong economy for the state we all live in" (p. 2). An earlier report by Moore and Shulock (2010) postulated similar findings; "Latina/o educational attainment is critical for the future economic prosperity of the state of California since they will be 50% of the working age population by 2040 (p. 61 as cited in Solorzano, 2012).

A report by the Public Policy Institute of California (2005), who reported on the intergenerational progress of Mexican American education, found educational attainment among this subgroup unsettling as they represented the largest proportion of California's population yet their educational attainment rates remain comparatively low when compared to other Latinos and ethnic groups. According to the U.S. Census Bureau

(2010), 82% of Latinos in California are of Mexican origin, yet “without improvements in intergenerational progress, future generations of California’s Mexican Americans will continue to lag behind other ethnic groups in educational attainment and will therefore be more likely to miss economic and other opportunities” (Public Policy Institute of California, 2005, p. 2). These findings support findings by Gandara (1994) who noted that in areas where a large percentage of the student population is Mexican American, their significant underachievement “constitutes an impending crisis” (p. 3).

Educational Challenges of Mexican Americans

Despite guarantees made by the Treaty of Guadalupe (1848), the educational rights of Mexicans were ignored (Saldana-Portillo, 2004). Continued westward expansion under the Manifest Destiny doctrine brought with it the belief that White Anglo-Saxons were superior to all other races (Saldana-Portillo, 2004; Menchaca & Valencia, 1990; Gutierrez, 1995) supporting the ideology of racialization (Saldana-Portillo, 2004). According to Bowman (2001), the Treaty of Guadalupe (1848) guaranteed individuals of Mexican origin the rights “afforded to all citizens of the United States” (p. 1763) and by all accounts individuals of Mexican origin were categorized as White, yet what they experienced was nothing short of segregationist practices (Saldana-Portillo, 2004). At the forefront were the Americanization campaigns implemented under the pretense that they would advance the assimilation of students of Mexican origin into mainstream America (Bowman, 2001); however, they allowed for separate schools maintained on the premise that they would benefit students of Mexican origin by addressing their educational shortfalls (Alvarez, 1986). As a result, students of Mexican origin endured inadequate educational resources, unfit buildings and inexperienced teachers (Montejano,

1987; Madrid, 2008; MacDonald, n.d.; Valencia, 2011). At the root, was the widespread belief that students of Mexican origin were not as smart as White students therefore segregation between the two was needed to advance the assimilation of students of Mexican origin and to prohibit the deterioration of White students (Madrid, 2008).

In more contemporary times, research has shown Mexican Americans are growing up in families that on average have less educational capital (Alva, 1991; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Gandara, 1994; Pew Research Center, 2009), more likely to live in poverty (Alva, 1991; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Pew Research Center, 2009; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013) and more likely to experience low social support to include few mentors (Rodriguez et al., 2000). Complicating matters is the fact that many second-generation Mexican Americans are first-generation students. According to Chen (2005), first-generation students are those students who are the first members of their families to enroll in post-secondary education. A study prepared by the NCES (2005) concluded first-generation student status has been shown to have a negative association with student's academic preparation and persistence (as cited in Hirudayaraj, 2011) thereby twice as likely to leave college than students whose parents had attended college (Hirudayaraj, 2011).

Despite similar difficulties experienced by male and female Mexican Americans, males also encountered distinct challenges that can account for their low educational attainment rates. For example, within the Latino culture, males are expected to take on the familial roles as protectors and providers for their families (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). The Pew Research Center (2009) found many second-generation Mexican Americans follow the cultural norm *familismo* which is laired within the male gender role of Latinos

(Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008). This strong sense of responsibility often results in males forgoing higher education and tending to their family's well being (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Solorzano et al., 2005). Additionally, Vasquez (2010) posits that "U.S. society racializes Mexican American men more stringently than Mexican American women" (p. 47) to the degree that gendered stereotypes have categorized Mexican American men "as violent gangsters who encounter a more rigid barrier to mainstream acceptance than women, who are typecast as exotic" (p. 47) and "perceived [Mexican American women] as less threatening and more capable of adopting mainstream cultural norms" (p. 48). Along the same lines, Alegria and Woo (2009) postulated "Mexican American gender roles have commonly been linked to negative outcomes such as... increased substance abuse in men (p. 618 cited in Morgan Consoli & Llamas, 2013) and the increased likelihood of being exposed to gangs (Pew Research Center, 2009). Whether combined or standalone, these factors have been known to negatively impact the educational attainment of Mexican American males.

Unfortunately, studies and reports that focused on the reasons why this subgroup continues with low educational attainment rates are abundant, yet this approach inadvertently disregards the factors that lead to success (Tello, 2011). According to Alva (1991):

Although it is evident that a constellation of socio-cultural variables predispose Mexican American students toward academic failure, very little is known about the factors that mediate their academic success. Regrettably, there has been a tendency to focus almost exclusively on predictors of academic failure (p. 19).

In general, Mexican American males will face a host of barriers that may impede them from achieving academic success; however, those that have furthered their education displayed high levels of educational resiliency or what Alva (1991) coined “academic invulnerability”.

Factors Promoting Educational Attainment of Mexican Americans

According to Alva (1991) academic invulnerable students are those who “sustain high levels of achievement, motivation and performance, despite the presence of stressful events and conditions that place them at risk of doing poorly in school and ultimately dropping out of school” (p. 19). Wolin and Wolin (1993) argue terms such as hardy, invulnerable, and invincible imply an innate characteristic suggesting individuals are born invulnerable therefore resilient. However, Benard (1993; 1995) contends individuals are not born resilient, rather they have the capacity to build resilience provided factors that promote resilience are available. Therefore the notion of resilience suggests patterns of positive adaptation in the context of risk or adversity (Masten & Tellegen, 2012) and dependent on “two key issues: (a) the attitudes, skills, and knowledge children possess, and (b) the number and type of environmental resources in place to provide support and ameliorate stress” (Alva and Padilla, 1995, p. 3). “In education, these adaptive characteristics can include certain personality traits and individual behaviors, features of the school and classroom environment, and the home and family environment (Hupfeld, 2007, p. 3). Alva and Padilla (1995) concluded many high-achieving “Mexican American students can be described as academically invulnerable, sustaining high levels of achievement, despite conditions and events that place them at risk for academic failure” (p. 4). On the other hand, Alva and Padilla

(1995) also argue large gaps exist in understanding the factors and processes that determine academic invulnerability as coping resources of Mexican American students are not thoroughly studied like the risk factors associated with academic failure.

More recent studies described the positive correlation associated with the notion of mentorship as a contributor to developing resilience. According to Nora and Crisp (2012), “support from family through verbal, emotional, psychological or financial means, as well as positive interactions and mentoring experiences with faculty have been found to influence Hispanic student retention” (p. 17) thereby promoting educational attainment. Paglis, Green, and Bauer (2006) proposed faculty advisers provide critical mentoring to students in a variety of ways such as demonstrating a caring interest in the students’ welfare, helping them deal with the anxiety and culture shock that may accompany undertaking a new endeavor, and assisting students in publishing and presenting research. These types of studies support research by Gardner (2013) who found first-generation students can greatly benefit from mentoring and guidance in their programs.

Problem Statement

Education continues to be recognized as a pathway to success. The fact that more and more Latinos are enrolling in higher education suggests movement in a positive direction (Fry, 2011) yet Latinos still continue to lag in post-secondary degree attainment behind other ethnic (Asian and Black) and non-ethnic (White) groups (NCES, 2012). Collectively, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Cubans comprise the three most populous subgroups of the Hispanic population in the United States; however, when compared to one another, those of Mexican origin lag behind their counterparts in the attainment of

post-secondary degrees (U.S. Census, 2012; Solorzano, 2012). As the post-secondary degree attainment gap widens, so does the educational disparity of Latina/o students and the urgency of understanding their distinctive needs (Cruz, 2012). According to Solorzano and Ornelas (2004) this growing need has prompted many researchers to examine the factors that hinder educational attainment; however, few studies have focused on the factors that promote academic success among Latino male students (Cerezo et al., 2013) and even fewer still on the factors believed to promote academic achievement at the doctoral level for Mexican American males. According to Castellanos et al., (2006):

there is a dearth of literature addressing the graduate experience that encompasses academic, psychological, social, cultural and environmental variables; the interaction of these variables with the graduate environment; and their subsequent effects on student experiences. Extensive literature addresses the social context of the graduate process and more recent literature has incorporated race and ethnicity; yet incorporation of psychological, social, cultural and environmental aspects internal to Latina/o doctoral experiences warrants further examination (p. 169).

Given the growing graduate-student population and the influence of educational progress in the United States, it is critical to thoroughly examine the Latino male's student experiences (Castellanos et al., 2006). According to Gloria, Castellanos, Scull, & Villegas (2009) "current literature on male Latinos' education generally situates their academic experiences in the context of their Latina counterparts" (p. 318) thus scholars and practitioners are limited to understanding Latino males in the context of Latina

females. Moreover, while college success factors for Latina/o students are well documented at undergraduate levels, the extant research literature is silent for second-generation Mexican American males at the doctoral level.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California related to earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

An additional purpose of the study was to identify how the factors impacted the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California earn their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

A further purpose of the study was to identify barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

The final purpose of the study was to determine how the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California were overcome during their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree

Research Questions

1. What are the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California earn their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?

2. How did the factors identified influence the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California in earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?

3. What barriers were encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?

4. How were the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California overcome during their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

Significance of the Study

Identifying the factors that promoted academic success of high achieving second-generation Mexican American males from California added to the current body of literature in a number of ways. Research revealed a critical shortage of Mexican American males from California with a doctorate (National Science Foundation, 2014a). The National Science Foundation (2014a) published between 2002 through 2012, approximately 506, 342 doctorate degrees were awarded from doctoral degree-granting universities in the U.S. Of these, 785 were conferred on males of Mexican origin who

graduated from a university in California. Unfortunately, this aggregated data does not distinguish between first-generation and later generations. Research also showed limited literature that examined Mexican Americans with respect to gender (Castellanos et al., 2006; Gloria et al., 2009) and graduate studies (Gandara, 1994; Heimlich, 2001; Rendon, 1999). According to scholars such as Dr. Daniel G. Solorzano, “few studies have shown that Latinos are underrepresented in graduate school, but they provide no information by specific Latino subgroup” (Solorzano, 1993, p. vii). Therefore, the factors identified can be used as a baseline for further research which involves second-generation Mexican American males in pursuit of their doctorates.

Second, this study can provide educators and universities research-based results that can be used to implement structures that will reduce the attrition rate. Studies over four decades of data found that 40% to 60% of Ph.D. candidates (Council of Graduate Schools, 2008; West et al., 2011) and between 50% and 70% of Ed.D. candidates (Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012) fail to attain their doctorate.

Lastly, this study concentrated on Mexican American males rather than the Latina/o umbrella as a whole. Regrettably, “most research on Mexican Americans fails to make the important distinctions between immigrants and their children, and later generations-since-immigration” (Telles & Ortiz, 2008, p. 3). Therefore, the research-based information presented can be used as a resource that can assist in creating a supportive environment for other Mexican American males in pursuit of their doctorates. According to Lovitts (2001), creating an academic environment conducive of doctorate attainment will increase the likelihood of completion.

Definitions

The following is a list of terms relevant to the study:

- *At-risk*: an individual who is likely to fail academically by virtue of their circumstances. The term at-risk and high-risk is used interchangeably throughout this study.
- *Asian*: a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand or Vietnam. It includes people who indicated their race as Asian or reported entries such as Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese and Other Asian or provided other detailed Asian responses (Humes, Jones & Ramirez, 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- *Black*: a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa that includes people who indicated their race as “Black, African American or Negro” or reported entries such as African American, Kenyan, Nigerian or Haitian (Humes, Jones & Ramirez, 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- *Caballerismo*: a term specific to Mexican-American men that describes the positive counterpart to machismo that includes emotional responsiveness, honor, caretaking, and providing for one’s family (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008).
- *College*: refers to any two-year and four-year college or university.
- *Doctorate degree*: The highest academic degree conferred by a university in the continental United States. For the purposes of this dissertation, the term will make

reference to the Doctor of Education (Ed. D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.) degree.

- *Educational capital*: a combination of factors influenced by one's culture and schooling and has the potential to influence future generations through increased likelihood of access to other forms of capital such as economic (higher earnings) and social (increased networking opportunities) (Bourdieu, 1986).
- *Familismo*: A strong identification with and attachment to family, often characterized by feelings and behaviors that reflect loyalty to and solidarity with one's Latino family (Cerezo et al., 2013).
- *First-generation student*: According to the U.S. Department of Education (1997), first-generation students are those students whose parents never enrolled in post-secondary education (as cited in Hirudayaraj, 2011)
- *Hispanic*: refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race (Ennis et al., 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The term Hispanic and Latino is used interchangeably throughout this study.
- *Latina/o*: refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race (Ennis et al., 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The term Hispanic and Latina/o is used interchangeably throughout this study.
- *Mexican-American*: a person who is American male/female of Mexican origin. (Ennis et al., 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

- *Mexican origin*: refers to people who report their origin as Mexican and can include people born in Mexico, in the United States or other countries. Mexican origin is based on self-identification (Ennis et al., 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).
- *Native Californian*: refers to a person who was born in California.
- *Second-generation*: denotes individuals born in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent - these individuals are U.S. citizens by birth and many times referred to as “native-born” (Fry, 2008).
- *Socioeconomic status*: the social standing or class of an individual or group often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation (American Psychological Association, n.d.).

Delimitations

According to Roberts (2010), delimitations clarify the boundaries of the study by indicating “to the reader how you narrowed your study’s scope” (p. 138). Therefore, the following is a list of boundaries used:

- The study included only those participants that matched the selection criteria established for the study. The criteria for selection included; being male, second-generation Mexican American, native to California, received Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from an accredited university within California.
- Those surveyed must have received their doctorates after 2002. Research showed 785 doctoral degrees were conferred on males of Mexican origin who graduated from a university in California between 2002 through 2012(National Science

Foundation, 2014a).

Organization of the Study

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 one contains an overview of the study with the following subsections: introduction, background of the problem, problem statement, purpose statement, research questions, significance of the study, definitions, delimitations and organization of the study. Chapter II is a review of the literature and will help frame the study. Chapter III will focus on the methodology and the rationale for the research design. This chapter will be subdivided into the following sections: overview, purpose statement, research questions, research design, population and sample, instrumentation, trustworthiness and credibility, data collection, data analysis, limitations, and a summary of this chapter. Chapter IV summarizes the findings of the study through themes and patterns parallel to the research questions. Chapter V reports major findings, unexpected findings, conclusions, implications for action, recommendations for further research and concluding remarks and reflections.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Research literature regarding the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males attain their doctorates is limited. To better understand the factors that influenced high achieving second-generation Mexican American males attain their doctorates, a review of historic events provided a background regarding the evolution of Mexican Americans. Therefore, this literature review was organized into the following categories; theoretical lens (Assimilation Theory), factors hindering educational attainment (social, political, cultural), factors influencing educational attainment (school desegregation, educational resilience), and commonalities of doctorate completers (attrition, attainment).

Research regarding assimilation of Mexican Americans provided a macro level explanation of why this ethnic group continues to lag in the attainment of post-secondary degrees when compared to other ethnic and non-ethnic groups (Telles & Ortiz, 2008; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Pew Research Center, 2009; NCES, 2013; Cardenas & Kirby, 2012; Campaign for College Opportunity, 2013; NCES, 2012; Solorzano, 2012). Ortiz and Telles (2012), contend Mexican Americans have historically and legally been treated as second-class citizens and experienced segregationist educational practices antithetical to the historical purposes of public education in the United States; to create an educated citizenry for the democratic process, assimilate immigrants to American culture and language, and prepare a stable workforce for a productive economy (MacDonald, n.d., p. 307). Arguably, these actions can account for the poor educational outcomes experienced by this ethnic group and also account “for the slow or interrupted assimilation of Mexican

Americans in socioeconomic, cultural, residential and other dimensions in life” (Telles & Ortiz, 2008, p. 16).

In addition, it was also prudent to view this ethnic group’s resilience which can explain how some have overcome social, political and cultural barriers and had educational success at all levels of education. According to Alva and Padilla (1995), the notion of resilience can be used to explain why some Mexican American students perform well while others from similar socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds do not. Applicable to many Mexican Americans are uncontrollable life events that interfered with their academic motivation and performance (Alva, 1991) and if these conditions persist, Mexican American students “may come to believe that they cannot overcome failure” (Alva & Padilla, 1995, p. 5). Research found certain variables contributed to their educational attainment, yet very little is known “...about the factors that Mexican heritage students attribute to their own educational success” (Easley et al., 2012, p. 166). Therefore, existing research literature is limited for second-generation Mexican American males at the doctoral level.

Review of the Literature

Assimilation of Mexican Americans

“In every immigration era, certain groups are taken as emblematic of the period’s problems and successes” (Alba, Jimenez, & Marrow, 2014, p. 446). What the Irish were to the second half of 19th century, the Jews and Italians were to the first half of the 20th century (Alba et al., 2014). In more contemporary times, it is the Mexicans (Alba et al., 2014). Since the Treaty of Guadalupe (1848), there have been two major waves of immigration: the first wave between 1850 through 1930 (primarily European) while the

second occurred during the 1960's that included individuals mostly from "Latin America and Asia, with Mexicans easily the largest group" (Telles, 2006, p. 11). The irony is that the Mexican population has "been an immigrant group for more than a century, and before then, they were a large part of the original population resident on territory that was incorporated into the USA by conquest" (Alba et al., 2014, p. 447). According to Ortiz and Telles (2012), throughout the 20th century,

Mexicans with low levels of education and from poor backgrounds immigrated to the United States to fill the lowest paid jobs (agriculture, domestic work, construction) with peaks during the Mexican Revolution in 1910–1929, during the agricultural guest worker program for Mexicans (Bracero program) from 1942 to 1964, and post the Immigration Act of 1965 which liberalized immigration from the Americas (p. 44).

The Assimilation Theory argues that the descendants of immigrants (second generation) will be "absorbed into U.S. society" (Telles, 2006, p. 7). According to Telles and Ortiz (2008), "assimilation refers to the actual social process by which immigrants and their descendants may become integrated with and more like members of the host society through prolonged exposure and socialization to them and their institutions (p. 15). While the assimilation process is complex, Basuchoudhary and Cotting (2014) argue that "societies have certain cultural norms" and "implies that immigrants adopt these cultural norms" (p. 212). Alva and Padilla (1995) argued that cultural change involves an understanding of the norms and expectations of the new culture, but will create an identity that integrates the native and new cultures. As a result, Padilla (1986) states that "this process involves difficult, sometimes painful, decisions as to which cultural values

and practices to adopt and integrate into a self-identity” (as cited in Alva & Padilla, 1995, p 2). According to Richard Alba and Victor Nee (1997) this “social science concept offers the best way to understand and describe the integration into the mainstream experienced across generations by many individuals and ethnic groups (p. 827). Given reasonable expectation, this is especially true for a society like the U.S. with “its’ characteristically strong institutions (such as formal democracy), education, and its mass consumerism and culture, which all arguably promote homogeneity” (Telles, 2006, p. 7). For example, the offspring of many Europeans who left their native lands during the first immigration wave adapted to American culture and moved up the “mobility escalator and became regular Americans: middle class, intermarried with other ethnic groups, and monolingual in English” (Telles, 2006, p. 7).

Review of literature revealed numerous pessimistic views. Portes and Zhou (1993) stated the offspring of the second wave of immigrants will have a “future of segmented assimilation in which some groups, particularly those who arrive with high levels of human capital, will do well, while other groups such as Mexicans will assimilate in a downward fashion” (as cited in Telles, 2006, p. 12). Portes and Zhou (1993) further argued that

presumption is that it will be more difficult for the descendants of contemporary immigrants, many of whom enter the labor force at or near the bottom, to make the gradual intergenerational transition upwards, because footholds in the middle of the occupational structure are relatively scarce. Movement into the top strata requires substantial human capital, particularly higher educational credentials,

that is not likely to be within reach of all members of the second generation (as cited in Alba & Nee, 1997, p. 847).

Portes and Rumbaut (2001) supported earlier findings and proposed that the children of Mexican immigrants are “embedded in a particularly negative context in which parent’s low human capital combined with hostile government immigration policies and a history of racial stigmatization” (as cited in Telles & Ortiz, 2008, p. 33) will affect access to social networks, financial resources and impede school performance. Moreover, they support their argument by stating that educational problems for second generation are replicated and in many cases are worse in latter generations. A lecture given by Harvard University Professor Samuel P. Huntington on October 11, 2005 at Texas A&M University suggested that these immigrants (second wave) are following a fundamentally different path as “Latinos, particularly Mexicans, he claims, are overwhelming American borders and labor markets, and their descendants are failing to assimilate as European immigrants did before them” (as cited in Telles, 2006, p. 8). A study conducted by the Pew Research Center revealed similar skeptic views and stated that the children of today’s Latino immigrant will not enjoy the same upward mobility experienced by the offspring of European immigrants.

Scholars such as Alba and Nee (1997), Perlmann (2005), Telles (2006), Telles and Ortiz (2008) and Ortiz and Telles (2012) are more optimistic as they expect for most individuals of Mexican origin to assimilate similar to the first wave of Europeans. They hypothesized that the offspring of these low skilled immigrants may not be able to advance in the way that was possible for the first wave of Europeans for several reasons; the American economy has changed, an extended education is often out of reach for

immigrant families, and American society is a long way from ignoring race. Alba and Nee (1997) emphasize assimilation is a process of becoming similar rather than an ultimate state and assert that assimilation will depend on the “rigidity of social boundaries that keep particular ethnic groups from entering mainstream” (as cited in Telles and Ortiz, 2008, p. 31).

A study by Leo Grebler, Joan Moore and Ralph Guzman’s *The Mexican American Study Project* taken in 1965 and 1966 was conducted to systematically address the huge gaps in knowledge about Mexican Americans. Rather than focusing on rural areas, it focused on cities where by the 1970’s most Mexican Americans resided (Telles & Ortiz, 2008). According to Meier and Rivera (1993) while a vast majority lived in rural areas during the early 1900’s, approximately 40 percent of Mexican Americans resided in cities or towns by 1920; by 1990 the estimated proportion had risen to 94 percent with Los Angeles having the highest number of Latinos and the greatest proportion of its population were individuals of Mexican origin. Grebler and colleagues’ study concluded that some Mexican Americans had entered the middle class, “yet there was still little overall assimilation, even for those who had lived in the United States for several generations” (Telles & Ortiz, 2008, p 1).

In their follow up study some 35 years later, Telles and Ortiz (2008) were able to locate and re-interview 684 of the original respondents and 758 of their children. They argue that while “35 years represents the end of legal segregation and egregiously discriminatory laws and policies that had directly impeded progress” (p. 9), they acknowledge that Mexican Americans still experience racial exclusion but assimilation has increased and possible. However, they contend that it is and will continue to be slow

for second generation Mexican Americans. Moreover, later-generation Mexican Americans will continue to experience “a world largely shaped by their race and ethnicity” (p. 265) suggesting educational limitations will continue. These findings align with research by Telles (2006) and Ortiz and Telles (2012) who recognized that not all Mexican Americans will be integrated into American society to the same extent and at the same rate.

Because “education helps propel individuals toward assimilation on most other dimensions, a lack of educational progress thus limits Mexican American assimilation overall” (Telles & Ortiz, 2008, p. 265). Scholars such as Alba and Nee (1997), Perlmann (2005), Telles (2006), Telles and Ortiz (2008), Ortiz and Telles (2012) recognize the disadvantages encountered by individuals of Mexican origin and note they are not severe enough to affect long-term integration yet contend low educational attainment may be due to social, political or cultural barriers.

Factors Hindering Educational Attainment

Social Barriers

Racialization is a social process that creates and maintains systematic, unequal life chances between hierarchically ordered populations, where the superior one is generally described as the majority and the inferior one as a minority (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). Arguably, the fall of the Aztec Empire created “a racist system” that “favored light skin and European descent” (Forbes, 2013, Mestizo Concept and Strategy of Colonialism, para. 2). Keeping along the same lines, Saldana-Portillo (2004) argued territorial expansion under the Manifest Destiny doctrine brought with it the belief that White Anglo-Saxons were superior to all other races (Saldana-Portillo, 2004; Menchaca

& Valencia, 1990; Gutierrez, 1995). Nonetheless, Menchaca and Valencia (1990) posit ideologies claiming the biological and social superiority of Anglo-Saxons “encouraged unequal practices against racial minorities and justified the passage of segregationist legislation in the late 1800’s” (p. 225). Moreover it provided the belief that “God had predestined Anglo-Saxon Protestantism to triumph over all other religions and the conquest of inferior races was His Divine Plan” (Menchaca & Valencia, 1990, p. 226). According to Gutierrez (1995), Anglo-Saxons believed it was their God-given duty as a superior race to “eradicate inferior Mongrels” (p. 204). To do so require the “maintenance of a pure race and culture” achieved only through “selective intra-group breeding” and the “social segregation of the inferior races as the only preventive measure to maintain the racial purity (Menchaca & Valencia, 1990, p 225). In the case of individuals of Mexican origin, their defeat during the conquest of the Aztec empire and the Mexican American War were “...viewed to be evidence of their half-breed inferiority” (Menchaca & Valencia, 1990, p. 226).

Despite guarantees made by the Treaty of Guadalupe (1848) that ended conflict between Mexico and the United States, the rights of the annexed Mexican was ignored (Saldana-Portillo, 2004; Bowman, 2001). Saldana-Portillo (2004) contended of interest within the Treaty of Guadalupe (1848) were Articles VIII and IX, which “presumably guaranteed the land and civil rights of the newly annexed population” (p. 138); specifically, Article IX promised that all newly annexed Mexicans would be afforded the enjoyment of all guaranteed rights to citizens of the United States, which included education. The treaty did end the conflict, but it further promoted the “racialization of Mexican Americans in relation to Anglo-Americans” (Saldana-Portillo, 2004, p. 136) and

“established a tenuous border between Indian identity and Mexican American identity” (Saldana-Portillo, 2004, p. 136). MacDonald (2004) noted that the treaty also created negative feelings toward individuals of Mexican origin who were viewed as “lazy, shiftless, jealous, cowardly, bigoted, superstitious, backward and immoral” (p. 31). Complicating matters for educational equality of individuals of Mexican origin was society’s accepted views of their whiteness.

By all accounts, the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which addressed the rights and equal protection of U.S. born and naturalized citizens, should have sanctioned the educational advancement of individuals of Mexican origin. However, the “separate but equal” doctrine that would become the foundation that justified racial segregation between Blacks and Whites, provided the quality of public facilities for each group were equal (National Constitution Center, n.d.; MacDonald, n.d.; Bowman, 2001), also served as a race pendulum for the newly annexed Mexican (Saldana-Portillo, 2004). Under federal law, the newly annexed Mexican was categorized as White, but they were not afforded the same social and educational privileges as Whites (Bowman, 2001; MacDonald, 2004; Saldana-Portillo, 2004). According to Bowman (2001),

as a group, Latinos are nearly invisible within this paradigm[Black-White] because Non-White often is presumed to be roughly equivalent to African American...The perception of *Brown* and its progeny as occurring in a society where there are two races, Black and White, is widely shared (p. 1753).

Therefore, Saldana-Portillo (2004) argue that “it was up to local and state government agents to determine” (p. 148) if “annexed Mexicans should be enfranchised or

disenfranchised” (p. 148) and allowed to take advantage of all rights afforded to citizens of the U.S.

Westward expansion and the continuance of immigration from Mexico continued to trigger anti-immigrant sentiments between well-established Anglo-Saxons and newly arriving groups (MacDonald, n.d.). These anti-immigrant sentiments prompted “xenophobic measures” against such groups and were instrumental in the passing of Immigration Acts and “English-only statutes in schools” (MacDonald, n.d., p. 309). Under the Treaty of Guadalupe (1848), Mexico was legally exempt from such demands; regardless, measures to segregate individuals of Mexican origin from so called White public institutions – including public education –increased under the Americanization campaigns (MacDonald, n.d.). These campaigns were based on the premise that their [individuals of Mexican origin] educational deficiencies would be addressed and the “deterioration” of the White students lessened (Madrid, 2008). Unfortunately, “Mexicans whether immigrant or born in the United States” (Ortiz & Telles, 2012, p. 45) experienced the same type of school segregation.

Political Barriers

The linkage between school segregation and educational achievement of individuals of Mexican origin has been amply documented (Menchaca & Valencia, 1990; Telles & Ortiz, 2008; Madrid, 2008; MacDonald, n.d., Perlman, 2005). Menchaca and Valencia (1990) argue that this observed relation was “pervasive, negative, and strong” (p. 222)—as the concentration of students of Mexican origin increased, achievement as a form of measurement by standardized tests, decreased. While educational opportunities were provided for individuals of Mexican origin, they came in the form of inadequate

resources, poor equipment, unfit buildings, and unfit teachers (Madrid, 2008; MacDonald, n.d.; Valencia, 2011). Montejano (1987) supported these findings adding Anglo teachers frequently shared the common Anglo belief about Mexican intellectual inferiority and often lacked teaching experience (MacDonald, n.d.). Menchaca and Valencia (1990) contend the Americanization campaigns were nothing more than a smoke screen that allowed basic levels of education but schooling past secondary education was often discouraged as it “would permit Mexican American children access to a segment of society Anglos reserved for themselves” (MacDonald, n.d., p. 310).

Grace Stanley, an educator in the 1920’s noted that often the “role of local community played in the creation and perpetuation of an educational system that segregated Latinos” (as cited in Bowman, 2001, p. 1761). Under California state codes, the segregation of Mexican American students was illegal; nonetheless, the Americanization and English-only policies in California were much more rapid than other parts of the U.S which soon became the “accepted view” of public schools (MacDonald, n.d., p 309). Garth (1923) and Young (1922) cited that many social scientists during this era labeled Mexican Americans as a problematic people with “low-intelligence, culturally and linguistically deprived” (as cited in Rendon, 1999, p. 40). “The blend of two inferior racial stocks – the argument went – had produced a third inferior race that was more feeble-minded than either parent race (Menchaca & Valencia, 1990, p. 228). Fueled by this belief, many Anglo parents objected at the notion that their children would be schooled with “dirty and diseased Mexicans” who belonged to a “lower class” (MacDonald, n.d., p. 310). Hence throughout California the “establishment

of Mexican schools became commonplace” and “featured separate educational facilities for Mexican children and children of Mexican descent” (Madrid, 2008, p. 16).

According to writings by Montejano (1987), it wasn't a matter of what was the best way to handle the educational needs of Mexicans to make citizens of them, "...it is politics. That is the way we excuse what we do" (p. 192). As such, throughout the Southwest "school authorities usually relied on a combination of pedagogical and popular sociological explanations to justify the Mexican school situation-mental retardation, language problems, poor hygiene, health reasons, failure to appreciate education, inherent inferiority, and so on" (Montejano, 1987, p. 192). Orozco (n.d.) reported that Texas education officials separated Mexican-origin children by pedagogical analysis or language deficiency. Munoz (2001) found that "children of Mexican descent posed a complex educational dilemma" for Arizonan Mexicans as they "were often U.S. citizens and the state considered them to be White for census calculations, even though they possessed a different heritage and culture than most White Arizonans" (p. 28). Regardless, Arizona courts allowed segregation of students for pedagogical reasons as long as the "children's educational opportunities were equal" (Munoz, 2001, p. 28)

Despite basic levels of education, the Americanization Campaigns generally prepared Mexican children and adolescents for jobs with low pay and low status (e.g. agriculture and domestic work) (Ruiz, 2003) and normally featured a curriculum that included "cooking, hygiene, English, and civics" (Madrid 2008, p. 16). Social scientists of this era argued individuals of Mexican origin were better suited for seasonal labor supporting findings by Montejano (1987), who reported on this era's educational views with regards to individuals of Mexican origin; "they should be taught something yes. But

the more ignorant they are, the better laborers they are. The law which keeps them out if they can't read keeps out the best laborers and lets in the worst. If these get educated, we'll have to get more from Mexico" (p. 192).

Literature review also revealed that not all individuals of Mexican origin were subject to second rate schooling. According to MacDonald (n.d.) the educational policies of this era varied and were dependent on the economic and political power of the Mexican descent population. For example, those who were deemed "honorary White" were allowed to attend White schools. According to MacDonald (n.d.),

this honorary Whiteness was often extended to children with American surnames (typically those with an Anglo father), children possessing light complexions, members of the older elite Spanish families in certain locales and others who possessed economic/social capital or connections with school board members (p. 310).

Literature review also revealed that in 1931 Assemblyman Bliss of Carpenteria, California introduced a bill that would have legalized the segregation of Mexican origin students and reclassify them under the Indian rubric (Bowman, 2001). According to Madrid (2008), "under the auspices of the education code" (p. 16), the separation of Indians and Whites was constitutional.

Arguably, the Americanization campaigns were implemented to help advance the assimilation of individuals of Mexican origin. Telles (2006) argued that to a certain degree it retarded their advancement as a key indicator of assimilation is acquiring "English language skills by the second generation" (p. 13). Ironically, a large number of students who participated in the Americanization programs were American born citizens

(Alvarez, 1986) and “spoke English only” (MacDonald, n.d., p. 309). Be that as it may, the Americanization campaigns allowed for segregationist school practices, promoted racialization and encouraged this ethnic group’s stigmatization of being associated with low intelligence. Review of literature also found cultural barriers that can explain why this ethnic group continues to lag in the attainment of post-secondary degrees (Hurtado et al., 2008; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011a; NCES, 2013).

Cultural Barriers

Review of literature noted many cultural barriers associated with the educational underachievement of Latinos (Alva, 1991; Alva & Padilla, 1995; MacDonald, n.d.; Bowman, 2001; Saldana-Portillo, 2004; Madrid, 2008; Alvarez, 1986; Orozco, n.d.; Munoz, 2001; Martinez 1997; Pew Research Center, 2009; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Lopez, 2009; Gloria et al., 2009; Cerezo et al., 2013). Often highlighted was low socioeconomic status (SES); specifically, living in poverty (Alva, 1991; Waxman, 1992; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Waxman et al., 2003; Huffeld, 2007; Pew Research, 2009; Solorzano et al., 2005, Saenz, 2009, Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Cerezo et al., 2013) and a lack of educational capital (Alva, 1991; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Waxman et al., 2003; Pew Research, 2009; Solarzano et al., 2005; Saenz, 2009; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). According to the American Psychological Association (n.d.), SES is often measured as a combination of educational capital, income, and occupation. Research on SES indicates a positive correlation between students from low-SES households/communities and low educational attainment. In fact, there is strong evidence that students who come from low SES households/communities develop academic skills more slowly than students from

higher SES groups which negatively affects their educational attainment (American Psychological Association, n.d.).

While low SES applied to both male and female Latino students, review of literature also revealed that Mexican American males will face gender specific challenges. According to Cerezo et al. (2013) Mexican American males' educational aspirations and behaviors are largely "shaped by various ecological spheres and interactions between these spheres" (p. 352). Often, Mexican American males will receive competing messages from family, schools, peer groups, neighborhood communities and society in general (Cerezo et al., 2013; Vasquez, 2010; Pew Research Center, 2009). In this respect, Arciniega et al., (2008) argued the psychological development of Mexican American males is caught in a continuum as competing messages may reflect incongruence between educational aspirations, masculinity, and "the intent of being a good man" (p. 33). Cerezo et al. (2013) posit

factors impacting young Mexican American male educational success are complex and multifaceted...With Mexican Americans comprising approximately 66% of all Latinos in the United States, many young men reside in low-income areas often characterized by under-resourced schools and multiple community stressors that pose a challenge to postsecondary preparedness" (p. 352).

Moreover, the low-income neighborhoods, or *barrios*, where many individuals of Mexican origin reside, are often plagued by "substandard social, economic, cultural and educational resources" (Bigalondo, 2013, p. 48) and in many cases gangs (Cerezo et al., 2013; Blatchford, 2008; Mendoza, 2005). Studies on Mexican gangs as being highly violent with drug dealing as the basis of their economic resources as well as having social

control are well documented (Skarbek, 2011; Bigalondo, 2013; Blatchford, 2008; Mendoza, 2005) and have been known to impede the educational aspirations of Mexican American males (Vasquez, 2010; Cerezo et al., 2013). In their study of Mexican American men in college, Cerezo et al. (2013) cited participants often reported as "...having to negotiate pressure from peers in their neighborhood community who encouraged the pursuit of non-college paths" (p. 359).

Howell (1998) argued neighborhood ambivalence toward gangs exists because many gang members are children of community residents or often identify with gangs because of their own or relatives prior involvement. A study by the Pew Research (2009) reports individuals of Mexican origin are more exposed to gangs than any other Latino subgroup. The same study suggested that 56% of the population surveyed stated gangs where in their schools and approximately 37% stated friends or a relative where members of a gang. In fact, Telles and Ortiz (2008) posit "second generation is the most susceptible to street socialization and gangs" (p. 154) and "nowhere are gangs as apparent as among the Mexican origin population in the barrios of southwestern cities, particularly in Southern California" (p. 154).

The Pew Research Center (2009) also found many second-generation Mexican Americans follow the cultural norm of *familismo*. According to Cerezo et al. (2013) familismo is defined as "a strong identification with and attachment to family, often characterized by feelings and behaviors that reflect loyalty to and solidarity with one's family" (p. 353). Arciniega et al. (2008) posit familismo is laired within the male gender role of Latinos; specifically, the gender norms of machismo and caballerismo which are culturally unique to Mexican American males. "To varying degrees, machismo in the

Mexican and the Mexican American community is being defined as a construct that is both positive and negative” (Arciniega et al., 2008, p. 20). Positive characteristics consistent with machismo are protector of family and its honor, dignity, wisdom, hard work, responsibility, spirituality, and emotional connectedness while caballerismo refers to a code of masculine chivalry embedded with respectful manners and living by an ethical code (Arciniega et al., 2008). The more one self-identifies as Mexican, the higher the cultural expectation to conform to these gender norms and provide for their family (Arciniega et al., 2008). In other words, Mexican males will “experience pressure from greater society and the immediate family to sustain the family’s well-being, first and foremost, via financial contributions” (Cerezo et al., 2013, p. 353). While many Latino parents acknowledge higher education as a vehicle to climb the social ladder and gain access to higher paying jobs “many still exert pressure on their sons to contribute financially to their families” (Clark et al., 2013, p. 462). According to Saenz and Ponjuan (2009) “in many respects, the familismo orientation among Latino families serves to define gender roles and expectations for family members such that sacrificing the needs of the individual over the needs of the family is commonplace” (p. 63). Thus the gender role and expectation of Latino males to contribute to the family’s well being often results in forgoing higher education and joining the workforce (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Solorzano et al., 2005). Along the same lines, Cerezo et al. (2013) noted financial needs sometimes encouraged involvement in “an underground economy” (p. 352) that is readily accessible to many Mexican American males. As a result, members of this underclass have been known to rely on different forms of economic alternatives which include drug trafficking, white-collar crimes and other profitable street crimes (FBI, 2011).

Further challenges include the pervasive “boy code,” which frames self-identity of boys as being tough, independent and strong (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Clark et al., 2013). According to Saenz and Ponjuan (2009) “for Latino men, the machismo archetype only serves to reinforce these codes through a culturally infused lens... These young men feel pressure to be strong and tough, which could affect the stance they take toward their education (as cited in Clark et al., 2013, p 459). In this fashion, Arcieniga et al. (2008) found a positive correlation between certain antisocial behaviors (i.e., fighting and arrests) and less education among Mexican American men. This finding supports the majority of the popular literature on machismo which continues“...to be associated with the negative characteristics of sexism, chauvinism, and hypermasculinity” (p. 19) and often overshadowed with overtones of being controlling, violent and aggressive.

Coincidentally, most research literature on Latino males generally contains a plethora of deficiency-focused or maladaptive-behavior-based articles focusing on violence, cultural influences or drugs (Gloria et al., 2009) which reinforces the stereotype that Mexican American males are not “college material” (Cerezo et al., 2013, Arciniega, et al., 2008), often associated with gangs and prone to violence (Pew Research Center, 2009; Blatchford, 2008; Mendoza, 2005; Howell, 1998) and viewed as being “hard” and controlling (Vasquez, 2010); a misconception that continues to be circulated across numerous media platforms (Vasquez, 2010; Skarbek, 2011).

While the notion of familismo can carry negative connotations, literature review found that it can also serve as a social network that can support male Latinos as they navigate the educational system (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Cerezo et al., 2013). According to Cerezo and colleagues (2013), familismo is central to the lives of Mexican Americans

and has been noted “as a significant protective factor in the lives of Latino college students” (p. 353). Furthermore, they reported “...emotional support from the family positively contributes to the pursuit of college for many Mexican American men” (p. 353) while Valenzuela and Dornbusch (1994) stated that “for Latino males, the value of familismo can be an asset because of its correlation with strong social and family networks, which can ultimately be accessed to support their academic achievement (as cited in Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009, p. 63) and overcome obstacles.

According to MacDonald (n.d.), barriers are not always a reflection of ability; rather they are many times social, economic and political. “Despite obstacles faced, Latino communities have always demonstrated the capacity to act independently and make their own choices in the struggle to gain access to quality schooling” (MacDonald, n.d., p. 307) thereby building momentum to increasing their overall educational attainment.

Factors Influencing Educational Attainment

School Desegregation (Will to Overcome)

Matters of civil rights and school desegregation traditionally have been perceived within the Black experience. According to Madrid (2008) this is “problematic because it tends to marginalize the history of intolerance and bigotry leveled at Latinos” (p.15) who by all accounts were categorized as White (Saldana-Portillo, 2004; Madrid, 2008). Wells & ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education (1989) noted the segregation of Hispanic students was not as pronounced as it was for Black students but it allowed for the maintenance and separation of schools for individuals of Mexican origin. Hence, school

desegregation is not often associated with the Mexican Community in California (Alvarez, 1986).

Alvarez (1986) stated “the earliest court cases concerning school desegregation occurred in the Southwest and California” (p. 116). In fact, approximately “100 school desegregation and education-related cases” (Bowman, 2001, p. 1770) were heard during the 19th century “yet there is little mention of them in the history texts” (Bowman, 2001, p. 1770) as most challenges to educational desegregation were lost due to the government employing the racial designation of White (Martinez, 1997) rendering identification difficult for litigators (MacDonald, n.d.). MacDonald (n.d.) argues *Romo v. Laird* (1925) changed this view and brought the only “formal legal case of the 1920sin which Mexican Americans fought against educational segregation” (p. 312). Within the lawsuit, Mexican American parents sued Tempe, Arizona School District for allowing student teachers in steadof fully trained teachers. The court agreed with the plaintiff citing segregation of “Mexican American students without giving them equivalent opportunities to attend the regular public schools violated the students’ rights” (MacDonald, n.d., p. 312).

Along the same lines, the first court victory at the state level (California) that challenged the “perfidious notion of separate but equal facilities” (Madrid, 2008, p. 1) and demanded the desegregation of schools and educational equality for Mexican American students was *Alvarez v. Lemon Grove School District* (1931). According to Madrid (2008)

the Lemon Grove parents’ efforts and legal struggles involved more than 70 children of Mexican descent who were summarily directed by their school

principal to attend a hastily constructed, two-room segregated school, the *caballeriza*, the barn, which was situated in the Mexican side of town (p. 15).

The court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs (Mexican community) and prohibited further segregation stating “the laws of the State of California do not authorize or permit the establishment or maintenance of separate schools for the instruction of pupils of Mexican parentage, nationality, and/or descent” (Bowman, 2001, p. 1771). The courts concluded that under California law, the segregation of Blacks and Indian students was lawful; however, since Latinos were not categorized as Black or Indian, their segregation was not defensible (Bowman, 2001). While the Lemon Grove court ruling was viewed as a victory, it proved to be an anomaly as it was not used as a precedent for further immediate court cases (Bowman, 2001). Furthermore, throughout the Southwest and California, segregation continued and persisted until the 1940’s and 1950’s.

At the federal level, the “most significant court case affecting the de jure segregation of Mexican children in the Southwest” was *Mendez v. Westminster* (1946) in Southern California (Bowman, 2001, p. 1773). Again, the school districts claimed to segregate Latino students under the pretense of being English (language) deficient which according to Santiago (2013), became yet another vehicle that allowed for the segregation of Mexican American students. The courts concluded that “the student assignment process was sometimes completed on the basis of the students name alone” (Bowman, 2001, p. 1773). Specifically the court ruled:

The equal protection of the laws pertaining to the public school system in California is not provided by furnishing separate schools the same technical facilities, text books and courses of instruction to children of Mexican ancestry

that are available to the other public school children regardless of their ancestry.

A paramount requisite in the American system of public education is social equality. It must be open to all children by unified school association regardless of lineage (PBS, n.d., p. 4).

Furthermore, Judge Paul J. McCormick stated that

the evidence clearly shows that Spanish-speaking children are retarded in learning English by lack of exposure to its use because of segregation, and that commingling of the entire student body instills and develops a common cultural attitude among the school children which is imperative for the perpetuation of American institutions and ideals. It is also established by the record that the methods of segregation prevalent in the defendant school districts foster antagonisms in the children and suggest inferiority among them where none exists (PBS, n.d., p. 4).

“Although *Mendez* foreshadowed *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and played a prominent role in dismantling the system of de facto educational segregation, *Brown* did not render the segregation of Latinos unconstitutional” (Bowman, 2001, p. 1768). Under the realm of education and Black-White binary, Mexican Americans were still categorized as White. Despite the personal involvement of Chief Justice Warren, the *Mendez* court ruling and other successful challenges to Latino segregation were not referenced in the ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education* (MacDonald, n.d.; Bowman, 2001). According to Bowman (2001)

The *Mendez* decision ...led to California’s repeal of its school segregation statutes. Then Governor Earl Warren signed legislation repealing California’s

segregation statutes on June 4, 1947. This was, of course, the same Earl Warren who, as Chief Justice of the United States, would later pen the opinions in *Brown v. Board of Education* and *Hernandez v. Texas* (p. 1776).

Brown v. Board of Education did overturned decades of jurisprudence when it ruled that it was unconstitutional for state laws to deny educational equality based on race yet de facto segregation continued as Mexican Americans were still concentrated in Mexican Schools.

Numerous court rulings followed in the fight against school desegregation. Twelve days after the *Brown* ruling, the Supreme Court ruled on *Hernandez v. Texas* (1954) “where the court declared Latinos to be a protected class” (Bowman, 2001, p. 1776) and *Cisneros v. Corpus Christi Independent School District* (1970) recognized Mexican Americans as an ethnic group (MacDonald, n.d.; Orozco, n.d.). However, even with de jure legislation in place, de facto segregation of Latinos continued until the ruling of *Keyes v. School District 1 in Denver, Colorado* (1973), where the courts ruled that Mexicans would be recognized as a separate ethnic minority (Bowman, 2001; Allsup, n.d.; MacDonald, n.d.). However, Latinos would now be viewed as Non-White under the newly established White-Non-White paradigm. According to Bowman (n.d.),

the Supreme Court collapsed the Latino and African American narratives of segregation and discrimination by making Latinos, who had been raced White by courts (and would continue to be raced White by the U.S. Census Bureau), Non-White for the purposes of school desegregation (p. 1779).

The Black-White binary which played a significant role in Mexican Americans educational inequality and race-conscious remedies were now replaced with the White-

Non-White paradigm which meant Mexican Americans were once again caught in hierarchical paradigm; this time as a member of the “majority or the minority, either White or Non-White” (Bowman, 2001, p. 1752).

According to Tello (2011), these court victories “indicate that Mexican American people have actively struggled for educational empowerment” (p. 35) showcasing this group’s will to fight for educational equality and ability to build resilience.

Resilience (Will to Adapt)

The notion of resilience emerged, almost by accident, from longitudinal developmental studies of “at risk” groups of children who encountered many life stressors as they grew toward adulthood (Howard & Johnson, 2000, p. 2). Instead of focusing on deficit paradigms, a new approach focused on individual and environmental strengths that helped withstand high levels of “risk” (Howard & Johnson, 2000).

Garmezy, Masten and Tellegen (1984) adopted the term “invulnerable” to describe students who developed well despite the stressors experienced. Masten and Tellegen (2012) reported that the term was short lived for numerous reasons including the “untenable idea that there were children impervious to horrible experiences” (p. 347).

Waxman et al. (2003) posit that the term resilient was adopted in “recognition of the struggle involved in the process of becoming resilient (p 2), which aligns with the findings of Garmezy and Masten (1991), who stated that resilience is a “process of, or capacity for, or the outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging and threatening circumstances” (p. 459).

Literature review found numerous scholars agreeing resilience a process and not a fixed attribute (Masten, 1991; Alva, 1991; Werner & Smith, 1992; Alva & Padilla, 1995;

Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Masten, 1994; Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Masten, 2001; Waxman et al., 2003; Masten & Tellegen, 2012). Additionally, it was noted that two sets of criteria were required to infer resilience: positive adaptation and overcoming adversity (Masten et al., 1990; Alva, 1991; Alva & Padilla, 1995; Luther & Cicchetti, 2000; Waxman et al., 2003; Masten & Tellegen, 2012).

While numerous risk factors associated with high academic failure and attrition among Latino students were found (discussed in the subsection titled *Cultural Barriers*), difference of opinion on a minimum number of risk factors for a scenario to be deemed “adverse” was noted. According to Waxman et al. (2003), this issue raises the question as to whether or not “a successful student who has only one or two of these risk factors can be considered a resilient student” (p. 2). Moreover, research revealed difference of opinion as to what constitutes risk (barriers), which supports findings of Howard and Johnson (2000), who stated that defining risk factors is challenging due to the researchers understanding of risk and resilience. With regards to positive adaption, difference of opinion was again noted; however, within the realm of educational resilience, Jew, Green and Kroger (1999) stated researchers often use results from state testing or grades as a measurement of positive adjustment, which supports the notion that attaining a post-secondary degree is one form of measurement.

Early Studies on Resilience. A longitudinal study conducted by Werner and Smith (1977) explored the impact of biological and psychosocial risk factors, stressful life events, and protective factors on a multi-racial cohort of some 698 children born in 1955 in Kauai, Hawaii. During the two decade study, a team of public health workers,

pediatricians, and psychologists followed this cohort. According to Werner and Smith (1977)

the study population consisted of Japanese, Filipino, Hawaiians, and part-Hawaiians, Portuguese, Puerto-Ricans, Chinese, Koreans, and a small group of Anglo Saxon Caucasians. They were children and grandchildren of immigrants from Southeast Asia and Europe, who had come to Hawaii to work on the sugar plantations. About half came from families in which the fathers were semiskilled or unskilled laborers and the mothers had less than eight years of education (p. 293)

One third of the population were deemed high-risk due to being “born and raised in poverty, had experienced pre- or perinatal complications; lived in families troubled by chronic discord, divorce, or parental psychopathology” (Werner, 2005, p. 11). The study concluded one third of the high-risk group displayed a high state of disposition that found support through family and friends. Werner and Smith (1977) postulated that most were competent in coping with their problems, chose their parents as their models, found their family and friends to be supportive and understanding, and expressed a strong sense of continuity with their families in values attached to education, occupational preferences, and social expectations (p. 305).

In a follow up study, Werner and Smith (1992) monitored this group’s development during the latter years of 32 and 40. The studies of Werner and Smith showcased the following resilient traits; problem-solving skills, communication skills, self-efficacy, sense of pride, high internal locus of control, can-do attitude, and ability to relate to numerous sources of support (i.e. teachers, caring neighbor, mentors).

Additionally, it was reported that these individuals succeeded in school, were able to set realistic educational goals and manage home and social life. According to Werner (2005) “their educational and vocational accomplishment were equal to or even exceeded those of children who had grown up in more economically secure and stable home environments” (Werner, 2005, p. 12). Furthermore, the study unveiled individual, family and community protective factors that differentiated resilient individuals from non-resilient individuals (Werner, 2005). Moreover, the study found that “resilient boys tended to come from households with structure and rules, where a male served as a model of identification, and where there was encouragement of emotional expressiveness” (Werner, 2005, p. 12).

Masten and Tellegen (2012) stated most of the pioneers in the study of resilience were clinicians trying to understand, prevent, or treat mental health problems (p. 347). Masten, Best and Garmezy (1990) noted that the concept of resilience has been used to describe three major phenomena in psychological literature (as cited in Waxman et al., 2003). The first included studies of individual differences in recovery from trauma; the second comprised of people from high-risk groups who attain better outcomes than typically expected; while the third included the ability to adapt, despite stressful experiences. According to Waxman et al. (2003), one of the pioneer studies that reflects educational resilience was Garmezy, Mastem and Tellegan’s (1984) Project Competence; the third category.

The focus of Project Competence was to gain a deeper understanding of how life stressors affected competency levels. In other words, Garmezy and colleagues set out to “measure key aspects of competence (our criteria for adaptive success) and exposures to

stressors (our risk criteria), as well as the attributes of child or family that might account for variations in adaptation in the context of stressful experiences (clues to protective processes)” (Masten & Tellegen, 2012, p. 347). Project Competence provided conflicting conclusions. First off, it concluded that “disadvantaged children with lower IQs and socioeconomic status (SES) and less positive family qualities were generally less competent and more likely to be disruptive” (Waxman et al., 2003, p. 4). However, they also found that some students did not display negative behavioral problems but rather “developed negative adaptations” (as cited in Waxman et al., 2003, p. 4). Finally they recognized that resilience could change over time; thus, students might display resilience at one point in life and not another (Masten & Tellegen, 2012; Masten et al., 1990).

Educational Resilience. Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1994) posited that educational resilience was “the heightened likelihood of success in school and other life accomplishments despite environmental adversities brought about by early traits, conditions, and experiences (p. 46). According to Alva (1991) students who “sustain high levels of achievement, motivation and performance, despite the presence of stressful events and conditions that place them at risk of doing poorly in school and ultimately dropping out of school” (p. 19) are prime examples of resilient students. However, the process is complex and includes collective factors across multiple domains, with the factors often interacting with each other (Hupfeld, 2007). Therefore the interrelationship between personal (individual characteristics) and environmental (external support) factors are critical for the development of educational resilience (Arellano & Padilla, 1996).

Studies on Educational Resilience and Mexican Americans. Alva (1991) examined the characteristics of a cohort of tenth-grade Mexican American students who

shared similar background. Her findings concluded that resilient students (high grade point average and were from a low socioeconomic background) displayed “a positive view of their intellectual ability and a strong sense of responsibility for their academic future were more likely to be academically successful” (p. 18). Her findings also suggest that a supportive network was linked to academic invulnerability. In a similar study, Reyes and Jason (1993) examined the factors that differentiate the success and failure of Latino students from inner-city high schools. Forty-eight minority high-school freshmen from similar low socioeconomic backgrounds whose parents’ education average was below the fifth-grade level were categorized as high- or low-risk. Based on high rate of absenteeism and high rate of course failure, half the students were identified as being high-risk thus more likely for dropping out of school; the others were identified as low risk. Participants were interviewed individually on four main topics: family background, family support, overall school satisfaction, and gang pressures. The significance of this study was twofold; no substantial difference was noted with regards to socioeconomic status and family support. Meaning low socioeconomic status and family support played minimal role in students either dropping out or not dropping out. Additionally, high-risk students reported they were more likely to have been invited to join a gang, have gang-affiliated friends or family, or carried a weapon to school. As expected, low-risk students were significantly more satisfied with school.

Arellano and Padilla (1996) examined the life circumstances of high achieving Mexican decent students who gained acceptance into elite universities. They investigated at-risk and academic resiliency by examining 30 undergraduate Latino students categorized by educational attainment of parents: Group 1 parents had 11 or fewer years

of schooling; Group 2 at least one parent graduated from high school; and Group 3 at least one parent completed college. The analysis of the study revealed four common protective resources consistent with the respondents' academic success: each respondent cited the critical importance of parental support and encouragement; the belief that success was possible regardless of obstacles (self-efficacy); the personal characteristic of being persistent; and “the majority of the respondents identified strongly with their ethnicity, citing ethnicity and motivation in their academic attainment” (Arellano & Padilla, 1996, p. 492). A secondary theme emerged among most of the respondents in Groups 1 and 2, which was the importance of a mentor or role model in setting and attaining academic goals. Unexpectedly, “the majority of the respondents (83%) were second generation Mexican American” (p. 488).

Gandara (1994) studied 50 Mexican Americans, 30 male and 20 female, who despite adversity were able to attain the following graduate degrees; Ph.D., M.D.& J.D. Of the 30 males, 11 were categorized as second-generation. “During their years in school they met most of the criteria that are generally acknowledged to be highly predictive of school failure and dropping out: poverty, low levels of parental education, large families, limited exposure to English at home” (Gandara, 1994, p. 4). The study reported that a majority of the participants stated persistence, hard work and ability contributed to their success. Additionally, gender differences were noted. Females were more likely to attribute their academic success to supportive family members (environmental factor) while males were more likely to attribute their academic success to hard work and ability.

Heimlich (2001) conducted in depth interviews with 12 Mexican Americans doctoral students at a competitive research university in California in pursuit of their

Ph.D. The study found personal drive, career aspirations, enjoyment of chosen discipline and the role of mentorship as factors that influenced their degree attainment. According to Heimlich (2001) “members of the educational system, peers, and family all played important roles at various times in supporting these students”(Heimlich, 2001, p. ix). However, “no one factor was found to be essential to the pursuit of the doctorate, and each student’s perspective on their experiences was truly unique as they discussed both their struggles and supports (Heimlich, 2001, p. ix).

Protective Resources Identified in Educational Resilience. Masten (1994) contends protective resources describe factors that can facilitate adaption and reduce the effects of risks while researchers Werner and Smith (1992) noted protective factors are both internal and external and have the capability to buffer, and in some cases, prevent risk. According to Garmezy (1983), these protective resources are unique to a specific individual, their environmental condition, and life events that act as barriers against adverse conditions and outcomes.

Research unveiled two types of protective resources: personal and environmental (Werner & Smith, 1982, 1992; Garmezy, 1983; Bernard, 1993, 1995; McMillan & Reed, 1994; Alva & Padilla, 1995; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Gandara, 1995; Reed, 1999; Howard & Johnson, 2000; Ceballo, 2004; Werner, 2005; Perez et al., 2009; Cavazos, 2010; Cerezo et al., 2013). “Personal resources are individual attributes such as personality characteristics, attitude, and motivation, whereas environmental factors refer to external support systems found in the family, school, and community. Both act as protective influences and serve to neutralize the effects of at-risk conditions” (Arellano & Padilla, 1996, p. 486). However, Howard and Johnson (2000) posited that “no single

combination of protective factors” (p. 5) can be identified as being superior to others.

What is certain is the more protective factors (resources) available and utilized, the more likely an individual will become resilient and display resilient behavior (Johnson & Howard, 2000).

Personal Factors (Internal). Alva and Padilla (1995) stated personal factors include characteristics and attitudes that students possess to “mediate the effects of detrimental environmental circumstances” (p. 4). Benard (1995) concluded that resilient individuals often displayed the following personal factors: social competence (abilities to elicit positive responses from others thus establish positive relationships with family, school, or community); problem-solving skills (abilities to think abstractly and be able to find alternate solutions for both cognitive and social problems); autonomy (sense of one's identity and the ability to act independently and remaining in control over one's environment); sense of purpose (goal-oriented, educational aspirations, persistence, hopefulness, and a sense of a bright future). However, review of literature found self-efficacy (Gandara, 1994; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Easley et al., 2012; Cerezo et al., 2013) and persistence (Gandara, 1994; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Heimlich, 2001; Cerezo et al., 2013) as reoccurring themes for college students of Mexican origin.

Self-efficacy. Hupfeld (2007) stated “personal resiliency traits can be linked to a sense of self-efficacy and self-determination—in other words, the student believes that he or she has the ability to shape what happens and is responsible for his or her success” (p. 3). This self-belief that one can accomplish any goal is critical and often found in resilient students (Cavazos et al., 2010). These findings support research by Masten and Garmezy (1990) who stated much of the resiliency research draws on the self-efficacy and self-

determination theories. Bandura (1997) argued self-efficacy is a personal judgment of one's capabilities to plan and implement courses of action to attain prescribed goals. Scholars Bandara and Locke (2003) posit the combination of self-efficacy and sense of purpose (goal) enhances motivation and performance attainment. Similar, Yussuf (2011) stated it serves as a core cause of human action that influences individuals to believe in their own ability to execute a given task. A study by Yussuf (2011) found a strong correlation between self-efficacy beliefs and achievement motivation, and self-regulation which supported Bandura and Locke's (2003) statement; "self-efficacy belief actively injects other factors of success such as motivation and self-regulation" (as cited in Yussuf, 2011, p 2614). According to Bandura (1997), "self-efficacious students participate more readily, work harder, persist longer, and have fewer adverse emotional reactions when they encounter difficulties than do those who doubt their capabilities" (as cited in Zimmerman, 2000, p. 86).

Along the same lines, Easley et al. (2012) also commented on the personal factor of *Ganas*; the Latino equivalence of motivation. According to Easley et al. (2012), "Ganas—cited as a source of motivation, may be a significant reason that individuals ...excel when statistically they are supposed to fail" (p. 174). Their data analysis noted multiple components of *Ganas*, including (a) acknowledgement of parental struggle and sacrifice, (b) strong value of family and family's history (c) parental admiration and respect, (d) a desire to repay and pay forward, and (e) resilience and willingness to persevere. "Alone, any one of these attributes could lead to increased academic achievement; however, together, they culminate in *Ganas*, a very strong source of motivation" (Easley et al., 2012, p. 174-175).

Persistence. A second prevalent theme noted among college students of Mexican origin was the characteristic of persistence or the drive to succeed (Gandara, 1994; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Heimlich, 2001; Cerezo et al., 2013). According to Hilton (1982) “the term persistence is used in a generic sense to refer to the complex processes that affect attendance in institutions of higher education” (p. 1). Moreover, persistence can be thought of as a dimension anchored by the vision of graduation (Hilton, 1982). Gandara (1994) found persistence was critical in determining high educational attainment during graduate studies. In fact, “most people saw themselves, like their parents, as extremely hard workers who would not give up” (Gandara, 1994, p. 35). Arellano and Padilla (1996) stated respondents to their study used the word “stubborn” to describe persistence “suggesting they were striving for something entailing a struggle and obstinacy against those who denied them access” (p. 497). Therefore, adapting to real adversities faced “assured confidence that enough effort would lead to success” (Arellano & Padilla, 1996, p. 498). Heimlich (2001) reported one of the “biggest reasons these students’ pursued the Ph.D. related to their personal drive to succeed, and graduate school was the next step toward reaching their career aspirations for the future” (p. 61). In this respect, respondent’s persistence was motivated by the fact that certain occupations would be unreachable without graduate training (Heimlich, 2001).

Environmental Factors (External). Environmental factors refer to “external sources of information, support, and affective feedback” (Alva & Padilla, 1995, p. 4). They are best described as support systems that lead the student to believe they are cared for, esteemed, and valued (Alva & Padilla, 1995). These external mediators have often included significant individuals in a child's life (e.g., family, friends, teachers, mentors),

the schools themselves and other social institutions that serve as a significant environmental resource (Alva & Padilla, 1995). According to Alva (1991), academically successful Mexican American students have a “supportive network of family members, friends, neighbors, and teachers, which they rely on for counsel and advice in difficult or stressful situations” (p. 4).

Review of literature found parental support (Gandara, 1994; Arrellano & Padilla, 1996; Castellanos et al., 2006; Easley et al., 2012; Cerezo et al., 2013) and mentorship (Arrellano & Padilla, 1996; Ceballo, 2004; Cerezo et al., 2013) as prevalent environmental resource for college students of Mexican origin.

Parental Support. In their study of 30 undergraduate Mexican American students, Arrellano and Padilla (1996) reported that parental encouragement was one of the most important sources of support. Castellanos et al. (2006) who commented on Latina/o pathways to a doctorate found those who experienced higher forms of parental support were more likely to achieve academic success which align with findings by Gandara (1994); Mexican American doctoral students academic achievement was largely influenced by parental support. However, parental support often came in less traditional formats often rooted by their parents low SES and lack of experience in higher academia (Gandara, 1994; Castellanos et al., 2006). For example, Gandara (1994) reported “while parents had few resources and relatively little experience with schooling themselves (though many were highly literate), most of what they could offer was verbal support and encouragement for their children's schooling, and most subjects felt very strongly supported at home” (p. 14). Ceballo (2004) who interviewed 10 Latina/o (Puerto Rican and Mexican American) college students from Yale University found similar findings;

parents repeatedly gave verbal “commitment to the importance of education, parental support of adolescent autonomy, and nonverbal parental expressions of support for educational goals” (p. 183). A more recent study by Cerezo et al. (2013) who examined 12 Mexican American college males found encouragement from family and peers” (p. 352) instrumental during their educational journeys. These findings align with research by Steinberg, Brown, Cider, Kaczmarek, and Laaro (1988) on family processes; "students perform better when they are raised in homes characterized by supportive and demanding parents who are involved in schooling and who encourage and expect academic achievement" (p. ii).

Mentorship. Review of literature also found mentorship as often being highlighted as an environmental factor that promoted degree attainment among Mexican Americans (Gandara, 1994; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Ceballo, 2004; Cerezo et al., 2013). Carter and McCallum (2008) argue “mentoring relationships create conditions for success...as they serve to integrate students into the fabric of the department, cultivate essential professional and social networks, aid students in acquiring core research components, and pave the way for a place in the workforce” (p. 2). However, Gandara (1994) argues “there is little consensus among scholars on the definition of mentoring or the characteristics of the mentoring relationship (p. 26) or content setting. For example, numerous scholars noted mentors often derived within the student’s academic setting (Ceballo, 2004; Heimlich, 2001; Cerezo et al., 2013); however it was not rare for Mexican American doctoral students to state mentors were found elsewhere (Gandara, 1994; Heimlich, 2001). What is certain is interaction with a mentor increases the likelihood of academic success.

The concept of mentorship will be further explored in the section titled *Commonalities of a Doctorate*. Similar to personal factors, difference of opinion as to which environmental factor was more prominent or more likely to be displayed by resilient Mexican American students were found.

Review of literature found compelling evidence that factors mitigating risk failure exist. According to Werner (2005), “their very existence challenges the myth that a child who is a member of a so-called high-risk group is fated to become one of life’s losers” (p. 12). Additionally, they showed that resilient individuals will interpret risk factors differently thereby adapting to them differently and developing resiliency differently. According to Howard and Johnson (2000) what is certain is that resilience can be gained through protective factors (resources) and processes that are internal to the individual (attitudes or belief) or external (supportive caring adults, school or community). Thus, the degree to which a student realizes success can be dependent upon the contextual event and access to these adaptive resources (Arellano & Padilla, 1996).

Commonalities of a Doctorate

Attrition

The phenomenon of doctoral attainment, and attrition, is perplex given that “paradoxically, the most academically capable, most academically successful, most stringently evaluated, and most carefully selected students in the entire higher education system—doctoral students—are the least likely to complete their chosen academic goals” (Golde, 2000, p. 199). According to Noble (1994), “until the past two decades, relatively little research was conducted on doctoral education despite the fact that the first doctorate was awarded in the United States in 1861” (as cited in Gardner 2009, p. 5). West et al.

(2011) noted that “almost all research studies regarding doctoral education concentrate in Ph.D. programs” (p. 311) yet since 1920, when Harvard granted the first Ed. D. degree, “little has been published about student experiences in these programs” (p. 311) and fewer studies on the Latina/o graduate experience “addressing racial and ethnic minority student’s unique journeys and challenges” (Castellanos et al., 2006, p. 171)

Studies over four decades of data found 40% to 60% of doctoral Ph.D. candidates succumbed to attrition (Council of Graduate Schools, 2008; West et al., 2011) while Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2012) found that in Ed.D. programs, the attrition rate is estimated to be between 50% and 70%. Much of the focus on attrition is centered on doctoral candidate’s ability; however, Lovitts (2001) argues that this factor as the primary reason for departure ignores real barriers to students' persistence. Moreover it is contingent on disparate views.

Disparate Views of Attrition. Golde (2000) stated that faculty members and deans often attribute attrition to a single factor such as student talent, student commitment or lack of finances. In her interviews with faculty members and doctoral candidates who gave way to attrition, Lovitts (2001) found that faculty advisors’ perspectives regarding doctoral attrition was that the students themselves were responsible for their attrition as “they were inadequately prepared to do research or entered graduate school with inappropriate expectations about what research was really about” (p. 29). However, departed students provided a disparate account citing academic reasons related to academic structure and process as the leading cause, followed by personal and financial reasons.

In her study of 60 doctoral students and 34 faculty members from six disciplines, Gardner (2008) found 34 faculty members interviewed discussed three main themes related to doctoral candidate attrition; student lacking (53%), student should not have come in the first place (21%), and personal problems (15%). Specifically, that “the student was lacking in ability, drive, focus, motivation, or initiative” (Gardner, 2008, p. 8). However, a different perspective was captured when the 60 doctoral students interviewed discussed the three main themes related to attrition citing personal problems (34%), departmental issues (30%), and (c) wrong fit for the program or institution (21%). According to Gardner (2008) “the majority of the personal problems that the students discussed as a reason for student departure related to marriage, children, or family responsibilities” (p. 10). From the perspective of the doctoral student, Gardner (2008) cited the second highest explanation for student departure were departmental issues which included “bad advising, lack of financial support, faculty attrition, and departmental politics” (p. 10).

Work-Life-School Balance. Today’s doctoral candidate will require keen time-management skills in their attempt to compete with their numerous responsibilities. According to Offerman (2011), they are highly nontraditional who exceed 30 years of age, are increasingly female, married, and/or have children (as cited in Martinez, Ordu, Della Sala & McFarlane, 2013). Consequently, because of this, the literature available on work-life-school balance with regards to doctoral students often focuses on women (Martinez et al., 2013). However, Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2012) reported that “balancing doctoral studies with family and work relationships is a challenge for doctoral students across disciplines” (p. 201). Furthermore, they argue that doctoral

candidates enrolled in education programs and work full-time within academia (e.g., principal, administrator, teacher) carry responsibilities serving to intensify the demands on their energy, commitment, and time. Along the same lines, Smith, Maroney, Nelson, Abel, and Abel (2006) found the lives of doctoral candidates and the society in which they live are extremely complex and in some cases difficult to balance. Specifically issues with “family concerns, employment, finances, community issues, demands from friends, responsibility as a parent, and responsibility to aging parents are some of the demands on today's doctoral students” (p. 22). When these demands and trying to obtain the doctorate clash, stress levels are more likely to increase which may compromise coping skills and self-efficacy leading to abandonment of the doctoral study (Smith et al, 2006). Lovitts (2001) found 70% of those who abandoned their doctoral studies cited personal reasons related to finances, health, academics, and family (as cited in Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012).

In a different study, Wao and Onwuegbuzie (2011) argued the typical doctoral candidate works full time therefore is constricted to studying part time which can lead to longer attainment rates and in some cases attrition. West et al. (2012) found “time management issues, including balancing work and life commitments, as well as their relationships with their dissertation chairs were the most common challenges” (p. 316). In efforts to attain a balance between work-life-school roles, Martinez et al., (2013) examined five full-time doctoral education students who worked part-time. Their study concluded the following strategies to overcome the challenges presented by the work-life-school concept; a) purposefully manage time, priorities, and roles and responsibilities, b) manage stress levels by maintaining mental and physical health, and

creating personal time; (c) find financial and emotional support from family and friends or student services, and (d) make tradeoffs.

Attainment

Review of the literature revealed doctoral attainment is not the result of one single factor, but rather a complex process and includes the interaction of multiple factors. However, difference of opinion was noted as to what factors were most influential. For example, early scholars such as Rudestam and Newton (1992) described a successful doctoral recipient as “one possessing strong internal discipline, independent initiative, creative thinking and, most importantly, the ability to work alone” (as cited in Rendon, 1999, p. 50) while Cone and Foster (1995) suggested doctoral recipients possessed the ability to break things down into smaller components and were exposed to numerous support systems that included family, friends, and community (as cited in Rendon, 1999). In a more recent study, the Council of Graduate Schools (2009), Ph.D. Completion Project found financial support (80%), mentoring/advising (65%) and family support (57%) as the three most influential factors.

Wao and Onwuegbuzie (2011) who studied 1028, Ph.D. and Ed.D. candidates noted five integration factors that influence degree attainment: academic (level of satisfaction with their academic performance, degree of involvement in program activities, and curriculum structure), social (interaction between candidate, peers and faculty), economic (financial needs being met), personal (psychological traits such as motivation, goal-oriented, commitment), and external factors (family, obligations). They postulate academic integration factors had the strongest influence on degree attainment followed by social factors and economic factors. These findings are consistent with

Carter and McCallum (2008) who proposed students who are academically and socially integrated into the institution are more likely to persist which supports Tinto's (1993) findings; the graduate persistence is "shaped by the personal and intellectual interactions that occur within and between students and faculty and the various communities that make academic and social systems of the institution" (p. 2). Therefore, the more integrated a student, the higher the likelihood that the student will transition from doctoral candidate to doctoral recipient.

Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2012) commented doctoral candidates "should seek ways to become socially, academically, and economically integrated into their university and program (p. 200) and warned that "if students fail to become integrated into their university's academic and social communities, they are more likely to withdraw (p. 200). According to Greer-Williams (2004), a quality advisor (mentor) can provide this service and assistance navigating all phases of the doctoral program; however, finding one may prove difficult as there is a lack of ethnic doctorate recipients (Carter & McCullum, 2008; National Science Foundation, 2014a). Along the same lines, Carnegie Foundation (2001) found that most doctoral candidates are unfamiliar with the doctoral process and will need the assistance of a mentor to navigate the system and provide some form of support. Literature review found numerous studies supporting the notion of mentorship/advisor as an important aspect of doctorate attainment (Williamson & Fensk, 1992; Rendon, 1999; Golde, 2000; Heimlich, 2001; Carnegie Foundation, 2001; Lovitts, 2001; Gasman et al., 2004; Nettles & Millett, 2006; Paglis et al., 2006; Carter & McCallum, 2008; Council Graduate Schools 2009, 2010; Gardner, 2009; Felder 2010; West et al., 2012; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011; Graham, 2013).

The Role of Mentorship. Mentorship has been recognized as an effective strategy for retaining and supporting doctoral students during their doctoral studies (Noonan, Ballinger, & Black, 2007). Kochan (2002) indicated mentorship means different things to different people, but most acknowledge the relationship between mentor and protégé as complex, encompasses many different strategies and approaches, and finding an effective mentor relationship is highly dependent upon the protégé's needs. In some cases, this means the mentor and protégé should be culturally aligned (Carter & McCallum, 2008) thereby reducing the potential of a questionable relationship. Along the same lines, Golde (2000) cautioned against problematic relationships stating they can lead to attrition.

A survey by Nettles and Millett (2006) of approximately 9000 doctoral candidates found mentoring as the facet of positive academic interactions and faculty-student relationship as key in doctoral attainment. Nettles & Millett (2006) defined a mentor as “someone on the faculty to whom students turned to for advice, to review a paper, or for general support and encouragement” (p. 98) while Noonan et al. (2007) defined a mentor as someone who is “more knowledgeable, has more and/or recent experiences, gives insight, shares knowledge and clears confusion” (p. 255). According to Paglis, Green and Bauer (2006) mentoring is a “nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development” (p. 451). These scholars posit mentoring is a process that is reciprocal in nature, can be both formal and informal, and can take on a number of roles such as professor, advisor or peer.

West et al. (2012) who explored the challenge and barriers of doctoral attrition through the lens of 103 Ed.D. candidates found the role of mentorship can also extend to one's dissertation chair while Heimlich (2001) and Gandara (1994), who studied Mexican Americans in pursuit of their doctorate, found mentorship was not exclusive to the academic institution as on a few rare occasions doctoral candidates mentioned an older relative or sibling as being instrumental in their aspiration toward degree attainment. According to Lovitts (2001),

the advisor is often the central and most powerful person not only on a graduate student's dissertation committee but also during the student's trajectory through graduate school. The advisor influences how the student come to understand the discipline and the roles and responsibilities of academic professionals, their socialization as a teacher and researcher, the selection of a dissertation topic, the quality of the dissertation and subsequent job placement (p. 131).

Council of Graduate Schools (2010), postulated "initiatives aimed at providing support for writing during the dissertation stage (or earlier stages) or offering various types of professional development opportunities" (p. 4) increased the likelihood of doctorate attainment. "For instance, early on, the adviser can demonstrate a caring interest in the students' welfare, helping them deal with the anxiety and culture shock that may accompany undertaking a new endeavor in an unfamiliar place" (Plagis et al., 2006, p. 453).

In their study of 214 Mexican American and American Indian doctoral recipients, Williamson and Fenske (1992) noted support and involvement from a mentor was critical to achieving the doctorate. They contend "doctoral student's feeling of belonging can be

greatly facilitated or deterred by her/his graduate advisor or mentor” (p. 20). Moreover, they found the quality of interaction between the doctoral candidate and mentor was central to “full incorporation into the academic system, for having a model for one's future professional role, and for ultimate satisfaction within the doctoral experience” (p. 20). These findings align with research from Golde (2000) who reported mentorship “plays a critical role in doctoral student persistence” (p. 223); from the outset of the doctoral program, the mentorship relationship needs to take center stage as “students expect and appreciate a committed, caring mentor/advisor” (p. 221).

In more recent studies, Council Graduate Schools (2010) also noted success in achieving a Ph.D. “depends upon a close and effective working relationship with one’s advisor and mentor” (p. 3). These sentiments were further echoed by Wao and Onwuegbuzie (2011), who argued candidate’s “view advising broadly and expect advice from assigned advisors as well as from other faculty members with whom they interact prior to and during the dissertation stage” (p. 130). As such, relationships with advisees, discussing problems encountered, establishing reasonable goals, providing quality and timely feedback, and “creating an atmosphere where students feel safe to discuss issues that affect their progress” (p. 130) are key. West et al. (2012) found the positive working relationship with the dissertation chair was also vital stating “often dissertation chairs provided much needed emotional support while still challenging students to produce valuable work” (p. 318). According to Plagis et al. (2006), “research with graduate students highlights the significant role students believe mentors play in their training, as well as the perceived benefits that mentoring confers” (p. 453). In short, mentoring will affect how a doctoral candidate adjusts to the doctoral process (Felder, 2010).

These findings align with research by Lovitts (2001), who argued for the creation of an academic environment conducive of doctorate attainment and further suggests that institutional factors (e.g. mentors, advisor, faculty, etc.) are more influential than the doctoral candidate's personal factors (e.g. motivation, goal-oriented). Moreover, persistence is not a matter of personal characteristics but rather "...it is what happens to them after they arrive" (p. 2). According to Lovitts (2001), much of the literature of mentorship is positive in nature and paramount to degree attainment; however, a weak relationship has been cited as a cause for attrition.

Review of literature also noted the unfavorable effects of negative mentorship relationships (Lovitts 2001; Kochan, 2002; Golde, 2000, Gardner, 2008, 2009; Graham, 2013). According to Graham (2013) a "negative relationship can extend the time to degree or support a decision to leave the doctoral program" (p. 79) altogether. According to Gasman, Gerstl-Pepin, Aderson-Thompkins, Rasheed, and Hathaway (2004) the mentor perception will be crucial in building the mentor-protégé relationship and critical to the development of the ethnic doctoral student. Research by Kochan (2002) found issues can surface if the relation involves a cross-cultural mentor relationship; specifically, if the mentor, who is usually from the non-ethnic group views the protégé as less qualified because of race/ethnicity or gender. Carter and McCallum (2008) posit that while mentoring has been found to be effective, the relationship "should be culturally and ethnically aligned with student's needs" (p. 2) as many gifted and talented ethnic students will "face unique challenges once admitted to programs where most of the students are from majority backgrounds" (Graham, 2013, p. 80). According to Carter and McCallum

(2008), this understanding will determine the effectiveness of, and satisfaction with, the mentorship relationship and if the doctoral student persists.

The argument goes ethnic students will chose a mentor/advisor they feel comfortable with (Graham, 2013) suggesting someone who at a very minimum acknowledges and understands their culture differences (Carter & McCallum, 2008). Unfortunately, culturally aligned mentoring may not always be possible as there is a lack of ethnic doctorate recipients (Carter & McCullum, 2008; National Science Foundation, 2014a). Focusing on Latino faculty who can assist with this effort, current data shows the number of Latina/o faculty in tenure-track positions that can help Latino students with cultural alignment sits at about 4% for colleges and universities throughout the U.S. and has not changed over the past 10 years (AAHHE, n.d.); yet, the pool of Latinos available to attend graduate studies has more than doubled (NCES, 2012). According to Felder, (2010) this issue has been addressed, but forward progress will require the development of a cadre of diverse scholars. In the meantime, Lovitts (2001) asserts that “affiliation with the proper advisor can often spell the difference between completion and non-completion” (p. 131).

Summary

According to Ortiz and Telles (2012), Mexican Americans have historically and legally been treated as second-class citizens even though they were granted de facto White status after the Treaty of Guadalupe (1848). Under legislative law, this ethnic group should have experienced the same educational opportunity afforded to non-ethnic (White) groups, yet what they experienced came nothing short of racial segregationist practices. Court victories in numerous Southwestern states demonstrated this group’s

will to fight for educational equality and their ability to adapt, but as a whole, this subgroup's educational attainment continued in a downward spiral due to social, political or cultural barriers. However, through prolonged exposure to protective resources, some individuals of Mexican origin have found success at all levels of education to include the doctoral level.

No studies were found that examined the factors that promoted doctoral attainment of second-generation Mexican American males from California. Therefore, this study sought to fill this gap.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

Chapter III describes the methodology selected to research factors that promote doctoral attainment of second-generation Mexican American males from California. Included in this chapter are the purpose of the study, the research questions that drove the study, the research design, population and sample, instrumentation used to collect the data, validity and reliability, the data-collection and data analysis procedures, limitations of the study, and a summary.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California related to earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

An additional purpose of the study was to identify how the factors impacted the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California earn their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

A further purpose of the study was to identify barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

The final purpose of the study was to determine how the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California were overcome during

their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California earn their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?
2. How did the factors identified influence the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California in earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?
3. What barriers were encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?
4. How were the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California overcome during their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?

Research Design

Creswell (2007) proposes that research design is the “entire process of research from conceptualizing a problem to writing research questions, and on to data collection, analysis, interpretation and report writing” (p. 5). This process is a “logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research questions and ultimately to its

conclusions” (Yin, 2003, p. 20). Therefore the design of this research study called for a qualitative paradigm. According to Creswell (2007):

qualitative approach is appropriate to use to study a research problem when the problem needs to be explored; when a complex, detailed understanding is needed; when the researcher wants to write in a literacy flexible style; and when the researcher seeks to understand the context or settings of participants (p. 51).

Qualitative research involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data through in-depth interviews, focus groups or observations as a type of exploratory research and provides the basis to interpret and discover prevalent trends in thought, opinion or an individual’s perception of reality (Patton, 2002).

To gain a deeper understanding of the factors that promoted doctoral attainment of second-generation Mexican American males from California, the Multiple Case Study approach was utilized as the framework. Creswell (2007) notes:

case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g. observation interviews, audiovisual material and documents and reports) and reports a case description and case-based themes (p. 73).

Multiple case studies replicate the procedures for each case and purposefully select multiple cases to display different contexts on the issue (Yin, 2003). In doing so, the researcher was able to analyze within each setting and across settings enhancing the ability to cover contextual conditions (Yin, 2003). The “outcome typically produces a wealth of detailed information about smaller number of people and cases which increases

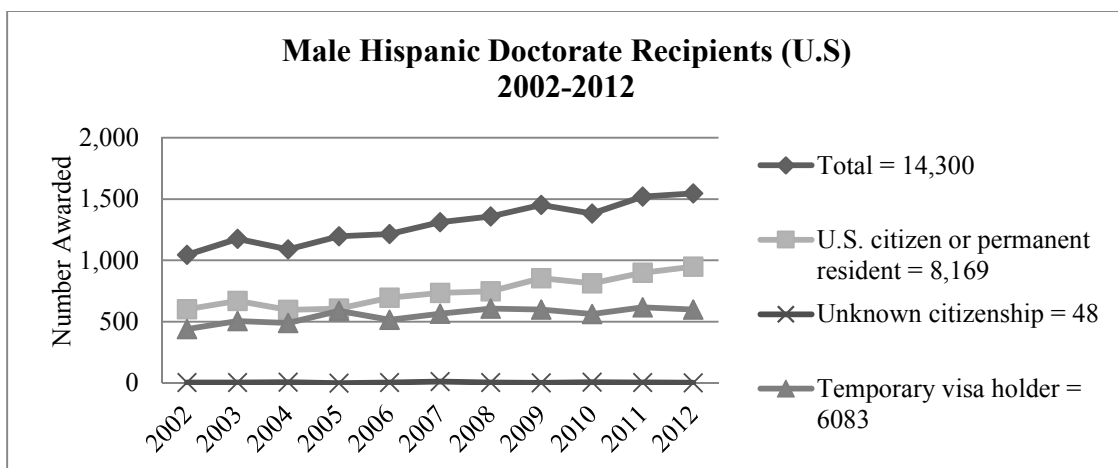
the depth of understanding of the cases and situations studied but reduces generalization” (Patton, 2002, p. 14).

Population

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) contend that “a population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events, that conforms to specific criteria” (p. 129). The population used for this study was male Hispanics who received a doctorate after 2002 from a doctoral-granting university within the U.S. According to the National Science Foundation (2014a), the time span between 2002 through 2012 produced the largest amount of doctorates bestowed to Hispanic recipients in the United States. Due to the focus of this study, second-generation Mexican American males, it was necessary to consider doctoral degrees conferred on male U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Therefore, 8,169 served as the population of interest. Figure 1 illustrates doctorates conferred on male Hispanics by citizenship: 2002-2012.

Figure 1

Doctorates conferred upon male Hispanics by citizenship: 2002–12.



Source: National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, NSF/NIH/USED/USDA/NEH/NASA 2012 Survey of Earned Doctorates.

Sample

The sample for this study focused on second-generation Mexican American males native to California who attained their doctorates after 2002 from a doctoral-granting university within California. According to Roberts (2010) “sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected” (p. 150). The NSF and NCSSES (n.d.) concluded between 2002 through 2012, approximately 3,342 doctorate degrees were conferred on Hispanics who graduated from a doctoral producing accredited university within the state of California; of these 1,490 were conferred on males. This same study concluded 785 degrees were conferred on males of Mexican origin. Table 3 provides a breakdown of doctorate recipients from California universities by Hispanic origin and gender for 2002 through 2012.

Table 3

Doctorate recipients from California universities by Hispanic origin and gender:

2002-12

	Male	Female	Total
Hispanic Doctorate Recipient	1490	1852	3342
Mexican Origin Doctorate Recipient	785	993	1778

Note. Table adapted from National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, NSF/NIH/USED/USDA/NEH/NASA 2012 Survey of Earned Doctorates, special tabulation (August 2014).

Sample Selection Process

Given the amount of doctoral degrees conferred on males of Mexican origin in California and considering that for the past five years California ranked as the number one state producing doctoral degrees (NSF & NCSES, n.d.) a criteria questionnaire was developed and administered to communicate the needs of this study and ensure respondents fell within the parameters needed. According to Patten (2012), “sample sizes in five journals, each of which publishes both quantitative and qualitative research” suggests approximately 13 participants for qualitative studies. However, Creswell (2007) also states for case study research, four or five case studies “should provide ample opportunity to identify themes of the cases as well as conduct cross-case theme analysis” (p. 128). Therefore, this researcher aimed for a sample size between 5-13 participants. A detailed explanation of this process was discussed under *Data Collection Plan*.

The concept of purposeful sampling was used to select “information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (Patton, 2002, p. 230). This meant the researcher solicited and selected individuals for study based on specific criteria and the fact that “they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem” (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). To do so required a combination of criterion sampling and snowball sampling.

Criterion sampling allowed for the selection criteria essential for choosing potential participants. “The logic of criterion sampling is to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance (Patton, 2002, p. 238) - a strategy useful in quality assurance efforts (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2007). Therefore in the summer of 2014 a list of criterion was developed that would confirm potential

participants fell within the parameters being studied. This led to the development of a questionnaire that would be used during the data collection phase. Within this questionnaire a statement requesting leads to other potential participants was included which resulted in additional participants (snowball effect).

In snowball sampling, a researcher initially finds a participant and requests an additional contact with other potential participants whom they know may fit the population of study (Patten, 2012; Creswell, 2007). This chain of recommended informants typically produces additional participants creating a snowball effect (Patton, 2002).

Instrumentation

In quantitative research, validity “depends on careful instrument construction to ensure that the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure”; however, in “qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the instrument” (Patton, 2002, p. 14). He/she “makes observations, takes field notes, asks interview questions and interprets responses” (Patton, 2002, p. 64) making judgments about the significance of the findings. Ironically, these judgments are connected to the researcher’s credibility which “hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing the fieldwork” (Patton, 2002, p. 14). Therefore, the researcher served as the “instrument” (Creswell, 2007, p. 38; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 322) for this study and developed an interview protocol questionnaire that supports strategies by Creswell (2007) with regards to qualitative researchers; qualitative researchers do not “tend to use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers” (p. 38). The interview questionnaire was designed to address each of the research questions and gain deeper

insight to “ensure information directly from the source” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 322). During the interview, follow-up questions were asked to gain deeper understanding and clarity. Appendix C is a copy of the interview questionnaire.

Validity and Reliability

“Validity is the degree to which the instrument used truly measures what it purports to measure” (Roberts, 2010, p 151). In other words, are the findings the instrument produced trustworthy or are there threats to validity (Roberts, 2010) that could serve as a plausible alternative explanation for the research findings? The insights generated from this study will “have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with the sample size” (Patton, 2002, p. 245). To facilitate this concept, *triangulation* was used to shed light on themes and perspectives (Creswell, 2007). “In triangulation, researchers make use of multiple and different methods, investigators and theories to provide corroborating evidence” (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). To attain this, the researcher combined “both interviewing and observations” and mixed “different types of purposeful samples” (e.g. snowball sampling and criterion sampling) (Patton, 2002, p. 248) that focused on “selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (Patton, 2002, p. 230). Thick rich description was sought to provide the researcher affirmation for interpretation and allow “readers to make decisions regarding transferability” to “other settings” (Creswell, 2007, p. 209).

“Reliability is the degree to which your instrument consistently measures something from one time to another” (Roberts, 2010, p. 151). In other words, if you measured the same thing again, would you find the same results (Roberts, 2010)? To

enhance this process, an interview protocol questionnaire was created that consisted of five open-ended questions. Prior to implementation, the interview protocol was pilot-tested for clarity, bias and ambiguity. Prior to the pilot test, a pretest was conducted “asking thoughtful individuals to read and respond to the questions” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). An adjunct professor from Brandman University assisted with this effort and all comments incorporate. A pilot test was conducted with two subjects who were not included in the study but fell within the population of the study.

With appropriate participant permission, all interviews were recorded followed by transcription. According to Creswell (2007), “reliability can be enhanced if the researcher obtains detailed field notes by employing a good-quality tape for recording and by transcribing the tape” (p. 209) for accuracy.

Data Collection

Institutional Review Board

Due to the nature of this study, an expedited review was requested and approved via Brandman University’s Institutional Review Board (BUIRB). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) state that an expedited review is appropriate where risk to participants is minimal and “the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated are not greater than what would be experienced in routine day-to-day activities” (p. 123). Following approval, data was collected using numerous techniques and in accordance with BUIRB (n.d.) policy:

expedited review is appropriate for research that involves no more than minimal risks to subjects; are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, if any, to subjects, and the importance of the knowledge; selection of subjects is equitable

and non-coercive; informed consent will be sought from each prospective subject or the subject's legally authorized representative; informed consent will be appropriately documented; adequate provision for monitoring data collected to ensure safety of subjects; and adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of data (Expedited Criteria, para. 2).

Data Collection Plan

The data collection plan for this research study consisted of four stages:

Stage 1. The researcher located and made contact with potential participants via email. To accomplish this, the researcher scoured through university websites, contacted alumni and professional associations, and followed up on leads. Once contact was made, the intent of the study was fully disclosed. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argue “researchers should generally be open and honest with participants about all aspects of the study” (p. 117) as participants cannot be coerced or compelled to participate. If a potential participant was willing to participate, contact information (e.g. email address, physical address and telephone number) as well as leads to other potential participants was gathered.

Stage 2. The researcher administered a criteria questionnaire via email. The intent of the questionnaire was to communicate the needs of this study, ensure respondents fell within the participant criterion and confirm the participant’s willingness to participate per Brandman University requirements. Appendix A is a copy of the Informational Letter.

Stage 3. Final participants signed a consent form and interviews were scheduled for the summer of 2015. Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) (1993) states

that researchers must obtain legally effective informed consent forms from prospective participants in a way that allows them to consider whether or not to participate and that minimizes the possibility for coercion or undue influence. Potential participants must understand that enrolling in the research is voluntary and that they may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits (OHRP, 1993). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) suggest that:

informed consent is achieved by providing subjects with an explanation of the research, an opportunity to terminate their participation at any time with no penalty and full disclosure of any risks associated with the study. Consent is usually obtained by asking subjects to sign a form that indicates understanding (p. 118).

Appendix B is a copy of the Consent Form.

Stage 4. Interviews were conducted between August and September of 2015 using an interview protocol which consisted of 5 open-ended questions. Creswell (2007) finds this “type of interview is practical and will net the most useful information to answer the research questions” (p. 132) and invites the interviewee to open up and talk. Advance copies of the interview questions were emailed to each participant. Face-to-face interviews were conducted when possible; however, when not feasible a virtual meeting was conducted. All interviews were recorded for accuracy using audio mediums as “quickly inscribed notes may be incomplete and partial because of the difficulty of asking questions and writing answers at the same time (Creswell, 2007, p. 134). Appendix C is a copy of the Interview Questions and Protocol.

Data Safeguarding. All data collected was protected to the limits of the law. The researcher safe-guarded all data in a locked file drawer and a password protected electronic file to which the researcher had sole access. All data was destroyed upon completion of the study.

Data Analysis

Data Management

“Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion” (Creswell, 2007, p. 148). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), there is “no set of standard procedures for data analysis or for keeping track of analytical strategies. Making sense of the data depends largely on the researcher’s intellectual rigor and tolerance for tentativeness of interpretation until the analysis is completed” (p. 367). To facilitate this process, allow for creation and organization of data, form initial codes, and establish themes and patterns, data was analyzed using NVivo 10 software.

NVivo10 is a software that supports the qualitative research methodology by collecting, organizing, and analyzing content from interviews, focus group discussions, surveys, video and social media (QSR, n.d.). It allows for deep analysis and has the ability to uncover subtle connections. According to Patton (2002), “qualitative software programs facilitate data storage, coding, retrieval, comparing and linking, but human beings do the analysis. Analysis programs speed up the processes of locating coded themes, grouping data together in categories and comparing passages in transcripts and incidents from field notes” (p. 442). By default, NVivo 10 electronically maintains a list of all codes and allows for periodic review (QSR, n.d.).

Coding

“A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldana, 2003, p. 3). Prior to assigning words or short phrases the researcher followed Creswell’s (2007) suggestion of reading all the transcripts until “a sense of the whole database” (p. 150) was felt. In addition, because NVivo 10 was used to identify themes and patterns, the researcher familiarized himself with the concept of a node. According to Stanford University (2012), “this is the term used by NVivo to represent a code, theme, or idea about your data” (p. 7). Inter-reliability of patterns and themes that emerged from the interview questionnaires was achieved with the assistance of a doctorate recipient who did not fall within the parameters of the study. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) inter-reliability can be achieved if two or more individuals agree about what was observed or rated. The following is a recap of the process:

Phase 1. The researcher reread all transcripts and made “marginal notes” (Creswell, 2007) by jotting down initial codes on the transcript itself. “These memos are short phrases, ideas or key concepts that occur to the reader” (Creswell, 2007, p. 151). Saldana (2003) described initial codes as “first impressions” derived from an open-ended process. To help generate themes, a combination of *descriptive* and *in vivo* coding was used. Descriptive coding “summarizes in a word or a short phrase” (Saldana, 2009, p. 70) the basic point of a passage while *in vivo* codes “are the exact words used by participants.....or names the researcher composes that seem to best describe the information” (Creswell, 2007, p. 153).

Phase 2. All interview transcripts were uploaded into NVivo 10 software and a parent-node assigned. In doing so, NVivo 10 software was able to begin categorizing and assist with identifying themes and patterns (Stanford University, 2012). Feedback from the first cycle required a second and third cycle of recoding (children-nodes). According to Creswell (2007) “to conceptualize different levels of abstraction”-the concept of children and parent codes-help the researcher “see the relationship between the raw data and the broader themes” (p. 169). Saldana (2003) states,

rarely is the first cycle of coding data perfectly attempted. The second cycle (and possibly the third and fourth, and so on) of recoding further manages, filters, highlights, and focuses the salient features of the qualitative data record for generating categories, themes, and concepts, grasping meaning, and/or building theory (p. 8).

Phase 3. Nodes were arranged, categorized and grouped by similarity. Saldana (2003) contends that qualitative researchers “organize and group similarly coded data into categories or families because they share some characteristic” (p. 8). During this phase, the most salient codes were condensed to help develop themes that converged across each case study. According to Saldana (2003), a theme is an outcome of coding, categorization, and analytic reflection” (p. 13).

Phase 4. To quantify the most salient themes, reports were generated from NVivo 10 software to displayed which themes were most significant and laid the foundation for “presenting an in-depth picture of the case” (Creswell, 2007, p. 157). Appendix D is a copy of the NVivo software report.

Limitations

Roberts (2010) states that a limitation is a factor that may or will affect the study and is not fully under the control of the researcher. Therefore the following are limitations to this study:

1. Capturing the full essence of meaning. Creswell (2007) comments on the challenges in qualitative interviewing and notes that unexpected participant behavior or the researcher's ability to "create good instructions, phrase and negotiate questions, or deal with sensitive issues and do transcriptions" (p. 140) can affect capturing the essence of the meaning.
2. Generalizing to a larger population. Patton (2002) argues that in qualitative research, findings will reflect a situation-specific condition in a particular context and "typically produce a wealth of detailed information about smaller number of people and cases which increases the depth of understanding of the cases and situations studied but reduces generalization" (p. 14).
3. Accurate accounts of the participant's doctoral journey may be affected by the passage of time. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argue that it is "not possible to account for all the complexity present in a situation" (p. 324).
4. The researcher falls within the parameters of the criteria outlined in Chapter 1, therefore the findings could have been affected by the researcher's biases.
5. "Most research on Mexican Americans fails to make the important distinctions between immigrants, their children, and later generations-since-immigration. Statistics frequently presented for Mexican Americans are swamped by large numbers of immigrants among the population (Telles & Ortiz, 2008).

6. Most studies conducted focused on undergraduate level students.
7. Data on conferred doctor's degree include "Ph.D., Ed.D. and comparable degrees at the doctoral level, as well as most degrees formerly classified as first professional, such as M.D., D.D.S., and law degrees" (NCES, 2012, p. 112).

Summary

Chapter III presented an overview of the intended methodology for this study. The purpose of the study and the research questions that will drive the study were restated as well as why this type of research design was utilized. The sample population was clearly identified along with how data would be collected and analyzed that would support validity and reliability. Finally limitations to the study were presented.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION AND FINDINGS

Overview

Chapter IV synthesized the findings of this qualitative study by organizing data from personal interviews with eight second-generation Mexican American males from California who attained their doctorates from a doctorate-granting university within California. This chapter includes the purpose statement, research questions, research method and data collection procedures, and a description of the population of interest and sample size utilized. In addition, a detailed presentation of participant demographic was included. In order to capture the essence of the interview, a detailed recapitalization of the interview was provided with each research question addressed within this content. Chapter IV concludes with a summary of the themes and patterns that emerged.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California in earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

An additional purpose of the study was to identify how the factors impacted the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

A further purpose of the study was to identify barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

The final purpose of the study was to determine how the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California were overcome during their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California in earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?
2. How did the factors identified influence the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California in earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?
3. What barriers were encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?
4. How were the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California overcome during their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?

Research Method and Data Collection Procedures

To gain a deeper understanding of the factors that promoted doctoral attainment of eight second-generation Mexican American males from California, the Multiple Case Study approach was utilized as the research methodology. Multiple Case Studies

purposefully select multiple cases that can predict similar results on the issue being studied; however, the procedures for each case must be replicated (Yin, 2003). To facilitate this effort, parameters for the study were identified, followed by the development of an interview protocol.

Following IRB approval, data was collected in four stages and protected to the limits of the law. During Stage 1, the researcher located and invited individuals to participate via email. During Stage 2, an informational letter detailing the needs of this study, its parameters and the participants' willingness to participate was sent via email. If a participant met the parameters of the study and agreed to participate, a consent form was either hand-delivered or sent via email and collected in Stage 3. During the final stage, Stage 4, interviews were conducted using an interview protocol that consisted of five open-ended questions. In doing so, this researcher was able to gather and analyze data, make comparisons and identify patterns and themes.

Population

The population used for this study was male Hispanics who received a doctorate after 2002 from a doctoral-granting university within the U.S. Due to the focus of this study, second-generation Mexican American males, it was necessary to consider doctoral degrees conferred on male U.S. citizens or permanent residents as the National Science Foundation (2014a) did not differentiate among generations-since-immigration. This report concluded the time span between 2002 through 2012 produced the largest amount of doctorates bestowed on Hispanic recipients in the United States. Therefore, 8,169 served as the population of interest.

Sample

The sample for this study focused on eight second-generation Mexican American males who received their doctorates after 2002 from a doctoral-granting university within California. The NSF and NCSSES (n.d.) concluded between 2002 and 2012, approximately 1,490 doctorate degrees were conferred on male Hispanics; 785 upon males of Mexican origin.

Demographic Data

The eight participants in this study were second-generation Mexican American males native to California and earned their doctorates from a California university. In addition, all eight participants were first-generation students. According to the U.S. Department of Education (1997), first-generation students are those students whose parents never enrolled in post-secondary education (as cited in Hirudayaraj, 2011). Nunez and Cuccaro-Alamin (1998) argue, “First-generation students are defined as those whose parents’ highest level of education is a high-school diploma or less. In cases where parents have different levels of education, the maximum education level of either parent determines how the student is categorized” (p. 7). Moreover, all participants earned their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees between 2009 and 2014. In order to ensure confidentiality, all participants were assigned a number and given pseudonyms. The lengths of the interviews ranged from 30-60 minutes with two interviews taking place face-to-face and six virtually.

Participants 1-4 and 6-8 worked full-time during their ascent while Participant 5 worked several part-time positions. Additionally, Participants 1-5, 7, and 8 worked in the field of education; subsequently, Participants 1-3, 5, 7, and 8 remained in the field of

education as either administrators or principals within the K-12 system or as a professor or as administrators within higher education. Participant 4 retired from the California State University System but is seeking a position as an administrator within California's Community College System. Participant 6 worked as a program director for a Fortune 500 Company within the aerospace industry, received a promotion after attaining his doctorate and continues to provide leadership and direction within his organization. All participants described either being married with children or cohabitating with a significant other during their doctoral journey. Table 4 is a demographic description of the participants. Pseudonyms have been assigned to each participant to aid in data referencing and study organization.

Table 4

Demographic Description of Participants During Ascent

Participant	Type of Degree/ Year Granted	Doctorate-Granting University Name	Work Status	Marital Status	Current Occupation	Nativity of Parents	Nativity of Participant
1-Salvador	Ed. D. 2009	Joint Doctoral Program from the University of California San Diego, San Diego State University and California State University San Marcos	Full-Time	Married with Children	Director Integrated Student Supports (High School)	Both from Mexico	Vista, CA
2-Miguel	Ed. D. 2014	California State University Northridge	Full-Time	Married with Children	College Student Outreach Specialist	Both from Mexico	Oxnard, CA
3-Chava	Ed. D. 2013	Joint Doctoral Program California State University San Marcos and University of	Full-Time	Married with Children	Director Human Resources (High School)	Both from Mexico	Riverside, CA

California San Diego							
4-Nathan	Ed.D. 2014	California State University Sacramento	Full-Time	Lived with girlfriend of 20 years	Seeking second career as administrator within California's Community College System	Father Mexico; Mother El Paso, TX	Santa Barbara, CA
5-Angel	Ph.D. 2014	University of California Santa Barbara	Part-Time	Lived with Fiancé	University Professor	Both from Mexico	Daly City, CA
6-Dylan	Ed.D. 2012	Pepperdine University	Full-Time	Married with Children	Program Manager for Mobility Programs and Program Manager of Competitive Alliances	Both from Mexico	Santa Monica, CA
7-Nico	Ed.D. 2015	University of Southern California	Full-Time	Married with Children	High School Principal	Both from Mexico	Los Angeles, CA
8-Anthony	Ed.D. 2010	Joint Doctoral Program California State University San Marcos and University of California San Diego	Full-Time	Married with Children	Founding Principal of K-8 Dual-Language Charter School	Both from Mexico	Blythe, CA

Presentation and Analysis of Data

This qualitative study focused on the factors that influenced eight high-achieving second-generation Mexican American males from California who attained their doctorates from a doctoral-granting university within California. Additionally, this study touched on barriers encountered during their ascent to achieving their degrees and how such barriers were overcome. In order to capture the essence of each interview, a

recapitalization of the interview was provided under *Themes and Patterns*. Each research question is addressed within the content of the recapitalization.

Overview of the Findings

Analysis of the data from eight second-generation Mexican American males native to California found six factors that that influenced their success and four barriers they overcame during their ascent to the attainment of a doctorate. Table 5 represents an overview of the findings from this study

Table 5.

Overview of Findings from Study

<i>INFLUENCING FACTORS</i>	<i>BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a Mentor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuances of a Doctoral Degree
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and Encouragement by Family and Friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing Work-Life-School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to Create Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Doubt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents' Lack of Educational Attainment as Motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing the Doctoral Degree
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Career Advancement 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Self-Satisfaction 	

Themes and Patterns

This section represents interview highlights and the most prevalent themes and patterns that emerged, broken down by research question. For this study, a minimum of four participants had to identify a common theme or pattern in order for it to be considered prevalent.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1: *What are the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California earn their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?* Table 6 represents six themes that emerged from the participants' responses to Research Question 1.

Table 6

Codes and Frequency for Research Question 1

	Number of Participants	Number of References
Having a Mentor	8	16
Support and Encouragement by Family and Friends	7	8
Desire to Create Change	6	7
Parents' Lack of Educational Attainment as Motivation	5	6
For Career Advancement	4	5
For Self-Satisfaction	4	5

Research Question 2

Research Question 2: How did the factors identified influence the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California in earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?

Having a Mentor. All eight participants talked about having a mentor during their ascent. The mentorship these men received came from various sources, which included school faculty, dissertation chair/member, peer/cohort member, parent(s), a former boss or some combination thereof .

Participant 1, Salvador, identified three mentors that supported and encouraged him: his dissertation chair, a female Latina; and his dissertation committee, which consisted of a second female Latina and one male Latino.

...For me, it was having a number of individuals. At least three individuals that were like me. I entered a doctorate program being one of few Latinos. Being Mexican American, it was very difficult. It was a different setting, different expectations and language...These are individuals that supported and motivated me throughout my master's degree and these individuals were still around when I began my doctorate's degree. They encouraged me to go forward and often told me that what I was experiencing was part of the doctoral process.

Participant 2, Miguel, cited having three mentors as key to his success: his dissertation chair, a Mexican American male; a former community college administrator who was also a Mexican American male; and his father.

I could go and speak to my mentors...So that was key....So it was very nurturing type of relationship but nonetheless, with them having gone through the process and knowing what it was like, I think it helped me a lot to get through those difficult times educationally. And then there was my father on the other side. He was the one that kept pushing me and constantly reminded me that I was not doing this for me but for future generations that are coming behind.

Participant 3, Chava, talked about the guidance and words of encouragement he received from a female Latina mentor, who was also his dissertation chair and whom he described as a second mom.

Then there were other professionals I considered friends in education that got me to this point. There was a strong Latina, who I considered a great friend and a mentor whom I almost think of as my second mom. She [mentor] always asked about my family first, preceded by school. And so that got me talking about I have to do this, this paper is due, timeline is due, chapter 3 is due, I have to present, it got kicked back and all the struggles I was going through. And sometimes that's all I needed was to talk to her about it. She always followed with, think about when you get it finished. In two years, in a year, in six months you will be done. And to have that piece of paper that says doctor. Those words of encouragement and that kick in the butt is what I needed.

Participant 4, Nathan, commented on having the support of two mentors during his ascent: a female Latina who became his dissertation chair and a male Latino. He stated that the direction and guidance his mentors provided was instrumental to his success, and acknowledges that without their support, he would never have accomplished anything,

The interesting thing about mentors is that they are people who go above and beyond the call of duty....She [Ed.D. mentor] kept me centered and often reminded me about my Chicanoness and what I was passionate about.... So I am very grateful that I was mentored by a wonderful Latina...Then I had the one in the counseling program...He was there for me throughout my Ed.D program as well.... His teaching, his manners, being there as a friend, advising me if I was on the right path or messing up, guiding me if I felt lost, words of encouragement. And again, I am very much appreciative of this Latino also because he was

someone who would always go above and beyond for me. ... I feel, I would never have accomplished anything without key people in my life who pushed me or went above and beyond or stuck out their hand and said how can I help you?

Participant 5, Angel, stated having more than one mentor was pivotal and extremely important during his ascent.

One thing that I noticed was that everyone I considered a mentor had a different mentorship style...So I quickly learned not to have one mentor but four or five more people. For me, that was really pivotal. Not all mentors were part of my committee, but I had the option to reach out to other professors and learn from them and be strategic...So, yes, mentors were extremely important.

Participant 6, Dylan, mentioned three mentors as influential during his ascent: his mother, who taught him how to set priorities; an Englishman who planted the seed that he could become one of the first Mexican Americans in senior leadership within his industry; and his Latino former boss, who provided sound advice and work flexibility.

...my mother was also a great mentor to me. She helped me to establish a balance with the fundamentals in life; god, family, work, and education. She taught me how to set priorities. He [Englishman] basically introduced me to a whole new world called technology; the advancement of aerospace, both commercial and military-type platforms. I remember he said to me, in this type of environment he had yet to experience Mexican Americans in senior leadership...Again, If I didn't have the support of my boss who was also my mentor, I believe that I wouldn't have been able to take time off of work to focus on my studies.

Participant 7, Nico, commented on receiving encouragement and support from three Latino mentors whom he could relate to, but stated that his dissertation chair provided the most guidance.

...They were all Latino males [mentors] who had been superintendents and if not mistaken were all second-generation. Their life stories really resonated with me as I was able to relate. For example they would tell me about their upbringing, the discrimination they encountered during their ascents to superintendency, other challenges they experienced and how they overcame such challenges...I leaned on several people but I would say I leaned on my dissertation chair the most. He was a down-to-earth leader, an awesome gentleman who kept me accountable and provided much-needed guidance. If I needed to sit down and explain a situation to him, he was willing to put things aside and listen and provide guidance. Not only was he my dissertation chair, but he was a true mentor to me.

Participant 8, Jorge, acknowledged three mentors that gave him access to a type of social capital which was critical to overcoming the nuances of the doctoral process: his dissertation chair, a strong female Latina; a White male with Russian background and a White female.

These were folks that I chose and chased after... reaching out to them was critical for me as it allowed me to maneuver the doctoral program. It allowed for a type of reassurance with regards to my progress...Looking back on it, some of my peers didn't have to apply this concept because they had all the social capital they needed. Unfortunately, I didn't have social capital and I had to be relentless and

seek out support from various folks. Till this day, one or two professors from my doctoral program are still within my open network.

Support and Encouragement by Family and Friends. Seven participants affirmed they received support and encouragement from either a family member or friend. Family member or friend in this context includes a cohort member, significant other (wife, girlfriend, fiancé), parent(s), or former work supervisor. Of the seven, five acknowledged a cohort member as key during their ascent, five credited their wives for providing emotional support or picking up the slack and four stated their parents provided a supportive and encouraging relationship.

Participant 1, Salvador, stated the dynamics of the cohort initially presented itself as a barrier but would also serve as a type of support during his ascent. Salvador went on to talk about how he aligned himself with the most diverse individuals of his cohort.

So for me I ended up being an ally toward individuals that were very diverse....one was the women's center director, one was Black center director and one was the gay/lesbian/transsexual director. And so, I found myself aligned to their progressive thoughts and way of thinking which was very supportive within the cohort and being able to be open-minded about the progress I was making, and the dialogue and conversation we were holding.

Participant 2, Miguel, talked about the intricate support network that included his immediate supervisor, father, and wife.

So the support of my supervisor allowed me to rework my schedule and make sure that I could get there on time (meant that I would leave early on Tuesday but then I would stay late the rest of the week)....And then there was my father. He was

the one that kept pushing me and constantly reminded me that I was not doing this for me but for future generations that are coming behind. So you are making that cultural change within our family. I believe that is what kept me pushing and the fact that I have a very supportive wife helped a lot as well... Luckily my wife was strong and took the load where I was dropping off, where I was lacking, in terms of taking my daughters to events, participating in family outings that I could not get to.

Participant 3, Chava, indicated an intricate support network that included his wife and cohort members as instrumental during his ascent.

In terms of support, I had a lot of support; for one, my wife. She was the one that supported me in this endeavor of going through the program... Another factor was the cohort itself. Three of us spent a lot of time the first two years in the coursework supporting each other, doing projects together when we could, building literature review, and sharing resources. So when we got to a point when we were on our own, we would call each other and push each other along. We would share our timelines and check up on each other's progress. That was a big part of it....

Participant 5, Angel, described a support network that consisted of his parents, fiancé and cohort members as conducive during his ascent.

Mostly it was my support network. My family helped me out morally and at times financially. Financially, in the form of, they allowed me to live with them while I was writing my dissertation. Morally or more so emotionally, they were willing to help me out so that I could advance my life. They kept me afloat when

I was in the program....Another factor was my lady, my fiancé. She has a great disposition in life and somehow she always seems to be happy....There were times when I felt I had the weight of the world on my shoulders, had doubts about finishing the program, or when I was writing my dissertation that just being with her helped ease and reduce the stress....among my peers, we formed our own network of graduate students that were figuring things out as we went along. We would have conversations and dialogues, debates, and share resources that I considered crucial in my success.

Participant 6, Dylan credits his former boss and wife as supportive during his ascent. He stated that his former boss was one of his biggest supporters and provided him with the flexibility to adjust his work schedule.

...my former...He was another influential Latino in my life. He encouraged me to go off and get my doctorate degree and facilitate change within the organization. While this was going on, I would say he was my biggest supporter. He continued to promote me along the way and ensured I was in line to make the most difference with my career and the industry. He also allowed me flexibility with regards to getting classes needed to complete my doctorate degree and adjust traveling associated with my work that could impede my progress and ultimately attaining my doctorate degree... Going through my doctorate, my kids were in high school. Specifically my daughter didn't completely understand. She felt that my time away from the family was pretty significant when it combined with work and travel and other things going on from an

industry perspective. It took my wife to intervene to get my daughter to understand that things would get better once I completed my journey.

Participant 7, Nico, talked about his supportive inner circle that consisted of his wife, parents, cohort members and supervisor. He described a scenario where he leaned on cohort members.

...I have a very supportive wife who consequently also graduated with an MBA from USC, my parents, my mother- and father-in-law, and my siblings. I had a very positive and supportive inner circle...I had a very strong and supportive relationship with my superintendent... I remember when my wife and I had our second child there were minor complications that required immediate medical attention. I leaned on my colleagues and they carried me. They helped me with notes, they helped me with assignments. In short, they were part of my network.

Participant 8, Jorge, affirmed having a support network that included his wife, parents and a Jamaican peer/colleague.

Of course; my wife, my parents, friends but again that's a closed network. These are people you are comfortable around and they all love you regardless. An open network [peer/colleague] are people who are different than you. And to me, that's the power because an open network challenges you. An open network holds you accountable. It forces you to see things from a different perspective.

Desire to Create Change. Six participants confirmed wanting to create organizational change within their profession. Creating change within this context includes the desire to change existing policy or desire to help others on an organizational scale. Three participants commented on wanting to create change within the K-12

education system while two desired to create change within higher education. The remaining participant wanted to create change within the aerospace industry.

Participant 2, Miguel, stated he wanted to facilitate large-scale change within higher education and used this factor as a type of motivation.

I came to the realization and discussion that if I wanted to make this large-scale change it would have to be at a level where I could change things. At a college through the administration or through the state in terms of policy which is what kept me going through my doctorate.

Participant 3, Chava, commented on wanting to create change within the school district he belonged to and used this as his driving force.

That's how this whole idea of getting a doctorate came about. I was in a meeting [school district level] and someone made this off-color comment about those kids. My eyes went up and another person's eyebrows went up. We spent the whole day working together and got to talking and by the end a suggestion was made that pursuing a doctorate may be good for me....

Participant 4, Nathan, stated that being aware of the past and current Latino issues—specifically the lack of Latinos in higher education—served as a type of motivation as he wanted to help other Latinos within higher education.

I learned about Chicano studies very early on in life. I was fortunate to have older brothers and sisters who were involved with the Chicano movement. The issues that revolved around this movement were reflective of issues that were happening around the nation but it was happening in our back yard. Because of this experience, I was very aware of the fact that I would many times be either one or

few Latinos in a school environment.... During my master's studies, I was one of few Latinos pursuing a counseling degree. Upon graduating, I got hired at the university and I became one of few Latino professionals within the university. This opportunity led me to recruit and work with underrepresented families in Northern California and get them to attend college. So pursuing my doctorate really began there...I wanted to help these types of students [Latinos] by applying what I had learned and guiding them.

Participant 6, Dylan, commented on his desire to create change within his organization, but in order to do so he needed a well-recognized credential that would validate his opinions and positions. He used this purpose as his drive to remain persistent.

I needed to attain some credentials that provided credibility when it came to providing positions with regards to policy and how the company conducts business. But beyond that and as I gained momentum, I made a determination that credibility was more important as I sought to make a difference from a policy perspective and how a company does business from an overarching industry perspective.... My purpose was specific-driven. I wanted to create change within my organization. I wanted to create change within my division and I wanted to create change within the aerospace industry...So I sought to pursue and achieve a doctorate degree.

Participant 7, Nico, wanted to create change within the K-12 educational system that he felt had failed Latino students and used this as a type of motivation to keep himself focused.

... I am tired of students of color, Latino specifically, as being held to lower academic expectations. I'm tired of a system that has failed students...I believe that the only way to create change and make a difference is by having the right leader at the right position. I see my job as both a profession but also as a vocation, a calling if you may. By attaining my doctorate, I feel that I am in a unique position. Not only can I advance with regard to my profession but I can also provoke change on a much larger scale. So wanting to create change really compelled me to stay focused and attain my doctorate because without it, it would have been challenging.

Participant 8, Jorge, talked about a desire to create large-scale change within his school and community and used this as a type of motivation.

...when I see Latino students and I tell them, do you know how hard it is to be you...There is a lot of teaching that has to take place. Add to it, the belief that many [Latino students] believe they are more assimilated than they really are. I hate to break it to them but at the end of the day, they are still in a box. If they really knew what others were thinking about them, they would wake up and realize that they are a Latino with a "Nopal" on their forehead. So instead of being comfortable with one another, we need to push each other toward forward mobility. So this sense of, I'm going to be harder on you [students] comes out.

Parents' Lack of Educational Attainment as Motivation. Five participants stated that they used one or both parents' lack of an education as a type of motivation during their ascent. Lack of educational attainment in this context ranges from no formal schooling to at least attending secondary schooling.

Participant 1, Salvador, talked about how he used his parents' lack of education as a type of motivation during his ascent.

My mother did not finish elementary education in Tijuana and my dad had some middle-school education in California as a migrant worker. That in itself proved a motivating factor for me.

Participant 2, Miguel, stated the value of education embedded by his father carried over into his doctoral pursuit.

Ironically, this is a man that had a second-grade education from Mexico and I do not know where it came from [value of education]. To this day I ask him, why did you push my sisters and I to go on with education? His response was "I don't know. It's just something that I knew you guys would need; how, I don't know." I used my father's educational value to continue going forward.

Participant 4, Nathan, stated he was unsure if his parents graduated secondary schooling but at a minimum he knew they attended. Like Miguel, he used their lack of education as a type of motivation during his ascent.

My parents attended high school but I'm not sure if they graduated... They were basically good role models... So for me, this served as a type of motivation.

Participant 5, Angel, talked about how his mother reminded him to value education while she showed him her hands and the hands of his father. He recalls her telling him, "No sean burros como nosotros"; "don't be mules like us [that work all the time]". Angel stated,

One of the issues that motivated me and kept me afloat in the program was being aware that my mother never went to school....but did learn the basics of reading

and writing thanks to another girl in her village in Mexico.

Participant 6, Dylan, stated that one of the biggest factors that motivated him during his ascent was knowing that his father only had an eighth-grade education and remembering the valuable life lesson his father taught him.

...In order to succeed you have to have an education. I remember him telling me, I [father] grew up with a shovel in my hands but you don't have to. To prove his point, he told me to dig a hole during a hot day. After a while it got hotter, I got thirsty and tired to the point where I threw the shovel down and refused to continue. He said, this is exactly why you have to pursue your education. He passed away but regardless, whenever I felt discouraged throughout my academic journey I always used the shovel incident, but more specifically my father as a type of motivation.

For Career Advancement. Four participants talked about the potential for career advancement once they attained their doctorates. Career advancement in this context refers to any work position with greater responsibility or compensation.

Participant 3, Chava, talked about how attaining a doctorate would advance his career and provide him with options. Thus career advancement served as a driving force to attain his doctorate.

Career advancement had a lot to do with it....I wanted to be able to have options.... and for me this gives me access and opens a lot of doors. If I choose to walk through them, great, and if not, that's OK also. But at least I have a choice and that feels good.

Participant 6, Dylan, talked about how his former boss encouraged him to get his doctorate, which resulted in him getting promoted.

He encouraged me to go off and get my doctorate and facilitate change within the organization. While this was going on, I would say he was my biggest supporter. He continued to promote me along the way and ensured I was in line to make the most difference with my career and the industry.

Participant 7, Nico, commented how he could advance within his profession and provoke large-scale change along the way,

Not only can I advance with regards to my profession but I can also provoke change on a much larger scale.

Participant 8, Jorge, wrestled with his own cultural guilt of not spending quality time with his young children. However, he justified his action of pursuing a doctorate by saying his children won't remember this timeframe and attaining his doctorate would open doors.

I remember that I would always justify my actions by saying that my kids won't remember any of this because they are just babies, plus it will open doors for me in the future. The only person I have to worry about is me; my own guilt, my own remorse, my own issues of having to leave my wife or sick kids while I go through this program.

For Self-Satisfaction. Four participants stated that self-satisfaction served as a type of drive during their ascent. Self-satisfaction in this context refers to a participant's desire for self-fulfillment and a sense of pride for attaining his doctorate.

Participant 1, Salvador, stated that he stumbled into academia as a teacher. However, in order to satisfy his desire to become the very best at performing his professional duties, he sought his doctorate.

Always going through struggles, I reached a point in my life and entered academic studies to achieve the highest level of education in what I was pursuing. I stumbled into education as a teacher and I wanted to become the very best at performing my professional duties.

Participant 3, Chava, talked about personal satisfaction as a type of motivation during his ascent.

Personal satisfaction served as a type of motivation to get that degree [doctorate] and to get that piece of paper because I knew it would open doors for me down the road. For me I saw it as a type of key that I needed to acquire. By having this key, you could choose to unlock the door and walk through it or you can choose not to, but having that key gave me options which were very important to me...and that feels good.

Participant 4, Nathan, commented on his desire to become part of an elite group of Mexican scholars as a form of self-satisfaction that drove him.

Then there was a chart that resonated with me and sticks in the heart of my heart. It was a chart presented by Dr. Terra Yosso and Dr. Daniel Solorzano. It was a pyramid that represented the percentage of Latinos that come out of high school and reach the doctorate. Their conclusion was that only .2% of Mexicans reach a doctorate and I wanted to be part of that .2%. So wanting to be part of that .2% drove me forever.

Like Nathan, Participant 7, Nico, commented on also joining the elite group of Mexican scholars as a type of self-satisfaction.

You know, less than one percent of the American population has attained a doctorate. Be that as it may, the fact that I happen to be Latino, Mexican American to be more exact, makes this percentage smaller. Not bad for a kid from East LA.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3: *What barriers were encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?* Table 7 represents four themes that emerged from participants' responses to Research Question 3.

Table 7

Codes and Frequency for Research Question 3

	Number of Participants	Number of References
Nuances of a Doctoral Degree	7	10
Balancing Work-Life-School	6	8
Self-Doubt	5	6
Financing the Doctoral Degree	4	4

Research Question 4

Research Question 4: *How were the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California overcome during their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?*

Nuances of a Doctoral Degree. Seven participants cited the nuances of a doctoral degree as a barrier. Nuances of a doctoral degree in this context refers to participants not knowing how to navigate the doctoral process, locating mentors, dynamics of cohorts, and limited access to social capital.

Participant 1, Salvador talked about not knowing how to navigate the doctoral process and the power dynamics of his cohort as barrier. He stated that to overcome this barrier he aligned himself with the most diverse members of his cohort and sought mentorship from his mentors: his dissertation chair, who was a female Latina; and committee members who were male Latino and female Latina.

For me, it was having a number of individuals. At least three individuals that were like me. I entered a doctorate program being one of few Latinos. Being Mexican American, it was very difficult. It was a different setting, different expectations and language...These are individuals that supported and motivated me throughout my master's degree and these individuals were still around when I began my doctorate. They encouraged me to go forward and often told me that what I was experiencing was part of the doctoral process....my program called for a small cohort...I would say that the initial experiences of coming together and setting expectations in this cohort mentality was quite difficult because we did have diverse people in this group of individuals...There were a lot of the interactions and misunderstandings that took place. Again, the dynamics of the cohort served as a barrier but it also served as a type of support. I was seeing the dynamics play out. For me it felt like racism and discrimination was happening within the group as White females and White males were kind of

joining forces. You could see how people were aligning themselves in the cohort; you could see the allies that were developing. So for me, I ended up being an ally toward individuals that were very diverse...And so, I found myself aligned to their progressive thoughts and way of thinking, which was very supportive within the cohort, and being able to be open-minded about the progress I was making, and the dialogue and conversation we were holding...that's why I think I was able to navigate that.

Participant 2, Miguel, commented on the issues of locating a Mexican American male with a doctorate to serve as a mentor who could provide access to a type of social capital needed to help navigate the nuances of a doctorate. To overcome this barrier, he turned to his master's thesis chair, a Mexican American male, who would also serve as his dissertation chair.

...there is not many of us Mexican-American or Latino men that have gone through that process. Let alone men, but as a people [Mexican American] there is not many that we can go out and say, hey how did you do this, or how did you navigate the system... I did not know how to navigate the system. I did not know what to expect in terms of the language that I would need to use to communicate with staff and faculty on the campus... I could go and speak to my mentor, who was my thesis chair for my master's, and I could talk to faculty about what was going on or how to maneuver the system at the doctor level. So that was key and I think maybe that was one of the decisions of why I chose Northridge; I had that safety net there.

Participant 4, Nathan, also commented on the difficulties of locating a dissertation chair who looked like him, who felt like him and whom he could trust to help navigate the doctoral process. To overcome this barrier, he remained persistent and located a female Latina who kept him kept him centered and would become his dissertation chair.

No program does a very good job of orienting you. I believe there is almost an expectation that the student will figure it out. It's a blinding process and to some extent it seems like navigating the process is a rite of passage in these programs....For example, if I understand what the dissertation expectations are, then as I go through each class I know how to shape my literature review and not have to wait until the end of the course work. That's a huge nuance where I felt both the Ph.D. program and Ed.D. program were failing... so locating people who would help with my journey. It's my belief that we, as individuals, will always look for someone who looks like us, feels like us, someone we trust... so I reached out to her...She was honored and asked why me. I stated that due to her being younger, it would benefit me because I didn't want someone who was going to die or retire on me. I wanted someone who is young and would grow with me throughout my ascent. I need someone who will provide a different perspective, hold me accountable and kick me in the butt when I need it.

Participant 5, Angel, talked about the culture of the doctoral program as a barrier and stated he leaned on numerous people like older Chicano students, professors and mentors to help navigate the doctoral process.

...So I wasn't familiar with small settings [graduate culture] and I viewed this as a barrier that I needed to overcome...I had to learn how to interact in a small

setting, which was unique in itself, and also I had to learn to get comfortable with talking with professors and develop a relation with them. That was another issue that I was not familiar with; working close with a professor...Just being aware of my surroundings and getting advice from older Chicano students...They were very strategic and often shared things with me like how to prepare for seminars. Also, I came across professors that were really good about teaching me how to read critically and for depth...My mentors had different styles which I had to adjust to. For example, who do I turn to when I need to straighten a paper's content? I can go to this professor. If I needed support figuring out a particular theory, I had to learn this professor is well-equipped for this or that professor is well-equipped for that. Also, who can be an advocate for me when decisions are being made or who would be willing to sign off on administrative paperwork. So I quickly learned not to have one mentor but four or five more people. For me, that was really pivotal.

Participant 6, Dylan, spoke of not being familiar with the doctoral process and credits some of his professors with his overcoming this barrier.

Another barrier was not being familiar with the doctoral process itself. While I had conducted some research, I really didn't know what I was getting into...So I learned the doctoral process and got to know some of the professors...So having these types of senior people guide me and explain the process really helped me.

Participant 7, Nico, also commented on the nuances of a doctorate as being a barrier. He stated that he didn't know what he was getting himself into and how

challenging it was going to be. To overcome this barrier, he trusted in his peer/cohort members and sought mentorship from his dissertation chair, a male Latino.

I didn't know what I was getting myself into...while I was attending school, I didn't realize how challenging it was going to be. So to overcome this barrier, I organized myself and trusted on those whom I reached out to. I accepted the fact that I didn't know how to do something and asked for help...I remember when my wife and I had our second child there were minor complications that required immediate medical attention. I leaned on my colleagues and they carried me. They helped me with notes, they helped me with assignments. In short, they were part of my network... Learning how to work collaboratively, learning how to organize myself and prioritize was also critical to overcoming part of the nuances of the doctoral process...I leaned on several people but I would say I leaned on my dissertation chair the most. He was a down-to-earth leader, an awesome gentleman who kept me accountable and provided much-needed guidance. If I needed to sit down and explain a situation to him, he was willing to put things aside and listen and provide guidance. Not only was he my dissertation chair but he was a true mentor to me.

Participant 8, Jorge, commented on not having access to a type of social capital that would have enabled him to better maneuver the doctoral program. To overcome this barrier, Jorge reached out to his dissertation chair/committee—a female Latina, a White Russian male and a White female.

Reaching out to them was critical for me as it allowed me to maneuver the doctoral program. It allowed for a type of reassurance with regards to my

progress. I remember reaching out... and saying, I have some questions I want to ask you. In short, what I was really asking him: was I doing ok? Looking back on it, some of my peers didn't have to apply this concept because they had all the social capital they needed. Unfortunately, I didn't have social capital and I had to be relentless and seek out support from various folks.

Balancing Work-Life-School. Six participants cited work-life-school balance as a barrier. Work-life-school balance in this context refers to a participant's ability to manage quality time spent between work responsibilities, life responsibilities and school responsibilities.

Participant 2, Miguel, commented on having what felt like three full-time jobs; being married with children, his occupation and his pursuit of an Ed.D. He elaborated on the poor job universities do explaining how the family component takes a backseat during the doctoral pursuit. To overcome this barrier, he stated that he leaned on his wife, which allowed him to focus on the components of work and school.

At the point when I was going through my doctoral program, I was married and I had two young daughters. So the support that I received from my wife was very instrumental for me to continue with my education. One of the things that they [academic institutions] don't talk to you about when you are going to these programs or when you want to pursue your education, is the toll that it is going to take on your immediate family; especially with the Ed.D. program or doctoral program. It takes time away from the things that you're used to doing, like the time that you are used to spending with your family, having dinner as a family or whether it is going to outings as a family. All of this takes a backseat to what you

are doing because it is a full-time job [pursuing the doctorate] and then more than likely, well, I had a full-time job [employment] so it was two full-time jobs. Plus the full-time job of being a husband, a father, and a friend. So it takes a toll on you in that sense. Luckily my wife was strong and took the load where I was dropping off, where I was lacking, in terms of taking my daughters to events, participating in family outings that I could not get to. So this takes a toll on the family as well. These are things to consider as students take on this venture of getting their doctoral degree. Bottom line is that the student should take into consideration that it is not just you going through the struggle but those that are in your inner circle. More importantly, if you have children, your children and your wife, or your partner, are the ones that take that toll with you because they are going down this path with you as well.

Participant 3, Chava, talked about the time constraints associated with trying to find balance between work-life-school. He stated that being married and having children during his doctoral journey proved challenging. To overcome this barrier, Chava stated that he sought encouragement from his wife and compartmentalized work-life-school into three buckets.

The first barrier I encountered was time constraints. Sacrificing time away from my family, away from work and personal time taken away by my degree. I compartmentalize those three years into three buckets; my family bucket, my work bucket and the joint doctorate program. All of a sudden the JDP bucket was taking away a lot of time and energy from work and family. And so, at that point in my life [doctoral process] that's all I focused on for three years. However, I

was very purposeful during this timeframe. Meaning when it was time for work, I focused on work and gave work the due diligence it deserved. When with my family, I worked real hard at being there for my family. Same thing when I was at school. I focused at getting as much done as possible. If it meant going to the library on a Saturday and being there all day, I would get as much done as possible as there was no time to waste....There were times when I was ready to throw in the towel...My wife stated no way are you giving up. We've already put in too much time, too much money and you are doing this. For me, that was the kick in the butt that I needed...Her giving me the space to work on this and not having to worry about other family stuff was a huge part of it. It still brought up a lot of guilt for me because that was still my family but I didn't get any negativity from her as she always reaffirmed her support by saying I got the kids. Go and do your thing. So her giving me that space was huge.

Participant 4, Nathan, affirmed work-life-school balance a barrier. His job as the assistant director of admissions for a California state university demanded much of his time. Adding to this were the dynamics of his family. To overcome this barrier, Nathan summarized that he began to wake up early and sacrifice family time.

Work-life-school was a challenge. As the assistant director of admissions to a university with over 30,000 students, I was one of those who worked beyond 40 hours. My job was very demanding, but I also did a lot of presentations for Latinos in Northern California both in English and Spanish. I worked with bilingual education, I talked to families, to programs, at college fairs, and I worked with the consulate of Mexico to name a few. So again, my job was very

demanding and often resulted in long days. Even though I was tired, I had to find time to study. So I learned to wake up at 4am in order for me to build on my study habits and find time to complete assignments...Then of course came the family dynamics. When you're part of a large family, there are many events that come up like weddings, birthdays, funerals, graduations, etc. My immediate family consisted of approximately 40 individuals. My girlfriend's family was about the same. So here we are 80 deep. So during my ascent, we barely went a week or two where there was no family outing was taking place. So I had to sacrifice all those things and go to class. I had to be in class. It was a major commitment to stay focused.

Participant 6, Dylan, identified time as a barrier to the work-life-school balance. He talked about being married with children and working for a Fortune 500 company which absorbed much of his time. To overcome this barrier, he sought support from his wife, remained disciplined and received support and work flexibility from senior personnel within his organizational hierarchy.

I believe time was always a barrier, but having that ability to focus and balance god, family, work and education was critical....My children suffered a bit due to my absence. I took this program very seriously because I wanted to do well. I wanted good grades so it took away from family time and vacations, especially when it came down to the dissertation process....It took my wife to intervene to get my daughter to understand that things would get better once I completed my journey....Again, If I didn't have the support of my boss, who was also my mentor, I believe that I wouldn't have been able to take time off of work to focus

on my studies. Due to him, I was able work around a lot of my travels required by my work....

Participant 7, Nico, deemed work-life-school balance a barrier. He talked about being married with children and described how his wife gave birth to his second child during his ascent and he didn't want to take away from the family dynamics. To overcome this, he described having a supportive wife and waking up early so that he could study and not take away time from his family. He also stated that due to a supportive superintendent, he was able to overcome his work barrier.

Another barrier was managing my work-life-school balance. Upon entering my doctoral program my wife and I were raising our one-year-old son. During the middle of my journey, my wife and I gave birth to our second son. So time management became critical because my priority in life is my family. I wanted to make sure I was there for them and not sacrifice time away from them. So to overcome this challenge I made a personal sacrifice and began waking up at 4am, which meant lots of coffee. I needed to balance my responsibilities equally as to not take away from one another. When my family was awake, I wanted to be there for them full-time. During my role as a principal, I needed to make sure my work was completed during this timeframe. So I completed most of my school work at 4am at Starbucks....I have a very supportive wife who consequently also graduated with an MBA from USC, my parents, my mother- and father-in-law, and my siblings. I had a very positive and supportive inner circle. I had a very strong and supportive relationship with my superintendent...I shared my vision and explained to her that I was willing to come in early, stay late and take care of

business. And if I began to falter, I could make the necessary adjustments to stay on top of school issues.

Participant 8, Jorge, recalls that during orientation, the director commented on the difficulties of time constraints associated with trying to find balance and cautioned students. Against her advice, Jorge had two children, bought two homes and began a new job, which added to his responsibilities and placed additional strains on his time. To overcome this barrier, Jorge created time schedules and leaned on his wife.

So guess what I did; I had two children, bought two homes, which meant moving twice, and began a new job. Add to that, both my boys had heart issues during this three-year time frame. Add to that, my health. I began seeing a cardiologist due to what I believed was panic attacks, I underwent a stress test, and I gained weight...I would also like to say that during my doctorates I was working full-time. I opened up a brand-new school that was super controversial and political. I remember having to work long hours and having to travel... so I spent a lot of time away from home. It was tough. So to overcome this barrier, again it was me being relentless plus communicating with my wife, her picking up the slack and creating schedules.

Self-Doubt. Five participants cited self-doubt as a barrier. Self-doubt in this context refers to a lack of confidence in one's abilities or a desire to quit.

Participant 1, Salvador, stating that feelings of self-doubt emerged after receiving an email from a school faculty member intended for another school faculty member with

regard to his qualifying paper. To overcome this barrier, Salvador turned to his dissertation chair and committee for guidance and support.

...So during my first year I turned in my qualifying paper and I received...I received a direct email from the San Diego State person really just blasting me to another colleague (another professor) saying this person turned in, and we don't know what he turned in, something that is unreadable, and not academic. I was completely taken aback. I was shocked and I was just I was floored because I didn't really know all the nuances or know all the expectations in creating and completing this task of a qualifying paper and doing a literature review...And so this email was very descriptive and very negative almost saying I can't work with this person. One of the lines in there was, if you want me to work with this person I will but it's on you. I was told that it wasn't meant for me. So, I went to the individuals [dissertation chair and committee] I had mentioned before....They said it's just part of the processes and they were really encouraging. They all related and of course they related to me and said they all had similar experiences. Then they talked to me about structure of the actual document, what it should look like and how it should be focused and narrowed and that I should not be all over.

Participant 2, Miguel, talked about being drained to the point where he didn't want to continue. To overcome this barrier, he reached out to his dissertation chair, a Mexican American male, who provided words of encouragement and guidance.

...This was common in the sense that there are points throughout your program where you think you cannot go another day, or you cannot make it to that next

class because it just drains you. It drains you emotionally, physically and mentally if you're just not in that place because of those hoops that I was explaining earlier. In talking to him [mentor], it made me realize that it is doable.

Participant 5, Angel, commented on times where he felt like giving up. To overcome this barrier he used his family's history as a type of driving force to continue going forward and the support of his fiancé,

The nature of schooling I had did not prepare for graduate school. Meaning, on paper, I received my bachelor's degree and did some research, but I wasn't familiar with the culture of a graduate program...Just being aware of my surroundings and getting advice from older Chicano students. I was lucky to be in a program where there were older Chicano students. Coincidentally, this was one of the major reasons I chose this program. They were very strategic and often shared things with me like how to prepare for seminars...Keeping it real, there were times when I had doubt about finishing this program; I would remember my family's history and used that as a type of motivation to continue going forward. There were times when I felt I had the weight of the world on my shoulders, had doubt about finishing the program, or when I was writing my dissertation that just being with her [fiancé] helped ease and reduce the stress.

Participant 6, Dylan, also spoke of the desire to quit and relied on his mentors and his father's memory as a type of motivation.

I certainly thought about quitting, but I used those influencers in my life [mentors] and my father's memory as a type of motivation to continue going forward.

Participant 8, Jorge, spoke of the traumatic experience of being labeled an English learner that carried over into his doctorate program. To overcome this barrier, he relied on his relentlessness and his mentors.

When you get put in a box like that, are in an elementary school, are in a heterogeneous class and suddenly somebody comes by and says, can I see....I had no choice but to get up and get pulled out of class to learn English...That in itself is very traumatic...Moving forward toward my doctorate, I believe I suffered from a type of trauma that stemmed from me being an English learner, writing failure, being pulled out from class, and the burrito incident. Just speaking on it gives me the chills. So I literally had to shed these demons and tell myself, you can get through this. You can write a strong dissertation. You don't have to go to remedial classes...Being able to apply this concept and reaching out...was critical for me as it allowed me to maneuver the doctoral program.

Financing the Doctoral Degree. Four participants cited financing the doctorate as a barrier. Financing the doctorate in this context refers to alternative measures taken by participants to fund their doctorates.

Participant 2, Miguel, talked about the high cost of financing a doctorate and the fact that if he wanted to continue with his education he would be forced to take out student loans.

The higher you go in education, the more it cost and unfortunately it is not the easiest thing to finance. So, I ended going into debt just to make sure that, based on where I was working and living, I could still provide for my family and

continue to get the education that I wanted to get....without loans from the Dept of Education it would not have been possible for me to continue my education.

Participant 4, Nathan, commented on a student loan from his first attempt at attaining a doctorate. While it wasn't related to his Ed.D. program, Nathan still viewed this debt as a barrier.

I actually entered a Ph.D. program through UC...prior to my Ed.D. I went through four years of coursework, but never entered the dissertation phase or qualification exam... I basically timed out. So for the last three years of my program, I had no direction or help.... So I left this experience with sore feelings. To elaborate, the grant I received for my Ph.D. covered a portion of it but I was also given a forgivable loan. The forgivable loan was contingent on the fact that I finish the doctorate. However, since I didn't complete the Ph.D., I was stuck with a \$30k loan, which I am still paying on today.

Participant 5, Angel, talked about having to find alternative means to fund his doctorates. To overcome this barrier, he used TA-ships, got a second job, attained a fellowship, and finally took out student loans.

So I used all my TA-ships that were available and got a second job. During my dissertation writing, I came back home and got another job. During this time frame, I applied to a fellowship during my last year. Thanks to my creator and the people who accepted me, I was able to finish my program. Economically it was tough because there was a lot of uncertainty. The program was built on many uncertainties to the point where students did not know if they would have TA-ships to assist with funding their doctorate. So, I had to figure out how I was

going to pay for my doctorate, which also included taking out plenty of student loans.

Participant 7, Nico, commented on having to take out student loans to supplement the loss of family income experienced during his ascent. In addition, he provided a narrative of having to reaching out to numbers organizations with the intent of allocating funds to offset the cost of his doctorate.

Being the sole provider, my wife and I made a decision after we had our first child that she would stay at home and help raise our children. Living on one income was challenging. The financial gap was significant so we were forced to take out loans. Luckily I was able to offset the financial strain by receiving scholarships but the financial burden was always on my mind. I reached out to Toyota Financial, who subsequently provided me with \$45k that I used to help finance my degree. Don't get me wrong, I had my fair share of humble pie and got rejected, but by asking for assistance I also experienced people who were willing to help.

Outlier of the Study

While all participants commented on their humble beginnings, data analysis found one participant that fell within the parameters of being considered an outlier. According to Patton (2015), the logic of outlier sampling is that extreme cases may be information-rich cases precisely because by being unusual they can illuminate both the unusual and the typical (p. 278). Participant 8, Anthony, spoke to the psychological effects of being labeled an English Learner during his primary education that carried over into his doctorate program.

When you get put in a box like that, are in an elementary school, are in a heterogeneous class and suddenly somebody comes by and says, can I see....I had no choice but to get up and get pulled out of class to learn English...That in itself is very traumatic...Moving forward toward my doctorate, I believe I suffered from a type of trauma that stemmed from me being an English learner...

No other participant stated described an English Learner. This finding is of interest because it challenges Telles (2006)'s argument that the offspring of Mexican-origin people often become proficient in English language skills by the second generation. However, this finding supports data published by Pew Research Center (2009), who posit that Latino parents encourage their offspring to speak in Spanish (60%) versus speaking in English (22%).

Summary

Chapter IV contained a recapitalization of personal interviews with eightsecond-generation Mexican American males from California who attained their doctorates from a university within California. In addition, this chapter presented findings and their frequency broken down by research questions. Prevalent themes and patterns of factors that influenced this group and barriers faced and overcame were provided in Table 5. *Having a Mentor* served as the most common theme to degree attainment and also served to overcome the barriers of *Nuances of a Doctoral Degree* and *Self-Doubt*.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter V contains the purpose statement, research questions, research method and data collection procedures, population and sample. In addition, it contains a summary of findings, unexpected findings, conclusions and implications for further actions. This study examined the factors that influenced eight second-generation Mexican American males native to California earn their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree and the barriers they encountered.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California related to earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

An additional purpose of the study was to identify how the factors impacted the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California earn their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

A further purpose of the study was to identify barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

The final purpose of the study was to determine how the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California were overcome during their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California earn their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?
2. How did the factors identified influence the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California in earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?
3. What barriers were encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?
4. How were the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California overcome during their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?

Research Method and Data Collection Procedures

To gain a deeper understanding of the factors that promoted doctoral attainment of eight second-generation Mexican American males from California, the Multiple Case Study approach was utilized as the research methodology. Multiple Case Studies purposefully select multiple cases that can predict similar results on the issue being studied; however, the procedures for each case must be replicated (Yin, 2003). To facilitate this effort, parameters for the study were identified, followed by the development of an interview protocol.

Following IRB approval, data was collected in four stages and protected to the limits of the law. During Stage 1, the researcher located and invited individuals to participate via email. During Stage 2, an informational letter detailing the needs of this study, its parameters and the participants' willingness to participate, was sent via email. If a participant met the parameters of the study and agreed to participate, a consent form was either hand-delivered or sent via email and collected in Stage 3. During the final stage, Stage 4, interviews were conducted using an interview protocol that consisted of five open-ended questions. In doing so, this researcher was able to gather and analyze data, make comparisons and identify patterns and themes.

Population

The population used for this study was male Latinos who received a doctorate after 2002 from a doctoral-granting university within the U.S. Due to the focus of this study, second-generation Mexican American males, it was necessary to consider doctoral degrees conferred on male U.S. citizens or permanent residents as the National Science Foundation (2014a) did not differentiate among generations-since-immigration. This report concluded the time span between 2002 through 2012 produced the largest amount of doctorates bestowed to Latino recipients in the United States. Therefore, 8,169 served as the population of interest.

Sample

The sample for this study focused on eight second-generation Mexican American males native to California who attained their doctorates after 2002 from a doctoral-granting university within California. In addition, all participants were considered first-generation students. The NSF and NCSES (n.d.) concluded between 2002 through 2012,

approximately 1,490 doctorate degrees were conferred on male Latinos, of which 785 upon males of Mexican origin.

Major Findings

The following major findings emerged from the interviews conducted with eight second-generation Mexican American males native to California who attained their doctorates from a doctoral-granting university within California.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1: *What are the factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males native to California earn their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?* The following factors identified by study participants are listed from most prevalent to least prevalent.

- Having a Mentor
- Support and Encouragement by Family and Friends
- Desire to Create Change
- Parents Lack of Educational Attainment as Motivation
- For Career Advancement
- For Self-Satisfaction

Research Question 2

Research Question 2: *How did the factors identified influence the success of second-generation Mexican American males native to California in earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?*

Having a Mentor. Analysis of the findings revealed all eight participants cited having some type of mentor as an important aspect for the attainment of their doctorates.

These men shared the guidance, advice and encouragement they received from their mentors as a main reason they were able to continue with the rigors of their doctorate programs and transition from doctoral candidate to doctoral recipient. Having a mentor also emerged as the most influential factor in overcoming two barriers identified in RQ3; the *Nuances of a Doctoral Degree* and *Self-Doubt*. Although mentors proved favorable in the attainment of a doctorate, at times, finding one within their academic settings who was culturally aligned with their ethnicity proved challenging. However, of the eight, six participants acknowledged locating a dissertation chair or committee member that was Latina/o. Of these, five cited their dissertation chair as being the most influential.

This finding aligns with the literature stating having a mentor at the doctoral level increases the likelihood of attaining a doctorate (Williamson & Fensk, 1992; Gandara, 1994; Golde, 2000; Carnegie Foundation, 2001; Lovitts, 2001; Castellanos et al., 2006, Gasman et al., 2004; Nettles & Millett, 2006; Paglis et al., 2006; Noonan et al., 2007; Council Graduate Schools, 2009, 2010; Gardner, 2009; West et al., 2012; Wao and Onwuegbuzie, 2011; Graham, 2013). In addition, these findings also align with the literature stating doctoral candidates who culturally align with mentors are more likely to become doctoral recipients (Solarzano, 1993; Heimlich, 2001; Greer-Williams, 2004; Carter & McCallum, 2008; Felder, 2010).

Support and Encouragement by Family and Friends. Analysis of the findings confirmed seven participants who stated that surrounding themselves with an intricate support network was crucial during their ascent. Participants observed that at times their network included a cohort member, a significant other (wife, girlfriend, fiancé), parent(s), a former work supervisor or a combination thereof. Of the seven, five acknowledged an

academic peer as key during their ascent, five credited their wives for providing encouragement and support that was more personal and easily accessible, and four stated their parent(s) provided a supportive and encouraging relationship. In doing so, participants were able to reach out and receive different types of support (e.g. emotional, moral, verbal, academic, familial, flexibility of work schedule) from different sources and at various times throughout their ascent.

This finding aligns with the literature which states doctoral students who surround themselves with a supportive network increase the likelihood of attaining their doctorates. Supportive networks can come in the form of family and friends (Gandara, 1994; Lovitts, 2001; Castellanos et al., 2006), academic peers (Heimlich, 2001; Paglis, 2006; Carter & McCallum; 2008; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011) and in some cases a wife (Rendon,1999).

Desire to Create Change. Analysis of the findings found six men of this study used the desire to create organizational change within their profession as a driving force to remain persistent to attain their doctorates. Creating change within this context included the want or need to change existing policy or procedures, thereby facilitating organizational change. These participants felt that attaining their doctorates would provide them with a well-recognized credential that would validate their positions and increase the likelihood of changing policy or procedures within their perspective professions. Five of the participants expressed a need to create change within academia that would benefit underrepresented students; more specifically, three participants commented on creating change within K-12 while the remaining two pushed to create change within higher education. The last participant within this subgroup wanted to

create change within the aerospace industry and become the first Mexican American president of his company.

The desire to create change as a factor that influenced doctoral attainment did not align with the literature review of this study.

Parents' Lack of Educational Attainment as Motivation. Five men in this study described how their parents' lack of a formal education served as a type of motivation during their ascent. While these men acknowledged their parents' education ranged from no schooling to at least attending secondary schooling, these participants noted their parents did value the institution of education. In fact, these participants shared stories whereby their parents shared their own experiences of working in harsh conditions (e.g. manual labor, working in fields, extreme weather, low pay) to the participant himself experiencing a similar environment, as supervised by their parent(s), to emphasize the value of an education.

Parents' lack of educational attainment as a factor that influenced doctoral attainment did not align with the literature review of this study. However, the notion that Latinos do value education supports literature by the Pew Research Center (2009) and Solarzano (2012), who found Latinos value education. More specifically, it supports findings by Valencia and Black (2002), who found Mexican American families value the institution of education.

For Career Advancement. Analysis of the findings concluded four men cited career-advancement impetus to attaining their doctorates. While these men did not have clear career paths in mind, they did acknowledge the attainment of a doctorate would

provide them with options and open doors. Moreover, these men agreed the attainment of their doctorates would serve as a stepping stone for their next career step.

This finding aligns with literature that states one of the biggest reasons Mexican American doctoral students pursue a doctorate relates to their personal drive to succeed; as such, they recognize graduate school as the next step toward reaching their career aspirations (Heimlich, 2001).

For Self-Satisfaction. Four men stated the desire to feel a high state of satisfaction that led to pride served as a force multiplier toward the attainment of their doctorates. Feelings of self-satisfaction emerged from two main reasons; two stated they wanted to become part of the elite group of Mexican scholars whereby approximately .2% of individuals of Mexican origin attain a doctorate (Department of Education, 2001) while the remaining two commented on wanting to become the very best within their profession.

The desire for self-satisfaction as a factor that influenced doctoral attainment did not align with the literature review of this study.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3: *What barriers were encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California during their ascent toward attaining their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?* Factors identified are listed by most prevalent to least prevalent.

- Nuances of a Doctoral Degree
- Balancing Work-Life-School
- Self-Doubt

- Financing the Doctoral Degree

Research Question 4

Research Question 4: *How were the barriers encountered by second-generation Mexican American males native to California overcome during their ascent toward earning their Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree?*

Nuances of a Doctoral Degree. Seven men of this study commented on the nuances of a doctorate as a barrier. Nuances of a doctorate in this context referred to participants not knowing how to navigate the doctoral process, locating mentors, overcoming the dynamics of a cohort, or having limited access to social capital.

This concept was consistent with the literature that states most doctoral candidates are unfamiliar with the nuances of the doctoral process and will need the assistance of a mentor to help navigate the doctoral process (Williamson & Fensk, 1992; Rendon, 1999; Golde, 2000; Heimlich, 2001; Carnegie Foundation, 2001; Lovitts, 2001; Greer-Williams, 2004; Nettles & Millett, 2006; Paglis et al., 2006; Carter & McCallum, 2008; Council Graduate Schools 2009, 2010; Gardner, 2009; Felder 2010; West et al., 2012; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011; Graham, 2013).

Balancing Work-Life-School. Six men from this study called balancing work responsibilities, life responsibilities and school responsibilities challenging. While numerous strategies emerged to overcome this barrier (e.g. waking up early, supervisor allowing work flexibility, focusing on role, or combination thereof), five acknowledged their wives as the key component to overcoming this barrier. These five men commented on the encouragement and emotional support they received from their wives. Moreover, they stated their wives took on the majority of the life component (e.g. nuances

associated with being married with children) so they could focus their energies on work or school.

This finding supports literature on the challenges associated with balancing doctoral studies with the competing roles of family and work responsibilities (Lovitts, 2001; Smith et al., 2006; Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011; West et al., 2012). In addition, it supports findings by Martinez et al. (2013), who posit that in order to successfully balance work-life-school, doctoral students must purposefully manage time, priorities, roles and responsibilities. Moreover, it supports literature by Rendon (1999), who found one of the five Mexican American doctoral candidates cited his wife's willingness to take on the nuances of being married with children in addition to continuing working so that they could maintain a quasi-standard of living and offset the high cost of a doctorate.

Self-Doubt. Five men within this study commented on their insecurities that led to feelings of self-doubt. These men stated their level of confidence diminished after being exposed to the nuances and expectations of their doctoral program, thereby increasing feelings of abandonment. To overcome this barrier, all five men sought direction and encouragement from their mentor(s), who subsequently reinforced their level of confidence.

Self-doubt as a barrier did not align with the literature review of this study. Arguably, these men initially believed in their abilities (self-efficacy) to achieve a goal. However, at different times throughout their ascent, these men experienced negative feelings associated with not attaining their final goal of transitioning from doctoral candidate to doctoral recipient.

Financing the Doctoral Degree. Four men in this study viewed financing their doctorates as a barrier. All of these men spoke of having to pull out student loans to overcome this barrier, but recognized that without them, their high aspirations of attaining a doctorate would lead to the abandonment of their studies. Specifically, three men who worked full-time commented on having to take out student loans to pay for their doctorates and/or help supplement the loss of family income. The sole participant who worked part-time spoke of having to find a second job, use TA-ships, attain a fellowship, and also take out student loans.

This finding supports literature that states doctoral students are more likely to leave their doctoral studies if a lack of financial support exists (Lovitts, 2001; Gardner, 2008; Council of Graduate Schools, 2009; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011; Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012).

Unexpected Findings

Mentorship Is More Diverse Than What Literature Describes

The first unexpected finding dealt with the notion of mentorship. While the notion of mentorship is complex and can mean different things to different people (Gandara, 1994), scholars acknowledge the relationship between the mentor and protégé will more often than not produce a positive outcome (Kochan, 2002; Gandara, 1994; Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Ceballo, 2004; Cerezo et al., 2013). Literature research found that mentors will often be sought from the doctoral candidate's academic setting (Nettles & Millett, 2006; West et al., 2012), yet on rare occasions Mexican Americans in pursuit of their doctorates also mentioned a family member as being instrumental in their aspiration toward degree attainment (Gandara, 1994; Heimlich, 2001). Surprisingly, the

source of the mentorship experienced by one study participant came from a former boss—a discovery that was not supported by the literature review of this study.

Males and Females Share Similar Extrinsic Factors

The second unexpected finding critical to doctoral degree attainment emerged as parent(s) providing emotional support and encouragement to Mexican American men in pursuit of their doctorates. Regardless of gender, review of literature noted parental support and encouragement as one of the most prevalent environmental factors that influenced the academic success of undergraduate students of Mexican origin (Arrellano & Padilla, 1996; Ceballo, 2004; Easley et al., 2012; Cerezo et al., 2013). At the graduate level, Castellanos et al. (2006) noted similar findings; Latina/os in pursuit of their doctorates who experienced higher forms of parental support were more likely to achieve academic success. However, available literature found no studies that pinpointed second-generation Mexican American males. This study found 50% of the participants commented on receiving emotional support and verbal encouragement from a parent(s). This finding was unexpected because available literature states that Mexican American females in pursuit of their doctorates are more likely to attribute their academic success to supportive parent(s) (extrinsic factor) while Mexican American males are more likely to attribute their academic success to characteristics associated with intrinsic factors like persistence or hard work (Gandara, 1994).

Desire to Create Large-Scale Change as Motivation

The third unexpected finding revolved around the desire to create change within their professions. This study found 75% of the participants used this theme as a driving force to remain relentless during their ascent despite the presence of conditions or

tangibles that increased stress levels and placed them at risk for abandonment of study. These men felt attaining their doctorates would provide them with a well-recognized title that would substantiate their professional positions thereby increasing the likelihood of facilitating change within k-12, higher education and the aerospace industry. This finding was unexpected because literature review found no studies where the desire to create change emerged as a factor that influenced doctoral attainment.

Feelings of Self-Satisfaction Leads to Degree Attainment

The fourth unexpected finding also emerged as a major theme that influenced doctoral attainment; for self-satisfaction. The desire to feel a high state of satisfaction that led to pride was acknowledged by 50% of the participants. Feelings of self-satisfaction stemmed from wanting to belong to the elite group of Mexican scholars to the need of wanting to become the very best within their profession. The desire for self-satisfaction as a factor that influenced doctoral attainment was not found in the literature review of this study.

Parental Educational Attainment Conflicts with Literature

The fifth unexpected finding emerged as a prevalent theme for this study: parents' lack of educational attainment. For this study, 63% of the participants described how their parent(s') education ranged from no formal schooling to at least attending secondary schooling. This finding was unforeseen as review of literature found strong correlation between parental educational attainment and the educational attainment of their offspring (Chen, 2005; Hirudayaraj, 2011). Meaning, students whose parents did not attend/graduate from college were more apt to not complete college than those students whose parents did attend/graduate from college. Parents' lack of educational attainment

as a factor that influenced doctoral attainment was not found in the literature review of this study.

Conclusions

Based on close examination of the participants' perceptions of their realities and literature review, the following can be concluded with regard to the factors that influence second-generation Mexican American males native to California in earning their doctorates:

Conclusion 1

Locating and interacting with more than one mentor from different settings who can provide direction, advice and encouragement is one component to the attainment of a doctorate. In doing so, doctoral candidates can reach out to various forms of effective mentorship and at different times as self-efficacy is not enough.

Clearly, intrinsic factors are not enough for the attainment of a doctorate for second-generation Mexican American males. Arguably, the belief in their ability (self-efficacy), supported by acceptance into a top California university, increased their level of confidence and the self-expectation that success at the doctoral level is possible. However, this study found it takes more than intrinsic factors to attain a doctorate and will require interaction with mentors (extrinsic factor) from different settings that can provide direction, advice and encouragement. The key, however, for doctoral candidates is to locate mentors in all aspects of life they feel they can trust and will remain active throughout the doctoral process. This type of front-loading will help create an effective mentor relationship whereby the student will continuously receive reassurance that

degree attainment is possible. Moreover, such a relationship will help suppress feelings of self-doubt, the opposite of self-efficacy, should these feelings arise.

The argument goes that mentors should be sought from the student's academic setting (Gardner, 2013); however, literature review and this study found effective mentorship can be found elsewhere. For example, studies by Gandara (1994) and Heimlich (2001) found that it was not uncommon for Mexican American doctoral candidates to find effective mentorship within the family setting. The findings of this study support literature that states mentors can emerge from the school setting and home setting; however, this study also found effective mentorship can extend to the work setting in the form of a supportive supervisor or former boss. Therefore, effective mentorship has more to do with someone who is interested and willing to provide support and encouragement to the graduate student and little to do with setting. The more mentors a graduate student seeks and interacts with from different settings, the higher the likelihood the student will receive effective mentorship leading to degree attainment.

Conclusion 2

Participants of this study found the existence and involvement from a dissertation chair, regardless of gender, that aligned with their Latino culture significantly increases the probability of degree attainment. This central figure will serve in a number of capacities to include providing a different form of mentorship that focuses on academics and provides direction with navigating the nuances of a doctorate.

Literature review found doctoral candidates who culturally align with mentors are more likely to become doctoral recipients (Solarzano, 1993; Heimlich, 2001; Kochan, 2002; Greer-Williams, 2004; Gerstl-Pepin et al., 2004; Carter & McCallum, 2008; Felder,

2010; Graham, 2013). Unfortunately, difference of opinion of who is considered a mentor and in what setting continues to emerge (Gandara, 1994). What is certain is the role of mentorship can extend to one's dissertation chair, as found by West et al. (2012) and this study.

Participants of this study held the majority of their dissertation chairs were also viewed as mentors. In addition, they were Latina/o but not always found within their school's setting. Due to their familiarity with the dissertation process and the expectations of the university, dissertation chairs were also seen as gatekeepers who were able to provide direction with the dissertation process. Participants noted that through continued interaction and reassurance, constant feedback and at times having their views challenged, they were able to produce quality work and be kept on track. Because of this, the majority of participants identified a culturally aligned dissertation chair as the most critical component to degree attainment.

Conclusion 3

Surrounding oneself with an intricate network of family and academic peers that can provide support and encouragement beyond the mentorship relationships is also critical to degree attainment. This inner circle will add an additional layer of support and encouragement that in most cases is more personal and continuously reinforces the message that degree attainment is achievable.

Literature review found family and friends during doctoral studies as critical for degree attainment (Martinez et al., 2013). However, difference of opinion was noted as to who belongs in this inner circle. What is certain is that supportive resources can come from the home (parents and wife, if married), school, or a combination thereof. Rather

than compete against one another, they complemented each other and provided different types of supportive elements.

Due to the parents' unfamiliarity with higher education, support and encouragement was often limited to emotional support and words of encouragement. However, the steps these parents took to embed the value of education carried over into the participants' doctoral studies. Participants described how their parents told stories of their own experiences—working in harsh conditions and receiving low pay—to validate the benefits associated with being educated (e.g. upward mobility, higher-paying jobs). These small, yet powerful images provided a layer of motivation that was extremely meaningful and served as a constant reminder that the participants' success would also serve as inspiration for future generations.

Given the fact that most participants of this study were married with children and had full-time management jobs, family and meeting cultural expectations were extremely important. However, participants stated that the pressures of balancing work responsibilities, home responsibilities and school responsibilities proved challenging. To overcome the issue of time, participants stated their wives increased their level of involvement when they faltered with their home responsibilities (e.g. nuances of raising and caring for their children). Thus, participants were able to focus on their doctoral studies and work responsibilities. Moreover, wives also provided emotional and moral support along with verbal encouragement that was more personal and easily accessible.

As a result of their doctoral studies, participants also cited academic peers as necessary toward degree attainment. In some cases, peers were also seen as horizontal mentors, yet their role was more tangible. Participants held they often shared academic

resources, engaged in academic debate and helped each other however possible. This interaction provided a type of support that would help keep them on the right academic track (Gandara, 1994).

Conclusion 4

Having a culturally aligned dissertation chair was seen as the most critical component toward degree attainment; however, additional strategies are also needed. Second-generation Mexican American males will need to be goal-oriented and use this vision as motivation to remain relentless throughout their doctoral studies.

Studies on Mexican American graduate students have shown ability alone is not enough for degree attainment and will require assistance from mentors and being persistent (relentless) (Gandara, 1994; Rendon, 1999; Heimlich, 2001). Scholars Bandara and Locke (2003) found being persistent (relentless) is not an inherent characteristic; rather, it is something that one can be developed through sense of purpose (goal). They posit the combination of self-efficacy (ability) and sense of purpose (goal) enhances motivation and performance attainment (Bandara & Locke, 2003). The goal, therefore, provides incentive and motivation that will help develop one's relentlessness toward goal attainment.

Participants of this study held being relentless in their pursuit created something worth fighting for. These participants shared the desire to create change within their organizations, the desire for self-satisfaction, or the desire for career advancement as long-term goals beyond degree completion. While most participants struggled with an inner guilt of not spending quality time with their families, they often overrode these feelings by staying focused and understanding that receiving their doctorates would

facilitate their long-term goals. Hence, being goal-oriented served as the central driver to remain relentless toward one's scholastic prowess and overall objectives.

Conclusion 5

Being of the mindset that one can succeed, exercising a wide range of supportive resources and remaining goal-oriented means little if second-generation Mexican American males do not have the means to finance their doctoral studies. Therefore, student loans should be viewed as a viable strategy to financing the high cost of a doctorate and investment for future aspirations.

Being accepted into a doctoral program created an opportunity for these participants; however, research shows a strong correlation between the high cost associated with doctoral studies and their abandonment (Gardner, 2008). In fact, the Ph.D. Completion Project found the leading cause of degree attrition was lack of finances (Council of Graduate Schools, 2009). According to College Scholarships (2015), there are a number of financial aid options designed to help defray the high costs associated with doctoral studies: grants, fellowships, teaching assistantships, and scholarships, which in most cases are not repaid. Unfortunately, these types of financial aid normally require extensive applications, are very selective and in most cases do not cover the entire cost of the doctorate. Loans, on the other hand, normally cover the entire cost associated with doctoral studies and are easier to apply for, but will require repayment (College Scholarship, 2015).

Participants of this study identified financing the doctorate as a major obstacle but also understood without that without financing, attrition would follow. While scholarships, grants, teaching assistantships and fellowships were financial aid options,

participants who were married with children and had full-time jobs in management positions choose student loans. The sole participant who was not married, had no children and worked part-time chose a combination of financial aid options that included fellowships, teaching assistantships, a second job and finally pulling out student loans. In either case, student loans were needed to bridge the financial gap created by the high costs associated with a doctorate.

Implications of Study

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following actions are recommended for implementation:

1. *Mexican American parent(s)* need to continue instilling the value of an education and promote an environment whereby educational attainment outweighs traditional male expectations. Therefore Mexican American parent(s) need to begin reading to their offspring at an early age, followed by enrollment in Head Start programs designed to promote school readiness and child development. During K-8 schooling, Mexican American parent(s) need to volunteer at their child's school and enroll them in after-school programs or summer programs designed to build on their educational skills and knowledge. In addition, throughout latter years of schooling, Mexican American parent(s) need to continuously communicate their high educational expectations while simultaneously providing emotional support and encouragement. They need to use examples of their experiences as powerful testimonies to support the institution of education and validate the positive outcomes associated with higher education (e.g. increased likelihood of upward mobility, higher-paying jobs,

increase in networking opportunities) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). This type of action will serve as the foundation—a value if you may—that continuously influences academic prowess of Mexican American students.

2. *Mexican American students* need to locate and access more than one mentor who can provide guidance, advice and encouragement during their academic journeys. Arguably, the groundwork during early schooling has been set, but now the onus lies with the actions of Mexican American student. Under the guidance and direction of a competent academic mentor, Mexican American students need to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses, or courses at a local college, in order to gain college credit and become familiar with the expectations of higher education. These experiences will showcase the benefits associated with good mentoring, or bad mentoring for that matter, and allow the Mexican American student to recognize the difference. This same action should continue throughout their post-secondary education with searches expanding beyond the student's academic setting. The goal is to seek mentorship in all aspects of life. The defining factors should be someone they trust who is interested in seeing them succeed, and is willing to fully commit. This action will allow Mexican American students to take advantage of various types of support (e.g. emotional, verbal, moral), from different settings (e.g. school, home, work) and when needed throughout their academic journeys.
3. *Latinos with doctoral degrees* need to get involved as dissertation chairs to provide leadership within the academic environment. To maximize on this relationship, potential chairs will need to seek and locate graduate students and

also serve as mentors throughout the doctoral process. To communicate their intentions, potential dissertation chairs need to use their school's communication vehicles and join external doctoral mentorship associations. These types of action will serve numerous purposes: 1) it will establish a trusting relationship whereby expectations, from both parties, are experienced early on and a toxic dissertation relationship avoided; 2) the dissertation chair can help the doctoral candidate pinpoint a dissertation topic, develop research questions and begin building the literature review prior to the dissertation phase; 3) it will showcase the dissertation chair's willingness to engage, provide guidance and support; 4) it will allow for fluid transition between pre-, peri-, and post-dissertation phases, thus helping the doctoral student with overcoming the nuances of the doctorate.

4. *Doctoral-granting universities* need to hire, retain and promote more Latino faculty. One strategy to add to the dearth of Latino faculty in higher education is for doctoral-granting universities to identify and offer year-round internships to current Latino doctoral students. In doing so, students will begin to understand their role as faculty, expectations of the university, and be fully integrated upon degree completion. Ideally, this scenario will lead to full-time employment. In addition, universities need to reserve a minimum number of tenure-track faculty positions for Latinos who hold doctorates. Current data shows the number of Latina/o faculty in tenure-track positions sits at about 4% for colleges and universities throughout the U.S. and has not changed over the past 10 years (AAHHE, n.d.). Conversely, the pool of Latinos available to attend graduate studies over the last 10 years more than doubled (NCES, 2012). These actions

will help create an academic environment whereby Latino students will have immediate access to a faculty that is culturally aligned; a faculty that is familiar with the school setting, its expectations, and processes; and a faculty that can better understand and relate to what Latino students are going through. This unique asset will also be able to provide emotional support and encouragement within the academic setting and provide information on how to defray the high cost of a doctorate.

5. *This researcher* will make the findings of this study available for dissemination to conferences that target Latino issues and journals that focus on Latinos and higher education (e.g. *Journal of Hispanics and Higher Education*). In addition, this researcher will solicit invitations to speaking engagements and reach out to educational policymakers at various levels. In doing so, research-based results will become available to educators, universities, policymakers and Latino families who can help create an environment conducive of degree attainment. While this researcher focused on second-generation Mexican American males, the results of this study can be also used as a guide for other Latinos and use its findings as a roadmap that can increase the likelihood of doctoral attainment.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on literature review and the findings of this study, the following is recommended for further research:

1. Literature review showed by second generation, most Mexican Americans become monolingual in English (Telles, 2006). This study found an outlier who spoke on the psychological effects of being labeled an English Learner during his

primary education that carried over into his doctorate program. It is proposed a study that focuses on Mexican Americans who also experienced the nuances of being an English Learner and to what extent this experience affects them during their doctoral studies.

2. The National Science Foundation (2014a) found the percentage of Mexicans, regardless of gender, who hold a doctorate and graduated from a university within California is approximately .35%; however, the report clustered all generations-since-immigration under the same umbrella. Therefore, future research should consider a study that compares the factors that influenced foreign-born Mexican doctorate recipients and native-born Mexican American doctorate recipients.
3. This study supports literature that states the likelihood of doctoral attainment is increased if the doctoral candidate and dissertation chair are culturally aligned. Future research should consider a study that examines the psychological impact on a doctoral candidate who enters a dissertation relationship whereby the doctoral candidate and dissertation chair do not culturally align.
4. The argument goes the Ed.D. is less prestigious than the Ph.D. and in many ways considered the junior doctoral degree (McDonald, 1943 as cited in Baez, 2002). This study found career advancement served as motivation toward degree attainment. In addition, the majority of the participants received an Ed.D. degree. Future research should focus on a study that compares career advancement of second-generation Mexican American men who attained an Ed.D. versus a Ph.D.
5. Literature review shows first-generation student status has a negative association with student's academic preparation, persistence and likelihood of remaining in

college when compared with students whose parents had attended college (Hirudayaraj, 2011). Future research should concentrate on the opposite end of the spectrum and target the academic prowess/attainment of second-generation Mexican American doctoral recipients' offspring: third-generation Mexican Americans.

6. Literature review found gender expectations within Mexican culture as follows; males are expected to provide for their family and females expected to care for the family (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Research shows females of Mexican origin continue to attain more doctorates than their male counterparts (NCES, 2012). Provided the spouse is male and of Mexican origin, future research should focus on husbands of high-achieving Mexican American females and the role of the husband during the ascent of the female doctoral candidate.
7. This study found factors that influenced second-generation Mexican American males to attain their doctorates. Future research should compare these findings against second-generation Mexican American male doctoral candidates who remained All But Dissertation (ABD) and determine to what extent similar factors were effective or ineffective. The goal is to add to the extent of available literature and gain a more holistic perspective.
8. Literature review identified the leading cause of abandonment of doctoral studies was lack of finances (Gardner, 2008; Council of Graduate Schools, 2009) while the College Scholarship (2015) reported student loans as the primary vehicle to finance any degree. Along the same lines, participants of this study identified financing the doctorate as a major obstacle but they also recognized without

student loans, their future aspirations (e.g. career advancement, more pay, upward mobility) would come to a halt. Given these findings and the fact that within the Latino culture, Latino males are seen as the providers for their families (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009), it is suggested a study be conducted that examines the role of cultural expectations and burden of acquiring additional student debt plays on the decision of a male Latino to enter a doctoral program.

9. Within the Latino culture, family has been found to serve as a social network that can support male Latinos as they navigate the educational system (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Cerezo et al. (2013) found “...emotional support from the family positively contributes to the pursuit of college for many Mexican American men” (p. 353). Along these lines, it is proposed a study be conducted that examines the impact of family on success.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

What exactly did this researcher learn from this study? There is a critical shortage of doctoral degrees conferred on California’s Mexican community (NSF & NCSES, n.d.) even though this subgroup represents 82% of Latinos in California (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010) and California is home to the largest post-secondary Latino student population (Solorzano, 2012). In fact, the National Science Foundation (2014a) found there were 506,342 doctoral degrees awarded between 2002 through 2012; of these, 1778 were conferred on individuals of Mexican origin—785 were conferred on males—who graduated from a university within California. That means between 2002 and 2012, approximately .0015% of conferred degrees were bestowed on males of Mexican origin.

Statistics like this have inspired researchers to conduct studies on factors that hinder educational attainment; however, they neglect the factors that influence degree attainment (Solorzano & Ornelas, 2004). The scope of this research found one study that focused on the factors that promoted the academic success of Mexican American males at the undergraduate level (Cerezo et al., 2013); however, there was no distinction made between generations. At the doctoral level, no studies were found that focused exclusively on Mexican American males. Often, available literature focused on Latinas/os or clustered Mexican American males and females together, but again, no generation distinction was made. Because of this, scholars and practitioners are limited to understanding the academic experiences of second-generation Mexican American males from California. Moreover, what is known about the Latino male experience is often derived from the context of their Latina counterparts (Gloria et al., 2009).

Adding to this problem are the misconceptions that males of Mexican origin are often associated with gangs and prone to violence (Pew Research Center, 2009; Blatchford, 2008; Mendoza, 2005; Howell, 1998). Unfortunately, these types of misunderstandings reinforce the stereotype that Mexican American males are not college material (Cerezo et al., 2013, Arciniega, et al., 2008). Therefore, completing this study felt like a type of redemption to showcase the fact that Mexican American males are college material and can succeed at the doctoral level.

What this researcher found most interesting were the similarities between undergraduate students and doctoral candidates of Mexican origin. For example, the intrinsic traits of self-efficacy and persistence were found as factors that promoted degree attainment at the undergraduate level (Arellano & Padilla, 1996; Cerezo et al., 2013).

Persistence was also found at the doctoral level but took on different names that included being persistent (Gandara, 1994) or being goal-driven (Heimlich, 2001). This study found participants used long-term goals to remain relentless (persistent) in their pursuit; therefore, this researcher felt the term relentless was more appropriate because it described an action associated with pace or being steadfast in pursuit of a goal. While the trait of self-efficacy did not emerge as a major theme that promoted degree attainment, the opposite, self-doubt, emerged as a barrier, thereby suggesting the presence of self-efficacy.

Literature review also found Mexican students at the undergraduate level relied on numerous types of supportive resources—parents, family and friends, mentors (extrinsic factors)—as ability and being persistent was not enough to achieve academic success (Gandara, 1994). This same ideology was found during this study; however, the term mentor extended beyond the school and home setting and included the work setting. In addition, family and friends extended to a wife. Collectively, these figures served in a number of capacities that provided different types of mentorship, support and encouragement and at separate times throughout these participant’s doctoral ascents.

One last point to make: participants of this study identified financing the doctorate as an obstacle, yet they found feasible workarounds—student loans—to facilitate degree attainment. While participants of this study held their dissertation chairs as the most critical component to degree attainment, this researcher argues this honor should be shared with student loans. Let’s face it. Even if a doctoral candidate has the belief (self-efficacy) that he/she can succeed at the doctoral level, has an intricate support system (mentors), has a culturally aligned dissertation chair and is goal-oriented, these

components will fall on deaf ears if these students cannot finance their doctoral studies. For this reason, it is this researcher's belief that it will take the combination of all five components to increase the likelihood of degree attainment.

Data has proven that Mexican men continue to lag in educational attainment when compared to their female counterparts, the three most populous subgroups within the Latino group (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban) and all non-Latino ethnic groups. On a good note, the fact that more and more Mexican Americans continue to attain doctorates (NSF & NCES, n.d.) indicates progress in the right direction, but it will take nothing short of a miracle to get this subgroup back on track. What is certain is that the findings of this study are only a glimpse in trying to understand a phenomenon that is perplexing and will require layers upon layers of research from future scholars. God willing, the findings of this study will provide hope for future scholars and a roadmap that, if followed, can increase the likelihood of doctoral attainment.

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APPENDIX A: Informational Letter

Dr _____,

My name is Jorge Chavarin and am a doctoral candidate at Brandman University (Part of Chapman University System). I am reaching out to you with hopes that you can assist with my dissertation study. In short, my dissertation will be qualitative in nature and focus on the factor(s) that influenced second-generation Mexican American males who attained their doctorates. As such, the criterion for this study is as follows:

1. Are you Mexican American?
2. Are you male or female?
3. As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, are you second-generation? Second-generation denotes those born in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent.
4. Did you receive a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from a university within the continental United States? If so, please provide the type of degree, name of the university and the year it was granted.
5. Was your Ed.D. or Ph.D. from a university within California?
6. Are you native to California?

If you meet the criteria and are willing to participate an interview will follow. The interview itself will take approximately 45-60 minutes and will be conducted at your convenience. Be assured that your participation will be completely confidential and no names will be attached to any notes or records from the interview. In addition, all information will be safeguarded to the extent of the law with access limited to the

researcher only. Lastly, at any given point, you can stop or withdraw from the study.

If you know of any others who may fit the dissertation study and may be interested in assisting, I would respectfully request their contact information be forwarded to me or my contact information be forwarded to them.

Thank You,

Jorge Chavarin

APPENDIX B: Informed Consent Forms

Informed Consent Form

(Brandman University, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618)

Information About: This study will explore the factors that promote doctoral attainment of second-generation Mexican American males from California.

Responsible Investigator: Jorge O. Chavarin

Purpose of Study: Using a qualitative research design, this study explored the common factors that promoted doctoral attainment of second-generation Mexican American males from California. To discover these factors, this study examined cultural, social and economic barriers as well as different types of support that facilitated high levels of academic success. Participants will initially receive an Informational Letter outlining the needs of the study. Immediately following, participants who meet the criteria and are willing to participate will complete a one-on-one interview that will last between 45 – 60 minutes. The one-on-one interview will be accomplished face-to-face or via virtual platform.

BILL OF RIGHTS: I understand that:

- The possible risks to me and benefits to me are minimal.
- I may refuse to participate in or I may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the investigator may stop the study at any time.
- No information that identifies me will be released without my consent and all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study

design or the use of the data is to be changed I will be so informed and my consent obtained.

- I understand an interview will take place and be recorded by the Responsible Investigator for the purpose of this study. Each participant will be assigned a number and pseudo name for identification purposes. The Responsible Investigator will keep the identifying number and pseudo name safe-guarded in a locked file drawer to which he will have sole access and destroyed upon completion of the study.
- Any questions concerning this study will be answered by Jorge Chavarin who can be reached at chav2803@mail.brandman.edu or by phone at (626) 367-2710. Further questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process can be forwarded to the Office of the Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs, Brandman University, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618 or by telephone at (949) 341-7641.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form. I have read the above and understand it and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

Name and Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Electronic Consent Form

(Brandman University, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618)

Information About: This study will explore the factors that promote doctoral attainment of second-generation Mexican American males from California.

Responsible Investigator: Jorge O. Chavarin

Purpose of Study: Using a qualitative research design, this study explored the common factors that promoted doctoral attainment of second-generation Mexican American males from California. To discover these factors, this study examined cultural, social and economic barriers as well as different types of support that facilitated high levels of academic success. Participants will initially receive an Informational Letter outlining the needs of the study. Immediately following, participants who meet the criteria and are willing to participate will complete a one-on-one interview that will last between 45 – 60 minutes. The one-on-one interview will be accomplished face-to-face or via virtual platform.

BILL OF RIGHTS: I understand that:

- The possible risks to me and benefits to me are minimal.
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design or the use of the data is to be changed I will be so informed and my consent obtained.

- I understand an interview will take place and be recorded by the Responsible Investigator for the purpose of this study. Each participant will be assigned a number and pseudonym for identification purposes. The Responsible Investigator will keep the identifying number and pseudo name safe-guarded in a locked file drawer to which he will have sole access and destroyed upon completion of the study.
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ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the “agree” button indicates that you have read the informed consent form and the information in this document and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

If you do not wish to participate you may decline participation by clicking on the “disagree” button.

AGREE: I acknowledge receipt of the complete Informed Consent packet and “Bill of Rights.” I have read the materials and give my consent to participate in the study.

DISAGREE: I do not wish to participate.

APPENDIX C: Interview Questions and Protocol

Today I am with Dr. _____ who has agreed to participate in my research study. My name is Jorge Chavarin, a doctoral candidate from Brandman University, Irvine, California. Before we begin, I would like to reiterate the intent of this exploratory study; to identify factors that influenced high-achieving second-generation Mexican-American males native to California who attain their doctorates. Before we continue with the actual questionnaire, I would like to reconfirm some basic information.

- Are you Mexican American?
- Are you male or female?
- As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, are you second-generation? Second-generation denotes those born in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent.
- Did you receive a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from a university within the United States? If so, please provide the type of degree, name of the university and the year it was granted.
- Was your Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from a university within California?
- Are you native to California?

Dr. _____, my study is titled: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF FACTORS PROMOTING DOCTORAL ATTAINMENT OF SECOND-GENERATION MEXICAN AMERICAN MALES FROM CALIFORNIA. The main focus will be on your doctoral journey. However, in order to gain a deeper understanding of your experience, I will be

asking some questions about challenges encountered and what types of support systems you used to overcome such challenges. The answers you provide will be kept confidential and used for scholarly purposes only.

1. Please describe the factors that influenced you to earn your doctorate?
2. How did these factors influence your success?
3. Please discuss some of the barriers encountered?
4. How were the barriers encountered overcome?
5. Is there anything you would like to add?

APPENDIX D: NVivo Report (Salient Themes and Patterns)

The screenshot shows the NVivo interface with a list of nodes. The 'Nodes' table is as follows:

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Mentorship	8	19	9/17/2015 10:11 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 8:35 PM	JOC
Influencing Factors	0	0	9/17/2015 10:10 PM	JOC	9/17/2015 10:44 PM	JOC
Mentors and Peers	8	16	9/17/2015 10:12 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 8:35 PM	JOC
Dissertation Committee	5	6	9/18/2015 4:39 PM	JOC	9/23/2015 4:21 PM	JOC
Create Change	6	7	9/17/2015 10:11 PM	JOC	9/18/2015 3:26 PM	JOC
Within K-12	3	3	9/21/2015 8:15 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 9:42 PM	JOC
Within Higher Education	2	2	9/21/2015 8:15 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 9:40 PM	JOC
Within an industry	1	1	9/21/2015 8:15 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 9:41 PM	JOC
Friends and Family	6	8	9/17/2015 10:12 PM	JOC	9/23/2015 4:22 PM	JOC
Cohort Support	6	6	9/18/2015 4:40 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 9:24 PM	JOC
Significant Other	5	5	9/18/2015 4:38 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 9:31 PM	JOC
Parents	4	4	9/18/2015 4:38 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 9:36 PM	JOC
Supervisor (2)	3	4	9/21/2015 8:11 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 9:26 PM	JOC
Parents Lack of Education	5	6	9/17/2015 10:11 PM	JOC	9/23/2015 7:41 PM	JOC
Career Advancement	4	5	9/17/2015 10:10 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 8:35 PM	JOC
Self Satisfaction	4	5	9/17/2015 10:12 PM	JOC	9/18/2015 2:54 PM	JOC
Witness Familial Struggle	4	5	9/17/2015 11:23 PM	JOC	9/18/2015 4:55 PM	JOC
Educational Struggles	2	2	9/23/2015 10:11 PM	JOC	9/23/2015 10:12 PM	JOC
Economic Struggles	2	2	9/23/2015 10:11 PM	JOC	9/23/2015 10:29 PM	JOC
Provide for Family	3	3	9/17/2015 10:11 PM	JOC	9/18/2015 4:48 PM	JOC
Role Model	2	2	9/17/2015 10:12 PM	JOC	9/18/2015 2:43 PM	JOC
Barriers	0	0	9/17/2015 10:10 PM	JOC	9/17/2015 10:44 PM	JOC

The screenshot shows the NVivo interface with a filtered list of nodes. The 'Nodes' table is as follows:

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Mentorship	8	19	9/17/2015 10:11 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 8:35 PM	JOC
Influencing Factors	0	0	9/17/2015 10:10 PM	JOC	9/17/2015 10:44 PM	JOC
Barriers	0	0	9/17/2015 10:10 PM	JOC	9/17/2015 10:44 PM	JOC
Nuances of Doctorate	7	11	9/17/2015 10:38 PM	JOC	9/23/2015 10:30 PM	JOC
Work-life-school balance	6	8	9/17/2015 10:13 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 8:35 PM	JOC
Self Doubt	5	6	9/17/2015 10:53 PM	JOC	9/24/2015 1:20 PM	JOC
Finance	4	4	9/17/2015 10:13 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 8:25 PM	JOC
Social Capital	2	2	9/17/2015 10:13 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 8:35 PM	JOC
Culture	2	3	9/17/2015 10:14 PM	JOC	9/21/2015 8:35 PM	JOC
Perception	2	2	9/18/2015 2:18 PM	JOC	9/23/2015 10:31 PM	JOC