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## An Empirical Examination of Hispanic-Americans in a University Setting and the Influences on Their Attitudes Towards Assimilation

Ramon Rodriguez

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AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION OF HISPANIC-AMERICANS  
IN A UNIVERSITY SETTING AND THE INFLUENCES  
ON THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASSIMILATION

by

Ramon Rodriguez

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Ramon Rodriguez

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Ramon Rodriguez, M.A.

Western Michigan University, 1989

Recent literature on Hispanic-Americans has determined that Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority in the United States. Both the high rates of immigration and a high birth rate mean it is only a matter of time before Hispanics will form an extensively large population. Hispanics, however, generally remain unassimilated. This study focuses on the influences on the attitudes towards assimilation of Hispanic-Americans in a university setting.

Survey methods were utilized to gather data from a sample of 100 individuals at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. A survey return rate of 57% was obtained from Hispanic students questioned. The data showed that there were several variables that influenced the attitudes towards assimilation of Western Michigan University Hispanics. These were their dominant and home language, their perceived experiences of discrimination and the ethnic composition of their social events. Conclusions suggest that cultural pluralism may be a more relevant concept than assimilation in relationship to describing Hispanic-Americans in the United States.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	ii
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	vi
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Background. . . . .	1
Statement of Problem. . . . .	3
II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE . . . . .	6
Introduction. . . . .	6
The Hispanic-American Subgroups Within the United States . . . . .	8
Mexican-Americans. . . . .	8
Puerto Ricans. . . . .	11
Cuban-Americans. . . . .	14
Other Hispanics. . . . .	16
Summary of Subgroups. . . . .	18
The Process of Assimilation . . . . .	19
The Hispanic-American Dilemma . . . . .	25
The Conflict Theory . . . . .	46
Relevance of Literature to Study. . . . .	49
III. METHODOLOGY. . . . .	51
Introduction. . . . .	51
Research Population . . . . .	53

## Table of Contents--Continued

Research Sample . . . . .	53
Data Collection . . . . .	54
Pretest Population. . . . .	57
Pretest Instrumentation . . . . .	58
Variables the Study Sought to Examine . . . .	61
The Operationalization of the Dependent Variable. . . . .	63
Analysis. . . . .	66
IV. FINDINGS . . . . .	69
Introduction. . . . .	69
Characterization of the Sample. . . . .	69
Demographics and Religion. . . . .	69
Language . . . . .	78
Social Attitudes and Activities. . . . .	79
Discrimination . . . . .	81
Summary of Responses. . . . .	82
Analysis of Relationships on Assimilation .	83
Introduction . . . . .	83
Demographics . . . . .	83
Language . . . . .	85
Social Attitudes and Activities. . . . .	88
Discrimination . . . . .	93
Religion . . . . .	94
Examining the Influences on the Attitudes Towards Assimilation. . . . .	96

Table of Contents--Continued

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	98
Introduction. . . . .	98
Review of the Study . . . . .	98
The Conflict Theory and American Minority Groups . . . . .	102
Advocating a Pluralistic Society. . . . .	104
Recommendations for the Future. . . . .	106
APPENDICES	
A. Hispanic Student Survey. . . . .	108
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	118

## LIST OF TABLES

1.	Anticipation of Respondents. . . . .	58
2.	Attitudes of Respondents Towards Assimilation . . . . .	66
3.	Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Sex, Age, Marital Status, Religious Affiliation and Ethnicity. . . . .	69
4.	Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by State Residency, Place of Birth, Home Region, and Residency. . . . .	72
5.	Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Employment Status, Socio- Economic Status, Family Income, Single-Headed Household, Family Size and Dwelling. . . . .	73
6.	Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Class Standing, Father's Educational Status, and Mother's Educational Status . . . . .	76
7.	Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Language Most Frequently Spoken at Home and Most Comfortable With . . . . .	78
8.	Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Social Relations, Social Events, Attitudes on Dating and Marriage . . . . .	79
9.	Frequency and Percentage Distribution of by The Incidences of Discrimination. . . . .	81
10.	Cross-Tabulation of Income and Assimilation. . . . .	84
11.	Cross-Tabulation of Language and Assimilation. . . . .	86
12.	Cross-Tabulation of Home Language and Assimilation . . . . .	87
13.	Cross-Tabulation of Partner Selection and Assimilation . . . . .	89



List of Tables--Continued

14.	Cross-Tabulation of Friends and Assimilation . . . . .	90
15.	Cross-Tabulation of Patterns of Interaction in Social Events and Assimilation. . . . .	92
16.	Cross-Tabulation of Discrimination and Assimilation . . . . .	93
17.	Cross-Tabulation of Religious Affiliation and Assimilation . . . . .	95

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

In the United States there are more than 15 million persons of Hispanic ancestry. These are the people who describe themselves in the United States Census as, "Mexican American, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish origin (Rendon, 1985, p. 3). Both the high rates of immigration and a high birth rate mean that it is only a matter of time before Hispanics will form an extensively large population. Numerically, they may exceed all other American minorities in the United States in the decades to come.

The United States is in continual change and the Hispanics could well take longer than any other immigrant ethnic group to melt into the American "melting pot." It is generally misunderstood why the last wave of immigrants is refusing to assimilate into the classic American melting pot. What makes them different from the Germans, the Italians, the Chinese, the Japanese and others who seem to have been seem to be absorbed in the United States?

Assimilation in the United States is a process whereby groups with different cultures share or participate in a common culture

(Kornblum, 1988, p. 7). Casual observation, however, suggests that the traditional values and culture seem to be preserved by Hispanic-Americans at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Hispanics often appear to create their own little niche. Therefore, they separate themselves from the rest of the student body. Thus, they remain distinct and unassimilated. What influences these convictions? This study seeks to determine the influences on the attitudes towards assimilation of Hispanic-Americans at Western Michigan University.

In order to determine what factors influence Hispanic student's attitudes towards assimilation an empirical examination is crucial. A survey instrument was distributed to the Hispanic student university population. The resultant data from this survey were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions, percentage table analysis, and the chi-square test of significance. The research proposes, then, to examine the various independent variables that either encourage or hinder (influence) the dependent variable of Hispanic attitudes towards assimilation at Western Michigan University.

Hispanics in general, and similarly at Western Michigan University, appear to be refraining from meaningful participation in mainstream culture. It is critical to disclose why by examining this proposed research question.

### Statement of Problem

Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority in the United States. During the 1980s Hispanics had amazing growth in the United States. While the nation's population went up only 11.5 percent, Hispanics jumped by 61 percent (Rendon, 1985, p. 3). Today, the United States Hispanic population is young, growing and highly urbanized. It is multiracial, containing blacks, browns and whites. Its attachment to the Spanish language and the Hispanic culture is varied. Thus, far from being monolithic, it is composed of distinct Spanish-origin groups. Each of them is concentrated in a different region of the country. Moreover, each of these groups present a different social and economic profile, while simultaneously being tied together by a common cultural background, language and religion.

Hispanic-Americans as a whole form a seriously disadvantaged population. As members of the second largest ethnic minority group in the United States, Hispanics are faced with many of the same social ills that plague other minorities regarding, for example, median incomes, education, unemployment, high fertility, immigration, and crime rates. Moreover, as a whole, the Hispanic population in the United States is also a generally unassimilated group. Thus, Hispanics are dissimilar and naturally also have different attitudes towards American society, as well as differential attitudes towards the assimilation that American society seems to demand.

Returns from the 1980 census suggest that the United States

is now the sixth largest Spanish-speaking country in the world (Rendon, 1985, p. 3). In fact, testimony before the Congress noted that there were 11 1/2 million people who reported that they spoke Spanish at home in 1980 (Rendon, 1985, p. 3). Hispanics have changed the language in the schools and on public documents, while taking over whole cities culturally and linguistically. The crucial issue of assimilation in the United States then can no longer be ignored. Often, achieving assimilation in American society is seen as being hindered by the speaking of another language. Language is seen as the transmitter of a distinct culture (Rendon, 1985, p. 3).

The purpose of a study of this nature is then critical. It seeks to determine how Hispanic students generally perceive the concept of assimilation, focusing on the Hispanic-American population at Western Michigan University. The population to be examined in this study are Hispanic university students. The participation of Hispanics nationwide in post secondary education remains relatively low. This generates a small population to be examined at Western Michigan University. In 1987, the U.S. Bureau of Census revealed that 50.9% of Hispanics are completing four or more years of high school, compared to 77.3% of the total population. In 1985, 8% of Hispanic students completed four or more years of college, compared to 20% of the Non-Hispanics. Additionally, in 1982, of the 55% of Hispanics who graduated from high school, 22% entered college and only 7% eventually completed college. While current data indicate a modest increase in Hispanic enrollments, such increase remains

disproportionately low when compared to the overall national college age population (Michigan State Board of Education, 1989, p. 1).

Factors that have weakened the Hispanic participation rate in colleges and universities are likely related to the facts that many Hispanic students are first generation college students and often lack the support and experience which other students can draw upon from their college-oriented families and friends. The close, centrally located family structure in which many young Hispanics exist may be a factor in their low representation in colleges and universities. This family structure, coupled with the absence of professional networks and with their inadequate academic preparation produces this current "leakage" in the educational pipeline for Hispanics (Michigan State Board of Education, 1989, p. 1). It is then critical to examine the limited Hispanic student population at Western Michigan University. Their views and perspectives relating to Hispanic and Anglo culture are particularly important to understand given the national patterns of low participation as just described.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The term "Hispanic" does not define a race, ethnic group or nationality, and is often not the term of choice by many Hispanic Americans. Rather, it is a bureaucratic catchall to describe immigrants and their descendants from more than 30 countries sharing the Spanish language (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). Therefore, it masks much diversity.

The United States Bureau of the Census regards as persons of Spanish origin or descent those who designate themselves in the census as being Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Other Spanish/Hispanic (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 8). It is a "self-identifier" that now officially defines the Spanish-origin population known as Hispanic or Latino, in the United States (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). In 1980, the census counted 14.6 million Hispanics on the U.S. mainland, comprising 6.4 percent of the total population. This includes an estimated 1.3 million undocumented Hispanic aliens, 930,000 of whom are from Mexico; it does not include the 3.1 million Puerto Ricans living in the island of Puerto Rico. An additional but unknown number of Hispanics, both documented and undocumented, add to the actual population, which is roughly

estimated at 20 million in the United States (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 8).

According to the United States Census report, Mexican-Americans form the largest single Hispanic group in the United States. There are 8,740,439 Mexican-Americans in the United States and this does not account for any "illegals." Mexican-Americans are primarily concentrated in the southwest, especially California and Texas. They are followed by Puerto Ricans, numbering 2,013,945 on the mainland in 1980 (Cafferty & McCready, 1985, p. 20). Puerto Ricans are concentrated in the Northeast, largely in New York City. Cuban-Americans are the third largest group, numbering 800,000 and are concentrated in the Miami, Florida area (Cafferty & McCready, 1985, p. 20). Central and South Americans numbered 863,000 in 1978 (Cafferty & McCready, 1985, p. 20). They, however, are generally scattered among the dominant Hispanic populations. About 85% of these Hispanics live and work in our nation's cities (Cafferty & McCready, 1985, p. 20). Most tend to reside in urban areas. Often, Hispanics live in close extended families, which include grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, close family friends, as well as the parents and children. Partly because of strong family attachments, Hispanics form strong community ties and prefer to work in or near their communities (Cafferty & McCready, pp. 20-21). The following is an examination of the various sub-groups of Hispanic-Americans in the United States. It is divided into four sections: Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and other Hispanics.



The Hispanic-American Sub-Groups  
Within the United States

Mexican-Americans

The major Hispanic group in the United States is comprised of Mexican-Americans, which showed a dramatic increase in the last decade. However, the Census is not always accurate in determining who is Hispanic. Nonetheless, Mexican-Americans in the United States nearly doubled in size in the last decade, growing from 4.5 million in 1970 to 8.7 million in 1980 (Rendon, 1985, p. 7).

The border of the United States and Mexico extends for more than 1,930 km (1,200 mi) and every day thousands of Mexicans have entered and left the United States to work or visit in the last decades. Large numbers also come either legally or illegally to stay. Population pressure, extensive poverty and unemployment in Mexico prompt Mexican workers to come to the United States, where many have relatives and friends to assist them. Mexican-Americans, whether they recently immigrated or not, form one of the most economically deprived groups within the nation, with nearly 20% of Mexican families living below the poverty level, the income level set by the Department of Labor as "necessary for a decent livelihood" (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 28). Mexican-Americans tend to be concentrated in various states and large urban areas within these states, like Los Angeles, California, Houston, Texas and Chicago, Illinois. Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Michigan also have

substantial Mexican populations (Parillo, 1985, p. 355). About 83 percent of the 8.7 million Mexican-Americans live in the southwest (Parillo, 1985, p. 355). Los Angeles alone whose very name indicates its Spanish origin, has more than a million Mexican-Americans residents, making it second only to Mexico City in Mexican population (Parillo, 1985, p. 355).

Most Mexican-Americans are of Roman Catholic background. They constitute 16% of all Catholics in the United States. Within another generation, Mexicans will constitute the largest segment of Roman Catholics in this nation (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 30).

The Mexican-American population as a whole has a low level of education. The United States Census revealed in 1978 that 23% of the population had less than 5 years of schooling (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 30). Education, however, is improving. In 1970, more than half of the 20-24 age group had finished high school (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 30). Poor education has resulted in low-paying occupational levels only 18% of the Mexican-Americans were white-collar workers in 1978 (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 30).

In our society, the Mexican-American community is basically proud of their Mexican background and sees much value in the Mexican heritage. By means of folk-level educational agencies, such as benevolent societies, patriotic organizations, and the extended family, many Mexican traits are kept alive, either as functioning parts of the individual's personal life or at least as items with which she or he feels some degree of familiarity (Weiser, 1978, p.

71). Mexican arts and crafts, music, dances, cooking, family structure, concepts of the community, the Spanish language, and other characteristics are maintained in this manner. Spanish-language radio, television stations, newspapers, and magazines, and Mexican-American political organizations help to carry on this process, as well as to bring in new cultural influences from Mexico. This was not true throughout history with other immigrants. In short, the Mexican-American community in our society possesses many internal agencies which serve to maintain a sense of belonging to "La Raza" and which also serve to carry forward worthy aspects of the Mexican heritage (Weiser, 1978, p. 71).

According to Weiser (1978), in many rural areas of the Southwest, as well as in some wholly Mexican urban districts, most adults can be described as belonging primarily to the culture of northern Mexico. Here, the Spanish language is universally favored over English, and the bilateral extended family provides a satisfying and strong background for the individual. In other urban districts, as well as in suburban regions and on the fringes of Mexican neighborhoods in rural areas, one finds numerous Mexican-Americans who are completely bilingual, or in some cases favor English over Spanish (Weiser, 1978, p. 71). These people have not become "Anglos," but their Mexican cultural heritage has become blended with Anglo-American traits (Weiser, 1978, p. 71).

An important factor which delays the complete absorption of partially Anglicized Mexican-Americans into the larger society is

the fact that more than 95 percent of Mexicans are part-Indian, 40 percent are full-blood Indians, and most of the mixed-bloods have more Indian than non-Indian ancestry (Weiser, 1978, p. 72). Mexican-Americans are, therefore, a racial as well as a cultural minority and the racial differences which set them apart from Anglos cannot be made to "disappear" by any Americanization or assimilation process carried on in the larger schools or society (Weiser, 1978, p. 72).

### Puerto Ricans

Like the first Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans became United States citizens through conquest. Initially Puerto Rico was a U.S. territory, but it became a commonwealth on July 25, 1952, with increased rights of self-government (Rendon, 1985, p. 9). Puerto Ricans came to the mainland after World War I as seasonal farmworkers, and during World War II as industrial workers (Rendon, 1985, p. 9). The amount of migration back and fourth is extensive, with many Puerto Ricans coming to the mainland for economic opportunities, then moving back to the island when conditions improved there. Although, large Puerto Rican communities have developed since 1960 in Chicago, Boston, Newark, Philadelphia, and other northern cities, New York has remained the principal mainland destination (National Council of La Raza, 1986, pp. 6-7). Today, more Puerto Ricans live in New York than in any single city on the island (National Council of La Raza, 1986, pp. 6-7).

There are two million Puerto Ricans in the United States, a 41 percent increase since 1970 (Rendon, 1985, p. 9). Puerto Ricans make up 14 percent of the Hispanic population (Rendon, 1985, p. 9). Puerto Ricans make up the main Hispanic group in six states: Connecticut (71 percent); Pennsylvania (60 percent); New York (59 percent); Massachusetts (54 percent), and Delaware and New Jersey (50 Percent) (Rendon, 1985, p. 9).

Puerto Ricans are then citizens of the United States by birth. Their movement to and from Puerto Rico is part of the internal migration of the United States, but their extensive migration is somewhat recent, in comparison to other Hispanic groups (Moore & Panchon, 1985, pp. 31-32). There have been as many as 5 million Puerto Ricans traveling between the island of Puerto Rico and the continental United States in some years (Moore & Panchon, 1985, pp. 31-32). Many come to remain permanently on the mainland or return to remain permanently on the island. Unrestricted travel, population pressures, unemployment, and extensive poverty influence Puerto Ricans to come to the mainland, seeking employment and a better life (Moore & Panchon, 1985, pp. 31-32).

The concentration of Puerto Ricans in New York City, 58.7% of their total population in the continental United States in 1970 (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 46), has been diminishing in recent years as they move to other sections of the Northeast, many to small cities in New England and to the Middle-Atlantic states, with a small veneer of Puerto Rican elite scattered throughout the

country (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 46). Puerto Ricans constitute a very young population, similar to Mexican-Americans. More than half were under the age of 21 in 1980 (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 46). As a group, they have the lowest income level in the United States. More than 40 percent of Puerto Rican families in 1980 were below the poverty level, the highest of any group (Moore & Panchon, 1985, pp. 46-47). Their unemployment rate in 1980 was 11.7 percent, the highest rate of Hispanics in the United States (Moore & Panchon, 1985, pp. 46-47). In 1979, only 25 percent of the men were white-collar workers (Moore & Panchon, 1985, pp. 46-47).

Poverty among Puerto Rican immigrants is also related to the low participation of Hispanic women in the labor force (about one-third in 1980), the high rate of families headed by women (about 40 percent in 1980), and low levels of schooling (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 34). Fewer than 30 percent have finished high school, according to a 1976 census report (Moore & Panchon, 1985, pp. 34). This figure was the lowest of any Hispanic group and much lower than 64.1 percent figure for the total United States population (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 34). When the second generation is considered alone and distinct from the first, it can be seen that educational levels are approaching the national average and occupational levels are increasing as well (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 34). However, half of the second generation were below 10 years of age in 1968 (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 34). Therefore, several years will pass before their achievements affect the statistics

for the total Puerto Rican population (Moore & Panchon, 1985, pp. 34-35). It is generally believed that frequent traveling from New York to Puerto Rico and back has often disrupted the education and undermined the economic mobility of young Puerto Ricans (Taylor, 1984, p. A1).

Puerto Ricans are racially a mixture of Taino Indians (the indigenous population of Puerto Rico), Blacks who were brought as slaves from Africa, and Spaniards who colonized the island (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). Like other Hispanic Americans, most Puerto Ricans are strong adherents of Roman Catholicism (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). Although, this too is changing.

In Puerto Rico, as in all Latin-American countries, the individual's identity, importance, and security depend on family membership. There is a deep sense of family obligation that extends to dating and courtship; family approval is necessary because of the emphasis upon joining two families, not just two individuals (Parillo, 1985, p. 365). An indication of family importance is the use of both the father's and mother's surnames, but in reverse order to the American practice (Parillo, 1985, p. 365).

### Cuban-Americans

Similar to Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans, who seem geographically territorial, Cuban-Americans seem to be primarily concentrated in Miami, Florida, as well as outside of southern Florida, Puerto Rico, and New York City. Cubans increased by 47

percent over the last decade, reaching 803,000 or 5 percent of all United States Hispanics (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7). Their presence has lent a distinctly Cuban aspect to the culture of Miami, Florida. Although, Cuban-Americans are increasingly venturing to other cities, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, and Union City, New Jersey. Their population now totals about 1 million (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7).

Virtually all the Cuban-born Hispanics have arrived in the United States as refugees from the revolution of Fidel Castro, who seized power in January 1959 (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). Castro initiated a series of revolutionary political and economic reforms that encouraged many Cubans to flee the island. For most of the last 25 years, like the White Russians of Paris, they have lived more as exiles than immigrants (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). For years, anticipations of returning home kept Cuban-Americans from joining fully in cultural and political affairs in their new environments (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). The overwhelming majority have chosen to resettle in the United States, including more than 12,000 Cubans who entered the country during a seven-week-long airborne and seaborne mass evacuation from Cuba in the mid-1980 (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7). Their flight to and their settlement in the United States were aided by the United States government (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7).

The Cuban population in the United States is generally middle-class (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7). Although, the



second "wave" of Cuban immigrants were economically disadvantaged. Many of the immigrants have backgrounds in the professions, business life, and government service. Many Cubans, however, are faced with the task of starting their careers again in the United States, and attempting to tackle the language barrier (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7). The Cubans have though have shown a great capacity for taking advantage of opportunities for social and economic advancement (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7).

Racially, the Cubans are predominantly caucasian. Most adhere to Roman Catholicism (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7). Culturally, they share the Hispanic tradition of Spanish Latin America, with similar characteristics of the middle-class business people of Western Europe and the United States (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7). Many live in the hope of someday returning to Cuba, and all have a strong sense of the Cuban identity. Yet they have adjusted a great deal to the United States political and economic life. This is unlike other Hispanic groups who clearly remain economically disadvantaged (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 7).

#### Other Hispanics

According to the Census Bureau there is a large category called "Other Hispanics." This broad category includes Hispanics from Latin American countries other than Mexico and Cuba, as well as those persons from Spain, the Caribbean, and the Philippines, and

others who identify themselves as Hispanic. Like other immigrants to the United States, many of these individuals have arrived during periods of political or economic upheavals in their country of origin (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 8).

Thus at different times waves of immigrants have arrived from Nicaragua, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, El Salvador, and many other countries in Latin and Central America. More than half of these immigrants have come to the United States since 1970; less than one-third are native born (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 8). Often, they have entered this country through Mexico. Some, however, have entered under immigration quotas (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 8). Others originally came to the United States on tourist visas and then stayed in this country without legal status. Some Dominicans, for example, first obtained visas to visit Puerto Rico, then they journeyed from there to New York (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 8). Clearly, then, recent immigration can be traced to economic and political conditions in their particular home country (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 8).

In 1975 more than 125,00 persons born in the Dominican Republic were estimated to be living in the United States (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 8). They are largely concentrated in the New York metropolitan area. They come seeking to escape poverty of their own land and hoping for economic improvement in the United States. Similarly, Colombians primarily concentrated in New York

City, are the most numerous of the South Americans living in the United States. There are an estimated 50,000 in the United States in 1975 (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 9). They also possess high levels of education and most are employed in white-collar and service occupations like the Cubans (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 9). Most are young adults, with 46% between the ages of 25 and 44 in 1970 (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 9). They are economic immigrants, seeking to increase their income and thereby obtain for themselves a better life when they return to their native country.

Dominicans and Colombians, particularly, tend to live low-key lives. The major problem is the large number who are in the United States illegally, without documents (National Council of La Raza, 1986, p. 9). Those who have no documents live an insecure life, fearful of being deported. Language barriers often tend to contribute to their unfavorable situation as well.

#### Summary of Subgroups

Regardless of distinctive histories and separate identities, the life situations of Hispanic minorities in the United States are merging. In fact, they are merging with other racial minorities as well. All segments of the Hispanic community are predominantly urban, many are locked into poverty and face prejudice and discrimination, language deficiencies, and many have problems coping with the "melting pot" theory they are compelled to adhere to.

In addition, another problem is that Hispanics are increasingly being treated by the larger society as a singular group with common characteristics and common problems. But there are important divisions. For example, Colombians and Cubans tended to be middle-class, whereas Mexicans and Puerto Ricans tend to be lower-class. Language, immigration patterns, median age, education rates, etc., also differ from group to group. In some respects, Hispanics are beginning to think of themselves as sharing many problems. This, however, is happening mostly in political life. For instance, separate Hispanic populations find themselves negotiating together for a special program that will benefit all kinds of Hispanics, for example bilingual education and the English-Plus bill. Yet, in many other respects the different subgroups have unique circumstances, problems, needs and views. For these reasons, this research will seek to investigate country of origin and home culture as some of the possible influences on attitudes towards assimilation.

#### The Process of Assimilation

An examination of the various influences on the attitudes towards assimilation of Hispanic-Americans would be incomplete without a detailed description of assimilation and the various analogous concepts, such as pluralism, acculturation, etc. The following is a closer analysis of the concepts and the related issues in regard to these concepts, including a section on the impediments towards assimilation.

In the past, the practice in the United States has been for assimilation to lead to a "melting pot" phenomenon. The "melting pot" signifies the belief of total integration of various types of groups. Traditionally, American society has then thrived on its perpetual pursuit of the classic American melting pot, and its acceptance of immigrant groups. Assimilation is the process whereby groups with different cultures come to have one common culture (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97). It refers to more than just dress or language and includes less tangible items such as values, sentiments, and attitudes. Assimilation refers to the fusion of cultural heritages (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97). When referring to Hispanics, the issue of bilingual education is seen as one of the obstacles to achieving assimilation. A common language, as well as norms, beliefs, customs, culture, and so forth is integral in achieving assimilation (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97).

Assimilation is the integration of new elements with old ones. The transferring of one culture from one group to another is a highly complex process, often involving the rejection of traditional ideologies, rituals, habits, customs, language, values and attitudes (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97). It includes, also, the elusive problem of selection. Groups are to reject their traditional set of values and norms that were passed on by their family and embrace a new, distinct culture (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97).

In the process of assimilation, one society sets the pattern. This would be referred to the "host" society (Kornblum, 1988, p.

97). Invariably, one group has a much larger role in the process than the other does. Usually one of the societies enjoys greater prestige than the other, giving it an advantage in the assimilation process. Or perhaps one society is better suited for the environment than the other, or perhaps one may have a greater numerical strength than the other (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97). The pattern for the United States was set by the British colonists, and to that pattern the other groups are persuaded to assimilate (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97).

Educator Richard Rodriguez, the son of Spanish-speaking Mexican-Americans, is well known for his views on assimilation and bilingual education. He regards himself as a Hispanic who is assimilated into American society. Achieving assimilation, in Rodriguez' view was not an easy task. In his autobiography Hunger for Memory, Rodriguez (1985) revealed the following:

Thus it happened to me. Only when I was able to think of myself as an American, no longer an alien in gringo society, could I seek the rights and opportunities necessary for public individuality. The social and political advantages I enjoy as a man began the day I came to believe that my name is indeed "Ric-heard Road-ree-guess. (p. 506)

Therefore, people from one civilization are believed to incorporate norms and values from other cultures into their own. The process by which this taking and incorporating occurs is called acculturation (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97). Most acculturation occurs through intercultural contact and the borrowing or imitation of cultural norms (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97).

The concept of acculturation refers to the newcomer. She or

he is expected to embrace the cultural ways of the host society. But acculturation is rarely a one-way process. The newcomers are also teaching members of the host society to use and appreciate aspects of their own culture (Kornblum, 1988, p. 97). This is manifested in the United States today where Pizza, Lasagna, Burritos, and Gyros are commonly accepted foods.

Pluralism is another route individuals may find appealing and many ethnic subgroups feel this is more desirable. Pluralism is the development and co-existence of separate racial and ethnic group identities within a society (Kornblum, 1988, p. 303). It is a philosophical viewpoint that attempts to produce what is considered to be a desirable social situation. Pluralism tends to describe a situation that is developing in contemporary American society. This can be interpreted to be emerging with Hispanics today. Many Hispanics are bi-cultural in the United States, preserving their own culture and simultaneously embracing that of contemporary American society.

Pluralism is an alternative to assimilation and the melting-pot phenomenon. It is a philosophy that not only assumes that minorities and immigrants have rights, but also considers the lifestyle of the minority group to be a legitimate, and even desirable ways of participating in society (Kornblum, 1988, p. 302). The theory of pluralism praises the differences among groups of people in the United States.

Additionally, pluralism implies a hostility to existing

inequalities in the status and treatment of minority groups. Pluralism thus provides a means for minority groups to resist the pull of assimilation, by allowing them to claim that they constitute the very structure of the social order (Kornblum, 1988, p. 303). From the assimilationist point of view, the minority should give up its' identity as quickly as possible. Pluralism, on the other hand, assumes that the minority is a primary unit of society and that the unity of the whole depends on the harmony of the various parts (Kornblum, 1988, p. 303).

Milton Gordon (1964) in his extensive studies has identified three ideological tendencies that have affected the treatment of minority groups at several times in American history. These philosophies suggest how ethnic or racial groups should change (or refrain from change) as they endeavor approval in the institutions and culture of American society. According to Kornblum (1988), they are as follows:

1. "Anglo-conformity," which is the demand that culturally distinct groups give up their own cultures and adopt the norms and values of Anglo-Saxon culture.
2. The "melting pot," theory, which suggests that there would be a biological merger that results from the new indigenous American type.
3. "Cultural pluralism," which is the belief that culturally distinct groups can maintain their communities and much of their culture while still participating in the larger society.  
(p. 301)

Additionally, a model used by Milton Gordon's Assimilation in American Life (1964) attempted to further interpret assimilation



in American society. This model has been used in many studies to identify ones' level of assimilation. It is a seven stage process that a minority group would have to go through in order to achieve full assimilation (or partial assimilation as the model suggests). It was utilized in Denise Tyiska's M.A. thesis (1977) "Assimilation: An Empirical Test of Milton Gordon's Model on Mexican-Americans in Holland, Michigan" at Western Michigan University.

In the first stage of Gordon's assimilation model, the minority group changes its' cultural patterns to those of the host society. This is cultural or behavioral assimilation (Gordon, 1964, p. 70-71). The second stage occurs when the minority group has gained widespread entrance into the various clubs, organizations, and institutions of the host society on a close, face-to-face level. This is referred to as structural assimilation (Gordon, 1964, p. 70-71). The third stage eventuates when there is a high rate of intermarriage between the minority group and the host group. This is more commonly referred to as marital assimilation or amalgamation (Gordon, 1964, p. 70-71). The fourth stage takes place when the minority group identifies with and accepts a sense of peoplehood based exclusively on notions found in the larger society. This is referred to as identification assimilation (Gordon, 1964, pp. 70-71). The fifth stage is realized when the minority group is able to participate in the general society without prejudice. This is called attitude receptional assimilation). In the sixth stage assimilation has reached such a point that the minority group does

not encounter any discrimination. This is called behavioral receptional assimilation (Gordon, 1964, pp. 70-71). The seventh and last step occurs when there is an absence of value contests between the host and minority group members, concomitant with an absence of power clashes between the two groups. This last phase is referred to as civic assimilation (Gordon, 1964, pp. 70-71).

The endeavor of this paper is not to see how assimilated Hispanic students are at Western Michigan University, but to assess their attitudes to the assimilation philosophy. Gordon's model is, however, useful in pointing out possible variables that might influence perspectives, associations and the like relating to assimilation. It is generally perceived that Hispanic students typically do not embrace the Anglo culture, and therefore have somewhat negative views towards the concept and practice of assimilation. The investigation seeks to assess this premise and go on to discover "why" by examining possible influences on such attitudes.

#### The Hispanic-American Dilemma

The remainder of this literature review chapter is reserved for more of the contemporary issues facing Hispanics in our nation. Hispanics in the United States typically form a seriously disadvantaged group, and they make up the nation's second largest minority group. This does not account for the illegal aliens who reside in the United States. The largest minority group consists of the twenty-six and a half million Black Americans (United States to

Become Largest U.S. Minority, 1983, p. 83). Although, Hispanics have generally improved in many realms of society in the recent decades, the majority remain uneducated and primarily clustered in low-paying jobs (Hispanics to Become Largest U.S. Minority, 1983, p. 83).

The Hispanic population in the United States is increasing rapidly because of the heavy immigration from various countries in Latin and Central America, and Puerto Rico, as well because of the high Hispanic birth rate. The following will help describe Hispanics further. In 1981, median family incomes for Hispanics were at \$16,401, lower than the \$23,517 of white families, but higher than the black family income of \$13,266 (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 6). Recent studies of Hispanic poverty, income and employment found that in 1987 Hispanic unemployment was 8.8%, well below the rate of 13.8% in 1982 when the economy was in a deep recession, and slightly below the 9.1% found in 1978 before the recession began (Brischetto & Leonard, 1988, p. 4). Despite the decline in unemployment rates to near the pre-recession rates, Hispanics still experienced a decline in family income. The income of the typical Hispanic family now falls further below the income of the typical white family than at any other time on record (Brischetto & Leonard, 1988, p. 4).

Hispanic wage levels have also eroded and now fall well below the levels of a decade ago (Brischetto & Leonard, 1988, p. 4). And, Hispanic poverty has risen dramatically in the past decade as

well. In 1987, 28.2 percent of Hispanics lived in poverty, whereas in 1978 this figure was 21.6 percent (Brischetto & Leonard, 1988, p. 4). In the midwest, the Hispanic poverty rate soared from 17.4 percent in 1978 to 27.5 percent in 1987 (Brischetto & Leonard, 1988, p. 4). Furthermore, not only have Hispanic poverty rates increased during this period, but Hispanic families who are poor have fallen deeper into poverty (Brischetto & Leonard, 1988, p. 4). At the same time, government anti-poverty programs intended to pull poor families out of poverty have decreased in their effectiveness (Brischetto & Leonard, 1988, p. 4).

Hispanics, particularly Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans, have also suffered discrimination that has serious repercussions on their economic and educational well-being and has alienated many from mainstream society (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 6). Like other immigrant groups, Hispanics are finding that as newcomers they must "start at the bottom." Because of the language barrier, for example, immigrant Hispanic schoolchildren are often placed in grades lower than the average for their age. Frustration with the situation may cause their relatively high drop-out rate; it more than doubles the figure for whites and almost double that of blacks (Hispanics to Become Largest U.S. Minority, 1983, p. 83).

Through much of the history of the United States, the speaking of languages other than English has been seen as divisive and threatening to the common good. Non-English-speaking immigrants were encouraged to adopt English as their new tongue as a sign of

their loyalty to the nation and as a method for their assimilation (Cafferty & McCready, 1985, p. 87). Language is a commonly considered the transmitter of culture; it is a mechanism by which individuals are socialized into society. The values, beliefs, and attitudes are communicated, and loyalty and allegiance to society is expressed. Previously, the language diversity has then caused conflict within mainstream society. Hispanics are the most recent group to enter into this attempted process of adjustment. Hence, the Hispanic difficulty has created a unique, misunderstood subculture in the United States today (Cafferty & McCready, 1985, p. 87).

Hispanic culture has persisted, although, it may have undergone some changes. The general belief by most American social scientists is that "change primarily affects the minority ethnic group, whose culture is expected to become more and more like the Anglo majority's culture" (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 130). This process has been called Americanization, or anglo-conformity or, as used here, assimilation. Thus it is assumed that traits of Hispanic culture disappear and are replaced by traits of the Anglo culture. However the pluralist model mentioned earlier argues that there can be such a thing as biculturalism. That is, the "traits of the indigenous culture, need not be dropped" (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 130). There can be two forms of functioning. It would be possible then to gain Anglo cultural traits without totally losing Hispanic cultural traits (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 130).

Some observers of the Hispanic situation in the United States

maintain that the Hispanic influence "remains fresh and strong because its strains are undiluted" (Gibbs, 1988, p. 68). Immigrant groups have had to renounce their past, relinquish their language and escape from ethnic enclaves in order to remain socially mobile in the United States (Gibbs, 1988, p. 68). Although, as Thomas Weyr (1988), author of Hispanic USA asserts, "the Hispanic community wants to assimilate and remain separate at the same time" (Gibbs, 1988, p. 68). For many Hispanics, the concept of the melting pot leaves too little room for diversity or identity. As Gibbs stated, "better to live in two cultures simultaneously and enjoy the fireworks when the cultures collide" (Gibbs, 1988, p. 68).

Nonetheless, Hispanics in the United States appear to retain a sense of their original cultural identity more persistently than many other ethnic groups have in the history of the United States. This is due to the fact that Hispanic culture is continually kept alive through Spanish television, radio, newspapers and books and other forms of media, foods and restaurants, music, fashion, cultural festivals in many cities and towns, cultural programs in various schools and institutions, and bilingual education (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 40). Such circumstances may impede the process of assimilation.

Additionally, the movement of Hispanics across the common border with Mexico, which has increased in recent years, and the migration and return of Puerto Ricans between the island and the mainland serve as cultural reinforcements that did not exist for

earlier immigrant groups in the United States. Family ties between "here" and "there" are easier to maintain, and travel back and forth is relatively simple (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 40). The culture can more easily persist, and thwart true assimilation.

The historical segregation of Hispanics; particularly Mexican-Americans, has kept many of them out of the cultural, political and economic mainstream of American society and has also hindered assimilation. The Mexican-American population was to a great degree isolated in the Southwest until early in the twentieth century (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). Inspired by the black civil rights movement of the fifties, sixties and seventies, Hispanics are currently undergoing a heightening of their sense of group identity and consciousness. This sense of identity has been reinforced by such institutions as government, the media, business, universities, foundations, and churches, which have come to regard Hispanics as worthy of special attention. Business, especially, has made much of the growing Hispanic market, estimated at about \$70 billion annually (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). The increase in bilingual advertising has also contributed to a sense of linguistic identity among the Hispanic population (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). While a sense of separate identity such as this might too impede assimilation it could easily be in line with pluralist notions.

Lawrence Fuchs, an immigration scholar at Brandeis University claims that xenophobia, "an irrational fear of or contempt for strangers or foreigners," (Taylor, 1984, p. A1) is far less

pronounced in contemporary society than it was at the turn of the century (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). The xenophobia that greeted the Irish in the middle 19th century or the Italians, Slavs and Poles early in this century was characteristic of riots, lynching and full-scale political movements (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). According to Fuchs, "immigrants today obtain a much more positive reception than immigrants. . .at the turn of the century. . .it was assumed back then that newcomers were simply indigestible" (Taylor, 1984, p. A1). This too, then, may facilitate either smoother assimilation or even cultural pluralism. Yet at the same time, any remnant of such fear would hinder assimilation processes.

Prejudice against Hispanics may still occur in the United States, but may also be less pronounced today than in the past. One report for Congress prepared in 1928 on Mexican immigrants exemplifies old stereotypes. Taylor's report (1984) stated that:

Their minds run to nothing higher than animal functions--eat, sleep and sexual debauchery. In every huddle of Mexican shacks, one meets the same idleness, hordes of hungry dogs and filthy children with faces plastered with lies, disease, lice, human filth, stench, promiscuous fornication, bastardy, liquor, general squalor and envy of gringos. . . . Yet there are Americans clamoring for more of these human swine to be brought over from Mexico (p. A1).

Such opinions are at least not as normative today. However, old conceptions and stereotypes may not necessarily fade, but rather linger and simply be transformed. Prejudicial attitudes are tied to separateness and discrimination and antithetical to adjustment



processes like assimilation.

Joan W. Moore of the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee has conducted research of Hispanic behavior by examining Chicano gangs in East Los Angeles. She felt that deviant behavior, such as gangs, were a feature of the Hispanic (Mexican) community as far back as the nineteenth century. Moore revealed that Hispanics were not necessarily though all criminals. The early barrio gangs were made up of young laborers whose behavior was more oriented toward fashion, sports and socializing than criminality (Senna & Seigel, 1988, p. 284).

The first prevailing explanations concerning Mexican gang behavior were racial. This was interpreted through the Pachuco fad in the 1940s, which consisted of Hispanic youths in "Zoot suits." They spoke a unique version of Spanish-English and unitedly gathered in urban regions or barrios. They initially evoked a sharp reaction from the Anglo community, because of their distinct appearance and behavior. They were different and not easily accepted. The tendency was to consider their deviant behavior almost innate. This is manifested (Moore & Panchon, 1985) in the following:

The criminality of teenage Mexican Americans is due to inferior genetic and cultural factors. . .Mexicans are prone to kick an adversary who has been knocked down in a fight whereas an Anglo youth would be more inclined to fight fair. . . . Aggravated assault is common among Mexicans, not because they are inherently aggressive, but because they live in a certain cultural stage, where fighting is approved. (p. 83)

In spite of their noncriminal behavior, a well-publicized murder case (Sleepy Lagoon) and some urban ruckus assisted in the Pachucos' later identification as "ratpacks" (Senna & Seigel, 1988, p. 284). Although the Pachucos were not all criminals, the local press paid so much attention to them that they became viewed as a habitual social problem. The net result was a new and strongly established stereotype of young Mexican men as savage, perhaps inherited from their Aztec ancestry. Thus, the issue became an ethnic one. A deviant stigma was explicitly attached to the pachucos, and, as a result, a persisting stereotype emerged (Senna & Seigel, 1988, p. 284). As one young activist revealed in 1954, "it became more and more difficult to walk through the streets of Los Angeles and look Mexican" (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 6).

In the Mexican-American culture of the Pachucos there inevitably existed fights, occasional serious wounds and even deaths. Moore explained, however, that this was the tradition of aggressive barrio-based youth groups. It was a part of their subculture where men were valued by their "machismo" or masculinity, and aggressive attributes that the Anglo world could not understand (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 6). Clearly, this conflicted with the values of mainstream America.

Tension between the law enforcement agencies and Hispanics can be evidenced in the criminal justice system as well. As Moore showed: "barrio gangs are known and continually harassed by the police" (Zatz, 1985, p. 14). In 1975, in Los Angeles, 24 percent

of the people killed by the police were Hispanic (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 166). In the same period, two studies show that more than a fifth of the people killed by the police in New York City alone were Hispanics. Similarly, in the city of Chicago, Hispanics were killed 13 times more often than whites (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 166). Evidently, Hispanics may be fewer in numbers, but as far as killings go, they are well represented (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 166).

For more than 50 years a series of American public opinion surveys have reflected distasteful images of persons of Mexican descent and more recently of Puerto Ricans and Cubans (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 8). In 1926, 1946, 1956, and 1966, Emory Bogardus measured the "social distance" that American college students felt about various ethnic groups. Mexicans and Puerto Ricans scored in the bottom third (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 8). In 1978, 500 men and women with annual incomes above \$25,000 were interviewed by the American public opinion surveys about their perceptions of various ethnic groups. Only 23 percent had positive feelings about Mexican-Americans (compared with 44 percent with positive feelings about blacks and 66 percent about Chinese-Americans) (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 8). When asked for the first three words that they associated with Mexican-Americans, 21 percent offered positive stereotypes such as "they're hard working," "good humored," 15 percent offered negative stereotypes such as "they're lazy," "dirty," or "ignorant," while 43 percent responded with some descriptive

phrase such as "they're poor," "migrant workers," or "discriminated against" (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 8).

Puerto Ricans elicited more negative associations in public opinion polls. Only 10 percent of the persons interviewed responded with positive images such as "they're hard-working," or "friendly," while 25 percent offered negative images such as "always want welfare hand-outs," "lazy" "dirty" or "criminal," and 47 percent agreed on more neutral descriptive statements such as "poverty," "slums," or "undereducated" (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 8). Additionally, a Roper public opinion poll (1982) found that only 25 percent of a national sample felt that Mexicans were "good for the country," while 17 percent felt that Puerto Ricans were good and 9 percent that Cubans were good for the country (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 8). On the other hand, 34 percent felt that Mexicans were bad for the country, 43 percent that Puerto Ricans were bad, and 59 percent that Cubans were bad (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 8).

How Hispanics think of themselves can be delineated by the "self-identifier" on surveys (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 8). For Mexican-Americans, most people interviewed in the Southwest want to be called "Mexican," "Mexican-American," "Spanish-American," "Latin-American," or "Chicano." Although, many Puerto Ricans preferred "Latino" to Puerto Rican. Other Hispanic groups show fewer variations in terms. In short, Hispanics see themselves as a distinctive people rather than as fully emerged into an all-encompassing American identity. Adult Hispanics usually do not

want to be identified as just "American" (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 8).

Families, communities and churches are the most important social structures of Hispanics in the United States (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 88). The interest in these areas stems from the idea that America is a nation of immigrants, each group with a distinctive culture and its own institutions. Thus family, community, language and culture are seen as a source of pride for many Hispanics. Often, they are explicitly contrasted to an Anglo culture and an Anglo family structure that is seen as cold, shallow, and uncaring (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 88).

Hispanics place great value on families, that is, they value family relationships so highly that family well-being takes priority over individual well-being. But the word "family" means not only the nuclear parent-child family, but an extended family of several generations, including cousins. These relationships are supposed to be emotionally and financially supportive. Family feelings also go beyond blood kin to the godparents of the family's children. Godparents are chosen not only for baptism, but for other rites of passage, as well and are drawn from a pool of friends of the family. Godparents (compadrazgo) in this traditional system is a method of knitting the community together and of formalizing informal ties of friendship. A man and the godfather, for example, become compadres (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 96).

Another common theme in the Hispanic family is that it is

patriarchal; that is, authority is vested in the male head of the family (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 97). This stems from the concept of "machismo." Machismo is a particular cultural definition of masculinity, with implications for women as well. Machismo has been associated with a strong double standard of sexual morality, with masculinity to be demonstrated through displays of physical and sexual prowess, extending even outside marriage (Moore & Panchon, 1985, p. 97). Women's roles differ greatly. "Good" women are to be kept chaste until marriage, and their sexuality is strictly restricted to the marital role. It is felt that women's most meaningful relationships should be within the family. Ideally, women's social relationships and recreation should consist solely of visits to sisters, cousins and other relatives. "Bad" women, on the other hand, are available for sexual pleasures. Tolerance for masculine infidelity is quite common for Hispanics. In Mexico, such tolerance is built into late nineteenth century laws in Mexico (Moore & Pachon, 1985, p. 97). This common theme with the regard to the status of women differs slightly in Mexico and Puerto Rico. There is evidence that women are allowed substantially more freedom in Puerto Rico (Moore & Pachon, 1985, p. 97).

Thus, the male is the central figure in this culture. He is the sole breadwinner, and the authoritarian and makes major decisions for the family. He has to be aggressive, macho, ready to fight, and in command at all times. Often, such endeavors as drinking, ostentatiousness, and debauchery, etc., are perceived as a male

trait (Moore & Pachon, 1985, p. 97). If the father is absent, the eldest son is expected to grow up quickly and assume his male role in the family. He assumes responsibility for the household. Providing for the family may take precedence over getting an education, which may eventually lead to poverty, unemployment, and so on.

Additionally, women in the Hispanic culture are quite often expected to be strictly wives, mothers and housewives. They are expected to have children and looked upon negatively when they do not do so. They may have jobs and careers, but this is usually relinquished during the childbearing years. Education and careers are not as critical as marriage and family. These convictions are changing to a great extent, but the basic ideals continue to persist.

Hispanics generally then are perceived to have strongly maintained their culture in the United States through these institutions, practices, and shared problems. Moreover, the important dimensions for the Hispanic culture generally involve language familiarity and usage, interaction with fellow Hispanics, ethnic loyalty and identity, cultural awareness and general proximity (Moore & Pachon, 1985, p. 130). Conflict can often occur within Hispanics. Many may be viewed as "acting white" or "anglo." Mexican-born Hispanics often refer to United States-born Mexicans as "Pochos." Nonetheless, Hispanics persist in keeping the foods, music, language, religion, values, norms, etc., alive from generation to generation in the United States. Often, it does become "watered

down," but the salience of the culture continues to exist.

Mexicans and other Hispanics have held on strongly to their language, values, beliefs, morals, food and the importance of the family unit and peers. These are the single most important factors in the whole Mexican-American social structure. Even though we have come into an era of high technology and a fast growing society, many Hispanics have held on to their traditional roles. Higher education may not be as important as marriage and family. Traditional values can then come into conflict with the American culture, since they are vastly different. The distinct Hispanic culture plays such an important part of life, that a choice sometimes has to be made. There seems to be an inclination to stay away from the Anglo world for reasons such as those previously described.

The Puerto Rican or Mexican-American in American society, then, is often caught up in the dilemma of choosing between the traditional way of life and the mainstream of the Anglo society. The youth in particular are in constant conflict in trying to establish their identity. This was discussed by David T. Abalos (1986) in the following way:

Many years later in Mexico I learned that although I had become a professional person withstanding in the United States, I was considered a "pocho," an Americanized Mexican born in the United States, a displaced person with no real culture or homeland. This experience is similar to that of Puerto Ricans from the mainland; they are often considered "Nuyurican," by their relatives in the homeland. There is a critical struggle going over the identity of the Mexican that is rooted in basic ambivalence. (p. 43)



Another conflict that comes into play is that of the child and the parent or tradition vs. non-tradition. Many times it is very difficult for both the parent and the child. Young Hispanics, especially teenagers, want to experience the freedoms and the carefree attitudes of the majority society, and this is when conflict begins. These youths are then compelled to adhere to two cultures. Hispanic culture emphasizes family and friends, while American culture emphasizes ambition and career.

The following renown poem, "Yo soy Joaquin," illustrates the culture conflict many Hispanic youth seem to face. It is a long evocation of Mexican history as a tribute to the endurance to the Mexican people. It is quite popular within the Mexican community. It was written by Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales (cited by Moore & Pachon, 1985):

I am Joaquin  
 Lost in a world of confusion,  
 Caught up in a world of a  
     Gringo society,  
 Confused by the rules,  
 Scorned by attitudes,  
 Suppressed by manipulations,  
 And destroyed by modern society.  
 My fathers  
     Have lost the economic battle  
 And won  
     The struggle of cultural survival  
 And now!  
     I must choose  
     Between  
 The paradox of  
 Victory of the spirit,  
 Despite physical hunger or  
     To exist in the grasp  
 Of American social neurosis,  
 Sterilization of the soul  
     And a full stomach. (p. 14)

Undoubtedly, many Hispanics are continually confronted with negative images of their culture. From an early age the youth is bombarded with the messages that his language, culture, food and habits are inferior and should be changed to conform to those of the Anglo. Many Hispanics reported that their first confrontation with the Anglo authorities was over language (Abalos, 1986, p. 46). Hispanics live in two-worlds, one in their home with their own family, and a second with the American institutions of mainstream America. These youths often have to grow-up quickly. Their culture is different than what society expects. David T. Abalos (1986) in Latinos in the United States has summarized:

Latinos have somehow partially maintained their language, religion, and culture, although they are constantly reminded of how much they have actually lost. We are in a diaspora: we belong nowhere. We cannot go home or be content here, so we see the real poison of racism: white people who forget who they are. We were made dull; we were not born dull. But we assist the process by playing the role. . .that was assigned to us. (p. 46)

Unfortunately in our society, many of our younger Hispanics educated in Anglo-oriented schools have not been able to relate in a positive manner towards either the north Mexican or Mexican-Anglo mixed cultures, primarily because their parents have been unable to effectively transmit the Spanish language and Mexican heritage to them. At the same time the public schools have either attacked or completely ignored their heritage and have attempted to substitute an Anglo heritage. The youths subjected to this pressure have not ordinarily become Anglos, though, because of a feeling of being

rejected by the dominant society (because of frequently experienced prejudice and discrimination) by the schools, and because the curriculum is negative in regard to their own personal and cultural background (Weiser, 1978, p. 72). These young people have frequently developed a mixed Anglo-Hispanic subculture of their own, based upon a dialect of Spanish heavily modified by an ingenious incorporation of English words and new expressions (Weiser, 1978, p. 72).

Hispanics face the obstacles to assimilation into U.S. cultural mainstream that previous groups faced, but with an added problem. Similar to Blacks and some other groups, for example, Hispanics suffer from the discrimination that has historically occurred with dark-skinned people. However, in addition to such problems, hostility from non-Hispanic whites (Anglos) could increase as they see the majority hold on the U.S. population shrink from 80 percent in 1980 to an anticipated 65 percent in 2050 (Hispanics to Become U.S. Largest Minority, 1983, p. 83).

Another factor that hinders Hispanics-American assimilation is their lack of fluency in English. This impedes acceptance by Anglos and causes extreme controversy on such issues as bilingual education in the public school system. Critics of bilingual education have often claimed that such programs are counterproductive to American society and could create a "Hispanic Quebec" (Hispanics to Become U.S. Largest Minority, 1983, p. 83). Yet increased hostility could cause Hispanics to band even closer together and to ultimately distance themselves from the majority (Hispanics to

Become U.S. Largest Minority, 1983, p. 83). Educator Richard Rodriguez (1985), in his autobiography Hunger for Memory confessed:

Supporters of bilingual education imply that students like me miss a great deal by not being taught in their family's language. What they do not recognize is that, as a socially disadvantaged child, I regarded Spanish as a private language. It was a ghetto language that deepened and strengthened my feeling of public separateness. (p. 500)

The issue of bilingual education in the United States has often been debated. Bilingual Education is part of a larger concern among non-Hispanics regarding Hispanic assimilation and the potentially harmful social effects if that assimilation does not occur. For most Hispanics the issue is irrelevant. While most Hispanics appear to regard knowledge of English as a prerequisite to success in American society, many feel it is important to preserve their Spanish language and Hispanic culture. Moreover, many Hispanics feel offended about the pressure placed on them to assimilate into the classic American melting pot. They interpret this pressure to mean that they are not accepted as they are and are required to change (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 39).

Pluralism ensures that one could live "bi-culturally," embracing the ideals of two cultures simultaneously. Controversy still exists between assimilation and pluralism and between ethnic identity and civic identity (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 39). Older models of assimilation asserted that the cultural cohesion (values, beliefs, norms, and attitudes) of ethnic groups in the United States would eventually deteriorate through contact with individuals outside

the group and through increasing economic and social mobility. Newer models stress that acculturation can occur independent of assimilation and integration into mainstream, through the processes of mass culture, educational systems, religious systems, and mass media. Therefore, ethnic identity may be preserved through language, cultural expression, and ethnic ties, but values, beliefs, norms, and attitudes are those of the dominant culture (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 39). As Richard Rodriguez (1985) has argued, Hispanics could possibly achieve a bi-cultural status in the United States. He stated:

Bilingual educators say today that children lose a degree of "individuality" by becoming assimilated into public society. Bilingual schooling is a program popularized in the seventies, that decade when middle class "ethnics" began to resist the process of assimilation or the American melting pot." But the bilingualists oversimplify when they scorn the value and necessity of assimilation. They do not seem to realize that a person is individualized in two ways. So they do not realize that, while one suffers a diminished sense of private individuality by being assimilated into public society, such assimilation makes possible the achievement of public individuality. (p. 506)

A major study based on 1970 census data concluded that with each passing decade Hispanics are brought closer to the mainstream of social change and economic development of the larger society, to the point that eventually there will be full integration. The study (1970) used a number of measures of assimilation but focused on three primary ones: intermarriage with non-Hispanics, language use, and levels of fertility. It found that United States born

women of Hispanic parentage married non-Hispanic whites in varying degrees. Wives of Mexican descent married non-Hispanics at a rate of 16 percent (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 40). Those of Puerto Rican descent married non-Hispanics at a rate of 33 percent (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 40). Those of Cuban descent married non-Hispanics at a rate of 46 percent (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 40). It also revealed that about one-third of U.S. born Hispanics switched from Spanish to English as the language spoken at home (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 40). And fertility declined with the succeeding generations (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 40). Levels of education also grew and gradually approached levels for the United States population as a whole (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 40). A similar study (1980) of intermarriage in New York City suggested high rates of intermarriage in the second generation for Cubans, Central-Americans, and South Americans, but not Puerto Ricans (Ford Foundation, 1984, p. 40). Based on these studies, it would appear that Hispanics are moving more into the mainstream or becoming more assimilated with successive generations. This suggests that perhaps some obstacles are becoming overcome. Yet, whether or not assimilation is desirable from a Hispanic point of view remains an important question.

Assimilation models may not be totally accurate in determining an individual's or a group's level of assimilation and inclination. Assimilation models are quite varied and somewhat inconsistent. However, it is critical to at least begin to explore the attitudes

and views towards the concept of assimilation by the group in question.

### The Conflict Theory

The conflict perspective has had a long history in sociological thought. Karl Marx is best known in this tradition. The theory is often referred to as Marxian theory. Marxian conflict theories seek to explain all social arrangements as the result of class conflicts in capitalistic societies. Marx felt that the social order of a society is determined by the control exercised by a dominant group over subordinate groups. Marx wrote that "the ruling ideas of any age are the ideas of its ruling class" (Stark, 1989, p. 104). Therefore, the subordinate groups in a stable society tend to be socialized into conformity with the prevailing ideologies of the institutions or the dominant, ruling class. The ruling class, according to Marx, creates social structures that best serve its own interests (Stark, 1989, p. 104).

Non-Marxist conflict theories examine a much wider range of conflicts within societies. For example, conflicts between groups divided by language, race, culture, and even regions are examined. These theories seek to show how competing groups use their power to shape favorable social structures and condition for their own concerns. Max Weber, for instance, argued that while class conflicts are an important social influence, there are many other causes of group conflicts besides class conflicts. Groups often form to

pursue common aims on the basis of a great variety of cultural interests or identities (Stark, 1989, p. 104). Weber called these groups "status groups" (Stark, 1989, p. 104).

An ethnic group is then a good example of a status group. Persons of different classes may find a common purpose and unity in their shared cultural heritage, which in turn may bring this group into conflict with other ethnic or host groups. This could describe the situation in the United States concerning Hispanics and the dominant Anglo class. Hispanics are pressured into assimilating into Anglo society, because it would serve the interests of the Anglo group. Thus, by assimilating they would be less of a threat to the Anglo society in the United States (Stark, 1989, p. 104). American society would then not have to deal with the distinct concerns of this emerging, bilingual group and its' corollary demands and needs.

On the other hand, many of the critical concerns of Hispanics are relevant to Marxian analysis, because Hispanics are in a struggle or conflict with the dominating Anglo class. Marx saw the main source of conflict as the struggle among social classes for access to, and control over, the means of economic production and the distribution of resources. Society serves the interests of the rich and those in power. According to this view, Hispanics tend to be plagued with poverty and many other social ills and do not have much a say in societal endeavors (Parillo, 1985, pp. 381-382). They therefore clearly constitute an underclass. Conflict



theories, then, are concerned with the distribution of resources like money and power in society and how various interest groups seek and gain power and use their power to shape social structures.

Economic exploitation is another dimension of conflict analyses. Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics work as migrant farm laborers in many parts of the United States under substandard conditions for meager pay despite repeated exposures (Parillo, 1985, pp. 381-382). For example, city sweatshops employed thousands of illegal aliens, refugees, and low-skilled legal immigrants for cheap wages (Parillo, 1985, pp. 381-382). Evidently, this ensures they remain an oppressed group with little hope for advancement, being trapped in low-paying jobs and unskilled labor. As Pfohl (1985) has summarized:

Unfortunately the conditions which foster reciprocal power relations are generally absent from the world in which we currently live. Most elements of contemporary society promote hierarchy rather than reciprocity: hierarchies which position owners and managers over workers, citizens in developed nations over those in third world countries, men over women, whites over people of other colors and the old (not the too old) over the young. These hierarchial divisions are so deeply rooted in our culture that they are often taken for granted as natural. (p. 344)

Resolution of the inferior status of millions of Hispanic-Americans, according to a Marxian view, will occur only through protest movements and organized resistance to exploitation (Parillo, 1985, p. 382). Hispanics will have to realize their commonalities and join forces in order to create the necessary changes to benefit

themselves. Their situation will never improve unless they rebel against the ruling class (Parillo, 1985, p. 382).

At the university setting, conflict theory is also easily applied. It is evident that even educated Hispanics will remain in lower paying jobs. They are underrepresented in the university setting and underrepresented in such technical pursuit as engineering, mathematics and the various sciences. Additionally, Hispanic women tend to be clustered in such typical majors as education, nursing, and social work. They are seldom engineers. The dominant Anglo students, however, are represented in all majors, and in all levels such as in masters and doctoral programs. Thus, education is another domain in society where Hispanics could be manipulated and oppressed, particularly as this translates into the workforce.

#### Relevance of Literature to Study

The preceding literature review depicts the Hispanic-Americans in the United States in detail, emphasizing many of the social ills evident in many realms of contemporary society. Clearly, Hispanic-Americans are not an assimilated group. They are an oppressed group who are often in conflict with the ideals of contemporary American society. The Hispanic culture continues to thrive in many Hispanic-Americans throughout the nation and often opposes or resists many of the ideals of Anglo society. This study endeavors to examine Hispanic-Americans in greater detail by utilizing the Hispanic student population at Western Michigan University where

this resistance to assimilation also exists. The attitudes, favorable or unfavorable, towards assimilation constitute the dependent variable in the study.

There are various influences that affect such attitudes of Hispanic-Americans towards assimilation. The literature review discussed many of the possible influences on assimilation, such as the distinctive culture, experiences of Hispanics and Hispanic immigrants, the language variation, the experiences of discrimination, religious practices, patterns of social interaction, and so forth. All of these may be possible influences on attitudes towards assimilation. Accordingly, these influences are the independent variables for the study. These factors may either hinder or encourage positive attitudes regarding assimilation.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This examination aims to determine the influences on the attitudes towards assimilation of Hispanic-Americans in a university setting. Hispanic-Americans have varying views towards the concept. It is generally believed that many Hispanics tend to remain unassimilated in American society. This study proposes to explore this dilemma by examining the views of the Hispanic students at Western Michigan University. There are various independent variables that may influence an individual's view of assimilation. Such variables may strongly predispose a person to embrace assimilation or vice-a-versa, i.e., strongly resist assimilation. It is critical to see what factors influence such attitudes towards assimilation.

In order to determine what influences Hispanic students' attitudes towards assimilation an empirical examination is then crucial. A questionnaire was used to collect pertinent data from all Western Michigan University students who have indicated their nationality as Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Spanish/Hispanic in their University entrance applications.

A list of minority students was provided to the researcher

by the Office of Minority Student Services at Western Michigan University. The Hispanic students were chosen from this list. Students who did not fill out this category on their applications were not included on the list. However, many of these students were identified and contacted through the survey respondents themselves, mutual friends, the Hispanic Student Organization and their advisor, Diana Hernandez. It is not known how many students did not indicate Hispanic in the ethnicity category of their admittance application. However, several additional students were discovered and contacted.

The Hispanic student population at Western Michigan University consists of approximately 130 students out of nearly a 25,000 student population. Contacting the 130 students was attempted, through the Hispanic Student Organization at Western Michigan University, phone calls, and through the mail. Each individual student had the opportunity to be a research participant.

This chapter is divided into numerous sections. The first sections and concerned with a description of the population, the actual sample of respondents, and data collection. The next section is concerned with the pretest in this study. The following section concerns itself with the major variables investigated. The next section deals with the measurement of the dependent variable. Finally, the last section covers the data analysis.

### Research Population

The population that is examined in this study was drawn from the Hispanic-American students at Western Michigan University. As of the Winter semester of 1989, 130 enrolled students initially indicated their ethnicity as Hispanic in their admittance applications. The study proposed to examine the entire Hispanic population, since it was a simple size to work with. It was not a random sample. However, only a sample of this population participated in the study. They were those individuals who returned the survey instrument and participated in the study. All students, however, had the opportunity to participate. The final proportion of Hispanic students participating in this study was 57%.

### Research Sample

There was no sampling technique used in the study. It was decided that reaching the entire population would be attempted. Western Michigan University has a sizable Hispanic population from Central and South America. For purposes of study, however, this examination chose to only examine those Hispanics who were either American citizens or residents, and not international students. International Hispanics are not always familiar with the basic ideals of American society nor do they frequently anticipate remaining in the United States. For these reasons they were excluded.

The Hispanic-American students at Western Michigan University

are primarily of Mexican descent. They are college age students, over 18 years of age. They are predominantly first generation college students from working class homes. Some of the students are American residents who were originally born in Mexico and some are Puerto Rican or other. These Mexican-American students tended to be mainly from rural and suburban towns throughout Michigan, but a large proportion had been born in Texas. Several of the Texas born Hispanics revealed that their parents had initially migrated to Michigan in search of agricultural jobs. These were commonly referred to as former "migrants." A common characteristic of Michigan Hispanics is that they or their parents were originally from Texas.

The Hispanic-American population at Western Michigan University was not very substantial and it was crucial to collect as many returns as possible for purposes of study. A random sample would only attempt to yield a portion of the population. Additionally, given that some do not participate even when contacted, utilizing the entire population was the most practical manner to conduct the examination.

#### Data Collection

The distribution of the survey instrument, entitled "The Hispanic student survey," was conducted in the month of March, 1989. It was thought that two weeks would be sufficient time to collect the desired 100 or so questionnaires, however, the researcher

continued to receive questionnaires into the fourth week of March. The lengthy 64 question instrument seemed to discourage students from returning the survey immediately. Nonetheless, approximately 39 surveys were distributed on Tuesday, March 7, 1988, at the weekly, evening meeting of the Hispanic Student Organization (HSO). The researcher made himself available for directions and guidance in the completing of the survey instrument. Although no identifiers were placed on the survey question, records were kept so participation could be checked off when students had completed a survey, and so that unchecked names could be recontacted later.

During the first week of March, approximately 40 more questionnaires were mailed out. Thirty questionnaires were placed in intercampus mail. Eight students were phoned. Approximately 100 questionnaires were distributed in total. It was impossible to distribute 130 questionnaires, because the list did not always include the student's addresses or the correct addresses. Roughly, 30 people could not be contacted. About seven questionnaires were returned unopened indicating "no such person" or "return to sender." Forty-three of the distributed questionnaires were not returned.

Additionally, Mike Ramirez, the assistant director of Minority Student services, Diana Hernandez, and the Hispanic Student Organization served as critical contact agents to gather further data. They sought out other students who were not included on the list. They also helped in contacting students with whom they were acquainted, but who did not immediately return the survey.



Students revealed various reasons why they were not on the list of Hispanic students at Western Michigan University. Five students they contacted claimed they were biracial and did not choose to consider themselves only Hispanic on their entrance applications. They were half-Hispanic and a dual category was not provided. Others revealed that the ethnicity category was indicated as optional.

On several occasions it was necessary to leave the questionnaire with the prospective subject. A visit was made to pick up the questionnaire at the residence hall or the subject's home. This occurred about five times. When the subject was asked if the questionnaire was filled out, the subject would confess that he or she had forgotten to fill it out. At other times, the researcher would be asked for an additional day to fill out the questionnaire. It was soon discovered that those individuals who were procrastinating were actually non-respondents and impeded the research efforts.

The first week in April the researcher decided to discontinue the data collection venture. The researchers data collection efforts were exhausted. By this date, 57 questionnaires had been collected. This was 43 surveys less than originally planned. It was determined that during the last month of a Winter semester, returns would be minimal, especially given all previous efforts. Table 1 depicts the data collection further.

Table 1  
Participation of Respondents

	#		%
Surveys Distributed	100		
Surveys Received	57	% of Participation	57.0
Nonrespondents	43	% of Nonrespondents	43.0

#### Pretest Population

The population for the pretest consisted of Hispanic-American college students at Hoejke residence hall at Western Michigan University. This residence hall was selected because of the large size of Hispanic residents who lived in the hall in the winter semester of 1989. They were contacted through the lobby phone on several occasions, and were met at one of the study lounges located at the residence hall. Ten students were called. The pretest list of Hispanic-American students was provided by the Office of Minority Student Services at Western Michigan University.

During the week of Monday, February 27, 1989 to Friday, March 3, 1989, the pretest was distributed. The participants were very eager to participate. They were informed that the survey instrument was merely a pretest of the actual research instrument and their participation a second time would be necessary for the study. Additionally, these participants were encouraged to leave comments

and feedback on the survey in regard to the questions in the pretest instrument. The pretest involved ten participants.

The survey instrument was self-administered and respondents were allowed to take their time for its completion. Four respondents preferred to take the survey instrument to their dorm rooms and to return it at a later date. Six students completed the pretest promptly in the study lounge of the residence hall. They were asked if it mattered whether the researcher was in the same room while they completed the pretest instrument. No one was opposed.

#### Pretest Instrument

Administering a pretest instrument prior to the actual survey research instrument was critical in this empirical examination because it was essential to determine if various questions in the survey instrument were in need of revision. The survey instrument was to be modified, as a result of the pretest, if it was determined that various questions were too vague, biased or inappropriate in securing the sought after information.

Some instrument weaknesses were found as a result of the pretest survey. The investigator discovered that the respondents were often having difficulty with the pretest. This was the only time the researcher spoke to the participants. The headings that were included in the survey to differentiate types of questions were difficult for respondents to follow. They did not seem to follow one another in a logical manner. Additionally, questions and

responses were often separated on different pages. Changes were therefore made to reorder the headings and keep the questions and their responses on the same page. The final headings used were the following: (1) Demographics, (2) Language, (3) Social attitudes and activities, (4) Religion, (5) Discrimination, and (6) Attitudes towards assimilation.

Evidently, many respondents did not understand several questions. The meaning of many questions had to be explained thoroughly by the researcher. Respondents felt some questions were ambiguous. Other questions were said to be incomplete. Therefore, many questions had to be revised in the second draft of the research instrument. Examples of some of these were as follows: Are you presently Employed, Unemployed, Student, or Part Time.

The problem was that a student could be unemployed or employed and still be a college student. She or he might also have been employed part time. The response categories were therefore changed to: employed part-time, employed full time, and unemployed.

Similarly, the respondents revealed that another set of questions were too vague. These questions are as follows:  
Do you feel you've been discriminated against? Yes or No.  
If yes, do you feel this has changed the way in which you view things? Yes or No.

The problem was that students felt that this was too broad a question. It was therefore revised as follows: Have you ever

been discriminated against? Yes or No. If so, how often does this discrimination occur? All of the time, Sometimes, Seldom, or Never.

Similarly, criticisms were also raised in a number of questions that only included the categories, Hispanic and Anglo. An individual could have friends or participate in activities and social events with other individuals who were Black or Asian, for example. No "other" category was provided in many questions. Below is one of the questions. The original question appeared as the following: My close friends are: All Hispanic, Mostly Hispanic, About even Hispanic and Anglo, Mostly Anglo, All Anglo. The response categories were subsequently changed to: all Hispanic, mostly Hispanic, about even Hispanic, Anglo and other, mostly Anglo and other, all Anglo and other.

Finally, respondents revealed that sociological terminology was difficult to respond to. They did not always understand the concepts. As a result, the researcher changed the wording of questions to better suit the diverse reader. The questions were simplified. The following provides examples: Assimilation in the United States is the process whereby groups with different cultures come to have a common culture. Do you feel Hispanics are assimilated? Yes they are assimilated, No they are not assimilated, They are somewhat assimilated, They are not assimilated.

The revised questions appeared as follows: Hispanics should be more like Anglos to improve in the United States. The "American

Melting Pot" is a good idea and direction for groups like Hispanics.

#### Variables the Study Sought to Examine

In the revised survey instrument questions were divided into headings, according to subject matter. This was done to follow a logical order, for organizational purposes, and to help categorize the independent variables for the study. The categories in the survey instrument were as follows: demographics, language, social attitudes and activities, religion, discrimination, and assimilation. These are the primary independent variables in the study, but subcategories under these categories exist as well.

The demographic variables were numerous. These independent variables are sex, place of birth, country status, employment, age, ethnicity, state residency, home region, parental income, class standing, socio-economic status, family size, parental educational status, occurrences of single-headed household and home ownership.

The language variables, however, weren't as numerous as the demographic variables. The language variable inquired about parental language, participant's dominant language and fluency, and the measure of participation in Spanish language activities.

The social attitudes and activities category sought to examine the social patterns of Hispanic-Americans. The various questions are concerned with the types of activities and types of friends participating in such activities. Specific items included food

preferences, sports, patterns of interaction with friends, dating and marriage preferences, patterns in holidays, social events, and extra-curricular activities.

The third category related to religion and sought to discover religious affiliation, church attendance, language preferences in church and the ethnicity of overall congregations.

The fourth category of discrimination sought to determine the perceived attitudes and experiences of the population with regard to discrimination. Questions in this category consisted of incidences of discrimination, including frequencies, types of discrimination, and attitudes regarding whether or not discrimination against Hispanics merits more attention in the United States.

The final category in the survey instrument was entitled "assimilation." This category consists of the dependent variable in this study. Inquiries in this category sought to examine the respondent's attitudes towards assimilation, pluralism, the American melting pot, bilingual education, Hispanic and Anglo culture, and the English-only bill in Congress.

Appendix A contains the final version of the research instrument in its entirety. The wide array of independent variables just described were thought to be the potential influences on the attitudes towards assimilation of Hispanic-Americans in a university setting. This study sought to determine in detail which of these actually influenced the attitudes of Hispanic students.

### The Operationalization of the Dependent Variable

The dependent variable described in the literature review is attitudes towards assimilation. Assimilation was measured on a Likert scale, utilizing numerous questions in the research instrument. The questions relating to the dependent variable were all measured in a Likert scale and ranked 1 through 3 or 1 through 5 according to the number of responses and according to whether the respondent favored or opposed assimilation respectively. The lower the assigned number, the more favorable the respondent was in attitude towards assimilation. Conversely, the higher the assigned number, the greater the opposition towards assimilation. Points were then summed for the dependent variable questions (50 through 64) to provide a summary measure of students attitudes towards assimilation. Each student was assigned an index number or "an attitude towards assimilation" point score. The final range of the responses in attitudes towards assimilation in this study was from 0 to 61 with 1 being the positive end of the scale and 61 the negative high end of the range.

The questions were ranked according to their context: whether they were pro assimilation or anti assimilation. One was either high or low according to whether the attitude were pro or con in regard to assimilation. The higher the index number the more unfavorable the attitude towards assimilation. Conversely, the lower the index number the more favorable attitudes towards assimilation. The specific dependent variable questions were measured



in the following way:

53. Hispanics should be more like Anglos to improve in the United States. SA=1, A=2, N=3, D=4, SD=5

54. The "American Melting Pot" is a good idea and direction for groups like Hispanics. SA=1, A, N, D, SD=5

55. Personally, I am "Americanized." SA=1, A, N, D, SD=5

56. Hispanics should maintain two cultures. SA=5, A, N, D, SD=5

57. Bilingual Education should be instituted in all school systems. SA=5, A, N, D, SD=1

58. Hispanics should have a separate identity from Anglos. SA=5, A, N, D, SD=1

59. Hispanic individuals who do not speak the Spanish language have lost part of their identity. SA=5, A, N, D, SD=1

60. Some Hispanics "act white" or more anglo than other Hispanics. SA=5, A, N, D, SD=1

61. As economic and social mobility increases within Hispanics, their Hispanic identity is threatened. SA=5, A, N, D, SD=1

62. English-Only, the bill proposing to make English the official language in the United States should be enacted. SA=1, A, N, D, SD=5

63. I feel positive about the Hispanic culture. SA=5, A, N, D, SD=1

64. I will maintain the Hispanic culture in my life. SA=5,  
A, N, D, SD=1

In order to use some of the necessary statistics in this study it was necessary to collapse the attitudes towards assimilation variable. It was therefore recoded according to the frequencies in the data set. The categories were 1 through 4. One was high on assimilation and 4 was low on assimilation. The first and second categories consisted of respondents who were basically in favor of assimilation. The third and fourth categories consisted of those opposing assimilation. Specifically, the purposes were categorized in the following way: Category 1 was comprised of responses of 39 and below; Category 2 was comprised of responses between 40 and 44; Category 3 was comprised of response scores between 45 and 49; and Category 4 was comprised of response scores ranging from 50 on up. Therefore, the lower the number the more favorable the attitudes towards assimilation, and vice-versa.

Table 2 depicts the frequency and percentage distributions of the dependent variable attitudes towards assimilation in the study.

Table 2

## Attitudes of Respondents Towards Assimilation

Variable		Frequency	%
Unfavorable Attitudes Towards Assimilation	1 (39 and under)	12	21.1
	2 (40 - 44)	23	40.4
Favorable Attitudes Towards Assimilation	3 (45 - 49)	13	22.4
	4 (50 and above)	9	15.8

Examining Table 2 reveals that 35 of the respondents scored in the first and second categories. Therefore, roughly 61.5% of the respondents had unfavorable attitudes towards assimilation. The other 38.6% of the respondents had more of an inclination towards assimilation and responded in the third and fourth category.

## Analysis

The final part of this chapter concerns itself with the nature of the analysis utilized in the study. Frequency and percentage distributions is a preliminary step in data analysis. It is the descriptive analysis of the research sample. The researcher is able to determine the number of observations in each response category for the variables that were used in this study. Patterns could then be detected in the data. It is critical to organize and interpret the data with frequency and percentage distributions

as a first step in data analysis.

Tables will then be analyzed and interpreted with percentages. Patterns of associations or relationships between the independent and dependent variables will be scrutinized. The chi-square statistic is also utilized in this study, for the analysis of cross-table data. A chi-square test of significance will be utilized with alpha at the standard .05 level of significance. The research uses chi-square because it is a test of the statistical significance of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. It helps determine the significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables in the study to assess the influences on attitudes towards assimilation. It tests the independent variables one at a time against the dependent variable to see whether variations or patterns in relationships are likely to be due to chance or random fluctuation or, on the other hand, are significant.

Chi-square will be utilized with the dependent variable, attitudes towards assimilation, and the independent variables under the general categories: demographics, language, social attitudes and activities, religion, and discrimination. Of course, the independent variable under each of these specific headings is utilized in each of the cross-tabs.

It should be noted that because this research attempted to collect data from all Western Michigan University students, and therefore did not use any sampling strategy, that the use of

chi-square is more for heuristic purposes than real significance testing purposes. It will be only instructive to look at the chi-square values, since a research sample was not endeavored. The statistical significance of obtained chi-square values are not truly generalizable to the whole population, since the attempt was to survey the entire population Hispanics at Western Michigan University. It is strictly for heuristic interest that chi-square values are scrutinized.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the findings in the study. First a characterization of the respondents using demographic and background data is presented. Frequency and percentage distributions are utilized here. Contingency tables are then analyzed with percentage interpretations and chi-square.

#### Characterization of the Sample

##### Demographics and Religion

Each frequency and percentage distribution presented in this section considers the entire sample. The sample size is 57. Table 3 below depicts various demographic variables, such as sex, age, marital status, religion, and ethnicity.

Table 3

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents  
by Sex, Age, Marital Status, Religious Affiliation  
and Ethnicity

Variable	Frequency	(%)
<u>Sex</u>		
Female	29	50.9
Male	28	49.1

Table 3--Continued

Variable	Frequency	(%)
<u>Age</u>		
18 - 20	21	36.8
21 - 23	17	29.8
24 - 26	7	12.3
27 - 29	4	7.0
30+	8	14.0
<u>Marital Status</u>		
Married	4	7.0
Single	51	89.5
Divorced	2	3.5
<u>Religion</u>		
Catholic	41	73.2
Protestant	2	3.6
Lutheran	6	10.7
Not Affiliated	2	3.6
Other	5	9.0
<u>Ethnicity</u>		
Mexican	41	71.9
Puerto Rican	3	5.3
Cuban	2	3.5
Other	9	15.3

Table 3 shows the various pertinent demographic characteristics of the Hispanic student sample population at Western Michigan University. The population is almost evenly distributed within sex. There were 50.9% female and 49.1% male participants in the study. Students tended to also be distributed in all the age categories. The 18-20 age category was comprised of 36.8%, the 21-24 category contained 29.8% of the participants, the 24-26 age category consisted of 12.3%, the 27-29 category held 7.0% of the

respondents and the over 30 category had 14.0% of the participants. Therefore, 66.6% of the sample population is under 23 years of age. This is closely reflective of the overall student population, but the Hispanic student population seemed somewhat more diverse.

The marital status category was also reflective of the student body at Western Michigan University. Overwhelmingly, the Hispanic student population at WMU was single (89.5%). Three and a half percent of the participants were divorced and 7.0% of the population were married. Additionally, 73% of the participants were Roman Catholic, 3.6% were Protestant, 10.7 were Lutheran, 9.0% were of another denomination and 3.6% of the participants were not religiously affiliated.

The ethnicity inquiry revealed that Hispanics at Western Michigan University are not very representative of the different Hispanic groups. Participants tended to be primarily of Mexican descent. Nearly seventy-two percent of the research population was Mexican, 5.3% were Puerto Rican, 3.5% were of Cuban descent and 15.3% were of another Hispanic group.

Table 4 continues to depict various characteristics of the Hispanic student sample population surveyed at Western Michigan University. These characteristics concerned state residency, place of birth, home region, and residency status.



Table 4

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents  
by State Residency, Place of Birth, Home Region,  
and Residency Status

Variable	Frequency (%)	
<u>State Residency</u>		
Michigan	46	82.1
Other	8	14.0
<u>Residency Status</u>		
United States Citizen	52	91.3
Resident Alien	5	8.8
<u>Place of Birth</u>		
United States	46	82.1
Outside of United States	10	17.9
<u>Home Region</u>		
Urban	19	33.3
Suburban	18	31.6
Rural	16	28.1
Other	4	7.1

The participants were predominantly from the state of Michigan. Roughly eighty-two percent of the population indicated they were Michigan residents, while 14.0% indicated they were from out-of-state. Similarly, 82% were born in the United States. Nearly eighteen percent revealed they were born in another country. Therefore, 91.3% of the participants revealed they were American citizens, while 8.8% indicated alien resident status in the United States.

The participants also reported data concerning the characteristics of their home region. Roughly 33.3% of the participants

revealed their home region was urban, 31.6% stated coming from a suburban area, 28.1% were rural dwellers and 7.1% indicated the other category.

Table 5 depicts the responses to questions in the research instrument concerned with economic variables associated with the respondents and their families. These were employment status, socioeconomic status, family income, single-headed household, family size, and type of dwelling.

Table 5

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents  
by Employment Status, Socioeconomic Status,  
Family Income, Single-Headed Household, Family Size,  
and Dwelling

Variable	Frequency	(%)
<u>Employment Status</u>		
Full time	11	19.3
Part-time	26	45.6
Unemployed	20	35.1
<u>Socioeconomic Status</u>		
Lowerclass	15	26.3
Middleclass	39	68.4
Upperclass	3	5.3
<u>Family Income</u>		
Less than \$5,000	3	5.4
\$5,000 - 9,999	5	8.9
\$10,000 - 19,999	12	21.4
\$20,000 - 29,999	14	25.0
\$30,000 - 39,999	11	19.6
\$40,000 - 49,999	5	8.9
\$50,000+	6	10.7

Table 5--Continued

Variable	Frequency	(%)
<u>Single-headed Household</u>		
Yes	23	40.4
No	24	59.6
<u>Family Size</u>		
1 - 3	8	14.0
3 - 6	25	43.9
6 - 9	17	29.0
9+	7	12.3
<u>Dwelling</u>		
Rent	8	14.3
Own	45	80.4
Other	3	5.4

Table 5 portrays the financial dimensions of students origins. Although all of the respondents were students, their employment status while pursuing their degrees was questioned. Roughly 45.6% of the participants revealed they were employed part-time, 35.1% revealed being unemployed and only 19.3% of the respondents were revealed working full time while in school. Therefore, 74.9% of the students surveyed maintained a job of some sort while full time students in school.

The family income of the respondents was also scrutinized. The data on this revealed the following: nearly 5.4% of the participant's families made \$5,000 or less, 8.9% were in the \$5,000- 9,999 category, 21.4% were in the \$10,000 - 19,999 grouping, 25.0% were in the \$20,000 - 29,999 classification, 19.6% were in the

\$30,000 - 39,999 category, 8.9% were \$40,000 - 49,999, and 10.7% classified their families as \$50,000 and above. It should be noted that family income inquiries may not always be a realistic profile of the actual incomes. Students may not really know their parents' financial profile and are asked to approximate. Many may be hesitant to be honest and they may embellish their parents' actual earnings. The validity of these responses is therefore questionable.

Students were also asked to categorize themselves according to socioeconomic status in order to set another measure of economic standing. This category is merely an approximate estimate and may therefore not be an actual profile of their parents socioeconomic status. Students may be unaware of what constitutes lower or middle-class. These categories may hold negative connotations. Hence, the data in this category showing 26.3% lowerclass, 68.4% middle-class, and 5.3% upperclass might also be questionable. The fact that socioeconomic class and family income did not show concurring outcomes gives reason to question these responses.

The subsequent categories in Table 5 depict the frequency distributions on family size, incidence of single-headed households and type of home dwelling. All of these variables add to the economic profiles of the research participants. Single-headed households seemed to be a vague question in the study. Students were often uncertain of the intention of the inquiry. It was clarified that the question sought to determine whether they came from a one-parent family and consequently a single-headed

household. Roughly 40.4% respondents that revealed they were from a single-headed household, while 59.6% were not from a single-headed household.

Additionally, family size outcomes revealed 14.0% of the respondents came from 1-3 member households, 43.9% came from 3-6 member households, 29.0% came from 6-9 member households and 12.3% came from 9 or over member households. Clearly, Hispanics in the study were characteristic of large families. The home dwelling category sought to determine whether the respondent's parents either owned or rented their residences. Accordingly, the data revealed that 14.3% rented, 80.4% owned and 5.4% indicated the "other" category.

Table 6 shows the student and parental educational status. The specific variables here are class standing, father's educational status and mother's educational status.

Table 6

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents  
by Class Standing, Father's Educational Status,  
and Mother's Educational Status

Variable	Frequency (%)	
<u>Class Standing</u>		
Freshman	17	29.8
Sophomore	9	15.8
Junior	11	19.3
Senior	10	17.5
Masters	9	15.8
PHD	1	1.8

Table 6--Continued

Variable	Frequency	(%)
<u>Father's Education</u>		
Elementary	1	1.8
Junior High	19	33.3
Senior High	10	17.5
Junior College	13	22.8
College	3	5.3
Graduate	6	10.5
PHD	2	3.5
Other	3	5.3
<u>Mother's Education</u>		
Elementary	15	26.3
Junior High	13	22.8
Senior High	13	22.8
Junior College	3	5.3
College	9	15.8
Graduate	1	1.8
PHD	2	3.5
Other	1	1.8

The following was revealed in terms of education: 29.8% were freshman, 15.8% were sophomores, 19.3% were juniors, 17.5% were seniors, 15.8% were masters, and 1.8% were doctoral students. The table also shows father's and mother's educational status. Overall, as educational increased, the number of parents in the categories diminished. Father's of respondents were broken down in the following: 1.8% finished elementary school, 33.3 completed junior high, 17.5 completed senior high, 22.8% completed junior college, 10.5 completed college, 5.3% completed graduate school, and 3.5 completed a PHD. Mother's of the respondents were also broken down in the following: 26.3% finished elementary school,

22.8 completed junior high, 22.8 completed senior high, 5.3% completed junior college, 15.8 completed college, 1.8% completed graduate school, and 5.3 completed a PHD. Therefore, 75.4% of the fathers and 83.8% of the mothers did not earn a college degree.

### Language

The language variable is depicted in Table 7. The two questions here dealt with the respondent's main language and the dominant language of the parents.

Table 7

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents  
by Language Most Frequently Spoken at Home  
and Language Most Comfortable With

Variable	Frequency	(%)
<u>Language Most Frequently Spoken at Home</u>		
Spanish	25	44.6
English	22	39.3
Both	9	16.1
<u>Most Comfortable Language</u>		
Spanish	8	14.5
English	33	60.5
Both	14	25.5

The first questions from Table 7 concerned the most frequently spoken language in the paternal home of the respondents. The second question dealt with the language the respondent felt most comfortable with. This crucial question revealed that 44.6% of the respondents

had a predominantly Spanish-speaking home, while 39.3% of the respondents came from a predominantly English-speaking household. Roughly, 16.1% participants revealed that their home was a combination of both languages.

Student respondents also revealed that 14.5% felt more comfortable with Spanish and 60.5% claimed English was their dominant language. Twenty five percent, however, revealed they felt proficient in both languages.

#### Social Attitudes and Activities

An inquiry in the social patterns of Hispanic students is crucial in study of this type. Table 8 depicts these patterns further.

Table 8

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents  
by Social Relations, Social Events, Attitudes on Dating  
and Marriage

Variable	Frequency	(%)
<u>Social Relations</u>		
Hispanic	3	5.4
Mostly Hispanic	14	25.0
Equally Hispanic & Other	17	30.4
Mostly Anglo & Other	19	33.9
All Anglo & Other	1	1.8
Other	2	3.6



Table 8--Continued

Variable	Frequency	(%)
<u>Social Events</u>		
Hispanic	1	1.8
Mostly Hispanic	8	14.0
Equally Hispanic & Other	30	52.6
Mostly Anglo & Other	9	15.8
All Anglo & Other	1	1.8
Other	7	12.3
<u>Dating</u>		
Yes	8	14.0
No	36	63.2
Not Dating	13	22.8
<u>Marriage</u>		
Very Important	8	14.0
Important	12	21.1
Somewhat Important	13	22.8
Not Important	24	42.1

The researcher believed it relevant to determine how students socialized, dated and what they anticipated their marriage partners to be like. Data depicted in Table 8 revealed that students tended to be socializing in the following manner: 5.4% primarily with Hispanics, 25.0% with mostly Hispanics, 30.4% with equally Hispanics and other, 33.9% with mostly anglo and other, 1.8% with all anglo and other and 3.6% with all other. Additionally, activities and social events of the participants revealed that students tended to be socialize in events in the following manner: 1.8% with primarily Hispanics, 14.0% with mostly Hispanics, 52.6% with equally Hispanics and other, 15.8% with mostly anglo and other, 1.8% with all anglo

and other and 12.3% with all other. Clearly, Hispanic students did not always remain with only other Hispanics.

The dating patterns of the Hispanic respondents was also scrutinized. Fourteen percent of the respondents revealed that they generally only dated other Hispanics, while 63.2 revealed they did not date generally date Hispanics. When inquired if it was important to eventually marry another Hispanic, 14.0% revealed it was very important, 21.1% stated it was important, 22.8% revealed it was somewhat important and 42.1% stated it was not important. Therefore, 58.8% of the Hispanic respondents revealed it somehow mattered to marry Hispanics.

### Discrimination

Discrimination among Hispanic college students at Western Michigan University is delineated in Table 9. The questions attempted to measure the incidences of discrimination.

Table 9

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents  
by The Incidences of Discrimination

Variable	Frequency	%
<u>Incidences of Discrimination</u>		
All the time	5	8.8
Sometimes	23	40.4
Seldom	17	29.8
Never	7	12.3

Along this dimension, the students revealed the following: 8.8% stated they were discriminated against all the time, 40.4% revealed it happens sometimes, 29.8% stated it seldom happens and 12.3% claimed they never experienced discrimination. Therefore, 79.0% of the respondents revealed discriminatory incidences had resulted at one time or another.

#### Summary of Responses

The following is a brief summary of the characteristics or profile of the research population in the study. The Hispanic students at Western Michigan University were primarily Mexican-American. Nearly 72% of the respondents reported being from this ethnic group. Additionally, the respondents were primarily under 23 years of age. Roughly 66.6% of the participants were between 18 and 23 years of age.

The study also revealed the following characteristics: 82.4% of the respondents were undergraduates, 73.2% were Roman Catholic, 60.5% of the respondents were English dominant, 82.1% were Michigan residents, 82.1% were born in the United States, 68.4% claimed to be middle-class, and 85% of respondents came from families with over 3 individuals. The respondents were primarily first generation college students and 40% of the respondents either spoke some Spanish or spoke it fluently.

## Analysis of Relationships on Assimilation

### Introduction

The following section depicts the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable(s) in contingency tables. The specific variables were chosen from the five categories as represented in the research instrument. These categories were the following: demographics, language, social attitudes and activities, religion, and discrimination. Many variables within these categories were excluded because they had little variation or too much missing data.

### Demographics

Demographic variables in this study included age, ethnicity, class standing, parental's educational status, marital status, state residency, home region, incidences of single-headed households, and home ownership. However, most do not warrant a statistical test because of the low response rates in many of the categories. In the age, class standing, home ownership, single-headed household, and ethnicity areas, the responses tended to clustered in only a few categories. Most students are Mexican-American for example. Additionally, the majority of students are single, Michigan residents, and born in the United States.

Table 10 is an examination of one of the demographic variables that was deemed relevant for cross-tab analysis. This variable

income and was run against the dependent variable score on attitudes towards assimilation.

Table 10  
Cross-Tabulation of Income and Assimilation

ATTITUDES TOWARD ASSIMILATION	INCOME		
	Under 10,000	10,000-29,000	Over 30,000
Pro 1	1(12.5)	3(11.5)	8(36.4)
2	5(62.5)	7(26.9)	10(45.5)
3	1(12.5)	9(34.7)	3(13.6)
Con 4	1(12.5)	7(26.9)	1(4.5)
Totals	8(100)	26(100)	22(100)
Chi Square = 10.04289      6 Degrees of Freedom			

In examining Table 10, it is evident that income has a slight relationship with attitudes towards assimilation. In the under \$10,000 category, 75% of the respondents were basically in favor of assimilation. Roughly 25% of the respondents were opposed. In the \$10,000-\$29,000 category, 38% of the respondents were in favor of assimilation while 61.6% were exhibited unfavorable attitudes towards assimilation. The over \$30,000 category 81% of the respondents manifested favorable attitudes towards assimilation.

Roughly 18.1% exhibited unfavorable attitudes towards assimilation. By and large, the data suggest that as the income levels of the respondents increased their attitudes towards assimilation generally became more favorable.

The chi-square of the test is found to be 10.04289 with 6 degrees of freedom at the .05 level. Examining Table 10 shows that there is no significant relationship between the variables. (The critical value of chi-square here is 12.592.) Here, the calculated value of chi-square does not exceed the critical value at the .05 level. Chi-square is not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, income was not deemed to be a significant influence on the attitudes towards assimilation.

However, it must be remembered throughout this research, and particularly throughout this section, that chi-square is being used for heuristic purposes only, and not as a technique to infer or generalize back to the population from which the sample was drawn, as the attempt was to survey the entire Hispanic population at Western Michigan University.

### Language

Table 11 examines the variables language and assimilation in the study. Language is the next category in the independent variables according to the research instrument.

Table 11

## Cross-Tabulation Language and Assimilation

ATTITUDE TOWARDS ASSIMILATION	LANGUAGE		
	SPANISH	ENGLISH	BOTH
PRO (1)	2(25.0)	8(24.2)	1(7.1)
2	2(25.0)	17(51.5)	3(21.2)
3	3(37.5)	3(9.1)	7(50.5)
CON 4	1(12.5)	5(15.2)	3(21.2)
Totals	8(100)	33(100)	14(100)
Chi Square = 12.34844      6 Degrees of Freedom			

The table suggests relationships between the respondent's dominant language and his or her attitudes towards assimilation. Those individuals whose dominant language is Spanish were generally not in favor of assimilation. Roughly 50% of the respondents indicated unfavorable attitudes towards assimilation. Whereas 75.7% of dominant English-speaking respondents exhibited favorable attitudes towards assimilation. Therefore, this demonstrates that English-speaking respondents were more likely to have favorable attitudes towards assimilation than native Spanish-speaking respondents. Nearly 72% of the respondents who indicated fluency in both Spanish and English demonstrated unfavorable attitudes towards assimilation. The Spanish language among Hispanics is an

influencing factor towards an individual's attitudes towards assimilation.

The chi-square of the test is found to be 12.34844 with 6 degrees of freedom. The chi-square value is significant at the .05 level. There is an apparent significant relationship between the variables. Therefore, the language of the respondent can be seen as an influencing factor on the respondent's attitudes towards assimilation.

Table 12 utilizes another independent variable from language category. It examines the language in the home of the respondent and his or her attitudes towards assimilation.

Table 12

Cross-Tabulation of Home Language and Assimilation

ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASSIMILATION		HOME LANGUAGE		
		SPANISH	ENGLISH	BOTH
PRO	1	0	9(40.9)	2(22.2)
	2	7(28.0)	11(50.0)	5(55.6)
	3	11(44.0)	1(4.5)	1(11.1)
CON	4	7(28.0)	1(4.5)	1(11.1)
Totals		25(100)	25(100)	9(100)
Chi Square = 24.62660		6 Degrees of Freedom		



Table 12 revealed the relationship between the respondent's parental language and his or her attitudes towards assimilation. Those individuals whose parental language is Spanish were generally not in favor of assimilation. Roughly 72% of the respondents indicated unfavorable attitudes towards assimilation. Roughly 91% of dominant English-speaking respondents exhibited favorable attitudes towards assimilation. This demonstrates that English-speaking homes were more likely to have favorable attitudes towards assimilation than native Spanish-speaking homes.

The chi-square of the test is found to be 24.62660 with 6 degrees of freedom. The chi-square value is significant at the .05 level. There is relationship between the variables. Therefore, the home language of the respondent is an influencing factor on the respondent's attitudes towards assimilation.

#### Social Attitudes and Activities

The third category of the independent variables employs variables under social attitudes and activities. Table 13 is representative of this category. It consists of the variables partner selection and attitudes towards assimilation.

Table 13

## Cross-Tabulation of Partner Selection and Assimilation

ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASSIMILATION	PARTNER SELECTION	
	Hispanic	Other
Pro 1	2(10)	8(33.3)
2	9(45)	8(33.3)
3	5(25)	5(20.9)
Con 4	4(20)	3(12.5)
Tot.	20(100)	24(100)
Chi Square = 4.684                      3 Degrees of Freedom		

Table 13 revealed surprising results. This table was the cross-tabulation between respondent's dating partner or partner and attitudes towards assimilation. Fifty-five percent of Hispanic students at Western Michigan University who strictly dated other Hispanics revealed that their attitudes towards assimilation were favorable. Only 45% of this category were relatively opposed to assimilation. For those individuals who did not date Hispanics the data revealed the following: 66.6% revealed favorable attitudes towards assimilation and 33.4% exhibited unfavorable views towards the concept.

The chi-square of the test is found to be 4.684 with 3 degrees of freedom at the .05 level. Examining Table 10 shows that there

is no significant relationship between the variables. Here, the calculated value of chi-square does not exceed the critical value at the .05 level. Chi-square is then not significant.

Table 14 is the cross-tabulation between the respondent's patterns of interaction and attitudes towards assimilation. The categories encompass the relative frequency of activities with Hispanics, mostly Hispanic and other, equally Hispanic and other, mostly Anglo and other, all Anglo and other and other.

Table 14  
Cross-Tabulation of Friends and Assimilation

ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASSIMILATION	FRIENDS					
	All Hisp	Most Hisp	Equally Hisp	Most Anglo	All Anglo	Other
Pro 1 0		1(7.1)	3(17.6)	6(31.6)	0	1(50.0)
2	2(66.7)	5(35.7)	7(41.2)	8(42.1)	0	0
3	1(33.3)	3(35.7)	4(23.5)	2(10.5)	1(100)	1(50.0)
Con 4 0		3(21.4)	3(17.6)	3(15.8)	0	0
Tot. 3(100)	14(100)	17(100)	19(100)	1(100)	2(100)	

Chi Square = 10.98319      15 Degrees of Freedom

Table 14 shows the relationship between the friends of Western Michigan University students and their attitudes towards assimilation. Surprisingly, 66.7% of Hispanics who mainly interact with

other Hispanics were in favor of assimilation. Respondents who mainly interact with "mostly Hispanic and other" however indicated being opposed to assimilation. Roughly 59.6% of the respondents in this category exhibit unfavorable views. This was not demonstrated in any other category on the table. Generally student's social interactions do not influence their attitudes towards assimilation.

The chi-square of the test is found to be 10.98319 with 15 degrees of freedom at the .05 level. Examining Table 10 shows that there is no significant relationship between the variables. Here, the calculated value of chi-square does not exceed the critical value at the .05 level. The relationship is therefore not significant.

Table 15 examines the respondent's patterns of interaction in social events and his or her attitudes towards assimilation. The various ethnicity categories are considered.

Table 15

Cross-Tabulation of Patterns of Interaction in Social  
Events and Assimilation

	INTERACTION IN SOCIAL EVENTS					
	ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASSIMILATION					
	All Hisp	Most Hisp	Equally Hisp	Most Anglo	All Anglo	Other
Pro 1	1(50.0)	1(12.5)	4(13.3)	5(55.5)		1(14.2)
2	0	3(37.5)	15(50.0)	2(22.2)	0	3(42.8)
3	0	3(37.5)	7(23.2)	1(11.1)	1(100)	1(14.2)
Con 4	1(50.0)	1(12.5)	4(13.3)	1(11.1)	0	2(28.5)
Tot. 2	(100)	8(100)	30(100)	9(100)	1(100)	7(12.3)
Chi Square = 22.83081      15 Degrees of Freedom						

Table 15 displayed an interesting relationship between the social interactions of Western Michigan University Hispanic students and their attitudes towards assimilation. Surprisingly, 63.3% of Hispanics who mainly attend social events with others who are "equally Hispanics and other" were in favor of assimilation. Additionally, 77.7% of respondents who attend social events with "mostly Anglo and other" were also in favor of assimilation. Generally student's social interactions do not influence their attitudes towards assimilation. Students did not seem to attend too many social events that were exclusively Hispanic.

The chi-square value is significant at the .05 level. There is relationship between the variables. Therefore, the respondent's patterns of interaction in social events can be viewed as an influencing factor on the respondent's attitudes towards assimilation.

### Discrimination

Table 16 is an examination of the fourth category of independent variables. It examines the cross-tabulation of incidences of discrimination and attitudes towards assimilation.

Table 16

Cross-tabulation of Discrimination and Assimilation

ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASSIMILATION		DISCRIMINATION			
		All the Time	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
PRO	1	1(20.0)	4(17.4)	3(17.6)	3(42.9)
	2	1(20.0)	9(39.1)	7(41.2)	2(28.6)
	3	3(60.0)	6(26.1)	2(11.8)	2(28.6)
CON	4	0	4(17.4)	5(29.4)	0
Totals		5(100)	23(100)	17(100)	7(100)

Chi Square = 12.78522      9 Degrees of Freedom

Table 16 demonstrates the relationship between attitudes towards assimilation and discrimination. Individuals in the study who revealed that discrimination occurred "all the time," were strongly opposed to assimilation. Roughly 60% of these respondents were opposed to assimilation. The table also revealed that 58.8% of the respondents who "seldom" experience discrimination were generally in favor of assimilation. Similarly, 61.5% of the respondents who "never" experience discrimination were also in favor of assimilation.

The chi-square value is significant at the .05 level. There is relationship between the variables. Therefore, the respondent's perceived incidences and experiences of discrimination can be interpreted as an influencing factor on the respondent's attitudes towards assimilation.

### Religion

Table 17 is an examination of the fifth category of independent variables. It examines the cross-tabulation of religion and attitudes towards assimilation.

Table 17  
Cross-Tabulation of Religious Affiliation  
and Assimilation

ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASSIMILATION		RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	
		CATHOLIC	OTHER
PRO	1	6(14.6)	6(40)
	2	16(39.0)	6(40)
	3	10(24.4)	3(20)
CON	4	9(22)	0
Totals		41(100)	15(100)
Chi Square = 4.6893		3 Degrees of Freedom	

Table 17 showed that by and large religion was not a critical factor in influencing an individual's attitudes towards assimilation. The table revealed the following: 53.6% of Catholics favored assimilation while 46.4% opposed to assimilation. The responses were very close in these categories. On the other hand, 80% of non-Catholics exhibited favorable attitudes towards assimilation. Roughly 20% of non-Catholics opposed this concept. Respondents in this category were generally not opposed to assimilation. But, it should be noted that the majority of the respondents were Catholic.

The chi-square of the test is found to be 4.6893 with 3 degrees of freedom at the .05 level. Examining Table 10 shows that there



is no significant relationship between the variables. Here, the calculated value of chi-square does not exceed the critical value at the .05 level. There is no relationship between the variables. Therefore, the respondent's religious affiliation is not seen as an influencing factor on the respondent's attitudes towards assimilation.

#### Examining the Influences on the Attitudes Towards Assimilation

In examining the various outcomes of the statistics, it was determined that only four variables were significantly associated with the attitudes towards assimilation. These variables were the home or parental language of the respondent, the dominant language of the respondent, the ethnic composition of the student's social events, and the perceived incidences and experiences of discrimination. The tables showing slight relationships in other areas were not significant.

The more favorable attitudes towards assimilation were finally associated with English speaking homes, individuals who were comfortable with English over Spanish, individuals who perceived less discrimination in their experiences, and individuals whose social activities involved non-Hispanics more often. Conversely, the less favorable attitudes towards assimilation were found to be associated with Spanish-speaking homes, individuals who were more comfortable with Spanish over English, individuals who perceived

more incidences of discrimination, and individuals whose social events mostly involved other Hispanics. These then are the influences as they operate to color students attitudes towards assimilation.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Introduction

There are many issues surrounding the central focus of research, the Hispanic-American in American society. This chapter discusses the findings of this study focusing upon the theoretical and practical implications concerning Hispanic American students and the influences on their attitudes towards assimilation.

#### Review of the Study

This study examined the influences on assimilation attitudes of the Hispanic student population at Western Michigan University. From this study it can now be seen that Hispanic-Americans at Western Michigan University are generally not in favor of assimilating into the Anglo culture or the classic American "melting pot." This generally seems to be the case with Hispanics throughout the American society as well.

The literature review discussed many of the possible influences on assimilation, such as the distinctive Hispanic culture, the experiences of American Hispanics and Hispanic immigrants, the language variation, the experiences of discrimination, religious practices, patterns of social interaction, and so forth. All of

these were possible influences on an individual's attitudes towards assimilation. Accordingly, these influences were the independent variables for the study. These factors were thought to possibly hinder or encourage positive attitudes regarding assimilation. Attitudes towards assimilation was the dependent variable in the study.

This research determined through the chi-square test of significance that there are several factors that influence how Hispanic students perceive assimilation. These variables included the respondent's dominant language, the language spoken in students' homes, their perceived experiences and incidences of discrimination and the ethnic composition of their social activities.

The language of the respondent, as well as the parental language, was a critical factor in determining the attitudes towards assimilation. Language is generally believed to be a transmitter of culture, therefore, it distinguishes the culture of Hispanics from non-Hispanics. It has affected how Hispanics feel about assimilation, because it is part of their unique identity. Thus, by assimilating, Hispanics would be giving up part of this unique culture and identity. Most Hispanics, whether they are fluent in the Spanish language or not, were found to value the Spanish language. It was discovered in this research that the more predominant the Spanish language in the life of the respondent, the less favorable the attitudes towards assimilation.

Language may have been an influencing force in assimilation

because it is part of the heritage of a traditional Hispanic. Often, Hispanic parents feel it is important to know their traditional language. This and other traditional ideologies are passed on to the children.

Hispanics in the United States often feel that American society looks negatively upon Spanish-speaking Americans. Hispanics may feel that being forced to learn English is being asked to reject the language they were reared with. This language is part of their identity. Thus, fluency in Spanish may be associated with some negative connotations in American society, and operate against a positive feeling about assimilation.

In the study perceived incidences and experiences of discrimination proved to be a significant variable in determining the attitudes towards assimilation of Hispanic-American students. Clearly, an individual who had an inordinate amount of experience with discrimination by the Anglo world would be hesitant to embrace its' culture and ideologies. Not only would they attempt to remain unassimilated, they could go to the extreme and become separatist. What was found in the research was that the more the perceived incidences and experiences with discrimination, the less favorable the attitudes towards assimilation.

Discrimination can be interpreted in a similar fashion to the Spanish language factor. Discrimination is overt prejudicial actions and beliefs towards minorities, in this case Hispanics. Hispanics who have been discriminated against may feel they are

not valued by the majority. Similarly, Spanish-speaking Hispanics may feel their language in American society is not valued. As a result individuals experiencing discrimination may develop unfavorable attitudes towards assimilation.

In the study it was determined that Hispanic students whose social events are primarily Hispanic have unfavorable attitudes towards assimilation. Clearly, Hispanic college students have the opportunity to participate in social events throughout the university whose ethnic composition is not primarily Hispanic. Therefore, they intentionally choose to mainly associate with other Hispanics in social events. Thus, they can be seen to be avoiding the Anglo world. This is an indication of how these Hispanics perceive the concept of assimilation. If they had favorable attitudes towards assimilation the ethnic composition of their social events might differ. Therefore, the greater the incidences of social events primarily consisting of Hispanics, the less favorable are the attitudes towards assimilation.

As the literature review and the study revealed, Hispanics are generally maintaining their culture. Even with perhaps a better economic and social standing than in the past, the traditional culture is perceived to be important. The Hispanic students at Western Michigan University prove to maintain their culture as well. However, they realize that the Hispanic culture they value and maintain has outside influences. Their culture has changed from that of their immigrant parents, but they still perceive themselves as being "Mexican" or "Puerto Rican" or other Hispanic,

just the same.

The Hispanic university students also realize that as college students they are not in the same position as Anglo students. They have critical concerns that are not associated with Anglo students. They are plagued by various social ills and remain barely represented in the college setting. The university setting does not necessarily condemn the traditional Hispanic culture, but it often does not condone the traditional and distinct ideologies.

Families, communities and churches are the most important social institutions of Hispanics in the United States. The concept of family is also a predominant factor with Hispanic students. It does not often play such a critical role with non-Hispanic students. Typically being first generation college students, Hispanics experience a distinct picture from their Anglo counterparts. Most Hispanic parents never attended college. They value family bonds to a greater extent than competitiveness and achievement of American institutions. Clearly, Hispanic students are encountering the clash of cultures. Many experience a culture shock when entering college. They feel different. For many Hispanics, the concept of the melting pot leaves too little room for diversity or identity.

#### The Conflict Theory and American Minority Groups

In the past, however, the practice has been for assimilation to lead to a "melting pot" phenomenon. Hispanics, however, have

not assimilated in the manner other immigrant groups have done in the past. Not only are they racially and ethnically different from the European immigrants of previous eras, but there also exists a language and a persisting culture whose intensity will not decrease.

Many assimilation advocates feel assimilation is necessary for Hispanics, Blacks and many other minorities in the United States. These minority groups, however, are still plagued by many social ills. Achieving assimilation would remove the threat an ethnic group could cause due to differing interests. They would then support the main ideologies of the majority and lose their own unique culture. For many Hispanics, however, their culture is a critical part of their identity.

Black minority groups were historically kept on the margins of American society through the practice of segregation and discrimination. Hispanic children in many public school systems were traditionally punished by authority figures and alienated by their non-Hispanic peers because of their language. Civil rights guaranteed Blacks equality, but they too still remain plagued by problems of full integration and assimilation. As Marxian theory advances, those in power are seeing to it that they stay in power in American society. The powerful do not want their own class or status group threatened. Although segregation and discrimination laws are removed from writing, and bilingual programs have long been instituted, there still exists a pressure to keep Black and Hispanic advancement



hindered. Hispanics, Blacks, and other minorities are inordinately uneducated and unskilled in the United States. Undoubtedly, they are pushed by conflicting forces.

American society still oppresses minority groups. Neighborhoods, institutions, towns and cities are continually segregated throughout the country. Xenophobia continues to exist. The English-only bill introduced in Congress, for example has attempted to prohibit Spanish in American society. The bill would make English the official language of the United States. This can be seen as renouncing the millions of immigrants from Latin and Central America, the Asian countries and many more. This would only serve to hinder the economic and social mobility of non-English speaking individuals even further. The "sink or swim" philosophy of adjustment would only help Hispanics to "sink" further.

Economic and social mobility, however, can not be acquired without a "struggle" as conflict theorists maintain. There will continue to be serious conflict regarding Hispanics and their progress in American society. Hispanics are the second largest minority group in American society. The Western Michigan University Hispanic student population determined, for example, that discrimination continues to exist and could continue to impede the development of Hispanics. Undoubtedly, it effected their views on assimilation.

#### Advocating a Pluralistic Society

Nonetheless, what can be hoped to be emerging in American

society, as the literature review and the study have revealed, is a cultural pluralism or a more pluralistic society. A new distinct sub-culture has emerged. The Hispanic population is increasing throughout the country and American society is compelled to consider Hispanic-Americans' special needs and concerns. Thus, what is developing is a new "Hispanic-American" culture that has not been seen with other immigrant group in the past.

The term "Hispanic" is not a generic one. The Hispanic people in the United States are Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cuban-Americans or other Hispanics. Their profiles are distinct as depicted in the "Hispanic sub-groups" portion of this thesis. Thus, considering these Hispanic-Americans is not an easy endeavor for American society. Their numbers are too abundant to just assimilate. Their culture is kept alive with the new immigrants arriving from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Central and South America every year.

Many of the Hispanic students in the study are becoming bi-cultural. They consider themselves part of two cultures. Therefore, Hispanics will not emerge into American society like other immigrants have. They do not have to assimilate and reject their traditional ideologies entirely. Rather, they can incorporate aspects of mainstream American culture with those that have been passed down to them, as "watered down" as they may be. Hispanics do realize that any economic and social mobility they desire requires fluency in the English language and the incorporation of many American ideologies. Yet, Hispanics can maintain both public and private

identities as Richard Rodriguez (1985) argued for in his autobiography Hunger for Memory.

#### Recommendations for the Future

It is recommended that the research in the future try to encompass as large a sample as possible, thereby, increasing the generalizability of the findings. An additional recommendation is the development of comparative studies of assimilation among Hispanics, Blacks, other minority groups and Anglo populations. Studies could also compare students who are located in different environments, such as the eastern, western, southern, and northern parts of the United States. The research could then compare different "sub-groups," such as Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Cuban-American or other Hispanics to discern similarities and differences in issues, views and the like.

This researcher concludes more significantly that it is critical to conduct more research in a related area. Cultural pluralism was a concept that proved to be of utmost importance in regard to Hispanics. It is crucial because of our changing society. There are 15 million persons of Hispanic ancestry in the United States, and due to high immigration and fertility rates this number will continue to increase. As time goes on Hispanics in American society will become a critical issue demanding more attention. The researcher encourages further research on the important issues relating to cultural pluralism, in addition to the continued

exploration of assimilation. It is important to compare and contrast these two concepts and processes, as they hold large implications for the future of minority relations in the United States.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Hispanic Student Survey**

Dear Participant:

The enclosed questionnaire is a part of my graduate program at Western Michigan University. This investigation explores the assimilation of Hispanic-Americans in a University Setting. Your participation is greatly appreciated. The main objective of this examination is to assess the different perspectives of University Hispanic Students.

You are one of 100 persons selected to receive this questionnaire. Responses from you are needed so that the overall survey findings are representative of the Hispanic university population. All questionnaires and results will be anonymous and confidential. No identifiers are placed on the questionnaire. Please be sincere and return it to me as soon as possible. Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely yours,

Ramon Rodriguez

## Hispanic Student Survey

### Demographics:

1. Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Male  
\_\_\_\_\_ Female
2. What is your marital status?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_ Separated  
\_\_\_\_\_ Single \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed  
\_\_\_\_\_ Divorced
3. Where were you Born? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you considered? \_\_\_\_\_ Citizen  
\_\_\_\_\_ Resident  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other, Please Indicate \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are you presently? \_\_\_\_\_ Employed Full Time  
\_\_\_\_\_ Employed Part Time  
\_\_\_\_\_ Unemployed
6. What is your occupation if you are working?  
(Job Title, description)  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is your national ancestry?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Mexican  
\_\_\_\_\_ Puerto Rican  
\_\_\_\_\_ Cuban  
Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_
9. What is your state of residency? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How would you describe your home region?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Urban \_\_\_\_\_ Rural  
\_\_\_\_\_ Suburban  
Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_
11. Please Approximate the total annual income of all persons in  
your parents household before taxes.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Less than \$5,000  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$5,000 to \$9,999  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$10,000 to \$19,999  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$20,000 to \$29,000  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$30,000 to \$39,000  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$40,000 to \$49,000  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$50,000 and over

12. Is your household a single-headed-household?  
       \_\_\_\_\_yes       \_\_\_\_\_no
13. What is your class standing?  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Freshman       \_\_\_\_\_ Senior  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Sophomore       \_\_\_\_\_ Masters  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Junior       \_\_\_\_\_ Doctoral
14. How would you describe your parent's socio-economic status?  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Lower Class       \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Class  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Upper Class
15. What is your parent's family size (include yourself and your parents)?  
       \_\_\_\_\_ 1-3 persons       \_\_\_\_\_ 6-9  
       \_\_\_\_\_ 3-6       \_\_\_\_\_ 9 or more
16. Do your parent's own or rent their own home?  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Rent       \_\_\_\_\_ Own  
       Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
17. How would you describe your Father's formal educational status?  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary School       \_\_\_\_\_ College  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Junior High School       \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate School  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Senior High School       \_\_\_\_\_ PHD level/degree  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Junior College  
       Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_
18. How would you describe your Mother's formal educational status?  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary School       \_\_\_\_\_ College  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Junior High School       \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate School  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Senior High School       \_\_\_\_\_ PHD level/degree  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Junior College  
       Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_

Language:

19. Which language do you speak the most frequently at home with your parents?  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Spanish       \_\_\_\_\_ English  
       \_\_\_\_\_ English/Spanish about the same
20. Which language are you the most comfortable with?  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Spanish       \_\_\_\_\_ English  
       \_\_\_\_\_ Both  
       Other please indicate \_\_\_\_\_



21. How would you describe your ability to speak English?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Very Good/Completely Fluent  
\_\_\_\_\_ Good  
\_\_\_\_\_ Fair  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not Very Good
22. How would you describe your ability to speak Spanish?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Very Good/Completely Fluent  
\_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not Very Good \_\_\_\_\_ Don't Speak Spanish
23. How would you describe your ability to write English?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Very Good/Completely Fluent  
\_\_\_\_\_ Good  
\_\_\_\_\_ Fair  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not Very Good
24. How would you describe your ability to write Spanish?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Very Good/Completely Fluent  
\_\_\_\_\_ Good  
\_\_\_\_\_ Fair  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not Very Good  
\_\_\_\_\_ Cannot Write in Spanish
25. How would you describe your ability to read Spanish?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Very Good/Completely Fluent  
\_\_\_\_\_ Good  
\_\_\_\_\_ Fair  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not Very Good  
\_\_\_\_\_ Cannot Read Spanish
26. How would you describe your ability to read English?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Very Good/Completely Fluent  
\_\_\_\_\_ Good  
\_\_\_\_\_ Fair  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not Very Good
27. How important is it to you that your children, if you were to have children, have the ability to speak, read, and write Spanish fluently?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not at all important  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not very important  
\_\_\_\_\_ Neither important nor unimportant  
\_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat important  
\_\_\_\_\_ Very important

28. List your involvement in the following activities, whenever applicable:
- |                                  |          |         |
|----------------------------------|----------|---------|
| Watch Spanish language TV        | _____yes | _____no |
| Listen to Spanish language radio | _____yes | _____no |
| Read Spanish language newspaper  | _____yes | _____no |
| Read Spanish language magazine   | _____yes | _____no |
| Listen to Spanish Records/tapes  | _____yes | _____no |
| Read Spanish Books               | _____yes | _____no |
29. How many hours would you estimate you engage in these activities in a given week?
- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Spanish TV _____        | Spanish Magazine _____      |
| Spanish Newspaper _____ | Spanish Radio _____         |
| Spanish Books _____     | Spanish Records/Tapes _____ |

Social Attitudes and Activities:

30. I would rather eat Hispanic/Spanish foods:
- |                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| _____All the time     | _____Sometimes |
| _____Most of the time | _____Never     |
31. Check off involvements in any the following activities:
- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| _____Football   | _____Baseball    |
| _____Basketball | _____Soccer      |
| _____Volleyball | _____Racquetball |
| _____Hockey     | _____Jogging     |
- Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_
32. My close friends generally are:
- |   |
|---|
| _____All Hispanic                             |
| _____Mostly Hispanic                          |
| _____About even Hispanic and Anglo (or other) |
| _____Mostly Anglo (or other)                  |
| _____All Anglo (or other)                     |
- Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_
33. Do you belong to any group in which all the members are Hispanic? (e.g., Fraternity, etc.,)
- \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_No If Yes, please list them.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
34. Please list your extra-curricular activities:
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

35. I would prefer to participate in social events that are:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ All Hispanic  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mostly Hispanic  
 \_\_\_\_\_ About even Hispanic and Anglo (or other)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mostly Anglo (or other)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ All Anglo (or other)  
 Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_
36. I usually celebrate holidays with persons that are:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ All Hispanic  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mostly all Hispanic (or other)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ About even Hispanic and Anglo (or other)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mostly Anglo (or other)  
 Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_
37. If you were to confide in someone, like a counselor or socialworker, would you prefer him/her to be:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Of Hispanic descent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Of Anglo Descent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ It Doesn't Matter  
 Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_
38. Do you generally date others only of Hispanic descent?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Not dating anyone
39. How important is it for you to marry another Hispanic?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Very Important \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Important \_\_\_\_\_ Not Important
40. What is the ethnicity of your Boy/Girlfriend/Spouse or Significant Other?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic-American \_\_\_\_\_ Anglo  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_ Black  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Not dating anyone  
 Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_

Religion:

41. What is your religious affiliation?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Catholic \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Protestant \_\_\_\_\_ Not affiliated  
 Other, please Indicate \_\_\_\_\_

42. If you have religious affiliations, how often do you attend church services?

☐ More than once a week  
☐ Weekly  
☐ Once a month  
☐ A Couple of times a year  
☐ Once a year  
☐ Less than once a year  
☐ Not applicable

43. The church I attend has a congregation that is:

☐ All Hispanic  
☐ Mostly Hispanic  
☐ About even Hispanic and Anglo (and other)  
☐ Mostly Anglo (or other)  
☐ All Anglo (or other)  
☐ Other Please Indicate \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Not applicable

44. I would prefer religious services to be:

☐ In Spanish Only      ☐ Both Spanish/English  
☐ In English Only

Discrimination:

45. Have you ever been discriminated against?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

46. If so, how often does this discrimination occur?

☐ All the time      ☐ Seldom  
☐ Sometimes      ☐ Never

47. Discrimination for me has occurred the most within:

(Check all that apply)

☐ Friendships  
☐ Dating  
☐ School  
☐ Social activities (Restaurants, stores, parties, etc.)  
☐ Housing  
☐ Employment  
 Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_

48. Do you agree with the statement that: prejudice and discrimination generally effects Hispanics in our country today?

☐ Strongly Agree      ☐ Disagree  
☐ Agree      ☐ Strongly Disagree  
☐ Neutral

49. Do you agree that discrimination against Hispanics is a crucial issue that merits more attention than the U.S. is paying to this issue.

<u>          </u> Strongly Agree	<u>          </u> Disagree
<u>          </u> Agree	<u>          </u> Strongly Disagree
<u>          </u> Neutral	

Assimilation:

50. How would you identify yourself?

           A Hispanic who is American  
           An American who is Hispanic  
           Equally Hispanic and American

Other, please indicate \_\_\_\_\_

51. In general, Hispanics are:

           Too Americanized  
           About appropriately Americanized  
           Not Americanized enough

In questions 52-64, please circle the response that best applies:

52. It is important for Hispanics to maintain a separate and unique subculture.

SA	A	N	D	SD
Strongly				Strongly
Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree

53. Hispanics should be more like Anglos to improve in the United States.

SA	A	N	D	SD
----	---	---	---	----

54. The "American Melting Pot" is a good idea and direction for groups like Hispanics.

SA	A	N	D	SD
----	---	---	---	----

55. Personally, I am "Americanized."

SA	A	N	D	SD
----	---	---	---	----

56. Hispanics should maintain two cultures.

SA	A	N	D	SD
----	---	---	---	----

57. Bilingual Education should be instituted in all school systems.

SA	A	N	D	SD
----	---	---	---	----

58. Hispanics should have a separate identity from Anglos.

SA	A	N	D	SD
----	---	---	---	----

59. Hispanic individuals who do not speak the Spanish language have lost part of their identity.  
SA            A            N            D            SD
60. Some Hispanics "act white" or more anglo than other Hispanics.  
SA            A            N            D            SD
61. As economic and social mobility increases within Hispanics, their Hispanic identity is threatened.  
SA            A            N            D            SD
62. English-Only, the bill proposing to make English the official language in the United States should be enacted.  
SA            A            N            D            SD
63. I feel positive about the Hispanic culture.  
SA            A            N            D            SD
64. I will maintain the Hispanic culture in my life.  
SA            A            N            D            SD

Please feel free to add other comments on the back.

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