

HISPANIC PROFESSORS IN U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: EXAMINING
DISCOURSES OF IDENTITY NEGOTIATION, DISCRIMINATION AND PREJUDICE,
AND WORKPLACE EXPERIENCES

By

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Abstract

Despite all the efforts universities and colleges put into facilitating a more diverse student and faculty body, the scarcity of Hispanics in academia and the struggles they encounter once they join a department remains a problem for administrators. This study explored how Hispanic faculty members negotiated their identities in the workplace in light of their perceptions of prejudice and discrimination, and their working experiences associated with their professions. Thirty in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with college professors from seven different universities who self-identified as Hispanic or Latino(a). Using a qualitative grounded theory approach, specifically a constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2000, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 1990), this study uncovered three themes. First, professors used different strategies to negotiate their identities depending on whether they are seeking to avoid or confront identity threats. Specifically, professors used dual identity and social creativity strategies to cope with potential identity threats. Second, professors demonstrated a constant sense of vigilance and self-reflexivity in reporting prejudice and discrimination experienced at different levels, thus revealing certain strategies outlined in the first theme. The third theme outlines the professors' perceptions of the difficulties they experienced in professional processes such as teaching and mentoring and establishing interpersonal relationships beyond the Hispanic community in academia. Ultimately, this theme highlights that their ethnic group membership is still central in the way professors perform in their professions but also in the way they relate interpersonally with different people.

In analyzing Hispanic professors in United States higher education institutions, this research made four theoretical contributions by (a) expanding knowledge about how professors'

identities are fluid and multiform, (b) considering the unique and constant self-reflexive process by which these professors behave, (c) expanding the nature of identity negotiation strategies, and (d) unveiling the fragile state of diversity initiatives on college campuses.

*To my generous participants,
whose inspiring example of life and scholarship
I intend to follow.*

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Chapter One: Introduction

Race and ethnicity in the workplace continue to be complicated features in organizations in the United States (Allen, 1995; Niemann & Dovidio, 1998; Roberson, Deitch, Brief, & Block, 2003; Leonard, Mehra, & Katerberg, 2000). One would think that gone are the days where race is seen as negative when determining hiring decisions, organizational policies, or job promotions. Although results from the Civil Right Acts in 1964 and subsequent legal procedures such as Executive Order 11246 in 1972 are still observed, there is still much to be discussed about equal opportunity employment for ethnic minorities.

Higher education institutions provide clear evidence of the unequal ethnic population distribution in the United States. According to the American Council of Education, faculty members from non-dominant groups only represent 17% of the full-time positions in higher education. Moreover, while the tenure rates for white males and females were 80%, it was 10% for men of color and 7% for women of color (American Council of Education, 2010, p. 59). This issue can be traced to the recruitment process where administrators in institutions of higher education report a difficult time hiring non-dominant faculty. As a result, universities in the U.S. do not reflect ethnic diversity on their faculty body (Glass & Minote, 2010).

Furthermore, once non-dominant faculty members join an academic institution, they face a myriad of issues that can potentially make their experience less enjoyable and less advantageous than their white colleagues. Factors such as extra service work, marginal professorial status, limited mentoring by senior faculty, and lack of recognition for research with a minority focus have been implicated in the slow professional advancement of minority faculty

(Aguirre, 2005; Allen, 1995; Justiz, Wilson, & Bjork, 1994; Turner, Garcia, Nora, & Rendon, 1996).

Even though the reasons for having a diverse faculty should be apparent, it is important to state that there are at least seven arguments for having faculty members from non-dominant populations in institutions of higher education. First, diversity in the faculty and student body can bring higher academic performance since this diversity allows for creative problem solving (Nemeth, 1986; Triandis, Hall, & Ewen, 1965; Peelle, 2006). Second, diversity in academia represents a compelling business case that brings cost advantages to institutions that handle diversity in a sensitive way (Wilkins, 2004). Third, diverse faculty will continue the pursuit of social equality as an overall outcome in higher education institutions' goals. In fact, the American Council of Education in its 2010 Annual Report emphasized the need to reach out to minority members if the nation's educational goals of decreasing turnover and improving access to education from different social classes (ACE, 2010). The report states: "The United States will have great difficulty reaching its educational attainment and global competitiveness goals unless it develops successful strategies for improving access to and completion of higher education among Hispanics in the United States" (p. 19). As such, the need for role models and multiple mentors who can talk to members of non-dominant groups are thus primary motivations for ensuring diversity in universities' faculty bodies.

Fourth, diversity enriches the learning processes in academia. For example, Umbach (2006) found that campuses where non-dominant groups are well represented tend to offer students a learning context that provides benefits beyond the academic experience and more holistic educational practices than less diverse campuses as students develop critical thinking and greater flexibility to react to contextual changes (Nemeth, 1986; Peelle, 2006).

Fifth, diversity among the faculty body can improve the mentoring capabilities of a university. Mentoring offers students from non-dominant groups access to positive role models and knowledgeable advice about life and career decision (Blackwell, 1989; Dutton, 2003; Juarez, 1991). Mentoring can also help increase the number of minority students who attend undergraduate and graduate school (Hurte, 2002).

Sixth, promoting diversity in higher education can help fight and reduce stereotypes (Milem & Hakuta, 2010). Milem and Hakuta (2010) also state that diversity in higher education is a key contribution to a healthy society insofar as it prepares students and members of the academic community to perform in an “increasingly pluralistic society” (p. 36). Evidently, a diverse faculty can give students the resources to interact with members of different cultural backgrounds in business and social contexts (Avery & Thomas, 2004). Seventh, Cox (1993) argues that diversity among faculty can be an opportunity for universities since they add multiple perspectives that can stimulate advances in social scientific research and also attract other faculty of color who see in these universities a friendly place for non-dominant populations. As such, many higher education institutions are attempting to improve the inclusiveness of non-dominant groups through proactive efforts to manage diversity such as the incorporation of structured plans and policies that go further than Affirmative Action stipulations (Gilbert, Stead, & Ivancevich, 1999).

Furthermore, in addition to the legal and ethical responsibilities of colleges to recruit ethnically and culturally diverse workforce, recruiting for diversity seems to be a good business strategy to attract students (Hall & Parker, 1993). Ward (2004) states: "Higher Education is faced today with the necessity - and the opportunity - to once again rethink what it does and how it does it. At the core of this effort is the organization's improved capacity to educate in a

pluralistic society for a pluralistic world" (p. 49). Thus, having diversity among faculty members represents numerous and tangible benefits for colleges.

Despite all the efforts universities and colleges put into facilitating a more diverse student and faculty body, there is not necessarily a major improvement. Most campuses have not been very successful in their attempts to attract and retain faculty from non-dominant ethnic groups (Blackwell, 1988; Smith, 1989; Stewart, Williamson, & King, 2008). There are two possible reasons to explain why these attempts are failing.

First, one of the concerns that some scholars (Stewart et al., 2008) have found is the low number of minority faculty achieving doctoral degrees. The assumption has been that achieving diversity among the faculty is hindered by the absence of candidates in the "pipeline." That is, there are not enough minority candidates who have completed, or are in the process of completing degree necessary to qualify for a faculty position (e.g., finishing high school, obtaining a baccalaureate, enrolling in a doctoral program, completing a PhD, obtaining tenure, etc.).

Second, Milem and Hakuta (2000) insist that diversity must be achieved in three areas. The first one is at a structural level, which covers the proportions and numbers necessary to reach a diverse faculty and student body. The second area involves diversity initiatives in which colleges can put all types of training and programs in practice. The third area should be achieved through interactions among the academic community. Given this holistic idea of diversity, it is easy to imagine that the absence of one or more of these three elements may explain why colleges are neither recruiting nor retaining enough minority faculty members (Milem & Hakuta, 2000). The problem of lack of diversity seems to be so systematic that it can be overwhelming,

and many have given up on it, either denying the existence of a problem or just ignoring the size and scope of the issue.

Hispanics Faculty in Higher Education

The issue of lack of diversity among faculty becomes more salient when considering Hispanic faculty members. Hispanics constitute the largest minority group in the United States, comprising approximately 12.5 % of the population, based on the 2000 census data. Subsequent reports by the Census Bureau in 2009 indicated that almost 48 million Hispanics live in the United States, and it is estimated that the Hispanic population will grow by more than 1.7 million people a year, about 5,000 people daily (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010). Thus, although Hispanics are growing in number and in representation in the workforce, they remain underrepresented in the higher ranks. According to the U.S. Department of Education, Hispanic represents only 3.6% of the full time-faculty academic body in the U.S. Out of that percentage, only 2.4 % are full professors, 3.3 % are associate professors, 3.8 % are assistant professors, and 5.5 % are on non-tenure track positions as instructors or lecturers (American Council of Education, 2010).

The statistics reported only begin to indicate the dismal status of Hispanics in higher education. The scarcity of Hispanics in academia and the struggles they encounter once they join a department are barriers that intensify the difficulty in becoming an integral part of an academic institution (Aguirre, 2000; Padilla & Chavez, 1995; Padilla, 2003). For example, limited experience as graduates working with other scholars accounts for many Hispanics' lack of knowledge about informal activities and university procedures that are necessary to become socialized into the academic community.

In addition, political issues associated with the state of Hispanics in the U.S. may affect Hispanic faculty's experiences in academia. Because of the current turmoil with immigration

laws and the prejudice linked to the Hispanic population, many faculty members may also feel the effects of the subtle preconceived notions associated with Hispanics (Fischer, 2010). Certain higher education institutions may be responsible for structural academic elitism or cultural ethnocentrism that precludes Hispanic faculty members from fully performing their role as educators and researchers without any prejudice associated with their ethnicity. For example, tenure application and teaching evaluations are designed without accounting for the difficulties Hispanic professors may encounter during these processes (Aguirre, 2005; Aleman, 1995; Allen, 1995; Perry, Jones, Edwards, Acosta, & Frey, 2006).

For instance, lack of mentorship among Hispanic scholars is one of those hardships that could affect Hispanic faculty occupying non-tenured, junior positions as they have few established mentors to aid them in the socialization process (Blancero & Del Campo, 2005; Escobedo, 1980; Ibarra, 1993). Thus, the extent of active sponsorship and supportive networks for Hispanics and other minorities is determined to a large extent by non-minority faculty or the few representatives (if any) of their own ethnic group. In practice, this does not always happen because there is not the willingness, time, or empathy needed to carry through mentoring processes.

Studying Hispanic professors' identity negotiation processes could shed light on addressing diversity from the three levels outlined above by Milem and Hakuta (2001). Specifically, members of the academic community could benefit from learning what Hispanic professors think of their experiences as minority members in academia insofar as their insights can help the university's diversity efforts and guide them in the right direction. Thus, it is crucial to know how Hispanic professors are creating and recreating their identities in order to deal with

their minority identity and negotiate the hardships and struggles that ethnic group membership may bring upon these professors.

This study seeks to consider Hispanic faculty members and their experiences as members of non-dominant groups in the U.S academic context. Specifically, this study considers the ways Hispanic faculty members negotiate their identity (ies) and deal with their roles as professors; their perceptions of prejudice and discrimination in higher education institutions; and the ways they approach different processes associated with the academic profession.

This research forwards three theoretical contributions. First, it adds to the scarce body of literature that focuses on Hispanic populations in the workplace. Communication scholars from non-dominant populations have stated the need for more research that focuses on the way ethnic minority members engage in the workplace (Allen, 1995; Amaya, 2007). Allen (2007) conveys the importance of developing communication theory that is inclusive of race. She states, “In turn, our theories can inform practice within academia and in other contexts. For instance, our theories might facilitate productive race relations and antiracism, as well as provide direction for developing, implementing, and evaluating policies related to race” (p. 262). It is in light of this sentiment that this project stands. I hope that this study contributes to the advancement of the discussion of race and ethnicity within the organizational communication field and illuminates better ways to develop comprehensive diversity programs that affect every level of higher education.

Second, this study seeks to understand the ways in which Hispanic faculty members articulate and develop discourses of identity. Particularly, this study explores the discursive strategies they use to negotiate their identity. Third, this study seeks to give voice to a group of people who have something important to say about their experiences in academia. In agreement

with Mumby and Stohl (1996), this study attempts to channel voices “that challenge dominant ways of seeing and thinking about organizations and which therefore challenge the implicit rules about who can legitimately construct organizational knowledge” (p. 55-56). Finally, this study aims to make practical contributions regarding what aspects are important to consider in order to understand the role of Hispanic faculty members in academic contexts.

Theoretical Perspectives

This research is guided by a theoretical framework that incorporates non-dominant perspectives on organizational communication and intergroup relations. As such, this framework allows for a better understanding of the different dynamics associated with Hispanic faculty members in the workplace. For instance, while some studies have provided important findings about how minority members negotiate their identities in order to network and make meaningful professional connections (Cox, 1993; Ibarra, 1993; James, 2000; McGuire, 2000; Sierra, Mehra, & Katerberg, 2008), there is still much to be studied especially regarding how the process of joining a specific workplace affects ethnic minorities.

In this context, this study uses Social Identity Theory (SIT) developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979) as a major framework to approach the main objectives of this study. Specifically, SIT will be helpful in order to understand how Hispanic faculty members negotiate their identity (ies) and use strategies to navigate their workplaces. I will also borrow from other intergroup concepts such as the functions of stereotypes and stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination, and tensions between minority and majority groups.

Outline of Research Project

This chapter presents a rationale of this research project and a brief introduction of Social Identity Theory as a major theoretical framework. I have emphasized the importance of and

subsequent need to pay attention to Hispanic faculty members in institutions of higher education because recruitment and retention efforts have not been very successful.

In Chapter Two, I discuss my theoretical foundations in more detail in order to present a solid background of what other scholars have discussed about issues related to my study. First, I present an overview of Social Identity Theory and the studies guided by it that are influential to this study. Second, I focus on past research conducted on Hispanic and minority populations in institutions of higher education. Specifically, I consider challenges, struggles, and strategies that non-dominant minority faculty have encountered in academia. I conclude the second chapter by laying out my research questions. These research questions center on the perceptions Hispanic faculty members have about working in academia and the discursive strategies they use to negotiate their identities.

Chapter Three explains the qualitative methodology used in this study. I provide a rationale for my data collection technique, a description of my research context and participants, and detail the data collection process. Lastly, in this chapter I explain the data analysis procedures and discuss the method I used to evaluate the quality of my analysis.

Chapter Four presents the main findings of this study in light of the initial research questions. The first emerging theme articulates the strategies Hispanic faculty members utilize in order to negotiate their identities as both minority members and professors in higher education. A second theme outlines Hispanic professors' perceptions of prejudice and discrimination in academia. A third theme describes the challenges and hardships Hispanic professors experience when dealing with the regular processes of the academic profession. Lastly, Chapter Five brings these findings into the existing discussion and argues for the significance of the theoretical and

practical implications of this study of institutions of higher education in general and Hispanic faculty members in particular.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This research project centers on non-dominant populations in higher education. Specifically, it considers Hispanic faculty and their experiences in academia. Thus, this study is informed by different bodies of literature on minority groups in higher education and Hispanics and wide theoretical perspectives on Social Identity Theory. As such, I pay careful attention to the construction and negotiation of Hispanics' identities as non-dominant faculty members but I also consider the workplace context in which these dynamics take place.

I begin this chapter by laying out the theoretical foundations of my research project. That is, I situate this study in Social Identity Theory and cover how the concepts of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination are important aspects to consider in studying Hispanic faculty members. I also draw attention to non-dominant perspectives on organizational communication and how communication scholars from minority groups have developed a different understanding of what it means to be a minority in the workplace. Second, I explore the existent literature on non-dominant groups in higher education. Specifically, I look at the studies that have Hispanics as subjects of research. Third, I conclude this section by proposing three research questions that articulate the ultimate purpose of this study.

Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory (SIT) is not a new concept among communication scholars. For example, it has been widely used to study organizational communication processes (Ashforth & Mael, 1992; Cheney, 1983; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Kuhn & Nelson, 2002; Morgan, Reynolds,

Nelson, Johanningmeier, Griffin, & Andrade, 2004; Russo, 1998; Scott, 2007 among others).

Henry Tajfel (1972) introduced the concept of social identity as “the individual’s knowledge that he (sic) belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional value and significance to him (sic) of this group membership” (p. 292). SIT has two main assumptions: (a) individuals strive to achieve or to maintain a positive social identity; therefore, social groups are in constant competition with each other due to their different status in the social structure, and (b) this competition highlights power imbalances that make low status groups deal with these power imbalances in different ways on either an individual level or on a group level.

As a part the first assumption, Tajfel and Turner (1979, 1982) argued that there are two main motivations behind intergroup competition. The first motivation is the desire to maintain and enhance group members’ self-esteem and self-concept. Therefore group members should be motivated to think of their groups in positive terms and subsequently have inferior views about other groups in competition no matter if these groups are in higher or lower status (Abrams & Hogg, 2004; Hornsey, 2008; Sedikides, & Strube, 1997). The second social identity motive is uncertainty reduction (Cunningham & Sagas, 2006; Hogg, 2000). People strive to reduce uncertainty about the perceived world and their place in it. In the search to find a place in society, individuals find reasons to identify with some groups and disassociate with other groups. Hogg (2006) argues that social identity allows individuals and groups to predict behaviors and thus allows people to avoid harm and plan effective action in cases of identity threats. SIT in this case “also allows one to know how one should feel and behave” (p. 121). Brewer (1999) mentions optimal distinctiveness as a possible third motivation for individuals to seek group memberships. That is, finding a balance between the desire for inclusion and the desire for uniqueness, a tension that underlies group memberships in general.

In light of the aforementioned assumptions, scholars also argue that identification with groups is a precondition for ingroup favoritism insofar as it allows for intergroup comparisons, differentiation, and outgroup derogation (Hogg & Abrams, 1990; Hornsey, 2008; Oakes & Turner, 1991). In this context, SIT scholars have investigated how low status group members can achieve and maintain a positive identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner & Brown, 1978; Hogg & Abrams, 2004). Some options outlined by the literature include social mobility strategies (e.g. physically or psychologically leaving the group), making downward comparisons, focusing only on dimensions that make the low status group look good, downplaying the dimensions that may reflect poorly on the group, and engaging in social change strategies to overturn the existing status hierarchy.

Jackson, Sullivan, Harnish, and Hodge (1996) argue that except for social mobility, all these identity negotiation strategies are collective strategies insofar as their objective is to enhance the status of the ingroup as a whole, thereby enhancing the social identities of individual group members. In the case of social mobility, the purpose is to enhance the individual's identity without necessarily change the status of the person's ingroup.

SIT posits that the choice of which strategy group members use depends on how feasible the alternative to the status quo is (Harwood, Giles, & Palomares, 2005). For example, if boundaries of groups are permeable (i.e., group change is achievable), then mobility is an option. However, Hogg (2006) disagrees about the effectiveness of the group mobility strategy. He argues that this strategy rarely works since it usually leaves individuals who originally intended to leave the group with a marginal identity. This is because they are not likely to be accepted by the dominant group and they are rejected by their own group because they have betrayed their original group identity.

SIT acknowledges that groups occupy different levels of a hierarchy of status and power, and that intergroup behaviors are motivated by group members' ability to be critical and self-reflexive of these power imbalance. As Hornsey argues: "For Tajfel, SIT was at its heart a theory of social change" (p. 207). In this context, social change strategies (i.e., protesting, political activism, marches, vigils, etc) are only possible if the status quo seems vulnerable and its legitimacy can be questioned. If low status group members perceive their positions as unchangeable, they will not engage in large-scale campaigns for social change.

Furthermore, SIT assumes that people have as many social and personal identities as there are groups they belong to and personal relationships they are involved in (Hogg, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Some scholars have argued that some of these identities are placed inside other more general identities (Ashforth & Johnson, 2001), and other scholars have posited that one can have multiple sources of identification (Bamber & Iyer, 2002; Reade, 2001; Scott, 1997).

For example, Ashforth and Johnson (2001) pointed out several ways in which overarching identities are manifested in more relevant ways relative to others. Also, Scott, Corman, and Cheney (1998) place communication at the center of the sources of identification and the process of social identity creation. In specific, they argue that it is through language that individuals express their identification with various sources but also which identity is prevailing at specific moments. Similarly, Kuhn and Nelson (2002) assume the existence of multiple identities by arguing that people make sense of identity tensions and conflict through the use of discursive strategies. In this context, Hogg (2006) believes that motivations for privileging one identity over others remain an underdeveloped issue for Social Identity Theory scholars.

Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination

Social identity theorists argue that stereotypes have a very important social function, in the sense that they help explain the social world and legitimize the past and current actions of the ingroup. In other words, stereotyping is a meaning-seeking process enmeshed in the socio-historical context (Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994; Spears, Oakes, Ellemers, & Haslam, 1997; Tajfel, 1981). Possibly reflecting the growing presence of the social identity approach in North America, recent social cognitive approaches to stereotyping are now much more likely to acknowledge that stereotyping occurs in a turmoiled social context. For example, the stereotype content model (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002) argues that the content of stereotypes is dependent on the structural relationships between groups with respect to status and competition.

Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination are at the core of the conversation about race and ethnicity because racial discrimination has been observed in society through historical and empirical research. Walter Lippman (1922) initiated the conversation about stereotyping by defining stereotypes as selective, self-fulfilling, and ethnocentric ideas that constitute a “very partial and inadequate way of representing the world” (p. 72). Other scholars have defined stereotypes as “public attitudes” (Katz & Braly, 1933), “collective representations” (Katz & Schanck, 1938), “shared understandings of social reality” (Tajfel, 1981), or “the process of ascribing characteristics to people based in their group memberships” (Oaks, Haslam, & Turner, 1994). Though there are affective and behavioral effects to this process, stereotyping is primarily cognitive. Stereotypes are commonly associated with antipathy towards outgroup members, but Operario and Fiske (2003) argue that stereotype-based antipathy is rare. Rather, stereotypes have a double feature: there is a combination of negative (most of the times) and some positive characteristics.

To understand the nature of stereotypes and the reasons why they are resistant to change, it is necessary to consider the cognitive processes associated with them. Fiske (1998) argues that stereotypes could be approached from a prototype model, which assumes that people organize information to assign an average description of a group as a referent (e.g. the average taxi driver, the average lawyer). Research has also shown that this type of stereotype is strong when individuals haven't had much interpersonal contact and have learned about a group through more generic methods such as everyday socialization (Devine & Baker, 1991; Johnston & Hewstone, 1992). Another cognitive process in which stereotypes are rooted is the exemplar case where mental pictures are formed based on personal experiences with outgroup members. The risk involved in this process is that individuals could form negative impressions of outgroup members because the interaction, or the exemplar, may have been unpleasant. An ideal situation would entail having multiple exemplar cases that construct informed mental pictures.

In addition to cognitive processes, there are also contextual barriers to changing stereotypes. Operario and Fiske (2001) mentioned that one contextual challenge involves the societal structure and historical hierarchy in which issues of discrimination and prejudice have originated. Many negative and inaccurate stereotypes have been passed on, revived, and reinforced through history. Thus, it becomes a very difficult task to change a mental picture that has been around for tens and hundreds of years. Lyons and Kashima (2001) found support for this claim when they conducted an experiment in which they analyzed a story that contained both consistent and inconsistent stereotypes. The story was passed along with consistent stereotypes, and the inconsistent stereotypes were gradually left out when the story was retold. In this way, Jackson, Sullivan, and Hodge (1993) argue for example that the success of women and [minorities] is more attributed to good luck or to an easy environment than to personal efforts;

the opposite scenario is the case for white males. In addition, Operario and Fiske (2001) found that stereotyping is also used as a weapon to keep certain groups of people in an oppressed situation; in that way, privileged groups keep their power and their privileged positions.

Stereotypes are cognitive but also contain attitudinal (prejudice) and behavioral (discrimination) dimensions. Prejudice is defined as an unfair negative attitude towards a social group or towards members of such group (Dovidio, 2001). Van Dick (1990) analyzes ethnic prejudice in terms of social representations that are shared by dominant groups about dominated groups. Van Dick continues to say that these social representations “feature contents, structures and strategies that optimally organize concrete models and actions in such a way that (for instance ethnic or racial) dominance may be effectively reproduced” (p. 169). Van Dick argues that stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination are embedded into social structures and it is not in the interest of dominant groups to change this dynamic.

Similarly, Lustig and Koester (2003) define discrimination as “prejudice in action” (p. 156). In other words, discrimination is any observable behavior or display of negative attitudes or feelings of dislike towards certain groups of people. Tropp (2003) examined the effects of prejudice on how unprivileged groups felt toward intergroup contact. By conducting an experiment in which members of a prejudiced group were discriminated by out-group members, Tropp concluded that those who encountered prejudice from an out-group member reported feeling more hostile and anxious. Furthermore, group members who experienced prejudice not only had more negative expectations for interactions with the prejudiced partner but they had more negative expectations for interactions with out-group members in general. Leets (2001) found that repeated exposure to racist speech decreased minority group participants’ perceptions of harm and made them more desensitized towards those messages.

However, although more traditional forms of prejudice are direct and overt, contemporary forms of prejudice may be indirect and subtle. Fiske (1998) found that statistics from self-reported data about racial inclusion and egalitarian rights have considerably increased within the last couple of decades. However, results from experiments indicated that prejudice still exists in many members of the majority group. Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) call this type of discrimination aversive racism, where on surface, things are managed with an egalitarian discourse but the reality is that there is rationalized discrimination underlying these discourses. By the same token, van Dick (1999) argues that aversive racism is embedded in both everyday and institutionalized language. He conducted a discourse analysis in which he studied several samples from the media, political, academic, and corporate arenas. He found that even though such discourses try to deny every type of racism, they usually end up giving away traces of their normalized discrimination. For example, the more racist discourse tends to have disclaimers such as: 'I'm not racist, but...' Additionally, Mastro, et al. (2008) found that this type of discrimination is visible especially when there is anonymity or low accountability, but also when the criteria for social judgment allows for ambiguity (e.g. qualifications, credentials, networking, etc.). In other words, aversive racists will display such prejudiced attitudes only when there is an 'alibi' they can use to hide their discriminatory motives.

Racial stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination in the workplace.

Various scholars have considered the risks of stereotypes at work (Niemann & Dovidio, 1998; Roberson & Block, 2001; Roberson, Deitch, Brief, & Block, 2003; Steele, 1997, Steele & Aronson, 1995). Steele and Aronson (1995) found through a series of studies that ethnic minorities experience 'stereotype threats' in the work context insofar as they fear confirming negative stereotypes about their groups through their own behaviors. Roberson and her

colleagues (2003) found that those fears of confirming negative stereotypes were related to poor job performance since feedback seeking and feedback acceptance were less likely to occur.

Niemann and Dovidio (1998) found that one of the most common performance-based negative stereotypes about African Americans is that of less intellectual ability compared to Caucasians. Research also demonstrates that when individuals are minorities at their workplace (e.g. solo or tokens), they feel singled out and subject to the scrutiny of those from majority members (Deitch, Barsky, Butz, Chan, Brief, & Bradley, 2003; Kanter, 1977; Niemann & Dovidio, 1998; Robertson, Deitch, Brief, & Block, 2003).

In a similar vein, research on workplace discrimination has unveiled multiple outcomes ranging from job stress to low satisfaction and absenteeism (Antecol & Cobb-Clark, 2009; Clark, 1997; Laband & Lentz, 1980). Mays, Coleman and Jackson (1996) found that perceived race-based discrimination has a negative effect in individuals' experience of job stress. Specifically, they found that young African American women with higher education levels were likely to experience job-related stress. Furthermore, Antecol and Cobb-Clark (2009) found that racial harassment has a direct effect on individuals' job satisfaction and likelihood of leaving the organization. While their study was conducted in a military environment, their results support the work of other scholars (Clark, 1997; Laband & Lentz, 1998). Deitch and colleagues (2003) found that African Americans reported higher levels of mistreatment at work than Caucasians did. In their piece, the authors emphasized the importance of widening the scope of what is considered discrimination in order to more fully capture the experience of being a target of discrimination in the workplace. Brief and Barsky (2000) argued that discrimination has become blurry because prejudiced individuals endorse plausible non-prejudiced explanations to justify discriminatory behaviors.

In addition, racial discrimination is also a challenge for minority individuals' experience of the job search process. A vast line of research has demonstrated various barriers ethnic minorities face when seeking to obtain promotions or navigate networks that are predominately populated by majorities (Granovetter, 1995; Ibarra 1993; James, 2000; Seidel, Polzer, & Stewart, 2000; Shaefer, 1993; Sierra, Mehra, & Katerberg, 2000). For instance, Seidel and colleagues (2000) argue that wage discrimination could be related to many reasons (i.e. overt racism) but concluded that it starts even before employees accept a job. Recruitment strategies are often guided by informal channels such as word-of-mouth, referral of friends or relatives, and direct recommendations among others. The authors concluded that the use of informal channels facilitates the reproduction of job segregation. In the same way, Seidel et al. (2000) state: "Differing networks can lead to systematic salary differences among racial groups through their effect on salary negotiation outcomes" (p. 2). In salary negotiations, information about particular aspects of the organization's policies can provide an advantage for those employees who have access to it. Granovetter (1995) argue that social networks help job seekers and employees in general gather information needed to apply for a job or negotiate a raise in salary. Social ties may simultaneously relay otherwise unobtainable information about the employer and the specific job to the applicant, who consequently makes "fewer mistakes when accepting a job" (Fernandez & Weinberg, 1997, p. 899). Additionally, social networks can improve relations once actors are working for organizations. A social tie may be highly valuable in promoting reputation and good references with administrators or employees who are in more privileged positions.

Discrimination, though practiced by individuals, is often reinforced by the well-established rules, policies, and practices of organizations. Once employed, discrimination at the organizational level makes it more difficult for minorities to achieve advancement. They do not

seem to get the same opportunities for promotion and advancement to supervisory, middle management, and higher administrative positions as Caucasians of equal abilities. Qualified African Americans and other minorities are routinely passed over for jobs and promotions in favor of less qualified Caucasian males (McCoy, 1994; Goldman, Gutek, Stein, & Lewis, 2006; James, 2000).

Morrison and Van Glinow (1990) observe that:

There is growing concern that differential treatment of women and [African Americans] is not related to performance alone... Ambiguity of lack of specific information about an individual contributes to bias against women and minorities because judgments are based on negative stereotypes of the group as a whole (p. 202).

The effects of discrimination can be seen at the group level and organizational level. For example, discrimination may result in differences in pay, job status, and job type between discriminated groups and groups that are not discriminated against (Goldman, Gutek, Stein, & Lewis, 2006). At the organizational level, we may observe the negative effects on an organization's reputation (Rindova, Williamson, Petkova, & Sever, 2005) as well as increased discrimination-related litigation (Donohue & Siegelman, 1991; Goldman, 2001), especially when employers introduce bias into the employee selection (Williamson, Campion, Malos, Roehling, & Campion, 1997). For instance, Shields and Wheatley (2002) found that minority employees who had experienced racial harassment or discrimination reported lower levels of job satisfaction. Their results showed that participants in their study who had experiences of racial harassment are "seven times as likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs than those who had never suffered that abuse" (p. 319).

Organizational diversity efforts and job satisfaction.

Organizations have taken a more active role in the new diverse panorama of the current workforce. Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunities are still a legal framework in which organizations consider minorities. However, administrators have realized that the commitment towards cultural diversity ought to be generated through an intentional initiative as opposed to the mere legal procedures of affirmative action (Cox, 1991; James, 2000). According to Thomas (1990), managing diversity is creating a climate in which the individual worker, regardless of personal characteristics or group memberships, can fully develop and move in the company (Thomas, 1990).

Cox and Blake (1991) argue that when effectively managed, workplace diversity can create a competitive advantage in the areas of cost, resource acquisition, marketing, creativity, problem solving, and organizational flexibility. Williams and Bauer (1994) found that participants were more attracted to organizations that demonstrated an ability to manage diversity in their recruitment process. Cox and Smolinski (1994) suggest that managing diversity may result in higher organizational productivity and ultimately in higher profit (Smith, Wokustch, Harrington, & Dennis, 2004).

However, employee diversity does not necessarily boost creativity, market share, or competitive advantage. In fact, research suggests that left unmanaged, employee diversity is more likely to damage morale, increase turnover, and cause significant communication problems and conflict within the organization (Jackson et al., 1991; Jehn, Neale, & Northcraft, 1999; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992; Zenger & Lawrence, 1989). For example, Glover, Mynatt, and Schroeder (2000) conducted study in which they focused on African American accountants' perceptions of their employers' commitment to equal opportunity. They reported that a number

of the respondents who answered these questions indicated that much of their employers' support for equal opportunity was simply "lip-service." As a result, it may be that African-American accountants perceive that they will be provided less opportunity to advance in the profession and as a result are less satisfied with their jobs. In addition, Parker, Baltes, and Christianson (1997) found that African Americans and Hispanic' job satisfaction levels were higher than European Americans' if the organization had clear Equal Opportunity policies.

Thus, "managing diversity" has become a commoditized managerial skill, and concerns about effective diversity management have provoked an industry of diversity training programs, diversity videos, and diversity consultants. But despite several decades of effort and millions of dollars invested, the evidence suggests that organizations continue to do a poor job of managing diversity. Recent report concluded that organizations are rarely able to leverage diversity and capitalize on its potential benefits (Hansen, 2003; Kochan et al., 2003). Gilbert and Stead (1999) concluded after their experimental study that managerial presence was crucial to successfully execute diversity management recruitment and training. In other words, organizations that adopt diversity management policies ought to provide the necessary professional environment for women and racial minorities to succeed; otherwise efforts could be seen as unfair and generally biased.

On the other hand, Deitch et al. (2003) believes that "typical on-time diversity training courses and diversity policies may do little to alleviate the existence of everyday discrimination in the workplace," insofar as the organizational effort may not portray sincerity from management, or it simply does not have a strong effect on individuals who are prejudiced against members of an ethnic minority. Brief and Barsky (2003) suggest that training in diversity should include a reflexive process in which prejudiced individuals are able to expand their concepts of

what constitutes diversity and non-prejudiced constructs, which hopefully may lead to truthful changes in prejudiced people's behaviors. Following a similar idea, Özbilgin and Tatli (2008) propose that administrators should participate in the different contexts where diversity is crucial. Administrators should also be reflexive of the different relationships operating in the organization and cognizant of how diversity may intersect many of those relationships, and lastly administrators ought to perform diversity policies and principles (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2008). A successful implementation of diversity programs in academic institutions should be the result of systematic efforts, but every member of the academic community should embrace these efforts.

Hispanics in the U. S. Academic Context

Some literature has examined Latino/a faculty in higher education but very little has focused on the role of identity on Hispanic professors. There is one common thread across the majority of the literature; all authors acknowledge the difficult and sometimes unequal situation that Hispanics face in academia. Scholars have written with regard to hiring, the tenure process, and retention (e.g., Guanipa, Santa-Cruz, & Chao, 2003; Ibarra, 2003; Padilla, 2003; Plata, 1996; Suinn & Witt, 1982), the demographic distribution of the Latino/a professoriate (Harvey, 2002; Verdugo, 2003), and barriers to Latino/a faculty success in higher education (Comas-Díaz, 1997; Delgado-Romero, Flores, Gloria, Arredondo, & Castellanos, 2003; Niemann, 1999; Olivas, 1996; R. V. Padilla, 2003; Reyes & Halcón, 1996; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002).

Even before joining academic institutions as faculty members, Hispanics face struggles in their doctoral studies. Reyes and Ríos (2005) describe their feelings of isolation when they were graduate students. Communication scholar María Cristina González (1995) also acknowledges her struggle associated with not having her own unique voice because she felt obligated to behave as the rest of her colleagues, pushing her to shut down her creativity and cultural

authenticity. Aguirre (1994, 1995) has been very vocal about the struggles he faced when joining an academic institution. He carefully narrates the feeling of uncertainty and inappropriateness when he faced his mostly white students for the first time. Because of all the stereotypes associated with the Latino population (Mastro, Behm-Morowitz, & Kopacz, 2008), there is a sense of strangeness surrounding Hispanic professors; a feeling of not belonging to the academic environment, rooted almost exclusively on the origins of Hispanic professors' ethnicity (Aguirre, 1995).

Padilla (2003) addresses the structural problems in academia regarding the low numbers of Hispanics in general. He puts blame into the academic 'pipeline' that is intrinsically segmented and therefore makes it very difficult for Hispanics to transcend from one stage to the next one (e.g., high school to college). Padilla argues that graduate school is the most difficult stage of this 'pipeline' to achieve. Therefore, the levels of Hispanic representation in academia are lower than expected. His criticism demonstrates that, before addressing problems of representation in higher education institutions, one needs to consider the entire structural education system that acts as a barrier for Hispanics who are trying to work their way up in the educational 'pipeline.'

Similarly, Vargas (1999) voices her concern for the lack of Hispanic professors in academia. In her study, she argues that academia needs to start making structural adaptations to welcome 'the other' professors. In other words, adaptations need to be made for those who belong to non-dominant groups and have a more difficult time adapting to an environment that has embedded barriers against them. Therefore, from the initial process of recruitment to the already stressful tenure process, Hispanic professors may experience double the anxiety relative to professors from dominant groups.

Along the same lines, Guanipa and her colleagues (2003) consider the importance of the tenure and promotion processes in universities. They found that even though tenure is a difficult process for every professor regardless of their ethnic background, there are also institutional barriers that can impede Hispanic professors and minorities in general from accomplishing this important step. Some of the institutional barriers can be the absence of mentoring, lack of opportunities and incentives to progress, and inadequate professional development.

Another concern regarding Hispanic professors in higher education is the difficulties in finding formal and informal mentors. In an academic context, mentoring helps to foster relationships among senior and junior colleagues, increase retention among faculty, and improve cooperation and cohesiveness, among other benefits (Girves, Zepeda, & Gwathmey, 2005; Schrodt, Cawyer, & Sanders, 2003). As such, mentoring processes can be very beneficial. Apart from bringing the mentee knowledge about specific skills, advise, encouragement, and feedback, mentoring processes give the mentor recognition and an expanded network of colleagues.

Mentoring can be both formal and informal. It can be part of a university's systematic plan or it can emerge as spontaneous relation between two colleagues. In general, mentoring involves consistent support, direct assistance, and role modeling; mentoring also implies personal and close relationships among colleagues (Jacobi, 1991). However, mentoring programs, if not well thought out, can be a means of marginalization for minority populations (Ibarra, 1993; Ragins & Cotten, 1999) insofar these groups find it more difficult to establish informal relations with colleagues and may find difficult to empathize with the mentors they are assigned through formal channels (Ragins & Cotten, 1999).

Siedel and colleagues (2000) argue that perhaps the biggest constraint minorities face is having fewer people of the same race available with whom they can form ties. This presents a

structural impediment to the formation of same-race ties. Even though this situation has been changing and demographics in organizations have been shifting leading towards a more multicultural population, Siedel et al.'s (2000) argument remains applicable to a diagnosis of minorities' role in social networks.

Similarly, the scarcity of Hispanic professors in academia is also related to prejudice and discrimination against Hispanic faculty. In fact, Glascock and Ruggiero (2006) found that the instructor's ethnicity was a factor in students' perceptions of teaching caring and competence. As such, students in predominantly white colleges, as the ones from this study, perceived their white instructors more caring and competent than Hispanic instructors. In this context, Bavishi, Madera, and Hebl (2010) describe occupational stereotyping as "a preconceived attitude about a particular occupation about people who are employed in that occupation, or about one's suitability for that occupation" (p. 246). As such, the prototypes of what it entails to be a professor may privilege white males and leave out women and ethnic minorities since historically the latter groups have been underrepresented in academic contexts.

Research Questions

In light of this research, my research project seeks to primarily reflect upon Hispanic faculty member experiences in academia to enhance our understanding of the way they navigate their identities. In addition, this research explores the different processes Hispanic faculty members experience and how these processes affect their performance as members of a university's faculty body. In general, this study attempts to unveil how Hispanic faculty in higher education institutions perceive themselves, their colleagues, and their work environment. As such, I propose the following research questions:

- RQ1: What discursive strategies do Hispanic faculty use to construct and negotiate their identities as minority members in institutions of higher education?
- RQ2: How do Hispanic faculty perceive prejudice and discrimination in institutions of higher education?
- RQ3: How do Hispanic professors discursively construct the challenges they face in institutions of higher education?

Chapter Three: Methods

The goal of this study is to consider how Hispanic individuals with advanced education degrees who work at higher education institutions in the U.S. develop discursive strategies to construct and negotiate their identities; their perceptions of prejudice and discrimination in academia; and the discursive strategies utilized to frame the different challenges they face as members of non-dominant populations. This chapter: (a) outlines the rationale for the use of a qualitative approach to answer my research questions, (b) describes the research context for this study, (c) explains the methodological overview of my research, (d) describes the interview data collection, and (e) explains the data analysis process.

Qualitative Approach to Research

The most appropriate way to answer my research questions is through qualitative methods. Instead of measurement and prediction, qualitative inquiry examines the quality of communication phenomena and focuses on describing and understanding different communication practices (Fritch, 1994). Even though qualitative methods are often criticized for their lack of rigor, Trujillo and Taylor (2001) advocate for these methods by arguing that it is “naïve and narrow-minded to assume that one particular theoretical and methodological approach can completely reveal the complexities of communication” (p. 166). As such, a qualitative approach to examining Hispanic professors in higher education seems the most appropriate choice in order to understand this particular population in the specific context of academia.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) explain that qualitative research involves the use of different data collection methods (e.g., interviews, participant observation, artifacts, etc.) to describe “routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives” (p. 5). A good qualitative communication study should carefully consider how people use and interpret signs to (re) create the worlds they live in (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). In other words, qualitative methods help to unveil the meaning, connections, and implications of people’s communication practices. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) also use the metaphor of the *bricolage* to refer to qualitative research, that is, “a pieced-together set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of a complex situation” (p. 5). The bricolage is an emergent construction of what the *bricoleur* or researcher puts together. My purpose in conducting this study is to embody the role of a *bricoleur* by putting together emerging representations of different voices, different perspectives, and points of view in order to explain the complexities and nuances of Hispanics faculty members’ experiences in academia.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) argue that qualitative research serves to uncover intricacies that lie behind any object of study. Qualitative inquiry can also be used to provide a fresh and new understanding of a subject about which little has been researched. As a consequence, qualitative researchers are able to provide thorough descriptions and insightful details about a subject that would be difficult to achieve by means of quantitative research. Because I am interested in providing a ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) of my participants’ experiences, the design of my study is fundamentally qualitative. In this context, qualitative research provides this study with the breadth and depth necessary to establish reflexions between my participants’ experiences and the implications and meanings of these experiences vis-à-vis a broader context and to the eyes of an outsider. Furthermore, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) stress the importance of the researcher’s personal story, gender, race, ethnicity, social class, and context in the

construction of the bricolage. Whereas the ultimate goal of this project is to present a well-articulated and compelling interpretation of Hispanics' experiences as they negotiate their identities in the context of higher education, it is pertinent to note that I, as the researcher, am shaped by my own experiences and worldviews and these will affect the overall process of this project.

Research Context

Higher education is supposed to be an open-minded and welcoming environment, especially for minorities. However, according to *The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac* ("Number of Full-Time Faculty Members," 2007–2008), in 2007 faculty of color made up only 17% of total full-time faculty, with 7.8% Asian, 5.5% Black, 3.6% Hispanic, and 0.5% American Indian. When numbers reported for the full professor rank are examined, fewer than 12% of full professors in the United States were people of color: 7.1% Asian, 3.4% Black, 2.4% Hispanic, and 0.3% American Indian.

Higher education institutions find it challenging to recruit and retain a minority population. Thus, if it is indeed true that institutions of higher education in the United States are serious about improving the diversity of their classrooms, then administrations need to pay attention to what their faculty members of color, Hispanics in this case, are experiencing. Two of the five states considered in this study have a predominantly white racial distribution, even higher than the Nation's average (*Almanac of Higher Education*, 2010). In total, I conducted interviews with thirty faculty members from seven major public universities in the United States and visited four different campuses.

Universities involved in this study.

Professors from seven public universities participated in this study (See Table 1). Out of the seven universities, four are located in the Midwest region, two in the Southeast region, and one in the South region. According to the Carnegie Foundation (Carnegie Foundation, 2011), five of these universities are high research oriented and one is very high research oriented. Six universities had terminal doctoral programs; the remaining university only has a terminal masters programs.

Table 1 Universities Student and Faculty Composition

University	Student Body	Faculty Body
Midwest 1	26, 266 White: 19, 975 Hispanic: 1,193	1, 564 White: 1,271 Hispanic: 51
Midwest 2	23, 588 White: 18, 687 Hispanic: 1, 077	1, 251 White: 990 Hispanic: NR
Midwest 3	13, 433 White: 9,315 Hispanic: 553	979 White: NR Hispanic: NR
Midwest 4	40,800 White: 23,110 Hispanic: 2,444	1,113 White: 835 Hispanic: 67
Southeast 1	28,311 White: 20, 213 Hispanic: 993	1, 273 White: 998 Hispanic: 34
Southeast 2	19, 434 White: 15, 987 Hispanic: 590	906 White: NR Hispanic: NR
South 1	36, 067 White: 21,826 Hispanic: 5,061	1, 035 White: 775 Hispanic: 44

Methodological Overview

Participants.

Participants for this study include 30 tenure and non-tenure track faculty members at seven higher education institutions across the United States. Participants were eight professors, six associate professors, twelve assistant professors, and four lecturers. Twenty-six participants hold doctorate degrees from U.S. universities, two participants are in their final stages of their doctorate degrees (ABDs), and two participants hold masters degrees. Participants' age ranked between 30 years and 72 years old and areas of study included STEM ($n = 13$), social sciences ($n = 10$), humanities ($n = 9$), and arts ($n = 1$). Seven participants reported the United States as their country of citizenship, six professors are citizens of Argentina, three from Spain, three from Puerto Rico, two from México, one from Brazil, one from Chile, one from Panamá, and three reported having two countries of citizenship. For purposes of identity privacy, all names have been assigned pseudonyms (see Table 1).

Race and ethnicity self-report.

One of the most common debates in the literature on Hispanic issues deals with the semantics of the labeling of the ethnic group (Bishin & Klofstad, 2009; Calderon, 1992, Tafoya, 2004). There are different terms to refer to people of Hispanic descent: Chicano/a, Latino/a, Latino/a American, South American, Hispanic, etc. Those who are aware of their cultural history may choose a term based on that knowledge, while others might choose the term most accepted within their community. For this study, participants were asked to self identify the ethnic group they would normally answer when asked about their ethnic background when filling out legal documentation.

Table 2. Interviewees: Full, Associate, Assistant Professors and Lectures in Higher Education Institutions

Pseudonym	Position	Age	Tenure at current job	Country of Citizenship
Gaston	Professor	57	5 years	Mexico
Paco	Professor	48	16 years	Puerto Rico
René	Professor	72	40 years	Argentina
Laura	Professor	NR*	50 years	Argentina
Elena	Professor	43	13 years	Canada
Ernesto	Professor	49	14 years	Argentina
Indra	Professor	51	15 years	Chile
Angel	Professor	54	18 years	Spain
Arturo	Assoc. Prof.	54	7 years	Puerto Rico
Leandro	Assoc. Prof	49	9 years	Mexico
Miguel	Assoc. Prof.	46	13 years	USA
Gloria	Assoc. Prof.	53	13 years	Spain
Sandra	Assoc. Prof.	45	15 years	Spain
Abigail	Assoc. Prof.	50	2 years	USA/Puerto Rico
Raquel	Assist. Prof.	37	6 years	USA
Gladys	Assist. Prof.	41	5 years	Brazil
Pablo	Assist. Prof.	33	2 years	USA
Anibal	Assist. Prof.	35	6 years	USA
Indira	Assist. Prof.	33	< 1 year	Argentina
Julia	Assist. Prof.	31	< 1 year	USA
Romulo	Assist. Prof.	44	2 ½ years	Mexico

Sofia	Assist. Prof.	34	6 years	USA
Alejandra	Assist. Prof.	34	3 years	USA
Mabel	Assist. Prof.	30	3 years	USA
Oscar	Assist. Prof.	37	12 years	USA/Argentina
Diego	Lecturer	42	9 years	Argentina
Lucy	Lecturer	31	3 years	USA/Mexico
Frida	Lecturer	*NR	8 years	Panamá
Carolina	Lecturer	46	5 years	Argentina

*Participant chose not to report her age.

Participants Recruitment.

Due to difficult access to participants, recruitment was particularly challenging. In total I contacted 61 Hispanic professors from across the country, only receiving responses from 32 faculty members. One of the professors contacted chose not to participate in the study, s/he reported being an introverted person and not doing well in interviews as the reason why s/he declined participation. Another professor declined participation because, regardless of his/her ethnic background, s/he did not consider his/herself a member of the Hispanic ethnic group.

Recruitment efforts began in the Summer of 2010 with a personalized email (See Appendix 1) directed to faculty members whom I had met in the past or of whom I had knowledge from informal social networks. A second recruitment technique consisted of snowball sampling and word of mouth. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) recommend this technique to reach dispersed groups of people who share certain attributes. When asking people to help me contact other professors or help me ‘spread the word,’ I made sure to provide a brief summary of my study and emphasize the significant contributions that possible participants could make to

understanding Hispanic professors in higher education. Lastly, a third recruiting technique consisted of a public announcement made at an interest group in the annual convention of our discipline.

Once professors agreed to participate, we planned the logistics of the interview. Two types of arrangements took place. Twenty-five interviews were conducted face-to-face and these individual meetings happened at their places of preference (e.g., cafes, libraries, bookstores, workplaces, and residences). The other five interviews were conducted via Skype, at the times that were most convenient for participants' schedules. Professors received the consent form (See Appendix 2) that contained the general purpose of the study, the procedures involved in the study, the risks and benefits associated, a contract of confidentiality, and a statement clarifying the voluntary character of their participation. Professors read the form and gave consent to participate by signing the forms. In addition, I made sure to let participants know that the study was completely voluntary and anonymous so they had the freedom to withdraw at anytime or choose not to answer any question they did not feel comfortable answering.

Interview Data Collection Procedures

Semi-Structured qualitative interviews.

Qualitative interviewing is a guided conversation in which the researcher carefully listens to what participants are trying to convey (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). The purpose of conducting interviews is to give participants the opportunity to locate themselves in a position where they can recreate their experiences through the stories and information they disclose in their conversation with the researcher (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Interviews also allow researchers to have access to participants' discursive constructions of reality in order to understand their points of view. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) mention: "These language forms serve social purposes such

as marking in-group membership, asserting expertise, and controlling emotional expression” (p. 74). One of the purposes of this study is to have access to Hispanics’ discursive strategies when managing their identities. Interviews therefore constituted the principal data collection method of this study.

Qualitative interviewing as a data gathering method is considered a “digging tool” (Fontana & Frey, 2002), which implies certain responsibilities for the researcher. Fontana and Frey (2002) voice the concern about that the interviewer should approach participants in an effective and non-threatening way, “The interviewer should be a conversationalist, willing student” (p. 184). In this study, I tried to make my participants feel at ease to talk on and off record about any issues they felt comfortable disclosing. For example, I spent time building rapport by asking them initial questions that were not necessarily related to my topic, but that allowed for free personal disclosure and identification with the interviewee (e.g., their countries of origin, current national news, etc.).

For this study, I conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews that were based on a preconceived questionnaire but allowed for follow-up questions and spontaneity during the interview process. Questions focused on: (a) their lives before their current employment (e.g., Could you tell me how did you end up working at your current organization? What educational and professional background do you have?); (b) their organizational experiences at their current workplace (e.g., What type of people do you interact with on a daily basis? Could you describe the organizational culture at your current workplace?); (c) their experiences as Hispanic members (e.g., Are you the only Hispanic in your department? Does your ethnicity affect the way you perform at work?); (d) their opinions about diversity issues independent of their workplace (e.g., In general, what is your opinion about policies such as Affirmative action, EEO, Diversity

programs?) (See Appendix 3 for interview protocol). Interviews lasted from 45 to 100 minutes, with an average length of 60 minutes. In total, I conducted 30 interviews totaling more than 40 hours of recorded talk. After each interview I sent each participant a thank you email.

Data management procedures.

All 30 interviews were digitally recorded to secure the accuracy of the information provided by participants (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Before the interview started, I informed all of my participants that I was going to be recording our exchange and that they could opt out of this method whenever they felt uncomfortable. Interviews were then stored on my personal computer and transcribed by three research assistants who signed a privacy contract previous to starting any kind of transcribing activities (See appendix 4 for privacy contract). I personally listened to and corrected each transcript against the original audio file (e.g., ‘tenure’ instead of ‘ten-year’) (Silverman, 2000).

The level of analysis I wanted to conduct did not call for a detailed and verbatim type of transcript since the main focus was on answers’ content rather than the utterance structure (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Thus, I tried to leave out vocalized pauses (e.g., um, uh, huh, etc.), spontaneous distractions (cell phone ringing, side conversations, and other interruptions). However, I left in exact words and expressions in a different language (e.g., *Hispanidad*, *latinidad*) and accounted for expressions of emotions (e.g., laughter, excitement, doubt). All interviews were conducted in English, though many times we spoke Spanish before and after the interview happened. In total, transcription resulted in more than 600 pages of single-spaced text.

In addition, I wrote memos of my individual thoughts after each interview. This exercise helped me remember some specifics about the interview and the participants. It also helped me in recording some immediate impressions about how the interview progressed and my initial

reactions about issues piqued my attention during the interview. The following two excerpts are example of the memos I wrote after each interview,

June 16th, 2010

For the longest time before the interview started, I kept thinking about possible excuses I would give my interviewees about why –if we both spoke Spanish– the interview had to be in English. I decided that ‘transcription purposes’ would be the safest idea. After all, they probably have been in my position before.

October 5th, 2010

It seems like my participant has been pondering and thinking about many of the topics we covered today. Makes me wonder if this is because he is an academic or if he is just a very reflexive person. There were times where I thought he was contradicting himself (don’t we all do this?). For example, he mentioned that he thought that [university] was doing okay in terms of diversity but he later mentioned that the committees he’s been part of are trying to recruit minorities and are having a hard time doing so.

Data Analysis

In analyzing my data, I followed Strauss and Corbin’s (1990) recommendation to conceptualize the data as the first step in the analysis process. By conceptualizing, Strauss and Corbin (1990) mean to break down every observation, sentence, paragraph, and idea and give it a name or label that can represent a major concept or phenomenon. In this conceptualizing process, I used an open and axial analytical technique (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Open coding is the “initial, unrestricted coding of data” (Strauss & Corbin, p. 28) or process of assigning initial labels to the data. In this process, I assigned codes on a line-by-line process in order to ultimately establish connections and to capture participants’ implied and explicit meanings. For example “education background,” “work process,” “department dynamics,” etc. In total, my data generated 70 open codes. Charmaz (2000) argues that this initial coding helps the researcher become familiar with the data and allows her to differentiate between participants’ views and her own views. I generated a list of recurrent themes across the interviews, such as their hiring process, experiences with coworkers, experiences as Hispanics, remarks about their ethnic group, support of diversity policies, etc. The

open coding process required multiple iterations therefore it became an ongoing activity throughout the duration of this study.

Once broader categories were identified, I began the process of axial coding (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994) in which codes are refined and put in perspective with other codes. In axial coding, the main idea is to integrate categories and to develop more compelling interpretations of the data. For instance, for open codes such as “identity awareness,” “humor about negative comments,” and “feeling of illegitimacy,” I generated broader categories such as “comfortable with identities,” “downplaying racism,” and “highlight positive distinctiveness.” In the analysis process I also considered Owen’s (1984) criteria: repetition (same words repeated), recurrence (different words, same meaning), and forcefulness (emphasis and energy when expressing certain ideas). For example, when an idea was mentioned on different occasions, I took notes of the words used to describe the idea and the tone and emphasis participants used in their accounts.

Additionally, I incorporated Miles and Huberman’s (1994) data analysis strategy by generating within-case displays that allowed for the recognition of similarities and differences among participants. I also utilized cross-case displays to make comparisons between participants (e.g., U.S. born vs. non-U.S. born, assistant professors vs. full professors, etc.). I carefully considered negative cases and outliers, having in mind Miles and Huberman’s (1994) wise advice, “the outlier is your friend” (p. 269). Instead of avoiding and underplaying the existence of outliers and negative cases, I tried to make sense of them and consider how the existence of such outliers added to my discussion or if I needed to modify my conclusions. For example, I found that most of my participants demonstrated support for Affirmative Action policies and programs, but one of my participants categorically disagreed with the rest of the professors and

wished these programs disappeared. Instead of ignoring this reaction, I analyzed the reasons behind his strong opinions and tried to connect such opinions with the rest of my findings. In general, by considering negative cases, I acknowledge the murkiness and complexity of my research problem.

As a reflexive exercise, I met several times with my advisers to go over my transcripts and discuss emerging themes. In these meetings, we discussed participants' quotations, we explored the relationship between emerging themes, and we connected emerging themes with theoretical aspects evoked from the transcripts. The process of data analysis was cyclical and iterative, demonstrated by going back and forth between the raw data and the analysis process (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

To analyze my data, I used Dedoose®, a web-based data analysis software developed by research psychologist Eli Lieber, Ph.D and anthropologist Thomas Weisner, Ph.D both professors from UCLA. This software allows researchers to store, manage, and analyze qualitative data from an online platform. Dedoose was designed as a more affordable alternative to more costly qualitative packages (e.g., NVivo, Atlas.ti). In addition, it provides a secure place to store data. To address concerns of confidentiality and privacy, Dedoose developers use SSL EV (Secure Sockets Layer Extended Validation) “the highest tier of encryption and validation offered on the internet. This protects your data while traveling on the internet so that only you and Dedoose have access to your precious data” (Dedoose, 2011).

Assessing the quality of conclusions.

Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that qualitative research, though useful and important, is not exempt from scrutiny. As a matter of fact, it should be exposed to standards of quality. As

such, they offer five criteria to be considered when judging the quality of conclusions in qualitative research, which I tried to follow in my study.

First, qualitative researchers should strive for *confirmability*, or the importance of focusing on the “inquiry rather than the inquirer” (p. 278). To address this issue, I made sure to clarify the ways in which I analyzed the data and the different filters I used to interpret my results (i.e., looking for patterns, cross-checking the data with existing literature). Second, researchers should look at the *auditability* of the study, or the consistency of the study over time. In this study I tried to be consistent with my research questions by always going back to them and reconsidering them. I also tried to keep a steady methodological design that allowed for accountability. For instance, when I was not sure about the interpretations or connections I was making, I met with my advisors to attain further perspective on the quality of my analysis. Third, researchers need to strive for *credibility*, or developing authentic conclusions that have “truth value” (p. 278). To address this issue, I always strived to present plausible accounts of my data and provide careful descriptions of my analytic process. Fourth, Miles and Huberman (1994) explain that: “We need to know whether the conclusions of a study have any larger import. Are they transferable to other contexts?” (p. 279). To address *transferability*, I provide sufficient details about the scope and transferability of my study in the upcoming chapters. This will not only be useful for other researchers who want to pursue research in similar fields or use similar methodologies, but it will also provide insights about future directions for my own research.

Summary

This study focuses on Hispanics faculty members’ experiences in their workplace. As I proceed to discuss my findings in the next chapter, I will consider my participants’ strategies for

negotiating their identities, their perceptions about prejudice and discrimination in the academic context, and their discursive constructions of the challenges they face in institutions of higher education.

Chapter Four: Results

In this chapter I dig into the discourses of 30 Hispanic faculty members from different universities in the country. Some of these are public institutions, some are private institutions; some institutions are research oriented, some institutions are teaching oriented. Through my participants' accounts, I examine their experiences as non-dominant professors in institutions of higher education. I offer some insight about how members of the most growing yet underrepresented ethnic minority negotiate their identities in the workplace. In order to do so, I take my research questions as a starting point for this discussion. Research question one (RQ1) asked: *What discursive strategies do Hispanic faculty use to construct and negotiate their identities as minority members in institutions of higher education?*

A clear theme emerged regarding the ways Hispanic faculty perceive themselves as minority members and the strategies they use to negotiate such perceptions. Hispanic faculty members developed diverse strategies to create and negotiate their identity. Two strategies were especially common in the process of identity negotiation (See Table 2). First, participants perceived themselves capable of developing a dual identity to navigate their positions as minority faculty members. Second, participants developed social creativity when they encountered challenges in their roles as faculty members from a non-dominant group.

Table 3 Discursive strategies of identity negotiation

Discursive Strategy	Sub-strategies	Examples
Use of Dual Identity discursive strategies	(a) Identify with both own and majority group	(a) <i>“I can shift in and out whenever the need arise”</i>
	(b) Mentor both majority and minority students	(b) <i>“I have two [students] – one is Mexican and I have no problems with him at all and an American is coming, so that’s gonna be interesting”</i>
	(c) Perform to standards of the majority group	(c) <i>“You wanna make sure that you are liked here and it’s an effect of trying to prove a little too hard”</i>
Use of Social Creativity discursive strategies	(a) Rationalize qualifications	(a) <i>“I am a big deal, I am very well known in my discipline”</i>
	(b) Downplay racism	(b) <i>“They make comments that I think are meant to be funny even though, I’m not sure that they would like the jokes. But I also tend to be a positive person, not too paranoid”</i>
	(c) Highlight positive distinctiveness	(c) <i>“I think that most Americans just don’t have a good sense of what being bilingual means”</i>

Discourses of Dual Identity as Identity Negotiation Strategy

This section analyzes how participants in this study decided not to side with a particular identity but rather preferred to purposefully navigate between the identities that work best for them in a particular moment. In specific, this strategy includes how participants (a) identify with their own ethnic group but also with the majority group, (b) mentor both their own ethnic group

members and members from the majority group, and (c) perform to the standards of the majority group. Ultimately, this strategy involves a self-reflexive process as the participants adapt to a context in which they have to perform both as qualified professors and also as a representative of their ethnic group.

Identify with both own and majority group.

As members of a non-dominant group in academia, the professors who participated in this study were well aware that even though they might come from an underrepresented and underprivileged ethnic group, they are also in positions of privilege due to the status that comes with being part of the faculty body of a higher education institution. Nonetheless, they recognize that they are looked at as representative of their ethnic group both by Hispanics and non-Hispanics. As a result, they have learned to navigate, deal with, and even enjoy this twofold experience. Lenin describes,

So my classes, when I have Latin American students, I always find out where they're from, and I always joke about whatever country they're from or what their last soccer team result was. Those types of things, which I clearly made sure it's tongue and cheek, and they know I'm just kidding around. Then, of course, I have to take it, too, because then they get me back, but you create the atmosphere, the context, right? So it's not like a situation where you have a white professor who's making fun of some Black students' culture or something like that. That can be perceived in a very different way, and so it's those things that you have the ability to be able to jump in and out.

When I see repeat students—I got a high percentage of repeat students in my classes that are not necessarily Latinos. That tells me that they like what I'm doing and how I run the class. The evaluation that I get every semester, those make me feel really good about what I'm doing. I mean, you know, those are big rewards that I get from that. So when I see what they've learned or later on, they'll tell me, privately, or send me an email or something and just express something that they learned or maybe a student that I had a previous semester that is not in my class, but sends me a link to some article they read that related to the class that they're still actively engaged after the class is over. Those are the things that really make me feel good.

According to Lenin, being a Hispanic constitutes a teaching tool for him insofar as he can allow himself some liberties with his Hispanic students that would not go well if these same comments

came from a non-Hispanic or white professor. It is clear that Lenin found in his ethnicity a tool to approach and identify with his students. On the other hand however, he implies that being Hispanic does not impede him from comfortably interacting and identifying with his students. Moreover, this level of identification with his students enhances his self-esteem. In a way, Lenin is unveiling his strategic and somewhat advantageous position of knowing that he is capable to reach out to two different types of population.

In addition to connecting with different student populations, the professors who participated in my study also sometimes referred to connecting with their colleagues at other levels different than their ethnic group membership. Ernesto explains,

I don't deny being Hispanic, but what does that mean? You know, I am also a member of the department, I have been around for sixteen years. So, in a way, yes. I think in general when people see me and hear me and they don't know me they would find it strange that I would say that I'm from [State]. And I don't ever think that I'm from [State] I'm always from Puerto Rico regardless of what I tell them. So I do identify but I'm sure people would link me with [region] or [region] universities. I think my department is fairly relaxed and I have been here so long that I think, people don't think of me constantly as Hispanic. I think I have done many things for the department, so I think now they think of me in that sense. Graduate director or working with the committees at various stages...

Here, Ernesto references other aspects of his identity that are more salient than his ethnicity.

Participants in this study highlight the effort their colleagues put on treating them as they treat other non-minority colleagues. However, as a part of their twofold experience they cannot help but bring their ethnic group membership back to high salience when they think it is necessary.

Ernesto continues,

But I think how people are and how they behave is a mix of their background, their individualities. I do try to offer my perspective on issues to share, not to be preachy. I don't like to speak as a representative of Hispanics or Puerto Ricans, but you know, I want to value the way I think of things and try to offer that to broaden discussion on issues of that sort.

Ernesto's insight about not being the representative of his ethnic group unveils great self-reflection insofar as he acknowledges that he is only one of many points of view other Hispanics may have. However, he is also aware that he may bring a different perspective to the conversation.

Perhaps, the professors who participated in this study use the dual identity strategy as a way to blend in with their work environment but also to bring novelty and new perspectives to the workplace. On one side, they aim to be considered and treated in the same way as other professors. After all, they have gone through a similar academic journey to the one that every other professor has gone. On the other hand, they are aware that their ethnicity is a constitutive part of their character. Even though they have gone through analogous journeys as their academic peers, their upbringings and cultural background represents a very significant part of who they are.

Mentor both Hispanics and non-Hispanics.

A second way in which Hispanic faculty members embody a dual identity as a strategy to negotiate their roles as minorities in higher education is by mentoring both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. Rene explains this dynamic,

René: No, right now there is another Argentine. He's a good friend, and a younger guy. He's from Córdoba, I'm from near Buenos Aires, and he's having a very, very successful career; he comes from [successful university]. He would think that I'm his mentor, I don't know if I am really. But since I have been around so long and seen so many things; when you get old you keep your eyes open, and learn things, and so I discuss things like that with him. But we're good friends and we get together for lunch, and our families get together every so often too.

Author: So you mentioned that you are some sort of a mentor for him, do you have the same relationship with other people?

René: Yeah, there is a couple of younger faculty. As a matter of fact I'm officially a mentor of a young woman, non-Hispanic. They have a grant here, a kind of a blanket grant that [...] gives to states that don't have that many grants, so they can

help produce more younger researchers that would evolve. These are competitive grants, but they are reserved for states like [...] or [...] and that I have to mentor, and I'm a mentor of one of these. I do talk to her and she's doing very well, she's going up for tenure right now. You know, strategy, 'don't get into these, don't lose time in that,' that sort of thing we discuss a lot.

Even though at the beginning it may seem strange, professors acknowledge that when it comes to mentoring students, the identity as a professor prevails over the identity as a member of the Hispanic ethnic group. Gaston voices his concern on mentoring a non-Hispanic student,

I have two [students] – one is Mexican and I have no problems with him at all. He came because I was here and he was interested in working with me, and an American is coming [...], so that's going to be my first American student, which is going to be interesting. I am very interested in the cultural differences between other countries. And I'm learning a lot and it's going to be a very different experience. What he would expect from me, what I'm expecting from him, how are we going to be able to develop – with your own culture, there're thousands of things that you just know, right?

Even though there is uncertainty associated with mentoring students who belong to a different ethnic group, there is also a sign of interest in learning about cultural differences and work styles.

In other cases, professors with longer tenure have become accustomed to mentoring students regardless of their ethnic group. Once again the relational identity that becomes salient is that of mentor-mentee as opposed to the one Hispanic-non-Hispanic. Indra gives a supporting example,

I continue to mentor any former grad students that I had, to be sure they get tenure, get the publications, the news and stuff like that. I am very, very involved with my former students as they're going at the tenure track and with my current students as they're getting their dissertation done and applying for jobs, and fellowships. So that's how I spend my days, there are a lot of different things that I do.

In this case, the focus is in the professional development of the grad students and their academic accomplishments rather than the shared or unshared ethnic backgrounds. Once again, the salient element of the relationship is in shared professional journeys. This makes it clear that Hispanic professors consider themselves capable of mentoring both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students.

Additionally, professors often find other salient categories as predominant reasons for mentoring Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. This time it pertains to the economical and social background of the students. Lucy explains,

I also mentor students through the college transition in order to make sure that many of our students that come to us from the metropolitan area who attended urban schools need supports both academically and socially. And so one of the reasons I have an office of this size, students will just come in and sit and work. Or they'll come in and get help with writing or they'll get help with math or you know, they'll come in and cry about something. I mean, so it's, I'm that kind of support for them.

Other professors see their mentoring as a tool to reach out to underprivileged populations, Frida points out,

And even to get Latino students into the program there's specific programs that that department, which I work for, fosters for minorities. But the minorities who are being fostered into the program are mainly African Americans or Africans but no Latino. So I've worked and worked and worked and gotten two Latinos in. And one of them, she's a bright shining star. Everybody loves her to pieces because she's showed them how, not only brilliant and intelligent she is, but she has beautiful charisma and gets things done.

The multiplexed levels in which Hispanic faculty members can relate to students in a mentor-mentee relationship only reflect the complexity in which these faculty members operate. They can navigate from one level to another in order to find the most suitable one to accomplish their goals. As such, the professors' dual identity becomes multiple when considering the role that each professor chooses as salient in different circumstances.

Perform to standards of majority group.

A third way in which these professors embody a dual identity as a strategy to navigate their roles of minority faculty in higher education is by performing to the standards that have been set by the majority group. As we have discussed before, even though Hispanic faculty members do not share the same ethnic background with many of their colleagues, they do share an academic formation process that has informed both Hispanic and non-Hispanic professors

about the expectations of being part of a university faculty. However, professors in this study expressed a concern for the reputation of their work ethic. It seems that they felt more closely observed and judged on their performance because of their ethnicity. Abigail explains,

Sometimes I feel that Latinos have to work double so they notice you. It's like a friend, umm, not a friend, a colleague of mine told me last year after my annual evaluations: Oh my god you work so hard! And I'm like yeah. It's like you have to wait two years to know that I work really hard? Ha ha. Its like were you not expecting me to work hard? I'm very conscious of that so when somebody says that, maybe even though perhaps the person didn't mean anything like that, just passing a compliment, you know because they had just seen my performance evaluation for the year, the stuff I had done. But I thought about why is he telling me I work hard, yes I know that, nobody has to tell me I work hard you know. I work as hard as everybody else here.

One recurrent theme found in this study was the latent idea that Hispanic faculty members do not perform at the required levels and therefore feel obliged to demonstrate that they are deserving of the title and position they hold. Frida explains,

But as a minority of any group you always have to push harder, study more, be better than the ones that are from here, from this country. Be it Caucasian or African American, we have to push even harder. Because out of the minorities that were accepted we were the third. Even though we are growing to be a larger minority and we will in 2050 be the larger minority.

As Frida's account unveils, the assumption is that minority members must perform better or at least work harder than their majority counterparts.

By the same token, some Hispanic professors have this assumption as a general rule and even take it as a descriptor of their ethnic group. Lucy describes,

I think if you're looking at generalities, in general as a culture, we work very hard. And I do every job I've ever had, even you know at 15, I've always worked very hard, very committed, very loyal...don't mess with me (laugh). All of that shows itself in everything I do. It just does. And I know that, you know I'm not a big complainer about a lot of work. You just do things, you get them done.

Whether by principle or by demand, Hispanic faculty members expressed through their discourses that they should perform to the expected standards, if not higher than such standards.

They see it as an opportunity to demonstrate that neither they nor the group they represent comply with the preconceived notions ascribed to them. As Ernesto mentions,

I think I may have higher standards of myself than of others because of my education and also perhaps because being in a foreign country, you wanna make sure that you are liked here and it's an effect of trying to prove a little too hard.

Sandra agrees,

I know that I tend to overdo things and try to be a perfectionist, try to be – make sure that I'm not going to be reprimanded for some reason. And sometimes I think it's a little bit of overdoing it because you wanna be good, okay, so you do super-good.

Ernesto and Sandra's comments unveil a sense of social desirability where a professor must perform according to what is expected in order to be accepted. This acceptance is seen as necessary to decrease the resistance that coming from a different culture may cause.

In sum, Hispanic faculty members embody a dual identity as a negotiation strategy to navigate their roles as professors. In doing so, they identify with both Hispanic and non-Hispanics, they mentor students selecting different levels of approach, and they perform at the standards prescribed by the majority group. They do so because they feel somewhat obligated in order to fit in or simply because that is an assumption they have always used and consider it a trait of their culture and personality.

Social Creativity as Identity Negotiation Strategy

This section considers how participants utilize innovative ways to negotiate their identity. In specific, this strategy includes the ways in which participants (a) rationalize their qualifications, (b) downplay racism, and (c) highlight positive distinctiveness as a way to navigate troublesome aspects of being Hispanic academics. Ultimately, this strategy demonstrates the reflexive processes associated with existing dissonance that participants find in their workplaces.

Rationalize qualifications.

Hispanic faculty members often encounter dissonance in their roles as professors (Escobedo, 1980; Padilla & Chávez, 1993). In a way, becoming a professor in the U.S. and joining a body of academicians seems out of reach. Many of the Hispanic faculty members are first generation post-graduate students, some have left more labor-intensive jobs to become academics, and some have left their countries to become “fragmented” individuals who are in a continuous struggle to “perform according to the audience” (Amaya, 2007). As such, their journeys have influenced their place in academia. Aguirre (1993) narrates this constant dissonance as follows: “I am a minority person first, and a professor second. To them [students] I symbolize a stranger in academe, and my *strangeness* resides in being some place where I’m not supposed to be. I then wonder, is what I see in the eyes of my students the same things I see in the eyes of the faculty around me? Am I also a stranger to them?” (p. 1). It is in this indeterminate state, between the lines of belonging to academia and the lines of never being good enough for it where Hispanic faculty members operate. Mabel, an assistant professor from a research-oriented university, summarizes this ambivalence:

But it’s also tricky when you also have to make sure you’re proving yourself or you feel like you have to prove yourself more. To say this is also why I deserve to be here. And so there was also some questioning of how I got the job here within the department. Not as bad as graduate school experience, but just the question of what happened and it’s probably something that some of the other assistant Latino professors are gonna bring up as well. Just because some of us got targeted as far as sometimes that happens with a targeted hire where they’ll look for somebody who does a particular research area and also happens to be racially, ethnically, genderly diverse. In that situation it’s a different dynamic to how you are applying for the job and how you are interviewing for the job. But then if you do get that job, which I did, there’s gonna be the questioning of how did you get it, were you qualified, are you qualified, can you stay here?

Many of the participants in this study personally experienced the diversity initiatives that their universities developed and executed in order to increase the diversity of their faculty. As such,

many of these professors were ‘target hires’ or ‘diversity hires.’ Álvarez (1994) defines diversity hires as hires that:

are intended to help increase the alarmingly low and often nonexistent representation of minority and women faculty in campuses throughout the nation. Primarily because of community and affirmative action pressure, most campuses conduct special searches for high profile and qualified candidates of minority background (p. 259-260).

In this context, professors who were recruited and then hired as part of these diversity initiatives encountered the same twofold experience that Aguirre (1995) narrates above, that of being a minority person and a professor.

For many participants in this study, being a ‘minority hire’ was not a secret. Instead, they were very aware of that arrangement from the beginning of their application and interview processes as Sofia explains:

[He] was actually recruited and brought in and I was hired as a diversity hire. I think it was like a two for one. They advertised the position as very open and they saw who they could get. And so they brought in this professor who does [area of expertise], which they needed, and we have a journal that he could run. So they hired him and I remember being explicitly told by the chair at the time that hired me, ‘we’re working on to see if we can hire you as well, but hire you as a diversity hire. And that’s going to take approval.’

Sofia is aware that she was not the university’s top candidate but rather she represented an opportunity for the university to increase the diversity on their faculty body. Sofia also knows that as a Hispanic candidate, her ethnicity became a hiring asset but also represented a handicap when it came to demonstrating that, in spite of being a ‘diversity hire,’ she was worthy of her position and capable of delivering quality work. She explains,

I think my ethnicity got me the job. It opened the door, I think my qualifications got me the job but I think it opened the door, obviously it narrowed down the pool because they were looking for certain diversity hire. And the fact that I’m a woman and Latina, adds to that. I was hired along side another white colleague, so I don’t want to confuse the fact and say that it wasn’t my accomplishments that got me here, but I don’t want to be naive and say that the fact that I was Latina and diversity hire did not have anything to do with making me a much more viable and attractive candidate.

Naïveté aside, Sofia knows that her ethnicity made her an appealing candidate. Her ethnicity in this case helped her get to a place where she could demonstrate that her qualifications, in fact, made her worthy of the position.

Sofia was not the only participant who, because she was a ‘diversity hire,’ felt the need to justify her position. Instead, this was the case with all the 13 participants who acknowledged that ethnicity was a decisive factor in their hiring process. What initially is intended to help minorities gain access suddenly becomes a reason for suspicion. Hispanic faculty members find themselves needing to justify their achievements and present arguments to rationalize their hiring process. Abigail explains,

However I would have not been hired if my record was not good. And I had very good jobs in the past that were not target hires. I’m very well known in my field and the fact that I was a minority, I’m sure it did help. In order for me to, lets put it this way, I think if they had opened a position and interviewed me I think I would have been hired perhaps. Umm but that was not the case because it was direct hire.

Abigail finds the need to provide details about her scholarship and reasons why she deserved the position. Abigail is confident that ethnicity played a part in her hiring process for that specific job but points out that it has not been the case for other jobs in the past. Moreover, if she did not have the required qualifications she would not have been targeted and contacted to apply.

Likewise, Arturo argues,

Again I wouldn’t say that there have been, that I have only gotten where I have because of who I am, because of course I have many friends and colleagues and they haven’t been able to get to these places. And I would say that actually it’s a more negative thing to have, being a minority, even though people think minorities get all the breaks in the world. But what I’ve seen is not exactly, you know, I think there is still the expectations of what a professor looks like, what an academic looks like, and that still fits a certain kind of set of assumptions that are really hard to achieve if you’re not mainstream American.

As recourse to justify his qualifications, Arturo goes on to attribute his ethnicity with negative barriers that minority professionals face. However, his argument also shows an ambivalent

position when pointing out that the expectations about professors are difficult to achieve when you are not ‘mainstream American.’ His argument reflects yet again the difficult place that Hispanic faculty members usually occupy. In a way, Hispanic faculty members find themselves both debating about the reasons why they have a legitimate case for being in academia and trying to turn down out the voice that has chased other minority professors (Aguirre, 1995; Alemán, 1995; Contreras, 1995; Verdugo, 1995); a voice that accuses them of being strangers in academia.

Downplay racism.

When trying to navigate their identities, Hispanic faculty members also choose to overlook the remarks that would accuse them of not belonging in an academic context. Delgado (1998) points out how difficult it is for Hispanic professors to negotiate their presence in academia. He narrates: “A young Hispanic professor teaching at a major school approached a senior white male colleague... The professor appeared not to recognize her and asked her to please see his secretary for an appointment –the treatment he routinely applies to students and other staff” (p. 12). In the same manner, participants in this study encountered similar situations where their ethnic identity masked their identity as a faculty member. Ernesto explains,

But people ask me, and you can see in their face, when they say what do you do. I don’t tell them I’m a professor, I say I work at [University]. And you can see they don’t know how to ask you whether you clean the garden, or you’re a professor right? (He is laughing a lot, giggling as he is saying this) and so it’s there, but I joke about it, and I don’t think it will prevent me from doing anything professionally. So I don’t think it has affected me negatively, right? Um, but maybe it’s because of my personality. Um, so I don’t know, and also because despite everything we say, it’s still [University] right? So, it’s not the real world.

Ernesto describes a situation where his ethnic identity is connected to the regular stereotypes associated with Hispanics. But instead of being offended, Ernesto is optimistic about it.

Hornsey and Hogg (2000) argue that stereotyping represents an aggressive intergroup distinction

strategy characterized by fear, anxiety, and destructiveness. In a way, Ernesto is trying to achieve a positive identity through unconventional methods. In this case, Ernesto is giving the process of stereotyping a different and innovative value that is somewhat relaxed and celebratory. Hornsey and Hogg (2000) argue that identity threat is one of the reasons why stereotyping occurs, but in this case Ernesto does not seem to be threatened by the stereotypes associated with his ethnicity. He finds a way to turn such aggression into a humorous happening.

Likewise, participants have interacted with colleagues in their departments for a period of time long enough for them to focus on their identity as faculty members. Arturo explains,

I think some colleagues also have forgotten what my origins are. Maybe when I arrived it was something more conscious, and I did have uh at least one colleague who was who couldn't believe I could be a Puerto Rican with a PhD, cause he grew up in New York City and just thought of Puerto Ricans as gang members. He's a very uh, funny colleague so um but again I think people have forgotten now (pause) Well, I think it's a very unusual colleague and I think he meant it in an incredibly positive way and I didn't take it in any negative way. I actually made fun of him once, more than once. And I think people have become very good friends than you know that make comments that I think are meant to be funny even though, I'm not sure the that they would like the jokes. But I also tend to be a positive person, not too paranoid.

According to Arturo, as time passes different identities become salient. When Arturo started his position, his ethnic identity was more relevant than his identity as a professor, but he states that gradually his colleagues stopped focusing on his ethnicity and started developing other bonds. However, the experience he remembers from the past is an example of the innovative way Hispanic professors interpret stereotypical and racial remarks. Instead of taking offense on the stereotypical association with 'gang members,' the Puerto Rican professor took a relaxed attitude about it and welcomed the comment. Moreover, Arturo made a conscientious shift in his judgment of the situation. Instead of blaming his colleague, he decided to focus on one of his own personality traits (e.g., being a 'positive person') as a buffer for this situation.

The tendency to downplay racial remarks and interpret them with a humorous approach was a common way to channel otherwise aggressive identity threats into a jovial and inoffensive joke. Gastón agrees,

They avoid using certain terms, certain jokes, because you may be offended. Well, I don't have that. I'm treated exactly as another colleague and that's what I like and – but it's not common – and to the point that my friend and I sometimes misbehave in a mischievous way, for example – I'm going to give you an example. This is a joke that – these variations in this joke, we do often. Once we went to a seminar in which there was – not seminar, a meeting, where there were people from other departments and we're five minutes late, so when we were there, my friend said, "it's impossible with these Mexicans! They're always late! They're never punctual!" There was this, "Ah!" And it was just a joke. And I took it as joke and I'm not offended because I am also – I'm capable of making jokes about him as well, so it's even.

By both allowing and making jokes about his ethnicity, Gaston is redefining the negative dimensions of the stereotypes associated with his ethnicity and turning them into positive experiences. As such, downplaying racial remarks and otherwise racist comments becomes a sub-strategy for social creativity. Abrams and Hogg (2004) affirm that when social comparisons do not yield positive results, individuals are motivated to seek alternatives. In this case, Hispanic professors used a welcoming reception to negative comments and an emphasis on their own personality traits (e.g. positive person, not paranoid, humorous) to redefine their own identities.

Develop positive distinctiveness.

A third sub-strategy used by Hispanic professors in order to use social creativity is to develop positive distinctiveness. One of the tenets of Social Identity Theory is the assumption that individuals seek to feel good about the groups to which they belong. As such, striving for positive social identity is going to make group members, in this case Hispanic professors, find elements that set them apart from their non-Hispanic colleagues. For instance, participants

mentioned repeated times that their bilingual skills made them different from other non-Hispanic faculty and pointed out that such skill gave them an advantage. Oscar narrates,

Then, of course, there might be positions where you're advantaged by your background. So if you speak Spanish and it's a bilingual position, you have a huge advantage.

In this case Oscar acknowledges that speaking another language is a distinctive positive asset. Being bilingual sets him apart from the majority and reassures him that there are benefits associated with being a Hispanic professor. Brewer (1999) argues that the distinctiveness of a specific social identity depends on the context. As such, Hispanic faculty members can count bilingualism as an element of distinctiveness in the U.S. academic context where in addition to their native tongue; they have had to perform almost to a full extent in a second language.

Hornsey and Hogg (2000) explain that group members struggle to differentiate themselves favorably from other groups especially when they are part of a minority or low status group. Arturo voices part of that struggle,

I think opportunities have been made, I have received funding as a minority and I acknowledge and I'm very happy about that. I will say nobody gets anything for free and everyone treats you with very high standards so I think the opportunities are there but the demands and expectations are also very high. And again for things like writing in English, I have to fulfill the same demands as everyone else even though hardly any of my colleagues has to write in a foreign language. I don't think they even have any idea what that is like and if they do they haven't done it.

In this case, Arturo is not claiming distinctiveness to achieve a superior status for his ethnic group but, rather, Arturo is trying to make an argument for the challenges Hispanic professors have in academia. In other words, Arturo's drive for distinctiveness is a way to reach positive self-esteem towards Hispanics. As also expressed by Gastón,

I think, you know, colleagues don't understand what it is to write, work, and teach in a language that is not your own. I think that most Americans just don't have a good sense of what being bilingual means, for instance they only think that it has to be one language or another.

Not only does Gaston agree with Arturo insofar as bilingualism representing an asset for Hispanic professors but also his claim seeks positive self-esteem rather than higher social status. In other words, Gastón does not seek to differentiate from professors who are not fluent in another languages to create a divide but to feel reinforced about his own abilities.

Conversely, Frida does strive for higher social status when making social comparisons. In other words, she tries to establish a divide that reframes her ethnicity a better social status than non-Hispanics. For example she states,

But just the work ethics here are different. In Latin America people are very hard working. And to go to the top we don't try to squish anybody down. Here, you have the more watch your back kind of thing. Make sure you back up everything. Make sure you have everything double and triple checked. Which is sort of kind of habitual for us to make sure things are perfect. We like perfection. We look for good things. We like things to be done correctly.

Frida posits that Latin Americans have a different yet superior way to behave, to interact, and to operate than Americans do. In Hogg and Terry's (2000) words, Frida has a clear and cohesive prototype of Hispanics that is providing her with a powerful positive social identity. The social comparison exercise in which her ethnic group ends up with a better status makes her feel good about herself and about her group membership.

Summary

The above theme explains how Hispanic faculty members navigate their identities as professors in higher education institutions but also as members of non-dominant groups. Specifically, I draw from Tajfel and Turner's (1972) Social Identity Theory to explicate some of the strategies that Hispanic professors used to construct and navigate such identities. Hispanic professors developed two main strategies in order to construct their identities as minority professors in academia.

First, they developed a dual identity in which they make efforts to identify with both minority and majority group members; they aim to mentor both minority and majority students; and they strive to perform to the standards of the majority group. In general, this strategy allowed Hispanic professors to reduce uncertainty and helped them navigate both groups without difficulty.

Second, participants implemented a social creativity strategy that allowed them to develop novel ways of experiencing dissonant aspects of their group memberships. For example, they offered rationalized accounts to explicate the details behind their hiring process. This sub-strategy helped calm the ongoing inner debate about Hispanics' legitimate place in academia. A similar creative sub-strategy involved downplaying discriminatory or stereotypical remarks instead of taking offense. Finally, in order to seek positive self-esteem and achieve a higher status, participants highlighted the factors that make them distinct from their non-Hispanic counterparts.

Discourses of Discrimination as Perceived by Hispanic Faculty Members

Research question two (RQ2) asked: *How do Hispanic faculty perceive prejudice and discrimination in higher education institutions?* In other words, in what ways do Hispanic professors articulate their experiences with the presence or absence of prejudice and discrimination in academia. This theme elaborates perceptions at three different levels: (a) a micro level of first-hand experiences, (b) a meso-level of organizational practices, and (c) a macro-level of societal process (see Table 3). In sum, prejudice and discrimination are still present in different formats in institutions of higher education. The following three discursive accounts attempt to explicate the nuances of prejudice and discrimination as perceived by

Hispanic faculty members. In addition, this theme explicates how participants used the identity negotiation strategies afore mentioned to cope with these forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Table 4 Discourses of discrimination as perceived by Hispanic faculty members

Discourses of Discrimination	Sub-themes	Example
Micro-level: First-hand experiences	(a) (Perceived stereotyping	<i>(a) "But I always wonder if they are trying to figure out if I'm the right kind of Latina"</i>
	(b) Perceived tokenism	<i>(b) "You're not asking me to do this because I'm brown are you? Is that the only reason why"</i>
	(c) Perceived subtle discrimination	<i>(c) "There's this subtle kind of maybe a hint here and there of things that may happen that you'll see. But it's so subtle that it could pass you by and you just don't see it"</i>
	(d) Perceived self exception	<i>(d) "I can't say that I have been treated unfairly, to be honest"</i>
Meso-level: Organizational practices	(a) Perceived lower salary	<i>(a) "My salary has always been the lowest one"</i>
	(b) Perceived tenure difficulties	<i>(b) "The college level tenure committee is being very harsh, they are almost not letting the ethnic studies department choose the external examiners"</i>
	(c) Perceived retention barriers	<i>(c) "People aren't staying for different reasons, maybe they don't want to, but when I start thinking there is something to the fact that where are the efforts to actually retain us?"</i>

Macro-level: Societal processes	(a) Perceived privilege through the professorial shield (b) Perceived affirmative action legitimacy	<i>(a) "I don't tell them I'm a professor, I say I work at XX. And you can see they don't know how to ask you whether you clean the garden, or you're a professor right?"</i> <i>(b) "I was reluctant to consider employment like that. But after being turned down through the regular process, when I was offered an affirmative action position, I took it"</i>
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Discourses of Discrimination at a Micro-level: First-Hand Experiences

The first discourse set focuses on Hispanic professors' direct experiences with discrimination and prejudice. Specifically, this discursive set articulates Hispanic professors' (a) perceived stereotyping, (b) perceived tokenism, (c) perceived subtle discrimination, and (d) Perceived self-exemption. Ultimately, these discursive accounts reflect participants' perceptions of their experiences in academia and their interpretations of specific instances of discrimination. In addition, these perceptions highlighted participants' high levels of self-reflexivity and vigilance when it came to identifying different ways of discrimination and prejudice.

Perceived Stereotyping.

As discussed in the literature review, when people stereotype others they take a group of people and make assertions about the characteristics of all people who belong to that group (Lustig & Koester, 2003). This is no exception for Hispanic faculty members who have experienced such assertions in different ways. Sofia describes,

I have joked around with some colleagues but the fact of the matter is because people feel that they are so educated, that they're above certain discriminatory [practices] or

prejudice or limitations and if you are to therefore say this bothered me, you become the angry Latina. I always try to laugh because I always feel and perhaps this isn't the best way, but I always wonder if they are trying to figure out if I'm the right kind of Latina. And what I mean by that is complacent, like a Latina that doesn't rock the boat too much. A Latina that is good, hardworking, but doesn't tell them: hey, what you said is incredibly offensive!

Sofia, as is the case with many Hispanic professors, has encountered occasions in which she challenges stereotypes associated gender and ethnicity. These stereotypes have been historically reinforced through lack of contact or media portrayals of a Hispanic woman (Gonzalez, 1995; Mastro et al. 2008). Even though Sofia's account involves other faculty members who are supposed to be culturally sensitive and neutral when it comes to stereotypes, there is still the assumption that a Hispanic woman should adhere to a prototype previously defined by contextual and historical factors. In this case, Sofia does not fit the stereotype of the conforming Latina who does not cause problems, and this reality causes her uncertainty about the expectations other people have regarding her behaviors. Fiske (1998) mentions that a prototype model of stereotypes occurs when people form an average description of how members from different groups behave. In this case, Sofia does not fit the prototypes her colleagues have about Hispanic women.

Likewise, Miguel faced a similar situation where faculty members had existing stereotypes about the Hispanic culture. For example, most Latin American cultures are collectivistic (Hosftede, 1980), and the expectation behind such cultural taxonomy implies that Hispanics must behave according to the characteristics that accompany such taxonomy. The stereotype of being accommodating and complacent that Sofia mentioned underlines the following account. Miguel says,

One time, and this is with a faculty member, we were having a discussion at a faculty meeting. And I'm argumentative. I mean, I'm an argumentative person and I guess – maybe – I guess I'm perceived to be argumentative. I guess you would say I'm off

sometimes _____ and sometimes I observe it. But I am perceived to be argumentative. Even when I am trying to help out, people think I am arguing with them. But one time I was with – we were in this meeting and this person said, “I don’t understand you.” And I said, “Why?” And she said, “I thought all Hispanics were supposed to be collaborative. I thought they were supposed to be like, cooperative and seeking out collective relationships, and they were supposed to,” what did she say? They’re supposed to – they seek indirect means of conflict. And then I looked at her and I said, “No, that’s just with our friends.” And she kind of laughed at that.

Even though the curious inquiry of Miguel’s colleague is not out of ignorance but rather an informed belief supported by vast research (Hall, 1994; Hofstede, 1980), the assumption that every single member of a culture manage conflict in the same way is ill fitted.

Similarly, Alejandra narrates her experience as she fails to fit other prototypical expectations of a Hispanic woman professor:

So I show up and clearly I'm Alejandra Ortiz, right? Who studies race and ethnicity and Mexican-Americans. So you can make some conclusions. And the background is that the job had been created in part, but not in whole, from some student activism, I guess. And there were other people doing race, but one person doing Latinos. So I showed up on campus and there was a faculty – and the faculty there was very diverse, actually, pleasantly diverse. And there was a graduate student ‘Meet the Candidate’ lunch. So I go to the lunch, there was only Latinos there which I found pretty disconcerting. I mean, I was glad that they showed up, but there was no way that all the graduate students in that program were students of color.

I remember I walked away from that feeling like, "Okay, they really want someone who's like super working class, if not lower class, Chicana, nationalistic but not to the U.S., you know, more to Mexico and La Raza," sort of thing. And that was clearly not who I was, you know?

Alejandra’s experience unveils the rooted stereotypical views of what it means to be a Hispanic woman in academia, a woman who embodies all the typical characteristics associated with an average referent. In this case, Hispanic female professors are supposed to relate only to Hispanic students and have specific political, economical, and idealistic background. As such, whoever fails to enact this prototype may not be what departments are expecting. Dulce Cruz (1995) described a similar situation where fellow faculty would be stunned when they learned her

interests were nothing related to her cultural background. In this case, Alejandra did not fit their ideal candidate to fill a position about race and ethnicity and later on her interview reported not taking that job.

Conversely, there were occasions where Hispanic faculty members agreed to fit some stereotypes associated with their ethnicity. Such agreement did not seem to be taken as an identity threat but instead as a novel way to construct identity. Ernesto explains,

I think professionally the only thing, the preconception I know is because there used to be other people in the department, and maybe we all share this, and maybe they have this preconception because it's true, that we are too out spoken, right? So in the department, once someone told me: Oh, you are like so and so, I know how you are. And I don't know what he meant, but I think it's this notion that, we are louder. Ha-ha. And I am, and I know I am. So it's true, what can I say? I don't know if all Latino are, but I am. So, yeah, in my case the preconceptions they have in the sense that I'm louder, more outspoken, are true.

Abigail has a similar experience,

People notice that I'm Latina in the way I relate to people. (Joking tone) Short skirt, I don't know, I really don't wear skirts, but today I did, hah hah. But you know there is also the way I approach people. You know, I have no problem interrupting people in the offices. I think that is a Latino in me. I like stopping by my neighbor's house, you know? You know, obviously there are times I should not do it ha ha ha.

Ernesto and Abigail's accounts address characteristics of their ethnicity that fit the stereotypical images that the majority may have about Hispanics. However, instead of taking these characteristics as an offense, they point them out as distinct and positive behaviors that set them apart and make them different from everybody else.

Perceived tokenism.

Kanter (1977) argued that people are deemed to be tokens when they enter a job environment in which their social category –be it race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.– has been numerically scarce and rare in a specific occupation. Historical, economical, and political barriers have impeded Hispanics to advance in the academic 'pipeline.' As such, tokenism has

become an existing issue for Hispanic faculty members and minority faculty in general. Brenda Allen has written in different occasions about her experiences as the token Black women professor (see for example Allen 1995, 2000) and her struggles dealing with tokenism in everyday academia.

The concept of tokenism was something that was brought up repeatedly by Hispanics professors in this study. Either by experience or just by being aware of what tokenism represents, Hispanic faculty members expressed strong sentiments about the issue. Sofia explains,

I will tell you this, I am always struck by some of like the newspapers and things like that. Like the Grant Center newsletters that they send out because I have found my picture in there a couple times, and it's to show. Like one or two times I was at events with another friend who is African American, and it was very clear that they took the shot of both of us. And she appeared on a course catalogue. Alejandra's on a course catalogue, you know what I mean? It's Latinos, so there is like, you know there's another, Dario is like on everything, he's even on the Brazilian Studies catalogue and he isn't Brazilian, so I do think that there is a sense of that. They're like see? See? You know we have minorities here.

Apart from experiencing the stigma associated with being 'diversity' hires, Hispanic professors also have to deal with being identified as symbols rather than as individuals. Once again their ethnicity becomes their most salient characteristic above their expertise, qualifications, honors, etc. Allen (2000) recounts: "some of my colleagues consulted me of how to handle black students in the classroom, and they requested me to give lectures about race and gender (even though my area of study at that time was computer mediated organizational communication)" (p. 189). Just like stereotyping, tokenism encapsulates members of a specific group to behave and present themselves according to shortsighted expectations that do not allow for development of additional roles beyond the role of Hispanic professor.

Hispanic faculty members are very aware of this type of objectification from their colleagues and universities in general. They have had a taste of tokenism throughout the time

they have been a part of their academic institutions, even before they became professors. These experiences have helped them (a) identify when tokenism is happening, and (b) find the best possible way to cope with it. Elena explains how she has become attuned to identifying tokenism:

Elena: I was the token person of color. (Loud Laugh) People like to use me as token and I'm an easy token to use

Author: How do you feel about it?

Elena: That makes me extremely uncomfortable (Loud Laugh). It always has made me feel uncomfortable, to the degree that I notice it's going on, I will try to call people on it. I mean I did at [Former University] for example.

And Lucy tells us how in addition of being vigilant about tokenism, she has also found a way to react:

Lucy: I feel like my voice adds value. That I see the world in a particular way that isn't necessarily better or worse, but I think diversity of thought is needed to move any organization forward. (pause) I'm very sensitive to being a token.

Author: Have you experienced that?

Lucy: I don't know that (long pause) I don't know that I have, but it is a question that I raise. And I will ask very clearly, "you're not asking me to do this because I'm brown are you, is that the only reason why?"
Sometimes and I don't know that this is necessarily negative but I wondered when we were putting together search committees and we're bringing in candidates if I was selected to be a part of it because of who I am or because if you're bringing in visitors why not show your one Hispanic person. So I wonder about that tokenism sometimes, but I chose to use it as an advantage you know, "hey I had a private audience with all of our dean candidates when they came into town to interview for the position"

Elena and Lucy's account reflect the watchful place in which Hispanic professors stand regarding tokenism. However, these accounts unveil some of the defense mechanisms they have put in practice in order to cope with it. For example, Elena has chosen to call out people when she sees tokenism is taking place. Conversely, Lucy has a different reaction. Lucy has decided to

take advantage of some of the commitments in which she gets involved due to her ethnicity. She is using her assignments to committees as a way to meet key people and access key information.

Miguel has a similar experience:

It used to be very tokenized. ‘Stick him on the committee because blah, blah, blah.’ But then once you do well on those committees and you show that you’re more than just a brown face, then they start asking you to be on specific other committees that you know are really important. And that’s always nice. That’s rewarding.

Miguel takes that aspect of tokenism and reframes it as a reward. Thus, it seems that obligation to be on committees that are originated out of tokenism end up being useful for Hispanic professors in order to have access to classified information or to voice their concerns about important issues in the university that they would otherwise be unaware of. Miguel also sees through the superficial motives behind politics in academia that potentially foster tokenism:

I think for example if there’s a particular area that people have been looking for like the – all of one token, Universities think: “if I can get me a Latina who is a blind, international person, I’m going to go with that one, right?” Cross out as many lists as you can, right?

In general and beyond the coping mechanism discussed above, tokenism leaves a sour aftertaste. Hispanic professors are aware that their universities are making efforts to increase their numbers among minority faculty members, but they are also aware that in the process of doing that, Hispanic professors have to experience the curse of tokenism.

Perceived Subtleness.

Traces of blatant prejudice and discrimination are more and more scarce inside and outside academia. However, Hispanic faculty members agreed on an existing subtleness that ultimately underlines discriminatory practices in academia. The general feeling of Hispanic professors is that discriminatory practices are difficult to pinpoint. As Mabel narrates,

Because a lot, some of the discrimination that we face may be subtle and it’s not as outright as it used to be. And so if it’s more subtle it’s harder to know whether it’s

actually a problem or not or whether again you're just being paranoid or whether it's something that you can actually complain about.

In the same line, Frida talks about the intangibility of some discriminatory practices,

Frida: I think in general, where I'm working right now, you don't find that there's a whole lot of that. But how would I say that word in English? *Sutil*?

Author: Subtle.

Frida: Yeah, subtle. There's this subtle kind of maybe a hint here and there of things that may happen that you'll see. But it's so subtle that it could pass you by and you just don't see it.

Sofia provides one more example of how Hispanic professors reflect about these practices:

I don't think we're educated about what workplace discrimination means. I mean, honestly, 'cause I think it happens in very subtle ways sometimes and we don't really think about it.

These hidden discriminatory practices are what Gartner and Dovidio (2000) identified as aversive racism, where everything seems normal on the surface but when digging deeper, traces of status inequality and power imbalance arise. This type of racism can manifest in different practices, as Laura explains,

But, for example, at one time, I would've liked to have an administrative position, and I think, as an Argentine, I would never have gotten it. I really think there's discrimination, I really do. It's very subtle and it's really hidden in many cases.

Aversive discrimination hides behind different attitudes and behaviors that otherwise would not be seen abnormal. Mastro et al. (2008) argue that this type of discrimination happens when there is room for high ambiguity. As such, the administrative promotion that Laura is referencing could just mean lack of requirements to obtain the position, but it could also mean that there are discriminatory practices embedded in the structures of academia that are so fluid and shape-changing they become difficult to identify. Miguel describes some of these practices,

I mean, sometimes it's more subtle. Well, like racism and discrimination works on very different levels. So I would say that sometimes it's really subtle, like taking a picture of

someone because it looks diverse. Like people would never think that that's discrimination. I don't even mind, but that's also discrimination.

As noted earlier, Hispanic faculty members are very attuned to detect tokenism and Miguel points out that using a person purely as a symbol is a type of discrimination. Once again he mentions the subtleness of these practices and notices that he does not mind posing for those pictures as a symbol but that it does not take away from the reality that it is a form of discrimination.

Perceived Self Exception.

As discussed in the earlier sub-themes, the subtle presence of discriminatory practices was a common topic among Hispanic faculty members. In general, Hispanic professors acknowledge the existence of discriminatory practices but they also revealed a discursive disconnect when participants tried to think of personal examples of discrimination. For instance, Sofia, who criticized the stereotypes associated with Hispanic women and the existing tokenism in academia, denies having experienced it personally. She says:

I can't say that I have been treated unfairly, to be honest. Outside maybe certain comments and perhaps certain perceptions but I don't necessarily think I have been treated unfairly, at least not by my immediate colleagues.

Sofia even mentions that there were 'certain comments,' but she does not label them as discrimination. When it comes to identifying direct discrimination experiences, professors thought of overt discrimination and excluded themselves from these experiences. This is the case for René,

No, no. I don't think so. I don't think that anybody said, 'I'm not going to give this guy something because he is Latin;' I don't think so. Now will people realize I'm different, yeah, sure. You feel that too, I'm sure.

Professors separate themselves from the discriminatory experiences because they do not recall times when they experienced overt discrimination. Conversely, consciously or not, professors address the covert and subtle discriminatory processes. Gloria narrates,

I have to admit that I haven't suffered that much from that, but I know that happens and yeah occasionally I have come across people that assume that I like spicy food, or that you know, those misconceptions that people have asked. I've been asked whether in my hometown, if there are bulls in my streets, thinking of the running of the bulls. And you know those kinds of silly things. But to me I don't get offended, it's more like get your facts straight ha-ha, you know.

Gloria is referencing episodes where she has experienced stereotyping, but she does not equate them with discriminatory practices. She mentions that she does not take offense from these comments but also points out that she has not experienced discrimination on an individual level. She does not see those comments as offensive because she does not feel threatened by them. On the contrary she finds them silly and stops short of labeling them as discriminatory.

Discourses of Discrimination at a Meso-level: Organizational Practices of Discrimination

In addition to the individual experiences of discrimination discussed above, Hispanic professors talked about their observations of prejudice and discrimination at the university level. Specifically, they referred to the challenges Hispanic professors encounter when facing well-established organizational policies and practices. As such, Hispanic faculty members identified prejudice and discrimination at an organizational level through (a) perceived lower salary, (b) perceived difficulty in obtaining tenure, and (c) perceived retention problems.

Perceived lower salary.

The notion that minorities experience lower starting salaries and less salary increases has been studied by multiple scholars (Cancio, Evans, & Maume, 1996; Dreher and Cox, 1996;

James, 2000). Thus, it was not surprising that Hispanic professors voiced their concerns regarding unequal salary. Gladys describes,

My salary has always been the lowest one. I think this is the first year that I have maybe a higher salary than a couple faculties in the same position I'm in. Or maybe the same, I don't think it's higher

Gladys has been employed at her university for five years and has never had a higher salary than her white colleagues. Gladys, along with the other professors who have immigrated to the US, is at the intersection of a unique social space where economic advancement is either not available for them or simply not granted. Frida agrees,

Even in my own position, where I'm at now. I didn't get raises, like I said before. Basically because they don't want to support the program. Because the person here felt that I should be happy with just having a job. The person that I work with now, with my other hat, felt very good about me and my progress. Obviously, he can't move the money because the purse is being held by someone else. But he is at least changed the title and giving me what he thinks would be a better opportunity.

Frida's complaint implies that Hispanic professors should be content with just having achieved a faculty position. In a way, this type of organizational behavior reinforces the sentiments of illegitimacy that professors feel when they enter academia. According to this logic, holding a faculty position should be sufficient to feel happy and content. Other faculty members recognize that this is a flaw in the structural foundations of the universities and that not much can be done about it. For example, Ernesto acknowledges the problem, but fifty years in academia may have persuaded him to overlook the pay gap. He explains,

There is also, um, I don't care much, but occasionally other Latino colleagues are complaining about oh salary distribution. Uh but I guess that's, everywhere I don't think it's unique to this department or this university. So that's the unpleasant part, I mean, when it gets to these kinds of conflicts.

Ernesto's commentary regarding low salaries among Hispanic faculty has a sense of resignation. In a way, he acknowledges that although salary inequality is indeed a problem, it could be an overwhelming endeavor to constantly worry about.

Conversely, other faculty members are more discontent with the salary disparity and are more apt to challenge it as an organizational process that has discriminatory underpinnings.

Vicky argues,

Vicky: I mean, there have been studies that show that, you know, people with last names that indicate, you know, a Black or a Latino heritage, even though the resume is exactly the same, doesn't get responded to at the rate as does – or as do resumes that have names that suggest the person hails from a white background. I mean and everything from hiring to pay scales, so – I mean pay scales definitely are influenced, too.

Author: So do you think Hispanics are treated differently?

Vicky: I think there's differential pay in aggregate, yes.

Vicky is aware that salary gap is real threat for professors from non-dominant groups. Verdugo (1995) acknowledges such inequality and decided to disengage from academia by obtaining a non-academic position that started him with the salary equivalent of a full professor. Salary inequality among minorities is not a unique problem to institutions of higher education. However, higher education may conceal wage gaps better than other industries because the wage setting policies can be murky and intangible (Acker, 2006; Vargas, 1999).

Perceived Difficulty Obtaining Tenure.

After obtaining a doctorate, obtaining tenure is the single most important event in the life of a junior faculty member. In short, all professors who have completed a probationary period of six years, on average, undergo a rigorous examination that involves, as Sofia would call it, 'the tri-fecta of an academic:' research, teaching, and academic service. Tenure is not just an

important accomplishment since it implies that the professor will have lifetime employment but it means the legitimization of a career and the payoff of years of effort. As Miguel explains,

(Lists names) Those are my peers, you know? Those are the people I'm going to –these guys are real professors. I'm just – what am I? I'm not good enough. I'm not good enough. It's not 'til after I got tenured and then after I got tenured and then over here at this university they really started to ask me a lot of questions about diversity, serving on committees. And again, now working with the community again. Heck, now all the professors here, man, everybody called me Professor [], even if I just said, "Call me Miguel," they were like, "Nope. You're Professor [] now. I'm not going to call you Miguel." It's a different level of respect.

As articulated by Miguel, being granted tenure elevates professors to a different level of respect.

It becomes both a challenge and a goal for every scholar who is serious about academic affairs.

Indra agrees,

It was right after I got tenure and I realized this is a very unusual thing to become a professor, and then it's even less usual to get tenure, especially as a woman, especially as a woman of color. So then I thought this is very interesting and a very good career, and I also felt like it was my responsibility to stay a professor so that I would use my tenure to help others become professors.

As Indra pointed out, the tenure process is especially challenging for Hispanic professors who are already faced with insecurity about the legitimacy of their work. The battle is not only with the structural barriers that may exist, but it is also an internal battle where Hispanic professors must constantly keep shutting down disheartening inner and outer voices.

As such, Hispanic professors at different levels of their scholarship expressed concerns about the tenure process for minority faculty. Indra explains,

The college level tenure committee is being very harsh, they are almost not letting the ethnic studies department choose the external examiners, they're like 'we know better than you.' So they are really after these departments, and these departments don't have the sovereignty that say, the History department does. The History department decides who to send –you know, who throw you out for review; nobody second-guesses them. Well, Latino-Latina studies do it and they're like 'well, I'm not sure that's the best person to send us out for review.' Then they're like 'you don't get to say that, that's what the department decides, that's what you get for being a department.'

Indra's concern unveils the institutional bias against specific departments and populations. Her observations resemble Mendiola's (1995) personal experiences and the difficulties he faced when he had to apply for tenure. Inappropriate committees, unbalanced initial appointments, overloaded service due to tokenism are only a few of the reasons why Hispanic faculty members find tenure difficult to accomplish (Padilla & Chavez, 1995).

Brenda Allen (2000) uses her personal narratives to criticize the deceitful way power structures in academia affect minority faculty members while making them believe that they are privileged to serve on committees as the representative for the minority groups. Allen makes an important observation; people in higher power positions put the pressure on faculty of color to carry the responsibility of addressing diversity while at the same time these professors are affected by the burden that accompanies this duty. Vicky is aware of this reality. She shares,

But I've heard from a mentor back at [University] who was a woman of color that that's actually one of the main reasons, yeah, I guess, that women of color don't get tenure because they get so saddled with, you know, being that token whomever on various committees. I'm so sure that's true.

Vicky's concern closely resembles Allen's (2000) observations where the burden of academic service caused by ethnic characteristics becomes an obstacle in the struggle Hispanic faculty members have when balancing the academic 'tri-fecta' on the road to tenure.

As such, for those Hispanic professors who seek to obtain tenure, the fears of not being good enough come to the surface, and the insecurities of not working hard enough start to arise.

Sofia explains,

When I was hired I was told that for tenure I needed to have ten articles and a book. Which is what I have done, but maybe not the extent of everything that top top journal, which is what they tell you, but I think that is where part of my attitude comes in, I can only do what I can only do. I do though think about the last six years here and the fact that this is something I did because I didn't have children, I don't know how people do it, balance all those things and I realize that a lot of time that I spent continuously feeling like I have to produce I have to produce, I have to produce, and I still have a lot of that

but I'm trying to step back a little bit but that's a constant tension. You're constantly like you go home for vacation you're like 'if I don't work, I am, I'm going to come back behind.'

Once again, Sofia unveils that feeling of a 'stranger in strangeland' that Aguirre (2005) mentions when he discusses the trials and tribulations of Chicanos in academia. Sofia, and many of the Hispanic professors on the road to tenure have overwhelming angst that they have not done enough in their marathon towards the desired end. It is not only their academic ego in play but also that –consciously or unconsciously– their ethnicities seem to be compromised if their tenure bids fail. If the tenure process is unsuccessful, then the professors' fears of being just a token or not being good enough may become stronger and more real.

Perceived retention problems.

Turnover is higher among minority faculty than among their white counterparts (Thomas & Asunka, 1995). Retaining Hispanic faculty has become a challenge for universities across the U.S. (Aguirre, 2000). As discussed in the paragraphs above, Hispanic professors experience difficulties obtaining tenure, but tenure does not seem to be the only reason why these professors are leaving their universities. Lack of structural support, inadequate mentorship, or difficulty establishing meaningful professional and personal relationships are some of the factors contributing to low retention rates among Hispanic professors.

The professors interviewed voiced their concerns about this problem. Though not referencing the causes of this phenomenon, they indicated the absence of organizational processes that would help prevent this from happening. As Indra expresses,

Indra: And so I think that is a factor in that whole thing, and I think the university has been finding out that at a certain point, 'oh we hired this Latino person we did them such a favor' and it doesn't work that way. A lot of times these people moving will find a better place to go because they're treated better or whatever,

and so the university I think right now is very much engaged in reassessing its retention strategies for faculty of color.

Author: Obviously retention is a big problem but do you think the university is doing enough to kind of counteract that phenomenon?

Indra: No I don't think they have figured out how to do it. What they have figured out is that they have to do something. They are aware of it but not doing enough because I don't even think they have a plan but I think that they know, 'oh my god we have to do something.' Because otherwise it's economically inefficient, it costs about a million dollars to recruit and bring a new faculty member in, in terms of what the expenditures you engage in, and if they leave in two years it's a very wasteful way to try to build a faculty. So it makes sense, it's cost-effective to invest in that retention strategy. One of the ways you retain it is that you have a faculty that is diverse.

Indra expresses that retention is not only an organizational flaw but it is also a very costly one since funds invested in recruitment processes end up not bringing the expected dividends but they rather represent a negative and disheartening balance. Guanipa, Santa Cruz, and Chao (2003) raise a similar concern and point out that retention is a symptom of an ill organizational system. It appears that efforts are mainly directed toward recruiting faculty of color, in this case, Hispanic professors, as is demonstrated through the common 'diversity hire' practices. However, because little attention is paid to making sure that Hispanic faculty are surrounded with the resources the need to stay at their universities, those who are recruited are often not retained. Miguel narrates some the efforts and failures that his academic institution makes to recruit and retain faculty off color,

You know, I used to have an African American colleague. I used to have a Korean colleague. They're all gone, man. It's just me. So no, we cannot keep the faculty. It is a retention problem. It is a recruitment problem and a retention problem. We have these three short-term policies. We go get a bunch of Fulbright Scholars, and they're fantastic. We've got a great program with [predominantly minority university], exchange program with [...] University, with Morehouse, with HBC. They bring their students here who are finishing their doctorates. We have them teach here, and the idea is that if I can take a doctoral student from [...] University, bring that student here to work at a white university, majority white university, and we give that person skills where it makes them a better candidate, right? They can go out on the market next year and say, "I've taught

at more than [...] University. I've taught at a white university," right? And the idea is we want them to stay here. But we just can't keep them here. We just can't, can't keep people here. And we can't – it's not a community thing. I know that a lot of people say they don't like the city of []. The community of [] is not working for them. And no, that's not it because if you remember my last interview, I said the one thing that is keeping me here is the community. It's the town. The town is keeping me here, right?

The lack of success of the initiative described by Miguel is proof that minority-recruiting strategies are indeed in play but these strategies are myopic and fail because there is a lack of a systematic plan of action to retain faculty of color. Some of Miguel's hypotheses are related to inadequate professional support and an unwelcoming community environment, which he promptly discards and instead argues that it is precisely the community that keeps him at his current institution.

Thus institutions must reconsider the steps they are taking to achieve diversity in their faculty body. Recruitment strategies fall short if they are not followed by the necessary professional support. If such efforts are not comprehensive, the results will only lead faculty members to leave their institutions, as is evident in the following example described by Lucy,

Author: You mentioned that there were four Hispanics and now there's two. What happened to the other people?

Lucy: One of them left to have a baby. And the other went to California, his research was looking at Hispanic women and higher education and he was from California. And I think he just felt like if he moved back home he would have more access to that target population.

Similarly, Sofia expresses her concern about lack of professional and personal support,

People aren't staying for different reasons, maybe they don't want to, but when I start thinking there is something to the fact that, where are the efforts to actually retain us? I don't want to get personal in the aspect but I'm thinking I'm valued, I'm important, I have done my job, I'm pretty sure I'll get tenure, I have done all this but where is the effort to retain us? I don't see those efforts to be quite honest or to address, I have heard, one of my friends did leave precisely because there were tensions and she was thought to be the problematic Black woman in her department.

Sofia's skepticism about the role of her institution in making tangible efforts to keep their faculty of color directly questions the university's involvement in creating an environment that stimulates productivity, creativity, reassurance, collaboration, and fair treatment (Guanipa, et al., 2003). It may demonstrate how faculty who have a strong record of performance still do not feel welcome at their institutions.

Discourses of Discrimination at a Macro-level: Societal Processes

While the experiences of discrimination and prejudice at the personal and organizational level discussed in the previous sections represent major challenges for faculty of color, Hispanic professors agreed that prejudice and discrimination at such levels are primarily fostered by structural and societal practices. Institutions of higher education are only one of many contexts where discriminatory practices take place. For instance, at the time some of these interviews were conducted, the infamous anti-immigration law in Arizona was in the news and professors brought it up as an example of how society still embraces discriminatory practices. René explains,

You see, if you work at the university you're very isolated. So, I haven't experienced, I mean you look at the news and you watch, you look at the paper, you watch the news, and you do see discrimination. You see that I think right now the country is very much split, right? Um, you know all this law that they're trying to pass in Arizona right? It's, you feel you know, of course something needs to be done about the illegal immigration, but then there is this. I get the impression they are trying to blame something on someone. I think right now, um, the country is moving from the old time where Black people were discriminated and now the pressure is on the Hispanics and I don't quite understand why, I think it's a reaction to tough economical times and people need to blame or use something.

Apart from excluding himself from having experienced discriminatory practices (as was discussed earlier), René also points out that these practices are highly visible in society through

different media channels. He argues that the political, historical, and economical contexts have shifted the stigma from targeting African Americans to people of Hispanic descent.

Mabel also points out the structural connotations of discriminatory practices towards Hispanic population in American society. She explains,

They don't want us here. I get the sense that (pause) right now the political climate in America is such that openly racist and you know we don't, I wish we had a louder voice. I wish that people would see the economic impact of not having us around. Because you know there's a...this pervasive idea that we should go away, I'm like, "do you know what that would do to your economy, if we went away, do you have any sense of," you know so I know there's an element of society out there that hates me, that could just hate me for being me, for being born. I'm not going to let that keep me from living a joyful existence from doing meaningful work. I think as long as I have just a few people who are like, who could touch base with you, who could say, "yes you're doing the right thing," then I'll be fine. I can navigate that world.

This last discursive set elaborates on how Hispanic faculty members recognize this social power imbalance and recognize that regulations aimed and inclusion such as affirmative action and diversity initiatives in general are still a necessity. In this context, Hispanic professors elaborate on their (a) perceived privilege through the professorial shield, and (b) perceived legitimacy of affirmative action. The last part of this theme seeks to explicate the process of negotiation Hispanic professors experience in order to make sense of their positions in society.

Perceived privilege through the professorial shield.

Pierre Bourdieu (1988) discussed the existence of elite academic circles and stratified hierarchies in institutions of higher education. As such, Bourdieu argues that academic elitism has different dimensions that involve cultural capital, professorial authority, inherited and acquired capital, academic capital, research capital, intellectual capital, and economic and political capital (pp. 39-40).

Hispanic professors are privileged with many of these resources. Many of them have built a strong research agenda supported by numerous publications (research capital), received public

recognition (intellectual capital), and received teaching honors (professorial capital), to name a few. On the other hand, as discussed earlier, Hispanic professors may lack inherited capital (ethnic minority background) or cultural and political capital (Smith, Wolf, & Busenberg, 1996). They are therefore aware of the disadvantages that their ethnicities represent as well as the privileges that being in academia brings, as Carolina explains,

But here you are the professor, so you have some protection. We used to say, when I was working in Italy and we were educators in the communities we had a phrase that says ‘put your teaching apron on’ it’s like a shield, it’s a protection, you are the professional and the others are the patients, so you are always in some other place. We are super protected being professors.

The shield that Carolina mentions is precisely that academic and professorial capital that Bourdieu introduced. It is a type of social and occupational mobility (Levine, 1976; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) that allows professors’ identity -consciously or unconsciously- to shift away from their ethnic identity.

The protection provided by the ‘ivory tower’ allows Hispanic professors to remain insulated from the societal discriminatory practices that they have observed. To continue the ivory tower metaphor, Hispanic professors witness prejudice and discrimination from their comfortable privileged faculty positions. Indra is aware of this situation,

Here, you get a lot of farm hand immigrants, or immigrant laborers that travel around the country depending on the crop. That is a very different kind of Latino than me or another professor, or a student who comes in from Mexico as an upper-class international. So there are all these people and they all get treated differently

Elena agrees,

Ok here’s the thing. I continue to be really privileged and really lucky because I have not for myself experienced discrimination. So when I hear stories of racial or other kinds of prejudices, sexuality prejudices or really any kind of discriminatory incidence, I’m still shocked, which you’d think I wouldn’t be by now, but I am. I feel like I’m very lucky in my own personal experience. Maybe it’s because I am a professor... but I have absolutely no doubt that Latinos face a lot of challenges in the work place. But I have to add that those are not ones I’ve felt.

Elena recognizes that she is in a privileged position due to her status as a faculty member. Even though she is not certain her academic identity shields her from discrimination, she acknowledges that her status is at least a viable explanation for the absence of prejudiced experiences. Vicky has a similar perspective,

Vicky: And I feel like that's kind of analogous to what's going on here, at least with me personally. And it's probably shaped by the fact that I'm a faculty member as opposed to, I don't know, somebody else, a student or staff or someone.

Author: You think it would be different?

Vicky: Oh, yeah, I mean, I would guess so. I mean, there's – although I guess in the streets people don't know who I am or whatever, but I feel like on campus I'm probably recognized now as a professor, although I don't know how much that carries outside of campus.

Once again, Vicky implies that the ‘ivory tower’ protects Hispanic professors from experiencing discrimination. However, when this shield is not present, they are exposed to the same treatment as any other Hispanic. Unlike race and ethnicity, academic credentials and class status in general cannot be physically observed; therefore academic privilege is mostly present in the university context. Ernesto provides a clear example,

But people ask me, and you can see in their face, when they say what do you do. I don't tell them I'm a professor, I say I work at []. And you can see they don't know how to ask you whether you clean the garden, or you're a professor right.

According to participants, the social mobility that academia provides only functions behind the walls of the ivory tower, once professors are not protected by such walls, they are exposed to experience the same type of discriminatory practices that non academics experience.

This occupational and social mobility is not initiated by the professors, at least not consciously. Rather, this status privilege comes with the moment they become part of a university faculty. Tajfel and Turner (1979) argue that social mobility is one of the strategies

low-status group members can use to achieve a positive identity: “individual mobility implies disidentification with the erstwhile in-group” (p. 43) and an increasing sense of identification with higher-status group members. Interestingly, Hispanic professors may not necessarily be consciously trying to reach a higher status, but their professorial identities naturally place them in a path of upward mobility. Once achieved, they instantly become separated from their ethnic groups as a result of their academic memberships. Of course, as mentioned earlier, once they join academia they are faced with other levels of elitism that put them in disadvantaged places.

Perceived legitimacy of affirmative action.

Affirmative action relies on the premise that making discrimination illegal was not sufficient to compensate non-dominant populations because of the discriminatory practices in economic, educational, and labor contexts (Cox, 1991). Moreover, since these programs were designed to help compensate past discrimination towards individuals based on their race or ethnicity, they were also intentionally instructed to target and consider such populations (Cox & Blake, 1991).

It is exactly for these reasons that affirmative action policies have been the target of much criticism (Leonard, 1996). The primary line of attack against such policies is that, instead of helping reduce discrimination among women and minorities, affirmative action has induced discrimination against white males. Other lines of criticism posit that affirmative action, and diversity programs in general, are just a superficial attempt to even out demographics statistically, but do not make genuine attempts to address the root problems of discrimination and racial bias.

As actual and potential beneficiaries of affirmative action, Hispanic professors perceived these policies to be both necessary and fair. Raquel explains,

I think they're absolutely necessary. I think that they counter an entire legacy of exclusion in institutions of higher learning but also across our society. I think that if we look not just at the rising middle class, people of color who are coming into the middle class, but if we really look at our economic situation and how much and many of our communities are not only not having access to education but who are just being incarcerated instead of being educated, I just think that there is no way we can stop those kinds of programs. There's no way we can really pretend that they're no longer necessary.

Raquel advocates these policies because she perceives the need for more progress to be made in terms of balance and equality until discriminatory practices embedded in society for years finally cease to exist. Another way to look at this argument is presenting a counter perspective. In other words, how would this be if these policies were not in practice anymore? Sofia answers that question,

I also feel that in terms of employment though I do think that we're all qualified. I do think in that sense because we have all gone through a PhD process that I do think it's necessary to push that because if it was left without those initiatives, I don't think people would hire as many minorities. That's the truth, I just don't think they would. And it's sad but I think precisely because of that fear of new perspectives, new ideas, the anxiety it causes, you might say something offensive, and they might tell you its offensive. I think people don't want to be uncomfortable. So I think without those measures, I really think people wouldn't get hired. They wouldn't, to be quite honest.

Sofia indicates that the absence or possible end of affirmative action policies would be bad news for Hispanic professors because there would not be any legal guidance advocating for the underrepresented minorities in higher education populations, either in student bodies or in university faculty. In a way, it would represent a digression to the patterns of inequality that existed before these policies took place. Indra agrees,

Well I think they are very necessary. Once there is equality and diversity you don't need them anymore. It's like women studies; you don't need a department of women's studies when everybody takes gender seriously. But you only need it because a lot of people don't and so you still need to study these things. But I think they are very necessary, affirmative action is a very good program, and it's a necessary program. So I am not against affirmative action at all, I think we should support it.

Indra's criticism presupposes that affirmative action policies are only necessary because even with the existing inclusion parameters, Hispanics and non-dominant population in general are still far away from obtaining recognition and equal labor and education opportunities. As Oscar points out,

These policies are extremely positive and necessary. As I mentioned earlier, any type of affirmative action policy may help someone get in the door but will not help them in their performance or being able to finish, if it's an educational program. It's that simple. Many people have so much of a problem with affirmative action, yet, it is only affecting a miniscule percentage of people in higher education or in the employment workforce. If affirmative action were really doing as much as people thought it was, then, there would be minorities in all kinds of positions and in all kinds of educational programs and they're not.

Even though Oscar is advocating for affirmative action, he is also aware that these policies do go very far. In other words, if these policies were working, members of the Hispanic population would not find it as difficult to attain and remain in higher education (Chapa, 2005). As Vicky explains,

Vicky If you just look at the education statistics and see who's in graduate school, who's graduating, who's an undergrad and who's graduating, you'll still see that it's still a very small minority and it's definitely underrepresented, with respect to those populations percentage in the population.

Author: So why do you think is that?

Vicky: Well, because these issues persist. In the workplace, issues persist in terms of discriminatory practices. In education, it's a little more complex because so much of a function of higher education is your previous education, and so there, you get into a number of other issues.

Thus, the reality is that the Hispanic population is still very much underrepresented even with the normative support provided by affirmative action policies and diversity initiatives. Chapa (2005) argues that this problem is cyclic insofar as the underrepresentation starts in the lower rates of

Hispanics attending and finishing high school and is perpetuated at each successive level of the higher education pipeline. Oscar echoes Chapa's concern,

I mean, there are so many more complexities in that situation, so that I think affects a lot of the educational realm. But then, of course, the education affects the professional, right, so in terms of being able to even get the sufficient education to be in a position to get into a professional position. The cycle is definitely there, and then, the cycle definitely continues. I mean, of course, there's improvements. It's not what it was 40 years ago. It's not like it was 50 years ago. It's not like it was 30 years ago, but it's also clearly not representative of the population in the United States. If it were, then, you'd expect that there should be 15 percent Hispanics in professional positions, 15 percent Hispanics in college and in graduate school. You'd expect 13 or 14 percent African American in the same places, and so on and so on, but that's just not the case.

Oscar once again reinforces the underlying idea that these policies, though not as effective as they should be, are at least impeding a regression in time by trying to include a population that is growing at the most rapid rate among the other non-dominant minorities.

However, Hispanic professors are not so naïve to oversee the lack of effectiveness of affirmative action policies. In fact, they recognize that discrimination is rooted in deeper and wider contexts. As Julia argues,

I am pro affirmative action even though I do think that it's probably like a band-aid solution; that the problems are much more systemic and deeper than it can really address; the question of why it's like that aside from policies that explicitly exclude people of color from higher education. When we removed those policies why do we still see these educational disparities? Why are the poorest schools the ones in black and brown communities; why do we see that? Also beyond affirmative action and addressing the root causes of racial oppression and economic injustice. Until we do that, this is sort of what we see; we can bring students from El Barrio into like college classrooms but if we then compare the rates of who finishes and who doesn't, we see that that's where the pipeline breaks down. So yes we need to have programs to get people in and to retain them, but it is not going to be effective if we're not also addressing these root causes.

Julia uses the figure of a 'band-aid' to explain that affirmative action policies are indeed necessary but certainly not enough to address a systemic problematic that has persisted over hundreds of years.

Thus, Hispanic professors are aware that affirmative action policies and programs need to be improved, so they address the problems of segregation and discrimination at deeper level. Ultimately, one more thing is clear, getting rid of such policies and regulations is not a step in the right direction if this society is genuinely interested in decreasing racial inequalities. However, not all Hispanic faculty members agreed on this issue. Leandro voiced his strong opinions about affirmative action. This negative case will be discussed next.

Conversely, Leandro was the only professor who pointed out flaws associated with affirmative action and categorically disagreed with the other Hispanic professors and argued against the existence of such programs. Leandro explains,

These programs should disappear. They are in my opinion with practical, personal, very close experiences useless. The diversity and affirmative action offices are under the control of the President and the Provost, they should be independent entities controlled by the federal government. If they take a decision they always check around and they make exceptions. They hire people that they shouldn't, they don't allow you to hire people when you don't have the power. Seriously if they disappear tomorrow, this university would not suffer. This university would not be better but it would not be worse.

Leandro was very outspoken about his position on this issue. The reasoning behind his argument lies in the bureaucratic mistreatment that some colleges apply to these types of regulations. He implies that administrations in higher education institutions are able to bend the rules to make them more convenient to their interests. In perspective, Leandro's argument resembles the criticism associated with affirmative action programs (see for example Edgewood vs. Kirby, 1989; LULAC vs. Clements; and Leonard, 1996 among others) that argue that affirmative action has not only slowed down egalitarian practices in American institutions but it has also generated more opportunities of discrimination for both non-dominant and dominant populations.

Leandro's disengagement is rooted on the poor way some institutions have used these policies. However, instead of making criticisms about the policies as the other professors did, Leandro downright opposes them. He argues,

The policies started from a good heart but nowadays they are just a complete mess, in academia they are as useless as they could be. The rules and regulations are very strict but if someone upstairs says 'can we have a waiver?' oh yes you can, and then if somebody else says 'can we have a waiver' oh no you can't. It's just bad. At the university level, they're just bad and I wish they could just go and sell cars because I don't agree at all with those policies.

It seems like Leandro is so firm in his negative opinion about affirmative action because he sees that the policies that once were created to help increase justice and equality are being used in the service of personal agendas.

Summary

This theme explicated Hispanic professors' perceptions about prejudice and discrimination. Specifically, Hispanic faculty members perceived prejudice and discrimination in different levels. First, they reported individual experiences of discrimination that ranges from experiences with stereotypes and tokenism to aversive racism and hidden prejudice. However, they also reported not having any direct experiences with more overt discriminatory practices.

Second, professors reported discriminatory practices at an institutional level. Specifically, they perceived difficulties in the tenure process, lower salaries than non-Hispanic professors, and problems with the universities' retention efforts. Third, Hispanic professors commented on the effects of racial prejudice and discrimination in a macro context. They acknowledged the presence of discriminatory practices in this society but also recognized the privilege they have as academics. In addition, they advocated for the legitimacy of affirmative action policies and diversity programs. They argued that although flawed, these policies are necessary to give

Hispanic minorities access to higher education. This theme also contemplates a negative case where a professor presents his reasons for his opposition towards these types of programs.

Ultimately, this theme unveils Hispanic professors' multi-layered perceptions of the process of de-legitimization but, most importantly, this theme also reveals the resistance strategies professors use in order to cope with these forms of discrimination. I will address the de-legitimization – resistance dynamics in my discussion chapter.

Discursive tensions about challenges in higher education

Research question three (RQ3) asked: *How do Hispanic professors discursively construct regular academic processes in higher education institutions?* In other words, how do professors frame the challenges and opportunities they face regarding standard processes in academia? By standard processes, I mean the activities and practices that regular faculty members face as part of their academic job descriptions. In response to this question, this theme investigates the ways being a faculty member translates into challenges and underlying tensions behind these processes. In specific, this theme articulates (a) discursive tensions in community relations, and (b) discursive tensions in professional relations. Ultimately, this theme explicates the complex and sometimes contradictory facets of Hispanic professors' experiences in academia.

Table 5. Discursive tension about challenges in higher education

Discursive Tensions	Sub-tensions	Example
Discursive tensions of professional processes	(a) Teaching apprehensions	<i>(a) "It's my favorite area to teach but it is also a hard area to teach especially if your teaching a largely white student body because you never know what the response is going to be"</i>

	(b) Mentoring ambivalences	<i>(b) "That's been a little tricky for me, the mentorship. I was assigned to a professor who is no longer here but she wasn't very good mentor. But you know, I was one of those people who went and found my own mentor"</i>
Discursive tensions of community relations	(a) Abundant colleagues, scarce friendships (b) Ambivalent discourses of diversity	<i>(a) "I have one guy here who I would consider to be my friend. Everybody else, mm, they're kind of friends but no"</i> <i>(b) "There are diversity policies but it hasn't changed that much in 15 years. It's moved up a little bit, but it hasn't changed all that much. The item is also you have to look at the pool of the state, right?"</i>

Discursive tensions in academic processes

Once Hispanic professors have made their way into a faculty position, they are socialized in regular academic processes familiar to all those in academia (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Publishing, teaching, and advising are only some of the processes associated with the job description of an academic. That is, Hispanic professors encounter a disconnect when enacting some of these practices. In particular, professors described points of tension that revealed (a) teaching apprehension, and (b) mentoring ambivalences.

Teaching apprehension

Diversity initiatives in higher education should be tested not only in recruitment efforts and diversity sensitivity programs but also in minority professor/student dynamics. The

individual levels of discrimination and prejudice discussed earlier are not only present among colleagues and peers but perhaps most commonly among the student body (Bavishi, Madera, & Hebl, 2010; Glascock & Ruggiero, 2006; Perry, Jones, Edwards, Acosta, & Frey, 2006).

Stereotyping and overt racism can become an obstacle when it comes to evaluating Hispanic professors' teaching abilities. In fact, Glascock and Ruggiero (2006) found that instructor's ethnicity was a factor in students' perceptions of teaching, caring, and competence. That is, students in predominantly white colleges, as the ones represented in this study, perceived their white instructors as more caring and competent than Hispanic instructors. Consistent with Glascock and Ruggiero's findings, Hispanic professors in this study struggled with their students. Abigail explains,

But I'm sure, you know like in the back of my mind there are instances, memories, of feeling that if I were a white guy this would not be happening to me. Particularly sometimes in teaching, sometimes students, might perceive you...
Like I remember in the past I have had a rather, well my students evaluations are okay, but I have had one person that was like, "her English is not too good." And I'm like well I'm Spanish professor, I'm not here to talk in English, you know? So that's kind of a who cares if my English is not too good. Because I'm not an English professor.

Abigail experiences the resistance that many other professors who have an accent face as well. First, she reported that even for her area of expertise, which happens to be her native language, Abigail is perceived as linguistically incompetent. Second, students do not infer that Hispanic professors teaching in higher education have gone through similar aptitude examinations as their white counterparts and somehow professors manage to receive more negative reviews on their teaching evaluations. As Carolina explains,

So they don't like because I don't speak perfect English, in some comments they say that it was hard to understand me when I spoke. And I had some students asking for some other professor or me even offering to change classes because they prefer to learn with an American.

Carolina's observations unveil a barrier and level of marginalization that Hispanic professors face. Students conflate apparent lower English proficiency and the presence of a thick accent with lack of expertise and poor teaching. In a way, this barrier represents a deeper and more serious problem. Bavishi, Madera, and Hebl (2010) describe occupational stereotyping as "a preconceived attitude about a particular occupation about people who are employed in that occupation, or about one's suitability for that occupation" (p. 246). As such, the prototypes of what constitutes an effective professor may privilege white males and leave out women and ethnic minorities, especially because the latter groups have been historically underrepresented in academic contexts.

Third, apart from the accent, Hispanics professors have a difficult time building credibility in the classroom. Credibility in an academic context is related to the competence, character, and level of caring of the instructor (Chory, 2007). All these three dimensions of credibility may be biased by the occupational stereotypes students have about Hispanic professors. Therefore, uncertainty about their students' response is something that these professors commonly experience. Pablo describes,

Yeah, it does especially when teaching about race and ethnicity. It's my area of research, it's my favorite area to teach but it is also a hard area to teach especially if you're teaching a largely white student body because you never know what the response is going to be. People think I have an agenda, so I am sure that it has some material effect.

In addition to uncertainty, resistance to material and lesson plans is also common, as Mabel describes,

I've encountered some opposition to information I present. Cause I've taught Latino politics and when I, for example I've discussed obstacles that Latino and other racial and ethnic minorities face when they try to vote and there's a long history of facing problems and there's still problems that they face when they have to vote. I give specific examples of [state] because I'm from there and I'll have students, just tell me point blank, "You're wrong I don't think that's happening." So it's hard, they don't wanna accept the information so they just disagree with me, so that's hard.

In both Mabel's and Pablo's examples, the struggle is with topics relevant to race and ethnicity. Fourth, instead of adding credibility, their ethnicity negatively affects the reception of subjects that introduce racial matters. These issues may be perceived as threatening to the students' identity and therefore they have a hard time disconnecting a controversial topic from the professor because, as Pablo pointed out, students may think that Hispanic professors are trying to use their classrooms to push agendas. Pablo is aware that this bias carries over into student evaluations. He argues,

I am sure that it works its way into student evaluations, I mean that is one of the things we know about student evaluations in general. Women and people of color tend to, you know, there is a general trend downward in those scores. Especially women of color are at one of the biggest disadvantages for those evaluation rubrics. I know that teaching subject matter it is difficult to deal with, I talk a lot about racism and construction of racial identity through the media and I know that rubs people the wrong way.

As demonstrated by Glasscock and Ruggiero (2006), Pablo's observation about negative effects of students' comments on Hispanic professors evaluations is not far from the reality. Moreover, ethnicity once again becomes a liability for professors who experience the consequences of these negative comments in short-term effects such as decrease in self-esteem and professional confidence, but also in long-term effects when these professors have to submit student evaluations as a part of their tenure portfolios.

However, Hispanic professors are aware that while white students may be the more numerous group of students, they are certainly not the only group. There are also students who belong to non-dominant populations and might therefore find their teaching more valuable than white students do. Paul explains,

On the flip side my Latinas, Latinos, and African American students are very happy that we're actually talking about these issues and are most engaged in the classroom when we are.

In a way, students from non-dominant populations feel identified with Hispanic professors because these students have probably experienced prejudice and discrimination themselves and find in the professors and their topics a legitimate channel to voice their concerns. Thus, instructor's credibility in academia depends in part on the composition of the student body. Unfortunately, academia remains a white dominated occupation, and this becomes an obstacle for Hispanic professors when it comes to attaining credibility and teaching confidence.

Mentoring ambivalences

Mentoring is the multidimensional process in which a more advanced practitioner helps a novice practitioner set and reach goals, and develop the skills necessary to succeed in a position (Healy, 1997). In an academic context, mentoring helps foster relationships among senior and junior colleagues, increase retention among faculty, and improve cooperation and cohesiveness, among other benefits (Girves, Zepeda, & Gwathmey, 2005; Schrodt, Cawyer, & Sanders, 2003). As such, mentoring processes can be very beneficial. In addition to bringing the mentee knowledge about specific skills, advice, encouragement, and feedback, mentoring processes give the mentor recognition and an expanded network of colleagues. Mentoring can be formal and informal. It can be part of a university's systematic plan or it can emerge as spontaneous relationship between two colleagues. In general, mentoring involves consistent support, direct assistance, and role modeling; mentoring also implies personal and close relationships among colleagues (Jacobi, 1991). However, mentoring programs, if not well thought out, can be a means of marginalizing minority populations (Ibarra, 1993; Ragins & Cotten, 1999). This is due to the difficulty non-dominant groups experience in establishing informal relations with colleagues and in empathizing with the mentors they are assigned to through formal channels (Ragins & Cotten, 1999).

In this context, Hispanic professors present their concerns regarding mentoring in higher education institutions. Pablo explains,

Since there are only 4% Latino faculty, when it comes time for junior faculty mentoring program, well, there aren't many of the Latino faculty that are able to be involved in that program because they are already being taken up with all kinds of service responsibilities around the university. I didn't even meet other Latino faculty on campus until this year, my second year here. I eventually found them and now I am part of the email list and all that stuff. Honestly, I do not know if that is all that unusual with many universities to be honest.

Pablo is right to imply that there are a lack of Hispanic professors who can serve as same-culture mentors and role models for junior faculty (Zellers, Howard, & Barcic, 2008). Moreover, those Hispanic professors who could mentor junior faculty members are usually overworked, as per the discussion of tokenism above, because they are sitting on committees to add diversity. In other cases, mentoring is simply absent, as Gladys examines,

There is an instructor that is very poorly treated here. She is a [...] instructor that hasn't had a raise in her salary since she was hired, but her workload increases every year, she's teaching more classes and doing more. Nobody mentors her, and I have heard a couple times, "oh we're going to fire her, she's no good." But if you haven't even invested in her, so she teaches [...] but has a budget of zero dollars to buy books. Those are things, yeah, there is a lot in there.

Gladys condemns the lack of support to a junior faculty member and implies that both formal and informal mentoring could make an important difference in the performance of this instructor. Schrodt et al. (2003) are in agreement with Gladys' denouncement insofar as instructors who received mentorships adapt better to their work environments.

Nonetheless, many of the institutions where these Hispanic faculty work do hold systematic mentoring programs in which junior faculty are assigned to experienced professors who share a common ground with the junior faculty and have gone through similar processes in terms of seeking tenure, publishing, and being an academic in general. McLaughlin (2010) argues that strong formal mentoring programs should include program goals, schedules, training,

and evaluation. Without these elements, mentoring programs are likely to fall apart and become little more than lip service. It is precisely this shallow approach to formal mentoring that Hispanic professors criticized. Vicky describes how she was assigned two senior faculty members as mentors but she is the one who is proactive about the mentoring relationship,

So I know it works differently in other departments but in [department] we're each given – each of us, meaning junior faculty who are untenured, two official mentors who are in your substantive areas so, senior faculty who are tenured that you're supposed to be able to go to for advice and I guess general mentoring. So I have two of those. I feel, and I've raised the issue that I feel like it's very much on a need basis and I'm the one who needs to raise the yellow or the red flag and say, "Hey, I'm over here, please pay attention," which is a little bit – I mean, I guess, to be expected but a little on the disconcerting side because I don't get check-ins. On the other hand, I would suspect the benefit of that is that no one's peeking over my shoulder and asking me about my progress on a weekly or daily basis.

So, I mean, the good side is they're there if I need them and if I raise my hand, so to speak, you know, and approach them for some time which usually involves I would say it involves a lunch or a coffee every semester, which I don't think is all that much but I also know that I'm self-motivated and I've been doing fine. So – but on the other hand, it would be nice if periodically I'd get a check in that were not motivated by me.

Vicky outlines some of the characteristics of formal mentoring. First, there is a formal component in the assignment process that paired her with professors who share some common understanding of her area of expertise. Second, Vicky also reports that eventual check ups do occur in the form of a lunch or a coffee. However, Vicky is also concerned about the effectiveness of her mentoring relations. As she points out, she would like more genuine and proactive monitoring from her mentors. After all, there is the assumption that formal mentoring is led by the mentor rather than by the mentee (Schrodt, et al., 2003).

Furthermore, Hispanic professors in these study reported being proactive about mentoring. They recognized that when formal mentoring was not working for them or when formal mentoring simply did not exist, they made sure to utilize other avenues to find the mentorship they needed. Sandra explains,

Not officially but there's always people that I trust more for that kind of advice. And officially, yeah, there are people that I can always ... but I don't have a mentor as an assigned mentor. That would have been really nice to have had that at the beginning, sort of like a couple of people to be assigned to. But I think also mentorships develop organically. It's not a matter of having it in place. Having it in place is nice, but you may end up having a better rapport with somebody else who becomes your mentor because you trust them.

Raquel also describes the alternative ways she used in order to find a better suit for her,

[Mentor] actually helped me a lot because previously I had a different mentor, and she wasn't really helping me get research done because like she had her own issues with research, and so didn't really want to talk to me about her research or my research and so [Laughter] And I wasn't good at asking questions about it, and so I felt really lost my first year and a half. So, I asked for another mentor 'cause at the end of my first year I realized no, this is not gonna work. This is not good. If I'm gonna get tenure, I need someone to help me. And so I asked – I said can I have two mentors and have just ... 'cause I was very gentle about it, right? 'cause I said can I just have like a teaching mentor and then can you get me a research mentor?

Raquel's account unveils another flaw of formal mentoring programs. Sometimes the assigned mentor/mentee pairs do not produce the expected results because there was not an interpersonal connection or personal rapport between the colleagues (Allen, Day, & Lentz, 2005; Wo, Foo, & Turban, 2008). Sofia also has a similar complaint about the weakness of formal mentoring, she describes,

That's been a little tricky for me the mentorship, and I have a story for that because in our department there has been a practice to assign a faculty mentor to incoming faculty. I was assigned to a professor who is no longer here but she wasn't very good mentor but you know I was one of those people who went and found my own mentor. Which happened to be my friend, [...]. Also other people like I have sought out for different projects, for different knowledge but I have also been in my own way vocal about the fact that the mentorship, didn't work for me necessarily and people should think about that a little more.

Sofia's comment is once again an example of professors being proactive about finding other avenues when their relationships with their official mentors do not work for them. However, in other instances, formal mentor/mentee pairs work perfectly, and the relationship surpasses the prescribed assumptions of the formal programs to become a natural and comprehensive

relationship that resonates more with Jacobi's (1991) description of mentoring processes. Indira describes her relation with her mentor,

Indira: Yes. [University] usually assigns you a mentor, so it's a more senior professor that already – that is already tenured, so has already gone like through the same process that I'm going. But it's not an informal thing, but the idea is that you go out for lunch once or twice per semester and you can ask him questions and he can also guide you through the process and you can discuss things about anything, like the class, your research, like how administrative work works.

Author: Yes. How's your relationship with your mentor?

Indira: Oh, it's really good. Like he's also of Hispanic descent – he's from Spain – and he's also my age, and he's – well, I guess he went through exactly the same process, so it's real easy to talk to him, he's really nice and supportive. He's very fun. So we became like close friends; we do things on the weekends, and we're neighbors also – so.

In Indira's case there is a personality empathy that is also supported by a cultural empathy, which is consistent with research on mentoring (Blancero & Del Campo, 2005; Ibarra, 1993) about the importance of having minority mentors who can empathize with junior faculty. This is true not only because they have been through a similar academic path but also because their cultural background has informed their experiences as a minority in academia. Sofia, for example, is very aware of the importance of having same-culture mentors because their experiences can have different nuances and complexities relative to the ones provided by a majority group mentor. She argues,

But in one of the faculty meetings when we were discussing the possibility of hiring someone, I made it a point to suggest, it's great about attracting diversity to the university but you have to keep them here and in order to do that you need to provide mentors of color, that they can also discuss with, because I said there is things that as women of color or however you want to call it, we go through that. And I said that actually in a meeting where there was a dean present, the dean that was present at the time and that was actually the arguments that were made by my department to hire this colleague.

As such, Sofia's observation echoes the call for more mentoring programs that include ethnic minorities in their processes. However, even though it is certainly important to have these types

of mentoring relationships, a more comprehensive plan would provide both majority and minority mentors the tools and motivations to guide, advise, and support both groups. In this way, mentors from minority groups would not feel overwhelmed with the mentoring process or overworked because of the many service commitments they face due to their ethnic membership.

Discursive tensions of community relations

As discussed in the last portion, academic integration is crucial for professors to succeed in their positions. However, social integration is an equally important aspect of professors' adaptation to their jobs. It is important that professors experience a climate in which they feel welcomed and supported. This next section outlines the discursive tensions Hispanic professors express when reflecting on their relations with the community. Specifically, this section focuses on certain disconnects that explain (a) abundant colleagues but scarce friendships, (b) networking limitations, and (c) ambivalent discourses of diversity. Ultimately, this portion seeks to consider the potential disconnect in the way Hispanic professors look at their relations with the academic community.

Abundant colleagues but scarce friendships.

Krackhard and Taylor (1986) argue that turnover does not occur randomly. Rather, social processes affect individuals' performance and self-esteem. In other words, a person's social embeddedness in their workplace is crucial to avoiding potential turnover. Similarly Katz and Kahn (1978) argue that the integration of an individual to a social group is usually the result of affective behaviors rather than role requirements. In this context, Hispanic professors implied an ambivalent position vis-à-vis their colleagues and academic community in general. On one hand, all professors described their departments and academic environment as very collegial and

friendly. However, on the other hand, they reported having a difficult time achieving more personal relationships.

Based on the professors' previous reflections on prejudice and discrimination, one would think that relations with their colleagues could be problematic. However, every one of the professors had nothing but positive things to say about their colleagues and their work environment. Vicky explains,

Sure, so I think on the whole in the positive aspect that this department is very collegial, which I think is great. Like I said, I got a number of job talks my first year out in graduate school and I felt like that was a very standard line of, "Oh, this is such a collegial department." But this was actually the only place that in interactions with people I actually felt that it was true.

Elena agrees,

I think our department actually has a very good climate. And I think it's one of the selling points of our department. We are an extraordinarily collegial department. We tend on the whole to be very supportive of each other. Even if people are doing different kinds of work or have different methodologies, they feel supported

Collegiality is the word that Vicky, Elena, and many of the professors (16 total) used to describe their departments. Collegiality has been discussed as "conducting oneself in a manner that does not impinge upon the ability of one's colleagues to do their jobs or on the capacity of one's institution to fulfill its mission" (Seigel, 2004, p. 411). As such, collegiality is typically associated with positive contributions to a good academic atmosphere and demonstrations of academic citizenship. In the case of Hispanic professors, this was no exception. In general, professors spoke very highly of their academic environments and the quality of colleagues they work with on a daily basis. In some cases this collegiality is part of the organic order of things. For example, Arturo describes,

So people tend to be fairly relaxed, and I think that's good. And my department tends to be generally collegial, and supportive. So for instance, we uh tend to want our colleagues to get tenure and uh are supportive I think in that way.

In others cases, members of the department have incorporated collegiality as a department value and a norm that every faculty should observe. Paco describes,

I actually, very few people know this and even the Dean has forgotten that we do have in our contracts a clause of collegiality. So one of our stated requirements of this department is that you get along, at least be civil. So being civil, or being collegial. Screaming and yelling and jumping across the table is not tolerated. I love that, it's the only place that I have been that has a clause like that. And that we do have that in writing, with all of us. So we all have a professional obligation to behave. And we do behave, I mean are we perfect no, we might have differences of opinions. (pause) there are moments that there are a little bit of high voices and you know some people would say yelling, but to me it's no more than a happy family has.

Even though incorporating collegiality as one of the norms and regulations in a department behavioral code may seem unusual, it also gives Paco a strong idea about the boundaries and common ground in the department; the same common ground that most Hispanic professors perceived in their departments. It was commonly understood that the right way to behave in their departments is to be good colleagues.

However, even after acknowledging a strong sense of collegiality, some participants also elaborated on the downside of such camaraderie. Sofia, for example, complains about the hypocrisy of her department's collegiality,

So that climate's definitely there and I think that the other thing is that my department is very collegial but there is also a false sense of collegiality. I think that there is a polite way of coercing. I have been told on certain occasions, which I hate, 'you want to be a team player don't you?' Which is a term or the notion of 'she's a good citizen.' Which is part of the university as a whole but when it's told to you in that way, it's kind of a silent threat.

Sofia interprets the collegiality in her department as a coercive strategy that seeks to make her behave in predetermined ways. In a way, Sofia has underlined the 'status quo' of her department where everybody knows what academic citizenship is and whoever does not obey those guidelines is not a good member of the department, is letting the 'team' down, or is simply not being a good colleague.

In general, Hispanic professors considered the collegiality in their departments a positive feature. Collegiality represents good standing in their academic networks and gives them confidence that they will not be treated unfairly. It can also represent an abundance of what Putnam (2000) calls bridging social capital, or the ‘weak ties’ (Granovetter, 1973) and loose connections individuals utilize to gain access to useful information or other types of external benefits (e.g., promotions, access to social circles, etc.). In this context, Hispanic professors perceive solid bridging ties in their departments. In a way, their positions as faculty members are indeed both a protection and a device to feel part of a cohesive group of people, an advantage that Ibarra (1993) opined was lacking for ethnic minorities and women in other work place contexts.

Nevertheless, Putnam also describes another type of social capital. Bonding social capital refers to the close relationships individuals use to gain social support and support for emotionally related issues. In the same way, Ibarra (1993) calls this type of social capital informal or emergent networks, networks in which relationships have a more flexible core and involve but are not restricted to work-related information, social interaction or a combination of both. These types of networks are driven primarily by self-interest.

In this context, Hispanic professors in this study did not report the same level of certainty than they used to describe collegiality in their departments. Instead, their reactions tended to be negative and unveiled a sense of unconformity with the way personal relations work in academic contexts. Sandra explains,

Most of my relationships are professional encounters, academic encounters, so there’s not a whole lot of socializing. I think if we were in a corporate world, there would be more of like lunches and dinners, and I think maybe in those contexts you get to see some of that a little more. But here it’s just what we do is pretty dry.

Gloria makes a similar observation but finds reasons in her cultural background that explain the lack of socializing in her department,

Everybody is very kept to themselves and I kind of miss socialization a little bit. Perhaps again I'm being unfair because since I don't live here, I finish my job and I go home to [...]. But you know, it depends on the person, on the beholder. To me, which I am very social and you know being Hispanic, ha-ha, that's a negative thing the lack of that kind of interaction. For somebody else this might be 'great, everybody leaves me alone, I have my job, I don't have to ha-ha, to waste time chatting, you know, by the water fountain for example.' But to me, yeah I miss that. Sometimes I leave and say oh my goodness I haven't talked to anybody but my students today. Without of course counting, 'hi, how are you?' 'Have a nice weekend.'

Gloria's account is an example of how cultural diversity may be a barrier of social integration insofar as the socializing practices of Hispanic individuals may be very different from the socializing practices in U.S academic contexts (Milliken & Martins, 1996).

Abigail presents another example of this difference in socializing practices. She makes it very clear that Hispanics have a unique way of relating to people. She explains,

Umm [the department] it's well organized. Everything is spelled out and people are very approachable and I think that's a big thing. I like that. Well, it's what it is. It is a department in the Midwest so it's very white. Umm, yeah I mean in the way... I mean when I say people are nice, they're friendly. The fact that I choose in my early answers the word friendly or nice to describe Americans is for cultural difference. Umm, I think that Latinos relate to each other on a very different level that umm is deeper than Americans display. That is a very hard question um, you know, like when you have a real friend or somebody you connect with or identify with culturally your goal is to know more about the other's life. You want to know how they feel about this or that, like you go deeper.

Consciously or unconsciously, Abigail is denoting a cultural difference between her ethnic groups and the ethnic group of the majority. Furthermore, she is privileging her ethnic group's way of socializing with and relating to people in general. Abigail implies that the collegiality and friendliness of her department is superficial because most the professors in her department are white and she finds shallowness in the way they relate to people.

Because these professors are usually the only Hispanic individuals in their departments, they may find it more difficult to relate on more personal levels, as Miguel explains,

I would – yeah, they're colleagues. We get together. We write research together. I review their work, they review my work. We meet, we have beer, we chat, we laugh. But I would never ask them to watch [...] I would never ask them to watch my house when I'm gone. I'd never ask them – I'm not even sure I'd ask them to cover my class for me. They're not my friends. I would never ask them to borrow money. I'd feel crazy – I'd feel kind of weird – they could ask me for help for moving, okay. But I wouldn't ask them for help.

Miguel lists a number of activities that are commonly practiced by both colleagues and friends, but somehow he makes the distinction that even though he does all these activities with his colleagues, it does not make them his friends. It seems like a particular connection or an additional step is missing in order for Miguel to consider these relations a friendship.

Laura has a similar feeling, although she has spent most of her life (50 years) in the town where she works, she still has a hard time relying on other people for favors. She opines,

But, I have to think twice before I ask for a favor, you know? Because it's – I know they would do it, but it's sort of different, and that's cost me a lot of anxiety. After 50 years. After 50 years. Sometimes, look, after 50 years, the other day, I came back from a trip, and my car wouldn't start, well, because the people who took care of my house forgot to start it, whatever. And I thought to myself, now what am I going to do? I have an appointment at 2:00 that I need to go to. The only thing I can do is to take a taxi. I called the taxi. It would take half an hour for them to get here. And see, I thought I would just go, right? So, no. So, I had – whom can I call? After 50 years here, I had no person that I could call, and I cried.

Laura's sad account once again supports the idea that Hispanic professors find it very difficult to transcend in their relations with colleagues. Even though all of them praised their departments for their collegiality and camaraderie, many of them also voiced their concerns about the lack of meaningful relationships; more specifically, those strong relations that provide emotional or substantive support.

Ambivalent discourses of diversity.

The importance of social integration in the experiences of Hispanic faculty members transcends their department's borders. As such, in the process of creating relations with the community, professors also pay attention to the demographic composition on their campuses and the diversity efforts their universities are making to change these demographics that, as demonstrated by national statistics (American Council of Education 2010), fall short when it comes to ethnic representation.

In this context, Hispanic participants reported a disconnect between their universities' reported diversity efforts and what they have observed on their campuses. In general, the professors' general consensus about their universities' diversity did not differ much from what is supported by statistics. The majority of Hispanic professors were aware of and had knowledge of the different programs and initiatives their universities had to diversify their campus. For example, Mabel describes one of the programs specifically targeted to Hispanic populations,

Yea, uh we hear what they try to do within that Latino [...]. So I forgot what it was called they had a group of people that got together that were both in the community and at the University level where they try to get them together and try to figure out what to do to try to increase Latino recruitment. I wasn't a part of that group so I would just hear background of what they had been talking about. There's also a program, again that I heard from the Latino [...], where they were work with incoming students and get them together and try to see if they have any questions or concerns. And make sure they know the programs that are available on campus.

Oscar gives another example of how professors are aware of the university's diversity programs,

I know some of them; probably not all of them. Since I have been here so long, in some cases, I've been asked to provide input or contribute to those. I'm familiar with the organizations on campus, diversity-type organizations. I know that people who are recruiting, "diversity recruiters." I know the people like [...] who are directly involved in this process. So I would say yeah, I'm pretty familiar.

Oscar and Mabel can describe some of their universities' diversity programs that usually, as many of the diversity initiatives in universities, focus on recruiting minority students. The

programs described by the professors are usually publicized through different media and they usually become an emblem of the university. Universities are mandated to incorporate equal opportunity and affirmative action programs, but they usually also take the initiative to develop diversity initiatives in order to attract more students and to enhance their image in the community in general.

Conversely, according to the professors, even though all their universities were currently implementing these programs, the change in demographics was rather underwhelming. As Elena highlights,

You know I think [University] needs to work harder on their student diversity and in particular on their diversity of recruiting of Latino students because we are...the statistics for the [University] student body are under the statistics for the state of [State]. So that says to me that we're not doing a good enough job of appealing to that demographic

All of the professors were very vocal about the lack of diversity and especially, the lack of Hispanic population in their campuses. Pablo argues,

Often times diversity gets translated broadly into like an international education, so they do programs in China and stuff like that without thinking as much about the diversity in our backyard. We live in a town, the city of [...], which is 26%, Latino/Hispanic with 12.5% students that have that background. It's like we have got tons of Latino students here in the area, so why aren't we recruiting them better because we're not. They do not do a good job of tracking Latinos once they get to campus, either to help ensure there is retention and things like that.

Pablo unveils how simplistic many of these diversity initiatives are. His observation echoes Glover, Mynatt, and Schroeder (2000) insofar as he implies that it is not uncommon for diversity programs to be just a "lip service" without dealing with the problem in depth. Sofia joins this line of argument as well,

I think [University] has a long way to go. And I think they know that, to a point. I like I have said some of the things I have mentioned through out this interview at various times, this notion of I think their understanding of diversity needs to be expanded. I think it is very minimal and very basic. I think it satisfies an immediate need to say we're doing

this and this and that but like I said the diversity needs to exist on various levels not just you recruit, because people aren't staying.

Sofia agrees with the premise that universities usually have these types of diversity initiatives because they would look bad otherwise, but if universities are genuinely interested in integrating minorities into their student and faculty body, they need to start developing more comprehensive plans than the one Indira describes here,

Like one of the things that annoyed me a little bit was that there was a new faculty reception, and when I went there they kept – or it wasn't new faculty, but it was one of these receptions from the beginning of the year. I could see that they kept taking photos of me and two Chinese people that are here. And I'm completely sure that it was just because they wanted to show that they had hired diverse people. That's something that I find annoying in a way that I think it's great that they hire diverse people, but then they should hire diverse people instead of just taking pictures of the three only diverse people that they hire.

With these examples, Hispanic professors are unveiling the disconnect that exists between their universities' discourses of diversity and their actual initiatives to take ethnic underrepresentation in higher education as the serious problem it is.

Summary

This theme explicated Hispanic professors' discursive constructions of the regular academic processes in higher education. Specifically, this theme considered the tensions and disconnects present in professional and community relations. First, Hispanic professors reported having a difficult time dealing with teaching processes because their credibility and expertise are put in the spotlight and they are evaluated on the basis of their ethnicities. In addition, they struggled with the formal mentoring processes but found informal and alternative ways to establish a relationship with their mentors.

Second, Hispanic professors described having excellent colleagues and an overall satisfying collegial environment in their departments, but conversely, they complained about

having a difficult time transcending to more personal relationships. Finally, Hispanic professors denounced the existing disconnect between their universities' diversity initiatives and the actual diversity in the student and professorial body.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore Hispanic professors' experiences in academia. Specifically, I was interested in learning more about their perceptions of prejudice and discrimination in institutions of higher education; their approach to the processes associated with the academic profession; and the way they negotiate their identities as both members of a non-dominant group and members of a faculty body. In general, the purpose of this research project aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the positionality of Hispanic professors in higher education and draw conclusions that can potentially explicate the issues that the literature has unveiled about Hispanic professors in academia. In addition, this study sought to enter a conversation about diversity in the workplace and, as such, has theoretical implications for the study of diversity in organizational communication as well as for practitioners who seek to increase diversity in organizational settings. In this chapter, I provide a summary of my findings, present a discussion of how these findings are interconnected and subsequently tied to the 'big picture,' and I pull together the three findings of this study in order to establish theoretical contributions. I also consider the limitations of this project followed by the theoretical and pragmatic implications. Finally, I conclude this chapter with guidelines for future directions about the study of Hispanic professors in higher education.

Summary of Findings

In answer to my RQ1: *What discursive strategies do Hispanic faculty use to construct and negotiate their identities as minority members in institutions of higher education?* This study found that Hispanic professors developed two main strategies to negotiate their identities. First, they maintain a dual identity that allows them to successfully operate as faculty members and as members of an ethnic minority. In addition, Hispanic professors elaborated innovative strategies in order to cope with eventual threats to their ethnic identities. In general, these two strategies highlight the fluidity of professors' identities and their distinctive reflectivity about their positions as members of non-dominant groups in a context that has been historically dominated by those who are white.

In answer to my RQ2: *How do Hispanic faculty members perceive prejudice and discrimination in higher education institutions?* This study found that Hispanic professors perceived different types of prejudice and discrimination. In other words, prejudice and discrimination towards minority faculty members are visible at multiple levels. Specifically, professors reported individual experiences through the use of stereotypes, tokenism, and subtle remarks; they reported discrimination at the organizational level through the hardships of tenure attainment, lower salary, and retention problems; and they acknowledge that discrimination and prejudice are problems that are still at the heart of the structure of society and that there is therefore still the need to conserve Affirmative Action and diversity programs. Ultimately, this theme outlined two important findings. First, professors reported different forms in which their legitimacy as faculty members is threatened in micro, meso, and macro levels but most importantly, they also reported ways in which they attempt to resist these threats.

In answer to my RQ3: *How do Hispanic professors discursively construct regular academic processes in institutions of higher education?* This study found that the professors' discourses reflect tensions in two particular areas. First, they reported difficulties in professional processes such as teaching and mentoring. Second, they reported tensions in the way personal relations occur in academia. Ultimately, this theme highlights that their ethnic group membership is still present in the way professors perform in their professions but also in the way they relate interpersonally with different people.

Analytical Discussion

The first theme presented two main strategies used by Hispanic faculty members in order to negotiate their identities as minority professors in academia. These two strategies unveil a common denominator; they both seek to face the existing dissonance that professors encounter when negotiating their identities. In other words, professors used these two strategies when they perceived inconsistencies in the way they negotiate their identities. Hogg (2006) mentions that mainly two processes motivate social identity: self-enhancement and uncertainty reduction. In the case of Hispanic professors, they use a dual identity moved by these two motivations. However, when their Hispanic identity did not allow for self-enhancement or uncertainty reduction, they opted to use their professor identity. In that way, their social identity became fluid, flexible, and instrumental insofar as they could shift between both of them when one of the identities, usually the Hispanic, was generating uncertainty or acting as a threat to their self-esteem. Moreover, the dual identity strategy highlights the utilitarian aspect of Hispanic professors' identity negotiation process.

Professors shift between both identities because they aim to enhance their self-esteem and avoid any stigma associated with either of their identities. By identifying with both their own and

the majority group, mentoring both minority and majority students, and performing to the standards set by the majority, Hispanic professors are demonstrating that they are proficient and comfortable with both identities and they have little difficulties letting both identities co-exist. This finding is in line with Crocker's (1999) insofar as she argues that low self-esteem is a product of contextual situations rather than a product of a fixed characteristic. In that way, professors used the identity that helped them maintain or enhance their self-esteem in the pertinent context.

However, when the use of a dual identity is not enough to avoid a threat to their self-esteem, Hispanic professors developed innovative ways to cope with the dissonance regarding being minority members in a mostly majority-dominated context. Therefore, instead of avoiding the threat, as they tried to do by performing a dual identity, Hispanic professors faced these threats by developing novel ways to make sense of their identities without losing any self-esteem. Harwood, Giles, and Palomares (2005) argue that social creativity constitutes an alternative approach to improving a negative social identity. In this case, the identity threats that Hispanic professors experience originate from latent and constant feelings of illegitimacy that surround their roles as professors and are directed by the subordinate status of their ethnic group.

Nevertheless, these professors redefine the negative dimensions ascribed to their ethnic identity by downplaying prejudice and interpreting discriminatory comments humorously; they create new dimensions of comparison with the majority group by highlighting positive distinctions that are natural to their ethnic group; and they reframe outgroup comparisons by rationalizing their qualifications and arguing for their legitimacy. Contrary to what other existing literature argues about identity negotiation strategies (Jackson, Sullivan, Harnish, & Hodge, 1996; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Van Knippenberg & Van Oers, 1984), this research project did not

find dual identity and social creativity to be a collective strategy. Instead, such strategies originated in an individual effort to enhance one's self-esteem and reduce dissonance regarding unprivileged group memberships.

Furthermore, one of the unresolved conceptual issues that Hogg (2006) considers about Social Identity Theory is whether identities are "hydraulically related to one another, so the more one identity prevails, the less others do" (p. 127). Research on the subject show mixed results: on one hand, Mullen, Migdal, and Rozell (2003) and Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell (1987) suggest that identities are symmetrically related and as one prevails, others succumb. On the other hand, Mullen (1991) proposed an asymmetric identity activation where one identity prevails over the others. In this project, professors seemed to comfortably navigate both identities without major difficulties.

Similarly, this finding attunes with some organizational communication theorists (Ellingson, 2009; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005) who suggest that the 'self' and subsequently one's identities are multidimensional and work as a 'crystal' since they are not monolithic traits but instead they possesses many complexities and nuances depending on the context in which they develop. In the case of Hispanic professors, such complexity comes to the surface when they shift back-and-forth and in-and-out of whatever identity works better for them. Instead of implying a tension between both identities, there exists a feeling of fluidity and flexibility in the way professors manage their ethnic and professional identity.

Moreover, this theme presents the underlying and constant state of self-reflexivity in which Hispanic professors operate. That is, these strategies are only the product of the relentless reasoning process that these professors undergo because of their minority status. In contrast, because of their privileged position, professors of the majority or dominant group are less

inclined to reflect on their group's status (Leach, Snider, & Iyer, 2002) or to think of themselves in terms of their group membership (Kim-Ju & Liem, 2003; Pinel, 1999). Hispanic professors do have this sense of group awareness and have repeatedly experienced the consequences of belonging to a devalued minority group. Consequently, they experience a constant threat of becoming targets of prejudice and discrimination, as I will discuss on the finding of the second theme.

The findings from the second theme enhance our understanding of social identity theory by considering Hispanic professors' perceptions about prejudice and discrimination. Specifically, professors perceived prejudiced and discriminatory behaviors at different levels. The importance of this level differentiation lies in the amount of awareness these professors have to identify prejudice and discrimination in different instances.

The underlying assumption across the three levels described (micro, meso, and macro levels) is particularly important, that the different forms of discrimination and prejudice are perceived by professors as de-legitimizing forces against them. This level-based distinction has also been mentioned by other authors (Cox, 1993; Padilla, 1995). In a way, Hispanic professors carry what Goffman (1963) defined as stigma or "the process by which the reaction of others spoils normal identity" (p. 3). According to Goffman, stigmatization is a process of devaluation of an individual who possesses a deviant attribute. Ethnic and racial minority groups can also be considered as deviant for they do not form part of the majority groups. Stigma arises during a social interaction when an individual's social identity does not meet society's normative expectations of the attributes the individual should possess (Kurzan & Leary, 2001).

Thus, individuals' social identity is spoiled, and they feel disadvantaged when expected to fulfill the requirements of society. Vaan Laar and Levin (2004) believe that repeated negative

interactions where stigma is present lead members of a group to anxiously anticipate a similar treatment in future situations. Therefore, Hispanic professors are in a permanent vigilant state and have become very attuned to any sign of prejudiced and discriminatory behavior. For example, when considering the micro-level findings, Hispanic professors reported that they constantly experienced stereotypes associated with their ethnicity. It is possible that many of those stereotypes come with stigmas and misguided notions about Hispanics.

As such, these stereotypes affect Hispanic faculty members insofar as they erode the trust necessary to believe that they will be treated without any bias. On the contrary, professors have become accustomed to being wary of behaviors that may lead to stereotypes that can undermine their professional roles as academics. In addition to this developed sense of vigilance, Hispanic professors also developed tactics to cope with threats from stereotypes. First, in agreement with Stephan and Stephan (2001), professors managed dissonance to challenge stereotypes and employed disconfirming behaviors as a way to unfit the stereotype. That is, some of their behaviors were inconsistent with the customary views about Hispanics held by whoever engaged in stereotyping. Second, Hispanic professors agreed to sometimes fit the stereotypes associated with their ethnic group (e.g., opinionated, outspoken), however, they did not take such stereotypes as a negative threat to their identities and resolved to embrace these behaviors that ultimately enhanced their identities.

On a second micro-level of perceived prejudice and discrimination, Hispanic professors also reported being watchful of the occasions they were being used as tokens or as representatives of their ethnic group in order to satisfy shallow diversity initiatives. In the case of tokenism, more than any other micro-level perception of discrimination, professors seemed to be especially vigilant and weary of any behavior that could make them feel utilized solely because

of their ethnicity (Kanter, 1977; Umbach, 2006; Yoder, 1991). Just as with stereotyping, Hispanic professors incorporated tactics to counter the potential negative effects that tokenism may have in their identities. For example, they embraced being used as tokens, as representatives of their ethnic groups, or as members of diversity quotas as long as these appointments represented some type of privileged positions. In other words, if their ethnicity was a tool to advance and have access to classified information, face time with people in higher positions, or any advantage in their career or research, professors did not object being tokens. In a way, this tactic could be an additional social creativity strategy in order to maintain positive self-esteem and enhance their group identity.

However, in the third micro-level of perceived prejudice and discrimination, Hispanic professors could not quite identify the instances in which they were being discriminated against. Instead, they elaborated on the subtleness of some of these practices. In this way, professors in this study echo Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, and Hudson (2003) when they argue that contemporary racism is usually and sometimes unconsciously camouflaged behind otherwise egalitarian behaviors. Much research has demonstrated this subtle type of discrimination (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; Gaertner, Dovidio, Banker, Rust, Nier, Mottola, & Ward, 1997). Considering the intangibility of this form of discrimination, Hispanic professors were unable to develop a tactic that would allow them to control and manage these practices. Instead, this scenario generated uncertainty among professors since they were still wary of discriminatory behavior against them but could not target specific instances and therefore they were incapable of developing devices to resist such a threat to their identities.

Conversely, Hispanic professors used that same self-reflexivity and social awareness that allowed them to identify instances of prejudice and discrimination to craft one more tactic in

order to maintain a positive identity. In this case, professors excluded themselves from any personal instance of discrimination. It may sound contradictory after they have reported such sharpness in detecting those types of negative behaviors but this also constitutes yet another tactic to protect, maintain, and enhance their self-esteem.

Broadly, considering that prejudice and discrimination can have a negative effect on performance and motivation among the receivers of these behaviors (Marx, Brown, & Steele, 1999), professors have incorporated different tactics to avoid these negative effects. In the case of stereotyping, tactics included disconfirming behaviors and embracing the stereotypes that enhanced professors' self-esteem. In the case of tokenism, the tactic involved taking advantage of it only if it meant an advantage in accessing privileged places, classified information, and influential people. In situations where no advantages were involved, professors felt powerless and manifested discomfort.

However, even though all professors reported the presence of aversive discrimination, they were unable to develop a tactic that would keep their self-esteem from being affected. Perhaps the subsequent self-exclusion process is intrinsically related to the uncertainty generated in the professors' minds about not being able to identify discriminatory behaviors. As a result they opted for leaving themselves out of personal and direct encounters with these types of behaviors.

All these tactics can be directly tied to the social creativity strategy discussed earlier in the first finding of this research project. Moreover, these tactics once again confirm the individual motives of resisting and disconfirm what other authors argue regarding the collective effort of such strategies (Jackson, Sullivan, Harnish, & Hodge, 1996; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Van Knippenberg & Van Oers, 1984). Instead these tactics originate from the individual necessity to

cope with threatening situations and maintain a positive social identity even in moments where prejudiced and discriminatory behaviors can be intimidating.

Perceived prejudice and discrimination at the meso-level presented a slightly different picture regarding Hispanic professors' locus of control. Specifically, professors communicated that they have more difficulties obtaining tenure and achieving equal salaries. Furthermore, they identified problems with the retention of non-dominant faculty at their universities. Their concerns about organizational inequalities may not be unfounded. For example, when it comes to applying for tenure, professors may be in disadvantaged positions since academia is primarily composed of professors from the majority group. Bourdieu (1984) points out that the selection, culling, and molding of junior faculty is an ongoing exercise of power in academia; therefore, Hispanic faculty members and minority professors in general do not have the same type of power simply because there is inequality in the numbers and level of influence these professors have in the tenure and promotion committees.

In this level, the tactics and strategies developed at the micro-level do not find a home. On the contrary, there was a frustrated feeling underlying all these denouncements, a sense of an inability to react and resist the structural discrimination that is embedded in academia. In this level, their group membership was not used as an advantage and as a coping mechanism to confront discriminatory behaviors as it did in the micro-level, but it was taken as a liability that costs these professors consequences of big magnitudes.

These denouncements also highlight the underlying thread in the findings of this research project, namely that Hispanic professors feel that their positions are in constant danger of being illegitimated. This is especially true at the institutional level where it is out of the range of possibilities for professors to individually react to the injustices presented when Hispanic

professors apply for tenure, receive lower salaries, or experience difficulties adapting to an academic community (Mindiola, 1995; Padilla, 1995).

In the same vein, these Hispanic professors felt that behaviors of discrimination and prejudice could be traced back to a higher level of structural discrimination. Therefore, the last level of these findings addresses the macro component of Hispanic professors' perceptions of prejudice and discrimination. According to these professors, racism in the United States still remains a powerful force that shapes how Hispanics are treated. Political, economical, and historical events make this force even more powerful and influential in how majority members treat Hispanics. In that way, professors reported generally unfair treatment to Hispanics in different contexts: from being observed and judged at the supermarket, being categorized under certain job practices, to being blamed for taking over the workforce in the U.S. In this societal context, Hispanic professors once again demonstrated the already discussed self-reflexive process to identify when they, or other members of their ethnic group, were experiencing prejudice and discrimination, but they also reported feeling that they were fighting a battle greater than themselves.

As a result, Hispanic professors once again developed ways to counteract the identity threats experienced as a product of the prejudice and discrimination embedded in society. First, professors reported being protected from the discrimination and prejudice other Hispanics experience because of their positions as faculty members from an institution of higher education. As mentioned in the results section, Hispanics professors use their academic status as a shield that will keep them from facing to more blatant discriminatory practices. As such, this professorial shield could represent one of the reasons why these faculty members were excluding themselves from discrimination in the micro-level discussion.

This professorial shield gives professors enough permeability of group boundaries to allow them the realistic possibility of being observant actors of discrimination as opposed to recipients of such behaviors. Even though Hogg (2000, 2006) and other authors (see for example Abrams & Hogg, 2004; Hogg & Terry, 1995, 2000; Hornsey & Hogg, 1999) would disagree that in this case the professorial shield is an example of social mobility (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) insofar these professors are not consciously disassociating with their own ethnic group in order to gain acceptance as members of a higher status group, at the very least the privilege brought by a professorial identity allows professors to avoid identity threats associated with their Hispanic identity and the subsequent negative experiences produced by prejudiced and discriminatory behaviors.

Therefore, the professorial shield could certainly function as a strategy of social creativity for Hispanic professors to cope with negative identity threats or as a dual identity strategy in order to avoid such negative threats. However, this professorial shield could also represent a less permanent strategy of social mobility than the one it has been discussed by the Social Identity Theory scholars mentioned earlier. Instead, this type of mobility has an occupational tint and allows Hispanic professors to buffer negative threats to their identity by providing a shield. However, this occupational mobility does not drag Hispanic professors away from their ethnic identities since at no point do professors report a conscious distance from their permanent group memberships.

Similarly, Hispanic professors criticized the presence of prejudice and discrimination in a macro-level and strongly advocated for the retention of affirmative action and diversity programs that help counter the embedded character of these discriminatory behaviors in different societal arenas. As such, the strong defense of those programs resonates with a third identity negotiation

strategy proposed by SIT scholars (Hogg, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986) associated with the idea of social change. In other words, a collective strategy where a group, or at least the majority of its members, embarks on a process of challenging the status quo in order to advocate of a social good (Klandermans, 1997). Hispanic professors strongly believed that if it were not for these types of policies, the situation with Hispanics would be much worse than it is presently.

Even though professors are not engaging in protesting activities, their full endorsement of affirmative action and diversity initiatives represents a firm step towards the social change that originally motivated scholars to think about Social Identity Theory (Fielding & Hogg, 2000; Williams, Karau, & Bourgeois, 1993). Therefore, in this case professors do not have to experience prejudice and discrimination to believe that these are real problems at a societal level. It is once again their sharpness and self-reflexivity that makes them attuned to the injustices faced by other members of their ethnic group. Therefore, they engage in a collective exercise of solidarity and social support. In a way, the professorial status places them in a privileged place where they have access to resources (e.g., committees, material goods, etc) to voice their opinions about the crucial role of these programs.

In sum, the second theme confirms and connects with the findings presented in the first theme. In other words, Hispanic professors are faced with identity threats at different levels. As reaction and coping mechanisms, they develop innovative ways to deal with these threatening situations resonating with the social creativity strategy explicated in the first finding and discussed at great length by other Social Identity Theory scholars. In addition, the self-reflexivity found in the first theme enables Hispanic professors to not only develop identity negotiation strategies but to also engage in collective repudiation of social inequality towards other Hispanics and subsequent advocacy of diversity programs.

Finally, the third finding of this research project explicated the tensions experienced by Hispanic professors with the regular process of the academic appointment. Broadly, professors experienced difficulties with both professional and personal relationships. In the professional realm, professors struggled with the perceptions that their students have about their credibility and authority in the classroom. They also reported difficulties with formal mentoring programs insofar as most of the mentors they are paired with ended up not having significant influence in these professors' careers.

Findings of this third theme highlight the latent outgroup antagonism that several authors have discussed (Brewer, 1999; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1993; Pettigrew & Meertins, 1995; Stangor, Sullivan, & Ford, 1991). For example, students rated Hispanic professors less competent and therefore evaluated them more negatively than they did white professors. This resistance also unveils two aspects that are already mentioned in the discussion of this research project. First, it confirms the underlying threat to Hispanic professors' legitimacy, and second it also confirms the subtle racial bias that hides behind other behaviors, in this case the credibility judgment towards professors. As such, this study agrees with Mastro et al. (2008) and Gaertner and Dovidio (2005) in that aversive discrimination emerges in contexts where the criteria for social judgment are ambiguous, for example when it comes to assessing qualifications, credentials, and abilities. Even though professors were not able to cite examples when they referred to the subtleness of discriminatory behaviors in the second finding of this study, they were on point on their observations regarding the aversive legitimacy threats they receive.

This finding also challenges Glasscock and Ruggiero (2010), who argue that white instructors appear more competent and caring because they are more experienced in the classroom or have taught more higher-level courses. Perhaps Glasscock and Ruggiero do not

consider the similar training and teaching preparation than Hispanic professors undergo relative to white professors. Their argument falls short in explaining the lower credibility scores towards Hispanic professors in this context. However, this study does attempt to offer an explanation as of why Hispanic professors have lower credibility and caring scores by arguing that overt discrimination and unconscious prejudice can bias the judgment of a body of students that have been socialized to an academic environment that has been predominantly composed of white professors, as stated by Sleeter (2001).

In the case of mentoring, professors revealed discomfort with formal mentoring processes that did not fulfill professors' expectations. Instead, professors used social creativity once again to build informal relationships with the senior professors whom they felt drawn to and influenced by. Mentoring among minorities has been a topic of discussion among scholars (Allen, 1995, 2000; Blackwell, 1989; Ibarra, 1993; Koberg, Boss, & Goodman, 1998) who argue that due to the lack of representation of Hispanic and minority faculty in general, mentoring becomes challenging and minority professors are ultimately the ones who experience the negative consequences of weak formal mentoring. This research project supports this argument, but also presents informal mentoring as the creative strategy professors use to cope with poor formal mentoring programs. Even though there is evidence of the success of informal mentoring relations (Leslie, Lingard, & Whyte, 2005), the poor performance of formal or assigned mentors may have negative effects on Hispanic professors when it comes to being evaluated and working on deadlines toward tenure requirements.

Similarly, Hispanic professors struggled with the building of meaningful personal relationships as also found in other studies (Gersick, Bartunek, Dutton, 2001; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, Cook, 2001, Rodríguez, 1995). They reported the tensions that emerge from having

excellent colleagues but few strong personal ties and friendships. Professors in this study praise their colleagues very highly but, as per their observations, these relationships often do not transcend into more intimate relationships to become significant ties for Hispanic professors. The lack of friendships and social support networks could be closely related to the retention problems that they mentioned in the second theme of this research project. If professors do not feel welcomed or find a steady support network, they will be more likely to feel alienated. Some of the professors' observations resemble McGuire's (2000) findings that relationships such as friendships and links outside immediate work contexts could substitute for other connections and make a difference when it comes to facilitating better social support for Hispanic professors. In some cases, the lack of other Hispanic faculty members and the poor institutional support toward informal networks impede Hispanic professors from finding meaningful personal relations.

Finally, professors engaged once again in SIT's social change strategy insofar as they denounced the shallow institutional support towards a comprehensive diversity plan. Even though they all reported knowledge about their universities' initiatives, they also unveiled the superficiality of these programs by denouncing the lack of diversity in their respective universities. This sentiment echoes Glover, et al. (2000) and Dole and Schroeder (2001) who found diversity initiatives to be one-dimensional and not genuine in their efforts to improve diversity on campuses.

Theoretical Contributions

In analyzing Hispanic professors in United States higher education institutions, this research makes four theoretical contributions by (a) expanding knowledge about how professors' identities are fluid and multiform, (b) considering the unique and constant self-reflexive process

by which these professors behave, (c) expanding the nature of identity negotiation strategies, and (d) unveiling the fragile state of diversity initiatives on college campuses.

This research project extends Social Identity Theory insofar as it suggests that individuals can have multiple identities in managing their professions. Such simultaneity attempts to answer one of Hogg's (2006) unresolved issues about SIT, since other scholars (Mullen, Migdal, & Rozell, 2003) and Tajfel and Turner (1979, 1982) themselves implied that even though individuals can have multiple identities, people, informed by contextual needs, usually tend to privilege one identity over the others. In this case, Hispanic professors not only seemed to privilege both their Hispanic and professorial identities but did not report any type of tension when performing both identities. Furthermore, this dual identification can dampen intergroup tensions. As Hogg (2006) explains: "If dual identification of this type is possible then it may furnish a mechanism for defusing intergroup conflict and constructing groups and identities that celebrate diversity" (p.127). As such, this study opens the floor for the possibility of having more permeable identities that allow individuals to disseminate tensions and take advantage of this simultaneity as professors did in this study.

Second, this research project contributes to Social Identity Theory by strengthening the argument made by other scholars (see for example Livingston, Brewer, & Alexander, 2004; Leach, Snider, & Iyer, 2002; Monteith & Spicer, 2000) about members of minority groups anticipating episodes of prejudice and discrimination. In this study, it is Hispanic professors' sharpness, self-reflexivity, and sense of vigilance that allowed them to craft strategies to cope with identity threatening situations. Furthermore, since this self-reflexivity was overwhelmingly present in all the findings in this study, it shows the energy and effort that professors invest, either consciously or unconsciously, when performing their identities. In principle, this self-

reflexivity is a defense mechanism but gradually becomes an added value since it allows them to discern a situation and enables them to be in control of their actions. In a way, it gives them an advantage over professors of the majority group who, due to their privileged position, are generally less inclined to reflect on their own group's status (Tropp, 2003).

Third, this research project presents a different way to approach identity negotiation strategies by proposing that social creativity and social change or advocacy, otherwise known as collective strategies (Jackson et al., 1996), are initiated and recreated individually; almost as a resilience or a defense mechanism. Hispanic professors in this project demonstrated a very strategic way to manage both positive and negative aspects of their identities by using innovative arguments to cope with possible dissonance emerging out of identity threats. In addition, these individual strategies usually are channels to maintaining the status quo because they are initiated without any collective organization and usually are adopted and exercised as reactionary and defense mechanisms motivated by little premeditation and only guided by Hispanic professors' past experiences. However, collective strategies (e.g., endorsement of affirmative action) include more premeditation and can potentially overturn some of the policies that negatively affect the overall performance of Hispanic professors.

Fourth, this research project indicates the fragile state of diversity initiatives on college campuses. Even though colleges are making efforts in the recruitment processes, as demonstrated by the way most of these professors were hired, these efforts do not translate into deeper layers of other important processes. For example, mentoring, networking, community relations, and tenure are only some of the processes that do not have the same depth and aggressiveness that recruiting often does. Instead, they pale in comparison and fall short in delivering the well-crafted messages that their diversity plans state. In light of this finding, this study also highlights

the resilient force that moves Hispanic faculty members in academia. It is through their innovative strategies that Hispanic professors achieve some type of balance between their performance and the structural shortfalls of institutions of higher education in general. However, these individual strategies are also detrimental since they provide a cover for the lack of depth in the structural efforts.

Recommendations for Practitioners

Organizational diversity policies programs should be comprehensive and genuinely address every process involved in the successful support of Hispanic professors and faculty of color in general. Diversity hires and other recruiting practices are not enough if these policies are not followed with consistent support at the different stages where Hispanic faculty may need help. There are at least two pragmatic means that administrators can incorporate in the diversity policies and programs in order to solve the lower retention rates.

First, formal and informal mentoring should be present in different stages of Hispanic professors' careers. Mentors should not only come from professors' discipline of study about from other areas of the academic community in order to gain perspective and depth regarding different aspects beyond the field of study such as campus dynamics, experiences with tenure application, outside evaluations, etc. Mentoring programs should be structured in a way that (a) values the listening and exchanging of ideas, and (b) follows schedules, goals, and rewards for both mentors and mentees.

Second, community relations should be a pillar of diversity initiatives insofar as professional, emotional, and social support are an underrated resource that can ultimately make a difference in the performance of Hispanic professors. Thus, universities should incorporate deeper programs that go beyond mission statements and efforts of portraying diversity as a

selling point of their institutions. For example, establishing informal networks fosters non-academic interactions among members through open communication channels so Hispanic professors know that there are other members of the academic community that can provide emotional and social support.

Likewise, administrators should reconsider the tenure application processes for Hispanic faculty members. This goal can be accomplished through three different solutions. First, administrators should examine and revise the teaching evaluation processes and account for the unconscious biases students may have towards Hispanic professors. Second, percentages in the tenure evaluation areas (e.g., research, service, teaching) should be flexible and reflect efforts incorporated by Hispanic faculty members to foster diversity through their academic appointment. Third, administrators should consider opening opportunities for interstitial appointments such as post-doctorates, and visiting positions in order to foster research activities among Hispanic members who are just starting their research and publishing agendas.

Not only do administrators need to enhance policies and procedures targeted to Hispanic faculty members but these initiatives should also have multiple directions that involve members of the majority groups. Specifically, administrators should place cultural sensitivity and diversity at the core of their institutional plans and carry these initiatives through in every level of the organization. For example, continuous and well-thought out training sessions for majority faculty and staff, and curriculum intervention that incorporates diversity sensitive subjects into classes across all university programs should be on the agenda. In addition, diversity goals should be endorsed and delivered by every member of the academic community and should not be a burden or a responsibility solely of minority faculty members. It is when everybody endorses the

importance of diversity that academia will experience more balanced relations and less hazardous situations for minority faculty members.

Recommendations for Hispanic professors.

Hispanic professors can also be proactive on contributing to the advancement of more inclusive and welcoming policies. For example, even though the strategies found in this study provide defense mechanisms for professors to navigate their ways in academia, these mechanisms are not challenging the status quo in any way. Instead, the individual practices of these strategies limit the possibilities to generate the type of social change that academia needs regarding Hispanic faculty members and faculty of color in general. The advice then is to incorporate more collective strategies in addition to these individual coping strategies. In doing so, the status quo can be challenged in a way that facilitates a better environment for Hispanic professors with more steady and long term benefits for these professors and for the generations to come.

Limitations of Present Research

This study has ideological, conceptual, and methodological limitations. First, as a Hispanic who will soon join a department as a professor, I recognize that my positionality could have affected the interpretations of this research project. However, I made sure to have ‘reality checks’ with multiple members of the academic community and support my interpretations with existing literature.

Second, there are intervening variables that can have an effect in the way Hispanic professors negotiate their identities, perceive prejudice and discrimination, and experience regular professional processes. For example, whether professors are U.S. born minorities or

international minorities, time of tenure, and gender differences are just some of those variables. The aforementioned variables are aspects that I plan to pursue in future research.

Third, this research would have been stronger if I had been able to recruit and interview more participants. In addition, the implementation of other data gathering techniques such as document analysis and online ethnography would have enriched the quality of the findings presented.

Future Research

As with any research project, these results represent only the beginning step toward understanding Hispanic faculty members in U.S. institutions of higher education. Future studies should break down different populations among Hispanics (U.S. born, non-U.S. born, ESL speakers, women, etc.). In addition, future studies should focus on particular academic processes that were mentioned in this study but that are of great importance in the overall professors' academic success. For example, future studies should be conducted on formal and informal mentoring, relations with the community, diversity initiatives effectiveness, teaching credibility, to name a few.

Additionally, different theoretical perspectives such as structuration (Giddens, 1984), standpoint theory (Allen, 1995), and critical and feminist theories in organizational communication (Ashcraft, 2005; Ashcraft & Allen, 2003; Mumby, 1996; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) should be utilized in order to gain a richer understanding of the nuances associated with Hispanic professors in higher education institutions.

Conclusion

This study serves an initial foray into the experiences of Hispanic faculty members. This study especially emphasizes the discursive strategies they use to negotiate their identities, their

perceptions of prejudice and discrimination, and their experiences with regular professional processes. As per the findings presented in this research project, there are still several issues that need to be addressed in order to guarantee a more balanced academic and work environment for present and future Hispanic professors.

As the author of this study embarks on experiences similar to the ones of her participants, this research project not only constitutes an initial step towards a much needed research agenda but a useful consultation manual. Furthermore, this research project ultimately attempts to provide useful information not only to the author but also to many other members of the academic community whose interests are focused on improving interracial, interethnic, and intergroup relations.

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Appendix 1

Dear Professor XXXXX

My name is Astrid Villamil, I am a PhD candidate from the Communication Studies department at the University of Kansas. I am in the process of writing my dissertation. I am interested in studying Hispanic population's experiences in the workplace. To gather my data, I am conducting a series of interviews with Hispanic faculty members in higher education institutions. I expect the interviews to take about 45-60 minutes.

I was wondering if you would be willing to have a cup of coffee with me and share some of your own experiences. I would accommodate to any time frame you have available.

I would really appreciate it if you'd be willing to help me, as you can imagine, the Hispanic population at the faculty level is somewhat limited and it makes my data collection process a bit more challenging.

Let me know if you think you will be able to help me. Thank you for your consideration.

Astrid Villamil
Doctoral Candidate and GTA
Communication Studies
University of Kansas
villamil@ku.edu

Appendix 2

Approved by the Human Subjects Committee University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus (HSCL). Approval expires one year from 5/27/2010. HSCL #18763

Examining Hispanic population's workplace experiences in higher education Institutions

The Department of Communication Studies at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You may refuse to sign this form and not participate in this study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw from this study, it will not affect your relationship with this unit, the services it may provide to you, or the University of Kansas.

Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to better understand Hispanic minority views in the workplace, specifically in higher education institutions. In addition, I also hope to gain a deeper understanding of how Hispanics' group membership is negotiated and treated at their work place. Moreover, this study aims to describe Hispanics' experiences and perceptions of their daily interactions with other coworkers, as well as unveil possible conflicts that may arise between both group members (e.g. discrimination, prejudice, privilege, etc.)

Procedures

You will first be asked to complete a short questionnaire about your demographic information and work-related experience. Next you will be asked to engage in a discussion about your experiences as a Hispanic in the workplace. It is estimated that this will take approximately 30-45 minutes of your time. With your consent, this discussion will be audio taped. This tape will be used by the researchers only, will be free from any information that might identify you, and will be stored in a locked cabinet. As this discussion will be taped, you will have the option of using a pseudonym, if you so desire.

Risk and Benefits

There are no risks associated with your participation. However, there is a slight possibility that answering some questions about your experience in the workplace as a Hispanic may make you uncomfortable. Although participation may not directly benefit you, the information you provide will be beneficial to understanding of Hispanic population's experiences in the workplace.

Participant Confidentiality

Your name will not be associated in any way with the information collected about you or with the research findings from this study. The researcher(s) will use a study number or a pseudonym instead of your name. The researchers will not share information about you unless required by law or unless you give written permission.

Refusal to sign Consent and Authorization

You are not required to sign this Consent and Authorization form and you may refuse to do so without affecting your right to any services you are receiving or may receive from the University of Kansas or to participate in any programs or events of the University of Kansas. However, if you refuse to sign, you cannot participate in this study.

Canceling this consent and Authorization

You may withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time. You also have the right to cancel your permission to use and disclose information collected about you, in writing, at any time, by sending your written request to:

Astrid Villamil
Communication Studies.
102 Bailey, 1440 Jayhawk Blvd.
University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS 66045-7574
Phone: 785-864-9888
Villamil@ku.edu

If you cancel permission to use your information, the researchers will stop collecting additional information about you. However, the research team may use and disclose information that was gathered before they received your cancellation, as described above.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL) office at 864-7429 or 864-7385 or write the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7563, or email mdenning@ku.edu

KEEP THIS SECTION FOR YOUR RECORDS. IF YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE TEAR OFF THE FOLLOWING SECTION AND RETURN IT TO THE RESEARCHER(S).

Examining Hispanic population's workplace experiences in higher education Institutions

PARTICIPANT CERTIFICATION:

If you agree to participate in this study please sign where indicated, then tear off this section and return it to the investigator(s). Keep the consent information for your records.

I have read this Consent and Authorization form. I have had the opportunity to ask, and I have received answers to, any questions I had regarding the study and the use and disclosure of information about me for the study.

I agree to take part in this study as a research participant. By my signature I affirm that I am at least 18 years old and that I have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization form.

Type/Print Participant's Name

Date

Participant's Signature

Appendix 3

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Life Before _____

How did you come to be where you are in your position at the University of _____?

- Could you please describe the beginning days at the University of _____?
- Why _____?
- What kind of educational background and previous work experience do you have?
- We all have illusions/ideas about workplaces before we begin working. What were yours about _____?
- What has ended up being true? And what's not true?
- Would you like to add something else about your life before coming to _____?

2. Working at _____

- Would you tell me about your job?
 - What exactly do you do?
 - What is a typical day and week working at _____?
 - What type of people do you interact with?
 - How many coworkers do you have?
 - How many supervisors?
 - How many people under your supervision?
- How would you describe the climate of your work place?
 - What positive features would you use to describe the climate at your workplace?
 - What negative features would you use to describe the climate at your workplace?
 - What's the organizational structure like where you work?
 - How are decisions made?
- What are some rewards of working at _____?
- What are some of the challenges of working at _____?
- How do you explain to others why you work for _____?
 - In your opinion, what's the coolest thing _____ does?
- Do you feel identified with this organization?
 - If so, what makes you feel such identification?

- How did you develop that feeling of identification?
- If you don't feel identified, what makes you feel disengaged?
- Do you have close friends at work?
- Are you the only Hispanic in your department?
 - If not, how is your relationship with other Hispanics?
 - If so, how do you feel about being the only Hispanic in your department?
- How aware are you of your ethnicity on a daily basis at work?
- Does being Hispanic make a difference in the way you perform at work? With your coworkers? With your supervisors?
- Do you think other people notice your Hispanic identity on a daily basis? In what ways? Could you give examples?
 - Does that affect you? In what ways?
- Do you think other people may have preconceived ideas about how Hispanics behave? (If respondent offers a positive experience, probe for a negative one, and vice versa.
 - Does that affect you? In what ways?
- Have you been treated unfairly at work because of your ethnicity?
 - If not, do you know of anybody who has been treated unfairly?
- Have you ever been treated differently because you are Hispanic? How so?
- Has your ethnicity helped you advance in your job? If so, in what ways?
- What else would you like to add about working for _____?

3. General Thoughts

- How do you feel about the diversity at _____?
- Are you aware of any diversity programs or policies enforced by _____?
- In general, could you comment on your ideas of racial prejudice and discrimination in the workplace?
- In general, do you think organizations have eliminated prejudice and discrimination at the workplace?
- In your observations, how are ethnic minority members treated at the workplace in general? Hispanics?

- What are your perceptions of policies such as Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunities, and Diversity programs?
- Is there anything we haven't covered today that you'd like to add?

Appendix 4

Confidentiality Contract

I, _____ understand that the research project in which I am collaborating as a transcriber involves sensitive data. Therefore, I guarantee absolute discretion and confidentiality in the managing, transcribing, and processing of the data that I will handle. I will not disclose any names, schools, or information about the participant, nor will I discuss with anyone the findings and content of the interviews.

Signature _____