

# The Culture of Generativity: Exploring the Manifestation of Generativity in the Manifestation of Generativity in the Mexican/Mexican-American Population

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THE CULTURE OF GENERATIVITY: EXPLORING THE MANIFESTATION OF  
GENERATIVITY IN THE MEXICAN/ MEXICAN-AMERICAN  
POPULATION

by

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ABSTRACT  
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Generativity is a developmental stage in adulthood where an individual makes a conscious decision to leave their mark on the world with the intent to make the world a better place for future generations. Research has shown that engaging in generative acts benefits both the person engaging in such practices as well as the recipient, and thus generativity is positively correlated with reported wellbeing. It has also been shown that adults engaging in such practices are psychologically healthier and ease into old age with less resistance than their non-generative counterparts. Generativity is a strengths-based approach. It is shaped by one's cultural values and beliefs and also serves as a window into one's particular culture. Through the use of quantitative and qualitative measures of generativity, researchers are able to get a snap shot of individual differences in generativity as well as better understanding how it is manifested in one's own cultural group. However, the majority of generativity measures, are normed on Caucasian individuals of Western held beliefs and traditions. As the values and traditions of this group are very different from those held by other cultures, the necessity to create culturally specific measures of generativity is imperative. This project focuses on a sample population of Mexican/ Mexican Americans living within Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The first goal of the project was to create a culturally specific qualitative measure, The Mexican Measure of Self-Narrative Generativity (MMSNG) to uncover generative themes and behaviors unique to this population. The second goal was to then compare this new measure, to existing measures of generativity, The Loyola Generativity Scale (LGS) and the Generative Behavior Checklist (GBC) in order to determine which measure is most correlated and which is the best predictor of participants report of their own Satisfaction With Life (SWLS). Results indicated that the GBC was the only variable significantly correlated and predictive of Satisfaction of Life. Although the MMSNG was not significantly correlated with Satisfaction with Life, the measure itself gives much information about the unique practices and beliefs of the sampled population that they deemed to be generative practices within their own culture

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Generativity is an aspect of adult development wherein the individual begins to invest in activities that nurture younger generations and sustain a world that will benefit future generations. Studies have shown that engaging in generative behaviors positively affects the reported well-being of both the provider and the benefactor of such behavior (Huta & Zuroff, 2007; McAdams, 2006). It has also been found that one who reports psychological well-being is more prone to engage in generative behaviors (Huta & Zuroff, 2007). Generativity is an important aspect of adult development and intergenerational relations, yet there is a lack of culturally sensitive measures of generativity needed to capture the various ways it manifests itself in specific cultural contexts.

The purpose of this study was therefore to create a culturally sensitive measure of generativity for the Mexican-American population. Most existing measure of generativity were created using samples of White individuals from the United States and therefore reflect the values and beliefs of Western, individualistic culture (Triandis, 1989). However, Mexican-born and United States-born Mexican Americans have values and beliefs specific to their collectivist culture (Triandis, 1989) and this unique presentation of such values and beliefs is frequently not captured in these existing measures of generativity.

Generativity is the seventh stage in Erik Erikson's well-known "Eight Stages of Man" (Erikson, 1950). Being generative is having the power of generating, propagating, originating, or producing (Huta & Zuroff, 2008). Occurring around mid-life, generativity is defined as a time when adults start to contemplate their own mortality and begin to



focus on generating a legacy to leave behind. This legacy is achieved in a myriad of ways, such as producing offspring, mentoring the next generation, generating ideas, and fostering awareness of ways to meet the needs of the next generation. Generativity involves raising and guiding the next generation, contributing to society, and creating new products and ideas (Huta & Zuroff, 2008). During the generativity stage of development, people begin to feel a sense of pull to take part in giving to future generations and in making their mark on the world in which they live. Kotre (1994) explains generative adults as “act[ing] on the desire to invest one’s substance in forms of life and work that will outlive the self” (p.84).

The primary goal of this study is to create a culturally specific measure of generativity that is unique to the values and beliefs of foreign-born and U.S.-born Mexican Americans that may not be captured in existing measures of generativity. This measure will be called The Mexican Measure of Self Narrative Generativity (MMSNG).

This research study begins by examining Erikson’s concept of generativity and McAdams and de St Aubin’s subsequent model of generativity. It continues by reviewing literature on generative attributes and behaviors considered to be universal among generative adults. A discussion on the importance of culture and how it impacts the manifestation of generativity and a review and analysis of the literature on generativity that specifically examines the importance of culture and its impact on generativity follows this section. A brief discussion of the emic approach, which is often used to study culture, will be followed by an in-depth analysis of important cultural concepts and beliefs specific to Mexican culture. It is crucial that the beliefs and values of this population be brought to the forefront and taken into consideration when studying

this population, for they are key to understanding the manifestation of generativity of this cultural group. Lastly, a specific framework used to capture generativity among this population will be explained and will be followed by specific hypotheses and methods used to create a culturally specific narrative measure of generativity, The Mexican Measure Self Narrative of Generativity (MMSNG). It is hypothesized that scores on this measure will be more closely related to well-being in this sample of Mexican Americans as the two other measures of generativity have been designed and validated with predominantly Caucasian U.S. samples.

### **The Concept of Generativity**

Among Erikson's many contributions to the field of developmental psychology is his creation of an expansive psychosocial model of how the person develops over the life cycle. Influenced by Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic model of children and adolescents, Erikson created a life-cycle theory consisting of eight stages of development ranging from birth to death (Alexander, 2005). The eight stages of Erikson's life cycle model are named by the psychosocial tensions addressed in each stage. These tensions consist of: Trust vs. mistrust (in infancy), autonomy vs. shame or doubt (in toddlers), initiative vs. guilt (in preschool-aged children), industry vs. inferiority (in school-aged children), identity vs. role confusion (in puberty), intimacy vs. isolation (in young adults), generativity vs. stagnation (in mid-life adults) and integrity vs. despair (in late adulthood) (Erikson, E., 1950). Unique to other models, Erikson emphasized that development does not simply end once an individual passes through adolescence and into adulthood (Alexander, 2005). Rather, he focused on the continuous process of change

that an individual encounters throughout adulthood and into old age by highlighting specific issues pertaining to precise developmental phases, like generativity (Erikson, E., 1950).

The first five stages of Erikson's model describe the self-focused nature of childhood, where a child is focused solely on himself/herself and similarly views the world as revolving around and existing for him/her. It is not until the sixth stage, emerging adulthood (intimacy vs. isolation), that the individual begins to turn his or her gaze outward and begins to focus on the impact his/her behavior has on another and also begins caring for this other (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1998). This is evidenced by the individual seeking to invest in the well-being of another, specifically an intimate partner, whose needs and desires are seen as being as significant as the individual's own. The virtue gained in this stage is love, which is seen as causing a developmental shift to other-orientedness, which allows the individual to be able to care for someone else with the same intensity and willingness that they care for themselves (McAdams, Hart, & Maruna, 1998).

This shift to other-orientedness is a specific hallmark of the seventh stage in adulthood, generativity. It is at this stage that the desire to love and care for another human being matures and expands to a more global significance, that of caring for others and for the world around them (Erikson, E., 1950). Generativity encompasses the mid-life stage of adulthood, where the psychosocial virtues of care and production compel the individual to want to care for and nurture future generations. It is in this stage of development that one begins to face one's inevitable mortality and therefore chooses to create a legacy to leave behind. The type of legacy created is consistent with the person's

beliefs and experiences as well as their cultural values (Kotre, 1984; McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1998).

Generativity is not a stagnant concept (Erikson, 1950; Kotre, 1984). Rather, it is a developmental concept that is ever-changing, bending, and flexing along with the growth of a person. Its manifestation is heavily influenced by the culture of a people and at times may be even compromised when a cultural group's values and traditions, such as those of certain immigrant groups, do not fit with those of mainstream society (Erikson, K., 2004).

Erikson believed that the practice of generativity is most prominent in mid-life among adults aged thirty-five to sixty-five years (Erikson, E., 1950). Studies have supported this by showing that as individuals reach this age group, their motivation and desire to care for others is at its peak (McAdams, de St. Aubin & Logan, 1993; Peterson & Stewart, 1993; Peterson & Stewart, 1996). In the eighth stage, old age (integrity vs. despair), generative concern and practice levels off, as an individual's focus is on evaluating their life (McAdams, de St. Aubin & Logan, 1993; Peterson & Stewart, 1993; Peterson & Stewart, 1996). It is within the generative age group that individuals, having already established themselves and mastered the demands of adulthood, are more able to intellectualize and act on their own agentic needs (the need for personal achievement, power, and leaving a legacy) and communal needs (the need for nurturance, affiliation, and intimacy) (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1998). These needs are fulfilled by an individual's decision to actively contribute to fostering the next generation and subsequently to society at large.

According to Erikson, and supported by other empirical research (McAdams, de St. Aubin & Logan, 1993; Peterson & Stewart, 1993; Peterson & Stewart, 1996),

individuals enter into the generative stage in their early thirties, around the time they are firmly established and settled into their adult lives. Erikson considered adults passing through their thirties and forties who consciously chose not to enter into this stage of generativity as being “off-time” with the progression of this stage (Erikson, E., 1950).

When referring to off-time, Erikson was referring to the “social clock” of an individual’s society. The social clock refers to the internalized and shared understanding of the timing of major life milestones, such as becoming an adult, a spouse, a parent or grandparent (Furstenburg, 2010). Sixty years ago this was perhaps a valid assessment. However, as life expectancy increases and as more individuals have delayed marriage and children until their late thirties to focus on their careers, the number of individuals considered to be operating “off time” is ever increasing, causing the definition of the social clock to shift as well. (Furstenburg, 2010).

Along with the increase in off-time expression of generativity, there has been a shift in the specific expression of agentic and communal types of generative behaviors among men and women. For example, generative expression of women in the 1950’s took on a more communal approach- that of rearing children and maintaining the household and women’s primary role consisted of being a nurturer and a caregiver (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1998). However, as society changed, so too did women’s expression of generativity (Furstenburg, 2010). Furstenburg (2010) argues that women are now engaging in what was once considered to be a more masculine agentic type of generativity. For example, as more and more women enter the workforce and pursue highly prestigious careers, they have become part of a growing body of leaders, mentors, and decision makers’ positions formerly ascribed exclusively to men (Furstenburg, 2010).

Aside from leadership roles, women also have a stronger presence in the workforce in general while at the same time, raising children and often heading households. These dual roles place different demands on women which greatly impacts their expression of generativity. This shift in socially acceptable priorities and positions has important implications for the future of generativity scholarship and of its necessity to be studied and analyzed closely (Erikson, 2004; Furstenburg, 2010; Smith, 2003). Such implications may include how the changing roles of women are causing women to engage in more agentic leadership types of generativity. Having to take on more agentic roles, in turn, impacts their previously accepted communal type of generativity which was that of primary caretaker of their children. Because more mothers are in the workforce they often have to rely on daycare services or sitters to aid in the caretaking of their children. More research designed to focus on this group of professional women is imperative to identify whether putting off having children until later on in life is a choice made or a demand placed on them by society that they feel the need to adhere to. It would be important to explore how these changing roles in women's lives affect the way generativity is manifested in their lives.

Generativity is molded by many different biological, social and environmental factors. It is a fluid concept, yet it is specific to adulthood. The novelty that a person can continue to evolve throughout adulthood captured much attention. However, Erikson did not go so far as to continue on with creating a way to quantify this concept. With no set framework or quantifiable guidelines on how to capture generativity, the theory remained a difficult one to study.

In 1984, John Kotre, a developmental psychologist, helped bring the focus of generativity back to the forefront of psychology with his book, *Outliving the Self: Generativity and the Interpretation of Lives*. In this book, Kotre took Erikson's theory of generativity and revitalized it. Kotre molded and defined the concept of generativity, as "creativity between the generations" (Kotre, 1984). According to Kotre, generativity can be expressed in literally hundreds of ways, from raising a child to stopping a tradition of abuse, from writing a family history to starting a new organization. However the individual chooses to express himself/herself, the underlying message is that of trying to make a difference by giving back to society by taking care of one's fellow man and thus one's community (Kotre, 1984). In essence, Kotre continued where Erikson's work stopped by further investigating how generativity manifests itself and how it is expressed. In his work, Kotre defines generativity as being "the driving force behind all our human forms of reproduction, from the most biological to the most spiritual" (Kotre, 1985, p. 33). Kotre expanded on Erikson's concept, further defining generativity as being more than simply the concern of establishing and guiding the next generation. Kotre agreed with Erikson that generativity encompasses an individual's innate desire and need to reproduce oneself. However, he theorized that there are four categories or facets of generative expression: the biological, parental, technical, and cultural (Kotre, 1985). Although each has its own significance and depth of meaning, all four are seen as ebbing and flowing together as overlapping characteristics are shared among them (Kotre, 1985).

The first category is the biological facet of generativity, which concerns the decision to conceive a child as well as the evolutionary pull to carry on one's genetic line. It is not simply the desire to procreate, but the desire to continue to contribute via one's

offspring, one's beliefs, values, and traditions to the world. This facet can be seen as driven by the biological pull to reproduce and to create a life where parents see physical traits of themselves in their offspring (Kotre, 1985). The second type of generativity is the parental facet. This facet differs from the biological in that it involves the act of rearing children and teaching them in accordance with one's values and belief systems. Adoptive parents fall into this category because they consciously choose to add a biologically different member to their family but rear them and nurture them in accordance to their customs, which forever binds them to the family unit (Kotre, 1984).

The third category, the technical facet, involves two necessary agents in order to come to fruition: the apprentice and the skill being taught. Inherent here is the idea that a more experienced worker takes on an apprentice to whom one worker can impart his/her knowledge and trade. Centuries ago, skilled craftsmen and artisans took on apprentices to guarantee that their skilled trades would not die out, but would carry on from generation to generation (Kotre, 1984). Today this role is perhaps more akin to the role of mentor and student. A mentor provides wisdom, expertise, and guidance to a student and expects that the student will, in turn, pass it on to the next generation. This sharing of skill, expertise, and knowledge ensures that the skill or trade never dies because it carries within it the spirit and memory of its forbearers (Kotre, 1984). As more and more information and knowledge is imparted, inevitably a community of like minds is created, thus forming a group that follows the same traditions, beliefs and ways of being (Triandis, 2004).

This leads to Kotre's fourth category of generativity, the cultural facet. Like Erikson, Kotre believed that culture played an integral part in the shaping of generativity.



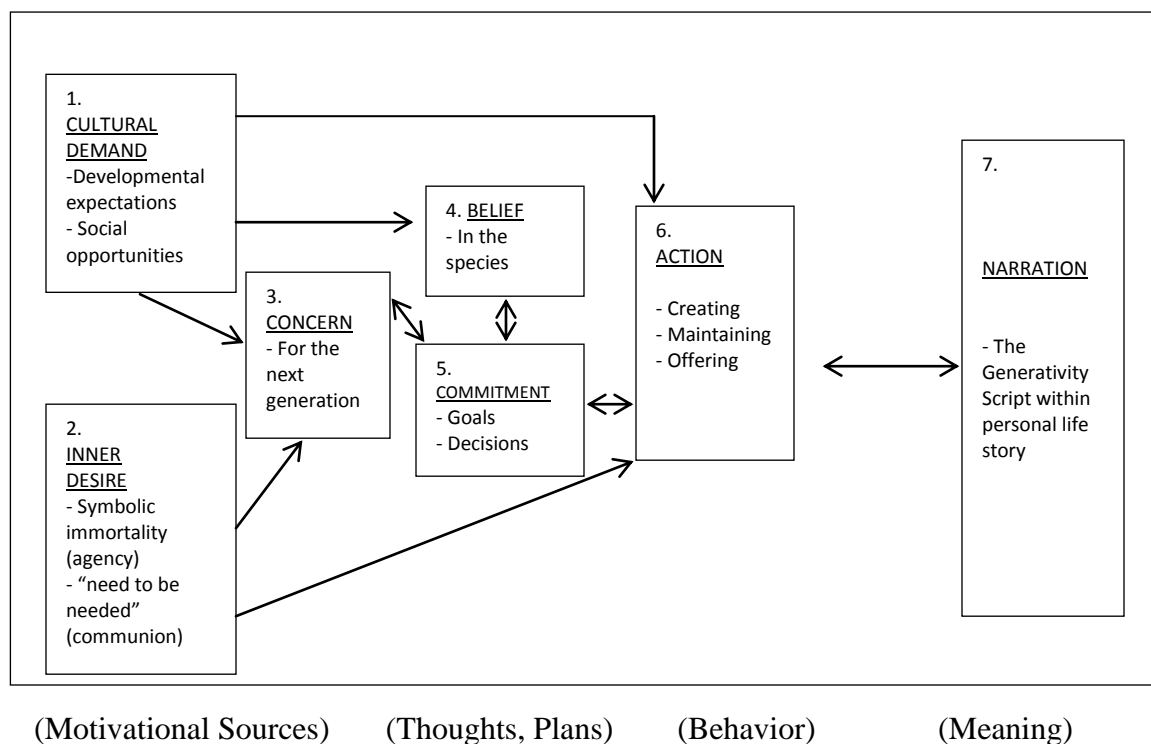
In his cultural facet, Kotre explains that knowledge and ways of being are imparted through an integrated set of values, beliefs, social mores, and traditions that give a sense of meaning and place to members of a specific community and ethnic background. In this facet, members of the community pass down important traditions and values that differentiate them from other cultures and bind new members firmly to their own (Triandis, 2004). Although the sharing of knowledge is a characteristic of the technical facet level, the ‘why’ of doing things in a certain way, the theories that guide beliefs and actions, mark the cultural facet level as different (Kotre, 1985).

Kotre may be credited as one of the key players in the revival of the concept of generativity. Although he was instrumental in defining and clarifying generativity through the implementation of his four-stage model, he did not provide a means to measure this concept. Without a way to qualify how to measure generativity, it remained an interesting concept, yet one that could not yet be measured adequately (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992). Nonetheless, even without quantitative measures, scholarship on the topic of generativity continued to increase as Erikson’s theory that development continued on throughout one’s life span was novel and captured much attention. While the concept of generativity dates back to 1950, the popularity of generativity, and the study of generative characteristics and how they impact an individual’s life, did not gain substantial attention until the early 1990s. One reason for this was that up until the past two decades, research on generativity was “sparse, scattered and unsystematic” (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992, p. 1003). Because of this, existing assessment measures for generative characteristics prior to the 1990’s did not receive wide spread attention (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992).

### **McAdams and de St. Aubin's Model of Generativity**

In 1992, Dan McAdams and Ed de St. Aubin, both developmental psychologists, set out to quantify the concept of generativity in hopes of being able to identify exact characteristics and behaviors of generative people. In order to create a measure to quantify generativity, McAdams and de St. Aubin first needed to create a schematic representation of generativity. Their efforts resulted in the creation of a model consisting of seven different key features of generativity, all of which are necessary and integral components inherent in the concept of generativity. This schematic model is documented below in Figure 1.

*McAdams and de St. Aubin's heuristic model of the seven features of generativity.*



*Figure 1.* Reprinted from *Generativity and Adult Development: How and Why we Care for the Next Generation* (p. 42), by D. McAdams and E. de St. Aubin, 1998, Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association. Reprinted with permission.

According to the model, one's (1) *cultural demands /norms* heavily influence one's (2) *inner desire* to leave behind a legacy as well as to nurture produces a conscious (3) *concern* for the generation that follows. An individual's "(4) *belief* in the goodness or worth-whileness of humanity causes an individual to make a generative (5) *commitment*, which, in turn produces 6) *generative action*" (McAdams, Hart, & Maruna, 1998, p. 9). The results of such action, in turn, become part of the (7) generative *narration*. This narration is qualitative in nature and thus allows an individual to express themselves in their own words and to describe key events in their lives that shaped them as people and fostered their engagement in generative concern and behavior. Through one's narrative

account, researchers are also able to study the type and magnitude of the generative behavior one chooses to engage in (McAdams, Hart, & Maruna, 1998). Each segment of the model is necessary and builds from and supports the others; if one segment is overlooked or left out, the overall model is compromised.

After the creation of the model, McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992) developed measures to identify and assess generative characteristics. Together, they created the two most commonly used self-report questionnaires, the Loyola Generativity Scale (LGS), which measures generative concern, and the Generative Behavior Checklist (GBC), which measures generative behavior. Other measures they created quantify other facets of generativity, such as *the narrative accounts of significant autobiographical scenes* and *reports of commitment and strivings* (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992). Unlike the LGS and GBC, the narrative and autobiographical measures allow individuals the freedom to respond in detail, using their own words, to a series of open-ended questions. Through the use of these narrative measures, researchers are able to get a more comprehensive look at individuals because they are able to tell their stories in their own words. These narratives are then coded by researchers who use thematic coding schemes designed to analyze plots, settings, scenes, characters, and themes inherent in the individuals' narratives (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992). This thematic coding system enabled the study of generativity to become quantifiable and allowed the concept to be studied on a systematic level. As a result, studies of generativity have increased in number over the past two decades.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **The Generative Adult**

Aside from understanding the model of generativity and all of its components, it is also important to examine what research has identified as the specific social correlates that relate to generativity. In order to fully understand the concept of generativity, it is then necessary to explore what being generative and engaging in generative behaviors looks like, and why people engage in such practices. This next section will review research that was designed to find specific characteristics and traits deemed to be the hallmark of generative people as well as the benefits from engaging in this practice.

The sense of hope and faith in the positive progress of society and future generations are qualities inherent in generative people (Lodi-Smith & Roberts, 2007; Ozer & Benet-Martinez, 2006). These individuals believe their positive works and actions can have a beneficial impact on others. However, it also has been shown that these individuals also reap benefits from engaging in generative acts and behaviors and feel that their own lives are enhanced by engaging in these practices (Huta & Zuroff, 2008).

A recent study by Cox, Wilt, Olson & McAdams (2010) examined the relationship between the big five traits of personality, (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) and generativity. The researchers specifically examined whether these big five traits were associated with psychosocial adaptation and well-being in mid-life and whether or not they played a role in fostering generative behavior and concern. Participants consisted of 128 adults, 78 women and 50

men ranging from 28 to 74 years of age ( $M = 49.2$  years of age;  $SD = 8.47$ ). The racial/ethnic composition of participants was 71.8% Caucasian, 25.8% African American, with two Asian Americans and one Latino individual participating. The majority of the sample participants identified themselves as being middle to upper class. 64% identified themselves as being currently married and 75% were parents.

To measure generative concern and behaviors, researchers used the LGS and GBC. Participants also completed a life narrative interview in which they were asked to speak at length about pro-social contributions they made to their respective families, their respective communities, and to society at large. These responses were then coded for active and effective engagement in the areas of family, community and volunteer activity, religious institutions, political involvement, and global awareness. The range for scoring these themes was 0-2. Participants received a score of “0” if no mention was made of one’s pro-social engagement or contribution to any of the five designated theme areas, and a “1” if one instance was mentioned. A score of “2” was given to a participant who reported more than two ways within multiple areas in which they engaged in extensive pro-social participation and involvement and reported that they intended to continue such involvement in the future (Cox, Wilt, Olson & McAdams, 2010).

To measure individual well-being, participants completed the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener et al, 1985) and the Psychological Well-Being measure (PWB; by Ryff & Keyes, 1995). The NEO-PI-R, a psychological personality inventory measure of the big five personality traits was also completed by participants. The study concluded that specific dispositional traits (openness, conscientiousness, and

extroversion) were positively associated with generativity and with an individual's reported sense of well-being in adulthood. Results also concluded that neuroticism was negatively associated with generativity and that the trait of agreeableness showed no significant association (Cox, Wilt, Olson & McAdams, 2010).

Although not present as a significant factor in the above-cited studies, the trait of agreeableness in other studies has shown positive associations with psychological well-being (Lodi-Smith & Roberts, 2007; Ozer & Benet-Martinez, 2006). Importantly, agreeableness, as well as conscientiousness, has been shown to correlate with taking on positive adult roles in work and relationships and with pro-social involvements, such as community volunteerism, in adulthood (Lodi-Smith & Roberts, 2007; Neyer & Lehnart, 2007; Ozer & Benet-Martinez, 2006).

The ability to think in an open-minded and conscientious manner while being flexible in thought and changing behavior when warranted are seen as important traits that influence individuals' decisions to engage in generative behaviors. Such individuals may choose to change patterns of thinking and behavior as an opportunity to end a pattern of suffering they have experienced, such as a life of violence (Roy & Lucas, 2006). Instead of choosing to raise their children in the manner in which they were raised, they change their focus to caring for the next generation in a more nurturing and compassionate way (Pratt, Norris, Cressman, Lawford & Hebblethwaite, 2001).

In a qualitative study by Roy & Lucas (2006), researchers were interested in uncovering motivating factors that influenced the parenting styles of low income African American and White fathers (N=77). Researchers used qualitative life story narratives as a way to account for these factors. Fathers were asked to express themselves in their own

words and to share how their own experiences shaped their decisions to parent their children in a different way than they themselves were raised. Of specific importance to these fathers was a common theme of them seeing their role as a parent as an opportunity to raise their children in an environment free of violence, unlike their own childhoods (Roy & Lucas, 2006). One particular participant highlighted in the study was a father who spoke at length about his childhood and shared that he was hopeful about the way he was choosing to raise his child. This father expressed feeling a sense of power in making a conscious choice to break the cycle of violence that existed in his own childhood. As a child, he was a helpless victim who suffered abuse and neglect at the hands of his caretakers. As an adult, he now felt a sense of power and pride in choosing to be a positive influence on his child's life (Roy & Lucas, 2006). These fathers made a conscious choice to rear their children in a more positive and loving manner to ensure that they grew up in a more nurturing environment. Their decision to alter their child rearing practices will not only positively impact their children but the larger community in which they live. Treating their own children with care and respect will instill a new value system in these children and will have a subsequent positive effect on the people they come into contact with, form relationships with, and the larger society in which they live. Such is the nature of generativity.

Other studies on generativity took a different approach to examining characteristics pertaining to generative adults. These studies used quantitative measure to focus on examining traits such as neuroticism and authoritarianism, which researchers considered to be traits not encompassed by generative people. Their focus was to then determine the impact said traits have on the expression of generativity as well as to



pinpoint and highlight specific characteristics of non-generative people. In one such study, Peterson & Duncan (2007) examined whether authoritarian-type characteristics were related to generative concern, as quantified by the LGS. Participants consisted of well-educated, upper middle class middle-aged White women (N=81) who graduated from Smith College, an East coast liberal arts college. The results of this particular study concluded that authoritarianism was correlated with neuroticism and suggested that authoritarianism may contribute to a rocky transition into later adulthood. Results also concluded that generativity and the positive traits associated with generativity made for a smoother transition into late adulthood and positively impacted an individual's reported level of satisfaction with marriage, motherhood, and successful aging.

Another similar study of generativity in middle-aged women also found that neuroticism was positively correlated with the stagnant mode, which is a characteristic of non-generative people, and also was negatively associated with extraversion and openness (Van Hiel, Mervielde, & de Fruyt, 2006). The results support the findings of other afore-mentioned studies that engaging in generative behavior, taking an active role as a participant in one's community, positively influences the lives of both the recipient and the giver (Huta & Zurhoff, 2008; Valiant, 1993; Van Hiel et al., 2006). Individuals' need to feel a sense of immortality may be a contributing factor to their decision to perform generative acts (Keyes & Ryff, 2007). Results of other studies, however, have shown that the satisfaction, sense of accomplishment and well-being gained from performing such acts encouraged these behaviors to be performed again and again (Valiant, 1993).

An additional hallmark of generative people is a strong sense of self, meaning

these individuals are comfortable with their beliefs and set of values, but do not feel they have to impose them on others (Cox, Wilt, Olson & McAdams, 2010). People in this category feel secure with themselves and their place in the world. They feel they have something to offer and it is their duty to share their time, effort and attention in service to future generations and society at large (Keyes & Ryff, 2007). These values and character traits are also found as traits that make up the openness, agreeableness and conscientious categories in the big five personality measure the NEO-PI-R (Pratt et al, 2001). In a recent meta-analytic study on the impact of personality traits on various types of generative beliefs and behaviors, the trait of conscientiousness showed a positive correlation to an investment in volunteering (Lodi-Smith & Roberts, 2007). Studies have added further support with findings that show that contributions to the broader community are directly linked to an individual's sense of personal fulfillment (Lodi-Smith & Roberts, 2007; Huta & Zurhoff, 2008). Studies also have found that the link between generativity and well-being is strongest in mid-life (McAdams, de St. Aubin & Logan, 1993; Peterson & Stewart, 1993; Peterson & Stewart, 1996), thereby supporting Erikson's original theory that generativity is a stage specific to middle adulthood (Ackerman et al., 2000).

Although generative concern is strongest in mid-life, research has shown that the existence of generative concern and the propensity of an individual becoming a generative adult in mid-life can be found in an individual just entering adulthood (Ackerman, Zuroff, Moskowitz, 2000). One study in particular by McAdams & de St. Aubin, (1992) looked at assessing generative concern and behavior in a sample of adults between the ages of 19 and 68 years old. Researchers had participants complete the LGS,

the Social Desirability Scale (Osche & Plug, 1986), the generativity subscale (Hawley, 1985) and narratives of important autobiographical episodes. One group consisted of college-aged undergraduates (N=165; 105 women, 60 men) from a large urban university. Results showed that college-aged women scored higher on generative concern on the LGS than did their male counterparts but still scored significantly lower than adult men and women in the sample of the mid-life age group (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992). Adult women in the mid-life group scored significantly higher overall on generative concern than adult males, although adult males who were fathers scored higher on generative concern than their male counterparts who were not fathers. These results of the existence of generative concern and action among the college-aged sample may be due to the influence of parental values in the college-aged subjects' lives, specifically if their parents are engaged in generative behaviors (McAdams, 2006; Pratt et al., 2001). Studies have shown that adults who were raised by generative parents and grandparents also were able to recount stories of transmission of family values and considered the interactions with these family members to have added a sense of value and integrity to their lives (McAdams, 2006; Pratt et al., 2001). These results lead researchers to conclude that generative behaviors and characteristics can be so important in a family and become so ingrained in an individual's life and thus a family's life that the importance of living a generative life becomes a family value.

Another trait seen in highly generative people is the presence of higher levels of positive appraisal of self, otherwise defined as self-esteem. Individuals with high self-esteem tend to have an optimistic outlook and feel more in control of their impact on the world and on their environment (Cox, Wilt, Olson & McAdams, 2010). They therefore

often manage to interpret negative events in relatively positive terms, or describe a positive event or lesson learned, known as a redemptive interpretation, as the outcome of having experienced a negative event (Himself, Hart, Diamond & McAdams, 1997; Roy & Lucas, 2006). These kinds of redemptive interpretations, in turn, may help to encourage higher levels of self-esteem (McAdams, Reynolds, Lewis, Patten, & Bowman, 2001; Roy & Lucas, 2006). It is also worth noting that an increase in the reported quantity of one's negative representations of their past were strongly related to a decrease in level of self-esteem. This suggests that individuals with high levels of self-esteem are especially reluctant to recall and report negative ramifications or outcomes in life narrative measures without also including a positive lesson learned from such encounters (Himself et al., 1997). This does not mean that individuals with high self-esteem did not suffer harmful or detrimental experiences. The difference, however, is that they did not let these experiences overpower or color the good they experienced in life or prohibit them from searching and striving to create a better life for themselves (Hart et al., 2001; Roy & Lucas, 2006).

A final and possibly most important correlate of generativity is psychological well-being. This is a core component of theory regarding the generative adult. It is also a robust finding in the empirical literature (de St. Aubin & McAdams, 1995; Keyes & Ryff 1998; Ackerman, Zuroff & Moskowitz, 2000; Lodi, Smith & Roberts, 2007; Peterson & Duncan, 2007; Cox, Wilt, Olson & McAdams, 2010) and a key aspect of the hypothesis proposed in this study.

Researchers studying the manifestation of generativity in varying populations include measures of psychological well-being in their studies in conjunction with their

measures of generativity. This was common practice in the above mentioned articles that looked at various motivating factors that encourage the practice of generativity or commonly seen personality traits imbibed by generative people. (Ackerman, Zuroff & Moskowitz, 2000; Lodi, Smith & Roberts, 2007; Peterson & Duncan, 2007; Cox, Wilt, Olson & McAdams, 2010). This inclusion of measures to test psychological well-being of participants is necessary, as indices of generativity are positively associated with higher reported levels of well-being and of overall satisfaction of life as well as adaptation to midlife in adult populations (Keyes & Ryff, 1998; Ackerman, Zuroff, & Moscovitz, 2000; Huta & Zuroff, 2007).

All of the above studies show strong support for the benefits of engaging in generative behavior, as well as provide a snapshot of what a generative adult looks like. Engaging in generative behaviors has been shown to promote a positive sense of self and self-esteem and instill a sense of hopefulness that individuals can have a positive impact on the lives of others. Researchers argue this, in turn, enrich their lives and support their desire to continue to contribute to their communities and society at large. Although most of the researchers were mindful of including participants of different racial/ ethnic groups, it is unclear as to why they chose to do so as their reasons for selecting these study participants is not explained in these studies. It is unclear if including a diverse group of participants was done in an attempt to provide an ethnically-mixed sample or to highlight the similarities and differences among these groups. It would be beneficial to know what the researchers' aim was with respect to including minorities in their sample groups. Was this done for a specific purpose and if so, what? Or did the sample itself simply shape itself this way?

## **The Role of Culture in Generativity**

Much of the focus of generativity research has concentrated on the nature and characteristics of generative people. However, new research on generativity still follows the pattern of established research in that racial and ethnic minorities continue to be disproportionately underrepresented in sampled populations. By failing to take into account how culture shapes its members, the direct link to its influence of generative attributes and behaviors is not acknowledged. When including ethnic minorities, but neglecting to explore the 'how' and 'why' of the role culture plays in their findings, researchers are missing an incredibly important variable: Culture. This is the driving force behind the creation of an individual's beliefs and social mores (Penezić et al., 2007).

Erikson was particularly sensitive to the impact of culture and its definitive place in the shaping of generativity (Friedman, 1999). In addition to focusing on the impact that one has on others and on the world around oneself, Erikson also addressed how one's own immediate environment, one's racial/ethnic community, impacts the growth of an individual. Erikson was interested in how one's beliefs and ways of being, one's culture, shaped a person's life and life path and guided a person through each stage of life (Erikson, E., 1950).

Erikson was fascinated with culture and how it gave an individual a solid foundation on which generativity is played out (Erikson, E., 1950). Well-known for forging his own path within the field of psychology, Erikson was one of the first in his field who understood the importance of taking an individual's culture into account when

studying a person or a community. According to Goldberg, Erikson was one of the first psychologists who understood that: “in the world of persons, it is likewise reasonable to suggest that our knowledge would be inadequate were our theories of the person insensitive to the social world into which persons are born and within which they carry out their lives” (Goldberger & Veroff, 1995 p. 417). Erikson’s fascination with culture was not only a professional interest, it also stemmed from his own personal experiences grappling with issues surrounding his own identity, never feeling a complete kinship with either his German roots or his Jewish heritage (Friedman, 1999). As a tall, blonde-haired blue-eyed child, Erikson looked markedly different from his dark skin, dark-haired family members (Friedman, 1999). His outer appearance drew much unwanted attention in Hebrew school by his Jewish peers and he was also mocked for being Jewish by his German peers in primary school. Because he did not possess the desired features of the majority in either setting, he perceived himself as a perpetual outsider in all social circles regardless of how hard he tried to fit in (Friedman, 1999). Erikson described himself as being well-versed at walking on the edge of the two cultures he was born into and admitted never feeling a kinship with either one (Friedman, 1999). This lack of a connection to his own peer group in childhood, coupled with his immigration to the United States as an adult, may have been the impetus for Erikson’s deep interest in the study of other cultures.

Although he was a psychologist, Erikson had a deep appreciation for anthropology. He was particularly interested in Native Americans and took extensive trips to South Dakota reservations to study the Sioux Indian tribe. Erikson was influenced by the experience and was deeply impressed by the child-rearing practices of the Sioux.

Although mindful of universal components of parenting such as wanting children to thrive, be healthy, and eventually carry on the family cycle by having their own offspring, Erikson was particularly taken with the distinct method and style of parenting of the Sioux. Compared to German culture, the Sioux adopted a more flexible parenting style, which allowed the children more freedom to explore the relationship among themselves, their bodies, and the world at large. Erikson (1950) viewed this style of parenting as fostering children's freedom to create and explore their own identities and their specific place within their tribe (Erikson, E., 1950).

Although all acts of parenting practices are not considered to be in and of themselves generative practices, the Sioux's practice of caring for their young was seen as being generative in nature and greatly impacted Erikson's subsequent theory of generativity. By allowing their young the freedom to make sense of the world they lived in, children learned about their world without any strict superimposed values of the parents halting and interfering with this period of exploration. This developmental principle practiced by their parents allowed Sioux children to be individuals during childhood. In doing so, Erikson argued Sioux parents "show no hostility toward the body as such nor do they, especially in boys, decry self-will" and that "there is no condemnation of infantile habits while the child is developing that system of communication between self and body and self and kin on which the infantile ego is based" (Erikson, E., 1963, p. 154). Erikson further praised the Sioux and their ways of life, specifically that of their attitudes and practices of child rearing, by arguing that "the discovery of primitive child-training systems makes it clear that primitive societies are neither infantile stages of mankind, nor arrested deviations from the proud progressive



norms which we represent: they are a complete form of mature human living, often of a homogeneity and simple integrity which we at times might well envy” (Erikson, E., 1963, p. 112). Erikson’s praise of the Sioux, for their simple yet mature way of parenting and fostering of independence in their children, was highly controversial (Friedman, 1999). This upholding of the Sioux way conflicted with the conventional perspectives which regarded the Native American lifestyle as primitive and savage. Society viewed the Native American people as subhuman (Spring, 1994). In fact, at the time Erikson was extolling the lifestyle of the Sioux, government-sponsored efforts to wipe out the Native American culture were still in effect (Friedman, 1999).

It is possible, given his lifelong struggle with his own identity, that Erikson felt a kinship with the Sioux, who struggled to maintain their own identity as Native Americans amidst the desire and heavy push towards conformity with United States values and beliefs (Friedman, 1999). Whatever the reason, Erikson was extremely taken by the Sioux way of life which was in stark contrast to Western culture – a culture which was “guided by the conviction that a systematic regulation of functions and impulses in earliest childhood is the surest safeguard for later effective functioning in society” (Erikson, E., 1963, p. 155). His study of the Sioux way of life greatly influenced his theories, as well as the way he viewed the world and worked with his clients (Friedman, 1999).

Erikson’s anthropological approach to studying the Sioux allowed him the opportunity to live and learn first-hand from this population. Unfortunately, this type of research requires an enormous time commitment and is not always feasible for researchers in other social science disciplines. What is important to note, however, is that

Erikson's approach to researching the Sioux demonstrates a willingness to let himself be taught the Sioux ways by the Sioux themselves. In so doing, he was able to respectfully compare, in an unbiased way, their cultural norms to those of his own cultural group and was able to gain a deeper level of insight into the working of their community. By acknowledging and respecting the Sioux culture, Erikson was able to paint a culturally sensitive and specific picture of Sioux generativity.

### **Generativity and Culture: A Review and Analysis of the Literature**

Including racial/ethnic minorities in research studies should be seen as an important and sought after practice in the field of psychology, as these groups continue to grow in number and add to the large immigrant populations of the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). When minority groups are included in studies, results are generalizable to the larger population the sample represents and the more generalizable the results, the stronger the implications of the study's findings (Hofer, Busch, Chasiots, Kartner, & Campos, 2008; Marín & Marín, 1991). However, simply including minorities in research studies is not enough. The culture of one's racial/ethnic group needs to be considered and analyzed for it does impact the results of said studies. An acknowledgement and discussion on how the values and beliefs of a group affect results is often excluded or overlooked, therefore negating their impact and importance. This section presents a discussion of a body of research that both accounts for cultural differences among the sampled population and acknowledges how these cultural differences contributed to one's expression of generativity.

Hart, McAdams, Hirsch, and Bauer (2001) designed and conducted a study to understand differences in expression of generativity and social involvement among

African American and White adults ages 35 to 65 years ( $N=253$ ; 114 African Americans, 139 Whites;  $M = 48.5$  years,  $SD = 8.7$ ). The two groups sampled differed substantially on education and on family income, with White adults reporting completing a degree in higher education and averaging double the amount of yearly income reported by the African American adults. Participants completed the LGS, the GBC, and Emmons abbreviated personal striving 10-item measure (1986) designed to measure the interactive effect of commitment and strivings on psychological and physical well-being (Hart et al., 2001, p. 215). Each participant also completed a narrative account of his peak experience, or high point in his life, and one turning point narrative, which details a certain key moment or episode in an individual's life wherein they begin to see themselves differently. Participants also completed four short self-report scales measuring types of parental involvement (Hirsch, 1995). These peak, nadir, and turning point narratives were then scored for magnitude of generativity. The focus of the research was to (1) determine if highly generative adults are more involved in religious communities; (2) examine a possible link between generativity and politics; and (3) examine the role of race with respect to generativity and social involvement.

The results indicated that the African American sample was more highly involved in organized religious communities than the White sample, whereas the White sample group was more politically active, but had fewer social supports and was less likely to see themselves as role models for their children. In contrast, the study concluded that the African American sample showed a different pattern of care-giving, which included extended family members playing a more important role in child rearing. Intercorrelations among acts, goals, and generative themes were consistently significant

among the White sample, but in the African American sample generative acts and goals were not related (Hart et al., 2001). In both samples, LGS scores significantly predicted scores on generative behavior and goals. Whites scored substantially higher on the LGS than African Americans whose scores on the measure were considerably lower (Hart et al., 2001). This discrepancy could be related to the absence of certain generative characteristics listed as choices, such as specific religious/spiritual practices and extended family and friends' involvement in child rearing practices more common among the African American group. Without further exploration as to why the groups differed, one may conclude that African Americans are less generative than their White counterparts, a conclusion which may not necessarily be true.

In neglecting to analyze the results with respect to how the cultural component may have accounted for the discrepancies between the two groups, they neglected to explore the role culture may have played in accounting for this difference in their findings. In other words, they did not follow through in questioning why these results were so different from one group to another. Hart et al. (2001) controlled for income and education and found that African Americans showed higher scores on generative concern (LGS) and reported more generative acts (GBC) compared to Whites. While it is possible that researchers attempted to control for differences between the two groups (income and education level) to even out major discrepancies, controlling for education and income alone does not create equality between groups.

Had this study accounted for cultural influences among each racial/ethnic group, they might have found that specific types of generative concern among the African American population were not adequately captured in by the LGS. While the African

American sample scored higher on generative behaviors than their White counterparts, they were found to be lacking in concern, even though their actions showed otherwise. Given that the LGS and GBC were measures normed on White Americans, and that such inconsistencies between LGS and GBC scores were found for the African American sampled population, focusing more heavily on narrative measures for this group might have given researchers more insight into such discrepancies. Often times researchers incorporate the use of existing measures on racial/ethnic groups that were not equally involved in the process of creating and validating such measures in an honest attempt to study these populations. However, this process often results in missing the specific impact that the specific culture of these minority groups has on the findings.

A German research team (Hofer, Busch, Chasiots, Kartner, & Campos, 2008) acknowledged this practice by highlighting a gap in existing research on the applicability of generativity to other non-United States cultures. The rationale behind the necessity of this study was that they felt that “to be able to make statements about the generalizability of any psychological theory or construct, cross-cultural research is indispensable” (p. 2). They designed a study to test the cross-cultural applicability of the integrated model of generativity created by McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992). The sample population of this study (N=566) consisted of adult participants from Costa Rica (n=193), Germany (n=190), and Cameroon (n=183) who resided in their countries of origin. All participants completed the LGS, the SWLS and the personal striving 15-item measure (Emmons, 1986). Participants also completed a modified version of the Thematic Apperception Test, a projective measure which was used to assess participants’ accounts of their respective level of three motive clusters: achievement, intimacy-affiliation and power.

All measures used in this study were translated into Spanish and then into German by the same native Spanish speaker who also spoke German. The Cameroonian sample completed an English version (Hofer et al., 2008).

The results showed that the Germans and the Costa Ricans reported greater commitment to values that reflect a striving for autonomy, self-direction and independence than the Cameroonians surveyed. Additionally, a significant relationship also was shown between motivation to engage in volunteering within one's community, known as pro-social concern, and generative concern in all three groups. However, the Germans scored significantly lower than the Costa Ricans and the Cameroonians on pro-social concern for their communities at large (Hofer et al., 2008).

Because the study design did not account for very different cultural values of each sample group, it remains uncertain whether this decrease in pro-social concern can be attributed to Germans valuing more individualistic beliefs than the collectivist cultures of Cameroon and Costa Rica. This oversight in the study design is further reflected in the fact that researchers omitted certain items on the LGS for each group if the group did not have significant loadings on such items. In so doing, they explained that "in order to test the mental makeup of generativity and to test its universality, interpersonal factors such as cultural demands and generative behavior were kept out of the analysis" (Hofer et al., 2008, p. 5). In an attempt to treat the sample as a somewhat homogenous group, these researchers were thus unable to dig deeper into the results and to explore the influence of culture on generative behavior. Acknowledging and exploring the differences between the groups of study could have explained why such discrepancies existed.

Another research team made up of Slovenian and Croatian scholars, (Penezić et al., 2007) attempted to find predictors of generative action among adults (N= 927) in two transitional countries, Croatia (n=381) and Slovenia (n=546). The researchers hypothesized that differences between the two countries would exist, given that Slovenia was further developed and more economically stable than its war-torn neighbor (Penezić et al., 2007). The researchers stated that they operationalized generative inner desire from the generativity model by McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992) into generative goals. The researchers explained that they chose to do so because “the inner desire to be generative does not always correspond to real circumstances” (p. 2). Therefore, these researchers decided to look at generative goals as being more indicative in the prediction of generative behavior.

This study employed an abbreviated version of the GOALS assessment (Pohlmann & Brunstein, 1997), which asks participants to rate the level of importance of 16 long-term life goals pertaining to six major life domains: intimacy, affiliation, altruism, power, achievement, and variation of experiences and excitement. Penezić et al. (2007) also used the GBC and the LGS to measure and to assess generative behavior and generative concern among participants. For the purpose of this study, researchers modified the GBC, keeping 11 original items and adding 9 new, culturally specific items, however, they did not explain what these new culturally specific items were, or how they were chosen or validated as being culturally appropriate. The LGS was also modified through a series of factor analyses in an attempt to make it more representative of both populations. As a result, original items of the LGS were omitted that pertained to

voluntary work for a charity, caring for the homeless, and adopting children (Penezić et al., 2007).

The study concluded that Croatians were more concerned with finding employment and reported higher overall generative concern and communal goals. The study also found Croatians to be pessimistic and anxious about the success of their future generation (Penezić et al., 2007). The Slovenian sample rated the importance of free-time higher than that of the Croatian sample and reported more agentic goals than their Croatian counterparts (Penezić et al., 2007).

In looking at the methods, one may question why certain above-mentioned items of the LGS were omitted, as well as what constituted the 9 culturally specific items. The researchers, at the time of the study, considered Croatia to be a struggling country whose citizens were concerned about the state of the next generation. Could it be that the disproportionate number of Slovenians in the sampled population too heavily impacted the loadings on the factor analyses? The results with regard to Croatia seem contradictory in nature. How can a country worry about the future of its people, but not be concerned for caring for those in dire need, such as the homeless and children who may have been orphaned due to the war? The researchers further hypothesized that it was likely that most Slovenians value free-time because it is in their free-time that they are able to donate their time and energy to helping others. Does this mean that if they have free-time, they might contemplate or engage in generative behaviors? Another hypothesis may be that because Slovenia is a more highly developed country, and likely moves at a faster pace, less free-time is available and therefore Slovenian have a more acute recognition of the value of free-time.



Each of the three studies on generativity discussed above was admirable in its attempt to explore possible cultural implications of the manifestation and type of generative expression among people of different cultures. However, all three studies neglected to discuss why there were differences between these two cultures. Although existing quantitative generativity measures were used, these measures were created in the United States and thus reflect the cultural beliefs and traditions of mainstream United States society. If the aim of the researchers was to highlight the differences among groups or to show that existing quantitative measures are not representative of other cultures, the inclusion of other qualitative measures in conjunction with the measures used would have provided further detailed information to support their original hypotheses. Qualitative measures, such as narrative measures, allow for participants' to express themselves and to talk about their set of values and beliefs in their own words. These types of narrative measures are also laced with cultural nuances and language not captured by standardized quantitative measures. Without the use of qualitative measures to provide more in-depth, culture-specific data, researchers were unable to further explain why certain items on the measures were not indicative of particular groups, so they simply omitted these specific items. With this omission went the opportunity to make a connection between the 'how' and 'why' culture may have contributed to the discrepancy in scoring.

The common thread among the three studies is that they neglected to account for participants' different cultures in the study design, thereby potentially skewing the study's findings. Instead of eliminating items in assessment measures because of their poor loadings, their studies would have been strengthened as would their findings on

generativity from further exploration as to why certain items did not pertain to certain ethnic groups.

Although the study by Hofer et al. (2008) went to great measures to include groups living outside of the United States, they chose to ignore cultural demands of these groups when analyzing their data. In all three studies, the researchers neglected to explore why they received the results that they did. Why did some groups perform differently and sometimes drastically different from their counterparts? By not weaving this question into their study, it remains unanswered. These studies, then, followed a well-worn path in the field of generativity in that they did not appropriately weigh the role of culture as a driving force in everyday life. As a result, the model of generativity continues to be compromised as the role culture plays in the manifestation of generativity often remains unaccounted for.

### **An Emic Approach to Research**

Aside from ignoring values and patterns of behavior specific to culture, researchers in the three studies used an etic approach in their research designs. Etic constructs consist of accounts, descriptions, and analyses that are regarded as meaningful and appropriate *by the community of scientific observers*. However, these accounts and analyses are reflective of the beliefs and values of their culture and not necessarily of the population studied (Lett, 1996). Researchers often favor the etic approach in constructing and analyzing their research studies. By taking this approach, however, researchers often easily miss the cultural influences and implications of the behavior of their subjects when the subjects do not act or respond in ways consistent with the researchers' tools or beliefs. Researchers also need to weigh their decisions to use specific measures to assure that the

measures will adequately capture what they are looking for. More common in an etic approach to research is the rigidity of measures used to collect data from participants. In asking participants to select from specific categories or answers given on a specific measure, one is forced to choose from approved answers that may not adequately be representative of that person. It also does not allow for deviation from such answers even if such a deviation would be more adequately representative of the individual and their culture.

Erikson, however, took a very different approach in his study of other cultures. Erikson used an anthropological approach to learning about other cultures. He utilized a more emic or ‘ground up’ way of learning, which consisted of spending time living with the group being studied and learning directly from them through daily interactions. In other words, he used emic constructs, which are accounts, descriptions, and analyses that are regarded as meaningful and appropriate *by the members of the culture under study*. This is especially important in research on culture, for the design of a study is then guided by the specific values and beliefs of a particular culture of study and allows for these important variables to guide the researcher thus assuring a more adequate representation of that population.

de St. Aubin (2004) also followed an emic approach in his writings regarding generativity in Japanese and United States culture. He stated that he chose to study the culture in this way instead of using existing quantitative measures because “such top-down approach to cross-cultural work fails to capture the specific generativity dynamics unique to a particular culture” (p. 66). “If a researcher chooses an existing model that is

not normed on a specific culture and attempts to make that model fit that culture, this limits the ability to advance generative theory” (p. 66).

In this work, de St. Aubin provided a detailed description of the unique ways in which the Japanese display generativity as compared to how it is expressed in the United States. He provided a narrative description of the daily lives of Japanese residing in their native Japan, focusing on their parenting styles and beliefs, and on the role of mentoring in daily interactions. By using the emic approach to researching this population, de St. Aubin was able to provide a detailed and in-depth picture of Japanese life. Although de St. Aubin’s work is very important in understanding generativity, it also offers detailed insight into the Japanese culture.

Yoko Yamada (2004) a Japanese developmental psychologist, also followed an emic approach to studying Japanese students in Japan. Yamada reconstructed Erikson’s life cycle model to include a marriage of Japan’s Eastern values and the United States’ Western values. She explained that such a mix would be more representative of a set of values held by modern day Japanese adults (Yamada, 2004). Yamada wanted to find out how the 137 Japanese university students who participated in the study visualized the course of life by having them depict their life experiences through a series of drawings. Yamada found that the students’ eastern spiritual beliefs about nature and the universe at large, along with their strong ties to family, including ancestors, living relatives and those yet to come, heavily influenced the students’ drawings. These spiritual beliefs also influenced the manifestation of generativity among the sample as well as their definition of generative concern and acts. As Yamada explained, “the Japanese construct generativity as one generation’s caring for and linkage not only to succeeding generations

but also to preceding generations” (p. 109). Yamada’s study offered a unique view of how the Japanese define caring for the next generation and contributed to the importance of including and incorporating culture in future studies on generativity.

Because of the increase in attention to the study of generativity, it is necessary that the field examine the cultural piece of the model and its importance to the model. Like Erikson, researchers need to begin refocusing their research to uncover and address how culture, traditions, and values are manifested in individuals’ lives. In order to do so, researchers need to be willing to meet their target populations ‘where they are at’ and acknowledge their subjects as the experts and themselves as the students, ready and willing to learn from them. By doing so, researchers take on the role of being observers before analysts. The focus of the researchers then centers on that of asking their participants to explain in their own words what is important to them, rather than using pre-constructed measures that reflect a particular cultural framework. Researchers then need to carefully examine their cultural traditions, actions, and behaviors, comparing and contrasting them to existing generativity measures to see if existing measures are really inclusive of the culture being studied. Should this approach to studying generativity not materialize, research approaches applied to diverse cultural groups will continue to mistakenly produce results that researchers believe are indicative of their sample populations, when in reality they may not be.

### **Why Culture Matters**

The expression of generative attributes and behaviors is seen specifically, yet distinctly, among differing racial/ethnic groups for these groups are heavily influenced by

the values, traditions, and beliefs of their particular culture. Yet staying true to the values of one's ethnic group may be compromised if the group lives outside of its own country of origin and instead resides in a country with a differing value system (Erikson, K., 2004). In such instances, a push towards shifts in values and beliefs, as well as in generative expression, may be seen as newer generations of the minority group strive to assimilate to the majority culture. These shifts in generative expression, although arguably necessary yet definitely unavoidable, also create a type of tension seen in the cultural demands of one's own group (Erikson, K., 2004; McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1998). This rift, although common among generations, is especially salient for ethnic minority groups (Erikson, K., 2004; Garcia-Preto, 2005) whose cultural beliefs and traditions may deviate from that of mainstream society.

The study of generativity is a strengths-based approach. Because of this, generativity as a concept can aid researchers in finding out the strengths of a population based on its beliefs and value system. It can find out what motivates and pulls an individual to want to contribute to the human enterprise and the benefits obtained by the giver and the receiver of generative actions. This is especially beneficial when studying minority groups living in mainstream United States society. Much of the dominant research on minority groups in the United States looks largely at the deficits of these particular populations (Berry, 2003; Cuellar, Nyberg, Maldonado, & Roberts; 1997). Studies on acculturation also mirror this same model in that they have found that healthy acculturated individuals are those that can incorporate (consciously or unconsciously) new cultural traits into his or her original cultural patterns. It is a social and psychological process that reflects changes in cultural patterns that occur after individuals

of different cultures come into conscious first-hand contact with one another. (Berry, 2003; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). What is not emphasized, however, is that in order for minorities to adapt to the values of mainstream society, they must first discard some of their beliefs and traditions that directly conflict with those of mainstream society. Inherent in the acculturation process is also the act of losing traditions and values that are deemed conflictual. The push towards acculturation for minorities may be especially difficult if the values, beliefs, and traditional structure of the group is quite opposite from those of mainstream society. This type of conflict is especially evident in minority collectivist cultures residing in the United States.

The mainstream culture of the United States has been described as individualistic in nature (Triandis, 2001). An individualistic society prizes autonomy and independence for its members. It pushes its members to strive for their own personal goals rather than focusing on those that benefit the group (Triandis, 2001; Uleman, Lee, & Roman, 1995).

The United States, however, is comprised of several racial/ethnic groups that are more collectivistic in nature. In a collectivist society, the focus is on how individuals' actions benefit or impact the collective group or family as a whole. These individuals "shape their behavior primarily on the basis of in-group norms, and behave in a communal way" (Triandis, 2001, p. 909). Behaviors that benefit the individual without considering the group are not acceptable in a collectivist culture (Santiago-Rivera, Arredondo, & Gallardo-Cooper, 2002). This is especially true if the individuals are not focused on bettering the group through their actions, but are instead only concerned with improving their status, which at times may be at the expense of the well-being of the group (Garcia-Preto, 1996).

Immigrant populations in the United States are comprised of members who are at different levels of assimilation. Some members' are more traditional and adhere to those values and beliefs inherent in their country of origin, while others are more acculturated to the mainstream beliefs and customs of United States' mainstream culture (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002; Sue & Sue, 2007). As Kai Erikson (2004) states, less acculturated immigrants "tend to rely on old familiar ways of doing things, which only proved to their children that they were relics of a time passed," and, as a result, "the gulf between them sometimes widened" (p. 54). Having different generations within a family who are at differing levels of acculturation impacts the transference of a shared values and beliefs system. This, in turn, affects the manifestation of generativity. What one group might consider being generative concern and behavioral practices another may consider to be intrusive and unwanted attention. In such instances, the rift between generations is further complicated. Language barriers also inhibit the sharing of customs and thus generativity. English is the preferred language by younger generations who were born and raised in the United States and acculturated to U.S. society and its value system (Garcia-Preto, 2005; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). Often times third generation Mexican-Americans born and raised in the United States do not even speak Spanish. This creates a gap in communication between the older first generation relatives, many of whom do not speak English, and their third generation grandchildren (Erikson, K.; 2004; Garcia-Preto, 2005; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002).

Mexican and Mexican-American families, unlike some other ethnic minority families, are in a continuous process of transition as many of them are affected by difficult migratory and life transitions (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002; Sue & Sue, 2007).



Several social indicators suggest that many of these families have numerous risk attributes which influence their vulnerability to individual and family problems, including, but not limited to, poverty, poor health, low levels of education, employment, and incomes, substance abuse issues, domestic violence, and other social and mental health problems (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002; US Census Bureau, 2010). These indicators often become problematic for this population and make their progress toward socio-cultural adjustment slow, confusing, and disorienting. These indicators also keep many from developing stability that can affect family formation, family dissolution, and the ability to acquire adequate coping skills (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002; Sue & Sue, 2007).

Given that the Mexican population continues to be the largest growing Latino minority group, comprising 65% of the Latino population in the United States as recorded in 2009 (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011), becoming more familiar with their cultural practices and with obstacles that prevent or inhibit them from smoothly transitioning into mainstream society is warranted. It is crucial to get an understanding of their needs and overall functioning and cultural beliefs and practices to get a better understanding of how they may compliment and clash with those of mainstream United States society. This is especially important given that existing research among Mexicans and Mexican-Americans has shown that this group is not faring as well as other Latino subgroups in regards to overall mental health status. Because Mexico, an impoverished country where between 1/3 and 1/2 of rural Mexicans live in poverty and up to 18% in extreme poverty shares a border with the United States, the majority of Mexicans who cross over the border in search of work do so illegally (Bread for the World Institute, 2011). Thus,

immigration issues and illegal entry of this population into the United States is a very pressing issue and causes all Mexicans to remain under constant scrutiny regardless of their legal status (Añez, Paris, Bedregal, Davidson & Grilo, 2005; Espenshade & Hempstead, 1996). As a result, the Mexican-American population is somewhat insular and often relies primarily on its own members for support (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002). Being under constant surveillance by law enforcement and laymen alike may have a definite impact on the daily stress of this population. It also makes it difficult for future generations to assimilate to Western society with ease.

Research has found that second and especially third generation Mexican-Americans seem to have a more difficult time acclimating to Western society. Two separate studies (Escobar, Hoyos-Neve & Gara, 2000; Vega et al., 1998), found that second and third generation Mexicans-Americans were at a greater risk for major depression than their Mexican-born relatives (Escobar et al., 2000; Vega et al., 1998). This may be due, in part, to the difficulty in wanting and trying to build a bridge between the two cultures, which is more common among second and third generations (Añez et al., 2005). The rise of substance abuse among Mexican-Americans has been shown to dramatically increase in third generation Mexican-Americans, as does the prevalence of depression, anxiety and other psychiatric disorders (Alegría, Mulvaney-Day, Torres, Polo, Cao, & Canino, 2007). The results of these studies are very concerning as they highlight the fact that there is a large disconnect somewhere between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Mexican-Americans. Somewhere along the way, the values and traditions and strengths of the culture are getting lost in transmission. Something is not working. Likely the transmission of generativity is being stifled as well if the traditions and values

of 1<sup>st</sup> generation Mexican-Americans are not deemed worthy or important to uphold by the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. Therefore, there is a need to study and analyze the strengths of these cultural pieces in order to aid in the positive social and psychological growth of generations to come.

Also of particular concern to the field of psychology is the lack of help-seeking behavior among this population (Añez et al., 2005). Mexican-Americans often do not seek treatment for mental health or substance abuse until their illness has become so distressing and unmanageable. Reasons fostering this type of behavior are numerous, but include a lack of culturally sensitive bilingual providers and treatment programs, a lack of health insurance, illegal immigration status, and mistrust of existing resources (Alegría et al., 2007; Añez et al., 2005; Espenshade & Hempstead, 1996).

Given that the Mexican-American population continues to grow at a steady rate and given that research shows that the third generation is faring more poorly than previous generations, it is imperative to begin to critically analyze this segment of the population. If Mexican-Americans decline in mental health and engage more in substance abuse and thus risky behaviors from first to third generation, they are obviously not thriving in Western society. If they are not thriving, the field of psychology can help us understand why.

Studies aimed at analyzing Mexican and Mexican-American living within the United States seem to stay focused on determining the link between well-being and level of acculturation. They aim at finding the right mix of cultures that connote a healthy individual. Cuellar, Nyberg, Maldonado, & Roberts (1997) argue that the act of acculturation occurs when members of differing cultural groups come into contact with

one another which facilitate a change to be made in the values and beliefs of both groups in order to effectively work and coexist together. This change to the group involves a giving up of certain standards or cultural ways in order to be able to adapt to the dominant culture. There is loss involved in this process which most likely affects the identity of the individual participating in this process (Berry, 2003; Cuellar, et al., 1997). Although interesting and important to the literature and to our understanding of this population, these studies aimed solely at finding the balance of acculturation tend to be deficit-based models. This is because they highlight how a person who holds too tightly to their cultural values is unable to adapt to mainstream culture and is then viewed as being a less healthy and productive member of larger society.

Revamping the methods and approaches typically used to study Mexican-Americans seems to be of great importance and merits scholarly attention. Instead of focusing on the deficits, examining this population from a strengths-based approach, such as generativity, may aid in helping them to prosper within their communities and society at large. Through the use of generative measures, both quantitative and qualitative, researchers would be able to identify what is and what is not important to this group according to this groups' particular perspective. The results could yield a change in the way this population is viewed and often stigmatized by Western society. It could also result in the shaping and creation of programs designed to service this population and to target areas the population itself deems to be challenging and difficult and take a more proactive rather than reactive approach to curb such obstacles.

For these reasons, Mexican-Americans are potentially a valuable group to study given their culture and its impact on their generative ways. In addition, their practices

remain heavily rooted in their culture of origin and are perhaps less influenced by United States values and traditions. One way of doing this type of research in a non-threatening and culturally sensitive manner is to begin with the study of generativity. By using the concept of generativity, one can begin to measure what this population considers to be important to its culture.

### **Values Inherent to Mexican-American Culture that Shape the Manifestation of Generativity**

To begin to understand how generativity might be expressed among Mexican-Americans, it is important to acknowledge key beliefs and values inherent in the culture of this population. Mexican-American values to be taken into consideration include: group identification, the family system, respect and dignity, personalism and trust, and fatalism (Sue & Sue, 2007).

**A. Group Identification.** In contrast to the Western worldview, the self-concept of people from Mexican cultures is defined by their relationships to family and community and not by their separate individual identities (Bean, Perry, & Bedell, 2001; Garcia-Preto, 1996). Mexican culture is more collectivistic in nature and thus is starkly contrasted with the emphasis placed on individuality in United States society.

**B. *Familia* (Family).** Mexican culture's primary and preferred relational context includes the nuclear as well as extended family systems. The construct of family encompasses grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, as well as non-blood relatives, such as *compadres*, which are close friends and godparents (*padrinos*) of the family's children.

This goes beyond the view of extended family in mainstream United States culture. It is *la familia* that occupies a central role in the psychological well-being of all Mexicans, regardless of place of birth (Falicov, 1998; Sue & Sue, 2007).

A major source of strength is found within the family unit. Traditionally, Mexican or Mexican-American families tend to emphasize interdependence over independence and cooperation over competition. The emphasis on the individual's role within the context of the family is essential to maintaining the values and belief system of the Mexican culture while also guarding against the potential negative effects of the acculturation process.

Relevant and considered part of the immediate family unit are the *compadres* (godparents). *Compadres* can be blood relatives and are often long-term childhood friends of the parents who play an essential role in the structure and functioning of the family. As within Catholicism in the United States, the *compadre* (godfather) and *comadre* (godmother) in Mexican culture are “co-parents” and “spiritual teachers” appointed to these positions through a formal religious ceremony. By accepting these roles, the *compadres* (godparents) accept the responsibility to help rear a child or children in the family if some misfortune befalls the biological parents. However, in contemporary Mexican culture, *compadrazco* (godparents' role) reflects more of a social function as well as an economic support system to the children than an actual parental substitution (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2003). A child may, therefore, have a few *compadres* that play a continuous role in the child's life.

The construct of “in-law” is also viewed differently within the Mexican culture than in mainstream American culture (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2003). When someone

marries into a family there is no distinction made between relatedness by blood versus relatedness by marriage for they have the same standing with regard to family connectedness and loyalty. This extension of who is included in the immediate family has a direct impact on the way generativity is expressed within the family and social group as well. Expanding one's circle of family to include non-blood relations increases one's most intimate circle of support. With this increase in supportive people, the need to look to outside members or friends for support and camaraderie likely diminishes. Thus involvement and attachment to the larger community may be of less importance.

*Hijos de crianza* (reared children), adopted (though not necessarily legally) children, refers to the practice of transferring a child from one family to another in the extended family system during a crisis. In this strong and tight-knit extended family structure, the importance of kinship is noted, for example, in considering "first level cousins" as *primo-hermano* or *prima-hermana* (i.e. cousin-brother or cousin-sister). It would be difficult to overstate the value of family unity and honor within Mexican culture (Garcia-Preto, 1996a). There is a commitment to protecting and nurturing from the family as long as loyalty is maintained. The saying "*Los trapos sucios en casa se han de lavar*" ("Dirty laundry should be cleaned at home") is salient here (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002, p. 64).

Mexican culture places great importance on maintaining a close connection and relationship within *la familia* (Bean et al., 2001). Falicov (1998) refers to the extended family in particular as "the basic social unit of Latino culture" (p. 231). Therefore it is important to understand that an individual relies on family, loyalty, reciprocity, and solidarity among members of the family and views the family as a source of support,

strength, and inspiration (Marín & Marín, 1991). In their studies, Marín & Marín (1991) and Comas-Diaz (1997) argued that Mexicans' preference for a strong familial orientation reflected the value they placed on interdependence, cohesiveness, and cooperation as well as obligation to provide material and emotional support among members of the immediate (i.e. nuclear) and extended family.

Given the strong value of family ties that extend beyond blood relatives to include close friends and in-laws and that the well-being of the group takes precedence over the individual's personal achievement, it is likely that generative behaviors and actions are centered on these units. This is very different from what has been seen in Westernized individuals, where a large focus of one being 'generative' encompasses the work one does outside of their own family units, more so in the community at large.

In the Mexican population, every member of the group is considered a valuable asset. The elderly are particularly valued and revered for not only their place within the family, but also for their wisdom and knowledge. Caring for them at home until they pass away is standard practice. Even after a relative's passing, altars with their portraits for remembrance and for daily prayers both to them and for them are common in households. Once a year, on The Day of the Dead, these departed ancestors are celebrated and ceremoniously considered to be present among the living. Even in death they continue to play an important role in a family's life and practice. Because of strong family unity and because of the value of their elderly, the use of nursing homes is not paramount within this population and may be looked down upon by the family and community alike. This is a very different practice from that of mainstream U.S. society, where nursing homes are plentiful and full. One of the most widely used tools in the study of generativity, the



GBC, actually refers to this practice in the item: 1. “Visited a nonrelative in a hospital or nursing home”.

**C. *Respeto y dignidad*** (Respect and Dignity). In general, Mexican culture places a high value on interpersonal relationships. *Respeto y dignidad* among Mexicans refers to behaviors that enhance a sense of pride in one’s self or in interpersonal relationships, regardless of the individual’s status or position (Marín & Marín, 1991). Social relationships are built off of appropriate and deferential behavior towards others based on age, sex, socioeconomic position, and authority status. One of the ways *respeto* is manifested among some is their avoidance of direct eye contact with authority figures. This is important to note because in mainstream society in the United States, looking people in the eye is a sign of respect, while this behavior in the Mexican culture is considered to be very forward behavior and should not be misinterpreted as a sign of disinterest. *Respeto y dignidad* implies a mutual and reciprocal deference. It is therefore expected that outsiders treat the individual with returned respect because perceived disrespect or disinterest on behalf of the outsider can be detrimental to effective relationship-building and future collaboration. The relationship is easily terminated if they perceive that that respect is not being shown (The National Alliance for Hispanic Health, 2001). Because of this, it is expected that solidifying a working relationship requires time and effort and a certain amount of personal disclosure, for the sharing of what is important on a personal level shows that one respects the exchange and the building of a cohesive relationship.

**D. *Personalismo y Confianza*** (Personalism and Trust). The Mexican cultural value of *personalismo* represents a preference for understanding and dealing with organizations and individuals through the formation of personal relationships based on a congenial and personal manner, rather than adherence to an impersonal and business-like system of rules and hierarchies (Marín & Marín, 1991). These relationships reflecting *personalismo* also are guided by valuing the *confianza* (trust) and rapport that is established with others by developing expressions of warmth, friendliness, and the sharing of personal information (Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002).

*Respeto, dignidad, personalismo and confianza* are all values that dictate the acceptable practice of forming interpersonal relationships, as well as more business-like ones. In collectivistic cultures, forming some type of bond and getting to know someone on a personal level allows one to decide if that person is trustworthy, and in essence, worthy of being let into the group's inner circle. This again is incredibly different from what is considered to be standard practice of Western culture, where one's said position alone often dictates how that person is treated.

For example, in U.S. culture, positions of power are respected and often can be seen as intimidating to lay people. There is a definite distinction between individuals based on their titles and functions in society. Also respected is the notion of privacy and personal information that also dictates the appropriate amount of personal disclosure and to whom it is appropriate to disclose specific information. Although there are no written rules regarding such behavior, breaking these specific rules of social interaction can result in being ostracized or discarded from furthering social and professional relationships.

Within the Mexican and Mexican-American population, these strict rules of social interaction of Western society can, in fact, work against the forming of close personal bonds as well as productive working relationships. Members of this group become suspicious if an outsider fails to share something about themselves and also if they behave too rigidly. This type of behavior is seen as suspect and incredibly disrespectful. It is likely also seen as a sign that the outsider thinks his/her position is too important to require such an interaction and therefore the members eliciting such a personal exchange, are not worthy of knowing such information.

The difference in acceptable forms of social interactions among individualistic United States' culture and collectivistic Mexican/Mexican-American culture likely inhibits the latter from seeking services that they need within the community at large. It also likely negatively reinforces the idea that members of mainstream society need not or cannot be trusted.

**E. *Fatalismo*** (Fatalism). Among many Mexicans, *fatalismo* refers to the belief that a divine providence governs the world and that an individual cannot control or prevent adversity (Neff & Hoppe, 1993). Therefore the expression, "*si dios quiere*" ("God willing"), is often expressed in everyday conversation and punctuates every departure "*le veo mas tarde, si dios quiere*" (I'll see you later, If God wills it to be so). This belief suggests, first, that an individual may feel a sense of vulnerability and lack of control (i.e. external locus of control) over what has happened and what will happen to him or her. Thus, the individual perceives little responsibility for any positive or negative event in his life, including matters of health and illness. *Fatalismo* may also be perceived

as an adaptive response to the uncontrollable life situations that many Mexicans (and members of other minority groups) experience within United States society (Neff & Hoppe, 1993).

Mexicans and Mexican-Americans are commonly seen as a people of great religious and spiritual faith. So much so, that references to God even in personal greetings such as, “*bendición*” (blessings) and goodbyes such as “*Que Dios le bendiga*” (May God bless you), are common practice. This notion of faith and practices such as prayer and offerings made for one’s family, ancestors, and community are likely to be a new addition to already-established generative attributes. To date, the only acknowledgement of participation in religious activities is found in the GBC which asks whether a participant: (1). Taught Sunday School or provided similar religious instruction. (2). Attended a meeting or activity at a church (not including conventional worship service such as Mass, Sunday morning service, etc.).

Religion and spirituality also teach a person to have humility and respect that something greater and more powerful is ultimately in charge of everything. This potentially will affect the way in which generativity is perceived within this culture as well as who is allotted the credit for such acts. This is important to note because when looking at generative measures, specifically the most widely used measures, LGS and the GBC the language of all the items is very “I” centered. It connotes one person, the individual, as the only possible doer of the action. Again this is a very Westernized way of thinking which likely will not be as prominent in the Mexican and Mexican-American population.

Knowing what we know about Mexican-American values and also about

generativity, we know that generativity will be expressed differently within the Mexican-American population. It is expected that these values will definitely shape the unique way in which generativity is expressed. In collectivistic societies, the group is the central focus. Caring for others within the communal group is expected. Therefore, the manifestation of generative attributes and behaviors and the notion of 'giving back,' and caring for the next generation in this population may be innate, and therefore difficult to tease apart.

It is necessary to be ever mindful of these values both in the planning and implementation stages of research with this population for these values will shape the way one as a researcher interacts with people of this culture. As one enters into this type of research, it is not that one can predetermine what one is looking for, but instead needs to be willing to be taught, to learn from the participants. Researchers need to be mindful of their own biases and preconceived notions of the people of study to ensure that they do not shape the study framework and ultimately influence the findings and conclusions reached. Data collection may have to take on a new form and researchers need to be mindful of being flexible with this schedule. Participants will likely want to ask the researcher questions on a personal level in an attempt to get to know who they are working with, as forming a personal relationship is very culturally important and necessary if a participant is to feel comfortable sharing their own personal experiences. The relationship between participants and researchers is likely to be seen as a reciprocal relationship, very different from that of Western society. Openness and honesty on behalf of the researcher, is thus necessary. If participants feel they cannot trust the researcher, they may be apt to disengage themselves from the study.

One important cultural value, namely, that of specific gender roles, was not included in the values and traditions explored and highlighted. Although there are well-defined expectations of males and females, certain gender roles have had to change due to immigration. The role of women as stay-at-home mothers and men as the breadwinners and overall authoritarians are important gender-specific roles; however they are also arguably the most disrupted (Espenshade & Hempstead, 2003). The majority of Mexican immigrants coming to the United States are illegal, very poor, and lack the basic education needed to find higher paying jobs. They most often reside in the inner city, poorer neighborhoods within large cities, and are found to be working at jobs that pay very little. In order to support their families, women are most often required to work as well. For these reasons, it becomes very difficult to be able to maintain traditional male/female roles. While upsetting the family dynamics, it is tolerated and encouraged as a necessity for the survival of the family (Erikson, K, 2004; Santiago-Rivera et al., 2002).

### **Process of inquiry**

The goal of the study is to create a culturally sensitive, culturally specific measure of generativity for Mexican-Americans, The Mexican Measure Self Narrative of Generativity (MMSNG).

### **Hypotheses**

1. Scores on The Mexican Measure of Self Narrative Generativity (MMSNG) Measure will be statistically significant and strongly related to well-being.

2. Scores for Generative Concern (LGS) and Generative Behavior (GBC) will be statistically significant and moderately related to well-being.
3. The Mexican Measure of Self Narrative Generativity (MMSNG) will be a statistically significant better predictor of well-being than the LGS and GBC.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### Participants

A total of 137 participants completed the measures packet and are thus included in this study. The goal was to recruit a total of 120 participants, preferably equal numbers of men and women as well as equal numbers of foreign born and U.S. born participants. As generativity is considered to be a stage of development that occurs in midlife adults beginning around the age of 30 years old, the age range for all respective sampled participants was between 29 and 65 years of age. A total of 83 women and 53 men participated in this study. The mean age for men was 43 years of age while the mean age for women was 41 years of age.

All participants were of Mexican descent. Great effort and importance was put into finding participants who were specifically of this Latino subgroup. In order to stay true to the study design and to the value of how culture shapes beliefs and generativity, it was necessary to have a pure sample of this ethnic group and not to include other participants of different ethnicities, yet that still fall under the umbrella of 'Latinos'. Many researchers do a disservice to the Latino population by lumping together a sample of different Latino subgroups. This mutes the uniqueness and richness that each subgroup has to offer and in effect glosses over some very distinct cultural differences among these groups.

Participants in this study were clustered into 4 different groups based on sex and their country of origin. Group 1 consisted of Mexican-American men who were born and raised in the United States, but whose parents were born and raised in Mexico. Group 2



consisted of Mexican-American women who were born and raised in the United States, but whose parents were born and raised in Mexico. Group 3 consisted of Mexican men who were born in Mexico, but who came to the United States in late childhood/ early adolescence. Group 4 consisted of Mexican women who were born in Mexico but came to the United States in late childhood/ early adolescence. A total of 11 men and 13 women represented the U.S. born men and women in groups 1 and 2. A total of 42 men and 70 women represented the Mexican-born men and women in groups 3 and 4. Participant's also had to be within the targeted age range and either have been born in Mexico or born in the United States but had a parent who was born and raised in Mexico.

### **Procedures**

The sampling was rather complex, requiring many outreach efforts over several months. Outreach was conducted in 8 community churches and their bible study groups, 2 local public and charter schools, 4 area Hispanic non-profit agencies, flea markets, through word of mouth, and 3 free community events and seminars all located in the predominantly Mexican populated neighborhoods. All researchers and research assistants were bilingual, the majority being of either Mexican or Puerto-Rican descent themselves.

Packets of measures were distributed to participants by research assistants at the beginning of church group meetings, which assistants attended every week for a few months. Packets were collected every week and new packets were distributed to members who were interested in participating. Interested participants from local Hispanic non-profit groups were given a packet from researchers and called researchers

to pick up the completed packets or they participated in an on-site group where packets were distributed and group members filled them out together in one sitting. Researchers also obtained phone numbers of other interested participants by participants and packets of measures were hand delivered to these interested parties. Researchers also provided the lab phone number that allowed prospective participants to leave a voicemail message. A handful of interested parties contacted researchers leaving their names, phone numbers and addresses as to where their packet of measures could be dropped off. Included in the packets along with the consent forms was a phone number belonging to researchers that participants were instructed to call should they have any questions regarding completing the measures or if they wanted to meet or speak with researchers for further clarification. Self-addressed stamped envelopes were also given to participants who wanted to mail back completed measures.

Two different packets of measures were made available. One packet contained measures translated into Spanish. All measures were translated and back translated by a group of six bilingual and native Spanish speakers competent in reading, writing and in speaking Spanish. These translated measures were cross checked among this group multiple times until a standard translated packet was created. A total of 99 participants chose to complete a Spanish packet of measures.

Initially, consent forms of qualified participants who completed the packets were entered into a lottery where they were given the chance to earn a \$50 gift card from Target. For every 10 packets collected, a new winner was chosen. For every participant who was recruited through area church groups and who completed a packet of measures, an additional \$5.00 cash donation was made to his or her church group.

Recruiting participants and getting them to complete all measures in the packet was, in fact, very challenging. Approximately 200 additional packets were given to interested participants over the course of the data collection phase but were never completed or turned in. Multiple weekly trips were made by researchers and research assistants to local church groups over the course of 5 months in an effort to gather completed packets, and to bring new packets to potential participants.

Given the difficulty in securing completed packets of measures and study participants, a new system of incentives for interested participants was implemented. Approximately two months into the data collection phase of the study, and having only collected 12 completed research packets researchers sought and received approval by the Internal Review Board to give each study participant a \$25.00 gift card to a popular area grocery/department store. Area church groups were still given an additional \$5.00 for each of their qualified members who completed a packet of measures. This additional incentive increased the number of qualified participants and resulted in more measures packets returned.

## **Materials**

A variety of mixed measures, both qualitative and quantitative were included in the packet. For this study, three general categories of measurement scales were used. The first three were qualitative measures, and asked participants to write autobiographical responses to open-ended questions. The responses to these three qualitative questions were used to create The Mexican Measure of Self Narrative Generativity (MMSNG). The process used to create this new measure will be explained shortly. The second set of

measures, which were quantitative, included the two most commonly administered measures of generativity in the research literature to quantify individual differences in generativity. The last set of measures was designed to capture the level of well-being of study participants.

### **Constructing The Mexican Measure of Self Narrative Generativity (MMSNG)**

Participants' responses to qualitative measures, the generativity and the peak and nadir narratives were used to create this new measure. The first phase in creating this new measure was to gather a group perspective on what generativity looks like within this population. This was done through analyzing participants' responses to the generativity narrative qualitative measure. Staying true to the emic approach, participants gave examples, in their own words of the types of practices they engaged in which they deemed to be generative in nature. From the answers provided, researchers were able to uncover common themes of generativity and generative practices represented and depicted by study participants. This first phase focused on gathering a collective representation of generativity.

After completing this first phase, a scoring system was created to score individual responses to the peak and nadir narratives to then begin looking at how generativity was manifested by each individual participant. Next, the participant's peak and nadir responses were analyzed and scored for content consistent with the themes created by generativity narrative responses. In analyzing peak and nadir responses, researchers were able to look at individual differences in the expression of generativity. The majority of

the responses to the generativity, peak and nadir narratives were written in Spanish by study participants. Two research assistants, both native Spanish speakers translated the responses from Spanish into English. Assistants kept the integrity of each response by not correcting grammar used or adding in punctuation that was missing and instead translated what was written by each participant.

### **Autobiographic Qualitative Questions**

#### **1. Generativity Narrative:** (See Appendix A for this measure).

Each participant was given a short description of generativity that provided them a definition of the concept. Participants were then asked to provide a short description of the types of practices they partake in that they deem to be generative in nature. Through the use of grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2006) these responses were analyzed for common themes specific to the cultural values of this Mexican and Mexican-American sample population. Researchers and their assistants', selected 20 generativity narrative responses at random on 3 separate occasions. Each response was analyzed to find commonalities amongst the stories that would become possible themes and categories representative of generativity within the sampled population. After every scoring, researchers and research assistants met to discuss at length the existence of generative themes that were emerging in the participants' narrative responses. During the third round of analyzing generativity responses, it became obvious that no new generativity stories were outside of our taxonomy of themes and categories, therefore we had hit saturation and our themes and categories were now set.

In this first stage, researchers were not concerned with individual differences at this point, and solely examined the responses of the group as a whole to discern the many ways this sample spoke of being generative. The themes gathered from these narrative responses represented a shared understanding of how generativity is manifested in the lives of this sampled population. Once the foundation of generative themes and their supporting categories were established, a scoring system was devised in order to begin scoring the peak and nadir narratives. As a collective understanding of generativity was created by participants through their generativity narrative responses, it was time to begin focusing on scoring the peak and nadir narratives to determine individual differences of the manifestation of generativity among each participant.

**2. Peak Episode** (Pulled from McAdams Life Story Interview, 2005) (See Appendix A for this measure).

Participants were given the Peak Narrative description, an open-ended measure. This measure asked participants to provide a short narrative response detailing a high point in one's life. Participants were asked to include: what happened, when it happened, who was involved, what you were thinking and feeling, why the event is significant, and what the event says about you and your personality.

**3. Nadir Narratives** (Pulled from McAdams Life Story Interview, 2005)(See Appendix A for this measure).

Participants were given the Nadir Narrative description, an open-ended measure which asks one to provide a short narrative response detailing a low point in their life. Participants were asked to include: what happened, when it happened, who was involved,

what they were thinking and feeling, why the event is significant, and what the event says about you and your personality.

Researchers and research assistants analyzed and scored each individual's response from the peak and nadir narratives for the existence of the set themes and thematic categories generated by the generativity narrative responses. A random sample of fifteen peak and nadir responses were selected and distributed on three separate occasions, and were scored by researchers and each research assistant. All scores were analyzed by this group to review whether there was a difference in scores obtained by researchers and research assistants. Scoring selected responses in this way was done to ensure inter-rater reliability in scoring responses. Inter-rater reliability in the first round was approximately 75%. In the second round of scoring, it reached 83% and in the third and last round, Inter rater reliability was found to be 95%. Following each cross scoring round, researchers and research assistants met to look carefully at the scoring template and at the themes and the categories within each theme. Instead of focusing on how to improve inter-rater reliability scoring by going over existing scoring, the focus was on adding and making changes to the overall scoring system to make it clear and well defined so as to be easier to interpret and to score. This approach improved the overall inter-rater reliability while at the same time kept the integrity of the emic approach and the integrity of the measure created.

While analyzing the peak and nadir narratives, certain generative themes and categories that had emerged via the generativity narratives were found to be unmentioned and thus unsupported in the peak and nadir responses. If any one theme was not

evidenced at least twice throughout this process, it was eliminated from the thematic template.

Through examining the existence of these themes in the peak and nadir narratives, researchers were able to capture individual differences in types of generative practices among the population sample. These results also highlighted the magnitude of generativity reported by each participant. Each participant's Peak and Nadir narratives was analyzed and scored. Each peak and nadir response was dissected and scored based upon whether or not they mentioned one of the categories within the four themes in each response.

### **The Scoring System used to score Peak and Nadir Responses**

If a participant did not include mention and examples of any of the categories of the four themes of generativity (created by generativity narrative responses) in their peak and nadir responses, they received a score of '0'.

There are four *themes*: (1) Family, (2) Involvement with Children (3) Faith and (4) Gratitude. Each theme has several *categories* contained within it. For instance, the theme of Family is comprised of two categories: (A) Caring For and (B) United Front.

Each category received one of three scores: (0) Absent, meaning the category did not exist in the response. A score of (1) is given when a category is mentioned once and signifies that generativity is present at a minimal level and a score of (2) is given if the category is mentioned twice (or more) or if it was the essence of the story and signifies that generativity is present at a maximum level. (See Appendix B for more detailed scoring instructions).



This scoring system is utilized to score each category within each theme, and individual category scores may also be summed to provide an overall score of generativity for each individual.

The sum of each participant's scores on their narrative responses represented their individual generative score. Therefore, it represents how generative a participant is, while also explaining the type and magnitude of generativity in which they engage.

### **Quantitative Measures of Generativity**

#### **1. The Loyola Generativity Scale (LGS).** (See Appendix A for this measure).

Each participant completed the LGS, a 20-item self-report scale measuring generative concern. Answers to the LGS items are calculated and converted into one score which represents the participant's level of generative concern. The participant rates each item on a 4-point scale, ranging from 0 (*statement never applies to me*) to 3 (*statement always applies to me*). The scale shows high internal consistency (Cronbach alphas of .82 and .83 in Mc Adams & de St. Aubin, 1992) and adequate test-retest reliability (.73 over a 3-week span in McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992). The Loyola Generativity Scale scores have been shown to be positively correlated with measures of generative acts strivings for generativity in daily life, and themes of generativity in autobiographical recollections (Mc Adams & de St. Aubin, 1992; Mc Adams et, al, 1993). In this sample the internal reliability alpha was .79.

#### **2. The Generative Behavior Checklist (GBC).** (See Appendix A for this measure).

Each participant completed the GBC, a 50-item checklist measuring generative behavior. Answers to GBC items are calculated and converted into one score which represents the participant's level of generative behavior. The GBC is a 50-item checklist measuring generative behavior. Of the total, 40 acts represent generative behaviors, whereas the remaining 10 are neutral acts unrelated to generativity. The participant responds to each act by specifying how often in the previous two months, '0' if it was not performed, '1' if it has been performed once, or '2' more than once during the past two months. The scores on the 40 generative items are summed up to provide a composite index of generative behavior in daily life. Previous research has shown that GBC scores correlate significantly with LGS scores, with generativity strivings and with generativity themes in autobiography (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992; McAdams et al., 1993). In this sample the internal reliability alpha was .93

### **Measures of psychological well-being**

#### **1. The Hispanic Stress Inventory (HSI).** (See Appendix A for this measure).

The HSI was developed specifically to look at the type and amount of life stressors in five different domains of: Occupational/Economic Stress, Parental Stress, Marital Stress, Immigration Stress and Cultural/Family Conflict represented in a 73 item measure for foreign-born Mexican-Americans. A separate measure was also created specifically for United States-born Mexican-Americans and measures four domains of: Occupational/Economic Stress, Parental Stress, Marital Stress, and Cultural/Family Conflict represented in a 59 item measure. Scores from the HSI were to be compared to The Mexican Measure Self Narrative of Generativity (MMSNG) and also to two quantitative measures generativity.

Early in the data collection phase, it was discovered that both versions of The HSI measure were most often turned in blank or minimally completed by study participants. It is possible that the length of the measures and the fact that the items were statements and not outright questions may have made these measures more tedious and time consuming to complete.

Given the lack of completion of these measures, it was determined that this measure would not suffice as a measure of well-being for this particular study and would therefore need to be replaced by another one.

We were fortuitous in that amongst the other measures collected was a measure that is widely used and proven to be culturally sensitive in nature. The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) was therefore chosen as an appropriate replacement for the HSI and became the new measure of well-being used in this study.

**2. The Satisfaction With Life Survey (SWLS).** (See Appendix A for this measure).

Each participant completed the SWLS, to determine their reported level of satisfaction of their own life. Scores from the SWLS will therefore represent an individual's interpretation of their own sense of well-being. Determining level of well-being is important, as research shows that people with a stronger sense of well-being tend to engage in more generative practices.

The SWLS has been translated into over 30 different languages and is widely used in studies around the world. It has been used with Latino samples from different countries, including Spanish-speaking samples. Internal consistency for the Latino sample ( $\alpha=.82$ ) and Spanish-speaking sample ( $\alpha=.75$ ) proved to be adequate (Singelis,

Yamada, Barrio, Laney, Herr, Anaya, et al, 2006). Evidence for discriminant and convergent validity reveals that SWLS is highly correlated with other scales that measure subjective well-being and not associated with measures of psychopathology (Singelis, et al, 2006). In this sample the internal reliability alpha was .80

### **Planned Analyses**

The data was analyzed using version 19 of SPSS. Data was screened to ensure that it met the assumptions of the analyses before conducting the actual analyses. Means, standard deviations and ranges for major variable are reported in Table 3. A series of bivariate correlations was conducted to test hypotheses 1 and 2. These results were then analyzed to determine the strength of each correlation as well as whether the three correlations were significantly different. The strength of each correlation will be determined based on the following standards provided by Cohen (1988) and McGraw & Wong (1992): a very strong relationship (r values) ranges from 0.7 to 0.9, a strong relationship ranges from 0.5 to 0.7, a moderate relationship ranges from 0.3 to 0.5, and a weak relationship ranges from 0.1 to 0.3, a very weak or non-existent relationship falls within the -0.1 to 0.1 range. To test for significant differences between these Pearson correlation coefficients, each will first be converted to Z scores and their Z score differences will then be compared to the chart for significance.

In order to analyze the third hypothesis a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted. This allowed researchers the ability to determine which predictor variable (GBC, LGS or MMNSG) accounted for how much of the variance in the dependent variable (SWLS). Using a hierarchical multiple regression also allows one to see the

strength of the relationship between each predictor variable (MMSNG, LGS and GBC) and the dependent variable (SWLS).

## Chapter 4: Results

Prior to conducting planned analyses, preliminary analyses were performed to ensure that no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. The sample population consisted largely, of Mexican born participants who were Spanish language dominant, of lower educational level and lower socio-economic status. See Table 1 and Table 2 for a breakdown of descriptive statistics for this sampled population.

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics of the Sample Population*

	<i>N</i>	Minimum	Maximum	M (SD)
Participant Age	127	28	64	42.61 (8.85)
Highest grade completed	123	0	18	9.75 (3.69)
Hourly Wage	59	.00	33.00	11.84 (5.92)
Number of Children	115	0	8	2.62 (1.59)

Table 2

*Descriptive Statistics of the Sample Population*

	<i>N</i>	Percent
Born in United States	29	22.0
Born in Mexico	100	75.8
Employed Full-Time	63	47.7
Employed Part-Time	19	14.4
Unemployed	36	27.3

In the afore mentioned section, three hypotheses were stated regarding the relationship between three independent measures and scores on the Satisfaction With Life

Scale. All three independent measures, the MMSNG, the LGS and the GBC were then analyzed in a stepwise fashion to determine which variable was the best predictor of reported Satisfaction With Life. The following discussion looks at each hypotheses and speaks to the results of each to determine whether each hypotheses was supported, partially supported, or not supported.

Table 3

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges of Major Variables*

Variable	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>Range</i>
Satisfaction With Life scale	23.74 (6.83)	1-35
MMSNG	5.78 (4.25)	0-26
LGS	33.94 (9.14)	16-55
GBC	39.08 (17.44)	11-80

**Hypotheses 1:**

Scores on The Mexican Measure of Self Narrative Generativity (MMSNG)

Measure will be statistically significant and strongly related to well-being.

Hypothesis 1 was not confirmed. The relationship between the Mexican Measure of Self-Narrative Generativity (MMNSG) and Satisfaction With Life (as measured by the SWLS) was investigated using Pearson's correlation coefficient. There was found to be no significant correlation between these two variables, ( $r = 0.02$ ,  $n = 110$ ,  $p = .858$ ). See Table 4 below.

Table 4

*Pearson Correlation of All Major Variables*

	SWLS	MMNSG	LGS	GBC
MMSNG	.02			
LGS	.15	-.01		
GBC	.36**	.08	.31**	

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Hypotheses 2:**

Scores for Generative Concern (LGS) and Generative Behavior (GBC) will be statistically significant and moderately related to well-being.

Hypothesis 2 was partially confirmed. The relationship between perceived Satisfaction With Life (as measured by the SWLS) and generative concern (LGS) was investigated using Pearson's correlation coefficient. There was no significant correlation between these two variables, ( $r = .15$ ,  $n = 112$ ,  $p = .106$ ).

However, the relationship between perceived Satisfaction With Life was found to be positively and moderately correlated with generative behavior (GBC) ( $r = .36$ ,  $n = 112$ ,  $p < .000$ ) signifying that those who engaged in more generative behaviors reported an increase in overall satisfaction with life. Refer to Table 4 above.

As stated in the planned analyses, these results were then to be analyzed to determine the strength of each correlation and also whether the three correlations were significantly different. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient's of correlations in hypothesis 1



(MMSNG) and hypothesis 2 the (LGS and GBC) were to be converted to Z scores to determine which coefficient was significantly stronger. However, based on the initial results of the correlations, it was determined that only the GBC was moderately significant. The MMSNG and the LGS were not significant. Therefore, further analyses were unwarranted.

### **Hypothesis 3:**

The Mexican Measure of Self Narrative Generativity (MMSNG) will be a statistically significant better predictor of well-being than the LGS and GBC.

A priori analyses were conducted on gender, level of education, place of birth and age to determine if any would be possible covariates that would be predictors of Satisfaction With Life scores. Independent T-tests were done to determine if place of birth or gender were possible covariates and a series of correlations were performed to determine whether level of education and age were possible covariates that needed to be included in further analyses. None of the above listed factors were shown to be statistically significant factors in determining SWLS scores and therefore did not warrant inclusion as covariates in further analyses. Further, none of these variables were significantly related to measures of generativity: MMSNG, LGS and GBC.

A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to see whether the MMSNG was a stronger predictor of Satisfaction With Life (SWLS) than the LGS and the GBC. The order of entered independent variables was as follows: In step 1 MMSNG, in step 2, the MMSNG and the LGS and in step 3, the MMSNG, LGS and GBC. The MMSNG accounted for 2% of the variance in Satisfaction With Life ( $F(1, 95) = .03, p = .867, R^2 \text{ Change} = .00$ ) and was not shown to be a being a significant predictor of SWLS ( $\beta = .02$ ,

$p = .867$ ). After entry of the LGS in step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 16%, ( $F(2, 94) = 1.15, p = .321, R^2 \text{ Change} = .02$ ). The LGS ( $\beta = .15, p = .135$ ) was also not a significant predictor of SWLS. In step 3, the GBC was added and the model as a whole with all three independent variables entered explained 36% of the variance in Satisfaction With Life (SWLS), ( $F(3, 93) = 4.69, p = .004, R^2 \text{ Change} = .13$ ).

Results concluded that only the GBC was a significant predictor variable of Satisfaction With Life scores ( $\beta = .35, p = .001$ ). Therefore, the GBC and not the MMSNG, nor the LGS is the strongest predictor of wellbeing, and therefore the hypothesis is not supported. See Table 5 for reported statistics.

Table 5

*Hierarchical Regression Model of the SWLS (GBC predictor variable)*

	B	SEB	$\beta$	$R^2$	F Change For $R^2$
Step1				.00	.03
MMSNG	.03	.17	.02		
Step 2				.02	2.27
MMSNG	.03	.16	.02		
LGS	.12	.08	.15		
Step 3				.13	11.51
MMSNG	-.02	.16	-.01		
LGS	.03	.08	.05		
GBC	.14	.04	.35		

Following the steps outlined in the Methods section, the research team devised a thematic generativity measure, the MMSNG based solely off of participants' narrative responses. Explanations of themes and the categories inherent in each theme are

explained below. Examples of participants' responses pertaining to each theme and to multiple themes combined follow the complete description of themes. See Appendix B for detailed scoring instructions.

## **The Complete Measure of Mexican/ Mexican-American Self Narrative of Generativity**

### **Theme1: The Family**

The first theme in the new MMSNG measure speaks to participants' portrayal of the importance of 'family' within their generativity narratives.

The importance of taking care of the family unit, which includes extended family (fictive kin), is very much a part of this collectivistic culture. Fostering a strong family unit is thus very much considered to be a generative act within this sampled population.

### **Categories**

#### **A. Caring For (Fam-CF)**

Participants describe the importance of caring for family (children, grandchildren) or provide an example of it. Responses may also include mention of extended family members, close friends and tight community members. Responses often mention the importance of caring for family members in everyday life. Also included in this theme is the act of marriage, and the decision to marry.

#### **B. United Front (Fam-UF)**

Participants describe the importance of keeping the family together and keeping the family united. Participant's accounts of loss of loved ones, as well as of accounts of

divorce among the family are part of this category. For both actions, death and loss, break up the family unit.

The second theme was Involvement With Children. Many participants' in this collectivistic population spoke about mentoring children within their communities and being mindful of caring for nieces and nephews, grandchildren as well as other children not related to them in the same way and with the same intensity as they do their own children. For this reason, researchers divided up this theme of Involvement With Children in to two sections: Your Children and Other Children, in order to show the distinction for those in individualistic mainstream U.S. society, who may be less familiar with this others collectivistic cultural practice which is different from their own.

## **Theme 2: Involvement With Children**

### **Categories**

#### **A. Nurturing Your Children (Child-NY)**

Spending time acting as a role model and nurturing their children. This could be mention of mentoring own children in different stages of their lives. Along with nurturing children as they grow, giving birth to one's children and the act of deciding to have children also falls within this category.

#### **B. Education for Your Children (Child-EY)**

Wanting more for the next generation that education can give them. Wanting an education for your own children that parents, family members and community members themselves did not have.

### **C. Building Character of Your Children (Child-CY)**

Importance of molding children's character: instilling a sense of respect, dignity and responsibility as well as teaching them the importance of having a strong work ethic and a sense of pride in being a hard worker and of being dedicated to one's profession.

Of great importance is the notion that children be taught how to behave and interact with others both in and outside of one's own family. Of importance is raising respectful, responsible children of good character. Children are expected to be respectful of their elders, persons in authority positions, their parents and even their peers.

### **D. Nurturing OTHER (Aside from your own) Children (Child-NO)**

Importance of mentoring, being a role model and nurturing children in the community (even as mentoring as a father / mother figure to kids who may be without one or the other).

### **E. Education for OTHER (Aside from your own) Children (Child-EO)**

Wanting more for the next generation that education can give them. Wanting an education for kids that parents, family members and community members themselves did not have.

### **F. Building Character of OTHER (Aside from your own) Children (Child-CO)**

Importance of molding children's character: instilling a sense of respect, dignity and responsibility as well as Teaching them the importance of having a strong work ethic and a sense of pride in being a hard worker and of being dedicated to one's profession.

Of great importance is the notion that children be taught how to behave and interact with others both in and outside of one's own family. Of importance is raising respectful, responsible children of good character. Children are expected to be respectful of their elders, persons in authority positions, their parents and even their peers.

### **Theme 3: The Importance of Faith**

Catholicism is the dominant religion in Mexico and religious beliefs are generally revered with a sense of pride and are highly-regarded by local communities. Religion in Mexico is a huge part of Mexican culture and the Mexican way of life for many of the country's people, which makes it not just a religion, but a way of life. God is an active force in daily life, which results in an intensity of their beliefs and in how they practice those beliefs. This intensity and practice of beliefs is what sets them apart from other cultures such as that of the United States.

Because of the strong presence of religion in everyday life, practicing and fostering this faith, respect and love of God among family and the community is seen as a generative practice.

### **Categories**

#### **A. God/Faith (Relig-G)**

The importance of God and or Faith is very salient in this sampled population. (Included in this category is the importance of religion and faith, also one's relationship with a higher power: the importance of being married specifically by the church, communion, etc.) Responses within this category can include where someone is giving thanks to God. It could be implicit in the language. Language denoting this includes: "Reflecting upon..." 'Appreciating or showing appreciation for...'

## **B. Religious Traditions (Relig-T)**

This category encompasses the importance of traditions carried out to honor religiously based holidays, Church marriages and/ events (i.e., *posadas*, *quinceañeros*, *día de los muertos*).

## **Theme 4: Gratitude**

The notion of gratitude is a very grounding practice. It is very much linked to religious and spiritual faith. As religion is also seen as being very important among this population, the existence and implication of being ‘grateful’ and of expressing gratitude for what one has in life is also very salient in this population.

Aside from being closely tied to religion, this notion of gratitude among this population may also have arisen due to the opportunities they have found for their families by moving to the United States. Many Mexican/ Mexican-Americans are very patriotic and proud of their Mexican heritage. If the same opportunities available to them in the United States were available to them in their country of origin most would have preferred not to immigrate. However, the level of poverty often times quite dire and limiting in resources available to them, they have made a choice to immigrate. Going from sometimes extreme poverty, lack of employment and education for their children, to a country where these needs can be met, may also lend to the expression of gratitude among this population.

## **Categories**

### **A. Thanks for Family (Grat-F)**

Being thankful for family and/or country of origin: By ‘Acknowledging and reflecting upon’ the importance of their own experiences, and what they learned and were taught by their parents, grandparents, etc. As well as looking back on the importance of their past experiences of growing up in their country of origin. Expression of the person being joyful about a gift given that has to do with family.

### **B. Thanks for Opportunities (Grat-O)**

Being ‘thankful’ or ‘acknowledging’ opportunities that exist in their lives.

Reminding, teaching or bringing these opportunities to light for the younger generation.

#### **Examples of scored peak and nadir responses:**

(45 year old woman)

“My house is a safe place for all of my nephews and I listen to them when they need me. The benefit is maybe I can make a difference in their lives.” (Family-CF)

Generativity Score: 1

(40 year old man)

“Family comes first; this has been driven into my personality since I can remember. Sometimes it is hard but I always make it through.” (Family-UF)

Generativity score: 1

(33 year old woman)

“The most important thing that has happened to me is having my daughter (Child-NY) It’s the most important for me. May 28<sup>th</sup> was the day most important when my daughter was born.” (Child-NY)

Generativity score: 2

(42 year old woman)

“Yes, I have lived through it when I got called from the school of my kids telling me that my oldest was caught on facebook in class and the youngest was also saying bad words (Child-CY) This has changed me a bit because I think that everyone in school knows it and that makes me feel bad” (Child-CY)

Generativity score: 2

(44 year old man)

“Teaching kids to work & succeed in life.” (Child-NO)

Generativity score: 1



(45 year old man)

“A negative experience, trying to follow my friends whom were in bad steps, today I realize of many things that I could have been able to do if I should have listened to my parents, but the should have doesn’t exist anymore. But its never late to regret and find God above all the correct path.” (God/Faith-Relig-G)

A friend is someone who gives you advice and helps you not someone who drags you in addictions or problems but when you don’t listen you don’t understand reason that’s why one should simply find God.”(God/Faith-Relig-G)

Generativity score: 2

(46 year old man)

“The most difficult moment was when I felt into depression. I remember it was 4 years ago during the morning hours I got up to go to the bathroom and all of a sudden I felt bad I ran to wake up my wife and I started running all over the place and I felt very shaky I felt as if I was drowning my heart started beating very fast and I even told my wife that I was not going to be able to live another day and I lasted like that a couple of days. I went to the doctor and they found diabetes type II so both depression and diabetes were diagnosed I no longer wanted to live these were some experiences that were scary to me. Thanks to this a lot has changed in my personality wise my way of thinking I go to church more often (God/Faith-Relig-T) and I believe that God (God/Faith-Relig-G) has given me another opportunity.”

Generativity score: 2

(47 year old man)

“To me personally it occurred to me in the year of 1995 when I came to this country, I was scared of my own people I was fronting with an unknown world but the only thing keeping me going was my dreams, that I came to this country to become better and to offer a better future to my kids (Child-NY) and to be different I was 28 years old I didn’t speak English, without documents, but I was not giving up, I went to school I found a job and God placed me in the right path that eventually changed my life (God/Faith-Relig-G). I was my own boss in my own business and now I am not afraid of anyone. God gave me the strength (God/Faith-Relig-G) to drive a new car with 0 mileage, own a house and seeing my kids grow up too. (Grat-O) Thanks to that dream I have always been myself, back then I wouldn’t do anything with my appearance but now I can’t go out if I’m not well dressed I feel better and give thanks to God that gave me the strength to not give up in a different country than mine” (Grat-O)

Generativity score: 4

(33 year old woman)

“My most happy moment was when my children were born (Child-NY). I was 24 years and my three kids have already been born and I was not expecting my 4<sup>th</sup> child but he came. It was the happiest moment of my life because I was not expecting it (Child-NY) It was the best of my pregnancies, I even felt pretty. (Child-NY) It was something beautiful because my child was a gift from God (God/Faith-Relig-G) and I thank him for that most precious gift” (Grat-F) Generativity Score=4

## Chapter 5: Discussion

Although none of the three hypotheses proposed in this project were completely supported, the study proved to be valuable in the information gained through the creation of the MMNSG. Of the three independent measures, only the GBC showed any kind of significant relationship to SWLS. The GBC also proved to be the best predictor variable in the regression analysis, of Satisfaction With Life scores. This is an especially interesting finding, given that the MMSNG, was created based on generative behaviors as dictated by the sample population. In examining both the GBC and the MMSNG on a more in depth level, certain similarities of the two measures begin to surface. The GBC is a measure of generative behavior. It focuses on generative action. Participants are asked what types of behavior and how frequently they engage in such behavior. The MMSNG also focuses on the act of doing something, whether caring for family, raising children or mentoring youth; it is clearly a measure that depicts generativity in motion over generative concern (LGS), which is more about a generative disposition and not a behavior.

Inherent and supported by the literature on generativity, active engagement in generativity has been proven to be beneficial to both the person engaging in the generative act as well as the recipient. The act of engaging with others, of connecting with others in a generative fashion has been shown to increase reported levels of happiness and satisfaction with one's own life, thus encouraging such behavior to continue. For this reason, both the MMSNG and the GBC measure generative activity in a person's life. The GBC however, was shown to be the best predictor of Satisfaction With Life, well over the MMSNG. One reason for this is that the GBC consists of

statements that participants respond to. These statements were based off of values and beliefs of what generative practices and behaviors consist of to the sample population it was normed on. The MMSNG however, is a preliminary more exploratory tool designed to uncover the nature of generativity within this sample. It is based off of allowing participants to freely express in their own words what they deem to be generative practices in their own lives. For this reason participants are not asked to answer set statements regarding generativity and therefore, are less likely to hit upon all of them.

The MMSNG however, uncovered specific and unique themes such as gratitude and religious faith that were highly endorsed generative practices within this sample population. The act of giving thanks to God and also of recounting and reflecting upon opportunities afforded to them by the grace of God was an important theme in many peak and nadir narratives. Such narratives depicted one's belief in a higher power and even turning to this higher power in good times to give thanks and in troubling times for comfort and strength. Excerpts and scoring of such peak responses include:

“At the age of 28 the experience that for me was the very beautiful joyful happy in my life was when God gave me a girlfriend and we married (God/Faith-Relig-G) because marrying by the church was a moment that I will not forget in all my life (God/Faith-Relig-T) I was happy to start my life next to the woman that would be the formation of a family (Fam-UF) it changed me because I had to carry with me many responsibilities and for me it has been in all aspects something for my own good (Grat-O) this sacrament of the church has allowed me to fulfill my task with a lot of love”. (God/Faith-Relig-G) (32 year old man).  
Generativity score: 4

“Well one month ago on April 12-13-14 I lived my retreat (religious retreat) and for me of all the things that have happened this has been the most beautiful and unforgettable for me (God/Faith-Relig-G) since I was desperate and more or less too hysterical I would get mad for nothing and spontaneously and I was always against the world incomprehensible and loud. But going to live my retreat served me to value my family more (Fam-CF) from that I have been closer to God and to the people that love me and I want now go more frequently to church and I made

myself a member of the retreat (Grat-F) LOVE Now I think better the things and value my life more (Grat-O)". (32 year old man)

Generativity score: 4

"One of the most memorable events in my life would have to be my marriage and wedding. (Fam-CF)I was engaged to my boyfriend very late in my life, I was already in my 30's. He proposed to me when I was 25 but I wasn't ready for such commitment especially in the eye of God (God/Faith-Reli-G). We finally decided to approach my father with our intentions to marry, he of course was very against it because he had already been previously married and had children. I of course was a virgin with only 1-3 previous boyfriends. My father after several months of my brothers and sisters convincing him he agreed. We set the date I was 31 years old he was 38. Our wedding took place in a ranch outside Monterrey, MX. The wedding lasted 3 days. There were 350 people at my wedding (Fam-UF). We slaughtered 4 pigs, 2 cows, and 6 goats. I was the happiest time in my life. It changed me from a timid young lady to a full-fledged "senora" overnight. I was on cloud nine." (55 year old woman)

Generativity score: 3

Excerpts and scoring from nadir responses:

A 32 year-old male participant spoke at length about the challenges his sister faced in her final years while struggling with multiple sclerosis.

"I still get angry and wonder why she had to get ill. My only comfort is knowing she is with our Lord (God/Faith-Relig-G) and one day we will see her again (God/Faith-Relig-G). I know she is healthy once again as she is talking, walking, and singing with our Lord (God/Faith-Relig-G). I think of my beautiful sister Cecilia every day and the good times we had as a family. She will never be forgotten. We love her and we miss her dearly with all our hearts".

Generativity score: 2

"Well the experience that I have had that I remember was that now I am a survivor of cancer. I don't think it is a negative experience I don't look at it like that it was a test by God thanks to him I am alive and has given me an opportunity (Grat-O) and now I will take advantage of it 100x until God lets me (Grat-O)".

(52 year old Woman)

Generativity score: 2

The above mentioned depictions of the importance of God and the deep seated faith that participants consider to be important aspects of their lives would likely have been missed, had a narrative approach to generativity not been used when studying this

population. In giving participants the freedom to express themselves in their own words and in their own language, both the magnitude and intensity of one's belief in God and faith was captured.

These concept of believing in God and turning to God to praise Him or to seek comfort from Him are completely absent in the LGS. However, the presence of faith and God is hinted at, to a minimal degree, in two statements on the GBC. GBC items such as: "Taught Sunday School or provided similar religious instruction", "Attended a meeting or activity at a church (not including conventional worship, services such as Mass, Sunday morning service, etc.)" are actual statements on the GBC. Interestingly enough however, and represented very differently on the MMSNG is that in the GBC, conventional worship services such as Mass and Sunday morning services are not to be counted as engaging in generative behavior. This may be true for a more individualistic culture that does not deem such acts as being generative, yet it is highly endorsed by the sample population as being very important and very generative in nature. That being the case, curiously more than seventy five per cent of the sample population answered as having engaged in this type of practice on the GBC, even though it excluded Mass and Sunday services. This is likely due in part to the church being a safe haven and a hub in the community. Church members flock to the church not only for Mass, but for bible study groups and for women's and men's groups where not only their faith based needs are met, but also their needs to socialize and to connect emotionally with their community members are met as well.

Although the mention of church, which does not include attending religious services is found in one item on the GBC, nowhere in the literature on generativity do the

concepts of God, faith and gratitude comprise generative behaviors or concern. However, in this sample population, they are heavily regarded as generative acts and are interwoven with other generative actions throughout the participants' narrative responses. This finding is therefore most interesting and also most important for what it implies. It speaks to culture and how culture defines values and belief systems and shapes its people. In essence it highlights just how important the cultural piece is to defining what is deemed generative within a cultural group. By approaching this study in an emic fashion, researchers allowed participants to shape and define their own set of generative actions and to speak freely about what was important to them. By doing so, these new concepts of God, faith and gratitude arose and uncovered areas new to generativity research. Although research exists on studying generativity within differing cultural groups, the focus needs to switch. Existing research highlights how generative a group may be by simply using existing and well supported generativity measures such as the LGS and GBC. The problem with this however, is that it imposes guidelines and parameters on what generativity is according to how it was defined by one specific group. It does not allow for veering from these established concepts nor leaves room for one's differing culture to add to them.

Also highlighted in the MMSNG is the act of caring for and being there for family, including extended family members and members of one's community in the same intimate way as if they are all considered to be of equal importance. The lines of neighbors, extended family members as well as other people's children within the community are viewed as equally important on the MMSNG.

Given this concept of equality and importance, it is easy to see how certain items on the GBC may be seen as overlapping with these types of values. Such referenced items on the GBC are: “Served as a role model for a young person”, “Listened to a person tell me his or her personal problems”, “Drew upon my past experiences to help a person adjust to a situation”, “Taught somebody about right and wrong, good and bad”, were highly endorsed by the sample population. The item “Listened to a person tell me his or her personal problems”, was endorsed and scored as ‘0’, no engagement in this behavior, by only four out of 133 participants.

### **Limitations**

Although the GBC was shown to be more applicable to the sample population and definitely a predictor variable of reported Satisfaction With Life in this sampled population, the LGS was not. Again, this is also likely due to the LGS being a measure of generative concern and not action. As the MMSNG largely speaks to generative behaviors, it did not correlate well with the LGS which depicts a more passive and intellectual generative thought process.

The new measure, The Mexican Measure of Self-Narrative Generativity (MMNSG) was created through an emically driven approach to gathering research and analyzing data collected. It is comprised of a scoring system that was created by analyzing short narrative responses of participants who described in their own words what actions and beliefs they deemed to be generative in nature. The creation of this measure, however, had its limitations as well, which became more apparent later on in the project. In order to ensure that participants own voices were being heard, as well as to eliminate researchers own cultural biases, it was decided that allowing them to tell

their own stories and to describe in their own words, what they feel are generative practices and ways of being. However, some of the narrative responses of participants turned out to be very brief, lacked sufficient detail and at times, went unanswered altogether. What in essence had occurred was that researchers had in fact compromised specific cultural norms of this population in collecting the data, which likely played a big part in the above mentioned setbacks. Due to the nature of this project, researchers had only a set period of time to devote to data collection as the analysis of the data was to be labor intensive and time consuming. Therefore, packets of research measures needed to be distributed for participants to fill out and return on their own. Allowing participants to fill out the measures unassisted was a conscious decision and was also done to allow participants time to contemplate the qualitative measures and to allow them the freedom of writing out their thoughts in private. Although necessary to gather the most amount of data, in hindsight, this was a less than ideal situation given this population. In going forward in this way, researchers compromised the cultural values of *personalismo* and *confianza* and *respeto* and *dignidad* (personalism and trust and respect and dignity). Researchers expected participants to open up to them without having established some type of personal and trusting relationship with them. Asking for detailed personal stories and information about their lives without taking the time to establish a relationship with them likely greatly impacted the amount and the type of information that participants were willing to share. Along with being unable to establish a relationship with participants, researchers were also not of the same cultural group. They were not members of their community. Researchers had no ties established to participants' friends, families or to their churches and community support agencies. Therefore, a sense of



trust in knowing who they were working with was never established. This in turn, impacted the type of measure, the MMSNG would eventually become.

Aside from limitations of the measures, there were also factors within our sampled population that proved challenging when attempting to collect data for this study. The majority of our sample consisted of a Spanish dominant immigrant population with little to no educational background, therefore, reading, writing and for some, understanding what was being asked of them in regards to completing the measures proved challenging. Multiple participants mentioned that they did not know how to read and write in either English or Spanish, and therefore, they had to rely on help from others to complete their packet of measures. The reading/ writing deficiency of many participants likely also influenced information shared and disseminated to researchers.

The majority of the sample population was female and consisted of participants who were born in Mexico. Therefore, comparing the Mexican and Mexican/American groups was simply not statistically possible. This marked imbalance of groups likely had an impact on the results of the hypotheses as well.

### **Future Directions**

The study of generativity is a unique concept that highlights the transmission of cultural values from generation to generation. Tracking this type of transmission of values is especially important when studying immigrant populations with beliefs and traditions that vary greatly from those of the dominant culture of the country to which they are emigrating. The process of acculturation and assimilation into a world that clashes with one's own values and traditions causes one to make allowances and to amend beliefs and traditions somewhat or at times, completely if they are to mesh and fit

in well within the dominant culture. Therefore, certain values and beliefs may be arrested and thus not transmitted to future generations.

Through using qualitative measures as part of an initial study of the manifestation of generativity with different minority groups researchers are able to identify such values, and beliefs systems unique to different cultural populations that give one better insight into the intricacies of each one. Most importantly, however, it prohibits researchers own cultural biases from filtering into the data and tainting the analysis. Once a set of values and beliefs representative of the studied population is determined, this information can then be disseminated to others who work directly with the population providing services to aid them, support them and hopefully help ease their transition into mainstream society.

One strength of this project was that it approached, in an emic fashion, a portion of the population that is the largest steadily growing minority population in this country. Although this population continues to grow, little remains known about the strengths and the positive aspects of their culture that they bring with them. A lot of research is done using quantitative measures designed to get at the inner thoughts and workings of different cultural groups. Having only relied on quantitative measures, we would have still found that participants do in fact endorse items on such measures like the GBC; however, we would have missed the very unique way that generativity is captured and defined by this population. By using a narrative approach to create a new measure of generativity specific to this population, researchers were able to highlight the strengths and uniqueness of this population by allowing participants to share in their own words, what they value most and hold most dear in their lives. Most importantly however, is that

participants added new concepts and redefined what generativity looks like within their communities. They shared what culturally appropriate and culturally specific generative traits and behaviors look like, thus supporting how culture is a key factor in model and manifestation of generativity. This project laid the ground work upon which other studies may be built. It also allows for further exploration into this particular population, such as, the creation of more qualitative type measures that build off of the values and generative themes of the Mexican Measure of Self Narrative of Generativity.

Although two categories are aligned with research on generativity, those of the importance of family and of nurturing, mentoring and raising children, two others' were new themes with distinct categories that up until now are not representative of generative behavior and concern. Generativity has been shown to be aligned with faith based practices. Yet this research suggests that for this specific culture, faith based practices are a part of generativity as is engaging in gratitude. These are not separate variables that influence generativity but are actual components of generativity. These findings suggest that more work needs to be done around the importance of culture within a community. These findings also suggest that researchers need to broaden their scope of studying differing ethnic groups to ensure that they are representing the culture they are in fact studying in a culturally sensitive and explicit manner.

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## APPENDIX A: The Measures

### 1. **Generativity Narrative**

Psychologists interested in personality development speak about a concept called generativity.

Generativity has to do with caring for members of younger generations (mentoring, parenting, guiding students or siblings, etc.) and with behaviors that will benefit future generations (creating art, strengthening the community, environmental concerns, political causes, etc.). Some adults are extremely generative and others have personalities defined better by dimensions other than generativity. One's level of generativity is not related to illness or pathology. Like extroversion, it simply varies in magnitude from individual to individual. Think about the ways that you may have been (or may become) generative. What activities do you engage in that might promote the well-being of younger or future generations? Why do you do these things? What are the benefits or costs related to your generative effort?

#### **Narrativo de Generativity (Translated)**

Generalmente los adultos reinventan, crean y/o mantienen tradiciones que esperan dejar a futuras generaciones. Hay ciertos adultos que no han hecho estas cosas. ¿Cree Ud. que ha participado en la creación, mantenimiento o reinvencción de ciertas tradiciones? ¿Si Ud. cree que sí, en qué manera cree Ud./ que ha creado, reinventado o mantenido tradiciones que ha pasado a futuras generaciones? Por favor incluya ejemplos.

### 2. **Peak Experience**

Many people report occasional "peak experiences." These are generally moments or episodes in a person's life in which he or she feels a sense of great uplifting, joy, excitement, contentment, or some other highly positive emotional experience. Indeed, these experiences vary widely. Some people report them to be associated with religious or mystical experience. Others find great joy or excitement in vigorous athletics, reading a good novel, artistic expression, or in love or friendship. A peak experience may be seen as a "high point" in your life story -- a particular experience

that stands out in your memory as something that is extremely positive. Please describe below in some detail a peak experience that you have experienced sometime in your life. Make sure that this is a particular and specific incident (e.g., happened at a particular time and in a particular place) rather than a general "time" or "period" in your life. Please write about exactly what happened, when it happened, who was involved, what you were thinking and feeling, why this event is significant, and what this event says about you and your personality.

### **Experiencia Emocionante (Translated)**

Mucha gente reporta que ha tenido momentos, eventos o experiencias en la vida que han sido alegres, emocionantes y positivos. Aquellas experiencias son diversas y diferentes para cada persona. Pero estas experiencias, momentos y eventos quedan marcados en la memoria de uno como memorias que son extremadamente positivas. Por favor describa aquel tipo de momento, evento, o experiencia que Ud. ha tenido en su vida. Por favor descríbala en detalle (quien estaba presente, cuando pasó, donde pasó, que ocurrió). Escoja un incidente específico en vez de un período en su vida. Por favor incluya qué edad tenía, que estaba pensando y sintiendo cuando ocurrió y por qué cree Ud. que este momento, evento o experiencia significó tanto para Ud. También incluya si Ud. cree que ha cambiado su personalidad o modo de pensar desde que ocurrió.

### **3. Nadir Experience**

A "nadir" is a low point. A nadir experience, therefore, is the opposite of a peak experience. Please think about your entire life. Try to remember a specific experience in which you felt extremely negative emotions, such as despair, disillusionment, terror, profound guilt, shame, etc. You should consider this experience to represent one of the "low points" in your life story. Even though this memory is unpleasant, we would still appreciate an attempt on your part to be honest and straightforward and to provide us with as much detail as possible. Please remember to be specific. We would like to know what happened, when it happened, who was involved, what you were thinking and

feeling, why the event is significant, and what the event says about you and your personality.

**Experiencia Negativa (Translated)**

Por favor piense en una experiencia negativa específica que haya tenido en su vida. Aquella experiencia sería una experiencia que le causó bastante horror, desilusión, terror, o le causó a sentir sentimientos de culpabilidad o vergüenza profunda. Aquella experiencia será una que Ud. se acuerda como el evento o momento más malo de su vida. Aunque las memorias conectadas a este evento no son alegres, agradeceríamos si Ud. nos contara sobre aquel evento en detalle. Por favor describa aquel tipo de momento, evento, o experiencia que Ud. ha tenido en su vida. Por favor descríbala en detalle (quien estaba presente, cuando pasó, donde pasó, que ocurrió) como un incidente específico en vez de un periodo en su vida. Por favor incluya que estaba pensando y sintiendo cuando ocurrió y porque cree Ud. que este momento, evento o experiencia significó tanto para Ud. También incluya si Ud. cree que ha cambiado su personalidad o modo de pensar desde que ocurrió.

**4a. Hispanic Stress Inventory US.-Born Version**

Instructions: Please read each item and indicate whether that situation has occurred at all in your life within the past three months.

If the item has occurred in your life, please try to determine how stressful the experience was to you.

For each item, please provide one of the following ratings:

Write a "1" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Not at all stressful"*

Write a "2" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Somewhat stressful"*

Write a "3" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Moderately stressful"*

Write a "4" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Very stressful"*

Write a "5" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Extremely stressful"*

- \_\_\_1. Spouse and I disagreed about who controls money.
- \_\_\_2. Spouse expected me more traditional in relationship.
- \_\_\_3. Spouse and I disagreed on how to bring up children.
- \_\_\_4. I questioned idea that "marriage is forever."
- \_\_\_5. There've been cultural conflicts in marriage.
- \_\_\_6. I felt spouse and I haven't communicated.
- \_\_\_7. Spouse/I disagreed on importance of religion in family.
- \_\_\_8. Spouse and I disagreed on language spoken at home.
- \_\_\_9. Both spouse and I have had to work.
- \_\_\_10. Spouse hasn't been adapting to American life.
- \_\_\_11. Hard for spouse/I to combine Latino/American culture.
- \_\_\_12. Spouse hasn't helped with household chores.
- \_\_\_13. Spouse has been drinking too much alcohol.
- \_\_\_14. Hard to see why spouse wants to be more Americanized.
- \_\_\_15. Felt that due to work the rhythm of my life has changed.
- \_\_\_16. Watched work quality so others don't think I'm lazy.
- \_\_\_17. My income insufficient to support family or myself.
- \_\_\_18. To get ahead in job, had to compete with others.
- \_\_\_19. Since I'm Latino I'm expected to work harder.
- \_\_\_20. Since I'm Latino, felt isolated at work.
- \_\_\_21. Since I'm Latino it's hard to get promotions/raises.
- \_\_\_22. I've been criticized about my work.
- \_\_\_23. Boss thought I was too passive.
- \_\_\_24. Didn't get job I wanted because lacked proper skills.
- \_\_\_25. Forced to accept low paying jobs.
- \_\_\_26. Others worried about amount/quality of work I do.
- \_\_\_27. Economic pressures made me stop going to church.
- \_\_\_28. Since I'm Latino I'm paid less than others.
- \_\_\_29. I've seen son/daughter behave delinquently.
- \_\_\_30. I thought children used illegal drugs.
- \_\_\_31. My children have been drinking alcohol.

- \_\_\_32. My children influenced by bad friends.
- \_\_\_33. My children have less school opportunities than others.
- \_\_\_34. My children received bad school reports/grades.
- \_\_\_35. My children haven't respected my authority as should.
- \_\_\_36. Felt my children's ideas about sexuality too liberal.
- \_\_\_37. My children have talked about leaving home.
- \_\_\_38. Family drifted apart due to economic achievement.
- \_\_\_39. There have been conflicts among family members.
- \_\_\_40. There's been physical violence among family members.
- \_\_\_41. Family relations less important for those I'm close to.
- \_\_\_42. I've been around too much violence.
- \_\_\_43. Personal goals conflicted with family goals.
- \_\_\_44. People close to me less concerned about morals.
- \_\_\_45. I had serious arguments with family members.
- \_\_\_46. Thought I'd never see some family members again.
- \_\_\_47. I've missed close relationships with others.
- \_\_\_48. Haven't forgotten war deaths of friends/family.
- \_\_\_49. Couldn't decide how liberal to be in sexual conduct.
- \_\_\_50. Some family members have become too individualistic.
- \_\_\_51. Due to lack of family unity, felt lonely and isolated.
- \_\_\_52. Family considered divorce for marital problems.
- \_\_\_53. My doctor didn't spend enough time with me.
- \_\_\_54. I've seen friends treated badly because they're Latinos.
- \_\_\_55. Felt family members are losing their religion.
- \_\_\_56. I had difficulty finding legal services.
- \_\_\_57. I've seen traditional religious customs ignored.
- \_\_\_58. I pressured myself to provide more for my family.
- \_\_\_59. I felt guilty leaving family/friends in home country.

#### **4b. Hispanic Stress Inventory Immigrant Version**

Instructions: Please read each item and indicate whether that situation has occurred at all in your life within the past three months.

If the item has occurred in your life, please try to determine how stressful the experience was to you.

For each item, please provide one of the following ratings:

Write a "1" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Not at all stressful"*

Write a "2" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Somewhat stressful"*

Write a "3" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Moderately stressful"*

Write a "4" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Very stressful"*

Write a "5" in the blank if you felt the situation was *"Extremely stressful"*

- \_\_\_1. Since I'm Latino I'm expected to work harder.
- \_\_\_2. Legal status problem in getting good job.
- \_\_\_3. I've been forced to accept low paying jobs.
- \_\_\_4. Since I'm Latino it's hard to get promotions/raises.
- \_\_\_5. My income insufficient to support family or myself.
- \_\_\_6. Watched work quality so others don't think I'm lazy.
- \_\_\_7. Due to money problems, had to work away from family.
- \_\_\_8. Others worried about amount/quality of work I do.
- \_\_\_9. Didn't get job I wanted because lacked proper skills.
- \_\_\_10. I've been criticized about my work.
- \_\_\_11. Economic pressures made me stop going to church.
- \_\_\_12. Boss thought I was too passive.
- \_\_\_13. I've felt I might lose job to arriving immigrants.
- \_\_\_14. Thought children want independence before ready.
- \_\_\_15. Felt my children's ideas about sexuality too liberal.
- \_\_\_16. My children have been drinking alcohol.
- \_\_\_17. My children have seen too much sex on TV/movies.
- \_\_\_18. I thought my children not receiving good education.



- \_\_\_19. My children haven't respected my authority as should.
- \_\_\_20. My children have gotten bad school reports/grades.
- \_\_\_21. Thought about son/daughter living independently.
- \_\_\_22. My children have talked about leaving home.
- \_\_\_23. I thought my children used illegal drugs.
- \_\_\_24. My children influenced by bad friends.
- \_\_\_25. Difficult to decide how strict to be with children.
- \_\_\_26. I've seen son/daughter behave delinquency.
- \_\_\_27. Both spouse and I have had to work.
- \_\_\_28. Spouse hasn't helped with household chores.
- \_\_\_29. Spouse and I disagreed on how to bring up children.
- \_\_\_30. Spouse and I disagreed on language spoken at home.
- \_\_\_31. Spouse and I disagreed about who controls money.
- \_\_\_32. I questioned idea that "marriage is forever."
- \_\_\_33. There've been cultural conflicts in my marriage.
- \_\_\_34. I felt spouse and I haven't communicated.
- \_\_\_35. Spouse expected me more traditional in relationship.
- \_\_\_36. Spouse hasn't been adapting to American life.
- \_\_\_37. Hard to see why spouse wants to be more Americanized.
- \_\_\_38. Spouse has been drinking too much alcohol.
- \_\_\_39. Hard for spouse/I to combine Latino/American culture.
- \_\_\_40. Spouse and I disagreed on use of contraceptives.
- \_\_\_41. Spouse expected me less traditional in relationship.
- \_\_\_42. Spouse/I disagreed on importance of religion in family.
- \_\_\_43. Since I don't know English, hard interacting with others.
- \_\_\_44. I felt pressured to learn English.
- \_\_\_45. Since I'm Latino, difficult to find work I want.
- \_\_\_46. Thought I'd be deported if went to social/govt. agency.
- \_\_\_47. Due to poor English people treated me badly.
- \_\_\_48. Due to poor English, hard dealing with daily situations.
- \_\_\_49. I feared consequences of deportation.

- \_\_\_50. I avoided immigration officials.
- \_\_\_51. Due to poor English, have had difficulties in school.
- \_\_\_52. I had difficulty finding legal services.
- \_\_\_53. I felt guilty leaving family/friends in home country.
- \_\_\_54. Legal status limited contact with family or friends.
- \_\_\_55. Felt never regain status/respect I had in home country.
- \_\_\_56. Felt unaccepted by others due to my Latino culture.
- \_\_\_57. I've been discriminated against.
- \_\_\_58. I've been questioned about my legal status.
- \_\_\_59. Haven't forgotten war deaths of friends/family.
- \_\_\_60. Haven't forgotten last few months in my home country.
- \_\_\_61. There have been conflicts among family members.
- \_\_\_62. I had serious arguments with family members.
- \_\_\_63. There's been physical violence among family members.
- \_\_\_64. Felt family members are losing their religion.
- \_\_\_65. Personal goals conflicted with family goals.
- \_\_\_66. Some family members have become too individualistic.
- \_\_\_67. Family considered divorce for marital problems.
- \_\_\_68. Due to different customs, had arguments with family.
- \_\_\_69. Due to lack of family unity, felt lonely and isolated.
- \_\_\_70. I noticed religion less important to me than before.
- \_\_\_71. Being too close to family interfered with own goals.
- \_\_\_72. Felt family relations less important for those close to.
- \_\_\_73. I've been around too much violence.

**Hispanic Stress Inventory Immigrant Version (Translated version)**

Por favor lea cada oración e indique si aquel evento le ha ocurrido a Ud. En los últimos tres meses.

Para cada oración, por favor escriba el número:

“1”, si Ud. Piensa que aquella situación “no fue estresante.”

“2”, si Ud. Piensa que aquella situación “fue un poco estresante”.

“3”, si Ud. Piensa que aquella situación “le causo estrés de cantidad moderado.”

“4”, si Ud. Piensa que aquella situación “fue muy estresante.”

“5”, si Ud. Piensa que aquella situación “fue demasiado estresante.”

- \_\_\_ 1. Como soy latino/a, se espera que trabaje más duro.
- \_\_\_ 2. A causa de mi estatus legal tengo problemas obteniendo un bueno trabajo.
- \_\_\_ 3. No he tenido más remedio que aceptar trabajos que paguen poco.
- \_\_\_ 4. Es difícil conseguir promociones porque soy latino/a
- \_\_\_ 5. Mi sueldo es insuficiente para soportar a mi familia o a mí mismo
- \_\_\_ 6. He puesto atención a la calidad de mi trabajo para que otros no crean que soy perezoso
- \_\_\_ 7. Debido a la falta de dinero, he tenido que tomar trabajo lejos de mi familia.
- \_\_\_ 8. Otros se han preocupado sobre la cantidad/calidad del trabajo que hago.
- \_\_\_ 9. No conseguí el trabajo que quería por falta de habilidades.
- \_\_\_ 10. He sido criticado por el trabajo que hago.
- \_\_\_ 11. He tenido que dejar de ir a la iglesia por presiones económicas.
- \_\_\_ 12. Mi jefe ha pensado que soy demasiado pasivo.
- \_\_\_ 13. He sentido que puedo perder mi trabajo a causa de nuevos inmigrantes.
- \_\_\_ 14. Pienso que mis hijos/hijas quieren ser independientes antes de que estén listos.
- \_\_\_ 15. Creo que mis hijos/hijas piensan de una manera demasiada liberal sobre la sexualidad
- \_\_\_ 16. Mis hijos/hijas han estado tomando alcohol.
- \_\_\_ 17. Mis hijos/hijas han visto demasiado sexo en la televisión/películas.
- \_\_\_ 18. Pienso que mis hijos/hijas no están recibiendo una educación.
- \_\_\_ 19. Mis hijos/hijas no han respetado mi autoridad como deben.

- \_\_\_20. Mis hijos/hijas han recibido malas calificaciones en la escuela.
- \_\_\_21. He pensado en mi hijo/hija viviendo independientemente.
- \_\_\_22. Mis hijos/hijas han hablado sobre mudarse de casa.
- \_\_\_23. He pensado que mis hijos/hijas han usado drogas ilegales
- \_\_\_24. Mis hijos/hijas son influidos por malos amigos.
- \_\_\_25. Es difícil decidir cuan estricto ser con mis hijos/hijas.
- \_\_\_26. He visto a mi hijo/hija comportarse de una manera delincuente
- \_\_\_27. Mi esposo/a y yo (ambos) hemos tenido que trabajar.
- \_\_\_28. Mi esposo/a no ha ayudado con los quehaceres de la casa.
- \_\_\_29. Mi esposo/a y yo no estamos de acuerdo sobre como criar a los niños.
- \_\_\_30. Mi esposo/a y yo no estamos de acuerdo sobre qué idioma usar en casa.
- \_\_\_31. Mi esposo/a y yo no estamos de acuerdo sobre quién debe controlar el dinero.
- \_\_\_32. He pensado que el matrimonio no dura para siempre.
- \_\_\_33. Hemos tenido conflictos culturales en nuestro matrimonio.
- \_\_\_34. He sentido que mi esposo/a y yo no nos hemos comunicado.
- \_\_\_35. Mi esposo/a espera que me comporte de manera más tradicional en nuestra relación.
- \_\_\_36. Mi esposo/a no está adoptando la vida Americana.
- \_\_\_37. Es difícil comprender por qué mi esposo/a quiere ser más Americanizado/a.
- \_\_\_38. Mi esposo/a ha estado tomando demasiado alcohol.
- \_\_\_39. Es difícil para mí y mi esposo/a combinar la cultura latina y la cultura americana.
- \_\_\_40. Mi esposo/a y yo no estamos de acuerdo sobre el uso de anticonceptivos.
- \_\_\_41. Mi esposo/a esperaba que me comportara de una manera menos tradicional en nuestra relación.
- \_\_\_42. Mi esposo/a y yo no estamos de acuerdo sobre la importancia de la religión en nuestra familia.
- \_\_\_43. Como no se hablar inglés, es difícil relacionarme con otros
- \_\_\_44. Me siento presionado a aprender a hablar inglés.
- \_\_\_45. Como soy Latino es difícil encontrar trabajo
- \_\_\_46. Pienso que me deportarían si yo fuera a una agencia del gobierno para servicios.
- \_\_\_47. Como hablo mal el inglés me han tratado mal.

- \_\_\_48. Como hablo mal el inglés, es difícil lidiar con situaciones cotidianas.
- \_\_\_49. Temí las consecuencias de ser deportado.
- \_\_\_50. Evitaba a oficiales de inmigración.
- \_\_\_51. He tenido dificultades en la escuela porque hablo mal el inglés
- \_\_\_52. He tenido dificultades encontrando servicios legales.
- \_\_\_53. Me siento culpable dejando familia/amigos en mi país nativo.
- \_\_\_54. He tenido contacto limitado con mi familia/amigos a causa de mi estatus legal.
- \_\_\_55. He sentido que nunca obtendré el estatus o nivel de respeto que tuve en mi país.
- \_\_\_56. He sentido que otros no me aceptan porque soy Latino/a.
- \_\_\_57. Me han discriminado.
- \_\_\_58. Me han preguntado sobre mi estatus legal.
- \_\_\_59. No me he olvidado de las muertes en guerra de mis amigos o familiares.
- \_\_\_60. No me he olvidado de los últimos meses que pasé en mi país nativo.
- \_\_\_61. Ha habido conflictos entre familiares.
- \_\_\_62. He tenido discusiones serias con miembros de mi familia.
- \_\_\_63. Ha habido violencia física entre familiares
- \_\_\_64. Siento que mis familiares están perdiendo su fe (o dejando la religión).
- \_\_\_65. Mis metas personales han estado en conflicto con las de mi familia.
- \_\_\_66. Algunos familiares se han convertido a seres demasiado independientes
- \_\_\_67. Familiares han considerado divorciarse para resolver a problemas matrimoniales.
- \_\_\_68. He tenido discusiones con la familia debido a costumbres diferentes
- \_\_\_69. Me sentí solo/a y aislado/a por falta de una familia unida.
- \_\_\_70. Me he dado cuenta que la religión es menos importante para mí ahora que antes
- \_\_\_71. Estar demasiado unido a mi familia interfirió con mis metas personales
- \_\_\_72. Siento que las relaciones entre familiares son menos importantes para aquellos más apegados.
- \_\_\_73. Me ha rodeado demasiada violencia.

#### **4. Loyola Generativity Scale (LGS)**

Instructions. For each of the following statements, please indicate how often the statement applies to you, by marking either a "0," "1," "2," or "3" in the space in front.

Mark "0" if the statement never applies to you.

Mark "1" if the statement only occasionally or seldom applies to you.

Mark "2" if the statement applies to you fairly often.

Mark "3" if the statement applies to you very often or nearly always.

- \_\_\_ 1. I try to pass along the knowledge I have gained through my experiences.
- \_\_\_ 2. I do not feel that other people need me.
- \_\_\_ 3. I think I would like the work of a teacher.
- \_\_\_ 4. I feel as though I have made a difference to many people.
- \_\_\_ 5. I do not volunteer to work for a charity.
- \_\_\_ 6. I have made and created things that have had an impact on other people.
- \_\_\_ 7. I try to be creative in most things that I do.
- \_\_\_ 8. I think that I will be remembered for a long time after I die.
- \_\_\_ 9. I believe that society cannot be responsible for providing food and shelter for all homeless people.
- \_\_\_ 10. Others would say that I have made unique contributions to society.
- \_\_\_ 11. If I were unable to have children of my own, I would like to adopt children.
- \_\_\_ 12. I have important skills that I try to teach others.
- \_\_\_ 13. I feel that I have done nothing that will survive after I die.
- \_\_\_ 14. In general, my actions do not have a positive effect on other people.
- \_\_\_ 15. I feel as though I have done nothing of worth to contribute to others.
- \_\_\_ 16. I have made many commitments to many different kinds of people, groups, and activities in my life.
- \_\_\_ 17. Other people say that I am a very productive person.
- \_\_\_ 18. I have a responsibility to improve the neighborhood in which I live.
- \_\_\_ 19. People come to me for advice.
- \_\_\_ 20. I feel as though my contributions will exist after I die.

**Loyola Generativity Scale (LGS): (Translated)**

Instrucciones. Para cada oración, indique si le aplica a Ud.

Marque "0" si no le aplica a Ud.

Marque "1" si le aplica pero no con frecuencia

Marque "2" si le aplica con frecuencia

Marque "3" si le aplica mucho o casi siempre a Ud.

- \_\_\_1. Intento compartir con otros lo que he aprendido por mis experiencias.
- \_\_\_2. No siento que otros me necesitan.
- \_\_\_3. Creo que me gustaría el trabajo de maestro.
- \_\_\_4. Siento que he hecho una diferencia en la vida de otros.
- \_\_\_5. Trabajo de voluntario para una organización que ayuda a gente.
- \_\_\_6. He hecho muchas cosas que han impactado a la vida de otros.
- \_\_\_7. Intento ser creativo cuando hago cosas.
- \_\_\_8. Creo que seré recordado por otros por mucho tiempo después de que me muera.
- \_\_\_9. Creo que es responsabilidad de esta sociedad dar comida y alojamiento a los que no tienen techo. (Que lo necesitan).
- \_\_\_10. Otros dirían que he hecho contribuciones únicas a esta sociedad.
- \_\_\_11. Si no fuese capaz de tener a hijos/hijas, me gustaría adoptarlos/las.
- \_\_\_12. Tengo habilidades importantes que intento compartir con otros.
- \_\_\_13. Siento que no he hecho nada en esta vida que sobrevivirá después de que me muero
- \_\_\_14. En general mis acciones no afectan a otros de manera positiva.
- \_\_\_15. Siento que no he contribuido nada en especial a otros .
- \_\_\_16. He hecho muchos compromisos en esta vida con diferentes personas, grupos y actividades.
- \_\_\_17. La gente dirá que soy una persona productiva.
- \_\_\_18. Tengo la responsabilidad de mejorar el vecindario donde vivo.
- \_\_\_19. La gente viene a mí para pedir mis consejos.
- \_\_\_20. Siento que las contribuciones que he hecho sobrevivirán cuando me muera.

## 6. Generative Behavior Checklist (GBC)

Instructions. Below is a list of specific behaviors or acts. Over the past two months, it is likely that you may have performed some of these behaviors. It is also likely that you have not performed many of them as well during this time. Please consider each behavior to determine whether or not you have performed the behavior during the past two months. If you have performed the behavior, please try to determine how many times you have performed it during the past two months. For each behavior, provide one of the following ratings: Write a "0" in the blank before the behavior if you have not performed the behavior during the past two months.

Write a "1" in the blank if you have performed the behavior one time during the past two months.

Write a "2" in the blank if you have performed the behavior more than once during the past two months.

- \_\_\_ 1. Taught somebody a skill.
- \_\_\_ 2. Served as a role model for a young person.
- \_\_\_ 3. Won an award or contest.
- \_\_\_ 4. Went to see a movie or play.
- \_\_\_ 5. Gave money to a charity.
- \_\_\_ 6. Did volunteer work for a charity.
- \_\_\_ 7. Listened to a person tell me his or her personal problems.
- \_\_\_ 8. Purchased a new car or major appliance (e.g., dishwasher, television set).
- \_\_\_ 9. Taught Sunday School or provided similar religious instruction.
- \_\_\_ 10. Taught somebody about right and wrong, good and bad.
- \_\_\_ 11. Told somebody about my own childhood.
- \_\_\_ 12. Read a story to a child.
- \_\_\_ 13. Babysat for somebody else's children.
- \_\_\_ 14. Participated in an athletic sport.
- \_\_\_ 15. Gave clothing or personal belongings to a not-for-profit organization (such as the



"Good Will," "Salvation Army," etc.).

- \_\_\_16. Was elected or promoted to a leadership position.
- \_\_\_17. Made a decision that influenced many people.
- \_\_\_18. Ate dinner at a restaurant.
- \_\_\_19. Produced a piece of art or craft (such as pottery, quilt, woodwork, painting, etc.).
- \_\_\_20. Produced a plan for an organization or group outside my own family.
- \_\_\_21. Visited a nonrelative in a hospital or nursing home.
- \_\_\_22. Read a novel.
- \_\_\_23. Made something for somebody and then gave it to them.
- \_\_\_24. Drew upon my past experiences to help a person adjust to a situation.
- \_\_\_25. Picked up garbage or trash off the street or some other area that is not my property.
- \_\_\_26. Gave a stranger directions on how to get somewhere.
- \_\_\_27. Attended a community or neighborhood meeting.
- \_\_\_28. Wrote a poem or story.
- \_\_\_29. Took in a pet.
- \_\_\_30. Did something that other people considered to be unique and important.
- \_\_\_31. Attended a meeting or activity at a church (not including conventional worship service such as Mass, Sunday morning service, etc.).
- \_\_\_32. Offered physical help to a friend or acquaintance (e.g., helped them move, fix a car, etc.).
- \_\_\_33. Had an argument with a friend or family member.
- \_\_\_34. Contributed time or money to a political or social cause.
- \_\_\_35. Planted or tended a garden, tree, flower, or other plant.
- \_\_\_36. Wrote a letter to a newspaper, magazine, Congressman, etc. about a social issue.
- \_\_\_37. Cooked a meal for friends (nonfamily members).
- \_\_\_38. Donated blood.
- \_\_\_39. Took prescription medicine.

- \_\_\_ 40. Sewed or mended a garment or other object.
- \_\_\_ 41. Restored or rehabbed a house, part of a house, a piece of furniture, etc.
- \_\_\_ 42. Assembled or repaired a child's toy.
- \_\_\_ 43. Voted for a political candidate or some other elected position.
- \_\_\_ 44. Invented something.
- \_\_\_ 45. Provided first aid or other medical attention.
- \_\_\_ 46. Attended a party.
- \_\_\_ 47. Took an afternoon nap.
- \_\_\_ 48. Participated in or attended a benefit or fund-raiser.
- \_\_\_ 49. Learned a new skill (e.g., computer language, musical instrument, welding, etc.).
- \_\_\_ 50. Became a parent (had a child, adopted a child, or became a foster parent).

### **Generative Behavior Checklist (GBC) (Translated)**

Instrucciones: Abajo hay una lista de acciones o tipos de comportamientos. Es posible que en los últimos dos meses Ud. haya hecho o haya participado en aquellas cosas. Por favor considera cada tipo de comportamiento para determinar si Ud. lo haya hecho o no. Si encuentra algunas que haya hecho en que haya participado, intente determinar cuántas veces lo ha hecho. Para cada cosa en la lista, por favor marque con el número “0” si no lo ha hecho, el número “1” si lo ha hecho una sola vez, o el número “2” si lo ha hecho más de una vez.

- \_\_\_ 1. Enseñé una habilidad a alguien
- \_\_\_ 2. Serví como mentor para una persona menor
- \_\_\_ 3. Gané un premio o un concurso
- \_\_\_ 4. Fui al teatro o al cine.
- \_\_\_ 5. Di dinero a una organización que ayuda a gente
- \_\_\_ 6. Trabajé como voluntario para una organización
- \_\_\_ 7. Escuché a alguien mientras me contaba sobre sus problemas personales.
- \_\_\_ 8. Compré un carro nuevo o un televisor, lavadora de platos, u otros aparatos para la casa.

- \_\_\_9. Fui maestro para una clase de catequesis.
- \_\_\_10. Hablé con alguien sobre el bien y el mal.
- \_\_\_11. Compartí cuentos de mi niñez con alguien más.
- \_\_\_12. Leí un libro a un niño.
- \_\_\_13. Cuidé a los niños de alguien más.
- \_\_\_14. Participé como jugador en un equipo de deporte.
- \_\_\_15. Doné ropa u otras cosas personales a una organización que ayuda a gente pobre
- \_\_\_16. Fui elegido o me dieron una promoción a una posición de líder.
- \_\_\_17. Tomé una decisión que influyó a muchas personas.
- \_\_\_18. Cené en un restaurante.
- \_\_\_19. Pinté una pintura o hice otra forma de arte como un edredón, un mueble u otra forma de arte
- \_\_\_20. Hice un plan para una organización
- \_\_\_21. Visité a alguien fuera de mi familia en un hospital o una clínica.
- \_\_\_22. Leí una novela.
- \_\_\_23. Hice y regalé algo a alguien más.
- \_\_\_24. Utilicé lo que aprendí en mis experiencias pasadas para ayudar a otra persona a ajustar a una situación que enfrentaron.
- \_\_\_25. Recogí basura de la calle o en otra área fuera de mi propiedad.
- \_\_\_26. Di direcciones sobre cómo llegar a cierto sitio a un desconocido.
- \_\_\_27. Atendí a una reunión de la comunidad o del vecindario.
- \_\_\_28. Escribí un poema o un cuento.
- \_\_\_29. Adopté a una mascota
- \_\_\_30. Hice algo que fue considerado por otros como algo importante e único.
- \_\_\_31. Atendí a una reunión o actividad aparte de la misa en una iglesia
- \_\_\_32 Ofrecí ayuda a un amigo o un conocido (en forma física, como ayudar a mudarse de su casa, arreglar a su carro, etc.)
- \_\_\_33. Tuve una discusión con un amigo o un familiar.
- \_\_\_34. Contribuí con dinero o tiempo a una causa política o social.
- \_\_\_35. Planté o tendí un jardín, árbol, flor u otra mata.
- \_\_\_36. Escribí una carta a un periódico, revista o a un político sobre un asunto social.

- \_\_\_37. Cociné una comida para familiares o para gente fuera de mi familia que tampoco fueron amistades mías.
- \_\_\_38. Doné sangre.
- \_\_\_39. Tomé medicamentos recetados.
- \_\_\_40. Cosí ropa o arreglé a un artículo de ropa u otra cosa.
- \_\_\_41. Restauré una casa, parte de una casa, o un mueble, etc.
- \_\_\_42. Asemblé o arreglé un juguete de niño.
- \_\_\_43. Voté por un político u otro oficial en una elección
- \_\_\_44. Inventé algo.
- \_\_\_45. Ayudé a alguien que necesitaba atención médica.
- \_\_\_46. Fui a una fiesta.
- \_\_\_47. Tomé la siesta.
- \_\_\_48. Atendí o participé en un evento que recogía fondos para una organización.
- \_\_\_49. Aprendí una habilidad nueva (como: tocar un instrumento, o usar la computadora, etc.)
- \_\_\_50. Me hice padre/madre (adopté a un niño/a, estoy criando a hijos/hijas de otros).

#### **6. Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)**

Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 7 - Strongly agree
- 6 - Agree
- 5 - Slightly agree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 3 - Slightly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly disagree

\_\_\_ 1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

\_\_\_ 2. The conditions of my life are excellent.

\_\_\_ 3. I am satisfied with my life.

\_\_\_ 4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

\_\_\_ 5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

**Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) (Translated versión)**

Indique si Ud. Está de acuerdo o no con las siguientes oraciones. Usando el escala

abajo de 1-7 indique sí o no está de acuerdo y con qué magnitud. Por favor sea honesto

con sus respuestas:

- 7 Estoy totalmente de acuerdo
- 6 Estoy de acuerdo
- 5 Estoy poco de acuerdo
- 4 Ni estoy de acuerdo, ni en contra
- 3 Estoy un poco en desacuerdo
- 2 Estoy en desacuerdo
- 1 Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo

\_\_\_ 1. En muchos sentidos mi vida está cerca de mi vida ideal

\_\_\_ 2. Las condiciones de mi vida son excelentes

\_\_\_ 3. Estoy satisfecho con mi vida.

\_\_\_ 4. Hasta ahora he obtenido las cosas importantes que quiero en mi vida.

\_\_\_ 5. Si pudiera rehacer mi vida, cambiaría casi nada.

## APPENDIX B

### Content Analysis of Generativity in Autobiographical Episodes told by Mexican-Americans

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#### Methods

Our emic approach to designing a culturally relevant measurement of generativity within the Mexican-American population began by asking our participants to explain the number of ways in which one was generative. Working with a group of Hispanic consultants, we created and used these prompts:

##### **English:**

Generativity has to do with caring for members of younger generations (mentoring, parenting, guiding students or siblings, etc.) and with behaviors that will benefit future generations (creating art, strengthening the community, environmental concerns, political causes, etc.). Some adults are extremely generative and others have personalities defined better by dimensions other than generativity. One's level of generativity is not related to illness or pathology. Like extroversion, it simply varies in magnitude from individual to individual. Think about the ways that you may have been (or may become) generative. What activities do you engage in that might promote the well-being of younger or future generations? Why do you do these things? What are the benefits or costs related to your generative effort?

**Spanish:**      *Narrativo de Generativity*

*Generalmente los adultos reinventan, crean y/o mantienen tradiciones que esperan dejar a futuras generaciones. Hay ciertos adultos que no han hecho estas cosas. ¿Cree Ud. que ha participado en la creación, mantenimiento o reinención de ciertas tradiciones? Si Ud. cree que sí, en qué manera cree Ud./ que ha creado, reinventado o mantenido tradiciones que ha pasado a futuras generaciones. Por favor incluya ejemplos.*

We let the Mexican-American Adults define what they consider to be the ways in which they see themselves as engaging in generativity. We let them define what generativity means and which practices are deemed generative according to their culture. After reviewing numerous generativity responses, specific themes became more and more clear. These themes were broken down and analyzed and a description of each was provided in detail. We were not concerned with individual differences at this point. We examined the responses of the group as a whole to discern the many ways this sample spoke of being generative.

After defining the themes, it was time to convert this taxonomy of Mexican-American generativity into a scoring system that could be used to quantify individual differences in generativity for this population. Each participant had also written about two specific autobiographical episodes: a Peak and a Nadir. The prompt for the first asks that a participant write about a high point moment from their life. They were asked to first settle on a particular life moment that adheres to this description and then to basically tell the story – how old were you, who was there, what were you thinking and feeling, what was going on, how might this story tie into your larger life story. For the

second, Nadir event, the participant is asked to write a story about a low moment in their life.

The core logic of our methods is that the generativity themes created by asking a sample of Mexican-American participants to discuss their generativity may be converted into a scoring system that quantifies the existence and magnitude of each theme within the autobiographical stories that individual participants write. The assumption being that more generative Mexican-American adults will tell autobiographical stories (Peak and Nadir) that contain more generativity themes. Further, those who are relatively low in generativity should tell autobiographical stories with fewer mentions of generativity.

### **Scoring System**

There are four *themes*: Family, Involvement with Children, Faith, and Gratitude. Each theme has several *categories* contained within it. For instance, the theme of Family is comprised of two categories: (A) Caring For; and, (B) United Front. The system outlined below explains how to score categories as either Absent (0), Present at a minimal level (1), or Present at a Maximum level (2). The system outlined as follows explains how to score categories as either (0) Absent, (1) Present at a minimal level or (2) Present at a Maximum level.

This scoring system is used only to score the categories but know that the category scores for any one theme may be summed to provide a theme score. These scores will be computed later, once the data are entered into a SPSS database.



## **The Themes Representative of Mexican/ Mexican-American Generativity**

### **Theme1: The Family**

The importance of taking care of the family unit, which includes extended family (fictive kin), is very much a part of this collectivistic culture. Fostering a strong family unit is a generative act here.

### **Categories**

#### **A. Caring For (Fam-CF)**

Participants describe the importance of caring for family (children, grandchildren) or provide an example of it. Responses may also include mention of extended family members, close friends and tight community members. Responses often mention the importance of caring for family members in everyday life. Also included in this theme is the act of marriage, and the decision to marry.

#### **B. United Front (Fam-UF)**

Participants describe the importance of keeping the family together and keeping the family united. Participant's accounts of loss of loved ones, as well as of accounts of divorce among the family are part of this category. For both actions, death and loss, break up the family unit.

**Example of Scoring:**

“I have tried to help my younger brothers by giving them a place to stay but, that doesn’t seem to work”. **Fam-CF = 1 (present)**

“My house is a safe place for all of my nephews and I listen to them when they need me. The benefit is maybe I can make a difference in their lives”. **Fam-CF = 1 (present)**

“The monetary cost is at many times I find myself feeding 9 kids at once time on a fixed income”. **0 = not present**

“Family comes first; this has been driven into my personality since I can remember. Sometimes it is hard but I always make it through.” **Fam-UF = 1 (present)**

“Have a family and be the main one of the family or to be the man of the family”.

**\* 0 = not present**

\*This response would not qualify as a response considered to be ‘generative’. What is missing from this response is the explanation or subtype. We don’t know why this is important. We do not know from this response why this is an important thing to this particular participant.

## **Theme 2: Involvement With Children**

### **Categories**

#### **A. Nurturing Your Children (Child-NY)**

Spending time acting as a role model and nurturing their children. This could be mention of mentoring own children in different stages of their lives. Along with nurturing children as they grow, giving birth to one's children and the act of deciding to have children also falls within this category.

#### **B. Education for Your Children\_(Child-EY)**

Wanting more for the next generation that education can give them. Wanting an education for your own children that parents, family members and community members themselves did not have.

#### **C. Building Character of Your Children (Child-CY)**

Importance of molding children's character: instilling a sense of respect, dignity and responsibility as well as teaching them the importance of having a strong work ethic and a sense of pride in being a hard worker and of being dedicated to one's profession.

Of great importance is the notion that children be taught how to behave and interact with others both in and outside of one's own family. Of importance is raising respectful, responsible children of good character. Children are expected to be respectful of their elders, persons in authority positions, their parents and even their peers.

Examples consistent with this theme are:

**D. Nurturing OTHER (Aside from your own) Children (Child-NO)**

Importance of mentoring, being a role model and nurturing children in the community (even as mentoring as a father / mother figure to kids who may be without one or the other).

**E. Education for OTHER (Aside from your own)Children (Child-EO)**

Wanting more for the next generation that education can give them. Wanting an education for kids that parents, family members and community members themselves did not have.

**F. Building Character of OTHER(Aside from your own)Children  
(Child-CO)**

Importance of molding children's character: instilling a sense of respect, dignity and responsibility as well as Teaching them the importance of having a strong work ethic and a sense of pride in being a hard worker and of being dedicated to one's profession.

Of great importance is the notion that children be taught how to behave and interact with others both in and outside of one's own family. Of importance is raising respectful, responsible children of good character. Children are expected to be respectful of their elders, persons in authority positions, their parents and even their peers.

Examples consistent with this theme are:

**Example of Scoring:**

“You start by teaching them discipline, honesty respect at a very young age.”

**1. Child-NO = 1 – Present/minimal**

“For my son to be a good man like his father. For my son to be a hard worker like his dad.”

Scoring: **Child-CY. + Child-CY = 2 – Present/ maximum.** The participant points out 2 different aspects (wanting his son to be a good man like his father + to be a hard worker like his dad) of generativity that fall under the same theme.

“Raising my son to do the right things in life, how to respect others...raising my son...how to work for the things that he wants out of life.

Scoring: **Child-CY + Child-CY + Child-CY = 2 – Present/maximum**

“Teaching kids to work & succeed in life.”

Scoring: **Child-CO = 1 – Present/minimal**

“Teaching kids to be responsible parents.”

Scoring: **Child-CO = 1 – Present/minimal**

“Raising my son to do the right things in life + how to respect others...+ raising my son...how to work for the things that he wants out of life.

Scoring: **Child-CY + Child-CY + Child-CY = 2 – Present/maximum**

**(although they mention the subtheme 3 times, the highest number of points given is still only a 2).**

“Calling older people by “*Usted*” in English “sir, Ma’am”, really focusing on having respect towards adults. + I believe this will allow my future children (& daughter) to show respect and be able to give back + or show future generations the same respect I was taught, causing a trickle effect)

Scoring: **Child-CY + Child-CY + Child-CY = 2 – Present/maximum**

**Below is an example of a complex answer that will receive multiple points and encompasses different themes and subtypes.**

“I have three children ages 12, 10 and 8...I try my best to give them all that they need as well as make sure they are well mannered and at school every day. I have tried to help my younger brothers by giving them a place to stay but, that doesn’t seem to work. They have street and gang mentality. My house is a safe place for all of my nephews and I listen to them when they need me. The benefit is maybe I can make a difference in their lives. The monetary cost is at many times I find myself feeding 9 kids at once time on a fixed income. Family comes first; this has been driven into my personality since I can remember. Sometimes it is hard but I always make it through”.

**Break down of Scoring**

**Child-NY** “I try my best to give them all that they need” = **1 – Present/minimal**

**Child-CY** “...make sure they are well mannered” = **1 – Present/minimal**

**Child-EY** “and at school every day” = **1 – Present/minimal**

### **Theme 3: The Importance of Faith**

Catholicism is the dominant religion in Mexico and religious beliefs are generally revered with a sense of pride and are highly-regarded by local communities. Religion in Mexico is a huge part of Mexican culture and the Mexican way of life for many of the country's people, which makes it not just a religion, but a way of life. God is an active force in daily life, which results in an intensity of their beliefs and in how they practice those beliefs. This intensity and practice of beliefs is what sets them apart from other cultures such as that of the United States.

Because of the strong presence of religion in everyday life, practicing and fostering this faith, respect and love of God among family and the community is seen as a generative practice.

#### **Categories**

##### **A. God/Faith (Relig-G)**

Importance of God and or Faith. (Includes religious traditions: marriage, communion, etc.) Can include where someone is giving thanks to God. It could be implicit in the language. Language denoting this includes: "Reflecting upon..." 'Appreciating or showing appreciation for...'

##### **B. Religious Traditions (Relig-T)**

Importance of traditions carried out to honor religiously based holidays, marriages and/ events (i.e., posadas).

## **Theme 4: Gratitude**

The notion of gratitude is a very grounding practice. It is very much linked to religious and spiritual faith. As religion is also seen as being very important among this population, the existence and implication of being ‘grateful’ and of expressing gratitude for what one has in life is also very salient in this population.

Aside from being closely tied to religion, this notion of gratitude among this population may also have arisen due to the opportunities they have found for their families by moving to the United States. Many Mexican/ Mexican-Americans are very patriotic and proud of their Mexican heritage. If the same opportunities available to them in the United States were available to them in their country of origin most would have preferred not to immigrate. However, the level of poverty often times quite dire and limiting in resources available to them, they have made a choice to immigrate. Going from sometimes extreme poverty, lack of employment and education for their children, to a country where these needs can be met, may also lend to the expression of gratitude among this population.

### **Categories**

#### **A. Thanks for Family (Grat-F)**

Being thankful for family and/or country of origin: By ‘Acknowledging and reflecting upon’ the importance of their own experiences, and what they learned and were taught by their parents, grandparents, etc. As well as looking back on the importance of their past experiences of growing up in their country of origin. Expression of the person being joyful about a gift given that has to do with family.



### **B. Thanks for Opportunities (Grat-O)**

Being ‘thankful’ or ‘acknowledging’ opportunities that exist in their lives.

Reminding, teaching or bringing these opportunities to light for the younger generation.

#### **Example of Scoring:**

“I have shown them the important of appreciating the opportunities that we have been given in the states.”

Scoring: **Grat-O = 1 – Present/minimal**

“When we unite we can reflect on who we are and who are children will become to be.”

Scoring: **Grat-F = 1 – Present/minimal**

“First of all not to forget where we come from...giving thanks to God for giving us one more year.” Scoring: **Grat-G = 1 – Present/minimal**