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Generational Status and Views on Nonconforming Gender Expression among Individuals of Mexican Origin

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GENERATIONAL STATUS AND VIEWS ON NONCONFORMING GENDER

EXPRESSION AMONG INDIVIDUALS OF

MEXICAN ORIGIN

A Thesis

by

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August 2018

ABSTRACT

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Despite changes in perspectives and an increase of acceptance of gender nonconformity, gender still remains a controversial topic. Gender continues developing and maintains an influence in cultural context. Examining gender in various settings can enlighten our comprehension of nontraditional expression. This study examines gender less traditionally, exploring views of non-conforming gender expression among generations of Mexican Americans and individuals of Mexican origin. Through survey analysis of a university population, I bring light to the influence generational status and traditional views have on the concept of non-binary gender. Results indicate a significance in generational status and views on non-conforming gender expression among Mexican Americans and individuals of Mexican decent, the higher the generational status the less traditional views held of gender.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my amazing sister, who through long, sleepless nights and hours of staring at a computer screen, was always there for me, thank you Brianna. Without you this would not have been possible. To my little brother Tayden, I leave this as a reminder that anything is possible, as long as you believe in yourself. To my parents, mom and dad, without your constant support and love I would not be here. I love you all.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my teachers at Science Academy, who believed in my success, way before I believed in it myself, thank you. To my friends Jackie and Jenny, for always reminding me of my accomplishments when I've felt like I failed, I love you girls. Lastly, I would like to dedicate this thesis to everybody who said I could not, thank you.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Societal progression in the United States can be examined through prominent changes, such as allowing women to vote and participate in the formal economy to extending civil rights to racial and ethnic minorities. More recently, the U.S. has witnessed a rapidly growing movement, that of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer community (LGBTQ+). This movement has fought to push for acceptance of a variety of sexual orientations and preferences, diverse family compositions and relationships, as well as new perspectives on diverse biological sex and gender identities that are still widely viewed as deviant (Herek, 2007). Despite the gained visibility and inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals, scholars suggest that much of the acceptance of gender and/or sexual minorities in the country is in fact due to younger generations being more accepting of the LGBTQ+ community (Silverberg, 2013). Recent surveys show that there is a greater acceptance of the LGB community, but there remains widespread resistance to the transgender and gender nonconforming community (Halloran, 2015). With American politics and society taking a greater interest in the transgender community, and bringing forth controversial issues within the legal climate of public accommodations and their ability to fully integrate into society in various ways, more light is being shed on the current issues facing the transgender and gender nonconforming community today.

Importantly, this suggests a potential progression in understanding, tolerance, and acceptance among older and younger generations and movement towards a new inclusive outlook in the United States. Along with a greater acceptance of the LGB community, a steady growth has occurred of individuals who know a person who identifies as transgender (Halloran, 2015). This awareness may lead to a greater understanding of transgender and gender nonconforming individuals, which can help create solutions to critical issues and discrimination that is uniquely faced by this vulnerable group, such as lack of protection in employment and housing (Bradford, Reisner, Honnold, & Xavier, 2013). This understanding can potentially propel greater acceptance of this community (Halloran, 2015). Individual perceptions about transgender people and gender nonconforming individuals, although slowly changing, can be influenced by a variety of factors, including racial/ethnicity identities and personal ideologies. As intersecting social identities influence perceptions of other people's social statuses, such as how political affiliation can influence one's thoughts on sexual orientation, there are cultural aspects that require consideration when examining gender (Shields, 2008). Various cultures identify with the concept of gender through different lenses and may provide pressure to adhere to certain gender rules and roles. Within the Mexican American culture, gender policing, a response or reaction had by others to enforce or discourage deviation from expected gender roles and beliefs, is practiced through phenomena such as machismo and marianismo, to adhere to specific hyper-masculine or hyper-feminine behaviors (Wade & Ferree, 2014; Villarreal & Cavazos, 2005). Through such traditions, a constrictive identity of gender can formulate among many Mexican American people. Gender ideologies can take a different shape within communities in regards to what cultural influences surround it. Evaluating a sample within a border community, rich with multiple generations of individuals of Mexican origin, can illuminate a potential relationship

between views on non-conforming gender expression and the impact that culture can have on the concept of gender (Anzaldua, 1987; Su, Richardson, & Wang, 2010).

Gender is defined as certain ways people are normatively expected to behave and interact in society depending on a person's assigned biological sex at birth (Kitzinger, 2005; Schilt & Westbrook, 2009; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Constructed in a binary model, gender is determined through only two biological sexes, that of male and female, which is assigned at birth depending on the appearance of one's genitals. Once determined, a person's sex is linked to their gender identity as a man or woman and in turn becomes indicative of their expected, normative gender expression as largely masculine or feminine (Butler, 1990). These behaviors and relations range across multiple dimensions of a person's life reflecting masculinity and femininity, including one's body language, dress, and appearance, and the roles and professions to which they may have access (Browning, 2016; Walch, Ngamake, Franciso, Stitt, & Shingler, 2012). The dominant framework of gender constructions continues to directly link gender to biological sex, as well as expected behaviors and responsibilities within society based on the gender binary model (Brzuzy, Nagoshi, & Terrell, 2012; Butler, 1993; Durrell, Chiong, & Battle, 2007; Fuller, 2004; Kroska, 2001). From the moment one's biological sex, as a primary sexual characteristic, is identified and categorized, gendered expectations and roles are imposed by society and are reinforced as secondary sex characteristics develop. These dominant gendered roles and responsibilities, such as men in a relationship acting as the decision maker or primary breadwinner and women serving in nurturing roles or as caregiver, frequently dictate how individuals behave, think, interact, and live (Goffman, 1990). As individuals develop an understanding of these dominant gender rules, they begin to reflect and present themselves

accordingly, seeking acceptance and assurance (Browning, 2016; Goffman, 1990; Walch et al., 2012).

Although changing over time, gender norms are persistent, reinforcing created stereotypes that are deeply embedded in the fabric of society (Butler, 1993; Herek, 2007; Kroska, 2001; Schilt & Westbrook, 2009). Traditions and stereotypes have set the stage for inequality between men and women, and any person that does not conform to the gender binary (Schippers, 2007; Schilt & Westbrook, 2009; Shafer & Malhorta, 2011). Once an individual has crossed such dominant social boundaries, gender policing occurs, ostracizing the individual and causing identity suppression and confusion of their own identity (Fuller, 2004; Station, 1972). Feelings and awareness of this type of reaction can keep people from expressing individual gender non-conforming characteristics and behaviors, potentially leading them into a distraught or uncomfortable state (Connolly, Zervos, Barone, Johnson, & Joseph, 2016). Despite widespread societal resistance to expansive gender expressions and identities, an increase in transgender and gender nonconforming individuals showing resiliency, through inner circle support and having a healthy identity of themselves, disrupting the prevalent gender norms that dictate gender normalcy has been seen (Bockting, Miner, Romine, Hamilton, & Coleman, 2013; Singh, Meng, & Hansen, 2014).

In this study, I question if generational status, whether migrated to America, first born in America, having at least one parent born in America, or at least one grandparent born in America, has an influence on an individual's views of non-conforming gender expression among 471 individuals of Mexican origin in the Rio Grande Valley. With a high concentration of individuals of Mexican origin residing in this area, I investigate the attitudes on non-conforming gender expression among various generations of individuals of Mexican origin. Views of gender

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and its relationship to generational status has been shown to shift to more egalitarian views as the generation increases, but little research has concentrated on gender as a non-binary construct (Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004; Su et al., 2010). I will address this gap in literature and explore if generational status influences views on non-conforming gender expression, in an area where multiple generations coincide. I examine generational status among people of Mexican origin and its linkage to various gendered ideologies and the promotion of more traditional activities based on masculinity and femininity in relation to one's primary sex characteristics. From data collected, 471 respondents completed the survey. This group consisted of 323 women, 143 men, 2 respondents who identified as gender fluid and 3 who indicated other, ranging from 18 years old to 70 years old. Of these respondents 4.7% identified as first generation, 36.5% as second generation, 29.9% as third generation and 28.9% as fourth generation.

Respondents rate their views on various theoretical statements taken from two separate scales, 20 statements from the Genderism and Transphobia Scale and 9 statements from the Gender Role Beliefs Survey. Gender expression in this study is conceptualized as the way a person displays their gender identity through clothing, behaviors, roles and customs, with a concentration on non-conforming gender expression, as it does not conform to heteronormative[1] gender binary social expectations (Jackson, 2006; Schilt & Westbrook, 2009; Walch et al., 2012). In this regard, clarification of the relationship between generational status and views on non-conforming gender expression can further provide an understanding and identify patterns within generational status among individual of Mexican origin and the influence it may have on attitudes towards non-conforming gender expression.

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[1] Heteronormativity refers to the regulation of cultural and institutional applications that assert normalcy in the idea that gender is solely binary, reflective of one's biological sex, and indicates an absolute sexual attraction to the opposite sex as the only acceptable orientation (Schilt & Westbrook,2009).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sex and Gender Identity/Expression

Gender roles and attitudes have become more inclusive and less traditional in more contemporary times in the United States (Phinney & Flores, 2002; Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004). In the 21st-century, the LGBTQ+ community is gaining rights, from same-sex couples having the right to be legally married to transgender people fighting for equal treatment; accolades like these are innovating and pushing to expand the boundaries of roles for those who may not fit in heteronormative boxes. Individuals who do not express gender-conforming behaviors and identities that match their sex assigned at birth may not identify as transgender, but could be broadly considered individuals of non-conforming gender expression.

Being transgender is widely conceptualized as anyone whose gender identity or expression does not coincide with traditional gender identities and expressions. Expressions and identities held by transgender people can be within the binary, such as individuals seeking surgical procedures to transition their sexual genitalia, but can also transcend or lay in between the gender binary (Brzuzy et al., 2012; Bockting et al., 2013). The acknowledgement of fluidity can also be seen along a spectrum, not strictly identifying as either/or and having the freedom to move, without disregarding the gender binary. These individuals disrupt normative roles and identity that both surpass and encompass the dominant binary gender norms (Brzuzy et al.,

2012). Moreover, when examining gender roles, U.S. society projects a gender binary model, which utilizes an "either/or" stance of gender as masculine or feminine. This binary is expected to be followed and is set in place to maintain dominant structures of power and inequality. Men are pressured to maintain a leadership stance in society, family and relationships, and women are constantly reminded to remain obedient to these men, as part of the normative gender expectations (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009; West & Zimmerman, 1987). The reinforcement and reproduction of such gendered expectations creates a framework of "normal/natural" versus "abnormal/deviant" (Clarke, 1981; Schilt & Westbrook, 2009; Walch et al., 2012). Scholars challenge this basic conceptualization, suggesting that sex and gender, not binary or interchangeable categories, although they are closely intertwined concepts, are independent (Amico, Bronski, & Pellegrini, 2013; Fausto-Sterling, 1993; Silverberg, 2013). Despite the dichotomy driven by external genitalia and reproductive organs, this binary can create uncertainty of an individual's definite sex as we see in intersex individuals. Although external genitalia and sex category assignment can create social pressures to conform to a certain gender identity, transgender identities directly challenge this notion (Brzuzy et al., 2012; Schilt & Westbrook, 2009).

With widespread awareness of the LGBTQ+ movement deeply enmeshed in civil rights issues, many individuals both young and old have developed an inclusive perspective on gender roles, expressions, and identities. Regarding social statuses that shape gender ideologies, scholars have concluded that women, on average, hold more egalitarian views within the concept of gender expansiveness (Martin, 1990; Phinney & Flores, 2002; Raffaeli & Ontai, 2004; Shafer & Malhorta, 2011; Worthen, 2012;). Men, on the other hand, are shown to only obtain broader egalitarian views on gender after major personal events that impact their gender beliefs, such as

having a daughter (Shafer & Malhorta, 2011). Given this evidence, there is a clear expectation to maintain social norms of masculine dominance and feminine submissiveness within society. Women are expected to follow along with masculine dominance in order to find an intimate partner and continue their feminine role as a mother, often passing along this message to their daughters (Anzaldua, 1990). In this hierarchical gendered system, cisgender[1] men benefit most from the privilege attached to their sex, inheriting a stronger hold within power relations among sexes involving the selection of a romantic partner, choice in career path, and an influential role as a parent (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009).

Gender and Mexican American/Hispanic Culture

When examining the boundaries of gender roles for men and women, it is important to examine additional sociocultural influences, such as racial/ethnic identities (Fuller, 2004; Herek, 2007; Su et al., 2010; Walch et al., 2012). Culture plays an integral role in shaping relationships, communication, gender expectations, and gender identities (Su et al., 2010). For instance, in India, hijras are acknowledged in the community as a third gender. Previously referenced with representing blessings and connecting to a higher spirituality, hijras now experience discrimination and hardship (Jain, 2018). Although hijras have not gained equal rights, they preserve their culture. Similarly, in Samoa, those who identify as a third gender are called fa'afaine. Fully integrated, they play an important role in sustaining and caring for the family while transcending gender expectations (Schmidt, 2016). While in Mexico in the small town of Oaxaca, muxes, individuals who are born biologically male later in life adopt more feminine characteristics in their dress and gender roles (Mirande, 2016). Muxes, like those mentioned before, do not subscribe to being neither man or woman, but instead self-identify and are

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[1] Cisgender refers to individuals whose gender identity corresponds to that of their sex assigned at birth (Stein, 2018).

recognized within their community as a third gender lying in between the binary and are celebrated with the festival of Vela de la Intrepidas. Muxes in this community are not seen as transgender or wanting to be women but instead play a significant role in the maintenance and preservation of Zapotec traditional roles (Mirande, 2016). Due to their association with culture and being muxe as a natural occurrence and not a choice, there is great acceptance of muxes by the community. Many parents look at their muxes children as a blessing from God and not as a disgrace. Because they are categorized as a third gender, variations in muxes can be seen in presentation, from those who cross-dress in traditional female Zapotec attire daily, to those who only wear make-up or cross-dress for festivals, to those who identify themselves as muxes solely by the extravagant and colorful jewelry. Despite the way that each muxe presents, due to the social structure presented in this area as a matrifocal system, they are also associated with this community based on the roles and characteristics presented within family and work place. Despite general acceptance for muxes is observed, this third gender goes against highly accepted strict traditional gender binary Mexican values and Western binary gender models. Although gender is highly regulated in Western culture, there are clear examples among other societies that present a deviation from the gender binary, depicting a gender nonconforming presence such as hijras and muxes and a maintenance of inclusion and functionality unique to their communities.

Within the Mexican culture gender roles typically present a patriarchal composition where the men in the family are seen as superior through such concepts as "machismo," whereby men are primarily viewed as protectors and providers (Anzaldua, 1990; Fuller, 2004; Su et al., 2010). "Machismo" in the Mexican culture often influences men's actions and desires. From a young age a boy is taught to be aggressive and strong. As a man, he is expected to show his dominance in a relationship and his power by how many heterosexual sexual conquests he can

obtain. For females in this culture, a contrary expectation persists (Anzaldua, 1990; Station, 1972). Girls from a young age are guided to express their "marianismo" and to obey men. Marianismo is a framework set for girls to present themselves as hyper feminine, displaying passiveness, purity and submissiveness (Anzaldua, 1990; Station, 1972; Su et al., 2010). Within dominant Mexican culture, both men and women are known for largely adhering to traditional gender and familial roles (Anzaldua, 1990; Schilt & Westbrook, 2009; Su et al., 2010; Webster, 1997; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Gender roles, within dating and spousal relationships share many parallels with each other. In the Mexican culture, men glorify and idealize the woman they are intimately pursuing, granting her every wish, in hopes of impressing her. Women are expected to be impressed by men while in search of a suitor, and accepting all attention from them. Once married, however such dynamics change. After marriage, men are seen as the dominant protective figure in the home, whereas women are expected to satisfy their husbands' needs (Anzaldua, 1990; Station, 1972).

Many of these gendered roles are not only reflective within spousal dynamics, but also within parent-offspring relationships. In a parent-offspring relationship, most Mexican-American children are taught to be submissive and obedient to both parents but especially their father. Children usually turn to their mother for support and nurturing (Anzaldua, 1990; Phinney & Flores, 2002; Station, 1972). Parents also hold very different expectations and boundaries for Mexican-American sons compared to Mexican-American daughters (Zavella, 1997). This ranges from girls dressing appropriately in skirts to brothers being able to stay out later than their sisters (Zavella, 1997). Girls are also expected to learn how to care for the family by cooking and cleaning at a young age. If a young girl has brothers, she quickly becomes responsible for cleaning and caring for them. By learning to cook, clean and care for her family, a young girl is

said to have gained desirability to other young boys through mastering these skills (Anzaldua, 1990; Phinney & Flores, 2002; Station, 1972). Any type of deviation from these traditional norms can lead to ideas of "masculine" women being a form of a man and "feminine" men being viewed not as men but as women (Anzaldua, 1990; Lugones, 2007; Martinez, 2000). This can ultimately lead to speculation of homosexuality, with little to no room for gender and/or sexual fluidity, and social sanctioning, if not social marginalization (Anzaldua, 1990; Durrell et al., 2007). Considering Hispanics have shown homophobic responses, homosexuality is seen as a great betrayal in the Mexican culture (Acosta, 2008; Anzaldua, 1990). It is a betrayal to the family and dominant norms of sexuality, both dominant aspects of the culture. By doing this, the gay or lesbian individual is rejected by their family, their culture, and their people. This fear of abandonment can lead gay and lesbian individuals to reject or hide their sexuality conforming to the dominant heterosexual culture as a way to maintain their cultural identity (Acosta, 2008; Anzaldua, 1990; Durrell et al., 2007). In turn, LGBTQ+ Hispanics can have a greater sense of resistance towards gender role expectation within a traditional framework of gender and the interaction that it has with homophobic views (Durrell et al., 2007). This allows for a greater understanding of how important and significant traditional gender ideologies are in shaping people's responses to gender nonconformity. As such, people of Mexican origin's attitudes, beliefs, and values are deeply influential in their views on gender roles and examining views on non-conforming gender expression amongst varying generations can reveal the dynamics occurring within generational interactions influencing values surrounding gender and gender roles (Umana-Taylor, Alfaro, Bamaca, & Guimond, 2009).

In this study, I provide insight into the relationship between generational status beliefs surrounding nonconforming gender expression among individuals of Mexican origin in the Rio

Grande Valley. Utilizing the theory of intersectionality, I strive to gain an understanding of the overlap of social identities and their relationship and influence social beliefs and ideologies (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013; Shields, 2008). I ask the research question: How do the identities of Mexican ancestry and generational status in the United States influence one's idea of the concept of gender, more specifically non-conforming gender expression? Contradictory to the constrictive definition of the concept of gender, gender roles, and gender identity within the Mexican culture, I utilize a transgender theoretical frame. This theory acknowledges fluidity in gender expression and gender identity through self-embodiment and self-constructed components, based on the social expectations and experiences lived by an individual (Brzuzy & Nagoshi, 2010; Brzuzy, et al,, 2012; Shotwell & Sangrey, 2009). Gender fluidity emphasizes not only looking at the 'either/or' framework that adheres to the social binary of gender, but also acknowledges the 'both/neither' aspects that are internally factored into gender identity. (Brzuzy et al., 2012). Acknowledgment of gender fluidity, being so conflicting to that of traditional Mexican gender expectations, can serve as an indication of a shift of views on the concept of gender among people of Mexican origin.

Gender and Generational Status

An increase in the Mexican population can be seen in the United States (Su, Richardson, & Wang, 2010). This affect may be due to its close proximity to Mexico and the influx of Mexican immigrates crossing the US-Mexico border. The continuous cross of immigrants can create multiple generations in a particular within the Rio Grande Valley, laying on the South most border of the United States. This allows for an interesting perspective on views on gender, in relation to the generation the individual is within the United States. This particular area allows for the examination of views held by those who have recently migrated to the United States and

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those who have lived in America for multiple generations and therefore a variation that may occur between individuals of various generations and their concept of gender, specifically nonconforming gender expression.

A difference in views on gender and gender role attitudes can be seen between cultures along either side of the Mexican American border. Mexicans hold a more conservative view on gender and gender roles and are specifically categorized as appropriate based on and differ by sex. The United States in comparison generally tend to hold less restrictive and more egalitarian views on gender role attitudes and gender (Phinney & Flores; 2002). When exploring the concept of gender among Mexican Americans and those of Mexican decent, generational status can be a key indicator to a shift to more mainstream egalitarian views (Phinney & Flores; 2002). In examining generational status, it has been shown that the greater the generational status, the more egalitarian views Mexican American are likely to hold in relation to gender role attitudes (Phinney & Flores, 2002; Su, Richardson, & Wang, 2010). Considering the vast difference in views held on gender role attitudes between Hispanic cultures and that of the United States, this adoption of views is said to be affected by a number of variables such as language usage and proficiency, friendship networks, and education (Phinney & Flores, 2002; Su, Richardson, & Wang, 2010). Many of these views on gender roles was in reflection of husband/wife relations, parenting styles, or expectations among boys and girls (Phinney & Flores, 2002; Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004; Su, Richardson, & Wang, 2010). Although this gives insight to views on gender role attitudes, there is still a lack of research in examining gender in a more non-conforming aspect within presentation, among various generations of Mexican Americans and those of Mexican origin. By investigating views on non-conforming gender expression among Mexican

American and those of Mexican descent, an examination of potential shift in views on gender, not as a binary structure but instead as an inclusive fluid concept can be made.

Conslusively, people tend to organize their social world into categories. These categories create dominant norms for certain roles and characteristics we are expected to express based on gender, sexuality, race, or religion (Herek, 2007; Walch et al., 2012). Throughout history a transformation in gender roles and how they have adapted within society have occurred. Individuals whose identities and abilities lay outside of those categorical boxes may struggle. For those who identify as gender non-conforming, such as transgender people, there is still powerful pressure to conform to the gender binary. As society broadens its views on sexuality and gender, it is clear that gender is not merely a static binary concept but exists on a spectrum (Amico et al., 2013; Silverberg, 2013). Gender policing in various forms demonstrates the difficulty of accepting gender fluidity and those who veer from traditional gender norms. Whether there is greater acceptance and understanding had by women than men within the concept of gender, the expectations of gender identity and gender roles are often heightened within Mexican culture, compelled by dominant norms surrounding family dynamics, courtship, and parent-child relationships. If gender roles are not met or are contradicted, homosexuality is assumed and ridicule is conveyed by family and community. This study examines views related to gender nonconformity held by individuals of Mexican origin spanning multiple generations in the Rio Grande Valley. This research further expands the knowledge on the concept of gender in a non-binary domain, within a culture that highly reinforces gender norms along a borderland within the United States. Although gender fluidity is continuously developing, those who identify in non-conforming ways are underrepresented in a society that views gender as concrete and

monolithic. As time progresses, and with it knowledge and understanding, gender becomes more

complex and fluid allowing individuals to live more authentically (Shotwell & Sangrey, 2009).

CHAPTER III

SAMPLING METHOD

To explore the potential connection between views on non-conforming gender expression and generational status among individuals of Mexican origin, data for the analysis come from a participatory sample of 471 individuals of Mexican origin, college students and faculty aged 18 and older. I distributed the online survey to the faculty and student body of a large public university in South Texas, using the school email system from the month of November, 2017 to February, 2018. The sample included 471 respondents, including 323 women, 143 men, 2 who identified as gender fluid and 3 who identified as other. The sample gathered in this area was due to the interest in multiple generational statuses of respondents residing in this borderland. The survey was conducted in an electronic format through Qualtrics to allow suitable accessibility to students through a link to the survey directly. After obtaining informed consent, the respondent was prompted to complete the demographic information before filling out the questionnaires. The demographic information consisting of 18 questions, gathering information on generational status of the respondent, as well as sexual orientation, gender, and political affiliation amongst other information.

Asking respondents to identify the potential relationship between gender and role meanings through their stance of a variation of agreement or disagreement allows me to identify patterns between ethnicity, generational status and views on non-conforming gender expression.

CHAPTER IV

OPERATIONALIZATION

While examining the relationship between generational status and views on non-conforming gender expression amongst individuals of Mexican origin, several key variables stand out. I will analyze the relationship of the dependent variable, independent variables, and several control variables, described below utilizing SPSS by creating a scoring system derived from response answers selected by respondents, within part B and C of the survey to indicate favorable and unfavorable views amongst respondents to examine the dependent variable. Scoring was formulated through assigning each response option with a value number and giving each respondent a score to determine how more or less adherent they respondent to traditional gender binary ideology. Respondents scored along a scale on or between 0 through 116, to indicate their stance on views on non-conforming gender expression. Scores closer to or at 0 indicated views that were less adherent to more traditional views of gender, whereas scores closer to or at 116 indicated views held that were more adherent of gender binary ideology with 58 holding a neutral stance on gender ideology.

CHAPTER V

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable, views on non-conforming gender expression, are examined utilizing two different scales. The study will investigate reflective views of traditional role meanings and activities. The survey consisted of 3 parts, part A included demographic information, part B consisted of questions from the Gender and Transphobia Survey (Hill & Willoughby, 2005), part C held questions from the Gender Role Beliefs Survey (Kerr & Holden, 1996). There were a total of 29 scaled questions included in the survey, part B had 20 questions and part C had 9 questions. For analysis of sections B and C of the survey, each of the 29 questions were given a value of 0-4, 0 being the least adherent of responses to views of the gender binary and 4 being most adherent to more traditional views of the gender binary. I then summed up the values of each question giving each respondent a score ranging from 0, being the least adherent to views of the gender binary and 116 being the most adherent. These scores allow a greater understanding of the respondent's responses and the type of views each respondent has on the concept of gender, more specifically views on non-conforming gender expression. I then divided the scale of scores into 4 quarters indicating a neutral stance on views of non-conforming gender expression. Quarter 1 indicated respondents who's scores ranged from 0 – 28 as being least adherent to views of non-conforming gender expression, 29 – 57 as slightly less adherent views of non-conforming gender expression. A score of a 58 indicated neutral views of gender,

while 59 – 87 indicated views to be slightly more adherent to traditional views of gender. The last quarter ranged from 88 – 116, indicated more adherent views to the gender binary.

Genderism and Transphobia Scale

The Gender and Transphobia Scale is a 32-item scale developed to predict attitudes and beliefs toward gender non-conforming individuals, such as transgender individuals (Hill & Willoughby, 2005)[1]. Of this scale, I utilized only 20 items that identified some type of conflict with presentation or behavior of individuals presenting non-conforming gender expression in a general aspect to reflect more of a fluid non-conforming practice versus an individual who identifies as a transgender individual.[2] Items included were statements such as "Men who shave their legs are weird," and "Masculine women make me feel uncomfortable. Respondents were able to indicate their belief system on the statement through a 5 point Likert scale response from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Gender Role Beliefs Scale

The Gender Role Beliefs Scale was developed to predict gender role ideology of its respondents (Kerr & Holden, 1996). This scale consists of 20 items that explore beliefs of appropriate behavior for men and women. From this scale 9 items were utilized in the survey and were selected as those items that questioned appropriate presentation and behavior within gender. Items included were items such as "I see nothing wrong with a woman who doesn't like to wear skirts or dresses," and "Some equality in marriage is good, but by and large the husband ought to have the main say-so in family matters."

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[1] A transgenderist refers to an individual who changes gender often with minimal medication intervention and can move back and forth from gender to gender (Hill and Willoughby, 2005).

[2] A transgender individual refers to an individual whose gender identity and expression deviate from expectations based on their physical sex (Walch, Ngamake, Francisco, Stitt, and Shingler, 2012).

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CHAPTER VI

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The independent variables will consist of respondents' of Mexican origin and generational status of respondent. The variable of Mexican origin is operationalized at the introduction of the survey. Respondents are asked to meet the requirement of identifying of Mexican decent to take part in the survey. If the respondents declined identifying as Mexican American, the survey was prompted to thank the respondent for their time and ended the survey, denying access to further questions.

Generational status of the individual, is operationalized by having respondents indicate their generation in America at the time of survey completion, in the introductory demographic survey. I operationalized respondent's generational status into generational categories of "First Generation," "Second Generation," "Third Generation," and "Fourth Generation." First generation refers to those respondents who were born in Mexico and had migrated to the United States. Second generation respondents refer to those who were first to be born in the United States and one or both of their parents were born in Mexico. Respondents who indicated third generation, were individuals born in the United States with US born parents, and one or more grandparents born in Mexico. Finally, respondents who indicated they were fourth generation, identified as born in the United States to United States born parents with all grandparents born in

the United States. Identifying respondent's generation in America would allow a better understanding of influence in changes or consistency of values held within a traditional gender binary system (Raffaeli & Ontai, 2004; Station, 1972).

CHAPTER VII

CONTROL VARIABLES

The demographic information consisting of 18 questions, gathering information on generational status of the respondent, as well as sexual orientation, gender, and political affiliation amongst other information. I included a number of control variables within this study to evaluate any influence to gender views within the study. These control variables will be included in the study is to identify that these variables are not confounding and that the presented relationship is in fact significant, which can assist in further examination in future projects. In the introductive demographic questionnaire, I will include "Age," "Sex," "Sexual Orientation," "Gender," "Religion," "Generation in America," "Political Ideology," "Political Party." The demographic information will include both open-ended questions and questions of nominal level of measure.

Age, Sex, Sexual Orientation, and Gender

Age of the respondent was operationalized by having the participant complete their date of birth by month, day, and year. To operationalize the variable of sex the respondent was able to indicate whether they are "male," "female," or "intersex" and will be asked to select only one response. Biological Sex is examined to evaluate the difference in traditional gendered roles and activities that can be influenced by one's sex (Cunningham, 2001; Shafer & Malhorta, 2011). To identify "sexual orientation," the respondent will be able to indicate from several sexual

orientations, which will include "straight," "gay," "lesbian," "bisexual," "pansexual," and "asexual" and the respondent will be asked to select only one sexual orientation. To identify as pansexual is a person who is attracted to another person, despite their gender, while a person who identifies as asexual is someone who has little to no sexual attraction to others ("Glossary of LGBT Terms for Health Care Teams," 2016). As indicated in previous research, sexual orientation is shown to influence an individual's ideology on traditional roles, specifically within the Hispanic community (Durrell et al., 2007). When prompted to identify "gender," the respondent will be able to respond to the following genders, "woman," "man," "transgender," or "genderqueer/gender fluid" and be asked to only select one gender. Gender is examined due to the polarized roles that the Mexican culture constrains onto each gender (Durrell et al., 2007; Raffaeli & Ontai, 2004).

<p style="text-align:center">Religion, Educational Level, and Political Ideology</p>

Research has shown that an individual's religious affiliation and political beliefs can influence their identification with traditional gendered roles (Webster, 1997). For this reason the respondent will be asked to identify their religion as either, "Catholic," "Baptist," "Protestant," "Methodist," "Lutheran," "Mormon," "Buddhist," "Jewish," "Muslim," "Hindu," "Wiccan," "Unitarian/Universalist," and "No religion." Under "No religion" the respondent will have the opportunity to select from 3 more responses of "Atheist," "Agnostic," or "no religion." The respondent was prompted to select only one of these denominations. The respondent was asked to indicate their level of education completed. Educational level was operationalized within 7 response options, "less than high school," "High school graduate," "Some college," "2 year degree," "4 year degree," "Professional degree," and "Doctorate." As Kroska (2001) illustrates, most individuals in a subcultural group hold the same meanings for roles, such as that of political

affiliation. These beliefs can be seen as a driving force for how people react to traditional gender roles (Shotwell & Sangrey, 2009; Station, 1972). I will examine the political orientation and ideological framing in this portion by asking the respondent to identify their political orientation on a five item scaling as "Highly Conservative," "Conservative," "Neutral," "Liberal," or "Highly Liberal."

CHAPTER VIII

ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

To analyze the data utilizing computer program SPSS, I concentrated on the potential

relationship between the independent variables of generational status and ethnicity and the

dependent variable of views on non-conforming gender expression. I am looking at the potential

shift or possible significant pattern in the way certain respondents answered the survey questions.

To determine a difference in mean of groups within the independent variable, I ran a one-

way analysis of variance (ANOVA). With a null hypothesis of

$$H = G_i = G_1 = G_2 = G_3$$

and a significant difference in means of the groups would lead to a rejection of the null

hypothesis being

$$H_r = G_i \neq G_1 \neq G_2 \neq G_3$$

There was a slight significance in the between groups leading to a rejection of the null

hypothesis. Once a significance was determined, I ran a Scheffe's test on the respondent's

generation in America. Their response score determined a specific difference in means between

groups of generations of respondents and their views on non-conforming gender expression.

CHAPTER IX

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Over the span of approximately 3 and a half months a total of 617 submissions of the survey were retrieved. Of the 617 submissions, 146 had missing information, leaving a total of 471 valid submissions being analyzed. The sample respondents included: 323 women, 143 men, 2 who identified as gender fluid and 3 who identified as other. Of respondents, 30.6% identified as male and 69.4% identified as female. 82.4% of respondents identified as straight, 3.2% identified as gay, 2.5% as lesbian, 6.6% as bisexual, 1.1% as asexual, 3.6% as pansexual, and .2% as sexually fluid. Of respondents 48.5% identified as Catholic, 3% as Baptist, 4% as Protestant, respondents who identified as Methodist, Unitarian/Universalist, Lutheran, and Muslim represented .2% for each religion. .4% of respondents identified as Buddhist and Wiccan each, .6% identified as Jewish, and .9% as Mormon. Of respondents 11.9% indicated as having no religion, 5.5% as Agnostic, 3% as Atheist, 4.7% as Spiritual, and 16.2% as other. Political orientation of respondents were: 4% highly conservative, 11.3% conservative, 48.7% moderate, 26.4% liberal, and 9.6% as highly liberal.

Operationalization of my independent variable, generation in the United States, was done in 4 categories, first generation, second generation, third generation, and fourth generation. As

indicated in Table 1, of the respondents who took the survey, 4.7% of them identified as first generation (22 respondents), 36.5% identified as second generation (172 respondents), 29.9% identified as third generation (141 respondents), and 28.9% identified as fourth generation (136 respondents).

Table 1: Sample Percentage of Generation's in America
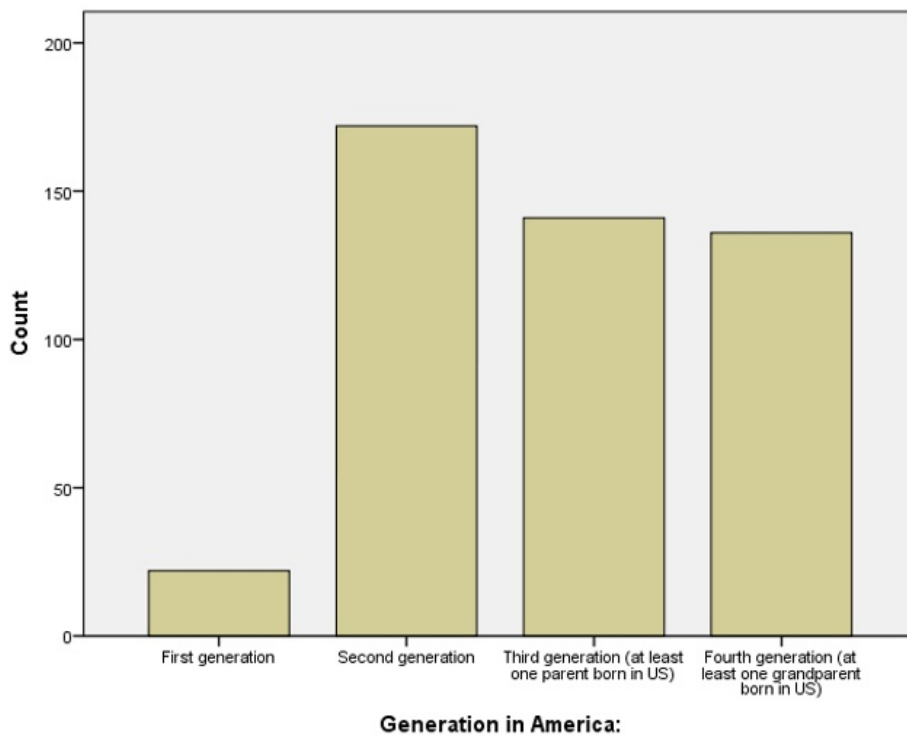
Of the response scores, 61% scored between the range of 0-28, being the least adherent to the gender binary, and open to a more non-conforming perspective of gender. Respondents scoring in the range 29-57, consisted of 33.1% of total valid responses, and .4% scored exactly 58, having the most neutral view of gender. 5% of respondents ranged in a score of 59-87, indicating somewhat adherent standpoints to the gender binary, and 0% of respondents scoring in

the last quadrant of 88-116, holding the most adherent views to the gender binary, and closed to a more non-conforming perspective of gender. Results show that more than half of respondents scored in the quadrant least adhering to the gender binary and therefore holding less restrictive ideals of the concept of gender. Almost the total of remaining responses scored in the second quadrant at 33.1% holding somewhat less adherent views to the gender binary and obtaining somewhat less restrictive views on the concept of gender. Only .4% of respondents hold a neutral stance on the concept of gender holding neither more or less adherent views of the gender binary. While only 5% of respondents held somewhat more adherent views of the gender binary, with 0% of respondents scoring in the last quadrant. As shown on Table 2, the average score held by respondents was a 25.65 with a standard deviation of 17.796.

Table 2: Distribution of Individual Respondent Scores

Mean = 25.65
Std. Dev. = 17.796
N = 471
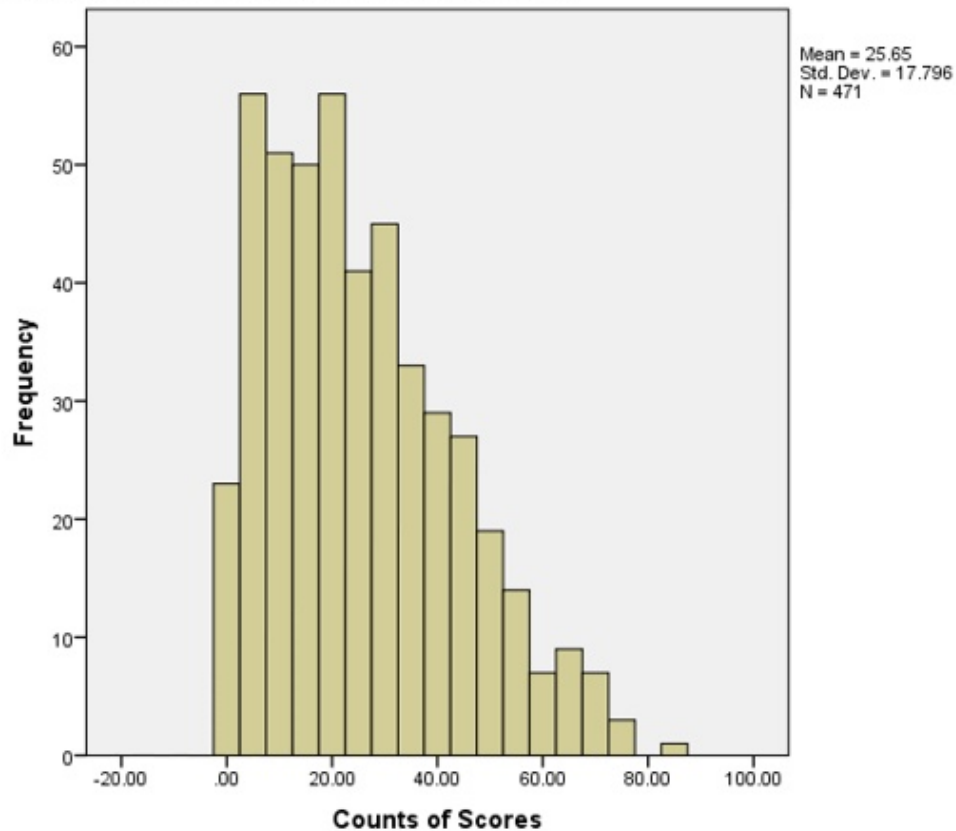
A one-way ANOVA was run on the data set to identify a significance in difference of means within generational groups. Results show a significant difference in means between groups, with a significance of .150. To gain further insight to the significance between groups, a Scheffe's test was run to clarify between which groups did the significant difference in means occur. As shown below, Table 3 shows the greatest significant difference between generational groups was between the second and fourth generation of respondents. Second generation scored

Table 3: Scheffe's Test

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Counts of Scores
Scheffe

(I) Generation in America:	(J) Generation in America:	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
First generation	Second generation	-3.67600	4.01943	.841	-14.9534	7.6014
	Third generation (at least one parent born in US)	-.78111	4.06923	.998	-12.1982	10.6360
	Fourth generation (at least one grandparent born in US)	.86230	4.07932	.998	-10.5831	12.3077
Second generation	First generation	3.67600	4.01943	.841	-7.6014	14.9534
	Third generation (at least one parent born in US)	2.89490	2.01668	.560	-2.7633	8.5531
	Fourth generation (at least one grandparent born in US)	4.53830	2.03695	.176	-1.1768	10.2534
Third generation (at least one parent born in US)	First generation	.78111	4.06923	.998	-10.6360	12.1982
	Second generation	-2.89490	2.01668	.560	-8.5531	2.7633
	Fourth generation (at least one grandparent born in US)	1.64341	2.13354	.898	-4.3427	7.6295
Fourth generation (at least one grandparent born in US)	First generation	-.86230	4.07932	.998	-12.3077	10.5831
	Second generation	-4.53830	2.03695	.176	-10.2534	1.1768
	Third generation (at least one parent born in US)	-1.64341	2.13354	.898	-7.6295	4.3427

4.53830 points higher than the fourth generation.

CHAPTER X

DISCUSSION

From the results retrieved, we can see that 94.1% if respondents obtained a score falling

in the first two quarters of the scale indicating perspectives less adherent to that of traditional

concept of gender. This response shows to be important due to the significantly traditional

ideologies held by the Mexican culture to the concept of gender (Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004).

Having such a high percentage of respondent's scores indicating less adherent views to

traditional gender binary ideology and more accepting of non-conforming gender expression

views has given us a glimpse into a potential shift to less constrictive views on the concept of

gender amongst individuals of Mexican ancestry in the South Texas area. When examining

results of scores of respondents by generational status, there was a slightly significantly greater

response rate of holding less adherent views to traditional gender binary ideology amongst

second generation respondents. Response rates of both third and fourth generations were similar

with third generation responses showing to be slightly more open to accepting views of a non-

conforming concept of gender than that of responses of the fourth generation. Additionally,

results display a greater percentage of responses scores falling in the third quarter, although

significantly lesser than that of responses in other quarters, holding slightly more adherent views

to that of traditional gender binary ideology for second generation respondents as well. Both

third and fourth generation responses scored equally in the third quarter, each having 5 respondents. This shows a greater percentage of differences in perspectives within second generation respondents. Lastly, after determining a significance and running a Scheffe's test in the data retrieved, there was a greater difference in responses between second generation respondents compared to that of fourth generation respondents. This indicates that there is a greater divide in views of non-conforming gender expression amongst these generational statuses. The disadvantage in the study is that results will offer only a glimpse into respondents' thoughts and views on non-conforming gender expression. This method, nonetheless can offer evidence and insight toward advancing our understanding of persons of Mexican ancestry's views on the concept of gender, and a potential shift in holding less traditionally gender binary ideas of gender and more receptive of non-conforming gender expression.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

Through this quantitative approach I examined the data collected for patterns expressing a correlation between generation in America, ethnicity and views on non-conforming gender expression among individuals of Mexican origin. Previous research has proposed that individuals from the same culture hold synonymous meanings developed socially (Kroska, 2001). Additionally it has been identified that Hispanics are more prone to expressing traditional socially gendered norm roles. I attempted to identify patterns, such as the greater the generation in America of the respondent the more accepting their views on non-conforming gender expression. Although I anticipated to find an inverse relationship between generation in America and negative views on non-conforming gender expression, a relationship amongst second generations and their favorable views to less traditional gender binary ideology was identified as well (Webster, 1997). The advantage of offering a quantitative approach of analysis is its ability to reach a broader population in the community through surveying. Extensive data is being gathered from one source, a university, where the population boasts rich diversity in age and possibly an array of views (Gumprecht, 2003; Worthen, 2012). As determined by Gumprecht, a college's population and ideologies can influence the surrounding community, highlighting the importance and validity of college students' ideologies (Gumprecht, 2003; Worthen, 2012). Beliefs surrounding gender non-conformity can be relatively new to many people and therefore

very personal for them (Kroska, 2000). These components make it difficult to generalize to the broader Mexican American population. This study does provide insight into the less charted concept of non-binary gender. As professionals of academia we can develop insight, understanding and awareness of a non-binary gender.

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APPENDIX A

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The author was born in Harlingen, Texas on June 25, 1990. She attended elementary and middle school at Monte Alto Elementary and Monte Alto Middle School. She attended high school at the Science Academy of South Texas in Mercedes. She joined the University of Texas-Pan American in August 2008 and graduated in May 2012 with a Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitative Services.

After attaining her degree, Lopez worked in a diversity of employments at various capacities before and during her graduate career. From February 2013 to February 2014 she was employed by Modern View Clinical and Forensic Services, from December 2013 to December 2015 she was employed by Jeffrey Moen Private Practice Counselor as a personal assistant, from February 2015 to current she was employed with Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) of Hidalgo County, Inc. as there volunteer coordinator, from February 2016 to May 2018 she was employed by the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) as a research assistant.

In January 2015, she joined the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley to pursue a Master of Science in Sociology. Lopez attained her Master of Sociology in July 2018 with honors. She can be contacted at bianca.lopez90@gmail.com.