

Cultural Immersion Project – Part 1

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What are some key things you have learned about this culture through reading the scholarly sources?

In reading the scholarly sources that I have selected, I have found that in the Hispanic culture there is an important emphasis on the family and how it plays into other aspects of the beliefs, practices, and behaviors of those members of the culture. According to Fernando A. Ortiz, “The family and the collective are the primary loci where Latinos/as meet their needs for safety, belonging, love, respect, and self-esteem” (2017, p. 1). The identity of an individual from the Hispanic culture is deeply rooted in the constructs of family. Parents instill religious and cultural beliefs in their children that are passed on from generation to generation. This includes the concept of *Simpatia*, or friendliness (Ortiz, 2017). The emphasis is on positive relationships and avoiding conflict when trying to achieve *Simpatia* with their children. Ortiz explains, “Interdependence among its members is culturally desired and great value is placed on their ability to interact well and to cooperate” (2017, p. 6). The attitudes and values among the Hispanic culture is reflected in the ability to have positive relationships among family and society, creating a very warm and inviting culture.

The article, *The Impact of Acculturation and Cultural Values on Hispanic Immigrants’ Parenting*, explains the transition of Hispanic immigrants to the United States and the acculturation that takes place. This article presented the main values that Hispanic parents wanted to uphold within their family as they faced acculturation in the United States. Natali Gonzalez and Joanna Méndez-Pounds write, “...parents maintained the value of respect, the Spanish language, fostered family cohesion, and instilled their spiritual beliefs to their children” (2017, p. 56). Throughout my research it is evident that these values are indispensable to the

Hispanic culture. Also, the majority of the Hispanic culture identifies as Roman Catholic. (Nabhan-Warren, 2016). The article, *Hispanics and Religion in America* describes customs and practices that Mexican Catholics participate in. These include, "...attending mass, praying the rosary and novenas, and lighting candles" (2016, p. 4).

The Impact of Acculturation and Cultural Values on Hispanic Immigrants' Parenting discusses characteristics of American culture that differ from Hispanic culture. For example, the authors explain how Hispanic people view Americans as more willing to allow their children to explore independence. I can see this in my own life and upbringing. From a young age my parents encouraged me to make my own decisions and develop independence. According to Gonzalez and Méndez-Pounds, "...independence diminished the importance of family by giving more focus to the individual itself" (2017, p. 58). This relates to the strong family ties that are engrained in the Hispanic culture.

The Spanish language is a large part of the Spanish heritage and culture. In reading about acculturation of Hispanic families in the United states, I found that the children begin to speak English more and more at home. The particular participants of the study explained that they would allow their children to speak English at home, even though the parents largely spoke Spanish. This is an example of intra-group characteristics, as some Hispanic families in the U.S. may require their children to only speak Spanish at home in order to preserve the language. Spanish speaking individuals in the U.S. face many barriers as they live and work in an English speaking country. From prejudice, to simply being misunderstood, their troubles can become numerous. The article, *Hispanics and Religion in America*, gives an example of a key event that impacted societal perceptions of the Hispanic culture. Nabhan-Warren writes, "Recent global

Hispanic events such as the 2014 fútbol World Cup helped bring attention to the ethnic, nationalistic, and linguistic similarities as well as the cultural diversity of Latin, Central, and South Americans” (2016, p. 1). Sadly, sometimes we forget to honor or even remember the existence of other cultures unless forced to like in a situation like this.

What are some key things you have learned about this culture through interacting with Internet/media resources related to this culture?

In looking for a media resource I came upon a YouTube video for Hispanic Heritage Month which is from mid-September until mid-October. The video included testimonials from Hispanic people who were being represented in the video. Right off the bat, it struck me that the individuals were from places including Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and Venezuela. This was interesting to me, because the preconceived notions that I have created about Hispanic people is that I would assume that they would be from Mexico. It was beneficial for me to watch this video and recognize that Hispanic or Latino/a people can be from areas including South America, Central America or other Spanish cultures.

Another media source that I chose to explore was Hispanic magazines. I was curious to see the content that was highlighted in a Spanish Magazine compared to one that we would find in America. *Latina Beauty* is the name of the magazine that I chose as a media source. One of the main ideas that I gathered from analyzing this source is that it is very similar to the content that an American woman would look for in a magazine. The focus was on different aspects of beauty including makeup, hair, style, public figures, etc. This was interesting to me because the things that are desirable and attention-grabbing in one culture can be the same in another. Part of the magazine included an area where there were posted recipes. Some of the recipes were catered

more to the cuisine of the Hispanic culture, which is to be expected. Although, there may be differences, it reminded me that all of humankind is connected and has similar desires of the heart and mind. I would be interested to continue researching this aspect of desired lifestyle and interests of women within the Hispanic culture.

Are there any current surprises regarding what you are finding out about this culture?

One of the most astonishing points I read in a source was on the topic of immigration. The author of *Hispanics and Religion in America*, writes, “Unlike most other immigrants in the U.S. history, Mexicans did not initially cross over or emigrate to the United States--the U.S.-Mexico border crossed them” (2016, p. 2). This was a great point that I had never gave much thought about. Land reaching as far north as Montana previously belonged to Mexico. I was surprised to learn that the population of Latino/as has been one of the quickest growing populations in the United States, also (Ortiz, 2017). Given the harsh treatment of Latino/a immigrants by many in the U.S., this surprised me to see that it hasn’t deterred their immigrating.

How does your search through the literature and Internet/media impact your expectations as you plan your immersion activities?

I am particularly looking forward to participating in a Spanish mass in my community. After reading the literature on spiritual and religious beliefs within the Hispanic culture, I am excited to witness the practices and beliefs firsthand and examine how it is similar and different from my own spiritual beliefs. Specifically, I am interested to see the differences in their sermon style, as well as the way that they worship and sing. While I come from a less-charismatic church background, I am anticipating their services to be fairly expressive.

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The other immersion activity that I am planning on attending is a Day of the Dead celebration. This is a Mexican holiday that remembers and celebrates the lives of family members who have passed away. I chose *Mexico News Daily* as one of the media sources. The website reported, “More than 800,000 citizens expected to travel for the event” (2019, Mexico News Daily). This shows the significance of this particular event in the Hispanic Culture, much like Thanksgiving might be in the U.S. I expect this to be a very meaningful celebration of life. I am interested to see the ways in which they honor their ancestors as opposed to how I have learned to. For me, it has always meant grieving and sadness more than any sort of celebration, so that will be an interesting tension to navigate.

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Cultural Immersion Project- Part 2

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What events did you attend? What happened?

I attended two events that immersed me in the Hispanic culture. The first event that I attended was a Day of the Dead celebration, also known as Día de los Muertos. The Mexican holiday is put on to celebrate the life of loved ones who have passed away. Students at a college put on the event for the community. The event included activities such as decorating skull cookies, creating festive candles, skull face painting and eating foods from the culture. There were lots of decorations and Hispanic music playing in the background. It was obvious that this was a celebration and not a somber experience as one would expect when thinking of loved ones who have died.

The second event that I participated in was a Spanish mass at our local Catholic church. This was a very eye-opening experience as I have never been to anything like it before. The church service was mainly in Spanish, including the worship and scripture readings. The service began with worship. Following the worship, the Catholic Priest read from the Bible in Spanish and gave a short sermon. The sermon was in English and was translated into Spanish. There was a greeting period where the members of the church welcomed those around them. The worship continued throughout the entire service at different times. At the end of the service several women went up on stage and received communion from the Priest. After the women finished, they brought the cup and bread around to the other members of the church. There was a second greeting period where I shook hands with those around me. This seemed to be more of a closing period. The service finished with a dismissal from the Priest.

How did your experience of actual cultural events compare with the expectations you had developed?

The expectations that I developed came partially from the media and scholarly sources that I found in the research for the Cultural Immersion Part 1. For instance, Nabhan-Warren writes about religious practices, "...attending mass, praying the rosary and novenas, and lighting candles" (2016, p. 4). I attended the Catholic mass and experienced several of the listed practices described in the article, *Hispanics and Religion in America*. Altogether, the service went as I had expected. It was interesting to be a part of a service that was mainly in Spanish. As I reflect on that, it makes me think about how I view the English language as "normal" and anything apart from English does not feel "normal" to me. For the individuals in the service, I am sure that the service being spoken almost entirely in Spanish felt very normal and familiar.

My initial expectations of the events were that they would be something that I just attended in order to fulfill the course requirements. As I reflect on the events, one thing that ultimately stands out to me is, the meaning and importance behind each of the events that I attended for this culture. Both the Day of the Dead celebration and the Spanish mass were centered around family. In the article, *Self-Actualization in the Latino/Hispanic Culture*, the author explains the process of self-actualization, which is centered around family, friends and feeling unified. Ortiz states, "...this joyful transformative experience instilled in them motivating ideals, an appreciation for others, love and care for family, and long-lasting friendships" (2017, p. 11). I saw this statement exemplified within the culture through these two events, and learned the important role that family plays in the Hispanic culture.

How did participation in these immersion events impact you emotionally? In other words, what was it like to be a minority in this group?

There was an aspect of nerves and anxiousness that accompanied attending these events, as I was a minority in the group. It is easy to worry about what others will think of you as you attend an event where you stick out as not being a part of the culture. This was especially the case at the Spanish mass, as it was clear that I am not Hispanic and everyone in the room was. When I realized that most of the service was in Spanish, I began to worry that I wouldn't know what was respectful and expected of me at the different points in the service. Participating in the Day of the Dead celebration activities made me nervous because I did not want to be disrespectful to their culture. This celebration of life is an important holiday and holds a lot of weight in the Hispanic culture. I did not want the Hispanic individuals to feel as though I was showing disrespect by participating in activities that were not a part of my culture. It was important to me that they knew that I appreciated their traditions and was not taking the celebration lightly.

Being a minority in the room also stirred up some uncomfortable feelings. These events were out of my comfort zone. Anytime you participate in an event that you have little knowledge about, it can be expected that you may feel uncomfortable because it is not familiar to you. If I would not have stepped outside of my comfort zone to attend these events, I would not have learned as much as I did about this culture.

As you consider your own cultural background, why do you think you responded the way you did?

My cultural background is very different from the Hispanic culture. There are physical, spiritual, and traditional differences between the culture that I identify with compared to the Hispanic culture. For one, my family is of Norwegian descent. I am blonde and have fair skin. The noticeable physical difference that was apparent when I attended these events, caused me to respond in a way that was timid and cautious. It was obvious that I am not Hispanic, and therefore felt like I should not be participating in the events.

I grew up in a Christian household. My family went to church every Sunday and I became accustomed to the practices of the Protestant Christian church. Although there were similarities that I picked up on between the Spanish Mass and the church services that I am used to, the two still have their differences. Since I have grown up in church, I expected to see a similar framework for the Spanish Mass. When there was a time to greet those around me, I was not surprised and confused on what to do because this occurs in my home church as well. Similarly, I knew to stand for worship and sit when the Priest began preaching. The similarities in the church services caused me to respond in a familiar manner when I was participating in an event that was otherwise unfamiliar to me. The traditional differences can be recognized when looking at important holidays celebrated within the culture. In my own culture, Christmas and Easter are the important holidays that my family celebrates. Both holidays are a time where the family can come together from different parts of the country and practice the traditions that are important to us. My family travels to spend this important time together. Likewise, Día de los Muertos is a Mexican holiday that celebrates family. In researching media sources, I found an

online newspaper that described traveling during Día de los Muertos. According to the article in *Mexico News Daily*, “Secretary Miguel Torruco said he anticipates 829,000 Mexican citizens will travel for Day of the Dead” (Mexico News Daily, 2019). This shows that this Holiday is very important in the Hispanic culture, and people travel in order to celebrate their loved ones together. I understand the weight of these traditions, as I have significant traditions in my own culture. My cultural background and experiences made me respond with respect to the practices and traditions of Hispanic individuals when celebrating Día de los Muertos.

What are some key things that you have learned about this culture through these events?

Something that immediately stood out to me when attending the Spanish church service was the fact that there were children of all ages present. There were little children who sat with their parents and older children who participated in different aspects of the church service. According to Gonzalez and Méndez-Pounds, “Hispanics place great importance on religious matters” (2017, p. 58). The article, *The Impact of Acculturation and Cultural Values on Hispanic Immigrants' Parenting*, emphasizes the connection between family and the church community. (Gonzalez and Méndez-Pounds, 2017). Having the children present in the church service, as opposed to having the children go to separate, age appropriate classes, shows how the Hispanic culture emphasizes family and religion. Gonzalez and Méndez-Pounds explains, “As children grow older, they can become more involved in their religious beliefs through taking part in sacraments...” (2017, p. 58). These are the beliefs and values that Hispanic parents want to instill in their children. I noticed at the Spanish mass that the women looked very nice and dressed up. Particularly, many of the women who would have had naturally darker hair, dyed their hair blonde. This was the case with several women as I looked around the room. From my research of

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media sources in Part 1 of the Cultural Immersion project, I found a website called *Latina Beauty*. One of the sections on the website is titled, “10 Celebrities Who Have Rocked Colorful 'Dos” (Latina, 2018). The section of the website shows Mexican celebrities who have colored their hair. This seems to be an aspect of achieved beauty that is common in the Hispanic population. The article, *The Impact of Acculturation and Cultural Values on Hispanic Immigrants' Parenting*, describes what it is like for Hispanic families who live in America and have faced acculturation. Despite the influence of American culture, Hispanic families still practice important traditions held in their culture. Gonzalez and Méndez-Pounds state, “...participants were also active in their efforts to maintain their family values despite the migration to a new country” (2017, p. 63). This was something that I observed in attending the Day of the Dead celebration. Just because they are in the United States, and the Day of the Dead is not a holiday that many Americans celebrate, did not stop these individuals from celebrating the holiday.

WeLaGente Documentary was another media source that presented the idea that just because these Hispanic individuals live in the United States does not mean that they have left the traditions that are important to their culture (Xfinity, 2019). The video was created for Hispanic Heritage Month which is celebrated from September to October. The video had accounts from Hispanic individuals describing their experiences living as a Hispanics in America, and still holding true to their heritage. Although it may not be the case for some Hispanic individuals living in America, these are the types of traditions that will continue to be passed down from generation to generation, regardless of where they live because they are important to the Hispanic culture.

Discuss counseling theories and techniques that have been empirically validated as effective with this group.

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Person-Centered, and Solution-Focused are counseling approaches that have been empirically proven to be effective in counseling Hispanic individuals. When using the Cognitive-Behavior Therapy, it is the counselor's responsibility to understand how the client's culture impacts their values, and how those values differ from the counselor's. The article, *Cultural Values Integration in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for a Latino With Depression*, explains how to appropriately apply the Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy based upon the client's values. González-Prendes, Hindo and Pardo write, "...the process of assessing and reframing a person's beliefs is at the core of the practice of CBT" (2011, p. 337). This is why in order to effectively use this technique, the counselor must understand the client's ideals, beliefs and values based upon their culture.

Person-Centered counseling techniques are also effective when working with Hispanic clients. Many Hispanic individuals face acculturation as they become immersed in the American culture. Person-Centered therapy focuses on having the client look inward and reflect on themselves. Coatsworth, Maldonado-Molina, Pantin, et al., explain how using the Person Centered approach can aid in identifying the acculturation process in Hispanic individuals. The authors write, "Person-centered strategies may be used as complementary approaches to illuminate alternative acculturative types and help develop a fuller understanding of the acculturation process" (2005, p. 171). Solution-Focused therapy is another effective approach to use when counseling Hispanic clients. This approach focuses on the current situation of the client and develops goals to achieve in the future. In the article, *Effects of a Solution-Focused*

Mutual Aid Group for Hispanic Children of Incarcerated Parents, the study described was conducted to see how the use of Solution-Focused therapy would benefit Hispanic children who had parents in prison. According to Springer, et al., “Using SFT, clients are encouraged to develop future-oriented, positively worded goals” (2000, p. 433). The characteristics of this approach would focus on highlighting future opportunities for the client. Miracle Questioning is a counseling technique that is similar to Solution-Focused therapy as it focuses on the strengths of the client. Springer, et al., writes, “The miracle question also provided a means to goal-set...” (2000, p. 436). The characteristics of this technique would be useful in eliminating obstacles in the client’s life by having the client think about practical steps to take in order to change the future outcomes.

Reflective listening is shown by using acknowledging responses and showing the client that you validate and hear them. In the text, *Ethnicity & Family Therapy*, the authors write, “In therapy, eliciting, listening, and validating stories about how their lives are affected by living in this country will help families to view themselves and their problems in relation to a larger context...” (2005, p. 163). Using this technique will help Hispanic clients foster resilience as they face the difficulties of living in the United States.

Finally, mindfulness can be used as a technique when counseling a Hispanic client. Mindfulness increases awareness of behaviors and provides the client with ways to deal with stressful situations. The study conducted in the article, *Effects of a Mindfulness Group on Latino Adolescent Students: Examining Levels of Perceived Stress, Mindfulness, Self-Compassion, and Psychological Symptoms*, explains, “...mindfulness interventions can help minority populations that may be exposed to additional stressors because of poverty, racism, and classism” (2014, p.

150). The Hispanic population is considered a minority in the United States, therefore applying the counseling technique of mindfulness with a Hispanic client can help the client build resilience to the negative stressors of being a minority in this country.

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Cultural Immersion Project- Part 3

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Share some of the background of your interviewee. What is this person's/couple's story?

I interviewed a Hispanic male in his late 20's. For privacy, I will change his name to Carlos. Carlos identifies as Mexican American, as he was born in the United States, but is of Hispanic descent. His parents are originally from Guadalajara, Mexico, and came to the United States when they were young adults. Carlos was born in Chicago, and has always been raised with traditional values and practices from the Hispanic culture. He has grown up visiting the family members that still live in Mexico during the summers and holidays. He continues to visit his family in Mexico often. When Carlos was a freshman in high school, his family moved from Chicago to a rural town in Wyoming. He described this change as a shock as he faced many cultural differences, especially with being a minority in rural Wyoming.

Carlos is the oldest male in his family and fills this role with great responsibility. He mentioned that he views himself as the one who is responsible to take care of his family, especially his two younger sisters. He said that he has always grown up with a close-knit family. This aligns with the research that suggests that Latino/as have strong family values, also known as familismo. In the article, *Self-Actualization in the Latino/Hispanic Culture*, the author explains a component of familismo as "...the person's deep feeling of obligation to be both emotionally and demonstrably supportive of his or her family members" (2017, p. 5). When Carlos spoke of his family, he stated that it is his duty to set an example to his sisters by continuing family traditions and supporting them in their goals to reach success. Carlos says that his culture plays a large role in his identity and how he lives his life. It is what drives him toward success in completing his Bachelor's degree in finance and working as a universal banker. The

Hispanic culture is something that he wants to instill in his future family.

How open was this person/couple? Why do you think this was?

Carlos was fairly open when it came to his family and his cultural background. I think this is because he is very proud of his culture, and its significance to him and his family. He talked a lot about the practices, religion, and traditions that are important to his culture as well. When asked about experiences within the majority culture, he seemed to be more closed off. I think that this is because he isn't someone that I know very well and haven't had the chance to create a trusting relationship with yet. If he had negative experiences with racism or being a minority in school or his career, I don't think that he would have opened up to me about that topic simply because that is a sensitive topic and would need some more time to get to know me and my intentions.

What were some key cultural events for this person/couple?

Like I mentioned before, Carlos did not tell me of any negative interactions that he has experienced with the majority culture. He did talk about the close-knit group of friends that he had made in Wyoming. Although, none of his friends shared the same culture as him. When living in an urban area like Chicago, Carlos was surrounded by more people who participated in similar traditions and practices. This made the transition to Wyoming difficult because he did not have the same support system and similarities when it came to his Hispanic culture. Since he did not have influences of the Hispanic culture around him as much when he moved to Wyoming, he somewhat lost touch with his culture during high school. He did not attend Catholic mass as often, and did not participate in as many Hispanic activities because of the lack of Hispanic

influences around him. Now that Carlos is out of high school and college, he said that he is more in touch with his culture and wants to make sure that it is a part of his future family. One of the media sources that I used as a part of my research for the Cultural Immersion Part 1 discusses Hispanic heritage. The video starts off with a quote from an older Hispanic woman that I think fits with how Carlos views his culture. The woman describes her heritage by saying, “It’s like a tree without the roots, the tree will never be beautiful” (WeLaGente Documentary, 2019). Likewise, Carlos has gone back to his roots because he saw the value of his culture and family heritage and the positive outcomes that it has had and will have on his life.

What was your sense of this person’s/couple’s acculturation level and racial/cultural identity development? Why do you think this is the case?

In talking with Carlos, I sensed that he had experienced internalized racism. The text, *Developing Multicultural Counseling Competence*, refers to internalized racism as viewing the White culture as a superior culture and conforming to the values of the White culture. Hays & Erford write, “This attitude may lead them to deny their racial heritage or isolate themselves from their racial group” (2018, p. 103). In Carlos’s case, he did have a period in his life where he was greatly influenced by the White culture when he lived in rural Wyoming during high school. This is a formative time for any teenager, and wanting to fit in becomes very important. This caused him to step away from his heritage and stop participating in the traditions and practices that accompany the culture. This experience also describes the acculturation process for Carlos. The article, *The Impact of Acculturation and Cultural Values on Hispanic Immigrants’ Parenting* describes acculturation, “Through this interaction individuals face the decision of deciding what is important for them to keep and to what extent they want to participate in the

new culture” (2017, p. 57). During this time of life, Carlos was presented with the decision to continue identifying with his Latino heritage, or partake in the norms of the White culture in order to fit in with his friends at school. Although Carlos experienced acculturation and internalized racism, as he has grown as an adult and matured, Carlos now recognizes the importance and values of his Latino culture that his parents instilled in him as a child.

How did you respond emotionally toward this person/couple during the interview? Given aspects of your personal experience, why do you think you reacted this way?

I noticed after reflecting on the interview that it was somewhat difficult to put aside my own culture and beliefs when listening to Carlos talk about his, especially religion. I have been raised in a Christian home my entire life and have been taught the same Evangelical teachings and values imparted to me since I was a child. Therefore, I noticed that my beliefs and outlook on certain things revolving around religion and the gospel are deeply ingrained in who I am. I aimed to focus on Carlos’s experience and welcome his culture and religious ideas with an open mind and hear what he had to say without implying my own thoughts or beliefs. Professionally, I want to always work toward becoming a multicultural competent counselor. The interview process made me realize the importance of understanding the Client Worldview. Hays and Erford describe a multicultural competency as, “Acknowledge the importance of reflecting on the attitudes, beliefs, prejudices, and biases they hold about privilege and marginalized clients” (2018, p. 594). Unfortunately, I realized how easy it is to let your own culture and beliefs impact your ability to see with clear eyes and an open mind. For me, this was frustrating, because it was so important to me that Carlos felt like he was being understood and could be open with me. When Carlos was speaking about how he had lost connection with his culture, I could see that it was an emotional topic for him. This brought out emotion in me as well, and I emphasized his

struggle. I am glad that Carlos felt safe enough to open up to me about this topic. As a counselor, I can see how important the process of creating a trusting relationship is with your client.

Based on the interview experience, what knowledge about this cultural group was added that you did not get from the previous parts of this assignment?

I learned about the yearly celebrations called Fiestas Patronales. This is a festival that Carlos and his family would attend in Mexico. I did not learn about Fiestas Patronales in the other research for the Cultural Immersion project, so this was new information that I was able to learn about from the interview with Carlos. Carlos described Fiestas Patronales as a celebration held in Mexico that was usually dedicated to a saint or the Virgin Mary. The festival usually takes place the first of the year and lasts several days. The celebrations consist of doing a march carrying a picture of the Virgin Mary, going to church, sharing meals, bull riding and dances at the end of the day. The celebrations are specific to the area and are different depending on which city is celebrating the festival. The festival that I did research on was the Day of the Dead for Part 1 of the project. Fiestas Patronales is similar to the Day of the Dead in terms of what sort of activities are included in the festivities. The media source *Mexico Daily News* describes, “The Day of the Dead celebration has become a huge opportunity for people to get away and live the experience in other parts of the country...” (Mexico Daily News, 2019). Similarly, for Carlos and his family, the Fiestas Patronales was of great value, and they made the effort to travel to Mexico to experience the festival first-hand, like many of the Hispanic individuals who travel for the important Day of the Dead celebration.

Summarize briefly culturally sensitive theories and techniques discussed in Part II and discuss ethical and legal aspects that counselors need to consider when providing counseling services for this specific group, including issues of conflict, bias, prejudice, oppression and discrimination

There are several counseling theories that have been empirically proven to be effective in counseling Hispanic clients. Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Person-Centered, and Solution Focused techniques are several of the counseling approaches that I discussed in Part 2 of the Cultural Immersion Project. These techniques can be effective when applied properly to the struggles that Hispanic individuals may face, including conflict, bias, prejudice, oppression and discrimination. For example, Hays & Erford discuss outcomes of discrimination as, “Experiences with discrimination often are correlated with high levels of stress and depression, low self-confidence and self-efficacy, and an overall limited quality of life for Latinas/os” (2018, p. 379). The ethical issue of discrimination is one that counselors must be aware of, and take precautions to both steer clear of being discriminatory as well as offering solutions to the negative impacts of discrimination in the client’s lives. Solution-Focused Therapy would be an appropriate technique to address this struggle in Hispanic individuals. Solution-Focused Therapy encourages the individual to focus on their personal and overall goals that they may want to achieve in the future. This encourages a positive mind-set in the client and can aid in working through the negative characteristics that are an outcome of discrimination. The article, *Effects of a Solution Focused Mutual Aid Group for Hispanic Children of Incarcerated Parents* states, “Practitioners are encouraged to work in partnership with the client, and to foster collaborative relationships with resources (e.g., schools) that may benefit the client” (2000, p. 433). These positive relationships with other resources can further the benefits of a Solution-Focused technique. It is

the counselor's responsibility to do additional research about the resources before suggesting them to the client. This is further described in *Developing Multicultural Counseling Competence* as, "By practicing the basic tenets of multicultural competence, counselors working with U.S. Latina/o clients increase their likelihood of providing effective interventions to this clientele" (2018, p. 380).

Summarize briefly your findings in Part I on group characteristics and reflect on the significance of multicultural sensitivity for your work as a professional counselor.

I hope to one day be an elementary school counselor. As a school counselor, I will certainly work with families and children of all cultures, including those of Hispanic descent. It is very important to be aware of the values, norms, and expectations that Hispanic parents are teaching their children. From the research done in Part 1, I discovered the influence of the family and the dynamic that is established in the Hispanic culture. According to Ortiz, "...Family-centered interventions are particularly effective with Latino youth based on their strong family focused values" (2017, p. 6). This is an important characteristic of the Hispanic population that I need to be sensitive to when working in the profession of a school counselor. An example of this that can be applied to my future profession is described in the text, *Developing Multicultural Counseling Competence*. The authors explain, when counseling a young student, the counselor may want to push them to look at colleges and apply for scholarships, but encouraging this could cause opposition between the counselor and the parents of the student because the parents want the student to stay close to the home and the family. (Hays & Erford, 2018).

What are some strengths or elements of common grace that you see operating in this cultural group? How can individuals pray for people in this cultural group?

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In looking through a biblical worldview lens, it is key that one goes beyond what they may know about one's culture and look at the culture and individuals through God's eyes. He in fact, is the Creator and has infinite knowledge and understanding. Through the Cultural Immersion Project, I have seen aspects of the Hispanic culture that prove to be strengths of common grace. For one, the family unit in the Hispanic culture is extremely strong and close-knit. As explained in the article, *Self-Actualization in the Latino/Hispanic Culture*, "From an early age, the Latino ideal is to socialize children in nurturing, loving, respectful, and agreeable relationships" (2017, p. 7). This extends to the family unit. In our culture today, we see a lack of respect for authority. This is an important quality that Latino parents aim to instill in their children. This is an example of the values and practices that the rest of the world can look at in order to improve family relationships and impart the value of respecting authority. Although there is such an emphasis placed on relationships, some Hispanic individuals are not translating this value to a relationship with Jesus Christ. Specifically, individuals could pray that members of the Hispanic culture will look beyond their deep family relationships and find the ultimate, personal relationship with their Creator and Savior.

Which part of this immersion experience (Part 1, 2, or 3) was most helpful to you in learning about this cultural group? Why do you think this was?

Part 2 of the immersion experience was the most helpful to me in learning about the Hispanic culture. Attending the cultural events allowed me to see with my own eyes and begin to understand another culture in a way that I have not experienced before. Initially, I would not

have put myself out there, and attended events that I am so unfamiliar with. After Part 1 of the Cultural Immersion Project- Part 3 10

Immersion Project, I began to form some ideas and notions about the practices and traditions within the Hispanic culture. It wasn't until I actually participated in the events that I was able to experience firsthand the meaning and purpose behind the Day of the Dead celebration and the Spanish mass. Afterall, the project is called the Cultural Immersion Project, and the key for me was actively immersing myself in the culture by participating in the Hispanic events.

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