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# A Seat at the Table: A Profile of the Leadership Preferences Among Generation Y Latina College Students

## Abstract

There continues to be mixed evidence regarding interest in, knowledge about, and preferences for leaders among Generation Y Latinas, despite their ability to vote. While a few studies have begun to profile leadership preferences among Generation Y samples, no previous studies have focused exclusively on Generation Y Latina college students. The purpose of this descriptive, quantitative research was to reveal a profile of the leadership preferences consistently endorsed by Generation Y Latina college students at a small, urban liberal arts college in the northeastern United States. Across five themes: (a) competence, (b) interpersonal relations, (c) management of others, (d) self-management, and (e) communication, using the online administration of the Leadership Preference Inventory, 50 female participants answered 44 items addressing their degree of agreement. The results show that participants most frequently agreed that leaders should: (a) provide opportunities for growth, take risks, exude authority, inspire others, and provide constructive feedback; (b) treat everyone with respect, provide encouragement, praise employees when they earn it, and be approachable; (c) be intelligent, provide mentoring, respect work-life balance, be a problem solver, and have a sense of humor; (d) set a positive example, consider the future when making decisions, control their emotions, and set realistic expectations for employees; and (e) communicate with confidence, create a fun work environment, be a good listener, and be trustworthy. These findings were consistent with previous research. Recommendations for stakeholders and research include: focus groups, mentoring, and larger survey population.

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A Seat at the Table: A Profile of the Leadership Preferences Among  
Generation Y Latina College Students

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

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Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education

St. John Fisher College

May 2018

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this body of work to my parents. My family believes – firmly – that education is the one thing that no one can take away from you. My parents stood by my decision to pursue a doctoral-level degree, which of course would come with bragging rights for them. They are with me in spirit daily, as they left this life too soon, but their guidance is with me always. I am eternally grateful to them for making me the woman and leader that I am today—forever my angels. To Jorge, my husband, for holding me up. You have upheld every bit of “for better or worse, in sickness and in health.” I would rather not imagine what I would have done had you not been by my side. To Jorge, my son, I am laying the blueprint to remind you that all things are possible when you put your mind to it. To my Jinger, who, when I was tired of writing, would slam my laptop closed with her paw. To the St. Francis family: Lynne, Lauren, David, Scott, Tim, Augusta, Brian, Michele H., Michele M., Starr, Sagine, Jennifer, Dr. Houlihan, Pete, Marina, Sintia, Yadira and, especially, Debra. My students, know that you have a stake in this body of research. You encouraged me, asked questions, kept me on my toes, and reminded me (sometimes daily) that this research was important and gave you a voice (Christina, Daniela, Christian, Adriannah, Ariana, Tala, Krystal, Melany, Nathalia, Marcus, Jamera, Essence, and Shantel). I have cried, complained, and screamed, and you pushed and made sure I did not give up. To my Sorors of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated: Ceci, for letting me crash when I had Saturday morning class; and my line sisters (Theta Beta chapter breeds leaders), who reminded me that I had what it took to

finish. To my brothers of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Incorporated. To my dearest friends from Tuskegee and Howard. To my Sands, Meshawn DeCoteau, you are a data goddess, and I cannot wait to see you hood when your time comes. To my cohort, we are still the finest that St. John Fisher has ever produced, Cohort 3 is 30 for 30! Thank you for not forgetting about me and praying, for me and with me, daily (Joyce and Earl). Caprice, I know you are watching. To Hexagon 13, we are six-sided again. A special thank you to Dr. Byron K. Hargrove, your perspective is invaluable. Dr. Janice Kelly, my sister in Greekdom, you stuck with me through my darkest hours, and I know that I tried every inch of your patience, but you did not abandon me. I really do not know how to thank you—your expertise and standard of excellence is priceless.

I pray that I have made all of you proud.

## **Biographical Sketch**

Michelle Steven, formerly Stevens, is a native of Brooklyn, New York, educated in the New York City public school system. Michelle's early educational years were shaped in Catholic school, where she also learned and practiced her faith. She was very active in dance, Girl Scouts, and horseback riding while growing up. She knew, very early on, that because of her love for animals, she wanted to be a veterinarian.

Upon graduating from high school, Michelle had been accepted to many great colleges and universities, but the school that stole her heart was Tuskegee University, in Alabama, where she would major in pre-veterinary medicine and ultimately graduate with a DVM (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine) degree. Tuskegee, well over 1,000 miles away from her beloved Brooklyn, was the school of her dreams and her parents supported her decision but reminded her that she should always have a back-up plan. Michelle's back-up plan was communications.

While at Tuskegee, she was engaged in her studies but was also a member of the university choir (Golden Voice), president of the New York Club, and was initiated in Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated. At this point, 2 years in, Michelle returned home and initiated her plan B; she changed her major and eventually transferred to Howard University in Washington, DC.

Ms. Steven graduated from Howard University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in TV production and graduated in 1996. She had several job offers waiting for her in NYC upon her graduation. The job offer that she took was with a new cable news network, the

Fox News Channel. From Fox, she went on to ABC News where she earned an Emmy and a Peabody Award for Outstanding News Coverage of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. Michelle then took her talents to the Showtime Networks and launched the Smithsonian Network, where she devised branding strategies. At that point, she knew that she wanted to start paying it forward to the next generation and be an adjunct professor in the evenings. Michelle started graduate school at NYIT and earned a Master of Arts degree in Communication Arts in 2009.

She began her second career at St. Francis College with the intention of it being a part time position, but it ended up being her calling, and she has been lecturing and creating courses for the past 6 years. Michelle spends her time mentoring young women, presenting workshops, as well as having been an active member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated for 27 years, is involved in the Kappa Delta Pi Educational Honor Society, Black Jewels Ladies Golf Association, and enjoys traveling with her family.

Michelle came to St. John Fisher College in the spring of 2011 and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. Mrs. Steven pursued her research on Generation Y Latinas and their perceptions of leadership under the direction of Dr. Byron K. Hargrove and Dr. Janice Kelly and received the Ed.D. degree in 2018.



## **Abstract**

There continues to be mixed evidence regarding interest in, knowledge about, and preferences for leaders among Generation Y Latinas, despite their ability to vote. While a few studies have begun to profile leadership preferences among Generation Y samples, no previous studies have focused exclusively on Generation Y Latina college students. The purpose of this descriptive, quantitative research was to reveal a profile of the leadership preferences consistently endorsed by Generation Y Latina college students at a small, urban liberal arts college in the northeastern United States. Across five themes: (a) competence, (b) interpersonal relations, (c) management of others, (d) self-management, and (e) communication, using the online administration of the Leadership Preference Inventory, 50 female participants answered 44 items addressing their degree of agreement. The results show that participants most frequently agreed that leaders should: (a) provide opportunities for growth, take risks, exude authority, inspire others, and provide constructive feedback; (b) treat everyone with respect, provide encouragement, praise employees when they earn it, and be approachable; (c) be intelligent, provide mentoring, respect work-life balance, be a problem solver, and have a sense of humor; (d) set a positive example, consider the future when making decisions, control their emotions, and set realistic expectations for employees; and (e) communicate with confidence, create a fun work environment, be a good listener, and be trustworthy. These findings were consistent with previous research. Recommendations for stakeholders and research include: focus groups, mentoring, and larger survey population.

## Table of Contents

Dedication .....	iii
Biographical Sketch .....	v
Abstract .....	vii
Table of Contents .....	viii
List of Tables .....	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
Problem Statement .....	6
Theoretical Rationale .....	8
Purpose of the Study .....	10
Research Questions .....	13
Potential Significance of the Study .....	14
Definition of Terms .....	16
Chapter Summary .....	18
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature .....	19
Introduction and Purpose .....	19
Review of the Literature .....	20
Summary .....	48
Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology .....	49
Introduction .....	49
Research Context .....	51

Research Questions .....	52
Research Participants .....	53
Data Collection Instruments .....	53
Data Analysis .....	54
Summary .....	54
Chapter 4: Results .....	55
Introduction.....	55
Research Questions.....	55
Overview of Data Analysis and Findings.....	55
Competence.....	56
Interpersonal Relations .....	56
Management of Others.....	58
Self-Management.....	59
Communication.....	59
Summary .....	60
Chapter 5: Discussion .....	61
Introduction.....	61
Major Findings.....	62
Findings Related to the Literature.....	64
Implications.....	65
Evidence of Theoretical Framework.....	66
Recommendations.....	68
Conclusion .....	71

References.....	73
Appendix A.....	82
Appendix B.....	83
Appendix C.....	84

### **List of Tables**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
Table 4.1	Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Competence, Among Generation Y Latina College Students	56
Table 4.2	Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Interpersonal Relations, Among Generation Y Latina College Students	57
Table 4.3	Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Management of Others, Among Generation Y Latina College Students	58
Table 4.4	Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Self- Management, Among Generation Y Latina College Students	59
Table 4.5	Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Communication, Among Generation Y Latina College Students	60

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America grants a United States citizen, regardless of gender, the right to vote (Ramirez, Soysal, & Shanahan, 1997). Fewer than 100 years ago, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment came into being on August 18, 1920, and it was the finale of the women's suffrage movement, the first feminist movement in the United States. This change adopted by the United States government not only provided a female voice in the American ideal of the democratic process, but it also opened doors to female leadership for generations to come. Given this treasured democratic right, what kinds of leaders do Generation Y women want to vote for, follow, identify with, and remember? This descriptive quantitative research examined the profile of leadership preferences endorsed by Generation Y Latina college students, a group often neglected in the literature and who have very few leadership models. This chapter provides an introduction, the statement of the problem, the research questions, and the potential significance of this research.

There continues to be a variety of definitions for members of Generation Y. Children born between 1982 and 2000 have been identified as Generation Y; they are also referred to as millennials (McCrindle, 2002). Generation Y members are emerging as leaders in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The older members of Generation Y turned 30 years old in 2012, and they are in the job market, while the middle-generation millennials (18-22) were born in the early 1990s. Approximately 35% of the Generation

Y Latinas (18-22 years of age) are currently enrolled in a U.S. college or university (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).

What do we know about Generation Y Latinas? To understand this population, their profile must include technological advancements, such as the Internet. The Internet (a fourth medium) was introduced to Generation Y before they entered kindergarten, and it enabled millennials to learn about cultural touchstones. Tragedies, such as the 1986 Challenger explosion, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the presidency of Ronald Reagan, which Generation X experienced first-hand, can be accessed via search engines. Pieces of popular history (pop culture), such as O. J. Simpson's infamous car chase during game six of the 1994 NBA final championship, carry little meaning to the members of Generation Y. Generation Y Latinas were in diapers, if they were born at all. Sadly, the attacks of September 11, 2001 are the first historic/tragic memory that millennials share (Raines, 2002).

Early Latino entertainers, like Desi Arnaz, were pioneers for television viewers, with the situation comedy (sitcom), *I Love Lucy*, in 1952, but it took decades before television shows featured Hispanic actors again. *Chico and the Man* (1974-1978), *Tony Orlando and Dawn* (1974-1976), *Que Pasa USA* (first bilingual sitcom 1977-1980), and *Condo*, based on middle-class Latinos (1983), aired in primetime (Korzenny, Neunendorf, Burgoon, Burgoon, & Greenberg, 1983).

Latino prime-time television shows, where baby boomers and Generation X could see themselves, were absent, prior to *George Lopez* (2003). George Lopez was also the first Hispanic to host a late-night talk show. Generation Y Latina television watchers connected with actors like Mario Lopez (*Saved by the Bell*), Freddie Prinze, Jr. (*I Know*

*What You Did Last Summer*), Selena Gomez (*Disney*), and Sofia Vergara (*Modern Family*). Advertising, marketing, television, and radio have kept the Latino/Hispanic demographic separate by means of singling out Spanish-speaking stations (Goodson & Shaver, 1994), such as Telemundo and Telenoticias, which did not host cultural firsts, like the *Tony Orlando and Dawn* (CBS) variety show. The *Cosby Show* (1984-1992) was in syndication as the middle group of Generation Y was growing up, and TiVo (1999), rather than the VCR, was the primary source for recording missed television shows. Reality television is a staple for this generation, as programming like *The Real World* (1995), *Survivor*, and *Big Brother* (2000) emerged to stimulate television viewership and offer alternative programming to sitcoms. In addition, Generation Y Latinas are more inclined to watch entertainment-based programming, such as *American Idol* (Fox), *The Voice* (NBC), and *Love & Hip Hop* (Bravo) rather than information-based programming like *Frontline* (PBS) or *20/20* (ABC). The medium of television played, and still plays, an integral role in the visualization of Generation Y Latinas, because the television Latina is a stereotype that, often, does not mirror the actual Generation Y Latina (Rojas, 2004).

Generation Y Latinas rarely watch the news or read it on smart phones (Rivadeneira, Ward, & Gordon, 2007). Selective gathering of information does not belong solely to this population of Latinas but to Generation Y all together. Baby Boomers and Generation X listened to and watched whatever their parents were watching (Coleman & McCombs, 2007). Generally, there was one television and one radio in the household, and family members had few choices. Generation Y, all ethnicities, were born into the age of CD players and individual listening devices. In other words, they have always had a choice, and technology now allows selective information and entertainment



intake (Coleman & McCombs, 2007). Because of social media, Generation Y are not sheltered from celebrity or public figure scandals, which often involve nude tweets and sex tapes. Heitmeyer and Sullivan (2008) stated that Generation Y Latinas are immersed deeply in social media and struggle with professional socialization; however, general, unstructured conversation give Generation Y Latinas a level of ease in which to discuss issues and concerns of the day (Heitmeyer & Sullivan, 2008). Consequently, Generation Y Latinas' conversations generally center on entertainers or a popular video on Youtube.com, rather than on politicians or governmental affairs. Given this history and upbringing, what do the Generation Y Latinas know and want in their politicians or leaders? Preliminary studies appear to suggest that they continue to know very little about leadership (Lopez & Taylor, 2010; Pew Research Center, 2013; Taylor & Lopez, 2010).

Despite almost 100 years of the right to vote in the United States, there continues to be very few visible Latinas in public office. The first women's movement, circa 1920, (albeit for White women) laid a foundation for baby boomer Latinas born between 1946 and 1964 (Dulin, 2005), and the second wave of feminism, circa the 1960s, began addressing the concerns for women of color, including Generation X Latinas born between 1965-1981 (McCrindle, 2002). Sonia Sotomayor was the first Latina named as a United States Supreme Court Justice in 2009, Nydia Velasquez was the first Latina New York City Council member in 1984, and Susana Martinez was the first female Governor of New Mexico and the first Hispanic female governor (Truman, 2012). Governor Martinez, who is Mexican-American, identifies as Hispanic rather than Latina because most Mexicans do not consider themselves Latino, but they accept the term Hispanic (Denton & Massey, 1989). In history, change agents and soldiers for social justice, such

as María Eva Duarte de Perón (first lady of Argentina 1946-1952) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (Genovese, 1995) were global iconic female leadership figures. Mohandas Mahatma Gandhi; Martin Luther King, Jr.; and Cesar Chavez were names associated with leadership and empowering the disenfranchised. However, do these present Latina role models and iconic historical leaders who are taught about in schools to inspire or influence the leadership perceptions of Generation Y Latinas?

The political landscape is changing at the same time Generation Y Latinas are entering the workforce. Prior to President Barack Obama's election, President George W. Bush courted the Hispanic community's vote (Connaughton & Jarvis, 2004), and as a result, when then Senator Barack Obama sought the office, Latinos became more politically aware and visible (Sanchez, 2006). Latinos in the United States who were viable members of the community wanted an active role in making decisions and choosing leaders. Many came from countries, like the Dominican Republic, where the government is corrupt, and the people had no say (Finkel, Sabatini, & Bevis, 2000). Island nations, such as Cuba, whose residents sought asylum here in the United States illegally, were also voiceless. Establishing a solid community where children were safe, and employment was plentiful, gave Latinos the desire to have input into the decision-making process.

Baby Boomer Latinos represent 10% of the baby boomer population (Gassoumis, Wilber, Baker, & Torres-Gil, 2009). The Latino baby boomers fought for bilingual education and rights for Latinos to be acknowledged academically, politically, and professionally (Gassoumis et al., 2009). They were less educated and were not economically empowered, but they worked hard toward achieving the American dream

(Gassoumis et al., 2009). Now, according to the Pew Hispanic Survey (Lopez & Taylor, 2010; Pew Research Center, 2013), Generation Y Latinos are now earning more academic achievements and professional advancements and seeking to exercise more of their own choices in areas of social justice, education, and employment (Kyles, 2005; Zalaquett, 2006). However, little is known about the leadership knowledge, attitudes, and interests of these Latina millennials (18-22 years of age), given that they are just beginning to exercise their right to vote, enroll in college, and/or advance within the workforce.

### **Problem Statement**

As more Latina leadership studies continue to emerge slowly (Bonilla-Rodriguez, 2011; Rivera, 2014), researchers are beginning to profile what leadership looks like with this population. For example, Bartunek, Walsh, and Lacey (2000) identified professional Latinas as transformational leaders. According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership is a key driver in motivation, morale, and job performance. Latina leadership style, according to Méndez-Morse (2004), depends highly on establishing mentors for minority women. Coles (2011) echoed Méndez-Morse (2004) in that mentorship is a necessary tool to take on leadership roles. Coles (2011) also stated that women of color identified as transformational leaders. However, Latina leaders have been reported as being passive when it comes to networking (Mendoza, 2010). While there continues to be very little published research on Latina leadership, there are even fewer studies on Generation Y perspectives on leadership.

According to the Pew Research Center (2013), leadership knowledge among Generation Y Latinas continues to be unclear or misunderstood. When asked who their

leaders were for Generation Y, the Latina population did not have an answer (Taylor & Lopez, 2010). While Taylor and Lopez (2010) posed this question to all Latinos, the Latina response was noted as being unable to identify any leadership. In other words, Generation Y Latinas did not appear to know who their leaders were and could not identify prominent governmental figures in the United States who are Latino/a.

Generation Y Latinas may be called upon, as the next generation of leaders, to examine social justice in the work place (Jean-Marie, Normore, & Brooks, 2009). Millennial Latina's upward mobility appears to be dependent upon the development of leadership skills and academic accomplishments (Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010). Leadership preparation for Generation Y Latinas demands commitment (Jean-Marie et al., 2009; Rivera, 2014). However, very little is documented on the leadership preferences, interests, and readiness among Generation Y Latinas prior to becoming professionals.

In general, Generation Y perspectives on leadership have been limited and only recently have been documented (Dulin, 2005; Wells, 2011). Dulin (2005) examined leadership preferences among a diverse group of Generation Y college students and developed a new instrument, along with five themes, called the Leadership Preference Inventory (LPI). The intent of the LPI survey (Dulin, 2005) was to draw out and identify leadership styles of Generation Y. The LPI, devised of 44 questions, pinpointed how the survey taker felt about leadership actions and characteristics—both in a leadership role and in the leaders whom they observed. Wells (2011) used Dulin's (2005) LPI to examine Generation Y leadership perspectives of Generation Y African Americans. Wells (2011) looked at employee patterns of African American Generation Y members, in comparison to baby boomers and Generation X. Wells (2011) revealed two facets

about Generation Y employees: (a) they understand diversity because millennials are the most diverse cohort to date, and (b) they want to garner skills in the workplace that they do not have. Encouraged by Wells (2011), and given the gaps in the literature, this present study focuses solely on another ethnic group of color, specifically, Generation Y Latina college students. Thus, this study addresses four of the five reasons for new research, which is referred to by Creswell (2012) as: (a) filling a void or extending existing research, (b) replicating a study with new participants and at new sites, (c) having not been previously studied, and (d) giving voice to a people not heard.

### **Theoretical Rationale**

Three theoretical ideologies filtered the Generation Y Latina perceptions of leadership: muted group theory, feminist standpoint theory, and social identity theory. These three theories were chosen because they support the notion that White perception does not recognize the cultural, ethnic, and language differences among people of color. Muted group theory (Ardener, 1975; Kramarae, 1981) applies to this population, filtering this research from the following perspectives: the Generation Y Latina population was born into the digital age, and they do not practice traditional forms of communication (Coleman & McCombs, 2007). For example, Generation Y Latinas are comfortable in virtual social relationships like teleconferencing, webinars, phone conferencing, and texting (Ramirez, 2012). Inherent to that generation, millennial Latinas also have short attention spans (Short & Reeves, 2009). Graphic novels, such as *Twilight*, have been an outstanding tool to keep millennial Latinas engaged and communicative with their peers. The use of literature to reach this population was a growing trend (Short & Reeves, 2009). Having a common bond (Short & Reeves, 2009) in which to converse neutralizes

the genders, and everyone has a voice. Generation Y Latinas do not have to be submissive in conversations with Caucasian male counterparts when commonality is established (Short & Reeves, 2009). The upside, as stated by Short and Reeves (2009), was that through current literature, millennial Latinas speak up, give opinions, and are not muted.

Feminist standpoint theory (Hartsock, 1983), when coupled with muted group theory (Ardenner, 1975; Kramarae, 1981) exhibit the struggle that Generation Y Latinas have with being recognized as a voice. Feminist standpoint theory (Hartsock, 1983) is in position to give Generation Y Latinas a voice, because the theory is an abridgement of feminism and it speaks to the point of view of the population/subject being studied. Feminist standpoint theory (Hartsock, 1983; Hill Collins, 2000) states that not every person's experience is the same just because she is the same race and gender. Feminist standpoint theory directly affects Generation Y Latina leadership because Latinas are identified as transformational leaders (Rivera, 2014). Traditional (first wave) feminism left women of color out of the conversation; therefore, the feminist standpoint theory (Hartsock, 1983; Hill Collins, 2000), which includes women of color, is a more accurate filter for the population. Generation Y Latinas are new to feminism but embrace notions of empowerment (Greer, Neville, Ford, & Gonzalez, 2013) that feminist standpoint theory promotes. Bullis and Stout (2000) stated that feminist standpoint theory is a springboard for women of color to examine feminist tenets. Feminist standpoint theory encourages solidarity for all women of color (Bullis & Stout, 2000). The positive nuance of feminist standpoint theory and how this research has benefited from it is that the theory includes all women of color (Hartsock, 1983), whereas traditional feminism (first

wave) was geared toward White women, and it was rejected by Latinas (Garcia, 1989). Garcia (1989) stated that the first wave of feminism was anti-men and family tradition; therefore, Latinas denounced that movement.

Lastly, social identity theory states that behavior within the group (Generation Y Latinas) varies based on what others think of them. For this study, the dominant cultures have perceptions of Generation Y Latinas, as viewed through the media and old stereotypes; however, the new Latina wants to maintain tradition via the culture and break the negative stereotypes of only being sexy but not educated and being forward thinking and career minded. Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory is useful for understanding how Generation Y Latinas see themselves in comparison to the dominant culture, and feminist standpoint theory provides historical context, as well as insights into how the participants move into leadership roles as women.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to describe five types of leadership preferences endorsed by a sample of Generation Y Latina college students in the northeast. When asked who their leaders are for Generation Y, the Latina population did not have an answer (Taylor & Lopez, 2010). Taylor and Lopez (2010) posed this question to Latinos as a whole; however, the Latina response was noted as being unable to identify leadership. The goal for this research was to identify Generation Y Latina's perceptions and identify leadership characteristics within themselves. There were three driving factors to understanding why this research is important: Hispanic consumerism and purchasing power, increased enrollment in higher education, and Hispanic increased numbers in the job market. These factors are integral as to why the new Latina

(Generation Y) is a hybrid of the traditional Latina that America typifies through television and films. The contemporary Latina consumer held \$1.2 trillion in buying power annually, which advertisers and brands covet (Nielsen, 2017; Rivera, 2014). Latina buying power has made a statement to the economy that the population is taking money matters seriously and they are aware of how Hispanic dollars affect the community (Pérez-Litwin, 2013). In short, understanding buying power not only equates to where Latinas shop but also where they are making larger investments such as in education, homes, and luxury items. Latinas have moved their families into the middle class through education, financial empowerment, and career choices (Pérez-Litwin, 2013); 86% of Latinas (collectively) stated that the primary household decision making, regarding spending, lay with them (Pérez-Litwin, 2013; Nielsen, 2017). Generation Y Latinas who are digitally astute rely on mobile devices to connect to family, friends, media/entertainment, and they have made informed purchases (based on consumer reviews) (Pérez-Litwin, 2013). Latinas are poised and are progressing steadily to take an influential position in the United States.

Dulin (2005) created the Leadership Preference Inventory (LPI), which was designed to understand Generation Y's leadership perceptions; however, when Dulin (2005) developed the Generation Y LPI, ethnicity was not a conclusion-drawing factor (Wells, 2011). Dulin (2005) surveyed 431 college students, in addition to conducting 30 interviews (Wells, 2011). Dulin's goal was to develop a pattern of leadership, sought by Generation Y, collectively (Dulin, 2005). Wells (2011) stated that because Dulin (2005) did not break down the study participants by ethnicity, there were gaps that disallowed researchers to understand patterns of Generation Y African Americans, Latinos, or



Asians. Wells (2011) furthered Dulin's (2005) research and separated African American Generation Y leadership styles, and this research is filtering out Generation Y Latinas leadership preferences, being the first study to build from Dulin's (2005) work pertaining to ethnicity and gender. Stratman (2007) also used Dulin's research as a foundation to develop leadership preferences of Generation Y Mexican-Americans (Wells, 2011). The 44-question survey makes inquiries that help to formulate personality characteristics of a current or potential leader (Dulin, 2005). In addition, it is important to note that Generation Y Latinas are the growth engine of the United States female population and are expected to represent 30% of the total female population by 2050, while the non-Hispanic White female population is expected to drop to 43%. The projected figure is 132.8 million Hispanics living in the United States by 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016).

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, nearly three-quarters of the population was non-Hispanic White in 1995, and it projected that this group would contribute only about one-quarter of the total population growth during the next 10 years. It was thought, in 1995, that from 2030 to 2050, the non-Hispanic White population would contribute nothing to the nation's population growth because it was declining in size; although, academically, this population was ahead of African Americans and Latinos (Gassoumis et al., 2009).

Generation Y Latina's educational success, according to Zalaquett (2006), is a daily challenge because educators are not motivating Latino students to achieve. Enrollment of Generation Y Latinas in higher education, however, is equal to that of African American Generation Y students (CollegeBoard Access, 2017). Sadly, there are data indicators that show disparities in resources to support the achievement goals of

Generation Y Latina students, but they have as much desire to succeed in college as millennial Asians and Caucasians (Minority Student Achievement Network, 2002).

Generation Y Latinas must continue to break barriers that inhibit success (Rivera, 2014), which, unfortunately, includes negative stereotypes and lack of self-confidence (Rivera, 2014).

Breaking the negative stereotype of Latinas and introducing the new Latina image professionally and academically, according to Rendon (2009), is achievable. Early Latina film and television pioneers like Rita Moreno (*West Side Story*, *The King and I*) were consigned to stereotypical roles by Hollywood (Barnes, 2012). In the United States, the narrow image of the urban Latina was domestication, and television perpetuated this viewpoint (*Devious Maids*, *Lifetime TV*). Berg (2002) defined the term “harlot” (p. 71) as a hot-tempered Latina seductress, which was a stereotype first featured in early silent American Westerns. Berg (2002) stated that the early Latinas featured in films were “eroticized as lustful and yearning for a White male” (p.71). Berg (2002) further stated that terms like fiery, lustful, and spicy have followed Latinas throughout their film careers, and they have become synonymous with Latina behavior. The Generation Y Latina wants to break this stereotype with a solid education, by staying career minded, while still embracing her family traditions (Rivera, 2014). Through avenues like mentoring (Méndez-Morse, 2004), Generation Y Latina’s leadership goals can be achieved.

### **Research Questions**

Drawn from the LPI (Dulin, 2005), the following questions emerged to research Generation Y Latina’s perspective of leadership:

1. What are the leadership preferences related to competence among Generation Y Latina college students?
2. What are the leadership preferences related to interpersonal relations among Generation Y Latina college students?
3. What are the leadership preferences related to management of others among Generation Y Latina college students?
4. What are the leadership preferences related to self-management among Generation Y Latina college students?
5. What are the leadership preferences related to communication among Generation Y Latina college students?

### **Potential Significance of the Study**

It is important to begin profiling what Generation Y Latina college students expect and want in a leader because, outside of the Latino community, Generation Y Latinas are perceived differently than they are within their communities (Corlett, 2011). As stated by Berg (2002), there are old stereotypes that the millennial Latina contends with to gain respect as the new Latina. This study will help college administrations become aware of the creative and unique opportunities for empowering Generation Y Latina undergraduates throughout the collegiate years (Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010). Through professional development activities, seminars, and workshops, this population has the opportunity to engage and transition into grassroots role models for their communities (Yearwood, 2012). In addition, advertising, marketing, and the political communities will have a better understanding of the Generation Y Latina population. Academic literature that provides a deeper understanding of Generation Y Latinas has

focused only on workplace habits, but they have not focused on professional development (Gloria, Castellanos, & Orozco, 2005). Creating professional development channels will empower an entire collective of Generation Y Latina women who have been, otherwise, overlooked and consistently not recognized as valuable assets to future leadership roles (Bonilla-Rodriguez, 2011).

The average American and researcher does not seem to know enough about this population, and conversations must begin with understanding who they are (Corlett, 2011), how they purchase, and what appeals to them—this cohort known as Generation Y Latinas (Harrington, Ottenbacher, Staggs, & Powell, 2011). The millennial Latina population has grown, and their successes have been measured via college enrollment data, but how is the United States handling this growth (Zalaquett, 2006)? In other words, have the colleges/universities been hiring more faculty and staff that resemble the millennial Latina population? Have the colleges/universities created new opportunities, via student activities, that support and enhance the Latina collegiate experience (Yearwood, 2012) (clubs, fraternal organizations and cultural events)? Research on the corporate level has not identified how the rise of this population is affecting employment (Dulin, 2005), American culture, and future college enrollment. How can the United States effectively serve a population, when there is not enough data to understand their nuances (Corlett, 2011)?

This document serves as a blueprint to understand and create inroads for Generation Y Latina's academic pursuits, career development, and economic power. The millennial Latina population, which is the focus of this research, grew the Hispanic enrollment (Appendix A) at their institution from 120 students in 2012 to 338 students in

2016 (CollegeBoard Access, 2017). Enrolled students stimulate the economy by purchasing books, daily transportation, and meals.

The economic impact of this population (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011; Rivera, 2014) as of 2012, was 52 million Hispanics, collectively, in the United States, and they have shown an impressive buying power of \$1.2 trillion annually; however, it is Hispanic women who possess the full purchasing power within this demographic (Pérez-Litwin, 2013).

Generation Y Latinas are coming into mainstream recognition and there is a better understanding of their economic positioning; however, there is much more to the Millennial Latina profile regarding what motivates this population to make specific purchases and how marketing/advertising campaigns can target their demographic. All of this information is pertinent when building a solid profile of this dynamic group of women, which translates into not only economic standing but also community and leadership objectives (Rivera, 2014).

### **Definition of Terms**

The following key terms and definitions will be used in this research.

*Career* – a track-oriented series of jobs where the employee is focused and committed to the growth of an organization (Wyld, 1994).

*Chicano* – a person of Mexican descent who is born in the United States (Sanchez, 2006).

*Commuter Student* – a university/collegiate learner who lives at home with parents or guardians (Yearwood, 2012).

*Cultural Premise* – socially transmitted values, beliefs, institutions, behavioral patterns, and all other products and thought patterns of a society (Larson, 2011).

*Generation X* – the segment of the population born between 1965 and 1981 (McCrindle, 2002).

*Generation Y* – the segment of the population born between 1982 and 2000 (McCrindle, 2002).

*Job* – employment, with no goal of advancement, it is strictly based on earning money (Wyld, 1994).

*Latina* – women living in the United States having origins in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and Central and South America (Page, 2013). This term is used interchangeably with *Hispanic*. According to the Pew Hispanic Center (2010) survey, individuals who identify as Hispanic or Latino use both terms with the exception of people of Mexican descent living in Texas, who accept the term Hispanic (Taylor & Lopez, 2010). The category Hispanic first appeared on the United States census in 1980; until that point the Hispanic community was not officially measured in the United States (censusbureau.gov, 2013).

*Multicultural Feminism* – advocacy for women's rights that does not focus on the struggles of White women but on women of color and on diversity amongst women (Zinn & Thornton-Dill, 1996).

*Social Identity* – perceived membership in community groups explaining intergroup behavior (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

*Transformational Leadership* – superiors who work with their employees and inspire them through creative vision, making changes where needed, and following through to execution of all changes with committed subordinates (Burns, 1978).

*Urban* – the inner city of a metropolitan area, which is generally populated by minorities.

### **Chapter Summary**

In summary, Chapter 1 examined the qualities of Generation Y, the emergence of Generation Y Latinas, and their perceptions of leadership and feminism. This study used quantitative methods, supported by research theories that examined social identity, feminist standpoint theory, and muted group theory. These theories were used as a filter in connection with empowering Generation Y Latinas. Millennial Latinas have emerged as their own demographic group (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Chapter 2 examines the literature on Generation Y, Latinas, and perceptions of leadership. The research design, methodology, and analysis are discussed in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 presents a detailed analysis of the results and findings, and Chapter 5 discusses the findings, implications, and recommendations for future research and practice.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature**

### **Introduction and Purpose**

Children born between 1982 and 2000 are identified as Generation Y (also referred to as millenniums and millennials) are emerging as leaders in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (McCrindle, 2002). It is important to understand the significance of the Generation Y Latina population because they are the fastest growing population in the United States. Generation Y Latinas are the growth engine of the United States female population, and they are expected to represent 30% of the total female population by 2050, while the non-Hispanic White female population is expected to drop to 43%. The projected figure is that there will be 132.8 million Hispanics living in the United States by 2050 (United States Census Bureau, 2016). Despite the growth in this population, studies have lagged behind in documenting how these individuals view or experience leadership in the workplace or in politics. It appears that Latinos, in general, are unable to identify their own leaders or any who could emerge as a leader (Taylor & Lopez, 2010). Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to review the academic literature in: (a) leadership recognition among U.S. Hispanics, (b) workplace leadership studies with Latinos, (c) the next generation of potential leaders from the Generation Y Latina college students, (d) leadership preferences of Generation Y Latinas, (e) theoretical perspectives, and (f) opportunities for new research.



## **Review of the Literature**

**Leadership recognition among U.S. Latinos/Hispanics.** Currently, there are a number of prominent Hispanics, generally of Mexican heritage, who have been active in American politics. These include New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez and Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval (NGA.org, 2013); however, the most visible Latina in a position of leadership is United States Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who is a native New Yorker of Puerto Rican descent. Sotomayor was the first Latina to serve on the Supreme Court, and Governor Martinez was the first Hispanic female governor in the United States (NGA.org, 2013). These two women have been examples of Hispanic female leadership, not only for Generation Y, but also for all Hispanic women who have aspirations in the legal and political leadership arenas. New York City had 11 Latino city council members, six who were women. The Council Speaker, Melissa Mark-Viverito (D), was the first Puerto Rican and Latina to hold a citywide elected position. Mark-Viverito represented the 8<sup>th</sup> district of Manhattan (El Barrio/East Harlem) and the South Bronx. How much awareness and knowledge do U.S. Hispanics/Latinos have about these leaders from their own communities or their accomplishments?

To address this question, The Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project conducted a survey in 2010 and a follow-up survey in 2013. Hispanics participated both in 2010 (1,375) and 2013 (5,103). The 2010 survey showed names of eight prominent Latinos and asked if the participants recognized the names (Taylor & Lopez, 2010). Following the name-recognition questions, those who answered positively were asked if that person was a leader. The 2010 survey showcased these names specifically: Justice Sonia Sotomayor (SCOTUS); Jorge Ramos (television news anchor on Univision); Antonio Villaraigosa

(Mayor of Los Angeles); U.S. Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D), Illinois' 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District; Dolores Huerta (co-founder of the United Farm Workers of America); Bill Richardson (Governor of New Mexico); U.S. Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D), Arizona's 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District; and Janet Murguía, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), which is a Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization (Taylor & Lopez, 2010). The Hispanic sample in the Taylor and Lopez study were aware of the following names by percentage: Sotomayor (67%); Ramos (59%); Villaraigosa (44%); Gutierrez (38%); Bill Richardson (35%); and Dolores Huerta (28%). The other two names were familiar to only a small share of respondents: Raúl Grijalva (13%) and Janet Murguía (8%) (Taylor & Lopez, 2010). The 2013 survey included four questions regarding Hispanic leadership in the United States, and the study did not indicate if the same population was used from the 2010 survey, only that the sample population were both Hispanic, contacted by telephone (landline and cellular) to participate, given the option of English or Spanish, and were 18 years or older in age. The participants were contacted who lived in the 48 contiguous states (Taylor & Lopez, 2010). One of the major questions within the 44-question survey was, Does the Latino/Hispanic community have a recognizable national leader? The other three questions were: (a) In your opinion, who is the most important (Hispanic/Latino) leader in the country today? (b) I'm going to read you a list of names of some (Hispanics/Latinos) you may have heard of, and (c) Would you say Bill Richardson is a leader in the country today, or not? Participants were asked to fill in or recognize popular names when prompted (Pew Research Center, 2013). The results of the Pew Research Center, Hispanic Trends survey in 2010 (Taylor & Lopez) revealed how Latinos do not

recognize who their community or national leaders are. In the 2010 survey, most of the Hispanics who participated did not recognize names such as Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the first Hispanic woman named to the Supreme Court of the United States. An open-ended question asked the participants to name the person they considered the most important Latino leader in the country and nearly two-thirds (64%) of the respondents said they did not know, and an additional 10% could not identify a leader. The 2013 Pew survey revealed similar responses. According to the Pew Research Center (2013) data indicated that 75% of Hispanics said their communities needed a visible leader, but many Hispanics did not believe a community leader existed at all. U.S. Representative Luis Gutierrez (D-Ill.) of Chicago is next at 5% recognizability; Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is at 3% recognizability; and Jorge Ramos, an anchor on Noticiero Univision, the national evening news program on the Spanish-language television network Univision, is at 2% recognizability (Pew Research Center, 2013). The Pew survey data for both 2010 and 2013 also did not indicate whether the participants were college educated. The next section summarizes key studies focused on Latino leadership in the workplace.

**Workplace leadership studies.** Dickerson (2006) reported that even with advanced education, African American women and Latinas continue to earn less than their White counterparts. White women, Dickerson claimed (2006), worked in higher salaried positions and upper management, whereas the Black and Latina women end up with lower and clerical-based positions, although Dickerson reported that the labor unions have provided a platform for Latina women to take on leadership roles. When Black women and Latinas combine their efforts, they push for changes in the male-

dominated labor structure. The combined effort of these two groups is not reflective of a generation, but it is only reflective of gender solidarity. Dickerson (2006) did not state whether feminism played a role in their actions, only that the two joined together to get what they wanted, which is job equality. Women of color have been achieving change, Dickerson (2006) argued, because of strong labor unions.

Some leadership studies have focused on the experiences of employed Latinas in the education sector, particularly within higher education. More colleges and universities are attempting to diversify faculty to retain and graduate the Latina population. The women featured by Wolverton, Bower, and Hyle (2009) described their climb in higher education, which is a field dominated by men. According to the research, men do not open the doors of higher education freely, particularly with positions like provost or president. Dr. Mildred Garcia, the former president of Berkeley College and currently the first Latina president of California State University, Fullerton, stated that she has gained a level of respect, but she is still among a small group of minority female college presidents. Women like Dr. Mildred Garcia and Dr. Juliet V. Garcia (University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College) are among the few Latina/Hispanic college presidents, as this rank is dominated by White men (Wolverton et al., 2009). Juliet Garcia is Mexican American, and Dr. Mildred Garcia is a New Yorker, but she was raised in the Puerto Rican tradition. Dr. Juliet Garcia stated in Wolverton et al. (2009) that she and other Hispanic presidents have worked hard to groom the next generation of minority leaders. Wolverton et al. (2009) argued that for women of color and non-color, the struggle is the same. According to the American Council on Education's 2012 survey, "The American College President 2012," indicated that racial and ethnic minorities

represent only 13% of college presidents. The Wolverton et al. (2009) work indicated that women, regardless of color, continued to struggle in a male-dominated world; however, for women of color, the struggle is intensified. The authors demonstrated that women of color achieve their goals but not without sacrifice. Furthermore, it was notable that none of the minority women discussed by Wolverton et al. (2009) mentioned having a mentor or a person who guided them toward their respective goals.

Porter and Daniel (2007) defined feminist leadership through the lens of the Latina. The authors stated that feminist leadership is transformational by nature with the goal of empowering members and improving lives and conditions for all stakeholders. Transformational leadership enhances the morale, performance, and overall motivation of the followers through a variety of mechanisms (Porter & Daniel, 2007). Porter and Daniel stated that feminist leaders are informed by social context, relating to her own social privilege and location. The feminist, according to Porter and Daniel (2007), also takes responsibility for her actions and maintains mutual respect for her colleagues. The feminist also displays ethical and sound communication practices. Porter and Daniel (2007) concluded that feminist leadership was a dynamic style that required values, openness, and learning. They stated that the feminist should be well versed in multicultural issues, which allows for broader thinking.

Gilligan (1982) stated that men communicate differently from women and that, in effect, govern how they lead. Particularly, Gilligan (1982) stated, that when confronted with an ethical dilemma, women, regardless of race, are uncomfortable and go out of their way to find a solution that would not hurt any of the parties involved.

Northouse's (2010) examination of gender and leadership styles, and culture and leadership are relevant for Generation Y Latina undergraduates because the leadership framework provided a foundation to build their leadership styles. Students were not aware of theoretically based leadership models. However, as they moved forward in their careers, leadership styles emerge. Each leadership style has a name and series of traits that surround it (Northouse, 2010), but college students simply categorize or see superiors as good or bad, and they see them as not applying the leadership styles.

Bonilla-Rodriguez (2011) stated that Latina leadership was highly limited, and the researcher looked at Latina leadership, beyond graduation, and what influences this population to step into leadership roles. Influences and obstacles were identified for this population (which is not identified by generation), in which 335 women participated via survey and five by interviews. The characteristics that Bonilla-Rodriguez (2011) identified were: (a) high integrity, (b) Marianismo, (c) new Latina, (d) transformational leader, and (e) visionary. Bonilla-Rodriguez (2011) affirmed that pursuing the attributes of these five leadership categories will assist Latinas on a leadership path, understand what it takes to be a successful Latina leader, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and enable them to create a plan of success for their professional journey. Bonilla-Rodriguez (2011) stated that Latina women, historically, are nurturing and thereby they are characterized as servant leaders. The researcher's results uncovered that Latina women are poised to take on leadership roles, but the obstacles had to be overcome, with assistance such as providing mentors to achieve their goals (Bonilla-Rodriguez, 2011). Even though the Bonilla-Rodriguez (2011) study focused on established Latina leaders and did not focus on a particular generation, it is important to note what their attitudes

were regarding their leadership styles. Cultural values, like familismo (family honor and loyalty), above individual needs and goals (Bonilla-Rodriguez, 2011) also affect Latinas with a desire to lead. Other ethnic groups value family, as well; however, this trait is strongest amongst Latinas. Marianismo values amongst Latinas focus on being a wife, mother, and overall family member, in addition to being a leader in her organizations. Bonilla-Rodriguez (2011) identified this value in her study, and Generation Y Latinas observe this leadership value as well.

Avolio (2011) stated that transformational leadership is time-based and cannot happen overnight. Furthermore, boosters are needed to reinforce what has been learned (Avolio, 2011). Boosters help people learn, and they raise accountability for an organization. Women, as transformational leaders, approach from a collective point of view (Ardichvili et al., 2009), particularly Latinas, who utilize culture to shape their leadership style. The style assists the Latina leader in her engagement and management with others and with problem solving (Ardichvili et al., 2009). Latinas who embrace the collectivist style are aware of their surroundings, in that their actions cannot be misunderstood by others (Ardichvili et al., 2009). Being friendly and personal (non-offensive touching or embracing) might be seen as a weakness, but Latinos, in general, maintain their cultural values in the work place and toward other ethnicities could be seen as a weakness in leadership ability.

**Learning before they can lead: Generation Y Latinas in college.** Generation Y Latinas are described as a diverse group of women, who are also known as millennials (Oboler, 2005). They are maintaining important family, culture, and religious traditions, like Quinceañeras (Sweet 15) and Three Kings Day for identity and cultural connection

(Davalos, 1996), while being involved in activities and lifestyles of the current world. Generation Y Latinas are striving to earn degrees and move toward solid careers (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005).

Generation Y Latinas continue to increase their enrollment in higher education. In 2008, Hispanic females had a college participation rate of 29% compared to 23% for Hispanic males (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). The National Center for Education Statistics (2012) stated that 2.9 million Hispanics were enrolled in 4-year degree-granting programs at public institutions. The Pew Hispanic Center echoed this statement (Taylor & Lopez, 2010) and confirmed that Hispanic population growth and improved high school completion rates helped Latinos become the largest minority group on college campuses. When African American, Latino/a, and Native American students are observed in schools in the United States, their respective groups are underrepresented on many campuses (Walton & Cohen, 2007).

The Pew Research Center's analysis of census data showed that more than 2 million Hispanics, aged 18 to 24, were enrolled in college in 2012, making a record 16.5% share of enrollments in that age group at 2-year and 4-year institutions of higher education. Page (2013) stated that the Hispanic population in higher education rose faster over the past 10 years—more than the African American and Asian populations. Consequently, the number of Latina students who entered undergraduate studies also rose (Page, 2013). Latinas enter college and choose majors that lead to careers in communications, education, business, and information technology. However, the experience of Latinas in college was different from Caucasian women. Specifically, while in college, many Generation Y Latinas work and find little time to participate in



extracurricular activities. As such, retention has been identified as an issue for Latinas (Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003).

Authoritative figures at higher education institutions have few Hispanics in positions of power (president, vice presidents, or deans) and millennial Latina students who enrolled in colleges in increasing numbers have struggled to find a comfort zone (Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003). The comfort zone is a mental ideal where Generation Y Latinas see and interact with college/university leadership who are Latinos; millennial Latinas tap into these leaders as role models, such as professors. Generation Y Latina students, often, do not have a support system or someone to relate to; specifically, they lack professors who look like them (Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003). Generation Y Latinas supported by Latino faculty have better transitions into higher education and better success rates toward graduation (Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003). Ultimately, Latina students disassociate and either do not graduate or transfer from college to college until they find a comfort zone (Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003). Collegiate support systems come in a variety of ways: alumni mentoring and Latino student clubs/organizations.

Retention at 4-year institutions, according to Hurtado and Kamimura (2003), is a leading issue for Latina students, because if Latinas do not graduate, it is unlikely that they will move forward professionally. Hurtado and Kamimura (2003) argued that because there is a low Latina presence at 4-year colleges, those students do not feel comfortable and do not stay. Comas-Diaz (2010) also suggested that Latinas should feel comfortable while attending college, which was achieved by joining Latina student organizations. More often than not, Latina students cannot identify with their surroundings, and they have never seen professors that look like them (DeJesus-Staples,

2005; Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003). DeJesus-Staples interviewed history professor, Johanna Fernandez, and discovered that the social histories of both African Americans and Latinos are somewhat entwined. The struggle for equality and the need to see faculty who resemble their students of color is integral to student success said Fernandez (DeJesus-Staples, 2005). Fernandez, a Dominican, understood the need for Latino curriculum and social identification; being a Columbia University alumna, she saw very few professors who looked like her.

According to Hurtado and Kamimura (2010), in order to be successful in college, Latina students needed guidance in navigating higher academic institutions including coursework, advanced placement, and particularly making the transition from high school to college. Comas-Diaz (2010) stated similarly that having a mentor is the key to Latina academic success. Bordes (2005) investigated the relationship between university-based mentoring programs and Latina students' comfort in the university environment. These studies were important because the support and retention of Latina students and ultimate attainment of a degree allow those women to become leaders in their respective communities. Academic studies, which focus on the Latina population, are integral to understanding how Millennial Latinas address the importance of education beyond high school. There are empowerment groups, like Proud to be Latina and La Raza, that encourage awareness about public policy and human resources but do not have a mentoring program in place. The retention of Latina students and ultimate attainment of a degree give Latina women the tools to help themselves become leaders in their respective communities. Solid mentoring programs can assist in this process (Sy, 2008).

Morillas and Crosby (2007) conducted research on a small sample of Generation Y college students at a Southeastern women's college, and they pulled out a sample of Latina students. What Morillas and Crosby (2007) discovered was that Latinas felt that they were treated differently by professors because of ethnicity, and they were not given the opportunity to show how smart they were because of preconceived ideas about Latinas.

The millennial Latinas, 21 participants, took a 15-question survey and were asked open-ended questions regarding social identity on their campus. Morillas and Crosby (2007) discovered that Generation Y Latinas were most concerned with stereotyping, and how they were seen by others in the classroom. Morillas and Crosby's (2007) study discussed various theories, which filtered Generation Y Latina's attitudes toward education, stereotyping, and comfort in social settings; however, Morillas and Crosby (2007) did not use social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) as a filter but a hybrid of identity contingency theory (Purdie-Vaughns, Steele, Davies, Dittmann, & Crosby, 2008).

Sy (2008) researched Generation Y Latinas and focused on collegiate women from immigrant families and the responsibilities associated within that structure. Sy (2008) interviewed 20 first- and second-generation Generation Y Latina women, aged 18 to 29, and found three key themes: family responsibility, college adjustment, and retention issues. Sy (2008) concluded that Millennial Latinas put family responsibility first, but they were determined when it came to earning a degree. Millennial Latinas were not abandoning the traditions and values that they hold dear, but they were moving forward, and they knew that education was integral to that venture (Sy, 2008). Duffy and

Risco (2010), however, found Latina students placed importance on interest in their chosen field, and they wanted to use their careers to make a difference. The Duffy and Risco (2010) data indicated that as long as Generation Y Latinas used their education to make a difference in their chosen career, they were happy. The population for this study had a variety of majors, including communications, psychology, and international cultural studies, with the goals of becoming broadcast professionals, psychologists, and foreign affairs liaisons. They were not concerned with family obligations or large salaries. Millennial Latina's main concern was the impact that they had on others (Duffy & Risco, 2010).

López and Hasso (1998) compared ways in which Latina and Arab American college students experienced their cultural identity in the university setting. They found that Latinas struggled with messages that they were unqualified to be university students because of their racial/ethnic background. Latinas received messages from their collegiate community that indicated their lack of qualification to pursue a higher education (López & Hasso, 1998). The sentiment was experienced at White colleges/universities. The messages or cues, as stated by López and Hasso (1998), were not verbal or physical attacks on Latina students, but it was more of an observation. Looking around the classroom or walking on campus and noticing that you are the only Latina or how many Latino and minority students attend their college/university were noted as cues/messages. The 1998 López and Hasso study indicated that the messages were internal and not coming from their peers but, rather, from the Latina students' insecurity that they did not belong in college.

Despite these challenges, Latina college students had increasing graduation rate (Bordes, 2005). The National Center for Education Statistics (2012) showed an increase in the rate that Latinas have earned bachelor-level degrees since 1999. According to the NCES, bachelor's degrees awarded to Latina students increased by 87%. In the 2009-2010 academic year Latinas earned 9% of all bachelor's degrees conferred in comparison to the 6% earned in the 1999-2000 academic year. Once they graduate and enter into the workforce, vote, and move up the career ladder, are Generation Y Latinas aware, knowledgeable, or even interested in their leaders or becoming leaders themselves? The academic literature is very limited, and it is only just beginning to examine the next generation and their perceptions of leadership.

**Leadership preferences of Generation Y.** Earlier studies compared leadership characteristics of Generation X and the baby boomers (not race or gender specific) as value driven, change agents, visionaries, and lifelong learners (Bass & Avolio, 1999; Carley, 2008). Lisbon (2010) examined leadership preferences for multiple generations, including Generation Y. Baby Boomers and Generation X are more comfortable with team projects and participative leadership than Generation Y (Kodatt, Green, Salter, & Duncan, 2009). Generation Y, which began entering the workforce around 2001, are concerned about how to run a better organization (Lisbon, 2010). One promising line of research began to explore the perceptions of Generation Y specifically as a group. Dulin (2005), Lisbon (2010), and Wells (2011) studied members of Generation Y, but they did not focus exclusively on the Latinas.

Dulin (2005) sought to gather a sample size of 128 participants. The itemization of the 128 participants consisted of African Americans (32), Hispanic/Latino (32),

Caucasian (32), and 32 were classified as *others*. The study targeted an equal number of male and female respondents in each ethnic group to gather a fair exemplification of both genders. Dulin (2005) hypothesized that Generation Y leadership preferences borrowed from both developmental and generational needs. Using a mixed-method study, Dulin examined the leadership preferences of Generation Y college students in the southwestern United States. The sample was drawn from the Millennial population. Dulin recruited participants born from 1977 to 1997 and wanted to ensure that participants were, at a minimum, 18 years old and employed at least part time. The Dulin (2005) LPI population comprised 413 business students with no specification of ethnicity or gender. Dulin (2005) had four focus groups (two groups of seven participants and two groups of eight participants for a total of 30 interviewees), which generated the five leadership themes: competence, interpersonal relations, management of others, self-management, and communication.

The next phase of the Dulin (2005) study used the five leadership themes to develop a 44-item LPI. The survey was administered with the expectation of creating a profile of leadership preferences for millennials. The LPI was validated through a series of statistical analyses, and it was established solely for the purpose of its creation to be used in further research. The LPI (Dulin, 2005) explored leadership preferences within employment/workplace environments. The strength of the LPI (Dulin, 2005) was that it was created and tested for validity. The survey asked solid questions regarding mentoring, communication styles, and managerial approaches to problem solving. Albeit the Likert scale is general in response, the participants' attitudes toward leadership were gauged from this instrument. The weakness of the instrument was the inability to create a

solid understanding of Millennial leadership perceptions, which might be connected to ethnicity or cultural influences. For example, in the Wells (2001) study, which focused on African American Generation Y students, there was no determinant to understand the differences between African American and Hispanic leadership perceptions, only the LPI can be used for such determination. The majority of the questions in the LPI are broad and open-ended, to get a feel for the participants' leadership perceptions. Although the LPI (Dulin, 2005) asked questions about leadership competence and communication styles, the LPI was not capable of creating a full profile of Millennial perceptions of leadership. As more studies are done, using Millennial subgroups, such as Asian women or Latinos (male and female), the LPI should be used in conjunction with other methods to create a full profile for Millennial leadership. Dulin (2005) concluded that additional research should be conducted to solidify whether these results could be attributed to employee developmental needs or Generation Y's needs. As a follow-up, Wells (2011) used the Dulin (2005) LPI and focused on African American millennials. Wells (2011) stated that Generation Y is the largest generation, but little is known about them. Dulin (2005) and Stratman (2007) did not focus on a particular ethnicity, but Wells (2011) examined the preferences of African American population. Hence, the study of Generation Y Latina's perspective of leadership is a scholarly progression and a necessity, in an effort to create a working profile for this group of women.

**Theoretical perspectives on Generation Y Latinas.** Research about the experiences of the Latina population through the theoretical lenses of feminist standpoint, muted group, and social identity are limited but need to be expanded (Adam, 1998; Martínéz, 1998). The academic readings from non-Latino researchers do not emphasize

any of the above theoretical lenses (Dulin, 2005); however, the Latino and Chicano researchers support these theories (Adam, 1998).

**Feminist standpoint (FST) and Latina feminism.** Female leadership was researched but African American women and Latinas were left out of the feminist movement in early American writings dating up to the early 1900s. The early feminist ideas were communicated by word of mouth, and pioneer feminist leaders struggled to define what feminism was to American women who were not exposed to the movement (hooks, 2000). The African American and Latina feminist movements were two separate movements that were established to push their respective groups forward. In *Ain't I a Woman?: Black Women and Feminism*, hooks (1981) identified how Black women did not fit into the White women's feminist movement. As Black women struggled to find their place outside of traditional household roles, the emergence of the modern-day Black women emerged, and next to them were their Latina counterparts. However, because Hispanics were not counted in the United States Census until 1980, those Latinas who were working and earning degrees were not tracked. The Black women of the late 1970s and early 1980s were educated or going back to school and raising families. In the 1990s, that model became standard for Black women who often put off marriage for her career and educational goals. This is important to mention because White women did not have the same issues in society that Black and Latina women had (hooks, 2000). hooks (2000) stated that White women were educated and able to think critically.

Feminist standpoint theory states that any argument stemming from feminism must enlist the social perspective of the subjects at hand (Hartsock, 1983). The theory emerged from an argument, via Marxism, that people from oppressed classes have unique



access to knowledge that is not available to privileged classes (Wood, 2005).

Furthermore, according to Marx (Wood, 2005), the feminist standpoint begins from the material conditions that exist in the lives of women. Wood (2005) stated that women's lives are structurally and systematically different from men's and, therefore, they develop and produce different bodies of knowledge. Wood (2005) concluded that simply being a woman does not automatically infer the feminist standpoint, rather that the feminist standpoint becomes a social position not a state of mind and action. Wood (2005) meant that women who live in the South versus the North (for example) are susceptible to their environments and thereby reflect feminist positions as the result of their location (geographically). The feminist movement progressed into three distinct cohorts: the first wave began in the 1800s in Europe, the second wave occurred with the onset of the civil rights movement in the 1960s (United States), and the third wave continued into the 1990s (Rampton, 2008).

The third wave of feminism, which included women of color and their struggles, began in the mid-1990s (Rampton, 2008). In this phase, many constructs were weakened, including the notions of *universal womanhood*, body, gender, and sexuality. An aspect of the third wave of feminism that mystified those who participated in the second wave of the feminist movement was the reemergence of feminine behaviors, such as wearing lipstick, high-heels, and showing cleavage. Whereas the first two phases of the movement identified with male oppression, the third wave identified with empowerment (Kinser, 2004). Kinser (2004) stated that women must make a clear distinction between the second wave and the third wave of feminism and their contributions. Kinser (2004) concluded

that the third wave feminists must be clear on their agenda and language to be taken seriously.

The third wave of feminism also saw the emergence of multicultural feminism, which included women of color and the issues that were important to their respective communities, and their recognition as a gender. Multicultural feminism, according to Thompson (2002) was intertwined in the second wave of feminism and was identified as White anti-racist feminism; however, it was not discussed in depth. Thompson (2002) stated that when the second wave of feminism was examined through a woman of color's lens, the multicultural feminism was visible. In other words, depending upon who you are engaged in conversation with, the perspective will be different, with the focus on either feminism or women of color. Kramarae (1989) stated that women of color were recognized by White feminists, and they acknowledged the differences that the gender faces.

Multicultural feminist conversations in the 1960s and 1970s were not discussed, at length, in the United States (Zinn & Thornton-Dill, 1996); however, they are prevalent in the new millennium. A scholar like Irigaray (1985), who was of Belgian descent, discussed multicultural feminism from a socio-political standpoint (Mookherjee, 2005). Mookherjee (2005), who hails from London, did a reassessment of Irigaray's (1985) manifesto on multicultural feminism. Mookherjee (2005) stated that Irigaray was a radical feminist writer whose tenets were the major foundation for multicultural feminist theory. Irigaray (1985) theorized that women do not need to abandon their culture to attain gender equality; however, Irigaray (1985) criticized Western culture for not separating the sexes and making a clear distinction (Irigaray, 1985). Irigaray (1985)

concluded firmly that there were too many aspects of women's sexuality that are in *darkness*; therefore, Irigaray deduced that there should be a definite clear line drawn between the sexes. Thompson (2002) and Zinn and Thornton-Dill (1996) presented their views from the United States' perspective, confirming that women of color were not singled out of the first wave feminist movement, although women of color had multiple issues, particularly cultural and racist, to contend with, when having feminism conversations.

Fundamentally, feminist literature, born out of the second wave of the feminist movement in the 1960s, was jumpstarted with Friedan's (1963) *The Feminine Mystique*. Friedan wrote case studies about women who were liberated from domesticity and the doldrums of being a 1960s homemaker. The study had women examining their place in American society, both professionally and personally. At this time, Latina feminism also emerged because Hispanic women (along with African American women) were feeling left out of the feminist movement, which was started by White women and did not address issues that women of color faced (Martínez, 1998). To that point, Generation Y Latinas disconnect from traditional White feminist thought because it does not apply to them (Brewer, 2002). Latina undergraduates are not drawn to majors, like women's studies, because of the connection to feminism and negative stereotypes, stated Brewer (2002). Latinas are also disenchanted with courses on women's issues because the Latina perspective is left out of the readings. Women's studies at many colleges focus on third-world countries in the Middle East, India, and continental Africa (Brewer, 2002). Women, unfortunately, are still disenfranchised in many Latin and Central American nations as well. Závala-Martínez (2011) argued in *Women as Transformational Leaders*

(p. 159) that sexist notions were tied to transformational leadership and that Latinas should avoid that leadership style, because it went against the values of traditional feminism; however, this opinion was not agreed upon widely. The collectivist values, as previously mentioned, clashed with gender roles, where there was an expectation for professional Latinas to be subservient in the work place, depending upon from which Latin nation your values were drawn. Bartunek et al. (2000) stated that assertiveness and forward thinking is a positive in the workplace and it was relative because Generation Y Latinas entered the workforce, observed the atmosphere, and behaved accordingly, being proud of their culture but not sacrificing their sexuality for their professional standing. In other words, Generation Y Latinas should not have to dress provocatively or engage in office romances in order to stay employed or be promoted (Bartunek et al., 2000).

The second feminist wave began in the 1960s and continued into the 1990s. This wave began during the turmoil of the anti-Vietnam War and civil rights movements as well as the growing self-consciousness of minority groups around the world. Women of color were still not included in this movement; therefore, they started their own organizations. Asian American, Chicanas, African American, and Native American women all started feminist groups, circa the 1970s (Thompson, 2002). Organizations, such as the Women of All Red Nations (WARN, circa 1974), became increasingly radical as sexuality and reproductive rights were dominant issues, and much of the movement's energy was focused on passing the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, which guaranteed social equality regardless of gender. *Roe v. Wade* (Ginsburg, 1984) was a pivotal Supreme Court decision, and it was seen as a triumph for women and their personal and physical rights. Women also protested at the Miss America contests in 1968

and 1969, chanting that they did not want to be treated like cattle (Hogeland, 2001). Rampton (2008) stated that feminists-formed, women-only organizations emerged, such as the National Organization for Women (NOW). In publications, such as “The BITCH Manifesto” advocated for a place amongst the work force (Freeman, 2000).

Dickerson (2006) stated that African American women and Latinas have banded together in the workplace for labor equality without the backing of the feminist movement/organization. Latinas and African American women are simultaneously having the conversation regarding careers, gender equality, and racism (Hill Collins, 1998); however, in many cases, they are not communicating with each other. The women of these communities are having these conversations and not realizing that their issues are shared with other minority women (Hill Collins, 1998).

Feminism, however, is not without critiques from women. Martínéz (1998), a sociology professor, stated that she includes class, race, and gender issues into her curricula and has always included feminist issues. Martínéz (1998) affirmed that she did not consider herself a feminist because she had issues with the tenets of White feminism because the term umbrellas White feminism and racism. Again, multicultural feminism entered the conversation in 2002 and supports the third wave of feminism. Color is important, and women of color do not agree with all the terms of feminism that the first wave offered. Martínéz (1998) further stated that feminism was promoted by White women as “man-hating,” and that race was not seen as being important in the conversation. Martínéz (1998) argued that, for Latinas, this notion is awkward and forces women to choose between culture beliefs; therefore, positioning the discussions about gender versus feminist beliefs. Martínéz (1998) claimed that Latina women should not be

left out of the conversation of women's issues. Her statement is in response to the limitations of the term of feminism as developed by White women; Martínéz (1998) used the term *Chicana feminism*.

The earliest mention of Chicana feminist organizations was in 1971, called Hijos de Cuauhtémoc (Thompson, 2002). Latina or Chicana feminism differs from White feminism in key ways. White feminist literature does not focus on sexuality, it focuses on equality issues including wages, employment opportunities, and voting rights. White feminism makes Latina women choose between culture and gender, which they are not open to doing. Martínéz (1998) claimed that White women who are feminists are not concerned with race and come off as misandrists. Adam (1998) discussed embracing the ideals of motherhood, whereas other feminists rejected those notions. Adam (1998) argued that because of the macho image of the Latino man, Latinas are devalued.

Latina feminists, such as Moraga, Cisneros, and Alarco, have forced traditional, White U.S. feminists to include the viewpoints of all women living within the states (Adam, 1998). Furthermore, Latina and African American feminism focuses on breaking stereotypes (Adam, 1998) and the marginalization of women (hooks, 1984). hooks (1984) took great care to separate the Black feminist movement from what she described as the "White bourgeois" (p. 67) movement. Ultimately, the concerns of White feminists are not focused on race, whereas Latina, African American, or Chicana feminist are chiefly concerned with racism and how it affects women (hooks, 1984).

Historically, the original feminist movement was started by White, middle-class women in 1800s England who were tired of being treated as second-class citizens by men (Zinn & Thornton-Dill, 1996). They embraced the ideology of equal treatment, voting

rights, and job opportunities for women of the day. The first wave of feminism emerged during this era, and women protested for the right to vote and to own property. The goal was to open opportunities for women and to focus on suffrage. In its early stages, feminism was interconnected with the temperance and abolitionist movements and gave voice to activists, such as Sojourner Truth in 1851, known for her speech, “Ain’t I a Woman?” Women of color were included in neither the first, nor the second feminist movements (Thompson, 2002); however, the third wave opened different windows to other races and ethnicities, thereby acknowledging the struggle for gender and social equality amongst other minority women (Thompson, 2002).

Generation Y Latinas continue to live in a male-dominated world and Latino men are strong figures in the household and the community. The dichotomy of living with powerful male figures and a changing world that includes female leaders gives Generation Y Latinas the opportunity to take on leadership roles.

**Social identity theory.** Another theory applicable to understanding Generation Y Latinas is social identity theory as a way to explain intergroup behavior (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). According to social identity theory, a portion of an individual’s self-concept is derived from perceived membership in a germane social group. The theory, originated from an anthropological base, states that individuals lose their identity and go along with the group for fear of rejection and harassment from peers (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Many Generation Y Latinas can speak basic Spanish to communicate with their elders, but they are not grammatically sound in the language (Reichard, 2013). Millennial Latinas know who Hector Lavoe is, but they would rather listen to Beyoncé. Generation Y Latina’s families insist that they speak Spanish fluently, but they do not think it is necessary

because they are second and third generations from their respective homeland. Millennial Latinas are not ashamed of their Latin American roots, but they are also proud to be a thread in American society (Reichard, 2013). Among those who are United States born, more than half are dominant in the English language. Many parents forbade them from speaking their native tongue, as an attempt to help them progress in American society, or they simply rebelled against the traditional culture, so most second- and third-generation Latinos do not speak fluent Spanish (Reichard, 2013).

Generation Y Latinas are influenced highly by what friends say and post on social media, as most millennials (Zalaquett, 2006). Social media outlets, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, are the go-to information apps, and Generation Y, globally, follow their favorite artists, fashion trends, and develop personal style because of their participation on social media outlets. Cyberbullies thrive in this arena, and unlike members of Generation X, who only had to deal with bullies in school, on the bus/train, and maybe the neighborhood but were safe inside the home, members of Generation Y must deal with the onslaught of information, positive or negative, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (Dulin, 2005; Kyles, 2005). The only means of escape is to disengage with whichever medium has caused the social rejection.

The role of the media is important to consider when discussing the development of Generation Y Latinas. McLuhan (1964) predicted the birth of the World Wide Web and was noted for his popular phrase, *the Medium is the Message*. McLuhan (1964) wrote that the visual, individualistic print culture would soon be brought to an end by what he called the electronic interdependence, when electronic media replaces visual culture with oral culture. In this new era, McLuhan (1964) predicted humankind would move from



individualism and fragmentation to a collective identity with a tribal base. McLuhan (1964) called this new social organization the *global village*.

McLuhan's (1964) predictions came into reality with social media outlets (such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn), and people no longer waited to get home to listen to or read the news. With the advent of mobile, handheld devices, information was available within seconds. Print media became secondary to electronic outlets. McLuhan (1964) wrote that the next medium, whatever it is, might be the extension of consciousness. Furthermore, McLuhan (1964) coined and popularized the use of the term *surfing* to refer to rapid, irregular, and multidirectional movement through an assorted body of documents or knowledge. Consideration of McLuhan's (1964) perspective was important because Generation Y, collectively, was born into the digital age and is often called the *digital generation*.

As members of the digital generation, Generation Y Latinas connect to what is popular (Morillas & Crosby, 2007). Millennial Latinas follow the latest trends in clothing, hairstyles, and manicures, and they do not separate themselves to look different from the crowd. Generation Y Latinas listen to the same musicians and rarely step outside the box to claim individuality. Thus, they strive for a collective identity, which was predicted by McLuhan (1964), rather than an individualistic identity of members of previous generations.

**Muted group theory.** A third theory to review is muted group theory (Kramarae, 1981). Muted group theory defines issues with gender power and how it was used against those, who exhibited weakness. While critical theories separate the powerful and the powerless any number of ways, this theory chose to separate the power continuum into

men and women. Muted group theory (Kramarae, 1981) started with the premise that language is culture bound, and because men have more power than women, men have more influence over the language, resulting in language that is male biased (Griffin, 1991). Men create the words and meaning for the culture, creating a gateway for the expression of their ideas. Women, on the other hand, are left out, and they have no avenue to express that which is unique to them. The Latino community and families have always had female leaders, but they are now recognized nationally in the United States (Chin, 2011). Chin (2011) further stated that Latina leaders identify and respect the importance of supportive and collaborative groups. Latinas face different challenges from other women of color, solely based on their ethnicity (Chin, 2011). The Chin (2011) study differed from the Pew Research data survey (Pew Research Center, 2010, 2013) regarding Hispanics not knowing who their leaders are. Chin (2011) focused on Latina leadership, not Generation Y Latina leadership.

Muted group theory defines how Generation Y Latinas function as communicators, as this population does not use traditional methods to communicate (Morillas & Crosby, 2007). In addition, the theory indicates that women suffer socially because they do not have a voice, particularly amongst men (Kramarae, 1981).

Generation Y Latinas value their fathers and other male figures, and muted group theory provides insight into this phenomenon. Generation Y Latinas are modern thinkers, but they are trapped, culturally, under the Latin male machismo (Chin, 2011).

Last, Generation Y Latinas are members of the digital generation, which was predicted by McLuhan (1964). Letter writing and even email have become obsolete, but millennial Latinas are connected through mobile technology (Ramirez, 2012). A fear was

that when this population sought employment after graduation, they might have a difficult time because they rarely communicate professionally and without their devices (Ramirez, 2012). To succeed, DeJesus-Staples (2005) stated that Generation Y Latinas must emerge as being perceptive while using interpersonal communication and by having a sense of self. Generation Y Latinas have a strong sense of culture and family loyalty, but they are quite modern and focused on the goals of education, economic empowerment, and career development (Pérez-Litwin, 2013). This research highlights the path that Generation Y Latinas take to achieve academic, career development, and economic empowerment goals

**Opportunities of new research.** The Latino population is growing and will dominate the United States by 2050. Despite this growth in population, studies have lagged behind in documenting how Generation Y Latinas view leaders from their own communities, leadership in general, or leadership challenges in the workplace or politics. Understanding Generation Y Latinas' perspectives on leadership has been understudied and remains incomplete. Preliminary data appears to suggest that Generation Y is more concerned with social media and material items (designer clothes and luxury brand cars) than they are about global warming and recycling. Millennial Latinas are desensitized to political and celebrity scandal because of the Internet, so they have not been shielded from the harsh adult world. In fact, it appears that Latinos, in general, are unable to identify their own leaders or anyone who could emerge as leaders (Taylor & Lopez, 2010). Once they graduate and enter the workforce, vote, and move up the career ladder are Generation Y Latinas aware, knowledgeable, or even interested in their leaders or

becoming leaders themselves? The academic literature is very limited, and it is only just beginning to examine the next generation and their perceptions of leadership.

One promising line of research has begun to explore the perceptions of Generation Y specifically as a group. Dulin (2005), Lisbon (2010), and Wells (2011) studied members of Generation Y, but they did not focus exclusively on the Latinas. A gap remains as to what 18-25-year-old, college-enrolled Latinas perceive about their leaders or what they believe makes a great leader.

Latinas in NYC have unique opportunities to see professional Latinas in active leadership roles. Access to organizations like Proud to be Latina, based in New York City, offer a variety of webinars and networking events to invigorate and connect established Latina professionals and collegiate women. New York City elected eight new Latinos to the city council. There were 11 members on the New York City Council who identified as Latino or Hispanic, as evidenced ([www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)). Nationally, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, whose slogan is: “Developing the Next Generation of Latino Leaders” was established in 1976 by five Hispanic members of Congress. The organization’s goal is to monitor governmental activities, which affect Hispanics. The President and CEO, Esther Aguilera, is Mexican. Generation Y’s potential Latina leaders who engage with millennials on a personal level and in professional circles, find that conversations and goals are the same as other ethnicities within the Generation Y cohort. Generation Y Latinas are concerned with academic achievement, career development, and economic empowerment (Pérez-Litwin, 2013). However, what do these New York City-area Generation Y Latinas think about leaders, becoming leaders, and leadership in general?

## **Summary**

This chapter reviewed previous national surveys depicting a lack of overall awareness and knowledge about Latino/Hispanic leaders in the United States among Hispanics. The review of literature revealed that a majority of empirical studies focused on workplace leadership experiences of Latinas in leadership positions. While the studies are emerging solely on Generation Y Latina college students, there remains new opportunities to further examine the perceptions of Generation Y Latina college students who are 18-25-years old and who are now able to vote for the first time, learn about leadership, and emerge as the next generation of leader. The gap in the research continues to exist for this understudied population. Chapter 3 reviews the method used to explore perceptions of a group of NYC-area Generation Y Latina college students.

## **Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to describe five types of leadership preferences endorsed by a sample of Generation Y Latina college students in the northeast United States. Generation Y Latinas were born between 1982 and 2000 (McCrindle, 2002). Historically, Latinas were relegated to domestic roles (Barnes, 2012). In the United States, the image of the urban Latina is fiery, sassy, and sexy rather than being seen as an intellectual or a practicing professional (Crenshaw, 1993). A survey by the Pew Hispanic Center (Taylor & Lopez, 2010) showed that Generation Y Latinas do not believe that there is a Latino leader. Previous studies emerged and described the leadership preferences among Generation Y samples; however, little was known about the leadership preferences among the growing subgroup of Latina female college students. The question that emerged was, “What are the leadership preferences among Generation Y Latina college students?”

The goal of this study was to build on the work of Dulin (2005). As a result of the Dulin (2005) anchor study, and the subsequent Millennial study on African Americans (Wells, 2011), the question arose as to what the leadership preferences are among Generation Y Latina university/college students.

There are Latina empowerment organizations throughout the five boroughs of New York City; however, are Millennial Latina college students connected with these organizations, as well as collegiate clubs? The Latina empowerment organizations, such

as Proud to be Latina, were started to connect women of Latin American heritage in their fields of endeavor and academics. The organization hosts in-person meet-and-greet events, as well as webinars, which provide encouragement/life-coaching segments. The women involved represent several careers areas, such as academia, business management, retail, and entertainment/media, and they are college educated, and in some cases, they are the first-time college graduates in their families. Their empowerment goals extend professionally, but they also help collegiate Latinas to understand their potential. The contemporary Latina consumer is currently holding \$1.2 trillion in buying power annually, which advertisers desire (Rivera, 2014). Latina buying power makes a declaration to the economy that the population is taking money matters earnestly, and they are aware of how Hispanic dollars affect the community (Pérez-Litwin, 2013). Latinas are more knowledgeable regarding how and where they spend their money. Long-term investments, such as education and homes, are a priority. Latinas are moving their families into the middle class through education, financial empowerment, and career choices (Pérez-Litwin, 2013). Generation Y Latinas have become empowered financially and have moved quickly to take on leadership roles.

Generation Y research has, to date, not focused solely on the Latina population (gender and ethnicity); therefore, colleges and corporate America are unprepared for how this group of women is emerging and eager to take on leadership roles. In New York City, the Hispanic/Latino population was 27.5% of all New Yorkers (nyc.gov, 2014). If this population of women is growing, it is important to measure their progress and understand Millennial Latinas' aspirations and motivation for leadership, as well as their definition of leadership. This purposeful sample of Millennial Latinas were selected

because their population is growing and should have data in place, which reflects educational goals, understanding of leadership, and social justice views. Research is currently limited on Millennial Latinas, and a purposive sampling is ideal for this population because of the number of students targeted for research, which was 50.

According to Creswell (2009), there are four quantitative research designs: descriptive, correlational, quasi-experimental, and experimental. This research, entitled, “A Profile of the Leadership Preferences Among Generation Y Latina College Students,” used a descriptive research design. Descriptive research was used to illustrate the participants’ patterns in achieving education, social justice, and employment (Creswell, 2009). A descriptive research design can provide information about the instinctive attitudes or other characteristics of a specific population (Creswell, 2009). In this case, Millennial Latinas. A survey was used to gather data, as stated in the descriptive method. The LPI survey for this study exhibits the data gathered with analysis to follow.

### **Research Context**

The research context for this study was located at a private 4-year liberal arts college. The institution has a religious foundation, and it is located in the northeast United States. The college, founded by Franciscan Friars in 1859 for young men, opened its doors to women in 1964. The college confers associate, bachelor’s, and master’s level degrees. This institution was chosen because of access to the population, enrollment size, urban location, and increasing Latina enrollment (averaging a 3% increase, annually) (CollegeBoard Access, 2017). The average age of a student is 22-years old, and part-time students comprise 7% of the population. As of 2016, the ethnicity and gender breakdown were (CollegeBoard Access, 2017): 39% White, 20% African American, 20% Latino, 4%



Asian, 2% multi-race, 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 5% non-resident alien. Overall, the college enrolled 58% women and 42% men for spring 2017 (CollegeBoard Access, 2017). Generation Y Latinas at this college enrolled in following majors with the actual number of enrolled students in parenthesis: education (24), biology (21), criminal justice (25), communications arts (20), pre-nursing (35), and psychology (61). These majors had the highest enrollees and the psychology program offers a 5-year option to earn a master's in psychology degree. The psychology enrollee number did not differentiate if Latinas were on the 4- or 5-year track.

### **Research Questions**

Given the increased number of Latina college graduates and the potential impact these women had in the United States, the following questions guided the proposed research:

1. What are the leadership preferences related to competence among Generation Y Latina college students?
2. What are the leadership preferences related to interpersonal relations among Generation Y Latina college students?
3. What are the leadership preferences related to management of others among Generation Y Latina college students?
4. What are the leadership preferences related to self-management among Generation Y Latina college students?
5. What are the leadership preferences related to communication among Generation Y Latina college students?

## **Research Participants**

After IRB approval was granted by the college to the researcher to conduct the present study (Appendix B), the College Registrar ran a student query identifying the spring 2017 student population at the college. The total population of all students registered for spring 2017 (including Hispanics/Latinos) was 2,654, which consisted with 1,090 males and 1,553 females. The overall Hispanic/Latino student enrollment for spring 2017 was 541; Latina (female) enrollment was 338 and Latino (male) enrollment was 203 (CollegeBoard Access, 2017) for a combined total of 541. The Office of the Registrar obtained the names and e-mail addresses of the 338 Latinas. The enrolled Generation Y Latina (338) population received an email invitation directly from the Registrar to participate in the present study (Appendix C). The LPI survey included qualifying data questions, such as age and ethnicity, which, when answered and did not match the criteria, the participant was automatically exited from the LPI survey. The survey was sent out with a 3-week deadline. After the 3-week deadline passed, a reminder was sent out with a 2-week return. A total of 52 participants responded to the invitation to complete the survey. Two participants were excluded, because they provided incomplete responses, leaving 50 surveys. All participants who completed the survey were identified as Latinas (aged 18- to 25-years old), and they were enrolled full time in the college. Thus, the number of participants for the study was approximately 15% of the overall Latina Generation Y enrollment for spring 2017 ( $N = 50$ ).

## **Data Collection Instruments**

The data was collected with a 44-question survey entitled the Leadership Preference Inventory or LPI (Dulin, 2005). The LPI is a 44-item, self-reporting

questionnaire that is used to assess the degree to which participants agree with certain leadership characteristics across five themes: (a) competence, (b) interpersonal relations, (c) management, (d) self-management, and (d) communication. Agreement ratings were scored using a 5-point Likert scale with the following equivalents: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Uncertain, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.

Higher scores indicated more agreement for the statement. The LPI proved to be a reliable instrument in previous studies (e.g., Dulin, 2005; Wells, 2011). The LPI was administered electronically, through a survey website: [www.Qualtrics.com](http://www.Qualtrics.com).

Dissemination of the LPI via Qualtrics was chosen for ease of use, accessibility, and post-survey analytical features.

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive analyses were run to analyze the participants' preferences for leadership characteristics across five areas. Descriptive summary tables for the five research questions are provided in Chapter 4, showcasing the frequency and percentages for nominal data and means and standard deviations for continuous data (Wells, 2011).

### **Summary**

This chapter reviewed the present descriptive study's design, research questions, sample selection, instruments, and data collection methods with an under-researched population: Latina Generation Y college females. The 50 Generation Y Latina college students at a small urban commuter college in the northeast completed online versions of the LPI using Qualtrics.com designed by Dulin (2005) to measure Generation Y leadership preferences. Chapter 4 summarizes the descriptive results for each of the five exploratory descriptive research questions.

## **Chapter 4: Results**

### **Introduction**

While previous studies have explored leadership preferences among groups of Generation Y samples (Dulin, 2005; Wells, 2011) using the LPI, no study, to date, has singled out the perceptions of Generation Y Latinas. This chapter summarizes the results collected from 50 Generation Y Latinas enrolled at a college in the northeast United States. The following exploratory questions were addressed by this study:

### **Research Questions**

Drawn from the LPI (Dulin, 2005), the following questions emerged to research Generation Y Latina's perspective of leadership.

1. What are the leadership preferences related to competence among Generation Y Latina college students?
2. What are the leadership preferences related to interpersonal relations among Generation Y Latina college students?
3. What are the leadership preferences related to management of others among Generation Y Latina college students?
4. What are the leadership preferences related to self-management among Generation Y Latina college students?
5. What are the leadership preferences related to communication among Generation Y Latina college students?

### **Overview of Data Analysis and Findings**

Based on responses to the LPI endorsed by the Generation Y Latinas, the following results are presented according to each of the five leadership themes:

(a) competence, (b) interpersonal relations, (c) management of others, (d) self-management and (e) communication.

### Competence

Competence refers to a leader’s ability to shape subordinates into sustainable future leaders. A person who possess competence is unafraid of disappointment and perseveres until they have achieved their goal (Dulin, 2005). The descriptive summaries for each item related to competence theme are shown in Table 4.1. As Table 4.1 shows, most of the Generation Y Latina college student participants agreed that leaders should provide opportunities for growth, not be afraid to take risks, exude authority, inspire others, and provide constructive feedback.

Table 4.1

*Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Competence, Among Generation Y Latina College Students*

Leadership Theme: Competence	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
A leader should have thorough knowledge of the organization (Q1)	2 (4.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (12.0)	42 (84.0)	4.72	0.83
A leader should not take risks (Q2)	11 (22.0)	33 (66.0)	5 (10.0)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	1.92	0.63
A leader should have vision (Q6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (4.0)	18 (36.0)	30 (60.0)	4.56	0.58
A leader should provide constructive feedback (Q13)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	16 (32.7)	33 (67.3)	4.67	0.47
A leader should meet the age-based needs of employees (Q18)	2 (4.0)	2 (4.0)	16 (32.0)	21 (42.0)	9 (18.0)	3.66	0.96
A leader should provide employees with opportunities for professional growth (Q21)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	18 (36.0)	32 (64.0)	4.64	0.48
A leader should reward quality work with financial and other rewards (Q25)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	10 (20.0)	25 (50.0)	14 (28.0)	4.04	0.75
A leader does not need to be friendly (Q29)	13 (26.0)	19 (38.0)	11 (22.0)	6 (12.0)	1 (2.0)	2.26	1.05
A leader should inspire others to follow (Q30)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (8.0)	26 (52.0)	20 (40.0)	4.32	0.62
A leader should project authority (Q35)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (4.0)	27 (54.0)	20 (40.0)	4.30	0.74

Note: Entries are all in N (%).

### Interpersonal Relations

What are the leadership preferences related to interpersonal relations from Generation Y Latina college students? Leaders with a focus on interpersonal relations have the ability to communicate clear expectations, respect differences in opinion, cultural perspectives, and provide encouragement to subordinates. Leaders with good interpersonal relationships are believed to have better chances of empowering their subordinates and, thus, they have greater opportunities to realize good outcomes (Dulin, 2005). The descriptive summaries for each item related to this theme are shown in Table 4.2, it shows that most of the Generation Y Latina college student participants agreed that leaders should treat everyone with respect, provide encouragement, praise employees when they earn it, and be approachable.

Table 4.2

*Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Interpersonal Relations, Among Generation Y Latina College Students*

Leadership Theme: <i>Interpersonal Relations</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
When required, a leader should be able to make sound decisions quickly (Q4)	0 (0.0)	2 (4.1)	2 (4.1)	30 (61.2)	15 (30.6)	4.18	0.70
A leader should model professional behavior (Q9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	18 (36.0)	32 (64.0)	4.64	0.48
A leader should develop a culture where diversity is valued (Q11)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (4.0)	14 (28.0)	34 (68.0)	4.64	0.56
A leader should communicate clear expectations (Q16)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	11 (22.0)	39 (78.0)	4.78	0.42
A leader should treat everyone with respect (Q19)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	11 (22.0)	38 (76.0)	4.74	0.49
A leader should implement family-friendly policies (Q26)	1 (2.0)	1 (2.0)	7 (14.0)	24 (48.0)	17 (34.0)	4.10	0.86
A leader should adapt his/her communication style to fit the occasion or person (Q31)	0 (0.0)	3 (6.0)	5 (10.0)	26 (52.0)	16 (32.0)	4.10	0.81
A leader should work well with others (Q36)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	16 (32.0)	34 (68.0)	4.68	0.47
A leader should be approachable (Q38)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	16 (32.0)	33 (66.0)	4.64	0.53
A leader should have a positive attitude (Q40)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	20 (40.0)	29 (58.0)	4.56	0.54
A leader should praise employee when they earn it (Q41)	0 (0.0)	2 (4.0)	8 (16.0)	28 (56.0)	12 (24.0)	4.00	0.76
A leader should provide encouragement (Q43)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	19 (38.8)	49 (61.2)	4.61	0.49

Note: Entries are all in N (%).

## Management of Others

What are the leadership preferences related to management of others from Generation Y Latina college students? Responses on positively worded items were collectively situated on the agreeing side (agree and strongly agree) while responses on negatively worded items (20 and 37) were situated collectively on the disagreeing side (disagree and strongly disagree). The means of the responses on positively worded items were above the score of 3 except for one questions (Q44), which means that the stated qualities were perceived and believed by the participants to be those that a leader must possess. The descriptive summaries for each item related to this theme are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

*Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Management of Others, Among Generation Y Latina College Students*

Leadership Theme: Management of Others	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
A leader should be intelligent (Q3)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	25 (50.0)	24 (48.0)	4.44	0.61
A leader should be willing to pitch in to get the job completed (Q5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	11 (22.0)	39 (78.0)	4.78	0.42
A leader should model ethical behavior (Q10)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (6.0)	15 (30.0)	32 (64.0)	4.58	0.61
A leader should be a problem solver (Q12)	2 (4.1)	1 (2.0)	1 (2.0)	27 (55.1)	18 (36.7)	4.18	0.91
A leader should make decisions without seeking input (Q20)	11 (22.0)	34 (68.0)	3 (6.0)	2 (4.0)	0 (0.0)	1.92	0.67
A leader should be able to implement effective conflict management strategies (Q22)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (4.0)	19 (38.0)	29 (58.0)	4.54	0.58
A leader should have a good sense of humor (Q32)	1 (2.0)	4 (8.0)	14 (28.0)	24 (48.0)	7 (14.0)	3.64	0.90
A leader should be unconcerned with employee work-life balance (Q37)	11 (22.0)	21 (42.0)	11 (22.0)	6 (12.0)	1 (2.0)	2.30	1.02
A leader should provide mentoring for employees (Q39)	0 (0.0)	3 (6.0)	3 (6.0)	24 (48.0)	20 (40.0)	4.22	0.82
A leader should unite people (Q42)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (6.0)	19 (38.0)	28 (56.0)	4.50	0.61
A leader recognizes that there is one best way to do a job (Q44)	9 (18.0)	24 (48.0)	7 (14.0)	8 (16.0)	2 (4.0)	2.40	1.09

Note: Entries are all in N (%).

As Table 4.3 shows, most of the Generation Y Latina college student participants agreed that leaders should be intelligent, provide mentoring, respect work-life balance, be a problem solver, and have a sense of humor.

### **Self-Management**

What are the leadership preferences related to self-management among Generation Y Latina college students? All survey items under the self-management theme were worded positively. Responses were situated collectively on the agreeing side (agree and strongly agree). The descriptive summaries for each item related to this theme are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

*Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Self-Management, Among Generation Y Latina College Students*

Leadership Theme: Self-Management	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
A leader should consider the future when making decisions (Q7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	18 (36.0)	32 (36.0)	4.64	0.48
A leader should consider the impact of his/her decisions on employees (Q14)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	14 (28.0)	35 (70.0)	4.68	0.51
A leader should set a positive example (Q15)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	8 (16.0)	42 (84.0)	4.84	0.37
When necessary, a leader should communicate with passion (Q23)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	19 (38.0)	30 (60.0)	4.58	0.54
A leader should control his/her emotions (Q27)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	11 (22.4)	22 (44.9)	16 (32.7)	4.10	0.74
A leader should set realistic expectations for employees (Q33)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	3 (6.0)	22 (44.0)	24 (48.0)	4.38	0.70

*Note:* Entries are all in *N* (%).

As Table 4.4 shows, most of the Generation Y Latina college student participants agreed that leaders should set a positive example, consider the future when making decisions, control their emotions, and set realistic expectations for their employees.

### **Communication**

What are the leadership preferences related to communication among Generation Y Latina college students? This leadership theme encompasses the ability of the leader to



create a fun work environment, communicate with confidence, and be trustworthy among others. These findings substantiate, again, that Millennial Latinas want friendship to go hand in hand with mentorship (Dulin, 2005). The descriptive summaries for each item related to this theme are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

*Descriptive Summary of the Leadership Preference, Communication, Among Generation Y Latina College Students*

Leadership Theme: <b>Communication</b>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
A leader should not be afraid to fail (Q8)	3 (6.0)	7 (14.0)	8 (16.0)	21 (42.0)	11 (22.0)	3.60	1.16
A leader does not have to be a good listener (Q17)	27 (54.0)	21 (42.0)	1 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	1.54	0.73
A leader should create a fun work environment (Q24)	0 (0.0)	5 (10.0)	6 (12.0)	22 (44.0)	17 (34.0)	4.02	0.94
A leader should communicate with confidence (Q28)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.0)	15 (30.0)	34 (68.0)	4.66	0.52
A leader should be trustworthy (Q34)	2 (4.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	11 (22.0)	37 (74.0)	4.62	0.85

Note: Entries are all in N (%).

As Table 4.5 shows, most of the Generation Y Latina college student participants agreed that leaders should communicate with confidence, create a fun work environment, be good listeners, and be trustworthy.

**Summary**

This chapter reviewed the present descriptive study’s responses to the items on the LPI across five major themes of leadership qualities. Chapter 5 summarizes the descriptive results, implications, and conclusions.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

### **Introduction**

What do Generation Y members want in their leaders? Little is known about the leadership characteristics desired by 18-25-year-old millennials or Generation Y individuals, who are now eligible to vote for their own leaders. While a few studies have begun to profile leadership preferences among Generation Y college student samples (Dulin, 2005) and African American Generation Y college students (Wells, 2011), no previous research has examined other U.S. ethnic groups using the Leadership Preference Inventory (Wells, 2011). Building upon the Dulin (2005) and Wells (2011) lines of research, this present study explored the preferences of another underserved group: the Generation Y Latina college students in the New York City metropolitan area. This discussion chapter summarizes the key findings, discusses implications, and provides conclusions.

Given that Generation Y Latinas in the U.S. appear to report very little awareness and knowledge about their own Latino leaders in public office or even what makes a leader (Pew Research Center, 2010, 2013), the purpose of this present study was to begin describing five types of leadership preferences (Wells, 2011) endorsed by a sample of Generation Y Latina college students who were born between 1981 and 2000 (McCrindle, 2002). Thus, the goal for this research was to identify Generation Y Latinas' leadership perceptions and identify leadership characteristics directly from them. Three theoretical lenses: muted group theory (Ardener, 1975; Kramarae, 1981), feminist

standpoint theory (Hartsock, 1983), and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), were chosen because they maintain that White American perceptions may not recognize the cultural, ethnic, and language variances that may exist among people of color or people of color's leadership preferences. Thus, an exploratory descriptive analysis was conducted with this particular group of color.

At a college in the northeast United States, 50 participants (or 15% of the total college-enrolled 18-25-year-old Latina population) completed the LPI, a 44-question leadership practices inventory. The five leadership themes measured by the LPI were: (a) competence or the ability to shape subordinates into future leaders, (b) interpersonal relations or the leader's ability to work with others, (c) management of others or the leader's ability to create a positive work environment, (d) self-management or a leader's ability to control his or her emotions in the workplace, and (e) communication or a leader's use of language to project authority and confidence to employees.

### **Major Findings**

According to Research Question 1, the present study profiled the leadership preferences relating to competence among Generation Y Latina college students. Most of the Generation Y Latina college student participants agreed that leaders should provide opportunities for growth, not be afraid to take risks, exude authority, inspire others, and provide constructive feedback. Research Question 2 discovered that the Generation Y Latina college student participants also profiled their leadership preferences relating to interpersonal relations. Most Generation Y Latina college students participants agreed that leaders should treat everyone with respect, provide encouragement, praise employees when they earn it, and be approachable. Research Question 3 revealed that, when it

comes to leadership preferences relating to the management of others, the Generation Y Latina college student participants in this study agreed that leaders should be intelligent, provide mentoring, respect work-life balance, be a problem solver, and have a sense of humor. According to Research Question 4, when it comes to their leadership preferences relating to self-management, the Generation Y Latina college student participants mostly agreed that leaders should set a positive example, consider the future when making decisions, control their emotions, and set realistic expectations for employees. Finally, this present study determined that with Research Question 5, when it comes to their leadership preferences relating to communication, the Generation Y Latina college student participants agreed that leaders should communicate with confidence, create a fun work environment, be good listeners, and be trustworthy.

**High level of uncertainty responses.** The questions that yielded the *uncertain* response is a primary indicator that this population has not yet entered the career workforce, but rather, they are still in the job phase of their lives. There were uncertainties in each of the five categories. Specifically, 50 (10.02%) responses from the competence theme, 27 (4.93%) responses from the interpersonal relations theme, 47 (8.56%) responses from the management of others theme, 16 (5.35%) responses from the self-management theme, and 16 (6.40%) responses from the communication theme were uncertain, indicating that the Millennial Latinas who participated in this study were not fully aware of the qualities that a leader must possess.

In aligning the five themes for this study (competence, interpersonal relations, management of others, self-management, and communication), which emerged from the Dulin (2005) study, to this Millennial Latina study, the following observation was drawn:

Millennial Latinas have neither worked in a career setting, nor in a job, long enough to formulate dependable and robust opinions. Albeit that Millennial Latinas do not have experience in their careers, the responses to the survey revealed that they do have a basic grasp on leadership.

### **Findings Related to the Literature**

The results on Generation Y Latina leadership preferences in this present study appear to be consistent with those reported by other Generation Y samples, as reported by Dulin (2005) and Wells (2011). Dulin (2005) documented that all Generation Y ethnic groups reported the same leadership preferences using the LPI. Dulin (2005) also found that a mean comparison of gender responses between male and female subjects revealed no major dissimilarities (statistically) in the underlying variables communication, competence, and self-management. The results of the Dulin (2005) study confirmed that the Millennial cohort favors leaders who are both mentors and friends. This study, among Generation Y Latinas studies, draws the same conclusion: Millennial Latinas desire a symbiosis of friendship and mentorship (Dulin, 2005). The Wells (2011) study, which focused on African American millennials, studied only the ethnicity, not genders. The Wells (2011) study cannot be compared directly to this study, as Wells (2011) did not report how the genders responded, only the ethnicity. Wells (2011) also stated that the African American millennial participants were in alignment with the Dulin (2005) population. The Wells (2011) study was instrumental in creating an analysis that focused on possible millennial ethnic variations in leadership preferences.

Future studies should focus on comparing the Latinas with their Latino male counterparts. It is important to note that the anchor study (Dulin, 2005) did not provide a

window into Generation Y Latina perspectives of leadership, it but provided the tool to gather future research on leadership preferences. Other groups need to be examined, using the LPI. It is important to understand that the Dulin (2005) LPI was not designed for comparative use but to be disseminated amongst Millennial researchers who desire to understand Generation Y leadership traits and focus in on ethnicity and gender differences. The LPI is a foundational tool to get a grasp on Millennial traits; however, the Generation Y characteristics do not account for nuances such as intersectionality. This research produced no anomalies in that it was the goal of this research to prove that Generation Y Latinas have a clear concept of leadership.

If future researchers look for ethnicity comparisons between this study and Wells (2011), the overall Hispanic/Latino numbers would be the reference point and the conclusion could be drawn that Generation Y Latinos (male and female) think similarly about leadership as the Generation Y Latinas (female only) from this study. The mixed-method study, developed by Dulin (2005), created the five leadership themes (qualitative results of that study). The LPI, which was developed from the five leadership themes, became the quantitative result. The LPI disseminated to a millennial cohort sample as a method to espouse, modify, or disprove the results of the qualitative segment of the research (Dulin, 2005).

### **Implications**

This study uncovered the following implications on millennial Latina perceptions of leadership. The findings are consistent with the theoretical framework developed for this study. The areas that feature prominently in the data analysis are mentoring

opportunities, leadership practices and literature, which will be an impetus for further study.

### **Evidence of Theoretical Framework**

**Social identity theory.** Defined as a sense of which a person is, based upon their group memberships (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The Dulin (2005) theme, management of others, connects to this theoretical lens. In this study, the two groups (intersectionality) represented are millennials (generation) and Latinas (ethnicity).

**Feminist standpoint theory.** Enhancing the literature on Generation Y Latinas from data in this study will create a blueprint for Generation Z Latinas (born in 2001-present). Generation Y and Generation Z Latinas' journeys will be different and FST can speak to that phenomenon. Feminist standpoint states that although a woman wants to be empowered, their stories and bodies of knowledge are different (Hartsock, 1983). Millennial Latinas are women of color, but their journey, successes, and stories are different from African American millennial women.

**Muted group theory.** Millennial Latinas are not silent in the workplace and they are observant of workplace culture. They understand the hierarchy and the role that management plays in nurturing employee growth. Millennial Latinas are not muted; they speak up and give their opinions. It is important to note that every response that fell beneath the interpersonal relations theme obtained affirmation.

**Mentoring.** The need for mentoring, as manifested in the LPI responses and provided a foundational context for this research. It reminds the reader that social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) exhibits insights into how the participants move into leadership roles as women. Lopéz and Hasso (1998) focused on collegiate women and

compared ways in which Latina and Arab American college students experienced their cultural identity in the collegiate setting. Latinas struggled because there was a lack of professors and administrators who looked like them. Recruitment of faculty, which resembles the student body, is integral for retention of the Latina student body. The Latina professors and administrators are a possible pool of mentors for collegiate Latinas.

**Leadership practices.** Latina leaders identify as transformational leaders (Bonilla-Rodriguez, 2011). Burns (1978) stated that transformational leaders work with their employees and inspire them through creative vision and making changes where needed. Bartunek et al. (2000) stated that assertiveness and forward thinking is needed in the workplace, and it is relative because Generation Y Latinas will enter the workforce and observe the atmosphere and behave accordingly. Generation Y Latinas will find a symbiosis between culture and career goals and, by having a positive role model or mentor, will aid in their journey to success. Dulin (2005) recognized that the leadership theme, management of others, aligned with 11 out of the 44 survey questions, as did Wells (2011). This leadership theme indicates that a leader has the capability to engage, manage others, and solve problems proficiently (Ardichvili et al., 2009) and the ability of the leader to mentor and unite employees. Millennial Latinas know that a leader should take risks, not be afraid to make decisions, and move the organization forward. Albeit that this population is enrolled in college (not yet graduated and into their career as designated by their degree), they are very clear on what leadership qualities a manager should possess. Students are not aware of theoretically based leadership models; however, as they move forward in their careers, leadership styles emerge.



**Literature.** Millennial Latina studies are very limited in scope; however, they are emerging. This study will add significantly to understanding of their social justice needs and their educational and employment goals. Academic literature that provides a deeper understanding of Generation Y Latinas has focused only on workplace habits, not professional development (Gloria et al., 2005). For this instance, professional development would create programs, in which employees could join in order to advance their careers. Management programs and mentoring programs would fit this ideal. The average American and researcher does not know enough about this population and the conversations must begin with an understanding of who they are (Rivera, 2014). This research is a springboard to understanding how to better service this population, the Generation Y Latinas.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations for future research should include: researching a wider population of collegiate millennial Latinas via focus groups (qualitative study), recruitment of Latina faculty and administrators and developing mentoring programs. The research population who participated were students at a small, private, urban liberal arts college in New York City. The survey could be distributed to Generation Y Latinas in a larger educational environment, like the City University of New York (CUNY), which has 24 campuses throughout New York City's five boroughs. In addition, the qualitative research for this population is integral. Focus groups would allow for the narratives of their journey to leadership.

Recruitment of Latina faculty and administrators is essential for millennial Latina collegiate retention. Generation Y Latina students often do not have a support system or

someone to relate to. Specifically, they lack professors who look like them (Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003). Higher education institutions have few Latinas in executive positions (president, vice presidents, or deans) and millennial Latina students struggle to find a comfort zone (Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003). The comfort zone where Generation Y Latinas see and interact with college/university leadership who are Latinos, figures millennial Latinas can tap into as role models, such as professors. Generation Y Latinas who are supported by Latino faculty have better transitions into higher education and better retention, getting them through to graduation (Hurtado & Kamimura, 2003).

California State University at Fullerton's president, Dr. Mildred García, transformed her campus, and it is now the largest Hispanic-serving college in the United States. Dr. García was a first-generation college graduate and shares that with her students. California State Fullerton, which she assumed the presidency in 2012, now graduates more Latino students than any other California campus, and it is the second most nationwide. During Dr. García's tenure, the campus enrolled 40,439 students for the academic year (FA17) and improved its four-year graduation rate by 65% (Xia, 2017). Dr. García is in a key visual position for Generation Y Latina college students to feel empowered and view leadership from someone who looks like them.

Millennial Latina positionality allows this population to express their personal values and perspectives, which influences how they comprehend their surroundings (the world). In this context, class, gender, race, and other aspects of identities are indicators of social standings. Generation Y Latinas are thriving despite the political climate in the United States, which threatens many of their relatives and friends (deportation). The

Dreamers are just that—here in the United States to achieve the American dream of success.

Mentoring partnerships are developed when gender and ethnic backgrounds overlap, according to Méndez-Morse (2000), and this phenomenon is visible with White men in leadership roles. Developing mentorship programs for Generation Y Latinas via avenues like club and organizational memberships are key avenues to leadership (Méndez-Morse, 2004). Comas-Diaz (2010) similarly stated that having a mentor is the key to Latina academic success, and Bordes (2005) investigated the relationship between university-based mentoring programs and Latina students' comfort in the university environment. Colley and Cooper (2011) echo Méndez-Morse (2004) in that mentorship is a necessary tool to take on leadership roles. The support and retention of Latina students and the ultimate attainment of a degree will allow these women to become leaders in their respective communities and professions. The retention of Latina students and the ultimate attainment of a degree will enable them to become leaders in their respective communities. Solid mentoring programs could assist in the leadership process (Sy, 2008). Dulin (2005) also stated that millennial Latinas want their leaders either to be mentors or to provide mentors for them, with the rationale that veterans in the workplace can impart their knowledge to the less experienced. In addition to Latinas labeled transformational leaders, the distribution leadership profile also fits this population. Distribution leadership (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001) creates insight into how leadership takes place among the people and within the context of a complex organization. Combining transformational and distribution leadership would give Generation Y Latinas a foundation to not only succeed in their careers but to move into mentorship positions,

after they have gained significant leadership experience. Both of these leadership styles allow for significant professional relationship building, which circles back to Dulin (2005), where Generation Y wants friendship and mentorship.

## **Conclusion**

Generation Y Latinas' perceptions of leadership were defined through this quantitative study. A sample population of millennial Latinas completed a 44-question survey LPI. Dulin (2005) designed a mixed-methods study to create a leadership preference profile for understanding Generation Y employees, regardless of ethnicity or gender. Dulin (2005) recommended further research of millennial leadership preferences and this research has answered the call.

Previous research states that Millennial Latinas do not understand leadership (Pew Research Center, 2010). This study has proven that, not only do millennial Latinas understand what leadership is but they also understand what qualities they expect their leadership to possess and how they want to be led. Millennial Latinas understand that education is integral to their personal growth. Generation Y Latinas hold onto family values while working to achieve their academic and professional goals. Their families and social circles are not demanding that they be relegated to the jobs that many of their predecessors held (domestic/homemaker). When a millennial Latina receives her 4-year degree, she receives it with the blessing and support of her family—they walk across the stage with her, as reflected by the St. Francis College Valedictorian, who is Ecuadorian American. This Generation Y Latina study was filtered through three theoretical lenses: muted group, feminist standpoint, and social identity. The millennial Latinas in this study fit the profile of each of these theories; however, through the LPI, they have proven that

these theories are not a hindrance to their educational, professional, and personal goals. A seat at the table will give Generation Y Latinas the opportunity to move into leadership roles and create a blueprint for Generation Z Latinas.

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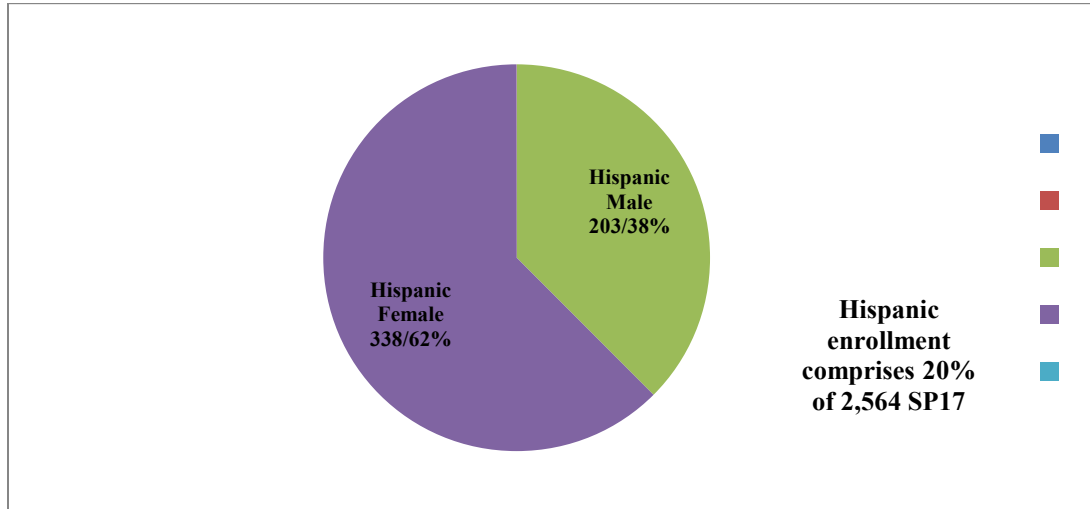
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## Appendix A

### Urban College Hispanic Enrollment SP17



## Appendix B

### IRB Approval from St. Francis College



November 16, 2016

Michelle P. Steven  
Department of Communications  
St. Francis College  
180 Remsen Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

This is to inform you that the approval of your project entitled “*A Seat At The Table: First Generation College-Enrolled Millennial Latinas Perception of Leadership.*” has been extended by the St. Francis College Institutional Review Board (SFCIRB) under the rules for exempt review (Category #3). It is our understanding that the survey regarding students’ experiences is anonymous.

This approval continues to be conditional upon your agreement to follow the procedures outlined in your proposal. Please note that any modifications to the methodology or procedure, including the addition of any survey or other assessment materials, must be reported to the IRB before any changes in the protocol take place. A representative from the SFCIRB will be available to take part in any training, if requested. Note that it is also customary for researchers to submit a summary of their results to the IRB once these are compiled.

This approval is good for one year from the date of this letter. For your information, the files of the SFCIRB are housed in the Office of the Provost (Dr. Timothy Houlihan). Good luck with your project.

Respectfully,



## **Appendix C**

### Letter of Introduction to Participants

Hello!

You are cordially invited to take my survey, which is the data portion of my doctoral research. The research being conducted is to better understand how Generation Y Latinas perceive leadership.

The current academic research on this population is limited, and your participation is very important in understanding academic needs, social justice views, and leadership expectations.

If you fit the criteria:

1. Identify as female
2. Identify as Latina (having family origins, for example, in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, Puerto Rico, Panama, Belize, Dominican Republic, and Uruguay – if your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents were born there, that counts).

If you do not fit the criteria above, please share with a friend who is qualified and attends this college.

Many thanks!!