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Cultural Identity of And Implications for Later Generational Hispanic and Latino Populations In The United States

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**Cultural Identity of And Implications for Later Generational Hispanic and Latino
Populations In The United States**

By

Tara Bustamante

A culminating thesis submitted to the faculty of Dominican University of California in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy

Dominican University of California

San Rafael, CA

2023

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Abstract

This study explores the Hispanic and Latino/x/e cultures within the United States, with a particular focus on the concept of identity within these communities and its implications for third and later generations. Data were collected during the pandemic via an online survey and art directive. The student researcher used the Identity Denial Scale (Albuja et al., 2019) to measure how often the participants' identity is denied within the United States and then used an art therapy prompt to invite participants to create their own self-portrait in conjunction with their authentic self and self-image. Qualitative data were also used in response to a vignette portraying a character experiencing imposter syndrome. Whereas 51 people signed the consent form for the project, 12 completed the study. First-generation ($n = 3$), second-generation ($n = 6$), and third-generation ($n = 3$) individuals identifying as Latina or Hispanic participated. First- and second-generation participants scored low but still had problems with their identity. Third-generation participants scored the highest on the Identity Denial Scale but coped well with due to familial ties and support. Overall, based on the qualitative data collected, the findings of this small study showed that the younger participants would benefit from therapeutic intervention. The third-generation conveyed the feeling that their identity was denied but they conveyed the notion that their place was secure.

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Chapter I: Introduction

The Western world is a melting pot of rich and diverse culture, with North America having 44.8 million immigrants in 2018 (Budiman et al., 2020). Twenty five percent of incoming immigrants to the United States are from Mexico, 8% are from the remaining regions of Central America, and 7.4% of immigrants are South American (Budiman et al., 2020). Nearly half of all immigrants come from a country that falls under the umbrella terms Hispanic or Latino/x/e, and while many studies are conducted on immigrant populations under this broad label, it is very rare to see a study of a population that has already been assimilated.

It is assumed that by the later generations, individuals have not only lost their culture but their language as well (Duarte, 2007). It is here that psychological studies begin to taper off. There is significantly less research done on later generation Latino/x/e and Hispanic Americans, such as those in the third and fourth. These Latino/x/e are generationally assimilated into American culture or the cultural norms and are left with bits and pieces of their heritage. It can be difficult for individuals who grow up belonging to a certain cultural group to have limited knowledge of their traditions or language. Especially when their membership in that group is readily apparent to others by their appearance, there is a lot of room for scrutiny and shame towards that individual and within the self. One's understanding of identity as compared to one's group membership may elicit feelings of shame.

2020s Perspective

This paper has an incredibly American-based perspective. The topic and the subject are something that potentially only Americans care about and may not be even recognized outside of the US. The student researcher is aware of the "woke" politics surrounding the United States, as well as the push back from the remainder of the world. The student researcher understands that

the use of Latino “/x/e” may not be an acceptable way to address Latinos not only in the US but in general. Nevertheless, the student researcher would like to respect those that wish to be more inclusive with their language. The student researcher would also like to acknowledge that the terms Latino/x/e and Hispanic are used in this paper but they are very American (US) terms and do not represent all the Latin Americans in the United States. It is the researcher’s perspective that we should address individuals with designations that refer to their place of origin, such as Mexican, Salvadorean, and Colombian, with the understanding that there are more Spanish-speaking nations besides Mexico that neighbor our country.

Art Therapy During COVID-19

At the beginning of the year 2020, humans encountered a virus that affected the entirety of our modern civilization. With the stay-at-home orders due to COVID-19, multiple mental health struggles emerged ranging from pent-up stress from isolation to ensuing trauma of watching the world fall into such a state (Braus & Morton, 2020). During the course of this study, plans changed with the pandemic looming. Suddenly everything had to become online participation only, and this drastically changed the way this study was conducted. The impact on the study directly reflects the results that will be discussed in later chapters.

Theoretical Orientation

Positive psychology is an approach to psychology that focuses on building strengths rather than focusing on weaknesses. Ackerman (2018) further stated that positive psychology, in short, focuses on positive experiences (focusing more on the feelings aspect, such as love and joy), positive traits (e.g., personality traits, such as strength, perseverance, or kindness), and positive institutions (applying positive elements and fundamentals to entire organizations). Peterson (2006) characterized positive psychology as “the study of what makes life most worth

living.” (p. 4). This student researcher created her study using the fundamentals of positive psychology and used the *positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment* (PERMA) model (Chu, 2020) to discuss the implications of cultural identity within the Hispanic and Latino/x/e communities in the U.S.

Research Study

The research study examined the use of self-portraiture in art therapy among the later generational Latino/x/e population as a way to explore their ability to cope with cultural imposter syndrome. It aimed at investigating the American Latino/x/e experience and how they would respond when being asked to show their authentic self through art, the aim of which would be to allow for a better understanding of this population and to be better equipped when serving this population in a mental health setting. Ultimately, this thesis addressed not only the need to see more mental health care for the Latino/x/e populations of the United States but to also show that art therapy is an absolutely viable option when treating all kinds of populations.

Research Questions

The main research questions that served to guide this study were as follows:

1. How do Latino/x/e or Hispanic adults conceptualize their racial and cultural identity using art therapy to depict authenticity and combat imposter syndrome?
2. Is there a relationship between authenticity and the self found in art therapy self-portraits?

Hypotheses

The study tested examined hypotheses:

H1: There will be significant empathy felt by the participants when discussing identity and it will be reflected in their writing and artistic representation of their authentic self;

H2: There will be a significant response and completion of the survey by the community.

H3: The Identity Denial Scale combined with an empathetic cultural impostor story will demonstrate that later generational Latino/e/x individuals feel between cultures.

Implications

Expectations were high for this study. People often have many things to say, but it is one thing to say something and another to be seen. An aim of the research was to help give the Hispanic and Latino/x/e community a voice within the art therapy world. The concept of art therapy was introduced to a community largely held together through familial bonds and traditions. In the future, any understanding gained from this work may help other art therapists and the field of art therapy when working with clients of the Hispanic or Latino/x/e backgrounds.

Summary

This aim of this study was to explore and confront the ideas of cultural norms and how they are applied within communities. The student researcher designed this study to take the reader through the history of the Hispanic and Latino/x/e communities in the United States of America and explore what it means to be a descendant of the early waves of immigration. The upcoming chapters will present the literature on family norms and further explore what it's like to be a later generational Hispanic or Latino/x/e individual.

Chapter II: Literature Review

In this next chapter, the student researcher will review the relevant literature on this topic and discuss the cultural implications from the perspective of the student researcher. The student researcher will introduce the Hispanic and Latino/e/x movements throughout the United States and how these affect the current generation of Hispanic and Latino/e/x individuals. Positive psychology and its emphasis on meaning, empathy, and authenticity will be presented to the reader, as well as the concepts of art therapy, self-portraiture, digital art therapy, and photography art therapy.

The main aim of this study was to delve deeper into cultural divides that assimilation into new countries creates. Immigrants come into the United States of America in search of greater opportunities, and while there is trauma attached to uprooting, many researchers do not examine what happens after that occurs. Generations are born from these immigrants and cultures are built and destroyed. These individuals may feel stuck between cultures or may find themselves experiencing different cultural norms at home compared to public spaces (e.g., school, work).

Hispanic and Latino Cultures in the United States

Hispanic and Latino/x/e cultures are complex and colorful. They are the fastest growing minority group in the US, estimated to comprise 25% of the U.S. population by 2050 (Villatoro et al., 2014). When describing these minority groups, it is important to note that the terms *Hispanic* and *Latino/x/e* are widely used in the US and are composed of many different cultures. On the world stage, one would refer to these individuals with respect to their place of origin, such as Mexican, Salvadorean, and Colombian.

The Hispanic and Latino/x/e community have a long standing history in the US with parts of the South West United States and California being under Spanish rule; even so, these

communities are still treated as first-generation immigrants. The student researcher will study these later generational families, and in this way begin to unfold the immigration image.

Terminology

Hispanic is a term used to describe Spanish-speaking individuals, excluding Brazilians. This word was created in the 1970s by the U.S. Census Bureau (Gershon, 2020). *Hispanic* became a widely used term, in part due to television giants like Univision and Unidos, the U.S. Civil Rights organization formerly known as National Council of La Raza (NCLR; Gershon, 2020). Unidos US was unable to collect census data on Mexican Americans and was searching for a way to collect this data (Gershon, 2020). They eventually created the Spanish Origin Advisory Committee, which was composed of Cuban Americans, Puerto Rican Americans, and Mexican Americans. This committee pushed for a new category in the U.S. Census Bureau to help define additional ways to identify Latin American ethnicities (Gershon, 2020). Univision was only shown to what was perceived as the Mexican American sections of the US (San Antonio and Los Angeles), but when the term Hispanics was deployed, Univision realized it could reach a wider Spanish-speaking audience using the term Hispanic (Gershon, 2020)

The term Latino was interchanged with the word Hispanic and is a shortening of the word Latino Americano or the Spanish word for Latin America. The term *Latino* deemphasized the connection to Spain. However, it again lumped many different cultures into one (Simon, 2020).

Latinx has emerged in recent years as a broadly used term that avoids having the male gender stand for the entire population. Some may argue that this term does not fit well with natural Spanish. Some have even called it non-Latino imposed. Currently, only 3% of Latinos use the term, Latinx but it has gained more popularity in the late 2010s and continues to grow in prevalence (Simon, 2020).

Latine is akin to the term Latinx, but it is more natural for Spanish speakers. For example, it is much easier for Spanish speakers to say *amigues* rather than *amigux* in place of amigos. Both Latinx and Latine emerge at a time in which many are trying to bring gender-neutral terms to traditionally gendered languages (Noe-Bustamante et al., 2020). These terms are important to be mindful of because they are connected to the identity of many. When it comes to defining one's identity, Taylor et al. (2012) found that most Hispanics prefer to use their own country of origin over pan-ethnic terms. It is important to note that 33% prefer the term Hispanic and a mere 18% prefer Latino, whereas the rest preferred to be called by their native country. The desire to preserve one's national origin remains very strong. Nearly half of Latinos (47%) view themselves as typical Americans, whereas the other 47% believe they are different from typical Americans (Taylor et al., 2012). Lopez et al. (2020) stated that the closer individuals are with their immigrant roots, the more likely they will identify as a Hispanic. By the third generation of American children with American parents, self-identification as Hispanic falls by 77%. It is important to note the polarizing effects that labeling has in the US and how it leads us to question the effects it may have on members of these different communities.

Familismo and Mental Health

Familismo is a term that denotes the intense attachment of a Latino/x/e's identity to the essence of their family (Villatoro et al., 2014). The family creates a natural support system for all issues, including emotional distress. Considering help from outside the family may cause shame within the family and statements of resentment may occur. Hispanic and Latinos have a strong loyalty towards family members, and because of this, they can be misdiagnosed. Behaviors could inadvertently end up misinterpreted as dependence or immaturity (Ceballos et al., 2020). Care

must be taken when working with Latinos, as their family-based culture is not in line within the typical Anglo American cultural norms, which most therapy practices are based on.

Latino/x/e History

This modern story begins with Haiti at the Inter American Conference on Problems of War and Peace in 1945 (Ortiz, 2018). After WW2, America looked to expand their imperialist nation. As one of the smaller countries, Haiti brought forth a resolution that stated the following:

Whereas the practice of racial discrimination is not only contrary to the positive reports and conclusions of scientists, but is also in formal contradiction of the Christian doctrine on which our civilization is based . . . Therefore, the Conference on Problems of War and Peace resolves to recommend to the governments of the American Republics the complete abolition of all political regulations or actions which make possible discriminations against people, based upon race, religion or nationality. (Ortiz, 2018, p. 144)

This resolution eventually turned into the Act of Chapultepec, which was first utilized by a Mexican American family in California after they challenged four school districts on the unfairness of segregation. This became the Mendez v Westminster Supreme Court case and predated Brown v Board by 8 years, leading California to become the first state to apply desegregation. During the 2-week trial, the family attorney provided “social science evidence to support his argument that segregation resulted in feelings of inferiority among Mexican-American children that could undermine their ability to be productive Americans” (United States Courts, n.d., Unusual Trial Evidence, para. 1). However, although they won the case, discrimination, educational segregation, voting rights, and ethnic stereotyping were principle issues of activists, which will be discussed further.

The Bracero Era and National Farmworkers Association (NFWA)

The Bracero program was a guest worker program that the US and Mexico signed, which lasted from 1942 through 1964. It allowed Mexican men to work in the US legally on short-term labor contracts (Library of Congress, n.d.a). It often coincided with worker exploitation and small strikes that were usually forgotten (Ortiz, 2018). The United Farm Workers was founded by Caesar Chaves and Dolores Huertas alongside other activists who defended farmworkers and protected their rights through nonviolent boycotts and marches, which eventually gained workers higher wages and improved working conditions (Library of Congress, n.d.b). These movements coincided with the Chicano identity and Civil Rights Movements.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is so often associated with the “I have a dream” speech that many forget he was a pioneer in trying to end poverty and believed that the hardest working Americans were in fact the poor (Ortiz, 2018). It is crucial to understand that all minorities of the Civil Rights eras had a fundamental understanding that they could fight for their rights and they were allowed the freedom to do so under the constitution of the United States of America. In 1965, all across the nation’s sunbelt, African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, and Filipinos joined together to create the largest union for farm workers’ rights. Most notably the work of the National Farmworkers Association (NFWA) led by Caesar Chavez in conjunction with AWOOC (Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee) in California ultimately led to the director of the Congress of Racial Equality to call for farm working jobs to be held under the protection of the federal minimum wage. In King’s (1967 as cited in Ortiz, 2018) explanation of his support over the boycotts he stated, “Many [W]hite Americans of good will have never connected bigotry with economic exploitation” (p. 155).

The Chicano Movement

Due to the lack of research on the third and later generational Latino/x/e communities, the Chicano/a movements of the 1960s became the main focus. The Chicano movement coincided with the Black power and Women's rights movements. During this era, there was a sort of cultural renaissance of many different groups fighting for change in the US. The Chicano movement was not unified, but it consisted of many movements and mainly focused on Mexican Americans. This movement largely focused on getting the younger generations of Mexican Americans into higher education. This education was to provide them with more options than merely working in the fields, as well as to demonstrate their ability to excel in the workforce in other capacities (Rodriguez, 1996).

Generational Anxieties

These movements and happenings help to shed light on the major anxieties of the Hispanic and Latino/x/e communities of the past, as well as an understanding of where the Hispanic and Latino/x/e populations stand now. Being treated equally specifically in the workforce and educational settings has been an issue through the decades since the era of Civil Rights. However, the biggest issue has to do with whether the Hispanic and Latino/x/e population fit into the solid molds of White or Black cultures? Abad-Merino et al. (2013) stated that the Latino/x/e person is likely to be excluded from the American national identity because they do not have a long-standing history, as Whites and Blacks do. The fierce prejudicial assumptions that Hispanics are "lazy" or "unclean" or "illegal" are projected by pop culture, and Latino/x/es are often depicted poorly in the media (Oboler 1995:14; Giménez 1999; Golash-Boza, 2006; Young 2000). Hispanics and Latino/x/e are likely to be exposed to some type of discrimination in their lifetime (Golash-Boza, 2006). Classic immigration theory has been under

scrutiny for decades now, however, at the time, Warner and Srole (1945) suggested that assimilation into the dominant culture was what was needed in order to maintain social cohesion. Golash-Boza (2006) stated that the main component of assimilation theory suggests that ethnic distinctiveness will eventually disappear from the children of immigrants in the United States, and, through the work of scholars, many immigrants connect being American with being White. It is also assumed that the average American with Hispanic features can be deemed as foreign (Golash-Boza, 2006). Many Latino/x/e in the US who are not perceived as White will face discrimination and are less likely to be viewed as Americans (Golash-Boza, 2006)

Imposter Syndrome

Clance and Imes (1978) first coined the term *imposter syndrome* or *imposter phenomenon* in their paper. In this phenomenon, despite one's own achievements, one may believe that they are not good enough to be in the position they are in. Mann (2019) stated that there are three characteristics that define imposter syndrome:

A belief that others have an ill-fated view of one's abilities or skills, the fear one will be found out and exposed as fake, and the belief that one's own success is due to external factors such as good luck. (p. 2)

Imposter syndrome is not a classified mental health illness in the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders* (DSM-5), but it continues to affect people in all aspects of life. Some of the main causes are bullying, religious belief, social comparison, and appearance (Mann, 2019). These attribution biases help contribute to the feeling of being inadequate, whereas microaggressions can gradually transform one's psyche into a state of uneasiness.

Cultural imposter syndrome occurs when despite one's own history or background individuals do not feel "good enough" to claim their identity. When adding a racialized view to imposter syndrome, one begins to see the racism that accompanies this term. The assimilation into Anglo American standards and culture while relying heavily on code switching, which is the practice of adjusting one's style of speech, expression, or behaviors in a way that comforts others and trades for fair treatment and equal opportunities (McCluney et al., 2019), creates a block or barrier to one's true identity. Racism comes from assuming one's race or blatantly stating that one is not enough to be a certain race. Assimilation and racism may also fall under the original categories of bullying, social comparison, and appearance.

A study led by psychology researchers at Michigan State University (2011) found that people who identify strongly with their racial identity are generally happier. This connection to who we are as a human is incredibly important and is a larger influence when it comes to identifiers. If someone is told that they do not fit into their own culture or race, it can have unhealthy ramifications. The divergence between cultures is how identity forms, but what happens when one is asked to hold more than one space? In recent years, there has been more immigration between the United States than ever before, with 44.8 million immigrants living in the US today (Budiman et al., 2020). For people who grow up between cultures, they may never feel like they quite fit in. By facing persistent prejudice, bullying, and others who lack cultural knowledge, individuals may not feel so welcome in their own country. The lack of validation one experiences from coming from a mixed background or having immigrated to a new country can damage the sense of self and wellbeing.

Identity and Intersectionality

Identity is defined by Merriam Webster (2023) as “the distinguishing character or personality of an individual or the relation established by psychological identification” (para. 1). Yet, how does someone develop an identity? When Erikson first posited his developmental model, he included an identity crisis, which occurs in the fifth stage, *identity vs. role confusion* (Narsaria, 2022). A crisis ensues when the identity begins to form while dealing with developmental achievements. This stage of development rises to prominence in the adolescent age, which occurs between the ages of 12 and 24. At the end of adolescence, if individuals successfully navigate their crisis, they are thought to have achieved an independent identity more or less (Narsaria, 2022).

Harter and Monsur (1992) stated that “as we grow older, we continue to create and grow different identities for different aspects of our life. Adolescents often shift the need to be outgoing to the forefront and feelings of depression slide to the back burner” (p. 251). During our formative years of youth, we have multiple influences around us. Many of the values we grow up with are instilled within us as a youth, and our views continue to grow around this basis. When considering identity, we must be conscious of which one is being portrayed. Identity can be labeled as a career, parent, advocate, or all of the above. Humans are complex creatures and trying to understand the whole of what we are is a difficult task. Identity is also rooted in both individual and group experiences. Identity can be negatively disrupted through bullying, tragedy, emotional neglect, lack of attunement, and/or abuse. These identity disruptors can lead to low self-esteem and low self-confidence, in turn making individuals more vulnerable to developing issues like imposter syndrome.

While the information covered on traditional identity is based on a Caucasian Western model, this notion of Western identity does not take into account intersectionality, where identities are formed in and between different cultures. Because of intersectionality, and specifically due to the development of racial identity, women of color do not fit within the “identity” conceptualized by the White, male scientists of the 19th century. Instead, the totality of the life that they are experiencing must be examined, including issues of personal circumstances and socio-political stances. Further inquiry into intersectional analysis shows that the main focus lies in the multiple social locations individuals with multiple identities inhabit and its complexity as a lived human experience. Talwar (2019) noted, “A practice based in intersectionality rejects received opinion and seeks a richer context for social inequality” (p. 40). Using intersectionality, we can begin to deconstruct the perceived notion of identity and begin to examine the complex string that creates a unique individual.

Within the Hispanic and Latino communities, a delicate balance exists between family and social cultures. Code switching between school and home further creates a dynamic that one must manage by living between. Basnight-Brown and Altarriba (2007) defined code switching “as switching between languages based on changes in the speech situation, where the topic or members of the conversation change” (p. 69). It is not uncommon for the child of an immigrant family to be the sole English translator for the family. A later generational family member may not even speak Spanish but still finds themselves at a crossroads of cultures, adjusting for whatever cultural norm they may be in at the moment.

Cultural Competency

Cultural competency is highly important when working with a group as wide and diverse as Hispanic and Latinos/e/x. The ability to understand and communicate with the many cultures

that fall under the guise of Hispanic or Latino is important in creating positive experiences within the health communities. Flynn et al. (2020) reported that the three biggest cultural domains when it comes to competence in healthcare are beliefs/attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Chu et al. (2022) described cultural competency as being the “core value of professional psychology” (p. 363). In 2017, the American Psychological Association released *multicultural guidelines*, which lay the groundwork for psychologists to conduct a culturally competent practice. These multicultural guidelines include recognition that the therapist is a cultural individual who holds attitudes and beliefs that can influence their therapeutic practices. Our beliefs and attitudes reflect our own biases and personal values. Our biases and the values we hold shape our own viewpoints of the client and our relationship to them. When practicing, the therapist must aim to go beyond their own worldview rooted in assumptions and biases and develop a practice that is based on the ability to recognize how language and communication of themselves, as well as that of their clients, affects their interactions. Cultural knowledge is the knowledge and awareness of the client’s beliefs and values. The guidelines stipulate that identity and self-recognition are flexible and complicated, and psychologists must acknowledge the intersectionality that is shaped by the array of the individuals’ social contexts, interactions, and forms of communications (American Psychological Association, 2017). This also means that psychologists must be aware of their work in a social and physical environment (American Psychological Association, 2017). Globalization has had an impact on the role of the individual; therefore, a professional must aim to remain informed and to be able to conduct appropriate research, teaching, consultation, within their own work (American Psychological Association, 2017). Lastly the skills point to the ability to communicate and navigate sessions in a culturally sensitive manner (Flynn et al., 2020).

Self-Portraiture

Art historians widely regard the Renaissance as the birth of self-portraits as a genre (Carbon 2017; Gombrich, 2005). The 1400s brought forth the beginning of the Renaissance and a great invention known as the mirror (Carbon, 2017; Melchior-Bonnet, 2001). With the rebirth of free thinking and modern technology, the Renaissance artists developed the self-portrait as a way to own one's image, as well as expressing to the public a certain image (Carbon, 2017). Self-portraits allow the artist to reflect on how they see themselves and help establish a concept of self and identity. According to Gallese (2022), self-portraits may be considered to be more emotionally charged due to the close nature of the portrait as opposed to a painter painting another person. The relationship between the artist and themselves becomes important as the artist provides the viewer with an insight into their own personality (Gallese, 2022; West 2004).

In the 1830s a new medium emerged, photography. Those in the art world have debated whether or not photography gives the artist agency or whether it is an example of automatism (Wilson, 2012). Automatism is thought to be the work of the subconscious or the unconscious (Tate, n.d.). Wilson (2012) explained that a picture shows us intent and is meant to represent something, which gives the artist agency; however, the automatism of photography lies in the unconsciousness, the natural chance of the photo, or the mechanical process.

Portraits in the New Age: Selfies

The first *selfie* was taken by Robert Cornileus in 1839, but it hardly meant what it does now (Carbon, 2017). The selfie is an image that one portrays in sociocultural context usually involving social media, and the selfie may be interpreted as representational or compositional (Zhao & Zappavigna, 2018). Given the nature of the selfie and how it may be represented, this social practice can reveal cultural values and practices (Senft, & Baym, 2015). Selfies are taken

with the intention to show someone else. People can be portrayed as young and fun and are often shown in a good light through social media applications. However, issues such as narcissism and body dysmorphia can affect the taker (Mills et al., 2018).

Art Therapy

Art therapy, as described by the American Art Therapy Association (2017), is a practice used with a wide variety of populations and “engages the mind, body, and spirit [in ways] that are different from verbal . . . [exchanges] alone” (Definition of Art Therapy, para. 4). According to Blank (2009), the creative process of self-expression can help resolve a numerous amount of mental health issues, such as managing behavior and building self-esteem and awareness. Of course, art therapy also does much more than what is listed and addresses many psychological ailments, including anxiety, depression, substance abuse, domestic violence, social emotional issues, and trauma and loss (Blank, 2009).

Art therapy can be understood and practiced using many different theoretical frameworks; however, many art therapists acknowledge that the images portrayed using art therapy are outward representations of an internal reality (Moon, 2006, as cited in Braus & Morton, 2020). The creative process allows for individuals through art to draw forth internal emotions and helps people to process their reality. In art therapy, art is not subjective. The art made in therapy does not follow any fine art or formal rules or structure (Malchiodi, 2007, as cited in Braus and Morton, 2020). According to Williams (2018, as cited in Braus & Morton, 2020), “Art therapy utilizes the therapeutic practice of mindfulness; when used with intent and purpose, it allows for self-reflection and expression” (p. S267).

Photo Art Therapy

Photo art therapy was first used when Hugh Diamond (a doctor) used photography with therapeutic interventions in his 1856 article, “On the Application of Phototherapy to the Physiognomic and Mental Phenomena of Insanity” (Saita & Tramontano 2018). The use of photography in therapeutic interventions has been prevalent since the beginning of the last century (Saita & Tramontano 2018). According to Halkola (2009, as cited in Saita & Tramontano 2018), photography in the clinical or therapeutic setting aims to aid the individual in developing their ability to recognize and express emotions, which can also help in promoting self-understanding. Photography as a tool for therapy differs from art therapy in that taking a photo is not intimidating and can be an unconscious action (Blank, 2009). With photography, people may not feel as intimidated as they would with other mediums, for dance, music, or art therapies, which they may believe require prior skills (Blank, 2009)

Digital Art Therapy

In art therapy, there are multiple techniques and ideas surrounding what can be done with the client. The further we advance in technology, the more viable these technologies become when applying them to current art therapies. Whereas traditional art is made up of many great mediums, many people may find these mediums intimidating; therefore, allowing digital art therapy to take a step forward and present itself as an option is useful (Diggs et al., 2015). Digital mediums can also be used at the beginning of treatments.

Art Therapy and the Effects of COVID-19

In the year 2020, a worldwide emergency was declared as a new virus triggered a global pandemic. COVID-19 wrought changes in every facet of human life as stay at home and social distancing took place. The stress and unmitigated trauma of isolation, the transitioning to work

from home, and joblessness spurred another invisible enemy, mental health (Braus & Morton, 2020). With this disruption in normal life, mental health care has found a way to thrive through the means of telemental health. Telemental health has many advantages, such as greater accessibility, removing barriers of time and distance (Stewart, 2020). However, some aspects may be of concern, such as privacy of the session from the family, access to art tools, and engagement in the session (Brenes et al., 2011).

Art Therapy and the Latino/x/e Community

Does art therapy work within the Hispanic and Latino/x/e community exist? The answer is yes, but there is a limited amount of work that has been done. The lack of adequate research within Hispanic and Latino/x/e populations has negative ramifications on resource allocation, planning, and application (Ceballos et al., 2020). Within some communities, therapy in any form, including art therapy, is not a viable option. Nearly 88% of Latino/x/e children in need of mental health care are not receiving appropriate care (Van Lith et al., 2018). Some of the barriers found between the Latino/x/e population and their care are stigmas against seeking help, language barriers (provider does not speak Spanish), and lack of health insurance due to financial reasons (National Alliance on Mental Illness [NAMI], n.d.).

Art Therapy and Working with Self-Image

The self-image is something that one does to portray themselves regarding how they would like to be. In therapy, being honest and open with oneself is one of the best ways to start healing and move forward. When working with one's self-image, there is no pressure from outside sources, but rather the activity is for the artist to explore themselves and be open to seeing who they truly are. An obsession with the faults and limitations that are ingrained into the self can be confronted and depicted in a more contained manner (Muri 2007). The process of

creating and being allowed to create provides a vehicle in which one may find self-acceptance and self-love (Cockle, 1994).

There is also therapy in which the therapist creates art for the client. This is called portrait therapy. In the process of portrait therapy, the art therapist paints for the patient, but the patient directs how and what they will look like in the painting. This style of self-imagery helps establish a strong connection and develop a strong therapeutic relationship (Franklin, 1990; Moon, 2002, as cited in Carr, 2020). The use of portraits to revise self-identities allows the patient to mirror or reflect different parts of their personalities, including their psychical appearance, and can even reassure and strengthen their feelings of identity (Carr & Hancock, 2017)

Art Therapy and Positive Psychology: Meaning

Positive psychology is a type of psychology that encourages its patients to focus on the positive elements of their lives. It takes what is seemingly normal and finds what is working and improves on it. It holds the notion that humans are ever-changing and approaches this concept from a positive reframe instead of a negative focus. The science of positive psychology is a rather simple one: what thrives in humans should be encouraged and cared for (Sheldon & King, 2001). Its basis for wellbeing and happiness is positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning, and accomplishment, which is referred to as the PERMA model (Chu, 2020). The Latino/x/e individual is already portrayed negatively in U.S. media; therefore, focusing on positive attributes will lead to more positive impacts in therapy (Vela et al., 2019) For the purposes of this study, the student will use the idea of PERMA but will be focusing on the idea of meaning.

In *A Primer in Positive Psychology*, Peterson (2006) stated that in positive psychology is one of the major workings of wellbeing is finding life's meaning. Finding life's meaning is something that every human strives to do and is one of the most fundamental human needs (Schippers & Ziegler, 2019).

Even though meaning and purpose are sometimes used interchangeably, literature suggests that meaning is superordinate, consisting of two dimensions, namely: comprehension (understanding your life and how one fits into the world) and purpose (overarching long-term aspirations and the motivations towards those goals). (Steger, 2012, as cited in Bekker et al., 2019, Introduction, para. 3)

As related to art therapy, making meaning using art therapy tools allows for the client to establish and move forward with treatments while understanding the meaning that is created and observed. There are different types of meaning with art therapy; creating meaning, discovering meaning, and sharing meaning. "The act of creating acknowledges the subjective nature of experience by activating the human potential for interpretation." (Brockway et al., 2019, p. 13).

Empathy

To have empathy is to have the ability to understand a person's experience and to be able to respond with a socio-normative response (Kelly et al., 2022). This is important for everyday life and allows for successful human interactions. "Cognitive empathy is understanding another's internal states" (Wondra & Ellsworth, 2015, p. 412). This includes understanding another's emotional and mental states (Wondra & Ellsworth, 2015). In this study, the student researcher used the story format to evoke feelings of empathy from the participants in an effort to connect empathically with the struggle of being caught between cultures. This is important because it shows that the Latino/x/e and Hispanic participants understand and connect with the prompt,

while simultaneously acknowledging the problem within both the Latino/x/e American (US) communities.

Authenticity

Authenticity plays a large role in this study. Varga and Guignon (2020) linked the idea of authenticity to autonomy, as an individual should aim to live their own life according to their own beliefs. The idea of authenticity also matches the modern concept of the self, in which any action against the self would be a betrayal (Varga & Guignon, 2020). This means to be anything other than oneself would be unauthentic. Toper et al. (2022) described authenticity as a *state of congruence*, in which the individual knows where they are emotionally. This connection allows the individual to show true expression and emotion in any situation both inwardly and with displayed behavior (Toper et al., 2022). Being one's true self is important in this study, as we look into different participants and their art. Understanding authenticity, we can begin to understand the art provided and the different perspectives the participants bring to the study.

Summary

The purpose of this literature review was to help the reader understand some of the history, although there is much more than what was covered here, of Latino/x/e folks in the United States and to begin to understand different aspects of the later generational identity of Hispanic and Latino/x/es who have already been established in the United States. There has been much research on the immigrant and the first-generation population, but little-to-no literature exists on the third and later generation populations. We cannot assume that once an individual is established within the United States, they are comfortably integrated or that their children do not question their identity groups. Most of the research found was on the Civil Rights Movements of the 1960s and 1970s. More research is needed to gain a better understanding of the effects of

losing touch with one's heritage and the confusion and struggle of not identifying with either group (Hispanic/Latino/x/e versus American). It is important to conduct more cultural studies on the lasting effects of cultural integration within the United States for Hispanic and Latino/x/e labeled individuals but also on other ethnic groups of the United States as well.

Chapter III: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore the concept of identity within the Hispanic and Latino/x/e communities' third and fourth generations in the US. The student researcher's aim was to discover common themes regarding cultural imposter syndrome and authenticity. This chapter will present an outline of the methods used to conduct this study, including a review of the research questions and hypotheses, population and demographics, measures and materials, procedures of the study, as well as the risks and benefits of the study.

Restatement of Research Questions/Hypotheses

Research Questions that served to guide this study were as follows:

1. How do Latino/x/e or Hispanic adults conceptualize their racial and cultural identity using art therapy to depict authenticity and combat imposter syndrome?
2. Is there a relationship between authenticity and the self found in art therapy self-portraits?

The hypotheses examined to address these research questions were as follows:

1. There will be significant empathy felt by the participants when discussing identity and it will be reflected in their writing and artistic representations of their authentic self.
2. There will be a significant response and completion of the survey by the community.
3. The Identity Denial Scale combined with an empathetic cultural impostor story will demonstrate that later generational Latino/x/e individuals feel between cultures.

Population and Sample

The subject population was a nonclinical, community population. The focus of this study was on Hispanic and Latinx adults only. The only criteria were that the participant must be of

Hispanic or Latinx descent and above the age of 18. The student researcher chose to include generational check boxes, as the understanding of the story may vary due to the generational status of participant. Race/ ethnicity was added in case participants wanted to elaborate on their country of origin rather than marking a generalized term like Hispanic or Latinx. Educational information was included but not required, because of its potential to be an influential variable within the themes. Gender was considered when analyzing the data for the types of themes participants chose.

Location

The study took place online due to the restrictions placed on participation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality was protected by the study design. Data were kept anonymous by the fact that the study was online and participants identifying information was not disclosed. The art was organized by medium in which it was submitted and stored on a secure file in the student researcher's password-protected computer. The digital images, demographics, survey results were all kept in a project file separate from the student researcher's school files. All data were saved on a USB file and placed into the researcher's personal safe. None of the thesis data files were backed up through online resources (e.g., the cloud, apple share) to minimize the risk of accidental views or hacking. The data are to be kept for the mandated 7 years and thoroughly disposed of after the time has expired.

Research Design

This study was a cross-sectional design using both quantitative and qualitative data. It included the Identity Denial Scale (Albuja et al., 2019), which measures the frequency at which

participants experience *acceptance threats*, in which their membership within their ethnic/racial group is challenged or questioned (Albuja et al., 2020). The scale served as a base measurement to allow the reader to see the difference in images when compared between the generations. They also responded to a two-part vignette in which the protagonist experienced imposter syndrome which had a successful outcome. Participants were asked to give three words to describe their impressions to each of the two parts of the story. They also were invited to complete a self-portrait and briefly respond to three questions regarding their art.

Procedures

The research invitation to participate was posted in forums, such as “Subtle Latino Traits,” “Atlantis: The Lost Empire Posting,” and “El Dorado: Gold Posting” on Facebook and on other sources of social media such as Twitter and Reddit (Appendix A). The hope was to achieve the engagement of 50 participants but the study gathered data from a total of 12 fully completed forms. There were concerns with social media, as people who may not be Latinx or Hispanic may take the study and convolute results. Participants accessed a link to the study, which gave them further information and asked them to provide their consent to participate (Appendix B). Then they proceeded to fill out the Identity Denial Scale (Appendix C), the demographic questionnaire (Appendix D) and the Qualitative survey (Appendix E) including the vignette and the art prompt for the self-portrait and open-ended questions. Then the participants were directed to a Debriefing Statement/Form (Appendix F). All information and data were collected through online surveys and submission portals and formatted on Wakelet.com. All participants’ answers went directly to the drive of the student researcher. To better track the participant’s answers, their three initials (first, middle, last names) were required on the demographic form.

Measures and Interventions

Measures

The Identity Denial Scale was used to measure the frequency at which participants experience *acceptance threats*, in which their membership within their ethnic/racial group is challenged or questioned (Albuja et al., 2020). It has 8 items and responses are on a 7-point Likert scale in which 1 = *never* and 7 = *always*; (Albuja et al., 2019). It has undergone factor analysis, and items that did not fit into the two main factors (identity denial, identity questioning), were excluded (Albuja et al., 2020). In Albuja et al.'s (2020) study it was found to have good reliability with $\alpha = .82$. Permission from the author of the scale was obtained.

Intervention

The intervention consisted of a two-part vignette designed to evoke empathic responses to an incident involving cultural imposter system, which participants were asked to respond to briefly. They were also given an art-directive in which they were asked to complete a self-portrait and answer three questions about their art.

Materials

There were no art supplies provided, and the participants completed the survey and art from the comfort of their home or surroundings.

Data Collection Methods

The Identity Denial Scale (Albuja et al., 2019, 2020) was used to measure the degree to which participants experienced *acceptance threats*, in which their membership within their ethnic/racial group is challenged or questioned. The scale served as a base measurement to allow the reader to see the difference in images when compared between the generations. After completing the scale, the participant read a story created by the student researcher that mirrored

an experience of cultural imposter syndrome and answered the statement: *In three words give your impression of this story*. The participants then read the second part of the story that focused on the positive aspects of the individual portrayed and answered the “*In three words give your impression of this story*” statement again. Then, following the end of the story, the student researcher asked for a self-portrait of the participant in when they felt their most authentic self. The self-portrait may be 3D art, digital art, traditional, or photography. Every participant was given the same forms and asked the same questions. Finally, the participants answered the last round of questions:

1. What do you want your self-portrait to represent?
2. How does your self-portrait show your authentic self?
3. What does it mean to be your authentic self?

Data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic, and in consideration ethics and the stress of the pandemic, all three parts were very short.

Data Analysis Methods

For this study, the student researcher used the Identity Denial Scale for quantitative data. Through this quantitative data the student researcher used descriptive analysis to understand and describe the IDD scores by the participants. The student researcher used exploratory analysis to look into the demographics and qualitative portion of the data. The researcher interpreted the art and the responses to the impressions of the cultural imposter syndrome vignette and to the questions about the participants’ art. The student researcher explored the data provided from the responses to these questions to find common themes in hopes that the study would reflect the aspirations of the self by the Latinx and Hispanic communities. The data yielded was expected to

shed light on the effects being cultural imposter syndrome and negative effects concerning one's identity.

Risks

The largest risk of this study was the lack of control of the environment and lack of tools available for art making. This was initially designed to be an artmaking through painting study; however, the times called for flexibility. The student researcher was also concerned that the draining effects of the current pandemic would make it less likely that anyone would want to participate. At the time of this writing, the world was slowly opening back up thanks to vaccines but the added stressors of work or lack of, daily life, loved one's wellbeing still weighed heavy on most people currently.

Benefits

The benefits for this study included the information gleaned from the measures. The structure of the study was designed to provide a much-needed window into how the later generations (third and beyond) of Latinos and Hispanics see themselves. The quantitative aspects of the study provided a starting point to learn about their experiences regarding lack of acceptance from the larger society. The other components allowed for themes to emerge alluding to how one may feel if similarly put in that situation (referring to part one of the story), while the questioning of authenticity allowed for the participants to describe themselves to whatever length they wanted to. Using this important information, the student researcher was able to draw conclusions about how the Hispanic and Latino/e/x community may see themselves.

Representation is important and it helped fuel this study.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine and investigate what the effect of integration into the United States has on identity by the third and fourth generations of Latino/x/e and Hispanic Americans. With the outlined method, the student researcher was able to collect both qualitative and quantitative data to support her research questions. In the next chapter, the participant data, and responses in the form of vignettes will be presented.

Chapter IV: Results

The aim of this study was to gather information on the use of self-portraiture in art therapy among the later generational Latino/x/e population to gain insight into its uses for coping with cultural imposter syndrome. This chapter will present the results of the study, including participant characteristics and hypothesis testing. Included is a summary of the portraiture data and the results of the Identity Denial Scale. Moreover, the qualitative data collected from the art will be presented and interpreted. Lastly the student researcher will present the results from four of the participants that provide evidence for the role of self-portraiture in art therapy in reflecting the mental health needs in later generational Latino/x/e individuals.

Review of the Hypotheses:

1. There will be significant empathy felt by the participants when discussing identity and it will be reflected in their writing and artistic representations of their authentic self.
2. There will be a significant response and completion of the survey by the community.
3. The Identity denial Scale combined with an empathetic cultural impostor story will demonstrate that later generational Latino/x/e individuals feel between cultures.

Participants

Fifty-one people engaged with the study; however only 12 completed the study in full. Table 1 shows participants' demographic characteristics. All 12 participants were women ranging in age between 20 to 70, with an average age of 34. Of these 12 women, the majority (42%, $n = 5$) identified as either a White Hispanic 25%, ($n = 3$) or a White Latina 17%, ($n = 2$). Additionally, 17% ($n = 2$) identified as Latina and 17% ($n = 2$) identified as Mexican. The last three identified as White Puerto Rican 8% ($n = 1$), Puerto Rican 8% ($n = 1$), and refusal to

identify 8% ($n = 1$). All women attained some form of higher education. One-fourth ($n = 3$) completed some college, whereas 33% ($n = 4$) reported having graduated from college, and 42% ($n = 5$) reported completing graduate level or higher education. Of the languages spoken, one was monolingual, speaking English only; 25% ($n = 3$) spoke English in addition to some Spanish; 59%, ($n = 7$) were bilingual, speaking both Spanish and English, and one was multilingual (four languages). Lastly, of the people who completed this study 25% ($n = 3$) were third generation, 50% ($n = 6$) were second generation, and 25% ($n = 3$) were first generation immigrants.

Table 1
Participant Demographic Characteristics

Participant	Generational status	Race/ethnicity	Do you identify as Hispanic or Latinx?	Languages	Age	Education
ANI	First gen	Mexican	Latina	English and Spanish	23	College
MCDN	First gen	n/a	*	English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese	20	College
JP	First gen.	Latina	Hispanic	English and Spanish	39	Graduate school
KMC	Second gen.	White Latina	Hispanic	English and Spanish	26	Some College
SM	Second gen.	White Hispanic	Hispanic	English and Spanish	24	Some College
JMG	Second gen.	White Latino	Hispanic	English	30	College
DVP	Second gen.	Puerto Rican	Hispanic	English and some Spanish	25	College
IMA	Second gen.	White Puerto Rican	Hispanic	Latina	23	Graduate school
GG	Second gen.	Latina	Latina	Spanish and English	25	Graduate school
PC	Third gen.	White/Hispanic	Hispanic	English, a little Spanish	62	Graduate degree
SH	Third gen.	Mexican	Hispanic	English and Spanish	41	Some college
RP	Third gen.	White Hispanic	Hispanic	English and Spanish	70	Graduate degree

Note. gen = generation; *does not identify.

The Study Prompt

Story Part 1

Christina is 22 years old and in college. She has been asked to represent the Latino/x/e graduation committee at this year's homecoming. She is honored and happy to represent her club. However, Christina cannot speak Spanish and she feels that this does not make her worthy to represent the Latino/x/e cultures at all. She feels out of place and not good enough despite being knowledgeable in Latino/x/e traditions and being an active member in her club.

After reading this part of the story, participants were given the following instructions: In three words, give your impression of this story.

Story Part 2

Homecoming came and went, and Christina did an excellent job during the homecoming games. Her friends, both multilingual and single language, told her how awesome it was to have her represent the Latino/x/e committee. Christina was relieved and happy that she could put forth her most authentic self and be accepted by those around her.

After reading this part of the story, participants were given the following instructions: In three words, give your impression of this story.

Hypothesis 1

The following hypothesis was examined in this study:

Hypothesis 1: The Identity Denial Scale combined with responses to an empathetic cultural imposter story will demonstrate that later generational Latino/x/e individuals feel between cultures.

The purpose behind the use of this scale was to see if there was a gap or difference between the generations of Hispanic and Latino/x/e populations. The student researcher was

looking to show these differences with the data from the scale and provide empathetic proof with the prompt responses. The three-worded responses were powerful and brought up illicit feelings within all the participants.

Identity Denial Scale

This scale was used in *Intra-race intersectionality: Identity denial among dual-minority biracial people* (Albuja et al., 2019). Initially the use of this scale in this study was to show that later generational Latino/x/e and Hispanic individuals are denied their identity by both individuals in the United States and their family's origin country. However, as examined in the previous section, a majority of individuals who took the test were early generational, leaving them more likely to be in contact with their culture or at least able to retain a second language. Again, a large mistake from the student researcher regarding this scale was that when she put up the online information regarding her study, she did not specify that the participants should be from the United States.

The Identity Denial Scale is a 7-point Likert scale in which = *never* and 7 = *always*; (Albuja et al., 2019). The questions from 1 - 6 are as follows:

1. How often are you asked where you are from/about your racial appearance?
2. How often are you asked about your nationality/about your racial ancestry?
3. How often are you told you are not American/not White?
4. How often are you told you cannot identify as American/White?
5. How often are you told you should culturally/racially identify differently?
6. How often are you told you should identify with one cultural/racial identity over another?

The averaged results have been split between three generations. Table 2 - 5 show the scores between each of the generations and the total average score for all participants. The first-generation participants' average responses were 3.3, 3.6, 3.3, 2, 3.3, and 4. The second-generation participants' average responses were 5.3, 5.5, 4.1, 4.3, 4.1, and 4. Lastly the third-generation participants' average responses were 5.6, 5.6, 4.3, 1, 4.3, and 4.3. The results varied according to participants' generational status. For example, first generation participants rated higher scores to the question, "How often are you told you should identify with one cultural/ racial identity over another?" Second and third generation participants gave higher ratings to "How often are you asked about your nationality/ about your racial ancestry?" and "How often are you asked where you are from/ about your racial appearance?"

The study's main focus was on third generation Latino/x/e members, which had three participants. Two thirds of the group scored higher on the first two questions (i.e., How often are you asked where you are from/about your racial appearance? How often are you asked about your nationality/about your racial ancestry?). Participant PC responded "always" to these two questions as well as 5 (How often are you told you should culturally/racially identify differently?) and 6 (How often are you told you should identify with one cultural/racial identity over another?). Participant SH responded "always" on Questions 1 and 2 but on Questions 5 and 6 answered "sometimes." All third-generation participants scored a 3 = "rarely" or 1= "never" on Questions 3 and 4.

The outlier was our oldest participant, who was 70 years old. Her scores on the Identity Denial Scale were notably lower; she had the second lowest scores of the study at 3, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1. She was an outlier demographically and reported that she identified as a White Latina and reported speaking both English and Spanish at home. She also completed graduate studies. It is

unknown whether she is a resident in the United States, but she did mention migrant life within her responses.

Table 2
Average Scores for First Generation Participants

Q #	Question	ANI	MCDN	JP	Average 1st gen.
1	How often are you asked where you are from/about your racial appearance?	1	3	6	4.9
2	How often are you asked about your nationality/about your racial ancestry?	1	4	6	5.0
3	How often are you told you are not American/not White?	1	4	5	3.3
4	How often are you told you cannot identify as American/White?	1	1	4	2.9
5	How often are you told you should culturally/racially identify differently?	3	5	2	4.0
6	How often are you told you should identify with one cultural/racial identity over another?	1	5	6	4.0

Note. gen. = generation.

Table 3
Average Scores for Second Generation Participants

Q #	Question	KMC	SM	JMG	DVP	IMA	GG	Average 2nd. gen
1	How often are you asked where you are from/about your racial appearance?	6	3	5	6	7	5	5.3
2	How often are you asked about your nationality/about your racial ancestry?	6	5	4	6	7	5	5.5
3	How often are you told you are not American/not White?	7	2	3	2	5	6	4.1
4	How often are you told you cannot identify as American/White?	7	5	1	2	5	6	4.3
5	How often are you told you should culturally/racially identify differently?	5	6	2	2	4	6	4.1
6	How often are you told you should identify with one cultural/racial identity over another?	7	4	1	2	4	6	4.0

Note. gen. = generation.

Table 4
Average Scores for Third Generation Participants

Q #	Question	PC	SH	RP	Average 3rd gen.	Score without the outlier
1	How often are you asked where you are from/about your racial appearance?	7	7	3	5.6	7
2	How often are you asked about your nationality/about your racial ancestry?	7	7	3	5.6	7
3	How often are you told you are not American/not White?	3	1	1	4.3	2
4	How often are you told you cannot identify as American/White?	1	1	1	1.0	1
5	How often are you told you should culturally/racially identify differently?	7	5	1	4.3	6
6	How often are you told you should identify with one cultural/racial identity over another?	7	5	1	4.3	6

Note. gen. = generation.

Table 5
Average Scores for Total Participants (N = 12)

Q #	Question	Total (N = 12) Average
1	How often are you asked where you are from/about your racial appearance?	4.9
2	How often are you asked about your nationality/about your racial ancestry?	5.0
3	How often are you told you are not American/not White?	3.3
4	How often are you told you cannot identify as American/White?	2.9
5	How often are you told you should culturally/racially identify differently?	4.0
6	How often are you told you should identify with one cultural/racial identity over another?	4.0

Note. gen. = generation.

Themes emerged from the responses to the two parts of the story prompt. See Table 6 for the themes and the number of participants who contributed to each theme. Four of the 12 three-word answers were response to the first short story. Guilt, shame, and embarrassment was a theme for the first prompt. Conversely there were also themes of pride, happiness, and validity in the second part of the story. There were participants who also chose to write sentences instead of writing singular words.

Table 6
Themes From Responses to the Two-Part Story (N = 12)

Themes	Number of participants
Validity	2
Shame/ashamed	3
Accepted	3
Happy	6
Full sentences	6
Pride/proud	7

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant response and completion of the survey by the community.

As stated previously, there were 51 participants with only 12 completed studies in total. The assumption based on hours of Internet research into communities was that there was a need for a voice. There were three main pages used to recruit participants: “Subtle Latino Traits,” “Atlantis: Lost Empire posting,” and “El Dorado: Gold Posting.” Atlantis: The Lost Empire Posting had the most wholesome reactions, with multiple words of encouragement and curiosity. There were a lot of questions as to the purpose and intent of the study. Multiple people offered their services with many more recommending other avenues for recruitment. Overall, the total activity on the post was 281 likes and 143 comments.

The next largest activity group was El Dorado: Gold Posting. It was here that the student researcher made a mistake. She included the term “Latinx” instead of reverting the post to only include the word Latino. This was an instance where code switching needed to happen but the student researcher forgot in the moment of posting. As such, the results were 24 laughing reactions and six comments mocking the term Latinx.

Finally, the last group was titled “Subtle Latino Traits.” There was not a big response from this group, but the few people that interacted were positive. There were three likes and 12 comments. The sweeping feeling of the commented feedback was found to be mostly of skepticism. People were curious and also unsure of the methods regarding the psychotherapy aspect.

Figure 1
Comments on Latinx Used in El Dorado: Gold Posting



Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3: There will be that significant empathy felt by the participants when discussing identity and it will be reflected in their writing and artistic representations of their authentic self.

As a reminder, participants responded to the following art prompt (see Appendix F).

Art Prompt

Please create a self-portrait representing your authentic self and title your piece. This can be done in any way: drawing, painting, sculpture, print, digital, photo. Last three prompt questions:

1. What do you want your self-portrait to represent?
2. How does your self-portrait show your authentic self?
3. What does it mean to be your authentic self?

In the next section, four vignettes were chosen to illustrate the art and responses from a participant of each of the generations of this study and the outlier. The student researcher will include the demographics and details of their surveys. As these participants' feelings are expressed, it will allow the reader to apprehend the duality of belonging to multiple cultures (primarily between the United States and Mexico).

First Generation Vignette

The first participant, ANI, is a 23-year-old first-generation Mexican American woman. She is a college graduate and speaks both English and Spanish fluently. Identifying as a Latina, the three words she wrote in response to the first part of the story, was “confused, empathetic, and worried.” For the second part of the story, she wrote, “happy, appreciative, and prideful.”

In her art, we see a portrait with bust proportions, it starts at the shoulders and the head goes beyond the page (see Figure 2). The background is a deep purple hue with purple accents hiding in the bust’s hair. The figure is wearing a black turtleneck with lace details at the neck line. The hair is short (just below the jaw) and wavy. The face has pointed ears like an elf or a demon that open up wide. Overlapping the face, there is a black mask. The mask extends like wings at the brow line and curls up while the bottom of the mask curves inward like the top part of the teeth on a skull. The teeth at the end of the mask have pointed canines and look aggressive. One eye peeking is a normal human-like eye, while the other eye is yellow with a black sclera and a slitted pupil, much like a snake.

Figure 2
Self-Portrait of a First-Generation Participant



On the face, only the mouth is visible. It is a flat line with a slight frown presenting the viewer with a flat affect. The character appears to be unbothered or perhaps upset by something. Her signature has been crossed out so as to protect the identity of this participant. Her answers to the self-portrait prompts following the story are as follows. In response to the first prompt, “What do you want your self-portrait to represent?” she responded, “I’ve never had a problem with being myself, yet I sometimes think I use a mask constantly.” To the second prompt, “How does your self-portrait show your authentic self?” she responded, “It’s an idea of somehow being out of place, yet it doesn’t look like it; the mask somehow hides everything but not completely everything.” To the final question, “What does it mean to be your authentic self?” she responded,

“To be able to communicate and understand people without having to feel bad for being different.”

Although the concept of this participant’s self-portrait is more general, the power of art therapy really shines through. The idea of feeling like there is a mask on or being out of place is shown quite well through the art. The figure looks unhappy or disinterested and is a good reflection of her responses. She writes about being hidden but states that she has never been afraid of being herself. This leaves the student researcher wishing that she could ask more and really lean into this content. The subject of this art therapy prompt opened a whole new path for the student researcher and possibly even the participant (proper sources were provided by the student researcher if the participants felt like there was a need to reach out to someone after the study). Although, the portrait and responses may not have conveyed wholly being in between cultures, they do express the experience of a first-generation Latina who feels she has to hide her authentic self. The art and the responses show the power of art therapy to pull and develop real conversations and feelings within others.

Second Generation Vignette

The second-generation participant, JMG, is a 30-year old woman who identifies as a White Latina. Her only spoken language is English and she graduated from college. The first three words this participant used to give her impression part one of the story were “excited, guilty, and ashamed.” The three words she gave for part two of the story were “proud, relieved, and accepted.” In the art piece she submitted she appears wearing a white shirt. Her head is lowered with her hair over her face and eyes. Her hair is curly and tangled. Her arms are bent at her elbows and she is grabbing her hair almost pulling down. It is a grayscale photo, and the

participant is the main focus. She takes up about 1/3 of the entire image, including background. She has a slight shadow in the background. See Figure 3 for her self-portrait.

Figure 3
Self-Portrait of a Second-Generation Participant



In response to the first prompt, “What do you want your self-portrait to represent?” she responded, “Turmoil.” In response to the question, “How does your self-portrait show your authentic self?” she responded, “Knotted coils, and hands straining to keep things together. Even though I’m in a better place; mentally, there are days I still struggle with being Mexican enough, or White enough. I’m lucky enough to have family on both sides that are supportive and aren’t judgmental—but personally it’s still a struggle.” In response to the third question, “What does it mean to be your authentic self?” she answered, “Be[ing] accepting of who you are and where you come from. Acknowledging all of the pieces that make you up without questioning based on your looks or abilities.”

The participant expressed feeling “excited, guilty and ashamed” when hearing of the opportunity in the first part of the story. These feelings are reflected in her prompt answers. In writing about her self-portrait, she referred to her hair as knotted in coils and stated that her hands were straining to keep everything together. She explicitly wrote that she struggled with being Mexican or White enough. Here we can begin to see the disconnect of language and culture. This is a perfect example of being in between cultures and how it can affect the inner selves of Latinos. Through art therapy, the participant has revealed something that may not have otherwise been seen.

Third Generation Vignette

The third-generation participant, PC, is a 62-year old female. She identifies as a third generation Mexican American woman. She labeled herself as a Hispanic woman and reported speaking English and very little Spanish. The three words she used as her impressions the first part of the short story were a sentence: “This was me.” The three words she used to convey her impressions of the second part of the story were: “accepted, friendships, pride.” Figure 4 shows her self-portrait.

Figure 4
Self-Portrait of a Third-Generation Participant



In her art piece, there are a lot of loose lines. It is all drawn in pencil on what looks like a notebook. One can see flowers, mountains, dogs, the sun, and the participant right in the middle. The participant is smiling in the drawn picture. She is wearing glasses and has short hair. It looks like she is holding up the peace sign with her hands while wearing a shirt that says peace. Her art looks rushed and unfocused. Her answers to the self-portrait prompts following the story are as

follows. To the question, “What do you want your self-portrait to represent?” she responded, “Life continues no matter what the confrontation. I am supported and thriving.” To the question, “How does your self-portrait show your authentic self?” she responded, “I love me. I know who I am and that is what’s important.” To the question, “What does it mean to be your authentic self?” she responded in depth:

Awesome. Knowing who I am and understanding my heritage and background. Being supported and surrounded by family and trying to be a representation of my heritage.

Although I am lacking in language and traditions, I am ok because my parents raised me this way. It was important for their kids to assimilate into the “White” American culture, to fit in. My authentic self is an English-speaking Hispanic woman with a hint of Mexican American traditions and ACCEPTANCE of who I am.

This participant was very direct in her responses. Although it may hurt to understand that she has lost connection, she reassures herself with the connection she has with her family. She connected with the story vignette as is evident from her first three words, “This was me.” This statement is very deep and personal in terms of her empathic connection with the protagonist of the story. Her art shows a woman who is comfortable and confident with herself, which is also shown in her answers. Her art and her responses reveal how art therapy is able to connect a person to how they may be feeling on the inside. Although her responses and art show us that she does well taking criticism, her Identity Denial Scale scores show that on Questions 1 (i.e., How often are you asked where you are from/about your racial appearance?), 2 (i.e., “How often are you asked about your nationality/about your racial ancestry?”), 5 (i.e., How often are you told you should culturally/racially identify differently?”), and 6 (i.e., “How often are you told you should identify with one cultural/racial identity over another?”), she responded “always,”

indicating that she often faces outside pressure to be a certain something or someone. This pressure may also be reflected in the art. In the art, she is strong and confident but the use of pencil is very controlled and the lines are thin and sporadic, perhaps indicating an underlying anxiety.

Outlier Vignette (Third-Generation Participant)

The outlier discussed earlier, RP, is presented here. She is 70 years old and identifies as a White Hispanic woman. She completed graduate school and can speak both Spanish and English. This participant did not use three words for the first prompt asking about the first part of the story. Instead, she responded with a two-word statement: “Cultural shame.” In response to the second part of the story, she gave a two-word statement as well, “Cultural acceptance.”

Instead of creating her own artwork, the participant shared with the student researcher a picture of her family and titled it “Migrant Life.” The photograph was originally black and white but in its old age, it has developed more into a color of sepia. In this photo there is a family of five standing in front of a large tent on a flat bed of dirt. The father figure is standing in the middle of the family with the mother figure on the left side. The oldest daughter hides behind the father figure on his right side. Standing in front of the father figure is a younger girl with one hand at her side and one behind her back. Finally, in the center left the mother figure is holding a young boy's face as he stands with his hands at his side, almost as if she's holding his face towards the camera. The clothing style of the family comes from the 1920s-30s.

Figure 5
Self-Portrait of the Outlier Third-Generation Participant



Her answers to the self-portrait prompts following the story are as follows. In response to the first question, “What do you want your self-portrait to represent?” she said, “Migrant Life.” In response to the second question, “How does your self-portrait show your authentic self?” she wrote, “My roots.” In response to the question, “What does it mean to be your authentic self?” she wrote, “Foundation.”

The student researcher believes that showing the outlier is important to this project, as it reflects the need and positivity gained from staying connected to your roots. The participant shared with us migrant photos from her family’s journey and although she is a third generation Mexican American woman, she still retained the ability to speak Spanish. Through her photo,

she has also shown that she is still able to connect with her family's past and culture. Ultimately this brings forth opportunities for her family to connect and grow within a healthy stable image or identity.

Summary

The examples of participants' artwork and responses to the prompts to not only the vignette but also about their art reflects the most important part of this research project: the humanity of it all. The examples provided by the student researcher allow the reader to take a look into these women's lives and from the data see that the third generation participants tended to give the highest scores on the Identity Denial Scale or they think about it more in their life as opposed to the first-generation participants. This finding is very important and highlights a problem within the diverse country of the United States. These data show that participants can connect with the story (during shelter in place in 2020 COVID-19), which brought up emotions that pertained to cultural imposter syndrome and feeling out of place within the culture of both their country and family heritage.

Chapter V: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore cultural identity in later generations of Latino/x/e and Hispanics. There is limited literature on third and fourth Latino/x/e generation; these individuals are not a largely studied group and may be considered to be naturalized into American culture. There is also limited literature on art therapy done with the Latino/x/e population. This final chapter will discuss the student researcher's findings in terms of their implications the art therapy world. The student researcher will also present a more personal view to her research.

Review of Methodology

The Identity Denial Scale is used for biracial individuals, but the student researcher used it with monoracial individuals to highlight microaggressions and denial of American roots. This scale specifically highlights the social norm that to be American one has to be Caucasian or Caucasian passing. It also brings up an interesting dynamic between the generations and further raises the question about the type of support system they surrounded themselves with.

Summary of Findings

The results were an indication that the student researcher's observations were true. Many of the participants felt out of place or between cultures. This can create a sort of imposter syndrome within their identity. The fault of the denial of cultural identity lies in both the systemic institutions influenced by the dominant culture within the United States of America and those who chose to gatekeep their culture. Culture is something that evolves with time, place, and people, while ancestry is something that connects us to our heritage and allows us to celebrate our history of where we are from and how we got here. During the course of this study, the participants showed that they had been subject to suspicion that they were not of this country

(US), yet they found that they were not accepted within their origin of heritage communities either. However, many were able to overcome this feeling with strong familial ties. Literature has shown the integral role Latino/x/e families play in the culture and this concept shines brightly with the research participants (Villatoro et al., 2014).

Although the research demonstrated that in comparison to their first- and second-generation counterparts, third-generation participants felt different or out of place in the US (as measured by the IDS), with an average age of 57, they were also more established in life than the first and second generation participants. Therefore, whereas the third-generation participants scored higher on the Identity Denial Scale, which was in keeping with the researcher's expectations, the qualitative data and the self-portrait responses showed that the first- and second-generation participants also felt a sort of mental fatigue overall. As shown in the examples representing the first and second generations in their responses to the vignettes and their artwork, the two younger participants appeared to feel as though they were pressured by society and that they had to constantly wear a mask or hide their true identity. The second-generation participant reported having a hard time coping with her inability to speak Spanish and also exist in the world. Based on these responses, the student researcher came to a conclusion that young Latino/x/e Americans (in the US) need significant support from their elders and family structures, whether they be in the form of mental health or cultural supports.

Key Findings

While the study confirmed that later generational members of the Latino/x/e community may feel out of place within American society, age had a great impact on the study. The first two participants portrayed in the vignettes, who were representative of their generation, were of first- and second-generation participants who both were under the age of 35. Both expressed feeling

out of place, with the first-generation participant stating that she feels like she was wearing a mask most of the time, and the second-generation participant wanting to hide or cover behind her hair. The younger participants were definitely more expressive with respect to their feelings. The older women in the vignettes were not as artistically expressive, they scored higher on the test, and credited their age and family to help carry them through tough times. Latino/x/e and Hispanic values were shown through this study and were shining brightly through our older participants.

Alignment to Theoretical Framework

The student researcher made use of the PERMA model and the idea of making meaning with the self-portraits. The idea of showing one's authentic self was also made use of. This study primarily showcased support systems and how individuals responded to them. Like the idea of positive psychology, the emphasis of the study was on strengths, and the families seemed to help support these third-generation participants who scored high on the Identity Denial Scale.

Contributions to the Literature

Again, the key findings reflected the significance of age as an influence on the findings. The older third-generation participants scored higher on the Identity Denial Scale but their responses to the questions reflected the sustaining influence of secure communities and identities. Whereas the second-generation participant expressed having familial support, she was still feeling some sort of inner turmoil as reflected by her self-portrait and her explanation of her portrait. Overall, Latino/e/x family strength really shines through the entire study.

Limitations and Validity Considerations

Limitations

The first limitation was that the study took place completely online. However, that was also its greatest asset. Being online limited the researcher's control over the study. The student researcher had a lot of submissions from first generation immigrants or participants or participants from outside of the United States of America. As stated throughout the paper, 51 people signed the consent form, but only 12 participants completed the entire study with a majority being first and second-generation women.

Internal Validity

Internal validity is the “degree to which a study or experiment is free from flaws in its internal structure and its results can therefore be taken to represent the true nature of the phenomenon” (VandenBos, 2007, p. 493). The data collected appears to be an accurate representation of participants' experience as first, second, and third-generation participants. Quantitative data collected from the Identity Denial Scale was in keeping with the expectations of the researcher. Aside from the outlier, responses to the Identity Denial Scale matched what the student researcher predicted. From these metrics, the study appears to have good internal validity.

External Validity

External validity is “the extent to which the results of the research or testing can be generalized beyond the sample . . . to other individuals or situation” (VandenBos, 2007, p. 358). The student researcher believes that the Identity Denial Scale results would be the same depending on the generation of participants. The student researcher also believes, as shown with the third generation, that age and family connection/support will also matter. In other words, the

findings are likely to be generalizable to other Latino/x/e females in the US. However, due to the small sample size, further research is needed to validate these results.

Recommendations for Future Research

The initial description of this research project did not include a clear statement that it was intended for American born people of Hispanic and Latino Americano descent. One of the unanticipated parts of this study was the varied responses of the participants from different countries outside of the United States. The student researcher received replies from individuals in the US and from Mexico and Colombia. Based on the responses to this study, the researcher recommends that future researchers clearly stipulate that participants be of Hispanic and Latino Americano descent. The Identity Denial Scale is meant to measure the identity denial caused by Americans' treatment and denial of those of diverse ethnic heritages. Due to this lack of specification, the results of the IDS were murky at best with the first-generation section of the study. Another issue was that the study was online. There were over 50 people who signed and completed the consent form, while there were only 12 people who completed the entire study. The student researcher believes that poor links (there had been multiple problems to the link provided for the study) and intimidation of art were the key causes for low finishing rates. The specific directive of a self-portrait may have added to the hesitancy about creating art for the study. Art itself is already a daunting task to people who may not complete art regularly. Asking someone who does not regularly complete art to create a self-portrait can be intimidating. For example, self-portraits may be considered to be more emotionally charged due to the close nature of the portrait as opposed to a painter painting another person (Gallese, 2022).

The student researcher received confirmation of her initial thought that imposter syndrome can affect members of the Latino/x/e community, but the community has shown itself

to be incredibly resilient. There were participants who heavily identified with the story written by the student researcher, and they discussed how this affected their life and their view of themselves. These stories are important and invaluable to the United States, as there is a population that feels unsure and insecure. The Hispanic and Latino/x/e communities of the United States, like the student researcher has said before, are very strong, and their family have kept them safe and secure. However, as more and more generations are born within the United States, a loss of culture and identity can be found leading to phenomena like imposter syndrome and insecurity and this continues to be vital to address.

The student researcher recommends and intends to replicate and extend this study with another population of the United States. During the course of this study, from the data collected from the Identity Denial Scale, the researcher found that 2/3 of her targeted population encountered significant problems, but they all had a support system to hold up their identity within their family structure. Therefore, in addition to measuring the authenticity in which they feel their identity is valid, researchers should strive to measure the support for the identity itself. They might ask participant to identify supports for their identity, such as extended families, as well as activities and organizations they are engaged in.

The study also only had women volunteers. Therefore, future research is needed to explore the cultural identity of later generation males who identify as Latinos. Moreover, the student researcher believes that a large population of males could benefit from art therapy. However, the researcher also understands that there are large cultural barriers and ideas of how masculinity should be in Latino/x/e cultures. The barriers include the concept of *machismo*, which includes the idea that men shoulder all the responsibilities and are not supposed to show emotion (Nuñez et al., 2016). Art is also another barrier, as most people would not be

comfortable creating art if they have never done it before. Also, there is stigma and cultural shunning of mental health issues. Researchers need to be strategic in recruiting males to such a study. It would be important to share ideas with them. There will be a lot who may respond that the idea of art therapy is not needed or that they do not need it. The best approach is to keep exposing them to art and art therapy and its potential benefits.

Implications to the Art Therapy Field

Lack of Awareness

There is not much research on later generational immigrant families in the field of art therapy. However, there is a great deal of research on immigrants and refugees. The lack of research on later generations is a problem primarily affecting the United States as it is a large immigrant nation. Although it is a very United States problem, the field of art therapy is a majority White female-led field, so it would make sense that the majority of art therapists do not understand this issue or see why a failure to understand cultural identities might cause harm to those outside the dominant culture. This issue can also be biased, such as the White savior bias. It could also be seen as “not a big deal.”

In addition, admittedly, the line between appreciation and appropriation can be thin and confusing. Many people who are of Latino Americano descent will have traditions they celebrate with their families that originate in their ancestral countries; however, they must also realize that they are Americans and that claiming they are from another country or another culture could be cause for appropriation. For example, if a woman celebrates Christmas by making tamales with her grandmother every year, then she is honoring her family’s tradition and heritage through food, but if someone were to make what seems to be an aqua fresca and calls it “spa water” or

tries to pass it off as a “new” invention of their own, then that would be appropriation which would signify lack of respect for the culture it comes from.

There was much discourse on the Internet forums between Latino Americano born and U.S. born Latino/x/e. Many of the Latino Americano-born individuals wanted the U.S.-born individuals to stop claiming their country and to stop using it for “their own gain.” The student researcher interpreted this as being seen to be problem that too many people in the US claim their ancestry only when convenient. Whereas it is not always true, the Internet is full of influencers that claim percentages of their ancestry only to behave in a way that is disrespectful towards others. Whereas the student researcher understands the outsider’s perspective, she also believes that there is nothing wrong with individuals celebrating their heritage or family traditions, and she acknowledges that culture is ever evolving. Bringing this discussion back to the field of art therapy, the student researcher would like art therapists to understand that culture is something to be shared but that it is also something that should be respected.

If an art therapist would like to incorporate cultural ideas into their practice, for example using Día de los Muertos celebrations, then extensive research is needed to understand the culture, the people, and the traditions. Moreover, when practicing different ideas, a transparent explanation of where the practice came from and who uses it should always be told to the client. The art therapist should also be receptive to other cultures when they are seeing clients. For example, if an art therapist is seeing a Muslim client, it might not be appropriate to have them do Christmas-themed directives. If the client is of Latino Americano descent, then they may not like that Latino/x/e culture is used without context in directives, and art therapists should respect that. As a majority White female field, art therapists need to understand the type of cultural sensitivities that may occur during the session.

Researcher's Experience

These next paragraphs will discuss the student researcher's perspective of writing and the thesis and the challenges that came along with this project. The student researcher wishes to convey her thoughts and feelings so that the reader may gain her perspective and understand a little more about where she is coming from and how she got here.

Found History

During the course of this study, there has been a lot of social justice research and opportunity for the student researcher to reacquaint herself with the rich history of Mexican Americans and other Latino movements. In the middle of research, the student researcher discovered that those in her lineage had fought for the right to higher education. Her grandmother was a part of the movement of getting the underprivileged immigrant kids through high school and into college. It was interesting to learn that the student researcher's family had taken part in Mexican American history alongside such renowned figures as Cesar Chavez. The student researcher has a renewed sense of pride in her Mexican American roots and strives to carry out social causes like her activist grandparents.

Code Switching

Code switching was introduced in the literature review. Although the student researcher is monolingual, she was surprised with the amount of code switching that was involved while going through the research process. There were many times in her online forums where she forgot to omit the use of Latinx, which is used in America, or where she needed to speak within normal parameters to cater towards the general population and not academia. The English-speaking forums are as a whole divided on the use of the term and it can be quite polarizing. On the Latino only pages, a majority of the Latino/x/e people did not like the term Latinx and often

denounced it through memes or comments. Participants for this study were recruited through the social media platform Facebook.

It was tough being in these pages as the student researcher was subject to discourse with the usage of Latinx and suspicion regarding the psychotherapy aspect. The student researcher was called many names, which she laughed off, but it really hit home why this thesis was being conducted. In these interactions with others, the student researcher was able to understand their feelings and gain a new perspective. It was a humbling experience and also a reminder that the US is just one of many vastly diverse countries in the world.

Thesis During a Pandemic

The pandemic slowed the entire process down. The student researcher began this project in 2020, and at the time of this writing, it is 2023. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the student researcher to work from home and gather results digitally. Designing the study for online participation meant more people had access to the study and the student researcher was able to raise more awareness. Unfortunately, online methods also resulted in less accountability. As stated in the previous chapters, nearly 51 people signed the consent form but only 12 completed the actual study. The student researcher believes that this was due to lack of accountability as well as difficulty getting the links to work. Once the pandemic shelter in place was lifted and life started to go back to normal, there was a significant struggle within the student researcher to get back to “normal” life. So many things were going on at once, and it became overwhelming for the student researcher while continuing this work. That overwhelming feeling continues through the end of this process.

Thesis Inspiration

This thesis project was originally inspired by *Art Therapy for Social Justice: Racial Intersections* by Savneet K. Talwar. The initial impulse was to take a look and see how out of touch the field of art therapy can be and what we could do to reach out to more communities. What was found during this study was a new sense of identity and a reason to not only uplift the art therapy field but to continue working in it. To continue to work in the art therapy field is to continue to preach about diversity and the struggle to fit into a predominantly White narrative. It is to raise a voice for underprivileged students who cannot work for free to complete their program. It is reaching out to historically diverse colleges and bringing in more perspectives. It is acknowledging that some of our most used methods of art making are appropriated. All of these aspects of the art therapy field can be fixed with time and care. It will take the whole community to come together to be able to move forward.

Through these last few years of writing and researching, the student researcher has come to appreciate her heritage and take pride in the life her family built in the United States. She fully recognizes that millions of people continue to seek better opportunities in the US and supports immigration as a whole. The student researcher understands that her experiences of shame and embarrassment growing up and not retaining her family's language and culture are the building blocks to recognizing people in the same situation and she hopes to build a community that shares and supports all forms of people and cultures. It all starts with one.

Conclusion

When writing this thesis, the student researcher thought it necessary to also include the basis of why she has chosen to take up cultural arms. Her own perspective has been shaped by the "American dream" that casts a shadow over people of color and their ancestors. As a woman

who's only representation growing up was the rendition of Pocahontas, it pains her to see that the field is lacking in cultural humility (Not only with respect to people of color but also privilege).

This research has powerful implications for developing self-confidence and a sense of reassurance. In the words of the participants: having a foundation on which you believe that you are awesome and accepting of yourself and your many different forms is the key to happiness within yourself.

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Appendix A
Social Media Posts

Atlantis: Lost Empire posting: Hello all! So, exciting times. My Master's thesis project got approved! I'm looking for participants who are Hispanic or Latine. I knew this was a pretty wholesome group so I thought I'd ask!

This study involves artmaking or photographs. If you have any questions let me know. The link is below!

<https://wakelet.com/i/invite?code=47f6895>

Subtle Latino Traits posting: At long last, I've gotten approval for my Master's Thesis study. It's regarding cultural imposter syndrome in the Latino and Hispanic communities living in the US and how mental health stigmas against us continue to do harm. I'm hoping you have a little time to spare and will help me in my endeavors!

This does involve artmaking! But I'm also allowing the use of photography. Please let me know if you have any questions. Here's the link.

<https://wakelet.com/i/invite?code=47f6895>

I need all of the Google sheets to be filled out! Thank you 😊

El Dorado: Gold posting: Hey guys! Kinda nervous to share but I'm looking for American based Hispanic and Latinx people to participate by doing some art for my thesis project. Everything you need to fill out is on this link and when I ask you to fill everything out, I mean everything or else my study doesn't count 😭 help a sis out!

<https://wakelet.com/i/invite?code=47f6895>

Appendix B

Agreement to Participate in Research

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Tara Bustamante

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: *Cultural Identity and Implications of Third and Fourth Generational Hispanic and Latino Populations in the United States.*

I have been asked to participate in a survey-based research study that is investigating Cultural Imposter Syndrome and its transference into art. The results of this study should further our understanding of the experience of different cultural backgrounds and how to be mindful when working with others' lived experiences.

I understand that:

1. I will be asked to take 3 short surveys, in 1 session as well as create a self-portrait. The running time for the first survey is approximately 5 -10 minutes while the second survey will be written and the time determined by the volunteer. There will also be a short ending survey 5-10 Min.
2. The possible psychological risks may be some discomfort based on my reaction to the survey. Should any feelings be elicited based on my participation in this study, I may contact:
 - a. Call 911 and ask to speak to the mental health worker on call
 - b. Go to your Local Hospital Emergency Room.
(We will make every attempt to inform you in advance of planned absences and provide you with the name and phone number of the mental health professional covering our practice.)
 - c. Other Emergency Contacts:
 - i. * National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255
 - ii. * If you are hard of hearing, you can contact the Lifeline via TTY by dialing 800-799-4889.

- iii. * If you are hard of hearing and a veteran, service member, contact the Veterans Crisis Line: send a text message to 838255

No physiological risks are anticipated.

3. There are no discernible benefits to me personally, although the results of this study will help expand our knowledge of Latinx and Hispanic cultural experience. This allows us to better support humanity.
4. Although alternative procedures may be used, the present procedure is the most advantageous and economical.
5. The results of this study may be published, but any information from this study that makes me identifiable will remain confidential. The data will be pooled to maintain anonymity.
6. Any questions about my participation in this study will be answered by Tara Bustamante tarabusta@email.com. Any questions or concerns about this study should be addressed to Erin Partridge, PhD, ATR-BC; erinpartridge@email.com. Complaints or concerns about this study may be addressed to addressed to Dr. Amy Backos, (Chair, Institutional Review Board, NDNU) at _ _ _ - _ _ _ - _ _ _ _ .
7. My consent is given voluntarily without being coerced. I may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study, and I may withdraw at any time, without prejudice to my relation with Notre Dame de Namur University or with any future contact with NDNU.
8. I have received a copy of this consent form for my record.

I consent to the use of my art in the thesis and other publications.

_____ I consent to the use of data resulting from any other
study measures

I HAVE MADE A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE. MY
SIGNATURE INDICATES THAT I HAVE READ THE INFORMATION
PROVIDED AND THAT I HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE.

Print Participant's Name

Participant's Signature

Date

Investigator's Signature

Appendix C
Demographics Form

Initials (first 3): _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Generation in the US: (checkboxes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th)

Race/Ethnicity: _____

Languages Spoken: _____

Do you identify as Hispanic or Latinx?: _____

Highest level of education: _____

Appendix D

Identity Denial Scale

Note . Items are rated on a scale of 1 (never) to 7 (always).

How often are you asked **where you are from**/about your racial appearance?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Sometimes	Almost Always	Always

How often are you asked **about your nationality**/about your racial ancestry?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Sometimes	Almost Always	Always

How often are you told you are **not American**/not White?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Sometimes	Almost Always	Always

How often are you told you **cannot identify as American**/White?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Sometimes	Almost Always	Always

How often are you told you should **culturally**/racially identify differently?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Sometimes	Almost Always	Always

How often are you told you should identify with one **cultural**/racial identity over another?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Neutral	Sometimes	Almost Always	Always

Appendix E

Qualitative Survey (Including Story and Artist's Prompt)

Story (Imposter Narrative): Christina is 22 years old and a Junior in College. She has been asked to represent the Latinx graduation committee at this year's Homecoming. She is honored and happy to represent her club. However, Christina cannot speak Spanish and she feels that this does not make her worthy to represent the Latinx cultures at all. She feels out of place and not good enough despite being knowledgeable in Latinx traditions and being an active member in her club.

1. In 3 words give your impression of this story.

Story (Conclusion): Homecoming came and went and Christina did an excellent job during the homecoming games. Her friends, both multilingual and single language, told her how awesome it was to have someone with such pride for her culture and heritage represent the Latinx committee. Christina was relieved and happy that she could put forth her most authentic self and be accepted by those around her.

2. In 3 words give your impressions of the second half of this story.

Artist's prompt: Please create a self-portrait representing your authentic self and title your piece. This can be done in any way: drawing, painting, sculpture, print, digital, photo, etc.

3. Please respond to the following questions.

What do you want your self-portrait to represent?

How does your self-portrait show your authentic

self? What does it mean to be your authentic self?

Ending Survey

1. How did it feel to make a Self-Portrait?

2. Why did you feel that way? Was there a specific aspect you did or did not like?

3. How could it change?

4. Would you do it again?

Appendix F
Debriefing Statement/Form

Project Title: *Finding authenticity within identity: Working with Latinx and Hispanic communities to understand the complexities of cultural imposter syndrome*

Principal Investigator: Tara Bustamante of Notre Dame de Namur University

Contact Information: tbustamante@student.ndnu.edu

Thank you for participating in this study. In order to get the information we were looking for, we provided you with information about some aspects of this study but not the complete picture. Now that the experiment is over, I will describe *Finding authenticity within identity: Working with Latinx and Hispanic communities to understand the complexities of cultural imposter syndrome* to you, answer any of your questions, and provide you with the opportunity to make a decision on whether you would like to have your data included in this study.

Taking part is voluntary

Although you have already completed the survey/interview/etc., your involvement is still voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw the data you provided prior to debriefing, without penalty or loss of compensation offered to you. Withdrawing your submission will not adversely affect your relationship with Notre Dame de Namur University, the researchers, or any of our affiliates.

Privacy/Confidentiality

If you agree to allow us to use your data, here is how we will maintain confidentiality of the information. Your art will be used (with your consent) and identified only by the random numerical code you have been given at the beginning of the research project. All files will be kept with the student researcher in a secured location.

The main researcher conducting this study is Tara Bustamante, an Art Therapy Master's Candidate at Notre Dame de Namur University.

If you have questions later, or would like to know about the results of the study, you may contact Tara Bustamante or Erin Partridge, PhD, ATR-BC. Complaints or concerns about this study may be addressed to Dr.

Amy Backos, (Chair, Institutional Review Board, NDNU) at (650) 508-3674.

Please sign below if you do, or do not, give permission to have your data included in the study:

I understand the true intent of and the purpose of my participation in the study titled, “*Finding authenticity within identity: Working with Latinx and Hispanic communities to understand the complexities of cultural imposter syndrome.*” I understand that my data and identity will be kept confidential. I consent to the use of my art and other data collected during the study to be used in academic and scholarly publication and presentation.

____ Checkboxes

Signature

date _____

You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

Extra help?

In the case of a mental health crisis, please use one of the methods below to contact crisis services. If it is an emergency and you cannot reach any help, please follow one of the three listed. Other emergency contacts are provided below:

- 1) call 911 and ask to speak to the mental health worker on call
- 2) Crisis Text Line: text the word “HOME” to 741714
- 3) Go to your Local Hospital Emergency Room. We will make every attempt to inform you in advance of planned absences, and provide you with the name and phone number of the mental health professional covering our practice.

Other Emergency Contacts:

* National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

* If you are hard of hearing, you can contact the Lifeline via TTY by dialing 800-799-4889.

* If you are hard of hearing and a veteran, service member, contact the Veterans Crisis Line: send a text message to 838255