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Marital Quality, Acculturation, and Communication in Mexican American Couples

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MARITAL QUALITY, ACCULTURATION, AND COMMUNICATION IN
MEXICAN AMERICAN COUPLES

by

Audrey L. Schwartz

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Psychology

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2011

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ABSTRACT

Marital Quality, Acculturation, and Communication in Mexican American Couples

by

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Utah State University, 2011

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Department: Psychology

Marital quality is a broad measurement of perceptions of satisfaction, happiness, and stability by partners in an established relationship. Marital quality has been relatively understudied among Mexican Americans, a population that warrants the inclusion of cultural constructs in any model concerning relationship outcomes. Therefore, acculturation differences between Mexican American couples were conceptualized as a distal context for understanding marital quality. Traditional gender role values and communication style (warmth and hostility) were included as proximal contexts. Data from Conger's California Families Project were utilized; results indicated that while most measures of acculturation did not impact marital quality, language use interacted with gender roles values and communication style to influence husbands' marital quality. Warmth, hostility, and traditional gender role values all exhibited a significant direct

influence on marital quality for both husbands and wives. Potential explanations and recommendations for future directions are discussed.

(124 pages)

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Audrey L. Schwartz

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Marital quality, a measurement of marital partners' subjective sense of satisfaction, happiness, and stability within their relationships, has been tied to psychological and physical health, sociodemographic variables, and environmental factors (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000). Yet, despite the importance of understanding the factors that impact and are impacted by marital quality, few studies on the topic have been carried out among Mexican Americans. This gap in the literature is problematic, given the fact that Mexican Americans make up a growing percentage of the overall U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009), demonstrate unique interpersonal value systems and marital patterns, and are less likely to receive mental health services than non-Hispanic White Americans (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS], 2001). Mexican American immigrants tend to marry younger (Bean, Berg, & Van Hook, 1996), stay married longer (Phillips & Sweeney, 2005), and select partners who are also Mexican American (Kalmijn & Tubergen, 2010). It is believed that in order to adequately study marital quality among Mexican Americans, research must include culturally relevant constructs.

One of the most researched cultural constructs that may impact marital quality among Mexican Americans is acculturation, the process through which individuals and groups adopt the cultural beliefs and behaviors of another group (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 2002). While several investigators have looked at how individual-level acculturation impacts marital quality, few have looked at couple-level acculturation,

defined here as the match between partners' acculturation levels. Additionally, little empirical data exists to clarify the impact of traditional Mexican American gender role values on marital quality, although gender attitudes and beliefs are often discussed as important to the functioning of a marital relationship (e.g., Bradbury & Fincham, 1988; Wiggins Frame, 2004). Finally, marital communication is known to play a role in the health and stability of a relationship (e.g., Burleson & Denton, 1997). Therefore, the current study is designed to include the interpersonal communication styles of warmth and hostility, both in order to assess the influence that communication has on the relationship between couple-level acculturation and marital quality, as well as to test the assumption that warmth and hostility have the same impact on marital quality among Mexican Americans as has been demonstrated in other cultural groups.

The current project was designed to investigate the relationships among couple-level acculturation (also referred to as acculturation gaps), traditional gender role values, communicative warmth and hostility, and marital quality among Mexican American couples. These variables were organized using Bradbury and Fincham's (1988) contextual model of marriage, which stated that marital quality is impacted by both distal variables (in this study, acculturation) and proximal variables (in this study, gender values and communication). Data from the California Families Project (Conger, 2005) were used to carry out the analyses.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following review of the literature will present findings on research regarding marital quality, Mexican American culture, acculturation, marital communication, and specific values that impact and are impacted by marital quality and acculturation. The purpose of this review is to present a rationale for examining how acculturation differences between Mexican American spouses affect marital quality, as well as how communication and gender role values moderate this relationship. Component variables of marital quality, marital satisfaction and marital stability, have been of interest to marriage researchers for decades, particularly given high divorce rates in the U.S. (Raley & Bumpass, 2003). Additionally, the health of a marital relationship impacts the psychological well-being of each individual (Gove, Hughes, & Briggs Style, 1983).

Historically, research on marital quality and marital communication has been carried out primarily in European American couples. However, the unique cultural characteristics of Mexican American couples suggest that assumptions made based on previous research should not simply be applied broadly and indiscriminately to diverse families. A primary goal of this project will be to show how a contextual model of marital quality (Bradbury & Fincham, 1988) can incorporate acculturation as a distal context for better understanding predictors of marital quality among Mexican American couples. Information about each variable of interest will be presented in a sequential manner, beginning with a review of the marital quality literature. A discussion of the Mexican American population and marital relationships within this cultural framework

will follow, leading into a focused exploration of the proposed distal context, acculturation. Particular attention will be paid to the way that acculturation differences between spouses have been shown to affect relationship patterns. Traditional gender role values will then be introduced as the first proximal context that may impact the purported connection between acculturation gaps and marital quality. Finally, information will be provided about the second proposed proximal context for marital quality, communication, with an emphasis on warm versus hostile communication strategies.

Marital Quality in Context

Marital quality refers broadly to the major elements of a marital relationship, including satisfaction, happiness, and stability. Although the current study aims to investigate marital quality specifically, the terms “quality” and “satisfaction” are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature, and as such many of the findings to be presented will regard satisfaction. To clarify, marital satisfaction is a cognitive construct, referring to an individual’s intellectual evaluation of the state of their marriage (Brockwood, 2007). On the other hand, marital happiness is an affective construct, referring to an individual’s emotional evaluation of the relationship. Finally, the term marital stability is used as a marker for the relationship itself rather than for either individual spouse, and it is more closely aligned with whether or not a couple will divorce (Rosen-Grandon, Myers, & Hattie, 2004). Longitudinal research has shown that while marital satisfaction and marital stability are the most highly correlated of all marriage-related variables, the relationship is not perfect (Karney & Bradbury, 1995).

Researchers have pointed out that while unstable marriages are certainly characterized by low satisfaction, the opposite is not true; marital dissatisfaction does not invariably lead to divorce. In an attempt to gain a more general sense of marital functioning, the current study has combined these major marital outcome variables into a single construct: marital quality.

Decades of research on marital quality has demonstrated that the health of a committed relationship is impacted by numerous overlapping variables, including psychological factors (cognition and affect), sociodemographic factors (parenting, finances, and social support), life stressors and transitions, and physical and mental health factors (Bradbury et al., 2000). A variety of theoretical perspectives have been developed to explain longitudinal patterns of marital quality, many arising from diverse fields of study (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Karney and Bradbury reviewed and evaluated four of these theoretical approaches to marriage, including social exchange theory, behavioral theory, attachment theory, and crisis theory. The authors concluded that while each theory contributes to the understanding of marriage by providing theoretical and empirical information about various aspects of marriage, each also demonstrates substantial shortcomings. Their own model of marital development attempted to integrate existing theories of marriage, as well as findings from their meta-analysis of 115 longitudinal studies, resulting in a “vulnerability-stress-adaptation” model. Karney and Bradbury’s model is described as being strongly rooted in behavioral theory, which focuses on the interpersonal exchanges between partners, while still taking into consideration life events (from crisis theory, which emphasizes how spouses adapt to

stressful experiences) and personality characteristics (from attachment theory, which emphasizes the way historical relationship experiences shape an individual's interpersonal style). One of the major strengths of Karney and Bradbury's vulnerability-stress-adaptation model, as stated by its developers, is its linking of both "broad and specific levels of analysis" (p. 25), although they also acknowledge that it is incomplete and doesn't include consideration of between-spouse differences.

In their review of marital satisfaction, Bradbury and colleagues (2000) pointed out that marital processes are best understood in context, and that although the widespread attention to interspousal interactions is well warranted, the micro and macro contexts in which those interactions take place must be taken into consideration. For this reason, the contextual model of marriage proposed by Bradbury and Fincham (1988) stands out as a useful and theoretically sound method for organizing the study of marital quality within specific cultural contexts. Bradbury and Fincham's contextual model of marriage suggests that behavior from one partner leads to cognitive processing by the other, leading to reciprocal behavior and more processing, which is highly influenced by the broader context in which the behavior is occurring. The model emphasizes the impact of both distal and proximal contexts when attempting to decipher inter-spousal behavior and perceptions of the marital relationship. According to the authors, distal factors refer to more or less stable psychological variables such as personality, while proximal factors refer to the internal experiences of a spouse that occur immediately prior to a particular interpersonal behavior.

Bradbury and Fincham (1988) tested how to best organize a contextual model of

marriage by investigating the influence of sex role and relationship beliefs (classified as distal contexts) and causal and responsibility attributions (classified as proximal contexts) on marital satisfaction. Results of several regression analyses using these variables showed that distal and proximal contexts each accounted for unique variance in marital satisfaction, indicating that the relationship between the two contextual levels is a moderating one. The data did not support the possibility that proximal contexts mediate the relation between distal variables and marital satisfaction. The authors pointed out that a moderating relationship between proximal and distal contexts not only fits the data better but also makes more sense theoretically, since both variable levels can be expected to interact with one another while still directly influencing marital satisfaction. More recent studies on marital relationships have continued to provide support for studying both interpersonal behaviors and environmental context when planning interventions for married couples (Karney & Bradbury, 2005).

Marital Quality Among Mexican Americans

One of the major shortcomings of the current marital quality literature is the lack of focus on diverse ethnic groups. Karney and Bradbury's (2000) meta-analysis of longitudinal marriage research found that of the 68 samples included, 75% were comprised primarily of middle-class White American couples, leading them to state that "much of what is known about predicting marital outcomes derives from one particular segment of society and may not hold true outside that group" (p. 9). Marriage itself varies in form and in function across cultures (Hamon & Ingoldsby, 2003). In fact the act of

marriage has undergone significant shifts throughout history (Coontz, 2005), making it difficult to define in any standardized manner. Although marriage previously functioned primarily to meet the social, economic, and political needs of a couple's family, the last two hundred years has seen the emergence of the marriage based in romantic love (Coontz, 2005). Current marital practices in the U.S. also include some form of property sharing and caretaking responsibilities. At a cross-cultural level, there is some evidence that marital expectations differ between White Americans and Latinos. For example, Latinos tend to view marriage as an extension of their family rather than the other way around, as is often seen in White American relationships (Harris, Skogrand, & Hatch, 2008). Additionally, Harris and colleagues' qualitative investigation of Latino marriages also revealed that participants emphasized primarily the elements of friendship, trust (*confianza*), and love in defining a strong and healthy marriage.

There are also important functional cross-cultural differences in the practice of cohabitation (Phillips & Sweeney, 2005). Phillips and Sweeney found that although cohabitating before marriage predicted increased risk for marital disruption in White women, the association was not significant among Black or Mexican American women. The authors pointed out that cohabitation appears to function differently for Mexican American women than for White American or Black American women, often serving as a "surrogate marriage" and resulting in planned childbirth (Castro Martin, 2002; Manning, 2001). Osborne, Manning, and Smock, (2007) found that while cohabitating parents were at greater risk for separating than married couples across all ethnic groups, the gap was significantly greater for White couples than for Mexican American or Black couples.

More interestingly, they found that different factors contribute to marital stability among Mexican Americans than those identified for White Americans. For example, while the greater risk for cohabitating White couples could be explained by accounting for relationship quality, family complexity (i.e., prior marriages and children from prior marriages), maternal background characteristics, and paternal education, including these variables in the models for Mexican Americans actually increased the risk differences between married and cohabitating couples. Instead, economic factors seemed to have most explanatory power for Mexican Americans, although it still contributed comparatively little to the overall model.

Other important differences exist between Mexican Americans and other ethnic groups, including the middle-class White Americans with whom most marital quality studies are carried out. Mexican American women tend to marry at a younger age than White or Black American women (Bean et al., 1996; Phillips & Sweeney, 2005). First-generation Mexican Americans also tend to stay married longer than other groups, according to analyses carried out with data from the 1995 National Survey of Family Growth (Phillips & Sweeney, 2005), and they tend to be more likely to marry another Mexican American (Kalmijn & Tubergen, 2010). Kalmijn and Tubergen found that 68.3% of Mexican American immigrants marry within their ethnic group, making them more likely than any other Latino subgroup, as well as Europeans, Eastern Europeans, Asians, or Middle Easterners to marry within-group members. Based upon several tested models to explain patterns of endogamy, Kalmijn and Tubergen found that cultural explanations (e.g., group norms) tended to play a more important role in determining

mate selection than structural explanations (e.g. opportunities for meeting mates). Furthermore, Mexican Americans appear to follow a different trend for marrying, something Oropesa, Lichter, and Anderson (1994) called the “paradox of Mexican American nuptiality.” Whereas marriage rates for White and Black Americans are believed to be driven to some extent by economic factors (e.g., income and employment promote marriage among White and Black women, respectively), Mexican American women still marry at high rates and at young ages despite historical economic disadvantages.

A significant complicating factor in evaluating and comparing marital patterns for Mexican Americans is the difference between Mexican Americans born in the U.S. and those born in Mexico (Oropesa et al., 1994; Osborne et al., 2007; Phillips & Sweeney, 2005). Raley, Durden, and Wildsmith (2004) reported that although marital rates are similar between U.S.-born Mexican Americans and White Americans, Mexican American immigrants have higher marriage rates. A similar trend occurs for divorce. In counting the rate of marital disruption within the first ten years of a first marriage, Phillips and Sweeney (2005) found that 13% of first-generation Mexican American experience disruption, compared to 41% of Mexican American women born in the U.S. (a rate that is very similar to rates for White Americans). Osborne and colleagues found that the stability of a cohabitating relationship for Mexican Americans depended primarily on whether the couple was born in the U.S. or in Mexico, even though both groups reported similar economic circumstances. Finally, Roebuck Bulanda and Brown (2007) found that reports of marital problems were fewer among Mexican American

immigrants than among White, Black, or U.S.-born Mexican Americans.

Mexican American Demographics

In addition to filling a much-discussed hole in the marital quality literature, examining marital quality among Mexican Americans is important for a wide variety of more pragmatic reasons. First of all, the Mexican American population is rapidly growing due to both immigration and high national birth rates (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Recent changes in the way Latino origin, race, and nativity are measured have led to numerical adjustments as well, with the most recent calculation estimating that 46.9 million Latinos lived in the U.S. as of 2008, making up approximately 15% of the total population. Of this number, at least 29.2 million reported being Mexican American. Additionally, as of 2009, over half (53%) of the U.S.' 38.5 million foreign-born people were from Latin America, and almost 30% were from Mexico specifically (Grieco & Trevalyan, 2010).

The experiences of Mexican Americans are considered by researchers to be unique and best understood within their own specific historical environmental and cultural context. Smart and Smart (1995), for example, pointed out that Mexican immigrants face a different set of challenges than many other racial and ethnic groups for multiple reasons, including discrimination based on skin color, a strong emphasis on family ties and social networks, historical reliance on physical labor, and the prevalence of undocumented entry into the U.S. These factors are further complicated by the legacy of armed conflict which led many Mexicans to become Americans via direct conquest of their homeland.

Although there is a tendency to discuss Mexican Americans under the umbrella label “Latino,” this practice of ethnic glossing loses valuable information and presents a superficial homogeneity where there is in fact a great deal of cultural variability (Trimble & Dickson, 2005). This cultural variability is observed, for example, in the immigration histories of Mexicans, which has been historically variable but more recently driven by high unemployment rates in Mexico (Mendoza, 1994). This is quite different than the immigration history of Cubans, who arrived after the 1959 Cuban revolution with the privileges and benefits of U.S. policies for political refugees. The histories of both these groups also contrast starkly with the immigration histories of Puerto Ricans, all of whom are U.S. citizens and have subsequently engaged in ongoing back and forth migration since the late 1940s. Whereas Cuban Americans reside predominately in Florida and have a somewhat higher socioeconomic profile than other Latino groups, Puerto Ricans reside predominately in New York and have historically worked in the textile industry, and Mexican Americans reside predominately in California and southwestern states and have historically worked in agriculture, meat packing, brickyards, and canneries (Mendoza, 1994). Immigration history is merely one small piece of the larger contextual puzzle that constitutes each distinct Latino subgroup. Given these broad subgroup differences, as well as the previously reviewed differences between U.S.-born and foreign-born Mexican Americans, the current study seeks to minimize the risk of over-generalizing ethnic minority group membership by focusing solely on the marital experiences of first-generation Mexican Americans living in the U.S.

It is startling to consider that while Mexican American immigrants make up an

increasingly large proportion of the U.S. population, they and other racial and ethnic minorities continue to constitute a disproportionate number of those with mental health problems who fail to seek or receive services. For example, although overall rates of depression among Latinos appear to be similar to those of non-Hispanic White Americans, there are a number of studies indicating that service provision is not equal. A study by Lagomasino and colleagues (2005) revealed that Latinos are less than half as likely as non-Hispanic Whites to receive services for depression, even when age, employment, education, medical and mental health status, and insurance were controlled for. These findings corroborated a 2001 supplement to the U.S. Surgeon General's report that stated that less than 1 in 11 Latinos with mental health disorders contact mental health professionals, and that less than 1 in 5 contact even a general health professional (USDHHS, 2001). Cabassa and Zayas (2007) found that 78% of Latino immigrants were un-insured and that 72% had never used mental health services before. While limited access to mental health services due to high rates of uninsurance and poverty create one type of barrier, the US Surgeon General's supplement (USDHHS, 2001) pointed out that another, somewhat more concerning barrier is the lack of culturally congruent treatment guidelines for treating those Latinos who do seek service. Consistent with the Surgeon General's concerns, the American Psychological Association's (2003) multicultural guidelines also call for greater research within specific diverse populations in order to improve the availability of culturally appropriate services. For Mexican Americans, research on culturally appropriate services necessitates the consideration of family and close relationships.

The importance of healthy relationships for mental health is no small matter, and the connection holds particularly true for Mexican American immigrants. Gove and colleagues (1983) argued that higher marital quality reliably predicts individual psychological well-being, while in-depth interviews by Grzywacz, Quandt, Arcury, and Marín (2005) showed that marriage and family tend to act as protective factors for Mexican immigrants. This protection is vital for offsetting the stress of immigration, as immigrants who experience greater strain related to separation from their families also tend to exhibit higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Grzywacz and colleagues speculated that if the gains of immigration for the family are clear, then immigrants may have an easier time managing the stress of immigration and work. Guarnaccia, Angel, and Worobey (1991) found that marriage appeared to exert a protective effect for Mexican Americans, as those who were married tended to have lower levels of depression and higher rates of employment than those who were unmarried. These protective effects are not surprising given the wide range of literature demonstrating the importance of social support and close relationships, particularly among immigrants. Alderete, Vega, Kolody, and Aguilar-Gaxiola (1999) found that Mexican immigrants who reported high levels of instrumental, or tangible, social support had nearly half the risk of depression as those who reported lower levels of instrumental social support. Alegría and colleagues (2007), in a sample of both U.S.-born and foreign-born Latinos living in the U.S., and Hovey (2000), in a sample of Central Americans, found that family conflict, dysfunction, burden, and ineffective support were all predictors of depression. Alegría and colleagues also reported that marital dissolution was a primary indicator of

the development of depressive symptoms.

Mexican American Culture

Thus far, information has been reviewed that outlines an existing model of marital quality and illustrates the need to study marital quality among Mexican Americans immigrants specifically. The following sections are designed to lay the foundation for how a contextual model of marital quality could be adapted to fit for Mexican American immigrants, a task which requires the discussion of several cultural variables that research has shown to be particularly relevant for Mexican Americans. It should be stated that the current project is not intended to act as a comprehensive model for marital quality, and in fact many important social, environmental, and personality variables are intentionally excluded from the current study in order to focus primarily on a more parsimonious investigation. As such, attention will be paid primarily to Mexican American acculturation and cultural values, eventually shifting to the interpersonal behavior component of marital quality, and finally combining the major variables of interest into a single theory.

Several salient aspects of Mexican American culture that provide insight into marital dynamics are the traditional emphases on collectivism and familism (Marín & VanOss Marín, 1991). Collectivism, the tendency for members of a cultural group to self-identify or define themselves in terms of their social roles and obligations to the group as a whole, is typically endorsed more strongly by Mexicans and Mexican Americans than by non-Hispanic White Americans (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). Familism,

which is closely tied to collectivism and also a well-known cultural marker for Mexican Americans, is characterized by deep loyalty to family members and a belief that the needs of the family unit supersede the needs of the individual (Lugo Steidel & Contreras, 2003). Due to the nature of having a collectivistic and family-centered value system, Mexican Americans are likely to prefer residing in close proximity to and seeking help from family members (Vega, 1995).

Other powerful cultural values, such as *simpatía* and *personalismo*, play a central role in the functioning of close relationships among Latinos. *Simpatía* refers to the emphasis placed on avoiding conflict and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships (Marin & VanOss Marin, 1991), while *personalismo* refers to a preference for relationships with members of the in-group. In a qualitative analysis of parenting practices among Latina mothers, Guilamo-Ramos and colleagues (2007) found that themes of *simpatía* and *personalismo* played distinct and important roles in how the mothers interacted with their children and with other caregivers. It has been suggested by previous researchers that due to these various values, Mexican Americans may demonstrate more positive attitudes about their marriages than more individualistic cultural groups, such as non-Hispanic White Americans (Roebuck Bulanda & Brown, 2007).

Of course, any discussion of culture and social patterns among Mexican American immigrants hinges on the concept of acculturation and the tension that arises between relationship expectations based on traditional Mexican culture and those based on mainstream American culture. As members of a marital relationship navigate their

complex and ever-evolving ethnic and cultural identities, acculturation becomes an important context for marital quality. Acculturation will therefore be reviewed next, first as an individual-level construct that influences interpersonal behavior, and ultimately as a couple-level variable that will serve as the distal context in an adaptation of a marital quality model.

Acculturation

Acculturation refers to the process wherein an individual or group adopts the cultural beliefs and behaviors of another group as a result of contact (Berry et al., 2002). Rather than being a static or unidirectional process, acculturation is in fact an ongoing, fluid, and bidirectional process that occurs throughout the lifespan (Berry, 1997; Cuéllar, Arnold, & Maldonado, 1995). Multiple models of acculturation (e.g., Berry, 2003; Cuéllar et al., 1995; Sullivan et al., 2007) situate individuals in one of four acculturative statuses based upon their standing on the two independent dimensions of retaining native culture attributes and adopting host culture attributes. These four statuses include *assimilation*, wherein individuals adopt the host culture and discard the native culture, *separation* (also referred to as “traditional”), wherein individuals retain the native culture and reject the host culture, *integration* (also referred to as “bicultural”), wherein individuals adopt the host culture and retain the native culture, and *marginalization*, wherein individuals reject or fail to connect with both the native culture and the host culture. Recent theoretical and empirical work has called into question these categories, however, with the greatest criticisms aimed at marginalization, which has been found to

be a valid descriptor for only a small minority of immigrant populations (Rudmin, 2003; Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008). Additionally, several types of biculturalism have been reported by Schwartz and Zamboanga, indicating that perhaps a two-dimensional model of acculturation is an over-simplification. Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, and Sczapocznik (2010) suggested instead that acculturation be considered from a multidimensional approach, one that takes into consideration the many variations of native and host cultural identities, values, and practices.

In part because acculturation has been defined in various ways, a number of different methods for measuring it also exist. For Latinos, the most common method for measuring acculturation is via language use, or the relative use of English versus Spanish in daily living. The Bidimensional Acculturation Scale for Hispanics (BAS; Marin & Gamba, 1996), Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans—Short Form (ARSMA-SF; Dawson, Crano, & Burgoon, 1996), and Brief Acculturation Scale for Hispanics (Norris, Ford, & Bova, 1996), each contain only questions about language use. Other measures, such as the Mexican American Acculturation Scale (Montgomery, 1992), Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II (Cuellar et al., 1995), and Hazuda Acculturation and Assimilation Scale (HAAS; Hazuda, Stern, & Haffner, 1988) supplement items about language use with other aspects of acculturation. The Mexican American Acculturation Scale, for example, also measures ethnic identity and cultural traditions, while the HAAS investigates structural assimilation. Given recent calls for more nuanced and culturally-specific approaches to acculturation (e.g., Schwartz et al., 2010), the current study includes methodology to investigate whether outcomes change

depending on how acculturation is measured. As such, three subscales of the Hazuda Acculturation.

Acculturation has been studied in conjunction with myriad mental health outcomes, including the successfulness of interpersonal relationships. An important distinction to be made is the difference between acculturation and acculturative stress (Gil, Vega, & Dimas, 1994), particularly since acculturation is not a linear process and does not inevitably entail high levels of acculturative stress. Whereas acculturative stress is generally a clear predictor of problematic interpersonal and mental health outcomes (Miranda & Matheny, 2000), acculturation level has a more complicated relationship with social well-being (Koneru, Weisman de Mamani, Flynn, & Betancourt, 2007). Some research has linked greater identification with majority culture (assimilation) with greater family conflict and sense of helplessness (Melville, 1978), while others have reported that individuals who reject the majority culture may be at higher risk for isolation and low social support (Rogler, Cortes, & Malgady, 1991). There is some evidence that integration, or biculturalism, exerts some protective effects for relationships and mental health outcomes (Lang, Muñoz, Bernal, & Sorensen, 1982; Miranda & Umhoefer, 1998). Torres and Rollock (2007), for example, reported that intercultural competence, or the ability to cope and adapt effectively in mainstream culture, moderated the relationship between depression and acculturation. The authors explained that cultural flexibility is important for coping with stress, and that depression is most likely among Latinos who have the ability to form effective relationships but cannot do so because they are unwilling to engage in mainstream cultural activities.

Some insight into the ways that acculturation influences mental health via interpersonal relationship can be found in literature regarding family processes, although overall the picture appears to be relatively complex. Most research in this domain has involved parenting, specifically how parental acculturation may affect parent-child relationships and children's psychological health. For example, Martinez (2006) reported a connection between parent-child acculturation gaps, increased family stress, and decreased parental effectiveness. Similarly, Merali (2004) found that when Latino immigrants were less acculturated than their children, they tended to overestimate their adolescent's behavior as problematic. Schofield, Parke, Kim, and Coltrane (2008) found that while mother-child acculturation gaps were not related to parent-child conflict or child adjustment, father-child acculturation gaps predicted later father-child conflict and child adjustment difficulties. Schofield and colleagues also found that the relationship between father-child acculturation gaps and father-child conflict was moderated by father-child relationship quality.

Although evidence exists to support the relationship between acculturation gaps and greater parent-child difficulties, there is also evidence to suggest otherwise. Findings by Pasch and colleagues (2006) bring into question the assumption that parent-child acculturation gaps lead to problematic child outcomes, as their research in Mexican American families found that families exhibiting such a disparity were no more likely to report conflict or adjustment problems than families who did not. In fact, their findings suggested that more parent-child conflict was reported when both parents and children were highly acculturated. Interestingly, Lau and colleagues (2005) reported that parents

who are more acculturated than their children may underestimate their children's behavior as problematic and fail to provide protective parenting practices.

Acculturation and Marriage

As of now, little work has been carried out regarding acculturation disparities in couples. Flores, Tschann, VanOss Marin, and Pantoja (2004), in two of the only studies of acculturation gaps in Mexican American marriages, predicted that acculturation differences between marital partners would result in greater conflict due to a disparity in values, stating that "it is possible that individuals who are more closely aligned with traditional cultural expectations will have a preference for smooth and respectful relationships with each other and be less accepting of open expressions of conflict, whereas individuals who are more acculturated or bicultural may value more open and direct communication, which may result in more conflict being expressed" (p. 41). The authors found that while couple-level acculturation was not related to wives' reports of marital conflict, there were several significant patterns for husbands' reports. When both partners were bicultural, husbands reported more conflict about consideration for the other, more conflict about relatives, more aggressiveness from their wives, and less conflict resolution. When husbands were more assimilated than, or as bicultural as their wives, they reported expressing their emotions more during conflicts than husbands who were more traditional than their wives. The authors explain that their findings suggest less marital conflict occurs in traditional couples and that this may be a function of multiple factors, including the possibility that traditional emphasis on *simpatía* reduces

emotional expressiveness, that traditional gender roles result in perceived male dominance, or perhaps that traditional couples express marital dissatisfaction in other, less explicit ways.

Regarding acculturation gaps, Flores and colleagues' (2004) results indicated that there is more at work than simply acculturative status, since husbands who were more traditional than their wives also reported less marital conflict. The authors hypothesized that perhaps wives who are more acculturated refrain from challenging their husbands' authority out of respect, while wives who are just as acculturated as their husbands feel a need to equalize the power within the relationship, which their partners might perceive to be aggressiveness and dominating behavior. The authors pointed out that these results may be clarified by the addition of gender role expectations and perhaps using a sample with greater acculturative diversity. Given the emphasis on conflict style, it may also be that measurement of marital quality and specific communication styles could enrich our understanding of acculturation and marital relationships.

Other studies on acculturation and marriage have focused on individual-level acculturation rather than couple-level acculturation. Flores and colleagues (2004), in fact, also measured acculturation unidimensionally and found that greater adherence to American culture was associated with greater emotional expressiveness by both partners and more frequent marital conflict according to husbands, whereas greater adherence to Mexican culture was associated with fewer conflicts and less dominating behavior by wives. When acculturation was measured via a classification system (assimilated, traditional, marginalized, and bicultural), Flores and colleagues found differences

regarding types of conflict across each of the four acculturation types. Among wives, those who were marginalized reported more conflict about money, while those who were bicultural and traditional reported more emotional expressiveness from their husbands. Among husbands, those who were assimilated reported more conflicts about money, those who were marginalized reported more conflicts about sex and household responsibilities, and those who were bicultural reported more conflicts about relatives and more aggressiveness from their wives.

There is evidence to support several different theories about how acculturation affects marital quality. Some research has suggested that greater acculturation is related to greater marital conflict and lower marital satisfaction, although these findings are usually only found for wives. Negy and Snyder (1997), for example, found while acculturation and marital distress were not correlated for Mexican American husbands, greater acculturation in wives was associated with more marital distress and more criticism about sex and leisure activities. Parke and colleagues (2004) replicated these findings using structural equation modeling, reporting that although maternal and paternal acculturation levels were correlated, only maternal acculturation was directly and positively associated with marital problems. Two studies found evidence that couple-level acculturation may be related to marital quality, as Santos, Bohan, and Sanchez-Sosa (1998) found a positive correlation between marital conflict and time spent in the U.S., and Casas and Ortiz (1985) found greater marital satisfaction among Mexican American couples when both partners were born in Mexico rather than the U.S.

Other results suggest that rather than acting as a blanket predictor for marital

stress, acculturation is related to specific types of marital stress and may play a role by influencing coping responses. Vega, Kolody, and Valle (1988) found a weak relationship between marital strain and acculturation in Mexican American women. Specifically, less acculturated wives expressed more strain regarding nonreciprocity from their spouse, while more acculturated wives expressed more frustration in provider-role expectations. These findings were likely related to the fact that less acculturated wives also reported lower mastery, lower self-esteem, higher self-denigration, and less usage of negotiation strategies for marital coping. While these results certainly opened the door to the possibility of a multidimensional relationship among acculturation, coping, and marital strain, the authors also warned that their unidimensional acculturation instrument may have been measuring socialization rather than acculturation, and they point out that their sample was relatively homogenous in terms of low acculturation.

Ultimately, several patterns can be observed in the existing literature regarding acculturation gaps and marital quality. First, couple-level acculturation statuses are related to differences in conflict levels and emotional expressiveness. Additionally, more traditional acculturation status tends to be related to lower conflict and greater marital quality. While it is difficult to consolidate all of these findings into a single, confident statement about how couple-level acculturation influences marital quality, what emerges from this review is a developing picture of how important the acculturative environment of a marriage is on the quality of inter-spousal interactions and relationship perceptions. It, therefore, stands that in order to effectively adapt a contextual theory of marriage to Mexican American immigrants, couple-level acculturation and potential acculturation

disparities should be viewed as a distal, more stable, context within which other more transient cognitive expectations and behavioral interactions take place, ultimately influencing and explaining changes in marital quality.

Traditional Gender Role Values

Of the many cultural values that impact marital patterns and relationship functioning, those regarding gender roles are among the most powerful and interesting. Indeed, gender role values could be considered expectations for how partners should behave in a marriage, and there are multiple examples of how these gender role expectations and beliefs impact marriages among Mexican Americans. Hirsch (1999), for example, outlined through in-depth interviews the influence of traditional gender roles in older generations of Mexican American couples, specifically the duty of men to provide for the family and of women to nurture and care for the family. Although Hirsch described the ways in which younger generations of men and women are moving away from rigid gender divisions and toward shared responsibility and trust, she also discussed ways in which some women, despite increased social and economic independence, become subjugated to their husbands in other ways to restore a balance of marital power. Additionally, a recent study by Wheeler, Updegraff, and Thayer (2010) found that gender-typed attitudes about marital roles and child-rearing were associated with Mexican American spouses use of control efforts in resolving marital conflicts, particularly among husbands.

Within the Latino cultural values literature, gender role values are typically

referred to separately by the terms *marianismo* and *machismo*. While lay usage tends to view machismo in a stereotypically negative manner with sole emphasis on male power, strength, and sexual prowess, Torres, Solberg, and Carlstrom (2002) argued that machismo is actually a multidimensional construct that varies across men. Torres and his colleagues explored different definitions of machismo and found that only about 10% of their sample identified with the traditional definition of masculinity as rigidly dominating and emotional restricted. They found that a more complex definition of machismo was necessary in order to tap into the many aspects of Latino masculine role values, including the positive virtues of bravery, taking care of one's family, and decision-making. Not only is the construct of machismo much more complex than often believed, Diaz-Guerrero (2000) has also provided evidence that it is changing as time passes, with fewer Mexican adolescents reporting acceptance of the traditional form of machismo, particularly the authoritarian dimension. Estinou (2007) reported gradual change in Mexican gender role expectations as well, stating that although Mexican families still tend to be traditional, more women are in the workforce than ever before and the hierarchical social structure is dissolving.

Although it tends to be less frequently studied, the construct of marianismo is also a valuable component of traditional gender role expectations. Marianismo was originally defined by Stevens (1973) as a prevailing sense that women are spiritually superior to men and therefore have a greater capacity for humility and sacrifice. Others have since elaborated on the construct, stating that just as machismo has a negative (aggressive) and positive (assertive) dimension, marianismo also has a negative (submissive) and positive

(affective) multidimensionality (Kulis, Marsiglia, & Hurdle, 2003; Lara-Cantú, Medina-Mora, & Gutiérrez, 1990). These multidimensional gender role values play an important part in shaping interpersonal and marital relationships, and it could be expected that marital matching of role expectations is important in predicting marital stability. Wiggins Frame (2004) reviewed common issues that arise in intercultural marriages and explained that conflicts often arise in a marriage when each partner holds different beliefs about appropriate gender roles, and these differences can often spill over into other hallmark conflict zones for marriage, such as money, sexuality, and child-rearing.

While it could be argued that gender role values might serve as a stable, distal context for marital quality, the current project is formulated on the theory that they are in fact a proximal context that moderates the relationship between acculturation and marital quality. This decision is made in part because they are influenced by acculturation at a secondary level. For example, there is evidence that as Mexican American couples become more assimilated to mainstream American culture, their traditional gender values are reduced (Leaper & Valin, 1996). Additionally, the current application of a contextual model of marriage asserts that the relationship between couple-level acculturation and marital quality is likely moderated by beliefs about gender roles, and since these beliefs take place at an individual cognitive level, they are hypothesized to be a proximal context.

Marital Communication

According to Bradbury and Fincham's (1988) contextual model of marriage,

characteristics of interpersonal interactions served as proximal contexts for marital quality. In the current adaptation of this theory, marital communication is believed to influence the relationship between couple-level acculturation gaps and marital quality. In other words, it is expected that the distal context, acculturation gaps, will impact marital quality, and that the proximal contexts (in this case, individual gender role values and communication style) will exert an effect on marital quality as well as moderate the relationship between acculturation gaps and marital quality.

The link between communication and marital quality has already been well established in White American couples. Burlison and Denton (1997) compared communication skills in a predominately White American sample and found that scores on a communication effectiveness task successfully predicted the difference between distressed and non-distressed couples. Additionally, communication skills by an individual impacted not only the marital satisfaction reported by the individual's spouse, but also the marital satisfaction reported by the individual. For example, wives who were categorized as having a distressed marriage reported greater marital adjustment and appreciation for their husbands if they were able to anticipate how their statements would be perceived by their husbands. However, the authors also found that in some cases of marital distress, good communication skills actually increased marital problems because partners were more able to carry out their negative intentions.

Another dimension of communication that plays a role in marital quality is conflict resolution (Gottman, 1994). Generally, conflict styles that are avoidant, competitive, or negative tend to result in decreased marital satisfaction (Caughlin &

Vangelisti, 2006). In particular, demand-withdraw patterns, wherein one spouse tries to engage in discussion of a problem while the other tries to avoid it, have been shown to have harmful effects on marital quality. Papp, Kouros, and Cummings (2009), again in a predominately White American sample, showed that when an unbiased diary methodology was used in the home to record interactions, both “wife demand—husband withdraw” and “husband demand—wife withdraw” patterns were equally prevalent. These patterns, although relatively infrequent in Papp et al.’s sample, were related to greater aggression and anger and lower positivity and constructiveness.

In a study carried out with couples recruited from a New Zealand university setting, Overall, Fletcher, Simpson, and Sibley (2009) investigated the strategies that partners use to influence one another. They found that while direct strategies (coercion, autocracy, and rational reasoning) appeared to be less effective than indirect strategies (manipulation, supplication, and soft persuasion) in creating short-term change, the opposite was true for long-term change. The authors also found that directness appeared to be a more important factor for creating partner change than valence (positive vs. negative) although the authors also noted that there are likely longer-term problematic effects of continual negative-direct communication strategies. In fact, analysis of video-taped interactions showed that negative communication strategies, such as coercion or manipulation, were more likely to create tension, defensiveness, and decreased change over time.

Given the importance of high positive and low negative strategies in promoting marital satisfaction, it is not surprising that therapy outcome studies have shown that a

major mechanism of change in couples counseling is change in communication style during problem interactions. Sevier, Eldridge, Jones, Doss, and Christensen (2008), gathered information from predominately White American (79%) sample of couples engaged in both traditional and integrative behavioral couple therapy. The researchers used an observation interaction measure that included four dimensions: negativity, problem solving, withdrawal, and positivity. They found that in both types of therapy, couples who demonstrated increases in positivity and problem solving also reported increased marital satisfaction, while couples who demonstrated increases in negativity and withdrawal reported decreases in marital satisfaction. Interestingly, partner perceptions appear to play an important role alongside actual communication style in determining marital quality. In a study of newly married couples, accurate perceptions of spouse's conflict style were not necessarily required for marital satisfaction, as long as that perception was relatively generous and positive (Segrin, Hanzal, & Domschke, 2009).

Although most research regarding marital communication among U.S. couples has included primarily White samples, there has been some important work applying models of marital communication to diverse samples. In many cases, the work has not specified the impact of culture on communication but has been carried out with mixed-ethnicity samples, such as within Segrin and colleagues' (2009) study of partner perceptions, which utilized reports from a sample that was 14% Latino. Some interesting international studies have been conducted to test the generalizability of the conflict resolution literature. For example, Christensen, Eldridge, Catta-Preta, Lim, and Santagata

(2006) investigated the interactions of couples in Brazil, Taiwan, Italy, and the U.S. and found that demand-withdraw patterns of conflict resolution were associated with decreased relationship satisfaction across all cultural groups. A similar cross-cultural comparison study was carried out by Rehman and Holtzworth-Munroe (2006), who compared communication strategies of White American, Pakistani American immigrant, and Pakistani couples and found that across all three cultural groups, demand-withdraw behaviors were associated with increased marital distress. However, while White American couples typically followed the behavior pattern of wife-demand/husband-withdraw, Pakistani couples did not exhibit this pattern. In fact, Pakistani husbands were more likely than their wives to use aggressive demands, while Pakistani wives were more likely than their husbands to avoid conflict. These findings suggest that many communication strategies have similar effects of relationship quality across cultures. However, they also support the need to investigate marital constructs and communication behaviors within the context of specific cultures rather than automatically assuming that theories developed in predominately White American groups can be applied cross-culturally.

Relatively little work has been done thus far to validate current theories of marital communication among Mexican American couples. There is evidence that the usual European American definition of “healthy communication” as being open, honest, and egalitarian does not always apply in traditional Mexican families (Esteinou, 2007), particularly due to collectivistic value orientations promoting smooth, harmonious, and low-conflict relationships. However, Esteinou reported a gradual shift in interpersonal

strategies among Mexican family members, and stated that a more emotionally expressive, less authoritarian, form of communication is becoming more prevalent and a potential strength within families. Studies carried out with Colombian and Ecuadorian couples have found that in general, balanced regulation of emotional expressiveness between spouses (relatively greater expression of positive emotion and relative suppression of negative emotions) is associated with greater marital adjustment (Ingoldsby, 1980; Ingoldsby, Horlacher, Schvaneveldt, & Matthews, 2005). There is some evidence that these associations hold true among Mexican American couples as well. For example, Vega and colleagues (1988) showed that negative emotional discharge was related to increased marital strain in Mexican American couples, while positive comparisons and negotiation responses were related to decreases in marital strain. It is clear that the field would benefit from greater extension of research on inter-spousal warmth and hostility in Mexican American populations.

Taken together, the existing research on marital communication suggests that levels of warmth and hostility in inter-spousal communication affects marital quality, at least within the cultural groups that have served as sample populations for existing research. These communication dimensions are important not just in and of themselves, but they may also play a role in explaining the relationship between acculturation and marital quality. Specifically, if acculturation gaps do in fact predict differences in the marital quality of Mexican American couples, it is possible that levels of warmth and hostility within marital interactions moderate this relationship.

Summary

Marriage researchers have emphasized the need to include both broad environmental contexts as well as more individual-level cognitive and behavioral contexts when investigating marital quality (e.g., Bradbury et al., 2000; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). One such model is Bradbury and Fincham's (1988) contextual model of marriage, which takes into account the influence of both distal contexts and proximal contexts. Few studies have attempted to adapt marital quality models to diverse populations. Given the growth of the Mexican American population in the U.S., the important socio-cultural differences between Mexican Americans and the White American populations which have historically comprised marital research samples, and the documented underutilization of services by Mexican Americans, it is believed that more specific data are needed about Mexican American marital patterns. In particular, the influence of acculturation, gender role beliefs, and communicative warmth and hostility are believed to be important variables for Mexican American marriages, and it is believed that understanding the impact of these variables will help inform culturally sensitive treatments.

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the relationships among marital quality, couple-level acculturation gaps, communication style, and traditional gender role values among Mexican American couples. Bradbury and Fincham's (1988) contextual model of marriage was used as a template for organizing these variables. Specifically, couple-level acculturation gaps are conceptualized as the distal context for marital quality, while individual-level gender role values and communication behaviors are

conceptualized as the proximal contexts that moderate the relationship between acculturation and marital quality. The study was designed to answer the following questions.

1. Do acculturation gaps between spouses predict differences in marital quality?
 - a. Are there specific types of acculturative gaps (husbands more traditional than wives, wives more traditional than husbands, husbands more assimilated than wives, wives more assimilated than husbands) that are more predictive than others?
 - b. Do different acculturation-marital quality patterns emerge depending on what form of acculturation is measured (language proficiency, language preference, and structural assimilation)?
2. Is the relationship between acculturation and marital quality moderated by warm versus hostile communication strategies?
3. Is the relationship between acculturation and marital quality moderated by traditional gender role values?

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Sample

The sample included 408 first-generation Mexican American couples who participated in the California Families Project in 2006-2007 (Conger, 2005). The dataset originally contained information from 674 Mexican American families, although only first-generation families in which the parents were currently together and each completed an interview were included in the current study. Additionally, initial review of the dataset found that in 28 couples, at least one parent was missing the Relationship Quality Scale. These couples were removed from the study. Scales were constructed so that only participants who completed at least 60% of the questions were included. After accounting for missing data, the final analyses of variance included a sample size ranging from 385 to 401. All couples were biological parents of a fifth-grade child. Ninety percent of the couples reported being married, while the other 10% were in committed, long-term relationships. Preliminary analyses showed no significant differences between married and unmarried couples on major variables of interest. There were also no statistically significant differences between married and unmarried couples on any of the descriptive variables, with the exception that married men were older than cohabitating men. Although not all of the couples were married, for the sake of simplicity and coherence, the current paper will use the terms “husbands” and “wives” to refer to participants. Descriptive statistics are provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Data for Sample

Variable	Sample			Wives			Husbands		
	Average	<i>SD</i>	Range	Average	<i>SD</i>	Range	Average	<i>SD</i>	Range
Years married (married couples only)	13.60	4.79	1-37						
Years living together (unmarried couples only)	12.10	4.66	1-31						
# children at home	3	1.04	1-7						
# people living in home	5.57	1.50	3-14						
Age in years				36.77	5.79	26-57	39.48	6.16	27-65
Years in U.S.				15.98	10.59	1-56	19.42	9.88	1-60
Years of education				9.42	3.76	1-20	9.30	3.76	0-18

Procedure

Analyses were performed using data collected by the California Families Project (Conger, 2005). The primary purpose for the original study was to investigate processes of risk and resilience for substance use among Mexican American children and families. Recruitment efforts enlisted families of fifth-grade children in which all family members were of Mexican origin. Data from two cohorts was collected, the first of which took place between 2006 and 2007, and the second of which took place between 2007 and 2008. Participants were interviewed in their homes across two visits that usually took place within a week of each other and lasted about 2 or 3 hours apiece. Approximately 60 different measures were used and were largely taken from the Iowa Youth and Families

Project and the Family Transitions Project (see Conger & Elder, 1994, for details). All measures were available in both Spanish and English. Results from six of these measures were used for the current study. These questionnaires are described in detail below.

Instruments

Marital Quality

Marital quality was measured using the Relationship Quality Scale. The Relationship Quality scale, developed by Rand Conger out of diverse sources (Conger, Ge, & Lorenz, 1994; Yeh, Lorenz, Wickrama, Conger, & Elder, 2006), is a five-item measure that gathers information about each spouse's perception of the relationship. The scale assesses for various aspects of marital quality, including relationship satisfaction, happiness, and stability. The scale includes items such as "your relationship is strong" and uses a 4-point Likert-type rating scale, with aggregate scores ranging from 5 (low marital quality) to 20 (high marital quality). At the time of the current study, validity data was not available for this scale. Previous versions of the scale (Yeh et al., 2006) have been found to have reliability estimates above .74 for both husbands and wives. In the current sample, the scale had Cronbach's alphas of .90 for husbands and .92 for wives. Items for this measure are found in the Appendix.

Acculturation

A couple-level acculturation match variable was created using the subscales of the HAAS (Hazuda et al., 1988). The HAAS was originally designed for use in epidemiological research in Mexican American populations, and the current version

measures acculturation as a multidimensional process involving language proficiency, language preference, and structural assimilation. The HAAS is subdivided into four subscales. Two language proficiency subscales (three items each on a 4-point Likert-type scale) measure the degree to which respondents believe they are able to understand, speak, and read English and Spanish. The language usage subscale (10 items on a 5-point Likert-type scale) measures which language respondents prefer using in a variety of situations. Finally, the structural assimilation subscale (six items on a 3-point Likert-type scale) measures the amount of childhood and adult interactions respondents have had with members of different cultural groups. Suarez and Pulley (1995) found that scores on the HAAS were positively correlated to scores on the widely used Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (ARSMA; Cuellar, Harris, & Jasso, 1980) within a sample of Hispanic women living in the U.S. Suarez also reported that the HAAS was found to provide a more multidimensional and superior assessment of the acculturative process than the ARSMA.

Three of the four subscales were used for the current study; because all participants in the study were Spanish language proficient, the Spanish proficiency subscale was dropped. The English proficiency subscale was found to have good reliability, with Cronbach's alphas of .87 for husbands and .93 for wives. Aggregate scores on the English proficiency subscale ranged from 3 (low English proficiency) to 12 (high English proficiency). The language use subscale had alphas of .92 for husbands and .95 for wives. Aggregate scores on the language use subscale ranged from 10 (only Spanish use) to 50 (only English use). The structural assimilation subscale was found to

have poor reliability in its original form for husbands ($\alpha = .59$), so the item with the lowest inter-item correlation was dropped (“What ethnicity are the people with whom you work closely on the job?”), resulting in a 5-item scale with Cronbach’s alphas of .64 and .79 for husbands and wives, respectively. Aggregate scores on the structural assimilation subscale ranged from 3 (mostly Mexican/Mexican American socialization) to 15 (mostly other ethnicity socialization). Items for these measures are found in the Appendix.

Communication

Communication was measured using items from the Behavioral Affect Rating Scale (BARS). Developed out of multiple sources for the Iowa Families Project (Lorenz, Melby, Conger, & Xu, 2007), the BARS consists of 22 items that gather information about each spouse’s perception of their partner’s behavior toward them during the past 3 months. Spouses are asked to rate on a scale of 1 (almost never) to 4 (almost always) how often their partner behaved in certain ways toward them. Items load onto three subscales for warmth, moderate hostility, and extreme hostility. Example items for each subscale include: “how often did he/she ask you for your opinion on an important matter,” “how often did he/she ignore you when you tried to talk to him/her,” and “how often did he/she insult or swear at you.” Lorenz, Conger, Simon, Whitbeck, and Elder (1991) found the BARS to be correlated with observer ratings of warmth and hostility in marital interactions, providing evidence of construct validity. Prior to the current study, the scale had not been used with a Mexican American sample. In the current sample, the warmth subscale (nine items) was found to have Cronbach’s alphas of .90 for husbands and .93

for wives. The moderate hostility subscale (nine items) was found to have Cronbach's alphas of .79 for husbands and .83 for wives. The extreme hostility subscale (four items) was not used in the present study because the items tapped into more of a violence/abuse construct and were therefore not congruent with the goals of the current study.

Gender Role Values

As part of the California Families Project (Conger, 2005), a traditional gender role values scale was developed from various sources to tap into positive and negative aspects of both machismo and marianismo. The scale contains an 11-item machismo subscale and a 5-item marianismo subscale whose items are scored on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree). The overall Gender Role Values scale had Cronbach's alpha of .72 for both husbands and wives separately. Scores on the scale were normally distributed. The subscales, however, has unacceptably low reliability and thus were not considered for separate analyses.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The following section will report the results of all major analyses, beginning with the preliminary analyses that include: (a) the descriptive statistics for the sample regarding each of the dependent and independent variables, (b) descriptions of the transformations performed on each of the scales, and (c) descriptions of the correlations for all demographic variables with each of the dependent and independent variables. Following the preliminary analyses, the results for the primary research questions will be reported, organized by the three acculturation subscales: English proficiency, language use, and structural assimilation.

Preliminary Analyses

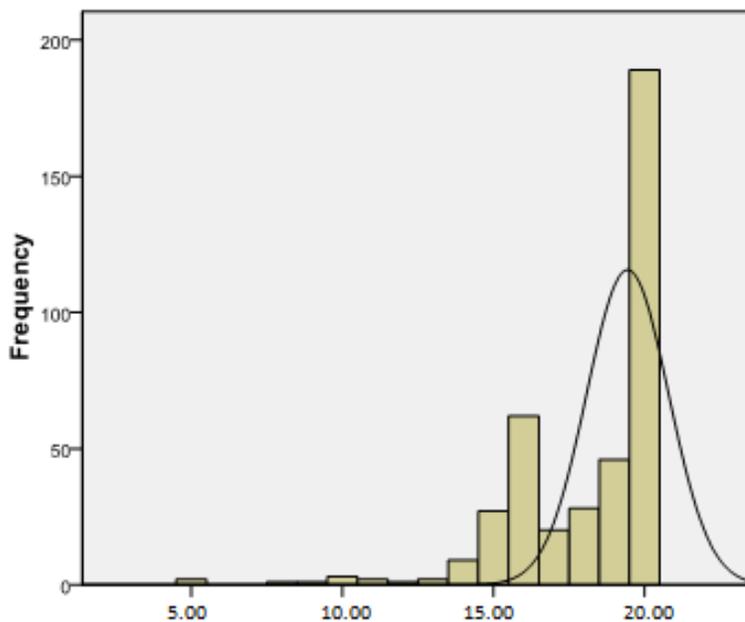
Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, and scale ranges for marital quality, the three acculturation subscales, the two communication subscales, and traditional gender role values are provided in Table 2. In each scale the scores range from low to high, so that, for example, 5 = low marital quality while 20 = high marital quality. All scales except the English proficiency subscale of the HAAS and the Gender Role Values scale were significantly skewed. The skewness statistics are also provided later in Table 5. Histograms showing the distribution of scores on each of the scales are provided in Figures 1 to 14.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for all Variables of Interest

Variable	Scale range	Husbands				Wives			
		Mean	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	<i>SE</i>
Marital quality	5-20	18.16	2.44	-1.80	.12	17.73	2.83	-1.43	.12
English proficiency	3-12	8.20	2.34	-.03	.12	7.47	2.86	.14	.12
Language use	10-50	18.81	9.35	1.73	.12	18.90	10.99	1.90	.12
Structural assimilation	3-15	6.68	2.05	1.49	.12	6.37	2.11	2.13	.12
Communication: Warmth	9-36	30.49	5.15	-.908	.12	30.53	5.85	-1.15	.12
Communication: Hostility	9-36	13.95	3.74	.977	.12	13.44	3.97	1.81	.12
Traditional gender role	16-64	45.64	4.79	.175	.12	45.08	4.99	.003	.12

*Figure 1.* Histogram of husbands' marital quality.

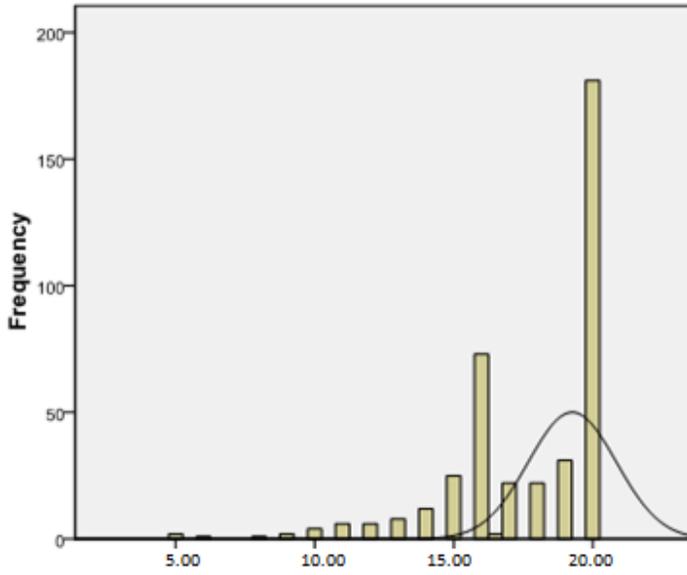


Figure 2. Histogram of wives' marital quality.

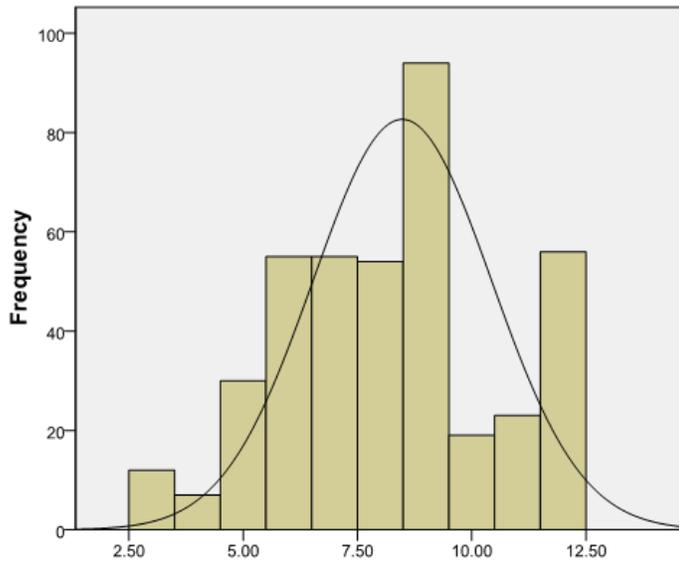


Figure 3. Histogram of husbands' English proficiency.

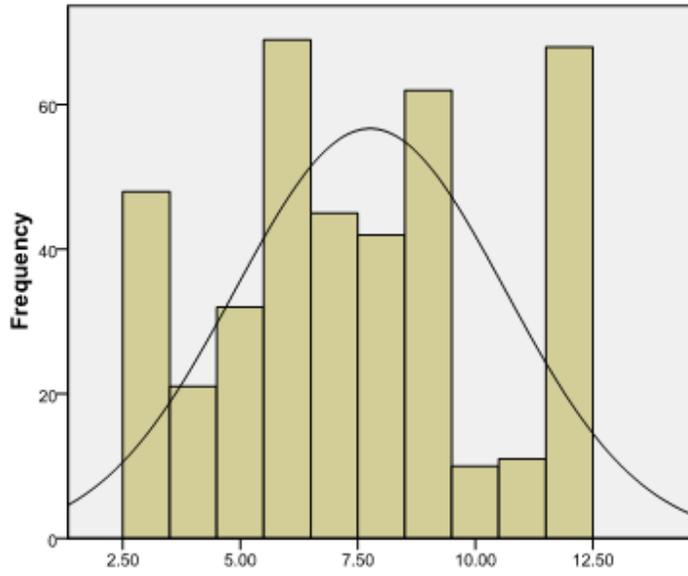


Figure 4. Histogram of wives' English proficiency.

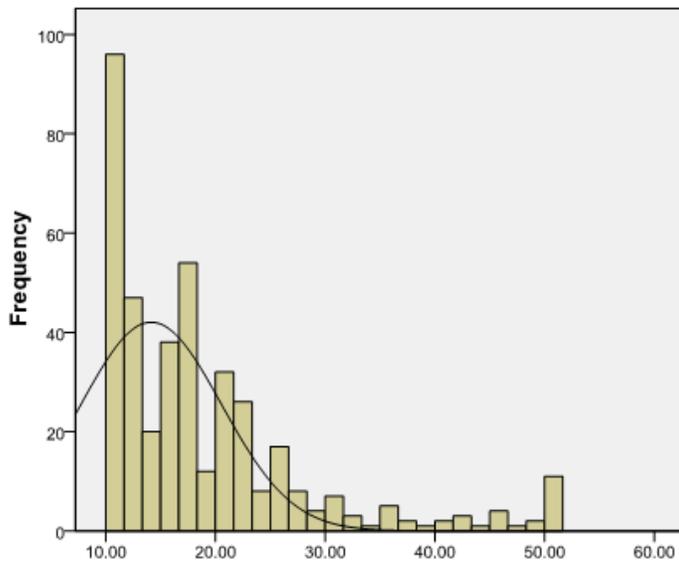


Figure 5. Histogram of husbands' language use.

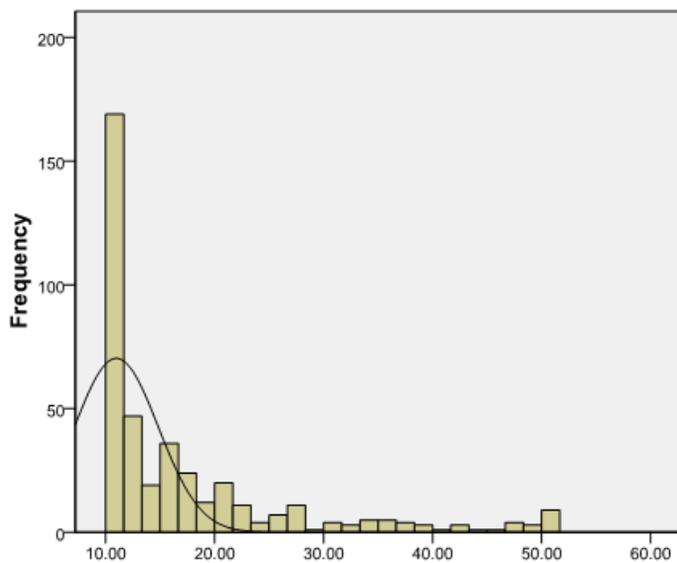


Figure 6. Histogram of wives' language use.

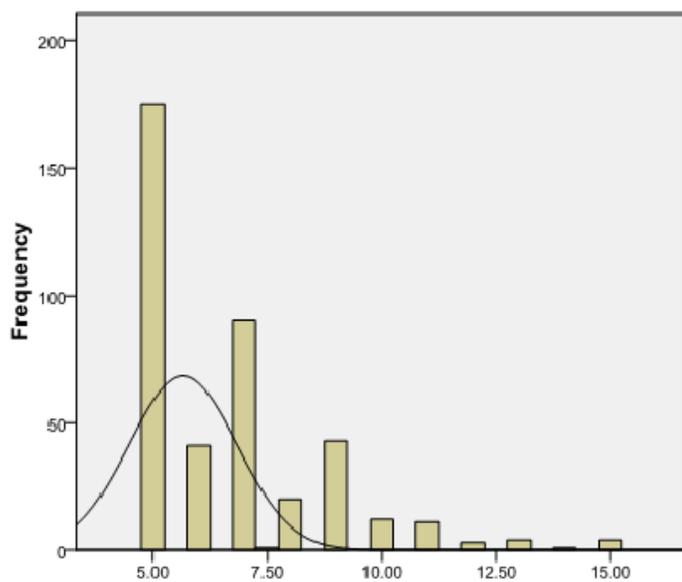


Figure 7. Histogram of husbands' structural assimilation.

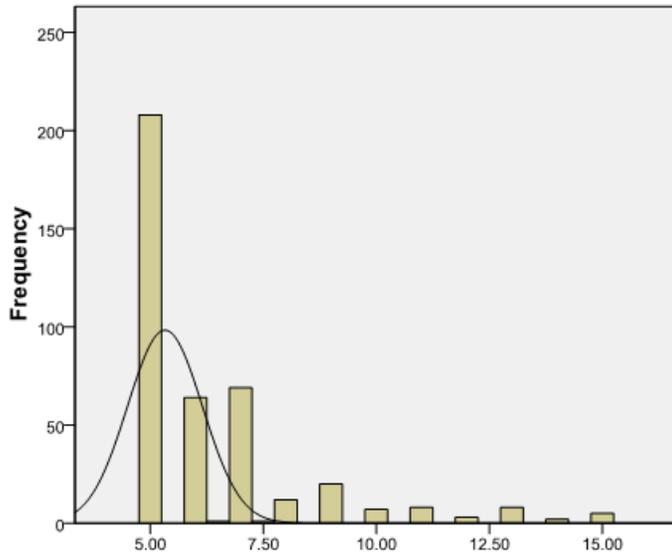


Figure 8. Histogram of wives' structural assimilation.

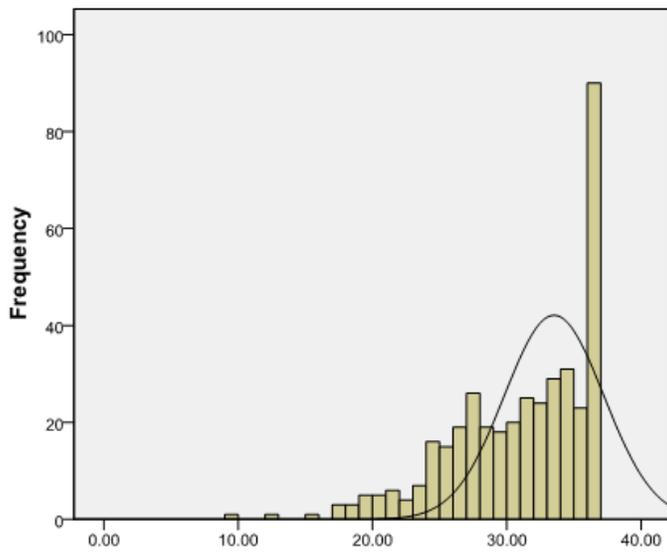


Figure 9. Histogram of husbands' reports of wives' warmth.

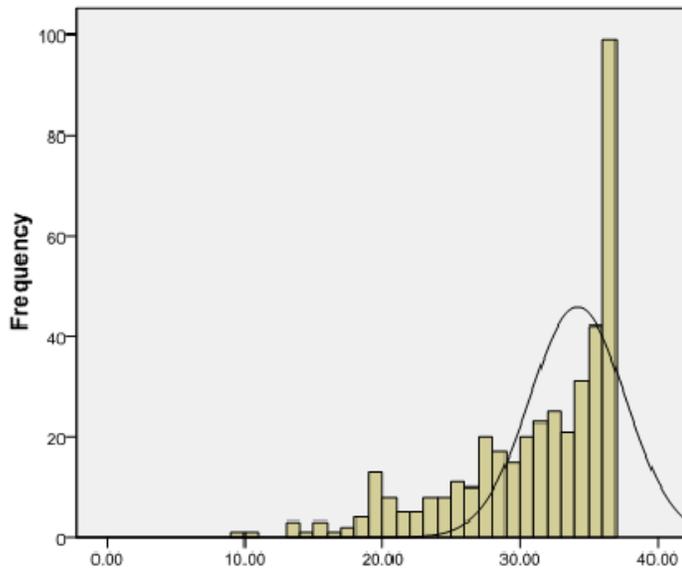


Figure 10. Histogram of wives' reports of husbands' warmth.

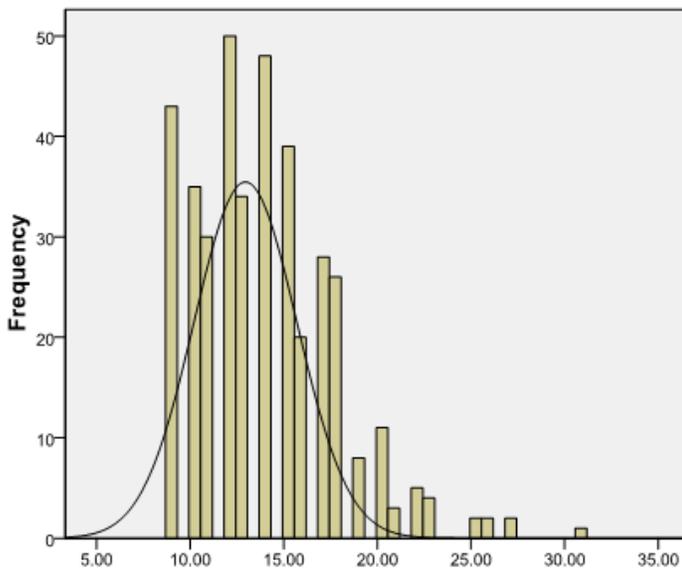


Figure 11. Histogram of husbands' reports of wives' hostility.

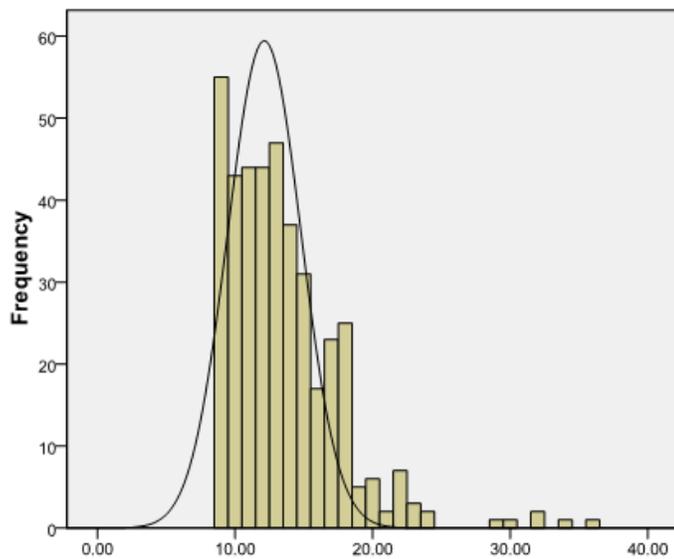


Figure 12. Histogram of wives' reports of husbands' hostility.

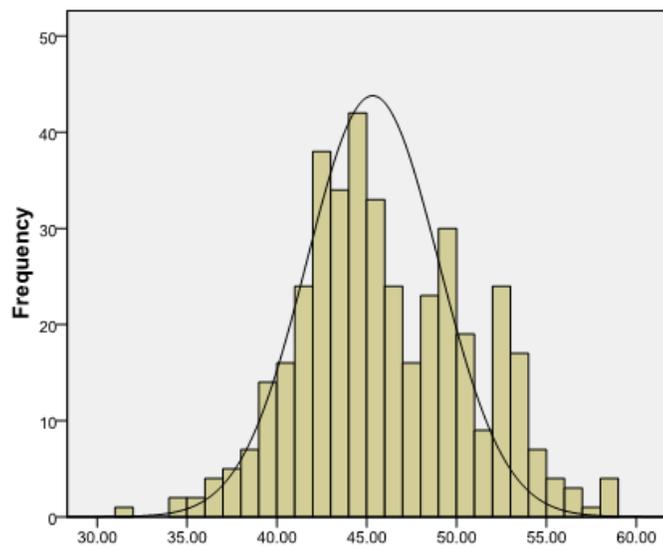


Figure 13. Histogram of husbands' gender role values.

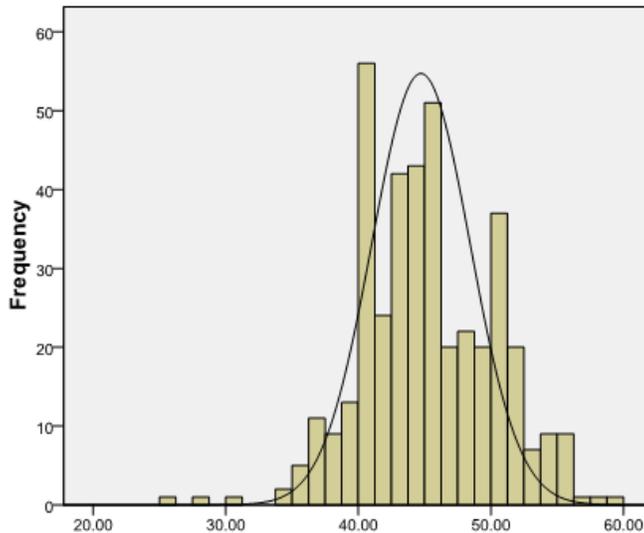


Figure 14. Histogram of wives' gender role values.

Data Transformations

Because the distribution of scores for marital quality were significantly negatively skewed, both husband and wife scores were reflected, transformed using an inverse transformation, and re-reflected in order to be used for the ANOVAs. Final transformation resulted in a scale with a range of .06 (low marital quality) to 1.00 (high marital quality) and a mean of .63 ($SD = .37$) for fathers and .59 ($SD = .39$) for mothers.

The three proximal variables, warmth, hostility, and gender role values, were converted into categories. This decision was made because the warmth and hostility subscales of the BARS were significantly skewed, and data transformation made interpretation of results difficult. Conversion to categories allowed for greater clarity and simplicity of understanding and interpreting the relationship among variables. For the communication subscales, several methods of categorizing the subscales were

considered, including dividing the sample into thirds (high, medium, and low) using the scale. Because the sample norms for each scale were at the very top (for warmth) or bottom (for hostility), scores outside of that norm were believed to be conceptually similar, so a two-category scale was created by combining the two smallest of the original three categories into one category. The resulting warmth subscale included a low category (low plus medium categories combined) and a high category, and the resulting moderate hostility subscale included a low category and a high category (medium plus high categories combined). The scale range and sample distribution for each resulting subscale is illustrated in Table 3.

As with the BARS subscales, several different methods were considered for categorizing the Gender Role Values scale. As the scale was normally distributed, the most effective method for dividing the scores was to split the scale in half, resulting in two categories: low gender role value and high gender role value. The scale range and sample distribution for husbands and wives is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 3

BARS Subscale Categories: Scale Range for Each Category

Category	Husbands		Wives	
	Scale range	<i>n</i>	Scale range	<i>n</i>
Low warmth	9-27	112	9-27	104
High warmth	28-36	279	28-36	293
Low hostility	9-16	299	9-17	341
High hostility	17-31	92	18-36	56

Table 4

Gender Role Value Categories: Scale Range for Each Category

Category	Husbands		Wives	
	Scale range	<i>n</i>	Scale range	<i>n</i>
Low gender role values	31-44	181	26-42	123
High gender role values	45-58	222	43-59	283

The three acculturation subscales underwent several alterations. First, each scale was converted into a couple-level variable by subtracting wives' scores from husbands' scores and creating a difference scale. Next, each set of difference scores was divided into three categories using a .5 standard deviation cut-off: scores below the -.5 standard deviation cutoff were combined into a "wife more acculturated than husband" category, scores above the .5 standard deviation cutoff were combined into a "husband more acculturated than wife" category, and scores between the two cutoff points were combined into a "husband and wife matched" category. A .5 standard deviation cut-off was selected as a cut-off point because it allowed for the greatest balance of group numbers across all three subscales. The sample distribution for each resulting 3-category subscale is illustrated in Table 5.

Due to a reformulation of the research questions, which will be discussed in more detail later, a second set of categorical subscales was created for language use and structural assimilation which separated couples by match magnitude. In other words, the scales divided couples by how far apart their difference scores were, rather than simply by whether or not their scores were different. First, the husband-wife difference scores on

Table 5

Acculturation Subscale Categories: Percentage of Sample in Each Category

Category	Wives > Husbands		Wives = Husbands		Wives < Husbands	
	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>
English proficiency	19.6	80	39.7	162	40.0	163
Language use	6.4	26	68.1	278	24.3	99
Structural assimilation	13.2	54	75.0	306	11.0	45

the language use subscale were converted to absolute values and transformed using a square root transformation to reduce its positive skew, resulting in scores ranging from 1 (no acculturation difference) to 4.73 (large acculturation difference). The structural assimilation subscale was also converted to absolute values and transformed using an inverse transformation to reduce its positive skew, resulting in scores ranging from -1 (no acculturation difference) to -.10 (large acculturation difference). Both subscales were then divided into categories using a .5 standard deviation cutoff, so that scores below the -.5 cutoff were combined into the “no acculturation difference” category, scores above the .5 cutoff were combined into the “large acculturation difference” category, and scores between the two cutoffs were combined into the “small acculturation difference” category. The sample distribution for each resulting 3-category subscale is illustrated in Table 6.

Correlation Analyses

A series of within-subjects correlations were conducted to determine the

Table 6

Acculturation Difference Magnitude Categories: Percentage of Sample in Each Category

Category	No difference		Small difference		Large difference	
	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>	Percentage	<i>n</i>
Language use	70.8	289	24.5	100	3.4	14
Structural assimilation	60.5	247	33.8	138	4.9	20

relationships among the main variables of interest. First, correlation analyses were run among the outcome variable, marital quality, and the main demographic indicators (see Table 7). As can be seen in the results, education and income, the two indicators for socioeconomic status (SES), were not significantly correlated with marital quality for either spouse and were therefore not included or controlled for in the remaining analyses. Next, individual-level acculturation scores were correlated in order to evaluate the relationship among each of the acculturation measures (see Table 8). Finally, correlation analyses were conducted between each of the major variables of interest and husband and wife marital quality scores (see Table 9). Although none of the acculturation measures was significantly correlated with marital quality among wives, English proficiency and language use were significantly and positively correlated with marital quality among husbands. Warmth and traditional gender role values were significantly and positively correlated with marital quality for both husbands and wives, while hostility was significantly and negatively correlated with marital quality for both husbands and wives.

Table 7

Correlations Among Marital Quality and All Major Demographics

Variable	Husbands marital quality	Wives marital quality
Education	.06	.05
Income	-.02	.02
Age	.04	-.12*
Years in the U.S.	.08	.00
Number of children	-.04	.00
Total people in home	-.13*	-.07
Years married (married couples only)	.03	-.02
Years living together (unmarried couples only)	-.43*	.01

* Significant at the .05 alpha level (2-tailed).

Table 8

Correlations Among Acculturation Subscales

Subscale	English proficiency	Language use	Structural assimilation
English proficiency	--	.70**	.46**
Language use	.71**	--	.63**
Structural assimilation	.57**	.73**	--

Note. Scores for husbands are shown in the upper half of the table; scores for wives are shown in the lower half.

** Significant at the .01 alpha level (2-tailed).

Table 9

Correlations among Marital Quality and All Major Variables of Interest

Variable	Husbands marital quality	Wives marital quality
Communication: Warmth	.43**	.52**
Communication: Hostility	-.20**	-.42**
Traditional gender role	.16**	.20**
English proficiency	.15**	.08
Language use	.16**	.05
Structural assimilation	.05	.06

* Significant at the .05 alpha level (2-tailed).

** Significant at the .01 alpha level (2-tailed).

Marital Quality and Acculturation

Due to the quality and skew of the data, the original research questions were re-formulated. First, it was not possible to categorize the acculturation subscales into four categories because doing so resulted in categories that were unacceptably imbalanced. Therefore, instead of categorizing the acculturation subscales into four categories (husbands more traditional than wives, wives more traditional than husbands, husbands more assimilated than wives, wives more assimilated than husbands), three categories were used: husband more acculturated than wife, partners matched on acculturation, and wife more acculturated than husband. In addition, the decision was made to investigate the impact of matching intensity, or how far apart each couple's acculturation scores were from each other (no difference, small difference, and large difference). This was done in part to accommodate for the detail that was lost when the acculturation subscales were divided into three categories instead of four. It was also done because at a conceptual level, the magnitude of acculturation differences between partners may be just as important to consider as the type of acculturation match the couple displays. For these reasons, an additional set of couple-level acculturation match magnitude scores were created, a process described previously in the preliminary analyses section. Match magnitude categories were not created for the English proficiency subscale because the scale was designed in a way that did not allow for such a conversion. As such, analyses were carried out for the following research questions.

1. Is marital quality influenced by couple's acculturation match in English proficiency, language use, or structural assimilation? If so, are these relationships

moderated by partners' reports of warmth, moderate hostility, or traditional gender role values?

2. Is marital quality influenced by couple's acculturation match difference magnitude in English proficiency, language use, or structural assimilation? If so, are these relationships moderated by partners' reports of warmth, moderate hostility, or traditionally gender role values?

To answer these research questions, ANOVAS were carried out using the continuous marital quality scores for husbands and wives, the two types of couple-level acculturation scores for English proficiency, language use, and structural assimilation, and the three moderator variables for each partner: warmth, hostility, and traditional gender role values. For clarity's sake, the results are presented below separated by each acculturation subscale.

English Proficiency

Several ANOVAs were carried out using the Marital Quality scores for each partner, the couple-level English proficiency subscale category scale, and the three moderating variables: warmth, hostility, and gender role values. The results for this set of analyses are provided in Tables 10 and 11. In short, for both husbands and wives, English proficiency did not have a significant main effect, and there were no significant interactions. Warmth and hostility demonstrated significant main effects for both husbands and wives, with higher warmth related to higher marital quality (wives high warmth $M = .698$, $SD = .362$; wives low warmth $M = .275$, $SD = .277$; husbands high warmth $M = .709$, $SD = .341$; husbands low warmth $M = .410$, $SD = .341$) and higher

Table 10

Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and English Proficiency Match Type: Wives

Predictors	SS	df	MS	F	p	Partial Eta ²
English proficiency	.01	2	.01	.05	.948	.000
Warmth	12.32	1	12.32	104.90	.000	.213
Interaction	.34	2	.17	1.45	.235	.007
English proficiency	.27	2	.14	1.01	.366	.005
Hostility	6.71	1	6.71	49.90	.000	.114
Interaction	.07	2	.03	.26	.775	.001
English proficiency	.26	2	.13	.87	.419	.004
Gender role value	.48	1	.48	3.22	.073	.008
Interaction	.32	2	.16	1.05	.351	.005

Table 11

Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and English Proficiency Match Type: Husbands

Predictors	SS	df	MS	F	p	Partial Eta ²
English proficiency	.25	2	.13	1.04	.354	.005
Warmth	6.87	1	6.87	56.58	.000	.129
Interaction	.50	2	.25	2.08	.127	.011
English proficiency	.19	2	.10	.69	.503	.004
Hostility	1.54	1	1.54	11.23	.001	.029
Interaction	.23	2	.116	.84	.431	.004
English proficiency	.07	2	.03	.25	.779	.001
Gender role value	1.96	1	2.00	14.47	.000	.036
Interaction	.14	2	.07	.51	.600	.003

hostility related to lower marital quality (wives high hostility $M = .260$, $SD = .271$; wives low hostility $M = .641$, $SD = .379$; husbands high hostility $M = .515$, $SD = .377$; husbands low hostility $M = .655$, $SD = .368$). Using Cohen's (1988) guidelines for interpreting effect sizes (.0099 = small, .0588 = medium, .1379 = large), the effect size of warmth for wives is large while the effect sizes for wives' hostility and husbands' warmth is

medium. The effect size for husbands' hostility is small. For husbands, traditional gender role values also demonstrated a significant main effect, with higher traditional gender role value related to higher marital quality (high gender role value $M = .693$, $SD = .367$; low gender role values $M = .536$, $SD = .366$). The effect size for husbands' gender role value was small. Levene's tests for testing the assumption of homogeneity of variance were significant for all six analyses, indicating that these results must be interpreted cautiously.

Language Use

Acculturation match type. ANOVAs were carried out using the marital quality scores for each partner, the couple-level language use subscale category scale, and the three moderating variables: warmth, hostility, and gender role values. The results for this set of analyses are provided in Tables 12 and 13. For wives, language use did not have a significant main effect in any of the models, and there were no significant interactions. Warmth and hostility demonstrated significant main effects, with higher warmth related to higher marital quality and higher hostility related to lower marital quality. The means and standard deviations for warmth and hostility in husbands and wives have been reported previously in the English proficiency results section and will not be repeated. The effect size for warmth was medium, while the one for hostility was small. For husbands, language use had a significant main effect only in the analysis that included warmth, indicating that that marital quality was highest for couples in which the wife reported higher English language use than the husband and lowest for couples in which husband and wife were matched for language use. However, Bonferroni post-hoc analysis

Table 12

Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and Language Use Match Type: Wives

Predictors	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta ²
Language use match type	.04	2	.02	.19	.830	.001
Warmth	7.53	1	7.53	63.48	.000	.141
Interaction	.13	2	.07	.55	.579	.003
Language use match type	.03	2	.02	.11	.898	.001
Hostility	2.45	1	2.45	18.08	.000	.045
Interaction	.103	2	.05	.38	.685	.002
Language use match type	.12	2	.02	.14	.868	.001
Gender role value	.01	1	.33	2.19	.140	.006
Interaction	.13	2	.01	.07	.929	.000

Table 13

Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and Language Use Match Type: Husbands

Predictors	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta ²
Language use match type	1.24	2	.62	5.25	.006	.027
Warmth	.26	1	.26	2.18	.141	.006
Interaction	1.43	2	.71	6.03	.003	.031
Language use match type	.58	2	.29	2.11	.123	.011
Hostility	.67	1	.67	4.89	.028	.013
Interaction	.09	2	.05	.33	.721	.002
Language use match type	.35	2	.18	1.33	.265	.007
Gender role value	.47	1	.47	3.57	.059	.009
Interaction	.84	2	.42	3.18	.043	.043

demonstrated no statistically significant differences among any of the couple categories, and it should be noted that when language use categories were entered into an ANOVA alone (i.e., without warmth added as a moderator), the results were not statistically significant.

The analyses for husbands revealed that although there was not significant main effect for warmth, there was a significant interaction between warmth and language use. Bonferroni post-hocs for the interaction clarified that among husbands who reported high warmth, acculturation did not significantly impact marital quality scores; among husbands who reported low warmth, those in the two categories of couples who were not matched on acculturation reported significantly higher marital quality than those in the category of couples who were matched on acculturation. The difference between couples with wives more acculturated and couples with husbands more acculturated was not significant. The interaction is illustrated in Figure 15. There was also a significant main effect for hostility, with higher hostility related to lower marital quality. Although traditional gender role values did not demonstrate a significant main effect, there was a significant interaction between gender role values and language use. Bonferroni post-hocs for the interaction clarified that among husbands who reported low gender role value, acculturation did not significantly impact marital quality scores; among husbands who reported high gender role value, those in couples with matched acculturation levels reported significantly lower marital quality than those in couples where the husband was more acculturated than the wife. The interaction is illustrated in Figure 16. The effect size for both interactions was small. Levenes' tests for testing the assumption of homogeneity of variance were significant for all analyses except the model for husbands which included hostility as a moderator. As such, these results need to be interpreted with caution.

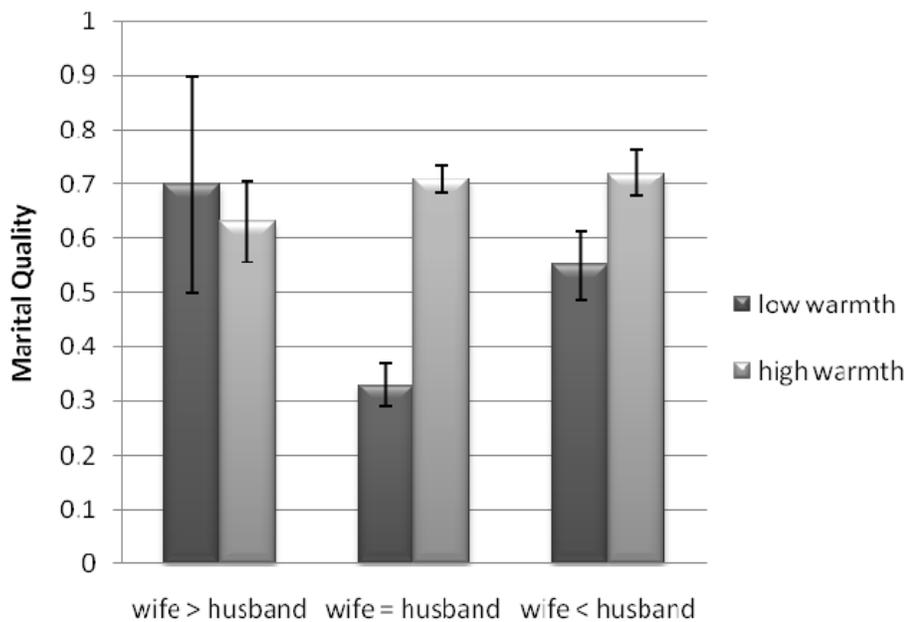


Figure 15. Interaction between language use and warmth for husbands.

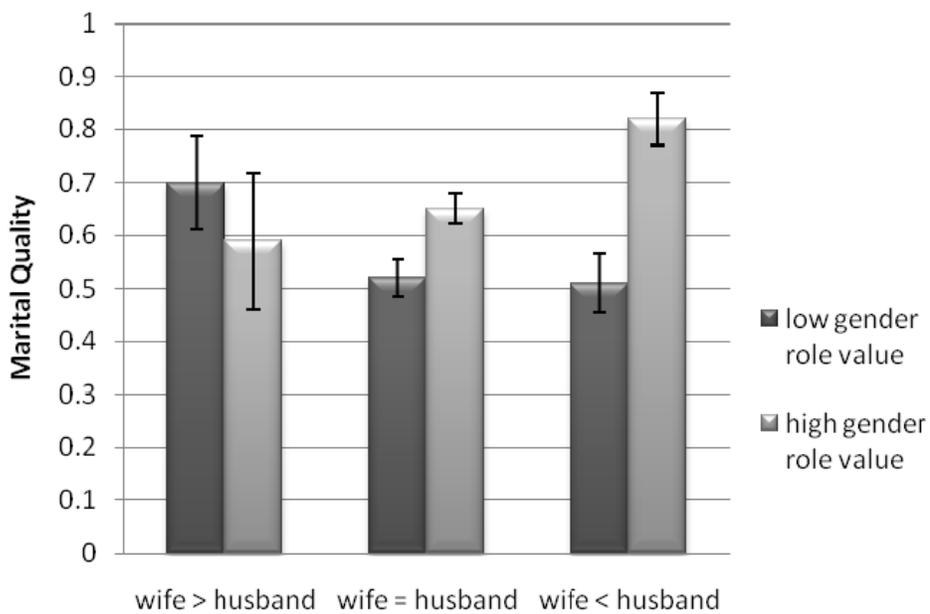


Figure 16. Interaction between language use and gender role values for husbands.

Acculturation match difference magnitude. Several analyses of variance were carried out using the Marital Quality scores for each partner, the language use match difference magnitude scale, and the three moderating variables: warmth, hostility, and gender role values. The results for this set of analyses are provided in Tables 14 and 15. For wives, language use match magnitude was not significantly related to marital quality in any of the models, and none of the interactions were significant. Warmth and hostility had significant main effects, while traditional gender role values did not. The effect size for warmth was medium, while the effect size for hostility was small. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was significant in all analyses for wives.

For husbands, acculturation difference magnitude had a significant main effect in all of the models, although the effect was opposite to the one expected: marital quality scores were higher for husbands in a relationship with a large acculturation gap than for

Table 14

Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and Language Use Match Difference Magnitude: Wives

Predictors	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta ²
LU match difference magnitude	.30	2	.15	1.28	.279	.007
Warmth	5.27	1	5.27	44.63	.000	.104
Interaction	.10	2	.05	.44	.646	.002
LU match difference magnitude	.18	2	.09	.68	.508	.004
Hostility	.84	1	.84	6.19	.013	.016
Interaction	.27	2	.14	1.01	.367	.005
LU match difference magnitude	.12	2	.06	.40	.674	.002
Gender role value	.01	1	.01	.08	.771	.000
Interaction	.13	2	.07	.44	.643	.002

Table 15

*Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and Language Use Match Difference
Magnitude: Husbands*

Predictors	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta ²
LU match difference magnitude	1.40	2	.70	5.95	.003	.030
Warmth	.57	1	.57	4.83	.029	.013
Interaction	1.21	2	.61	5.15	.006	.026
LU match difference magnitude	1.13	2	.56	4.16	.016	.021
Hostility	.53	1	.53	3.90	.049	.01
Interaction	.14	2	.07	.53	.588	.003
LU match difference magnitude	.91	2	.45	3.4	.034	.018
Gender role value	.57	1	.57	4.28	.039	.011
Interaction	.02	2	.01	.09	.917	.000

husbands in a relationship with matched acculturation. However, a Bonferroni post-hoc analysis revealed no significant differences among any of the acculturation match categories, and when the language use match magnitude categories were entered into an ANOVA alone (i.e., without moderator variables), the differences among categories was not significant. Warmth, hostility, and traditional gender role values each demonstrated a significant main effect in the same direction as previous analyses. The effect size for all three was small. Additionally, there was a significant interaction between language use match magnitude and warmth: however, the Levene's test for this model was significant, indicating that the result of the analysis should be interpreted cautiously. A Bonferroni post-hoc analysis showed that among husbands who reported high warmth, there was no significant impact of acculturation match magnitude on marital quality; among husbands

who reported low warmth, those in couples who had no acculturation differences reported significantly lower marital satisfaction than those in couples who had small or large acculturation differences. There were no significant differences between husbands in couples with small or large acculturation differences. The effect size for the interaction was small. The interaction is illustrated in Figure 17.

Structural Assimilation

Acculturation match type. Several ANOVAs were carried out using the Marital Quality scores for each partner, the couple-level structural assimilation match type category scale, and the three moderating variables: warmth, hostility, and gender role values. The results for this set of analyses are provided in Tables 16 and 17. For both husbands and wives, structural assimilation did not demonstrate any significant main effects, and there were no significant interactions. Warmth and hostility had significant

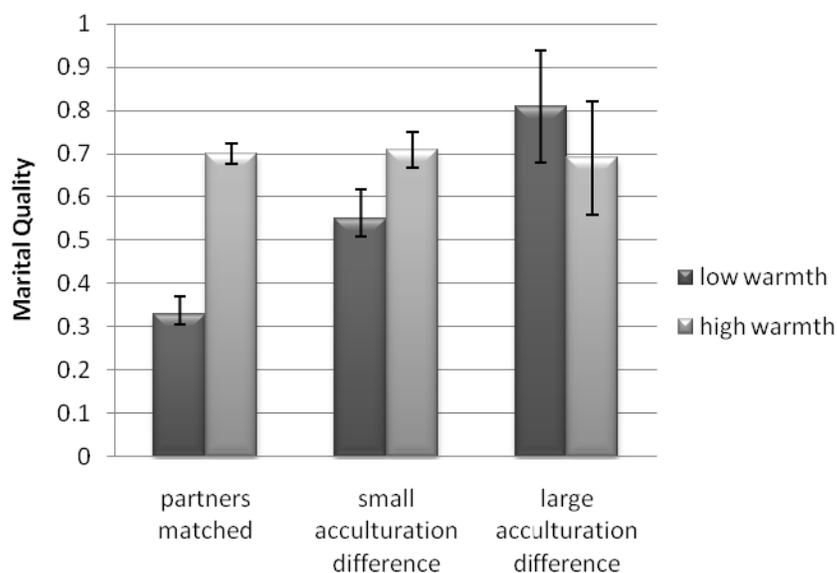


Figure 17. Interaction between language use match magnitude and warmth for husbands.

Table 16

Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and Structural Assimilation Match Type: Wives

Predictors	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta ²
S.A. match type	.17	2	.09	.73	.480	.004
Warmth	6.45	1	6.45	54.78	.000	.124
Interaction	.07	2	.03	.28	.759	.001
S.A. match type	.18	2	.09	.67	.514	.003
Hostility	2.45	1	2.45	18.25	.000	.045
Interaction	.05	2	.03	.18	.833	.001
S.A. match type	.01	2	.01	.04	.962	.000
Gender role value	.432	1	.43	2.86	.092	.007
Interaction	.05	2	.02	.16	.851	.001

Table 17

Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and Structural Assimilation Match Type: Husbands

Predictors	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta ²
S.A. match type	.06	2	.03	.24	.784	.001
Warmth	1.98	1	1.98	16.23	.000	.041
Interaction	.34	2	.17	1.40	.249	.007
S.A. match type	.04	2	.02	.15	.858	.001
Hostility	.60	1	.60	4.39	.037	.011
Interaction	.28	2	.14	1.01	.367	.005
S.A. match type	.05	2	.02	.20	.819	.001
Gender role value	.77	1	5.74	5.75	.017	.015
Interaction	.64	2	2.38	2.38	.094	.012

main effects for both husbands and wives, with greater warmth predicting higher marital quality and higher hostility predicting lower marital quality.

For husbands, traditional gender role values also had a significant main effect,

with higher traditional gender role value predicting higher marital quality. The effect size for wives' warmth was medium, while the effect sizes for all other effects were small. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was significant in the analyses for wives that included warmth and hostility as moderators and in the analysis for husbands that included warmth as a moderator. As such, the results for those analyses should be interpreted cautiously.

Acculturation match difference magnitude. Several analyses of variance were carried out using the Marital Quality scores for each partner, the structural assimilation match difference magnitude scale, and the three moderating variables: warmth, hostility, and gender role values. The results for this set of analyses are provided in Tables 18 and 19. For both husbands and wives, structural assimilation match difference magnitude did not demonstrate any significant main effects, and there were no significant interactions. Warmth had a significant main effect for both husbands and wives, with greater warmth predicting higher marital quality.

For husbands, traditional gender role values also had a significant main effect, with higher traditional gender role value predicting higher marital quality. All effect sizes were small. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was significant in the analyses for wives that included warmth and hostility as moderators and in the analysis for husbands that included warmth as a moderator. As such, the results for those analyses should be interpreted cautiously.

Table 18

*Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and Structural Assimilation Match Magnitude:
Wives*

Predictors	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta ²
S.A. match type	.37	2	.18	1.56	.212	.008
Warmth	1.37	1	1.37	11.70	.001	.029
Interaction	.35	2	.18	1.51	.222	.008
S.A. match type	.76	2	.38	2.87	.058	.015
Hostility	.22	1	.22	1.67	.197	.004
Interaction	.41	2	.20	1.53	.218	.008
S.A. match type	.56	2	.28	1.88	.154	.010
Gender role value	.07	1	.07	.49	.486	.001
Interaction	.11	2	.05	.35	.702	.002

Table 19

*Analyses of Variance for Marital Quality and Structural Assimilation Match Magnitude:
Husbands*

Predictors	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial Eta ²
S.A. match type	.04	2	.02	.17	.847	.001
Warmth	2.43	1	2.43	19.82	.000	.049
Interaction	.15	2	.07	.60	.552	.003
S.A. match type	.18	2	.09	.67	.515	.003
Hostility	.37	1	.37	2.71	.101	.007
Interaction	.24	2	.12	.87	.419	.005
S.A. match type	.06	2	.03	.20	.817	.001
Gender role value	1.01	1	1.01	7.46	.007	.019
Interaction	.09	2	.04	.32	.730	.002

Warmth, Hostility, and Gender Role Values

Results of the ANOVAs indicated significant main effects for warmth, hostility, and gender role values in a number of the tests. However, because many of the outcomes had to be interpreted cautiously due to significant Levene's tests, *t* tests were run with each of the moderator variables for husbands and wives in order to clarify the relationships these variables have with marital qualities. Results of these *t* tests are displayed in Table 20. The statistics reported assume unequal variances. Consistent with the results from the preliminary correlations, marital quality was significantly higher among husbands and wives who reported higher warmth and traditional gender role values. Marital quality was significantly lower among husbands and wives who reported higher hostility.

Table 20

t Tests for Warmth, Hostility, and Gender Role Values on Marital Quality

Variable	Mean difference	SE	df	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Husbands					
Communication: Warmth	.299	.038	211.42	7.76	.000
Communication: Hostility	-.139	.045	146.12	-3.11	.000
Traditional gender role values	.156	.037	365.52	4.17	.050
Wives					
Communication: Warmth	.423	.034	234.98	12.29	.000
Communication: Hostility	-.381	.042	94.43	-9.15	.002
Traditional gender role values	.083	.042	231.27	1.96	.000

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this project was to investigate the impact that acculturation gaps, communication style (warmth and hostility), and gender role values have on perceptions of marital quality in established romantic relationships among Mexican Americans. Bradbury and Fincham's (1988) contextual model of marriage was incorporated to understand the framework of how various factors influence marital quality. Accordingly, acculturation was viewed as a distal context, while more immediate variables such as warmth, hostility, and individually held gender role values were viewed as proximal contexts. It was hypothesized that partners who are matched on acculturation with their spouse would report higher marital quality than those who are either more or less acculturated (based on English language proficiency, English language use, or structural assimilation) than their spouse. It was also predicted that this pattern would be moderated by communication style and traditional gender role values. Specifically, it was predicted that acculturation gaps would influence marital quality to a lesser degree when participants endorse lower traditional gender role values and report that their partner uses communication strategies that are high in warmth and low in hostility.

Marital Quality and Acculturation

In general, the results of this study did not support the expectation that being matched on acculturation with one's partner would predict higher marital quality. This hypothesis was tested in two different ways: by comparing couples categorized by type of

acculturation match (matched, wife more acculturated than husband, and husband more acculturated than wife), and by comparing couples categorized by the magnitude of acculturation match (no acculturation gap, small acculturation gap, and large acculturation gap). Because acculturation was measured in three different ways (English proficiency, language use, and structural assimilation), 30 different models tested the influence of couple-level acculturation on partner reports of marital quality. Of these models, marital quality was shown to be significantly influenced only by language use match type and match magnitude for husbands. However, at closer inspection, the statistical significance of these results was tenuous and disappeared altogether when moderator variables were removed from the models or when they were investigated using Bonferroni post-hoc procedures.

Before discussing the implications of these findings, it is necessary to note that when acculturation was measured via language use, three interactions emerged for husbands. First, an interaction between language use and warmth indicated that when husbands reported that their wives communicated with a lot of warmth, language use differences between partners did not influence marital quality. When husbands reported low warmth, however, those in couples with matched language use levels scored significantly lower on marital quality than those in couples with a partner who had either higher or lower English language use than themselves. This pattern also emerged when couples were categorized via language use match difference magnitude (none, small, large) rather than match type (matched, wife more acculturated, husband more acculturated). As in the previous interaction, when husbands reported high warmth in

their relationships, language use did not have an impact on marital quality. When warmth was low, however, husbands in couples who were matched on language use reported significantly lower marital quality than those in couples with small or large acculturation gaps. Finally, gender role values also appeared to impact the relationship between couple-level acculturation and marital quality, as husbands whose wives had lower English language use than themselves reported significantly higher marital quality than those in matched relationships, but only for husbands who reported high gender role values.

There are several potential interpretations for the warmth and gender role value interactions, although all interpretations must be made cautiously due to the fact that these patterns emerged only when acculturation was measured via language use. The fact that warmth moderated the relationship between language use and marital quality for husbands supports the suggestion that rather than acting solely as a direct influence on marital quality, acculturation is instead a distal context that only impacts marital quality when other, more proximal contexts are in place: namely, low warmth on the part of one's spouse. Furthermore, when communicative warmth is low and couple-level acculturation, or language use, does exert a noticeable influence on marital quality, it does not appear to be as straightforward as originally hypothesized. Instead, the trend is in the opposite direction, with husbands in matched couples reporting lower marital quality than husbands whose wives have either higher or lower English language use than themselves. This finding can be explained in two ways: first, the fact that all couples with matched language use were combined into one category may be masking a more complex effect, as was found in Flores and colleagues (2004). Second, it may be that when warmth

is low, couples rely more heavily on role functions in their marital relationships. It is natural for partners to take on specific roles in their relationships, and in couples with partners who are at different acculturation levels these roles may take the form of specific cultural functions. For couples whose members do not have these specific and specialized roles in their relationship because they share the same cultural skills that their partner does, the absence of warmth may be more hazardous to perceptions of marital quality than for those couples whose members are reliant upon one another to function successfully. This explanation is supported in part by Prins, Buunk, and Van Yperen (1993), who found that although equity (e.g., both partners are getting their needs met) is related to reduced risk of infidelity, partners who are less dependent on their spouse for satisfaction or rewards are more likely to engage in extramarital sexual relationships.

The same argument can be made for the interaction involving traditional gender role values. The main statistical finding of this interaction was that when acculturation was measured via language use, husbands who strongly endorsed traditional gender role values were more likely to report higher marital quality when they had higher English language use than their partner than when they were matched with their partner on language use or had lower English language use than their partner. Again, the power of roles and partner functions may dictate that husbands who are more acculturated than their wives may experience consistency between their gender role values and the way that they actually experience their marital relationship.

One of the more interesting and practical conclusions that can be drawn from the combination of these findings is that couple-level acculturation appears to have a less

powerful impact on marital quality than might be commonly assumed. It was hypothesized by Flores and colleagues (2004) and by the authors of the current study that acculturation gaps in Mexican American couples might be expected to be related to greater conflict in terms of role expectations, value orientations, and emotional expressiveness. Similar to Flores colleagues, however, the patterns of the current study suggest that this does not appear to be the case, particularly for wives. The absence of any trend for wives is interesting, particularly since other studies investigating individual-level acculturation found that wives were more likely than husbands to display significant (albeit often weakly significant) correlations between acculturation and marital perceptions (e.g., Negy & Snyder, 1997; Vega et al., 1988). In contrast, the current study found that husbands were the only ones to display somewhat of a trend, although only when communication style and gender role values were taken into account. These interactions were in some ways consistent with what Flores and colleagues found as well: the previous study showed that husbands who were less acculturated than their wives reported less marital conflict, while husbands matched on biculturalism reported greater marital conflict. The fact that Flores and colleagues measured marital conflict rather than marital quality, as well as the fact that they categorized couples into more specific categories (i.e. matched traditional, matched assimilated, matched bicultural) makes it difficult to compare their findings to those of the current study, which, due to sample characteristics, combined all matched couples into the same category.

Overall, the results of the main analyses regarding acculturation and marital quality suggest that acculturation differences between romantic partners are not directly

or consistently predictive of higher or lower marital quality. This has practical implications for mental health professionals working with Mexican American couples and families, primarily in the sense that couples who present for therapy with low marital quality need not necessarily have their acculturation levels called into the treatment picture. In a broad sense, this is good news for counselors, as working with couples on communication is a far more manageable and ethical task than working to shift couple-level cultural variables. Additionally, the fact that warmth exerted the strongest effect on marital quality for both husbands and wives suggests that a counselor's time may be best spent primarily in increasing warmth and secondarily in eliminating hostility in marital communication. Vega and colleagues (1988), in researching the relationship between marital strain and depression among Mexican American women, found that when coping responses (e.g., negotiation and reciprocity) and cognitive traits (e.g. mastery, self-esteem, self-degradation) were accounted for, the positive relationship between marital strain and depression disappeared. Although acculturation did demonstrate a weak association with marital strain, the authors ultimately state that "the stereotyping of Hispanics in the research literature as a cultural group whose social arrangements indemnify them against mental health problems or, conversely, predispose them toward pathology is contradicted by this research." A similar statement could be made regarding the patterns that emerged in the current study; while couple-level acculturation needs to be taken into consideration for the benefit of engaging in culturally competent service provision, it is likely that the more important element for addressing in counseling is the degree to which couples communicate in a warm or hostile manner.

The present study suggests that acculturation mismatch is part of the variability that exists in Mexican American couples but it is not predictive of negative outcomes for them. This does not mean acculturation and cultural variability should be ignored completely. Culture clearly matters, and the constructs of warmth and hostility that therapists will be addressing in counseling may actually have different behavioral expressions across cultural groups. Additionally, although couple-level acculturation in and of itself need not garner undue attention from an intervention standpoint, counselors and their clients can benefit from awareness of the risk of acculturative stress. Mexican American immigrants face a variety of powerful stressors, such as a loss of social support, loss of identity, discrimination, and, in the case of undocumented families, threat of deportation (Smart & Smart, 1995). Acculturative stress has been tied to increased risk for depression, which in turn is predictive of relationship problems (Miranda & Matheny, 2000). Being attentive to these risk factors and working on developing skills for managing the symptoms of acculturative stress can be a valuable use of time, when indicated, for couples in therapy.

Communication Style and Gender Role Values

It is well documented that partners who perceive their spouse as communicating in more positive than negative ways are more likely to demonstrate higher marital satisfaction and greater marital stability (Gottman, 1994; Segrin et al., 2009; Sevier et al., 2008). Luckey (1964) found that people who described themselves and their spouse as warm, generous, and cooperative were more likely to also report higher levels of marital

satisfaction, while Matthews, Wickrama, and Conger (1996) found that rates of warmth and hostility in marital interactions successfully predicted whether couples were stable or unstable. Similarly, Matthews, Conger, and Wickrama (1996) found that the psychological distress caused by work-family conflict was due in large part to the influence of increased hostility and decreased warmth in the marriage. Consequently, it is not surprising that the current study also found that marital quality was highest for those participants who described their partners as using communication strategies that were high in warmth and low in hostility. This pattern appeared for both husbands and wives, and it indicates that methods for intervening on marital quality in Mexican American couples would benefit by targeting communication variables, particularly expressions of warmth and hostility. Based on the pattern of findings in the current study, it is also logical to extend this statement by suggesting that interventions may work best by implementing skills for increasing warmth before working to decrease hostility, so that couples learn first “what to do” before learning “what not to do.”

What is considerably more interesting is the finding that for husbands and wives, gender role values also demonstrated a significant relationship with marital quality. More specifically, higher gender role value endorsement predicted higher marital quality. It should be noted that this relationship is quite a bit stronger for husbands than for wives, and the interaction between acculturation and gender role values among husbands, which was discussed previously, may contribute to efforts in understanding this finding. It is possible that this outcome is a preliminary glimpse into a more complex relationship between gender role values and marital quality; participants who endorsed high gender

role values may be more likely to also endorse other cultural values that are known to promote smooth and harmonious relationships, such as *simpatía* and *personalismo*. Schwartz and colleagues (2010) point out that collectivistic attitudes and traditional cultural values tend to be protective for health variables among immigrants, and the same pattern may hold true for romantic relationships. Additionally, individuals who strongly value traditional gender roles may be more likely to select marital partners to match their expectations, thereby increasing perceptions of marital quality.

Conclusions and Limitations

By combining the results of the primary analyses with the preliminary sample and correlational findings, several conclusions can be drawn. First, the three acculturation subscales of the HAAS (Hazuda et al., 1988) were highly correlated (see Table 7), providing evidence for the notion that these various aspects of acculturation are interconnected. Second, there did not appear to be any broad overarching relationships among the demographic variables of this sample and the major variable of interest: marital quality. Among wives, age was weakly and negatively correlated with marital quality, and among husbands, the total number of people in the home was weakly and negatively correlated with marital quality. Additionally, for male partners in relationships that were established but not marital, the number of years living together was moderately and negatively correlated with marital quality. It may be that the relationships among marital quality and age, number of people in the home, and number of years together are more a function of child-rearing, and that once children leave the home they disappear or

reverse. It is difficult, however, to adequately interpret the latter finding, as it emerged for only the small subsample of cohabitating men. The fact that there were no significant differences between married and cohabitating men on any of the variable of interest negates the possible interpretation that cohabitation itself decreases relationship quality, while the absence of a similar finding for married men means that it cannot be simply a function of the length of time a couple has been together. There were also no significant differences between married and cohabitating couples regarding education, income, or family characteristics, making it difficult to suggest that socioeconomic factors or exposure to additional environmental stressors make the difference. Given the small number of couples who made up this subsample, it is important not to overstate the nature of this finding. Further examination is likely warranted to fully understand the differential impact of time on relationship quality between married and unmarried couples.

In general, the current study suggests that couple-level acculturation is not strongly or consistently related to marital quality, although for husbands, couple-level acculturation as measured by language use appears to interact with warmth and gender role values to predict complex relationships with marital quality. Marital quality in this sample appears to be most consistently related to high warmth, low hostility, and high traditional gender role values. Since couple-level acculturation does not appear to be a particularly strong context in the current adaptation of Bradbury and Fincham's (1988) model, it may be that gender role values are a more appropriate distal context representing culture.

While the outcomes of the current study certainly shed additional light on the

picture of established romantic relationships among Mexican American immigrants, there are several limitations that caution against immediate generalization without further investigation. First, due to the nature of the data collected for this study, many of the analyses of variance violated the assumption of homogeneity, indicating that marital quality score variance was not consistent across groups. Due to the large sample size and the use of conservative post-hoc procedures, the analyses were carried out. However, it is necessary to interpret the outcomes cautiously and from the context of other studies that have revealed similar patterns. A second limitation is found in the sheer number of individual analyses that were carried out. Because the risk of family wise error, or false positives, increases with the number of separate analyses performed in a study, it is important to recognize that this risk exists in the current study. Again, the outcomes should be considered one piece of the larger picture of marital quality and culture.

Finally, the sample used in this study was relatively homogenous with respect to scores on the major variables of interest. As seen in Table 5, the majority of couples reported very high marital quality, high warmth, and low hostility. Additionally, there was very little variation in terms of couple-level acculturation, with most couples showing only small differences in acculturation level. These factors made it difficult to investigate some of the nuances of acculturation, as couples were clustered into broad categories that allowed for less detailed analyses than would have been ideal.

Interestingly, other authors studying couple-level acculturation (e.g., Flores et al., 2004) also report difficulty in generating a sufficiently heterogeneous sample for adequately studying the influence of acculturation on marital relationships. It may be that the

Mexican Americans who self-select to be involved in research studies regarding family dynamics represent a unique subpopulation. More work in this area is certainly warranted to clarify the important features of Mexican American families and better understand how to serve them.

Based on the findings and limitations of the current study, several recommendations are made for future research. This and other studies (e.g., Flores et al., 2004) have found it difficult to make generalized statements about the impact of couple-level acculturation among Mexican Americans based on the tendency for samples to be fairly homogenous. It may be beneficial for researchers to consider carrying out more in-depth qualitative studies looking at case examples in order to better understand the patterns of marital quality, communication, cultural values, and acculturation. Additionally, as stated previously, the findings of this study may be merely a preliminary glance into what is likely a much more complex picture of Mexican American marital quality, and the field would benefit from further investigation into each of the proximal variables included in the current model. For example, the impact of traditional gender role on marital quality suggests that there may be other factors at work, and future studies should include other cultural values that are linked to traditional gender roles and communication among Mexican American couples. Finally, it is curious that despite the lack of relationship between couple-level acculturation and marital quality, several interactions emerged for husbands when acculturation was measured via language use. Although acculturation does not appear to be the primary variable of interest when investigating Mexican American marital quality, there may be some interesting work to

be done in the area of how language usage differentially impacts the relationship perceptions of partners.

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APPENDIX

Relationship Quality

We are going to talk about [spouse's name] for a while. Please tell me how true each of the following statement is about your relationship with [spouse's name]. Vamos hablar sobre [spouse's name] por un rato. Dígame que tan cierta es cada frase acerca de su relación con [spouse's name].		Not at all true	Some-what true	Mostly true	Very true	Refusal	Don't know
		Nada cierto	Algo cierto	Cierto	Muy cierto		
1.	You have a good relationship. Ustedes tienen una buena relación	1	2	3	4	8	9
2.	Your relationship with [spouse] is very stable. Su relación con [spouse] es muy estable.	1	2	3	4	8	9
3.	Your relationship is strong. Su relación es sólida.	1	2	3	4	8	9
4.	Your relationship with [spouse] makes you happy. Su relación con [spouse] la hace feliz.	1	2	3	4	8	9

5. Everything considered, how happy are you in your relationship? Tomando todo en cuenta, ¿qué tan feliz está usted en su relación?	
1	Very unhappy/Muy triste
2	Fairly unhappy/Más o menos triste
3	Fairly happy/Algo feliz
4	Very happy/Muy feliz
8	Refusal
9	Don't know

Behavioral Affect Rating Scale (BARS)

<p>Now I would like to ask you about [<i>spouse's name</i>] behavior towards you in the past 3 months.</p> <p>During the past 3 months, when you and [<i>spouse</i>] have spent time talking or doing things together...</p> <p>Ahora me gustaria preguntarle sobre el comportamiento de [<i>spouse's name</i>] hacia usted en los últimos tres meses.</p> <p>Durante los últimos tres meses, cuando usted y [<i>spouse</i>] han compartido tiempo platicando o han compartido tiempo juntos...</p>	Almos t never/ never	Some- times	A lot of the time	Almost always/ always	Refusa l	Don' t kno w	
	Casi nunca/ nunca	A veces	Mucha s veces	Casi siempre / siempre			
Warmth Subscale							
1.	How often did s/he ask you for your opinion about an important matter? ¿Con qué frecuencia le pide a usted su opinión sobre temas importantes?	1	2	3	4	8	9
2.	Listen carefully to your point of view. Escucha su punto de vista cuidadosamente	1	2	3	4	8	9
3.	Let you know s/he really cares about you Le deja saber que él/ella realmente la	1	2	3	4	8	9
4.	Act loving and affectionate toward you Le trata a usted con cariño o afecto	1	2	3	4	8	9
5.	During the past 3 months, how often did [<i>spouse</i>] let you know that s/he	1	2	3	4	8	9

	appreciates you, your ideas or the things you do Durante los últimos tres meses, ¿con qué frecuencia [spouse] le deja saber que le aprecia a usted, aprecia sus ideas o lo que hace?						
6.	Help you do something that was important to you Le ayudó a hacer algo que era importante para usted	1	2	3	4	8	9
7.	Have a good laugh with you about something that was funny Se ríen ustedes sobre algo chistoso	1	2	3	4	8	9
8.	Act supportive and understanding toward you Demuestra que le apoya y le entiende	1	2	3	4	8	9
9.	Tell yous/ he loves you Le dice que él/ella le quiere	1	2	3	4	8	9
Hostility Subscale							
1.	How often did s/he get angry at you? ¿Con qué frecuencia se enojó con usted?	1	2	3	4	8	9
2.	During the past 3 months, when you and [spouse] have spent time talking or doing things together, how often did s/he criticize you or your ideas? Durante los últimos tres meses, cuando usted y [spouse] han compartido tiempo platicando o han compartido tiempo juntos, ¿con qué frecuencia él/ella le critica a usted o critica sus ideas?	1	2	3	4	8	9

3.	Shout or yell at you because s/he was mad at you Le grita o le habla en voz alta cuando está enojado con usted	1	2	3	4	8	9
4.	Ignore you when you tried to talk to him/her Le ignora cuando usted le trata de hablar	1	2	3	4	8	9
5.	Give you a lecture about how you should behave Le da un sermón acerca de como se debe portar	1	2	3	4	8	9
6.	Boss you around a lot Muchas veces es mandono con usted	1	2	3	4	8	9
7.	How often did [<i>spouse</i>] not listen to you but do all of the talking himself? ¿Con qué frecuencia [<i>spouse</i>] no le escucha a usted pero solamente habla?	1	2	3	4	8	9
8.	Argue with you whenever you disagreed about something Discute con usted cuando tienen un desacuerdo	1	2	3	4	8	9
9.	Tell you s/he is right and you are wrong about things Le dice que él/ella tiene la razón y usted está equivocada	1	2	3	4	8	9
Extreme Hostility Subscale *(not used in the current study)							
1.	During the past 3 months, how often did [<i>spouse</i>] call you bad names? Durante los últimos tres meses, ¿con qué frecuencia [<i>spouse</i>] le llama algo negativo (por ej., babosa)?	1	2	3	4	8	9

2.	Threaten to hurt you by hitting you with his fist, an object, or something else Le amenaza con golpes u objetos o algo más	1	2	3	4	8	9
3.	Hit, push, grab or shove you Le pega, le empuja, le jala, o le avienta	1	2	3	4	8	9
4.	Insult or swear at you Le insulta o le dice malas palabras	1	2	3	4	8	9

Hazuda Acculturation and Assimilation Scale (HAAS)

I would like to ask you what language you use in various situations. Quisiera preguntarle qué idioma usa en diferentes situaciones.							
Spanish Proficiency subscale							
		Not at all	Not too well	Pretty well	Very well	Refusal	Don't know
		Nada	No muy bien	Poco bien	Muy bien		
1.	How well do you understand spoken Spanish? ¿Qué tan bien entiende español?	1	2	3	4	8	9
2.	How well do you speak Spanish? ¿Qué tan bien habla español?	1	2	3	4	8	9
3.	How well do you read Spanish? ¿Qué tan bien lee español?	1	2	3	4	8	9
Language Use subscale							
1.	What language do you usually use with your brothers and sisters? ¿Qué idioma usa cuando habla con sus hermanos?						
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español					
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés					
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente					
	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español					
	5	Only English/Solamente inglés					
	6	Other/Otra					
	8	Not Applicable/No es applicable (enter if person has no siblings)					
	98	Refusal					
	99	Don't know					
2.	What language do you usually use with your spouse/partner? ¿Qué idioma usa cuando habla con su esposa/pareja?						
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español					
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés					
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente					
	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español					

	5	Only English/Solamente inglés
	6	Other/Otra
	8	Not Applicable/No es aplicable
	98	Refusal
	99	Don't know
3.	With your children? ¿Con sus niños?	
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente
	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español
	5	Only English/Solamente inglés
	6	Other/Otra
	8	Not Applicable/No es aplicable
	98	Refusal
	99	Don't know
4.	With your mother? ¿Con su madre?	
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente
	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español
	5	Only English/Solamente inglés
	6	Other/Otra
	8	Not Applicable/No es aplicable
	98	Refusal
	99	Don't know
5.	With your father? ¿Con su padre?	
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente
	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español
	5	Only English/Solamente inglés
	6	Other/Otra
	8	Not Applicable/No es aplicable
	98	Refusal
	99	Don't know

6.	What language do you usually use at family gatherings, such as Christmas or other holidays? ¿Qué idioma usa en reuniones familiares, como Navidad u otros días festivos?	
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente
	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español
	5	Only English/Solamente inglés
	6	Other/Otra
	8	Not Applicable/No es aplicable
	98	Refusal
	99	Don't know
7.	With most of your friends? ¿Con la mayoría de sus amigos?	
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente
	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español
	5	Only English/Solamente inglés
	6	Other/Otra
	8	Not Applicable/No es aplicable
	98	Refusal
	99	Don't know
8.	With most of your neighbors? ¿Con la mayoría de sus vecinos?	
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente
	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español
	5	Only English/Solamente inglés
	6	Other/Otra
	8	Not Applicable/No es aplicable
	98	Refusal
	99	Don't know
9.	With most of the people at work? ¿Con la mayoría de la gente con quien trabaja?	
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente

	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español
	5	Only English/Solamente inglés
	6	Other/Otra
	8	Not Applicable/No es aplicable (enter if person doesn't work)
	98	Refusal
	99	Don't know
10	In what language are the books and magazines you read? ¿En cuál idioma son los libros y revistas que lee?	
	1	Only Spanish/Solamente español
	2	Mostly Spanish/Más español que inglés
	3	Spanish and English equally/Inglés y español igualmente
	4	Mostly English/Más inglés que español
	5	Only English/Solamente inglés
	6	Other/Otra
	8	Not Applicable/ No es aplicable
	98	Refusal
	99	Don't know
	Structural Assimilation subscale	
1.	When you were growing up, were your neighbors mostly...? Cuando estaba creciendo, ¿la mayoría de sus vecinos eran...?	
	1	Mexican or Mexican American/Mexicanos o México-Americanos
	2	About half and half/Más o menos mitad y mitad
	3	Of other ethnic groups/De otros grupos étnicos
	8	Refusal
	9	Don't know
2.	When you were growing up, were your schoolmates mostly...? Cuando estaba creciendo, ¿la mayoría de sus amigos en la escuela eran...?	
	1	Mexican or Mexican American/Mexicanos o México-Americanos
	2	About half and half/Más o menos mitad y mitad
	3	Of other ethnic groups/De otros grupos étnicos
	8	Refusal
	9	Don't know
3.	When you were growing up, were your close friends mostly...? Cuando estaba creciendo, ¿la mayoría de sus amigos íntimos eran...?	
	1	Mexican or Mexican American/Mexicanos o México-Americanos
	2	About half and half/Más o menos mitad y mitad
	3	Of other ethnic groups/De otros grupos étnicos
	8	Refusal

	9	Don't know
4.	Throughout your adult life, have your neighbors been mostly...? Durante su vida como adulto, ¿la mayoría de sus vecinos han sido...?	
	1	Mexican or Mexican American/Mexicanos o México-Americanos
	2	About half and half/Más o menos mitad y mitad
	3	Of other ethnic groups/De otros grupos etnicos
	8	Refusal
	9	Don't know
5.	Throughout your adult life, have your close friends been mostly...? Durante su vida como adulto, ¿la mayoría de sus amigos íntimos han sido...?	
	1	Mexican or Mexican American/Mexicanos o México-Americanos
	2	About half and half/Más o menos mitad y mitad
	3	Of other ethnic groups/De otros grupos etnicos
	8	Refusal
	9	Don't know
6.	Are the people with whom you work closely on the job mostly...? ¿Son las personas con quien trabaja más cerca en el trabajo mayormente...? <i>If respondent doesn't work but has in the past, ask about the most recent job.</i>	
	1	Mexican or Mexican American/Mexicanos o México-Americanos
	2	About half and half/Más o menos mitad y mitad
	3	Of other ethnic groups/De otros grupos etnicos
	8	Refusal (enter if person has never worked)
	9	Don't know

Gender Role Scale

Now I would like to know what you think about the following statements.		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Refusal	Don't know
Ahora quisiera saber que piensa de las frases que siguen.		Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo		
Machismo							
1.	A man should never allow another man to drink him under the table. Un hombre nunca debería permitir que otro hombre tome más alcohol que él.	1	2	3	4	8	9
2.	A man should always be brave around other men. Un hombre siempre debería de ser valiente cuando anda entre otros hombres.	1	2	3	4	8	9
3.	It is important for a man to guard his wife and daughters from other men. Es importante que el hombre proteja a su esposa e hijas de otros hombres.	1	2	3	4	8	9
4.	A man should never act like a woman. Un hombre nunca debería actuar como una mujer.	1	2	3	4	8	9
5.	A man should be willing to back up his words with his fists. Un hombre debería de estar dispuesto a defender sus palabras con los puños.	1	2	3	4	8	9

6.	It is a man's job to discipline his children to be upright, honest, and hardworking. El trabajo del hombre es disciplinar a sus hijos para que sean justos, honestos y trabajadores.	1	2	3	4	8	9
7.	It is important for a man to sacrifice anything for his family. Es importante que el hombre sacrifique todo por su familia.	1	2	3	4	8	9
8.	A man must maintain his family's importance, honor, and respect. El hombre debe mantener el honor, respeto y la importancia de la familia.	1	2	3	4	8	9
9.	A man's # 1 priority is his family. La prioridad #1 del hombre es su familia.	1	2	3	4	8	9
10.	A man should be proud to provide for his family. Un hombre debe estar orgulloso de proveer para su familia.	1	2	3	4	8	9
11.	A man is responsible for the welfare of his family. El hombre es responsable por el bienestar de su familia.	1	2	3	4	8	9

Marianismo							
1.	A woman should be a virgin until she gets married. La mujer debería de ser virgin cuando se case.	1	2	3	4	8	9
2.	A woman should put her husband and children first. La mujer debería pensar primero en su esposo y sus hijos.	1	2	3	4	8	9
3.	A woman's number 1 responsibility is her family and home. La responsabilidad principal de la mujer es su familia y su casa.	1	2	3	4	8	9
4.	A woman should never disagree with her husband in front of others. La mujer nunca debería contradecir a su esposo cuando hay otras personas presentes.	1	2	3	4	8	9
5.	A woman should be able to just take it when her husband treats her badly. Una mujer debería de aguantarse cuando su esposo la trate mal.	1	2	3	4	8	9

Supervisors: Scott Blickenstaff, Ph.D., Roueida Ghadban, Ph.D., and LuEllen Brown, LCSW
Total hours: 539, Direct contact hours: 259

5/10-5/11

Student Therapist

Cache Valley Cancer Treatment and Research Clinic, Logan, UT

Responsibilities: Conduct intake evaluations and one-time consults, develop treatment plans, write reports, consult with doctors and nurses in a multidisciplinary format, provide ongoing individual therapy to Cancer Clinic patients and family members, and participate in weekly individual supervision.

Supervisor: M. Scott DeBerard, Ph.D.

Total hours: 96, Direct contact hours: 43

8/09-5/10

Graduate Assistant Therapist

USU Counseling and Psychological Services, Logan, UT

Responsibilities: Conduct intake evaluations and crisis consults, develop treatment plans, write reports, provide on-campus outreach, directly supervise an undergraduate peer educator, participate in weekly staff meetings and case conferences, provide individual therapy, co-lead a DBT skills group, and participate in weekly group and individual supervision.

Supervisors: Amy Kleiner, Ph.D. and Mark Nafziger, Ph.D.

Total hours: 519, Direct contact hours: 246

6/09-5/10

Student Therapist, Practicum in Clinical Psychology

USU Student Health Center, Logan, UT

Responsibilities: Conduct intake evaluations and one-time consults, develop treatment plans, write reports, consult with doctors and nurses in a multidisciplinary format, and provide ongoing individual therapy to students.

Supervisor: M. Scott DeBerard, Ph.D.

Total hours: 384, Direct contact hours: 141

8/08-5/09

Graduate Assistant/Learning Specialist

USU Academic Resource Center, Logan, UT

Responsibilities: Work one-on-one with students to develop study skills and promote academic success (including areas such as goal-setting, motivation, time management, note-taking, textbook reading, and managing stress and test anxiety), co-lead an academic motivation support group, and participate in weekly individual supervision.

Supervisors: Carol Rosenthol, M.S. and Dave Bush, Ph.D.

Total hours: 206, Direct contact hours: 117

- 8/08-5/09 **Student Therapist, Practicum in Counseling Psychology**
USU Counseling Center, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Conduct intake evaluations, develop treatment plans, write reports, prepare and deliver outreach presentations, provide individual therapy, and assist with a 9-month Interpersonal Group.
Supervisors: Mark Nafziger, Ph.D. and Anna Mae Jorgensen, M.S.
Total hours: 300, Direct contact hours: 130
- 8/07-5/08 **Student Therapist, Practicum in School Psychology**
USU Community Clinic, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Conduct intake evaluations, conduct psychological evaluations, develop treatment plans, write reports, consult with other professionals, and provide individual therapy to children, adolescents, and families.
Supervisor: Gretchen Gimpel Peacock, Ph.D.
Total hours: 400, Direct contact hours: 100
- 1/07-5/07 **Student Therapist**
USU Community Clinic, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Conduct intake evaluations, develop treatment plans, write reports, consult with other professionals, and provide individual therapy to adults.
Supervisor: Melanie M. Domenech Rodríguez, Ph.D.
Total hours: 162, Direct contact hours: 22

Additional Positions

- 9/08-5/09 **Psychology Department Student Representative**
Utah State University (Logan, UT)
Responsibilities: Serve as elected student representative to combined program, co-lead monthly student meetings, attend and participate in bi-monthly faculty meetings, assist with the development of accreditation materials, and assist with the program applicant interview process.
- 7/05 – 5/06 **Vocational Training and Supported Living Coordinator**
RISE, Inc. (La Grande, OR)
Responsibilities: Work one-on-one in vocational and domestic settings with young adults with disabilities including mild mental retardation, cerebral palsy, autism, and conduct disorder; manage client and program finances; oversee vocational progress; and coordinate staff hours.

Specialty Training

- Briere, J. (2010, March). *An Integrated Approach to Complex Psychological Trauma*. Full-day workshop. Logan, UT.
- Gottman, J. (2010, February). *The Dynamics of Gottman Couples Therapy: A Research-Based Approach*. Full-day workshop. Salt Lake City, UT.
- Raney, T.J. (2010, February). *Hot Topics in Eating Disorders*. 3-hour training seminar. Logan, UT.
- Hayes, S. (2009, April). *An Introduction to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy*. Full-day workshop. Logan, UT.
- Lau, M. (2008, April). *Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy*. Full-day workshop. Logan, UT.
- Constantine, M. (2008, February). *Strategies for Developing Multicultural Competence in Mental Health Service Delivery*. Part-day workshop. Salt Lake City, UT.
- Yahne, C. (2007, March). *Motivational Interviewing*. Full-day workshop. Logan, UT.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Positions

- 9/07-8/08 **Graduate Research Assistant**
USU Latino/a Family Intervention Lab, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Organize, enter, and clean survey and behavioral observation data, assist with assessment of families and with parenting intervention groups.
Principal Investigator: Melanie M. Domenech Rodríguez, Ph.D.
Direct contact hours: 30 (parenting group and test administration)
- 9/07-8/08 **Graduate Research Assistant**
USU Children's Multisensory Cognition Center, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Review relevant literature, assist with set up of computer programming and lab space, and carry out experimentation with infants and families for investigation on multisensory numerical recognition in infants.
Principal Investigator: Kerry Jordan, Ph.D.

- 10/06-5/07 **Graduate Research Assistant**
Center for Latino Family Research, St. Louis, MO
Responsibilities: Conduct comprehensive database searches for Latino values, obtain and review references, and code relevant articles.
Supervisors: Melanie M. Domenech Rodríguez, Ph.D. & Luis Zayas, Ph.D. (Washington University)
- 9/04 – 5/05 **Undergraduate Research Assistant**
Project W.I.L.D, Eastern Oregon University, La Grande, OR
Responsibilities: Organize, clean, and analyze EKG and behavioral data for investigation on attention and object categorization in infants.
Principal Investigator: Marie Balaban, Ph.D.
- 9/04 – 3/05 **Undergraduate Research Assistant**
Eastern Oregon University, La Grande, OR
Responsibilities: Assist with brief literature review, experimental design, and pilot study procedures for investigation on cocaine sensitization in rats.
Principal Investigator: Richard Ettinger, Ph.D.

Publications

- Schwartz, A.**, Galliher, R., & Domenech Rodríguez, M. M. (2011). Self-disclosure in Latinos' intercultural and intracultural friendships and acquaintanceships: Links with collectivism, ethnic identity, and acculturation. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 17*, p. 116-121. DOI: 10.1037/a0021824
- Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Baumann das Neves, A. A., & **Schwartz, A.** (2011). Cultural adaptation of an empirically supported intervention: From theory to practice in a Latino community context. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 47*, p. 170-186. DOI: 10.1007/s10464-010-9371-4
- Schwartz, A.** & Domenech Rodríguez, M. M. (2010). Beyond wordsmithery: Ethical considerations when clients and psychotherapists use a language the supervisor can't speak. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 41*, p. 210-220. DOI: 10.1037/a0019447
- Balaban, M. T. & **Oldham, A.** (2005). Categorization. In N. J. Salkind (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Human Development* (pp. 227-229). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Professional Presentations

Domenech Rodríguez, M.M., & **Schwartz, A.** (2011). Cultural adaptation of an evidence-based intervention: Putting aspirational practice principles in effect. In M. Wrona, A. Varela, & M. Domenech Rodríguez (Eds.), *Advancing empirically supported interventions for Latino adolescents*. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association, Salt Lake City, UT.

Schwartz, A. & Galliher, R. (2009, November). *Effects of topic on self-disclosure levels in Latinos' intercultural and intractultural relationships*. Poster presented at the Utah University College Counseling Centers Conference, Park City, UT.

Schwartz, A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., & Galliher, R. (2008, November). *Latinos' self-disclosure in inter- and intra-cultural friendships and acquaintanceships*. Poster presented at the National Latino Psychological Association conference, Costa Mesa, CA.

Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., & **Oldham, A.** (2008, April). *Cultural adaptation of a PMTO intervention: Criando con Amor: Promoviendo Armonía y Superación*. Invited presentation at the Developing Interventions for Latino Children, Youth, and Families conference, Center for Latino Family Research, Washington University, St. Louis, MO.

Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., & **Oldham, A.** (2007, April). *Latino cultural values: A review of the literature and emerging meta-analysis*. Paper presented at the Developing Interventions for Latino Children, Youth, and Families conference, Center for Latino Family Research, Washington University, St. Louis, MO.

Balaban, M., & **Oldham, A.** (2005, May). *Getting to the heart of the matter: Investigating infants' attention*. Paper presented at the EOU Spring Symposium, Eastern Oregon University, La Grande, OR.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

5/10-6/10 **Instructor:** Psychology 1010: General Psychology
USU Department of Psychology, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Provide daily 2.5-hour face-to-face lectures to a class of 80 students, develop lecture materials and tests, grade assignments and examinations, and supply online ancillary materials and assistance.

- 9/09-12/09 **Instructor:** Psychology 1010: General Psychology
USU Department of Psychology, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Provide bi-weekly face-to-face lectures to a class of 7 students, develop lecture materials and tests, grade assignments and examinations, and supply online ancillary materials and assistance.
- 9/08-5/09 **Instructor:** Psychology 1730: Strategies for Academic Success
USU Academic Resource Center, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Provide bi-weekly face-to-face lectures to classes of approximately 25 students in four seven-week blocks, develop lecture and testing materials, grade assignments and examinations, and hold regular office hours.
- 9/08-12/08 **Instructor:** Psychology 1730: Strategies for Academic Success
USU Academic Resource Center, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Teach a web-based distance education course for one semester to a class of 15 students, grade assignments and examinations, and hold regular office hours.
- 5/09-7/09 **Graduate Teaching Assistant:** Psych 6010: Program Evaluation
USU Department of Psychology, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Manage on-line course materials, grade assignments and examinations, assist with student questions and concerns, and guest-lecture as needed.
Supervisor: Dawn Stevenson, M.S.
- 7/09-9/09 **Graduate Teaching Assistant:** Psych 6340: Psychological and Educational Consultation
USU Department of Psychology, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Manage on-line course materials, grade assignments and examinations, assist with student questions and concerns, and guest-lecture as needed.
Supervisor: Sandra Ameal, M.Ed.
- 9/06-5/07 **Graduate Teaching Assistant:** Psych 1010: General Psychology
USU Department of Psychology, Logan, UT
Responsibilities: Manage on-line course materials, grade assignments and examinations, hold regular office hours, and lead weekly labs.
Supervisor: Scott Bates, Ph.D.

- 6/02-7/02 **Guest English Teacher**
Escuela San Ignacio (Checa, Ecuador)
Responsibilities: Teach beginning English vocabulary and beginning conversation skills to children in grades K-7 at a rural elementary school.
- 10/08 **Guest Lecturer**
USU, Department of Psychology, Logan, UT
 Psychology 2800: Psychological Statistics
 Dependent-Samples T-Tests
- 11/07 Psychology 1010: General Psychology
 Somatoform Disorders
- 4/07 Psychology 1010: General Psychology
 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

OUTREACH EXPERIENCE

- 4/10 **Presenter**
USU Counseling and Psychological Services, Logan, UT
 Ethnic Identity Development
 Invited 2-hour workshop for multicultural students
- 3/10 Language and Psychotherapy Supervision
 90-minute presentation for CAPS staff members
- 2/10 Identity Development
 60-minute presentation for Multicultural Leadership class
- 11/09 Common Parenting Tools
 Presenter and panel member at 2-hour workshop
- 3/09 Helping Students Manage Math Anxiety
 60-minute training workshop for math tutors
- 2/09 Interpersonal Communication in Couples
 60-minute workshop for married students
- 3/09 **Presenter**
USU Academic Resource Center (ARC), Logan, UT
 Motivation and Change
 30-minute presentation for ARC staff members

AWARDS

- 2005 Outstanding Psychology Student Award Recipient
- 2004 EOU Sharing the Learning Grant Recipient

AFFILIATIONS

2009	Utah Psychological Association, Student member
2008	National Latino Psychological Association, Student member
2008	American Psychological Association, Div. 17, Student member
2007	Psi Alpha Omega, Lifetime member
2005	Psi Chi, Lifetime member
2005	Phi Kappa Phi, Lifetime member