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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA
AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN HISPANIC FAMILIES IN
MISSISSIPPI

A Thesis
Presented in partial fulfillment of requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts
in the Meek School of Journalism and New Media The University of
Mississippi

by MARLEN POLITO

December, 2016

ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative thesis with in-depth interviews with three children and one parent or caretaker of Hispanic descent. These interviews were conducted to find a connection between media use and cultural identity. By doing a qualitative project the researcher was able to do a video documentary with a written portion explaining the methods and findings. The researcher interviewed three students with at least one parent or primary caretaker of Hispanic descent seventh through twelfth grade child, who serves as the main child for the study. This research investigated the relationship between the media and cultural identity among Hispanic children in the state of Mississippi.

The issue is if the media send negative representations of Hispanics. This study focused on the representations of Mexican-Americans living in Mississippi and how they perceive that representation. These types of media messages about Hispanics can significantly impact cultural identity. The key concept of bicultural bilingual was explored and how it affects the media view of Hispanics. The study was conducted to find out if there was any relationship between media and cultural identity in Hispanic families in Mississippi.

The results suggested that the subjects in the study are bicultural bilingual, they relate more with their Hispanic side but at the same time the kids do not want to fit the stereotype that the media has depicted about Mexicans.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents for getting me this far into my education and for all their hard work. This thesis is also dedicated to all the hard working people who come to this amazing country to find better opportunities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my committee Chair Dr. Bradley E. Schultz, Assistant Professor Robert Magee and Professor Joseph B. Atkins for all the advice and encouragement they gave me while I went through this process. I would also like to thank the families who gave me access to their daily lives.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The media can be a tool to learn about outside cultures and the culture someone is trying to assimilate into, but the media can also be used in a positive or negative way. Many researchers have studied the effects of media. The media can be used to send negative messages such as hate speech and stereotypes. Hispanics in the media are often portrayed as criminals, rapists, drug dealers, and sex objects (Mastro and Behm-Morawitz, 2005). When immigrants from Latin America come to the United States and hear negative comments toward them, this can cause confusion with their cultural identity. Research in the United States has been done to understand how the U.S. media represent other cultures and the effects of this media on those cultures. (Batalova, 2008; Berry, 1997; Brennan, 2009; Croucher, 2011).

Media can be in the form of television, radio, magazine, newspapers (McCombs and Shaw, 1972) and now includes digital forms such as the internet. Within the past ten years there has been a new way for people to practice the First Amendment through the internet. The anonymity of the web makes it easier for people to express how they feel about certain races without having to see the person face to face. This new form of communication is known as social media and includes such platforms as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat.

On June 16, 2015, Donald Trump announced his presidential campaign for 2017. Trump's stated purpose is "to make America great again," but in his speech,

Trump also expressed his view on Mexicans:

“When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best. They’re not sending you. They’re sending people that have lots of problems, and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs, they’re bringing crime; they’re rapists. And some I assume are good people”(“XpressNews,” 2015).

These types of statements have brought out feelings of hate toward the Mexican community, causing Mexicans to feel unwanted. Mexican-Americans are often negatively stereotyped in communication media, and research has been done in the past to try and understand what these stereotypes are. Some have found that negativity can decrease integration and degrade the social identity of specifically Mexican-Americans but also other cultures in the United States in general (Berry, 1997; Shinnar, 2008).

Tajfel & Turner (1979) argued that when a group has been viewed negatively through the media, these groups can react in three ways. Individual mobility means that individuals will separate themselves from their in-group (Mexico) and will associate more with their out-group (Americans). Social creativity is when an individual finds another out-group that views the in-group more positively. Social competition is when individuals support their in-group more and will disconnect with the out-group.

Having a positive identity helps people connect to their identity, because having a negative image may cause a person to fully leave his or her own culture or decline the host culture. Television and other sources of media keep people around the world informed about current events. The media can be a helpful tool to learn about different cultures, but it can also be a tool of destruction toward a certain group of people. This thesis sought to understand how media consumption affects the cultural identities of young Mexican-Americans in the United States, and to better understand the relationship between media and cultural identity in

Hispanic families in Mississippi.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining Hispanic

The Romans originally called the Iberian peninsula Hispania. The people of Hispania were known as Hispanos. But it wasn't until the Middle Ages that the word Hispano was used to describe someone of the Spanish-speaking culture. In the U.S., the term Hispano has been changed into "Hispanic." Hispanic is used to describe individuals with a Spanish- language heritage (Marin and Marin, 1991).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015) the Hispanic population as of July 2014 constitutes 17 percent of the nation's total population, making this the largest minority group in the United States. Many of them emigrated from Latin America or Spain due to poverty, war, or lack of opportunities. Those that emigrated have the challenge to adapt to a new environment, new culture, and new language. The choice to move away from one's native home and immigrate to a new country can also affect future generations in their cultural identity.

Many immigrant workers come to the U.S. seeking a better financial and educational opportunity, and to find stability in their lives. These immigrant workers start their new life and slowly start integrating into the American culture, but still maintain the culture they brought from their home lands. As these families stay in the U.S., future generations grow between two different cultures in one country. Some of these generations come from

undocumented parents in the U.S., and children who have parents who are undocumented express fears of separation, mixed feelings about their heritage, and are more aware of their families' legal situation (Chaudry, et. al., 2010; Suarez-Orozco, et. al., 2010; Dreby, 2015). The way one views oneself can come from what one sees in the media, especially when one comes from a minority group and how the media portrays that group can either strengthen or weaken someone's cultural identity.

According to Villareal and Peterson (2008, p. 179), "Being Hispanic is a binary demographic characteristic, one either self- identifies or does not identify as being Hispanic." Shinnar (2008, p 554), observed, "If belonging to a certain group makes individuals feel good about themselves, maintaining affiliation with that group and preserving its positive evaluation compared to other groups will be very important to them." According to the U.S Census Bureau (Marin and Marin, 1991), in late 1969, Mexican Americans, Cubans, and Puerto Ricans were classified as white. These three countries were represented by the largest Latin American groups at that time in history.

Bicultural bilinguals

Bicultural bilinguals are individuals who have adopted two cultures and speak the language associated with each of those cultures (Luna, Ringberg, and Peraccho, 2008).

Individuals are considered bicultural if they speak both the language of their heritage cultural context and the language of their receiving cultural context, have friends from both cultural

backgrounds, and watch television programs and read magazines from both cultural contexts (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee, and Morris, 2002). Some people are bicultural without being bilingual. This is the case of speakers of a language who move to a different country where the same language is used or members of a minority culture who no longer know the minority language but who retain other aspects of the culture (Grosjean, 2015). Weinreich (1968) and Mackey (1962) define bilingualism as the alternate use of two or more languages, and, similarly, Grosjean (2015) states that bilinguals are those who use two or more languages or dialects in their everyday lives. This view encompasses people who live with two or more languages, ranging from the migrant worker who speaks the host country's language, and who may not read and write it, all the way to the professional interpreter who is totally fluent in two languages.

Many immigrants who stayed in the U.S. form families and these babies are stuck between two different cultures. Nguyen and Benet-Martinez (2007) define bicultural as those who have been exposed to and have internalized two cultures, and that biculturalism is combining two cultures as one. Bicultural people have the ability to switch between cultures, norms and behaviors in response to cultural cues.

Targeting Hispanics

The extent of one's acculturation will depend on the amount and type of media someone will consume (O'Guinn and Faber, 1986). The process through which immigrants begin to understand and then adopt at least some of the norms, values, and behaviors of the host culture is known as acculturation, and the more acculturation, the more a Hispanic will watch ads in English (O'Guinn and Faber, 1986). Those who consume media in Spanish do so

because they want to feel at home without actually being in their homeland, while those who prefer English want acceptance in their host country.

Spanish-language television networks like Telemundo have a different influence than that of Univision. Univision is a Spanish-only network, while Telemundo is more flexible linguistically; Telemundo uses Spanglish, which is a combination of English and Spanish (Gremillion, 1997). Wanting to target the young Hispanics, Telemundo developed remakes of English television programs in Spanish, with Hispanic actors and Spanglish language. This enables the network to relate to the younger generation Hispanics growing up in the U.S. (Levine, 2001). For example; Telemundo had a show called *Reyes y Rey* which was completely in Spanish but with English subtitles. Telemundo also has a variety of talent that comes from different Spanish speaking countries and different accents. On the other hand, Univision has more Spanish shows and without distinguishable accents (Baxter, 1998). Telemundo turned its focus away from older women who have been known to run the household finances to a younger generation of Hispanics between the ages of 18-34 years old (Lafranco, 1998). This is why Telemundo has become the number one choice for young acculturated U.S. Hispanics (Levine, 2001).

Univision wants to be identifiable and reachable through the Spanish language while Telemundo wants to be identified as younger and more acculturated to their audiences and advertisers.

Hispanics and the Media

McCombs and Shaw (1972, p. 177) observed that the mass media force attention to certain issues. “They build up public images of political figures and are constantly presenting objects suggesting what individuals in the mass should think about, know about, and have

feelings about.” This theory of agenda-setting is described by McQuail (2010, p.426-428, 456) as:

A process of media influence (intended or unintended) by which the relative importance of news events, issues or personages in the public mind are affected by the order of presentation in news reports. It is assumed that the more the media gives attention to a topic, the greater is the importance attributed to it by the news audience. The media influence is not on the direction of opinion but only on what people think about. The concept has been mainly applied to political communication and election campaigns especially. News stations across the United States have turned their focus toward Donald Trump since he announced his presidential campaign in 2015. Trump’s statements about Mexicans have been viewed online, on television, and in newspapers. Agenda-setting theory says that once the news covers a certain topic frequently, this issue is viewed as important since it is covered constantly.

When the mass media believe that a certain culture is of importance it usually comes as the focal point of the media. With everything that Trump has said about Mexicans through the media, Hispanics, more specifically Mexicans, are the focus of negative coverage through the media.

According to the cultivation theory in Mastro’s and Behm-Morawitz’s (2005, p. 111) study that focuses on Latino representation on primetime television, television is defined as a “primary socializing force in society, providing knowledge about the social world and contributing to cultural construction.” In their study the investigators found that even though Hispanics are the largest minority in the states, they are still underrepresented on primetime television.

Hot tempered, criminal, passionate, and comedian are just some of the ways the media depict Hispanic personalities. For example, the criminal is usually a young male, aggressive, and dishonest, the law enforcer is well groomed and respected, the Latin Lover has thick accent, well attired and professional, but what characterizes the Latin Lover is his hot temper and his sexual aggression. The female harlot is unprofessionally dressed and provocative, and

last is the comedian. The comedian lacks intelligence, is lazy, and has thick accent (Mastro and Behm- Morawitz, 2005). Media stereotypes can in fact change the way Hispanics view themselves.

Hispanics through the media have been viewed in negative ways (Rodriguez, 1997). Some of the most targeted groups are Mexican immigrants and Mexican-Americans (Guzman, 2001). When Mexicans have been represented on television, they have been represented in a stereotypical way such as comics, criminals, law enforcers, and sex objects. Such identity threats can cause physiological responses, disrupt cognitive processing, and shift one's preferences in ways that can ironically confirm group differences in behavior and performance (Schmader, Johns, and Forbes, 2008). Negative media portrayals of minorities stimulate racism, discrimination, stereotypes, myth, and social distance, as well as create negative self-imagery (Gandy and Matabane 1989; Graves 1999; Entman and Rojecki, 2000). As the media send more negative messages about Mexicans, this can cause Mexicans to see their ethnic group in a negative way eventually leading to shame. Mass media representations in the United States often portray ethnic minorities through the lens of distinct stereotypes (Tukachinsky, Maestro, and Yarchi, 2015). Some Hispanics have learned to accept the media's negative view or simply deny its existence entirely (Navarrete and Kamasaki, 1994).

These types of stereotypes can strengthen or weaken self-image among minorities and immigrants. When a group has a positive image, people will want to relate to that group, but when a group has a negative image, a person will not want to be associated with that group by completely leaving his or her native culture behind or rejecting the host culture completely (Felsted, 2013).

Therefore, minorities have been a target for stereotyping within the U.S. media and this can change the way Hispanics view themselves within their own culture. Operario and Fiske

(2001) saw that those affiliated with and who take meaning from their group incorporate societal bias directed at the group into the self-concept and this leads them to perceive personal vulnerability to prejudice and discrimination. When high ethnic identification exists, awareness of the group's condition stimulates a personal sense that discrimination might be experienced individually. Padilla and Perez (2003) observed that when a culture such as Hispanics tends to be viewed in a negative way, the greater the loyalty a person will have to their culture.

The Case of Mexican Descent Families

Schechter and Bayley (1997) explored the relationship between language and cultural identity. The study focused on the use of Spanish and English in the speech and literacy performances of four children from two California families and two Texas families. This is important because the use of Spanish was a way to integrate with the host country. The parents in the study wanted to maintain Spanish as an important aspect of their cultural identity. The other two families combined Spanish in the household with Spanish instruction from relatives who only spoke Spanish. However, the family that had moved most fully into the middle class failed in the intergenerational transmission of Spanish, despite a commitment to cultural maintenance (Schechter and Bayley, 1997).

Language chosen for viewing the news also affects the content Hispanics receive. Those who watch Spanish-language media tend to be more liberal about immigration but have no general opinion about abortion and same-sex marriage. However, they tend to have increased in-group consciousness.

Schechter and Bayley (1997) found that children did not want to watch television in Spanish because it was poor Spanish. For example, the news referred to gangs as “ganga.”

According to their findings through an interview with one of the families, there are not educational programs in Spanish. This is considered poor Spanish because “ganga” is a slang word that comes from the English word gangs. The correct way to say gangs is “pandillas” or “banda.”

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions sought to find a connection between media consumption and a cultural identity in young Mexican-Americans in Mississippi. The research questions were labeled in five different categories such as the introduction, reading, media, culture identity, and relationship questions. The following were the research questions:

RQ 1: What kind of media do Hispanics use and why?

RQ 2: Do Hispanics think the media they use play a role in the way they think about their family?

RQ 3: Have Hispanics run into negative stereotypes or hate speech while using social media? If so, how does that make Hispanics feel?

RQ 4: Do Hispanics think there is a relationship between their Hispanic friends on who they think they are and how they use media?

These research questions were used to compare and contrast each respondent's answer to find a relationship between media consumption and cultural identity. After the participants were asked the same question each answer was recorded individually. The researcher did find similar and different answers according to the individual responses.

The method for this thesis is composed of two sections. The first section discusses what the researcher observed. The second section discusses the execution of the research: participants, locations, atmosphere, and interviews.

The relationship between the consumption of media and cultural identity by Hispanic families was the frame of this study. The focus was three seventh to twelfth-grade children within the state of Mississippi, and also includes at least one parent or primary caretaker of Hispanic descent. The intention was to monitor the child at all times to see if there are different interactions when the child is at home with family and when the child interacts with friends.

This project was a 20-minute documentary where the researcher examined the home media consumption of the three families selected for the case study.

Participant selection and description of participants

The researcher was able to select the three families by doing a snowball sampling. Through another school project the researcher met the Mejia family, and through them was connected to the Martinez and Saldana families. The three families were selected for intensive case study.

There were three students. Two were young teenage boys and one was a young female. The interviews and observations were done in person. The three participants in the study were bilingual. The parents of the three participants knew some English but not fluently. With the three young participants, the interviews were done in English as they felt more comfortable speaking that language, but for the parents, the interviews were done in Spanish, as the parents felt more at ease speaking Spanish. The participants were allowed to look at the questions before being interviewed. Interview questions are both in English and Spanish (See Appendices A and B).

In this research study, all the names of participants were used as well as the parents' real names. Permission to interview and conduct the observations, including signed consent

forms, was done in accordance with IRB procedures, and the project received IRB approval in March

2016. Interviewing and video observation began at that time and lasted until May 2016.

The Martinez and Mejia families are members of a Pentecostal church, while the Saldana family is not affiliated with any religion. Sergio Mejia and Josue Saldana live with their mothers but are in touch with their fathers. Ana Martinez is the only participant who lived with both parents in the same household. Ana and Josue are the only children in their families. Sergio has a younger brother. Josue Saldana lives with his mother Miriam Saldana in Oxford, Mississippi; Ana Martinez lives with both her parents in Red Banks, Mississippi, and Sergio Mejia lives with his mother and younger brother in New Albany, Mississippi.

The participants in the study had access to television, computers, and cell phones and access to the internet within their cell phones. This was important in determining the connection between media consumption and cultural identity related to the study.

Interviews

All interviews were conducted in the children's homes. This is where they felt more comfortable and the parents were with their children at all times. The atmosphere of the home was a quiet place where the interviewees had no distraction at any given time.

In this qualitative study, one of the most important instruments was the researcher. The investigator conducted all the interviews and in-home observation without any help. The interviews were audio and video recorded with the use of a camera. All interviews and observations were recorded at all times. The primary foci of the interviews were the patterns of media consumption and the relationship it has with the three children's identities.

The research included questions that Felsted (2013) used in her study, but the

researcher added more questions to fit this study. All the questions were open-ended questions (see Appendix A). The same questions were asked in Spanish to the parents or caretakers of the children (see Appendix B).

Each interview took approximately an hour to conduct. There was a list of questions that were brought to the interview. Depending on the answer each question was followed up with another question. All the questions were open-ended questions. The participant had the freedom to lead the discussion. As the course of the interview took its own shape, the questions were modified after each answer.

Once each interview was completed, the researcher logged each interview. The researcher selected portions of the at-home observation containing informal interactions between siblings, parents, and other relatives. This was to help the researcher determine the material that was be used in the documentary.

Observations

The researcher was able to capture a range of family activities, including school and literacy activities, looking for behavioral choices, body language, and language choices. The researcher video and audio recorded every interview but also studied body language and tone of voice. For example, if the participant stated something insignificant, but then started to cry, those words could take on a new meaning. The researcher observed how the family communicated with each other either in English, Spanish, or Spanglish. The researcher conducted six home observations four different times during three separate weeks, and when school was in session.

Observation periods include at least three afternoons beginning shortly after the children

returned from school, three early morning periods from the time the children woke up until they left for school, and three weekend mornings. A number of the weekend observations were at times when they are at home or when they have activities going on. The families' interactions with the children were audio and video recorded.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on this study, the researcher logged each interview pertaining to cultural identity from the child and added all quotes necessary to convey understanding to the reader and to provide evidence as to the researcher's conclusions. The researcher conducted two interviews with the parent or caretaker. The researcher compared and contrasted answers based on the interviews of each family to see similar points of view and different perspectives. The researcher compared and contrasted the three children in the study. By doing this, the researcher found that the three children in the study identified with their Hispanic side, even though the children felt more comfortable speaking in English, but they also communicated in Spanish and Spanglish. The three children in the study used media as a way of entertainment, but their parents used media as a learning tool to acculturate themselves with their host country.

The results present a great deal of new information for scholarly discussion. Many of those interviewed expressed positive feelings about media consumption in general. The young Hispanics in the study believed that media consumption, such as the use of television, is always negative. The children expressed that they do not like to watch or hear the news because they feel that it is always negative, and that there is never anything positive. But since their parents like to be informed on current events the children also find themselves listening to the news. The three children stated that their parents are following the news leading up to the presidential elections. The three kids have been able to hear the

negative things the media reinforces about Mexicans. As for the internet, the children have said that they use Facebook to stay connected with friends and loved ones who are not geographically close. The kids have also expressed their negative feelings toward Facebook when they read other people's comment about Mexicans. The children have felt disrespected because they have read comments that made fun of the Mexican culture.

The legal guardians of the participants often said that it is necessary for them to speak in English because of their children's lifestyles, such as school and other extra curriculum activities. The use of media such as social like Facebook has helped improved the English of the legal guardians. Also, listening to the radio and watching television has helped the parents learn new vocabulary words. As for the young Hispanics, they mainly use Facebook to stay connected with friends who are also of Mexican descent. They had negative feelings because of the things that were said through Facebook comments, such as, "Mexicans should go back to Mexico" and other similar comments. They felt that news about Hispanics is always negative especially after Donald Trump announced his presidential campaign.

Ana, Sergio, and Josue have encountered racial comments through Facebook. The three children felt hurt by the comments that Trump made toward Mexicans, and they feel that the news always portrays Mexicans negatively. Below are more specific results of what Sergio, Josue, and Ana said about their media consumption and their cultural identity. The answers have been organized by research questions. The following excerpts have been transcribed from the original interviews.

RQ 1: What kind of media do Hispanics use for entertainment purposes and why?

Excerpt 1: Mejia

I usually use Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, and maybe even Twitter. All of them are in English. Now days, I have more American friends than I do from Mexico. Everything that I do I prefer to be in English. My favorite would be Discovery Channel because I feel it is more realistic.

Excerpt 2: Saldana

I use YouTube a lot to look at soccer videos. I watch a lot of sports show. Shows in English I don't find them very interesting.

(Josue Saldana splits his weekends with his dad who lives in Bruce, MS. Josue watches television in Spanish when he's visiting his dad because that's what his dad mainly watches. Also Josue's father has limited English competency).

Excerpt 3: Martinez

I use Snapchat and probably sometimes Instagram or Twitter, for my entertainment purposes on social media. I like using Snapchat the most because it's more live things, and you can take it on the spot. I like seeing what everybody posts right at that second. If it was on twitter, it would probably be something that they did yesterday. On Snapchat, you get to see what they did; it's almost like a right now kind of thing.

RQ 2: Do Hispanics think the media they use play a role in the way they think about their family?

Excerpt 1: Mejia

No, not really because I don't let media influence the way I think as much. If it does, it has very little impact.

Excerpt 2: Saldana

I think it kind of does. I may be Mexican but it doesn't mean I have to listen to Mexican

music. I like Hip-Hop music, but my family doesn't really like me listening to that type of music. A lot of the times, they have a lot of cussing, and they don't like what they say. I don't really pay attention to it; I just like the sound of it.

Excerpt 3: Martinez

I wouldn't say it's that important. I could go possibly days or weeks without it. It's just something I like to do in my spare time. I enjoy seeing what other people post; I'll probably post a few things but it doesn't really interfere that much with my family. It's just something that I do or watch in my spare time.

RQ 3: Have Hispanics run into negative stereotypes or hate speech while using social media? If so, how does that make Hispanics feel?

Excerpt 1: Mejia

Yeah, I have. I actually feel sorry for the person that is giving that hate speech because anybody that is giving a hate speech against somebody is hatred. It doesn't appeal to me at all. I feel sorry for the person, and I hope they stop their hatred. It doesn't change the way I feel, either way their hatred is negativity from them. I'm not going to let their negativity affect my positiveness.

Excerpt 2: Saldana

I have a lot but I don't even want to pay attention to it because it usually makes me mad a lot. All the negative things people say I try not to pay any attention to it.

Excerpt 3: Martinez

I ran through some, not with me involved but with other people and some of my friends. I feel that people who do talk bad things about other people through the internet is a cowardly move because it's just something that you shouldn't do. If you

have a problem with that person, why don't you just confront that person face to face not just over social media. Once you say it over social media it's possibly just going to stay there forever. It's just something that I don't really agree with.

RQ 4: Do Hispanics think there is a relationship among their Hispanic friends on who they think they are and how they use media?

Excerpt 1: Mejia

I think so because I have this one friend and all my other friends say that he's trying to act "white." To me he doesn't really act like he's trying to be white, but to my other friends he does, and I guess that's the way they see it. To me, I like to be who I am instead of trying to be somebody else. I don't try to fit in into the African-American category, Hispanic, or Caucasian category. I guess my own category (Mejia defines acting white as the way somebody speaks, does things, and acts.)

Excerpt 2: Saldana

I think there is. My old friends in Bruce that are Hispanics most of them were half-Mexicans. They used a lot of social media. There was more connection to their Hispanic side of their family. Most of them were half Mexicans. They've never been to Mexico, never really seen a lot of Mexican people. They used a lot of social media to connect.

Excerpt 3: Martinez

Most of my friends that I am really close to are Hispanics. I feel that they allow the media to kind of control their lives. They overdo it a lot, and they couldn't exactly live without their social media. If that was too happen they wouldn't know what to do; they overdo it a lot sometimes.

Miriam Saldana, mother of Josue Saldana, practices cross fit and is often seeking new exercise websites. When Saldana subscribed to videos from trainers, she never imagined that she would encounter negative comments toward Mexicans. Such comments made Saldana so upset that she discontinued her subscription. The parents of these young Hispanics are doing everything to integrate themselves into the American culture because this is the only culture that their kids know. In order to feel closer to their kids, the parents sit down to watch television shows that the kids want to watch. The parents do not pressure the kids to watch television in Spanish.

Josue Saldana and Ana Martinez both believed that there is a relationship between who they are and their media consumption. Both of these students were born in Mexico and came to the U.S months after being born, and to them this is the only country they know. As for Mejia, born in Wichita, Kansas, he does not see a relationship between who he is and the media he consumes.

Despite having different opinions, Martinez and Mejia represented Mexico at a church event because they both felt that no media are going to influence them with their cultural identity. Josue Saldana also said that he identifies with being Mexican despite what some presidential candidates have said about Mexicans.

Donald Trump

When the researcher was interviewing the three families, the topic that the families would most talk about was Donald Trump. The three students in the study expressed hurt feelings by the statements that Donald Trump has said about Hispanics. Sergio expressed his dislike for the media because he feels that the media are following Trump's example. The media only reinforce what Trump says about Mexicans. Sergio said:

The media nowadays is pretty powerful, it can be used as a weapon sometimes.

The media is very, very influential on many people nowadays from races and politics. The media nowadays has been putting a bad name on the Hispanic society. With all these politics like Donald Trump, I think the media is very dangerous. It can be very dangerous to somebody if you believe everything that it (media) says. It can really influence you to believe something that you would never thought to believe otherwise.

Mejia does not agree with Trump, “I think he has the wrong view of Hispanics in this country in this nation. I never personally have known any Hispanic that has committed a crime, rape, steal or murder. I don’t agree with Donald Trump at all.”

The three children felt sad by the declarations that Trump said about Mexicans because their parents have one to two jobs in order to have a better living. After Trump labeled Mexicans as criminals and rapists, these kids have felt that more and more people are bringing out their dislike for Mexicans by making racist remarks through social media and based on what they see and hear through the media.

Therefore, the researcher found that the children in the video tend to identify more with their parents’ culture. The kids identify more as Mexicans despite what a presidential candidate has said about Mexicans lately. But even as the kids identify with the parents’ culture, the researcher found these children to be bicultural bilingual as they have a hard time identifying with one culture over the other one despite only identifying with one culture, their Hispanic side. The researcher also found that Josue, Sergio, and Ana have learned to accept the negative stereotypes the media has labeled Mexicans with.

CHAPTER 5

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There were several limitations in this study, one of which was the difficulty of locating Hispanic families willing to participate in the study. The researcher had a small sample size to work with, thus it is harder to generalize the findings to a larger population. The study took place over two months, which may not be enough time to adequately gauge media effect. It may take a longer period to adequately measure perception such as a longitudinal study.

This research was a very broad look at the effects of media consumption on Hispanics, specifically, Mexican-Americans. The parents have said that they get their news from CNN; it would be interesting to find out the strategies CNN is using to gain such audience.

Another area of interest for future research would be to look deeper into how online news board comments are controlled as far as keeping comments clean without racial slurs, and without restricting freedom of speech.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This research makes a connection to the positive and lasting effects of media consumption on Hispanics in Mississippi, but it also highlights the negative effects. Citron and Norton (2011) believed that the Internet has the ability to shape public discourse online, including hate speech, if not properly moderated. Hughey and Daniels (2013), and Boyd and Marwick (2011) showed that newspaper comment boards were full of racist comments when the story dealt with immigration.

This research not only identified that Mexican-Americans are stereotyped, to an extent, in all forms of media, including social media, but the results from the study suggest that media consumption does affect the cultural identity of the three young Hispanics in the study. The three children in the study speak English with their friends but at home they communicated with their parents in Spanish, English, or Spanglish. The parents use media as a learning tool to improve their English-speaking skills.

With everything that has been said about Mexicans in the media these young children have been affected by the media depiction of Mexicans. The three kids in the study are able to speak Spanish but only because they are forced to in order to communicate with their parents. The children are not fluent in reading or writing in Spanish. They do not know nor do they seem to care for the history of Mexico. The kids either immigrated at a young age or were born in the states. Not consuming media in Spanish or being fluent in the language has a

connection with their cultural identity. This study found that the children don't speak the language fluently, they don't know much about their culture, and when the media generalizes Mexicans in one category the kids don't associate themselves with the Mexican community. This is because they do not want to be looked down upon.

The study also showed that the kids to some extent feel shame because of the negative portrayal of Mexicans in the media. The researcher found that despite the kids saying that the media do not influence their cultural identity, there is a negative effect. These children do not want to work in areas where they fit the typical stereotype of a Mexican immigrant. These kids are a young age where classmates and friends tend to be less sensitive about race. The children in the study do not want to be looked down upon or be ridiculed. This goes back again to how the media depict Mexicans.

The use of media consumption such as social media is used to create and maintain relationships with those who are geographically nearby or geographically distant (Croucher, 2011). The three families said that their main reason for their media consumption such as television, radio, and Facebook was for entertainment purposes. Media have helped the parents of the three kids in the study to improve their English in reading and writing, but when it comes to speaking English, they have a harder time. For example, Miriam Saldana did not understand why students and the local citizens of Oxford were always saying Hotty Toddy. Saldana turned to Google to search the meaning of it and came to the conclusion that it has no meaning, but it is mentioned in a school spirit chant at the University of Mississippi.

The three kids in the study pointed out that they have encountered negative comments on Facebook that have left them sad, mad, and hurt. The majority of the comments came from Americans who expressed their opinion by stating that they did not like Mexicans and did not

want them here anymore. These comments are also coming from high school students and classmates from the three kids in the study. These children have Hispanic friends on Facebook and are ashamed that these friends could also see the negative comments that other people left. The kids mentioned that this type of hatred has been more common since Donald Trump announced his presidential campaign.

This research sought to understand how media consumption affects cultural identity of Mexican-Americans, specifically in Mississippi. It did not generally investigate Caucasians or African-Americans for answers. The research was done in order to understand whether media consumption affected Mexican-Americans' cultural identity positively or negatively. The children's cultural identity was potentially strengthened or weakened.

Learning the language can help with integration in many cases. Media consumption, such as social media, also reinforces Mexican language learning skills. When it came down to media consumption, the kids watched English television shows and typed in English in their social media accounts, but their legal guardians are forced to type in English to communicate with their American associates and friends. This research did deal with the negative aspects, not because it was meant to be the main focus of this research, but because the families that were interviewed expressed stronger and more negative emotions when they discussed their relationships with media consumption.

The study also found that the parents of the three kids in the study tend to watch television programs that their children are watching in order to be closer with them. They do not force the kids to watch Spanish television, but the parents feel that it is important for them as the parent to adjust to the child's media consumption in order to feel closer to their children.

In summary, the researcher found that despite not consuming very much media in

Spanish, the participants in the study identify more with the parents' Hispanic culture. The kids in the study have expressed feelings of sadness and anger when the media view Mexicans negatively. The negative views of Mexicans either through social media or television do affect the cultural identities of the children in the study. Sergio, Ana, and Josue have learned to accept the negative views of Hispanics in the media. The researcher found that students are bicultural bilingual without consuming a lot of Spanish television, which the parents do not force either. The media's negative representation of Hispanics does affect the way these younger children identify culturally, because they do not want to be associated with a group that is viewed negatively.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A : INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH FOR KIDS

APPENDIX A

Introduction

(Interview question in English)

1. Name
2. Age
3. Ethnicity
4. Where were he/she born?

READING

5. How many hours do Hispanics spend reading in one day?
6. What do Hispanics read?
7. In what language do Hispanics read?
8. Is there anything else the researcher should know?

MEDIA

9. What kind of media do Hispanics use for entertainment purposes? And why?
10. What kind of media do Hispanics use for news?
11. On a typical day how much time do Hispanics spend watching TV?
12. What shows do Hispanics watch?
13. What are Hispanics favorite show and why?
14. Do Hispanics watch TV alone? Family or friends?
15. What language do Hispanics prefer to watch television?
16. In what language do Hispanics listen to music?
17. What are Hispanics favorite music genre?

18. Who are Hispanics favorite artist?
19. What music do Hispanics listen to when they're alone?
20. What typed of music do Hispanics listen to when they're with friends andfamily?
21. How do Hispanics feel when they see ads in Spanish?
22. How do Hispanics feel when they see ads in English?
23. Which do Hispanics pay attention to more?
26. Do Hispanics think the media they use play a role in the way they think about theirfamily?
Why?
27. What news sites do Hispanics read?
28. How do Hispanics search for facts online?
29. Does the internet help Hispanics understand the United States culture?
30. What do Hispanics believe the culture of the United States to be?
31. What type of social media do Hispanics use or prefer?
32. Do Hispanics feel fairly represented in American socialnetworks?
33. Do Hispanics feel fairly represented in thenews?
34. Have Hispanics ran into negative stereotypes or hate speech while using social media? If
so, how does that make Hispanics feel?
35. Has social media help Hispanics to view their culture identity different? How andwhy?

36. Is there anything the researcher should know?

CULTURAL IDENTITY

37. Could Hispanics give examples of what culture means to them? 38. Could Hispanics give examples of the culture(s) they identify? 39. Tell the researcher more about it

40. Do Hispanics think it varies?

41. Is there anything else Hispanics would like to tell me?

42. Which language do Hispanics feel more comfortable speaking?

43. Is there anything else the researcher should know?

Relationship Questions

44. Do Hispanics think there is a relationship between who they think they are and how they use media

45. How about their Hispanic friends? Do they think there is a relationship between who they think they are and how they use media

46. Is there anything else the researcher should know?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN SPANISH FOR PARENTS

APPENDIX B

Parents Interview (Interview question in Spanish)

1. Nombre
2. De donde es usted?
3. Cual es su
ethnicidad?

Leer

4. Cuanto tiempo lee un Hispano en un dia?
5. Que lee?
6. En que idioma lee un Hispano?
7. Alguna otra cosa que deva saber el investigador?

Medios

8. Cuales medios usa un Hispano para entretenimiento? Y porque?
9. Cuales medios usa un Hispano para noticias? Y porque?
10. En un dia cuanto tiempo ve un Hispano television?
11. Que tipos de programa ve un Hispano ?
12. Cuales son los programas favorito de un Hispano?
13. Cuando ve television un Hispano lo ve con su family ohamistades?
14. En cual idioma le gusta ver sus programas a un Hispano? Y porque?
15. En cual idioma le gusta escuchar musica a un Hispano? Y porque?

16. Cuales genero de musica es favorite de un Hispano? Y porque?
17. Quienes son los artista favorite de un Hispano? Y porque
18. Que musica escucha un Hispano cuando esta solo? Y porque
19. Que tipo de musica escucha un Hispano cuando esta con su familia oh amistades? Y porque
20. Como se siente un Hispano cuando ve anuncios en Espanol?
21. A cuales anuncion le pone mas atencion un Hispano?
22. Cree usted que los medios de comunicaci3n que utiliza un Hispano juega un papel en la forma de pensar sobre su familia? ¿Porqu3?
23. Cuanto tiempo tiene en los Estados Unidos?
24. Que tanto involucrado es un Hispano en lo que ve su hijo(a) en los medios?
25. Como deja un Hispano que ellos escojan el programa que va ver?
26. Un Hispano implica ver cierto programa para su hijo(a)? Y en que idioma?
27. Deme algunos ejemplos de los programas que su hijo(a) ve.
28. Que tipo de medios ve un Hispano?
29. Como elige un Hispano los medios que ve?
30. Deme algunos ejemplos de lo que ve un Hispano.
31. Utiliza el Internet un Hispano?
32. Qu3 sitios de noticias lee un hispano?
33. C3mo busca datos en l3nea un Hispano ?
34. Ayuda el Internet a un Hispano entender la cultura de los Estados Unidos?
35. Como describiria un Hispano la cultura de los Estados Unidos?

36. Qué medios de comunicación social utiliza o prefiere unHispano?
37. Se siente bien representado un Hispano en las redes sociales de Estados Unidos?
38. Se siente bien representados en las noticias unHispano?
39. Siente que los medios sociales han ayudado a mejorar el inglés de unHispano?
40. Cómo son las habilidades de un Hispano en inglés?
41. Ha encontrado un Hispano estereotipos negativos o expresiones de odio durante el uso de los medios sociales?
42. Siente un Hispano que el punto de vista del mundo ha cambiado desde que llegó a los EE.UU.?
43. Se siente más conectado y positiva un Hispano acerca de los EE.UU. desde que llegó aquí o menos?
44. Cuáles fueron los hábitos de un Hispano antes de venir a los EE.UU de usar los medios de comunicacion?
45. Alguna otra cosa que el investigador deveria saber?

Preguntas de Relacion

46. Cree un Hispano que hay una relación entre quien cree que es y cómo utiliza los medios de comunicación
47. Que hay de las amistades hispanas? Cree usted que hay una relacion entre lo que ellos piensan que son y como usar los medios de comunicacion?
48. Alguna otra cosa que deveria saber el investigador?

IRB APPROVAL LETTER



UNIVERSITY
OF
MISSISSIPPI

3/16/2016

Ms. Polito
Journalism

Dr. Schultz
Journalism

IRB Protocol #: 16-055
Title of Study: Cultural Media and Identity Among Hispanics in Mississippi
Approval Date: 03-16-16
Expiration Date: 03-15-17

Dear Ms. Polito:

This is to inform you that your application to conduct research with human participants has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at The University of Mississippi and approved as **Expedited under 45 CFR 46.110, categories 4 and 7, with children 46.404.**

Research investigators must protect the rights and welfare of human research participants and comply with all applicable provisions of The University of Mississippi's Federalwide Assurance 00008602. Your obligations, by law and by University policy, include:

- Research must be conducted exactly as specified in the protocol that was approved by the IRB.
- Changes to the protocol or its related consent document must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants.
- **Only the approved, stamped consent form may be used throughout the duration of this research unless otherwise approved by the IRB.**
- A copy of the IRB-approved informed consent document must be provided to each participant at the time of consent, unless the IRB has specifically waived this requirement.
- Adverse events and/or any other unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others must be reported promptly to the IRB.
- Signed consent documents and other records related to the research must be retained in a secure location for at least three years after completion of the research.
- Submission and *approval* of the *Progress Report* must occur before continuing your study beyond the expiration date above.
- The IRB protocol number and the study title should be included in any electronic or written correspondence.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482 or irb@olemiss.edu.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Caldwell, Ph.D.

Senior Research Compliance Specialist

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS

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IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION SHEET

INFORMATION SHEET

Consent for
You and Your
Child to
Participate in
Research

Title: ***The relationship between media and culture identity in Hispanic families in Missipi***

Investigator
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	The University of Mississippi Institutional Review Board
Protocol #	110-055
Approval date	03-10-10
Expiration date	03-15-11
Signature	<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>

The purpose of this study

By doing a qualitative project I plan on doing a video documentary with a written portion explaining my methods and findings. I want to know if a child's media consumption is related to their cultural identity. I also want to know whether the media consumption of you and your spouse affects your children's cultural identity. I want to know if there is a relationship between media consumption and cultural identity.

What you and your child will do for the study

You and your child will be interviewed in the comfort of your own house on the 1st day. Each session will include you and your spouse as well as your child; observation will also include daily activities outside of your home.

1. Interview (firstday):

Your child will be interviewed:

- On the first day your child will be asked a series of questions that I have prepared related to his media consumption and his cultural identity.

Examples of
questions

1. How many hours do you spend reading in one day?
2. On a typical day how much time do you spend watching TV?
3. Could you give me some examples of what culture means to you?
4. Do you think there is a relationship between who you think you are and how you use media

You will be interviewed:

- You will be asked Name, Origin of country, and nationality
- You will also be asked a series of questions related to your media consumption and your cultural identity. For example, you will be asked in what language you watch television and what do you watch?

2. On the 2nd day you and your child will interact as you normally do while I observe.

Videotaping/ Audiotaping

Your child will be videotaped while he or she is being interviewed on the first day. During this time period the researcher will be embedded with the participants for a short (approximately twice a week) time period for observation. The researcher will observe how the participants use various media--what kinds of media, how much, for what time periods, etc. That observation will help guide the interview portion of the research. The interviews are planned for approximately one hour (20 questions). My intentions are to follow the child around at all times to see if there are different interaction when the child is at home with family and when the child interacts with friends. Whether it is at home or outside the household I plan on capturing a range of different interaction with friends or family activities, including school and literacy activities. I will conduct 6 home observations where I will be looking for behaviors choices, body language, and language choices. I will video and audio record every interview but I will be looking for body language and tone of voice. I will conduct 6 home observations four different times during three separate weeks, and when school is in session. Observation periods will include at least three afternoons beginning shortly after the children returns from school, three early morning periods from the time the children wake up until they leave for school, three weekend mornings, and three Sunday evenings from the time the family returns from their weekend activities until the

children's bedtime. A number of the weekend observations will be at times when relatives are visiting. Their interactions with the children will be audio and video recorded. I will be looking on how the family communicates with each other either in English, Spanish, or Spanglish.

Time required for this study

It will take me approximately one hour to complete this interview, plus the 25 hours of observation. I will make observations twice a week, each time I attend your home I will be there about 3 hours.

Possible risks from participation

Your child may feel performance-related anxiety from the first day of the interview. Please see the Confidentiality section for information on how we minimize the risk of a breach of confidentiality,

which is the major risk anticipated with this study.

Benefits from participation

Neither you nor your child should expect benefits from participating in this study. However, you and your child might experience satisfaction from contributing to my study. Also, answering the interview questions might make you more aware of discipline habits you'd like to change• sometimes this can help lead to improved habits.

Incentives

The subject will not be provided with any compensation at any given time throughout the search.

Confidentiality

- A. Research team members will have access to records from this study. We will protect confidentiality by locking them up in a cabinet file.
- B. Members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) - the committee responsible for reviewing the ethics of, approving, and monitoring all research with humans - have authority to access all records. However, the IRB will request identifiers only when necessary. We will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone else without your written consent unless required by law.

Confidentiality and Use of Video/Audio Tapes

- In doing a documentary it is necessary that I video and audio tape interview as well as the 25 hours of observation.
- The only people who will have access to such material are the members of my thesis committee, who are professional faculty at the university and understand the need for research confidentiality.
- All video and audio recorded will be kept indefinitely
- I plan to make video and audio recordings to use beyond research analysis. For example, it might be use in publications or for promotional purposes.

Right to Withdraw

You do not have to take part in this study and you may stop participation at any time. If you start the study and decide that you do not want to finish, all you have to do is to tell Ms. Marlen Polito or Dr. Brad Schultz in person, by letter, or by telephone (contact information listed above).

The research may stop your participation and your child's participation in the study without your consent and for any reason, such as protecting your safety and your child's safety or proctoring the integrity of the research data. If the researcher terminates participation, any incentives will be prorated base on the amount of time spend in the study.

IRB Approval

PARENTS SIGEND RELEASED FORMS

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have been given an unsigned copy of this form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions, and I have received answers. I consent to participate in the study and to allow my child to participate.

Furthermore, I also affirm that the experimenter explain the study to me about the study's risks as well as my right and my child's right to refuse to participate and to withdraw, and that I am the parent/legal guardian of the child listed below.

Signature Gabriela V. Pantoja

Date 4/5/16

Gabriela Viviana Pantoja

Sergio P. Mejia

Printed name ofParent/Legal Guardian

Printed name ofChild

**NOTE TO PARTICIPANTS: DO NOT SIGN THIS
FORM IF THE IRB APPROVAL STAMP ON THE
FIRST PAGE HAS EXPIRED**

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Signature Emilia Martinez

Date 4/4/16

Emilia Martinez

Printed name of Parent/Legal Guardian

Anayeli Martinez

Printed name of Child

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Furthermore, I also affirm that the experimenter explain the study to me about the study's risks as well as my right and my child's right to refuse to participate and to withdraw, and that I am the parent/legal guardian of the child listed below.

Signature Miriam Saldana

Date 4/7/16

Miriam Saldana

Josue Saldana

Printed name ofParent/Legal Guardian

Printed name ofChild

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FIRST PAGE HAS EXPIRED**

VITA

MARLEN POLITO

900 Whirlpool Dr Oxford, MS polito.m22@gmail.com (435)749-8023

EDUCATION

B.A., Utah Valley University, Dec 2012
Concentration: Public Relations

A.A., College of Eastern Utah, May 2010
Concentration: General Studies

Work Experience

Graduate Assitant., 2014-2016
University of Mississippi
Courses: Journalism

Ole Miss Sports Production., 2015-2016
University of Mississippi
Intern

WTVA News Station., 08/2015-12-2015
University of Mississippi
Station Intern

Freelance Journalist., 2014-2016
University of Mississippi
Courses: Journalism

Publications and Presentation

Journalism Course: Polito (2014) Casinos in Mississippi: Worth the Gamble. Video
Documentary