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## FIRST-GENERATION SOCIAL WORK LATINAS BALANCING LIFE AND CAREER

Angelica Venegas

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FIRST-GENERATION SOCIAL WORK LATINAS  
BALANCING LIFE AND CAREER

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Angelica Elaine Venegas

May 2023

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## ABSTRACT

The study focused on learning about the successes and challenges first-generation social work Latinas face in the labor sector. The research project shows how Latino cultural values, beliefs, customs, and educational attainment impact Latinas' careers and overall well-being. The research utilized a post-positivist approach and qualitatively gathered data through interviews with first-generation Latina social workers in Southern California. The study presents qualitative research project results, with quantitative demographics, of first-generation post-graduate Latinas balancing life and career. Themes from the findings include job satisfaction/dissatisfaction, assimilation and enculturation, labor sector discrimination and oppression, *familismo* and *marianismo* projection toward individualization, feeling balanced or not, desire to contribute to future Latino research, and words of empathy/empowerment for the younger self. Acknowledging the different factors affecting first-generation social worker Latinas could validate their struggles in balancing their professional and personal lives. At the micro level of social work, findings from this study can help create support groups or coping skills that benefit the study's population. At the macro level, hearing narrative stories can create positive change to reduce discrimination of race, gender, and class within the workplace and reduce stigma about Latino culture.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my husband, son, and daughter, who unconditionally support, love, and believe in me. To my brother, sister, cousins, uncles and aunts, friends, in-laws, and work-family for listening to me and offering help throughout my educational journey. To my late mother, who struggled with severe mental illnesses and tried her best to see the positive in everything. You are my inspiration to be a social worker and receive my master's degree.

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## CHAPTER ONE: ASSESSMENT

### Introduction

Chapter one explores the research focus, explores how first-generation social work Latinas balance life and career. This chapter then identifies and explains the research paradigm chosen for the study. Then, a literature review discusses and elaborates on the critical factors affecting first-generation graduate Latinas. A discussion of the theoretical orientation follows. The chapter concludes with an explanation of this research's potential contributions to the study of micro and macro social work practice.

### Research Focus

This research project concentrates on first-generation Latinas' personal experiences balancing life and career after obtaining a social work degree. The study focused on the potential conflict between traditional Latino culture, values, and gender roles and the dominant White cultural environment many Latina social workers experience in the labor sector. The researcher identifies the term Latina being of Latin American descent and non-White.

The researcher explored the successes and barriers Latinas face in navigating traditional values and gender within their professional and personal lives. A mismatch between their professional and personal lives can create an unbalance, and attempting to reconcile the two identities can create stress or

other unknown physiological factors. Understanding what helps and hurts this population, either psychosocially, medically, physically, or other, is significant since it affects their overall well-being. Exploring how Latinas balance their careers and lives could help future social work Latinas avoid unnecessary stress and learn to carry all their responsibilities as educated working Latinas successfully.

### Paradigm and Rationale for Chosen Paradigm

The researcher utilized the post-positivist paradigm to conduct the study. According to Morris (2014), the post-positivist approach assumes an objective reality that cannot be fully understood. The researcher maintained awareness of their biases, where periodically, the researcher stepped away from the data to reflect on their emotions and how the study progressed.

The study collected qualitative data to capture the complex human experience in a naturalistic setting (Morris, 2014). Using a post-positivist paradigm allowed the researcher to openly explore the research focus by gathering qualitative data from participants and hearing about their experiences. Furthermore, the researcher collected information concerning the focus problem from literature review, observations, peer feedback, and personal experience (Morris, 2014). Using a post-positivist paradigm granted the researcher to explore the problem's complexities creatively and enabled the researcher to take course and progress naturally.

## Literature Review

This section explores a literature review on Latino (non-Latino Whites) prevalence in California, traditional cultural values and gender roles, cultural mismatch, the effects of acculturation and enculturation on mental health and interventions that could buffer challenges for Latinas.

### Prevalence of Latino in California

As of 2019, 39% of Californians are Hispanic/Latino, exceeding Whites (non-Hispanic/Latinos) who account for 36% of Californians. Additionally, In the 2000s, Latinas accounted for 55% of the Latino population in the U.S. (Flores et al., 2017). Furthermore, as of 2019, Hispanics/Latinos are the predominant racial group in the state (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019a). Nonetheless, there are significantly fewer Latinos seeking higher education when compared to non-Latino Whites. In 2019, 16.7 million non-Latina White females received bachelor's degrees compared to about 2.2 million Latinas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019a; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019b). Moreover, it is estimated that 10.8 million non-Latina White females attained a graduate or professional degree compared to less than 1.1 million Latinas in that same year.

### Latino Cultural Values

A wide variety of values, beliefs, customs, and traditions make up Latino culture. History shows that the culture is rich with origins from European conquerors' conquest, people who left Asia, African and Asian slaves taken to South America, and indigenous people (Arredondo et al., 2014). Therefore,

Latino culture embeds elements from many different cultures across generations as close contact between ethnically diverse people and environment, social, and political events gave into a multiethnic culture. Author Arredondo et al. (2014) propose core values among many Latinos are collectivism, *familismo* (the valuing of the extended family), *compadrazgo* (significance of extended family relations), birth order, gender roles, and *respeto* (respect) are values prioritized among Latino families.

Interpersonal values center around the family within the Latino population and are fundamental to traditional cultural norms (Arredondo et al., 2014). Latinos have high regard for others' well-being, graciousness, and interdependence within the family structure, allowing for collectivism. Arredondo et al. (2014) suggests *familismo* possibly derives from indigenous roots or small villages where residents knew and looked out for each other. Concern for others' well-being and creating strong bonds among family, friends, and neighbors allow Latinos to practice collectivism. Collectivism is like *familismo*, as *familismo* maintained strong connections during the European conquest of indigenous people. *Familismo* is the glue that shapes the importance of family for individuals who practice traditional familial beliefs. However, *familismo* can also serve as a buffer when Latinos are introduced to new surroundings and populations (Arredondo et al., 2014). Yet, while *familismo* is dependent on strong family connections, this can also negatively impact some individuals. For some Latinos, *familismo* could lead to controlling or smothering feelings, and others could feel

isolated when they move away from family. Often, *familismo* can project an individual to independentize further and create autonomy from family.

In general, Latino families value birth order (Arredondo et al., 2014). The oldest child has more expectations than younger siblings, and if the oldest child is a daughter, she will have extra familial responsibilities such as helping her mother with domestic chores. House labor among Latino families is divided by gender, with girls practicing more homemaking chores, and boys having no tasks or being limited to only outdoor tasks. As times change and more women seek a higher education and remain single and childless longer, roles for boys and men have changed. According to Arredondo et al. (2014), men increasingly are expected to help with typical female assignments, including cooking and cleaning. Latino children are also projected to have closeness and interdependence among siblings. Parents socialize their children to value each other more than friends or peers, and even if all the children go away to college, there is an expectation of them returning home.

The age and gender of individuals in *la familia* (the family) provide a base for the roles assigned to each family member. According to Falicov (1998), elders and seniors are treated with the utmost respect and are seen in a hierarchical role as having unquestionable authority. The parents are then viewed as keeping expectations of *respeto* for the abuelos, and they hold authority and decision-making power in the family. Parents also have delineating roles, where children are socialized to be well mannered, respectful, and loyal to the family by

representing the family with honor. Latina mothers' expectations include committing to *la familia* by making sacrifices for their hijos y hijas (sons and daughters). Some Latina mothers practice *marianismo* (self-sacrifice) as they place their children and family before themselves.

Latinas who seek higher education or work are projected to continue contributing to women's roles within the family (Gil & Inoa Vázquez, 1996). Frequently, mothers or career-oriented Latinas are reminded by their parents about the importance of *la familia* and their role in motherhood (Falicov, 1998; Arredondo et al., 2014). This can create cultural identity problems for women who are not heterosexual or who have no desire to have children. In the *marianismo* system, women's educational needs and values are put second, and the family's needs are first (Gil & Inoa Vázquez, 1996; Díaz de Sabatés & Taylor, 2021).

### Latino Culture and Mainstream White American Values

Collectivism and *familismo* are highly valued in Latino culture; yet, these core values differ from the White American culture of individualism, where goals are personalized and prioritized and come before in-group goals (Greenfield & Quiroz, 2013; Schwartz, 1990; Triandis et al., 1988). Greenfield and Quiroz (2013) identify that Western and Northern European immigrants brought and maintained their long history of promoting individualistic values in society to the U.S. and thus prioritize individual goals over in-group goals more than Latino families. Authors Greenfield and Quiroz (2000) researched Latino

intergenerational differences and found there are acculturation patterns to the host society for second generational Latinos. Relatedly, researchers Rueschenberg and Buriel (1989) report familistic and collectivistic values remain stable throughout Latino children's exposure to life in the U.S. even if Latino families adapt in the direction of the American society (Greenfield & Quiroz, 2013).

### Impacts of Cultural Mismatch

There is no scientific literature on the impact of a cultural mismatch for first-generation social work working-class Latinas in the U.S. However, there is limited literature on related populations. A study done by Lorenzo-Blanco and Cortina (2013) assessed Latino's acculturation in the U.S. and its effect on depression and cigarette smoking and found negative impacts. Their findings suggest an increase in smoking and rates of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) while Latinos acculturate to mainstream American values. Equally, their results propose that the outcome is worse or stronger for Latinas than Latinos (Lorenzo-Blanco & Cortina, 2013). They discovered that Latinas have a higher risk of depression and smoking when managing increased family conflict and closeness. Overall, their findings suggest acculturation could affect Latinas' mental health more than Latinos because of the effects they face from their traditional family dynamics (Lorenzo-Blanco & Cortina, 2013).

In addition to acculturation and enculturation, experiences of discrimination may impact Latinas' well-being. Understanding how oppression



affects Latinas is critical. Melville (1980) said that Latinas as women of color are twice a minority because of their ethnic identities and gender. Being a minority twice leads to Latinas facing greater vulnerabilities to different types of discrimination or inequalities. Furthermore, because of their ethnic identity and gender, dominant White culture has a history of viewing Latinas as less-than equal to White women (Melville, 1980). The history of discrimination toward Latinas as women and women of color carry over to the workforce. In general, Latinas' exposure to being minorities twice affects their opportunities in hiring rates and promotions (Thomas et al., 2020). Expanding on Melville's observation of ethno-racial inequalities among Latinas, Hsieh et al. (2016) studied the relationship between social, occupational, and spatial factors mental health disparities of working-class Latinas in the U.S. Their findings support those of Lorenzo-Blanco and Cortina (2013), where the results indicate sociodemographic status and traditional Latino gender values negatively impact Latinas' mental health and increase their risk of struggling with depression, anxiety, substance or addiction disorders, and suicide (Hsieh et al., 2016; Lorenzo-Blanco & Cortina, 2013).

### Interventions

Because there is no research on first-generation social work Latinas navigating White workspaces in the U.S., there are no existing interventions for this population. Nevertheless, there are interventions designed to assist Latinos acculturate to the U.S. mainstream cultural values. For example, in Smokowski et

al.'s (2009) research, *Familias Unidas* was designed to address the acculturating needs of Latino families as a multilevel family-oriented intervention to prevent behavioral problems among Hispanic Youth (Coatsworth et al., 2002).

Similarly, a recently published study by Covarrubias et al. (2020) recommends that universities be culturally sensitive to first-generation ethnic college students by acknowledging their interdependence and independence in academia. One intervention at the academic level, dating back to 1982, was created by a group of Chicana feminists who academically unified, organized, and developed a national feminist organization called *Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (MALCS)* (Garcia, 1989). The national organization was established to create mutuality or build rapport amongst Chicana professors and students, including undergraduate and graduate levels.

### Theoretical Orientation

The chosen theoretical orientation for the research focus is Chicana feminist theory. Although the term Chicana refers to Mexican-Americans or Chicanas, the researcher identified that the theory includes Latinas from other nationalities. According to Córdova (1998), Chicana feminism is characterized by four significant factors: (1) Chicanas are not what they are stereotyped to be; (2) there are historical roots and legacy endurance of Chicanas; (3) a Chicana's history and life experiences are only understood through the lens of race and class; (4) denotes and validates Chicanas' realities by hearing each of their personal stories.

Anzaldúa and Keating (2015) stated that formulating one's identity through narration allows the unconscious to find the self through social narratives instead of own choice. Inviting Latinas to share their experiences navigating their career goals while maintaining their Latino identity acknowledged their historical roots within their culture. Hearing their personal stories offered a reframe of to understand Latinas' stories and their acclimation to life and work as first-generational social workers. To effectively utilize Chicana feminist theory, the researcher empathetically, reflectively, and actively listened to participants' stories while providing validation throughout the interview process.

#### Significance of the Study of Social Work Practice

This study raised awareness of what it means to be a first-generation Latina social worker in Southern California at the micro-level. Findings from the research project could help social workers brainstorm different interventions or approaches regarding challenges working first-generation Latina social workers encounter due to their gender, culture, and class roles. Acknowledging the personal troubles Latinas experience can open doors for possible self-help support groups to gain the skills needed to reduce tension and stress within their social and professional lives while maintaining their identities. By creating support groups where Latinas feel safe and understood, Latinas can openly share their experiences, feel validated, and learn ways to cope with the daily stressors associated with them successfully. Furthermore, support groups for this population could reduce stress and negative emotions felt by first-generational

post-secondary working Latinas. Thus, support groups could be invaluable in giving Latinas the tools to carry themselves professionally and personally while enhancing their quality of life.

At the macro level, the study presented insight into how first-generational Latina social workers balance life. Applying the study's data to future research on Latinas living in the Northern Region of California or other areas of the United States of America could bring positive awareness and a better understanding of the different factors this population endures. Learning about the disparities Latinas experience can create a national change of discrimination/oppression toward women of color and patriarchal views in the workplace. Data from the research project also shed light on Latino cultural beliefs and stigmas about the culture, which can significantly benefit educated Latinas' overall well-being in the labor sector. In addition, although the study focuses on first-generation Latina social workers, findings from the research could serve as a foundation for future researchers interested in studying the identities of other first-generational post-secondary minority women nationally and globally.

### Summary

The chapter covered the research focus and the paradigm chosen to address the focus problem. The chapter detailed the post-positivist paradigm and a rationale of why the paradigm is suited for the study. A literature review focused on Latino traditional cultures and their effect on Latinas' educational

attainment and Latinas in the American labor sector. The literature review provided the foundation of why the researcher chose the Chicana feminist theory as the study's theoretical orientation. The chapter concluded by discussing how the study's focus and Chicana Feminism could contribute to micro and macro social work practice.

## CHAPTER TWO: ENGAGEMENT

### Introduction

Chapter two discusses the stages of the engagement of the study. This chapter focuses on the study site and the non-traditional engagement of participants at the study site, leading to a breakdown of the researcher's self-preparation for the study. Next, it details issues relating to diversity, ethics, and politics that appeared during the study. It concludes by discussing the role of technology during the engagement phase.

### Study Site

The study focused on the southern region of California. The interviewees come from different counties within the southern part of the state. The range of counties granted the researcher to engage with Latinas who bring unique personal life stories, experiences, and narratives to the project. The study incorporated workers from various counties within Southern California, including but not limited to Los Angeles County, San Bernardino County, Riverside County, and Imperial County. As of 2018, Hispanics are the largest racial group in Imperial County and San Bernardino County (Schaeffer, 2019). For the County of Riverside, the Hispanic population accounted for 49.6% of the overall population in 2018 (Data USA: Riverside County, CA, n.d.). Los Angeles County's Latina population was 49% in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

## Engagement Strategies for Participants

The researcher did not partner with an agency for the study; therefore, there were no gatekeepers. Instead, the researcher used interpersonal relationships to network and engage with participants. The researcher built rapport with candidates through light conversation then provided a formal introduction and explained the study's purpose. The researcher answered questions from potential interviewees. After selecting participants for the study, the researcher individually discussed schedule availability and coordinated a time and date for one-on-one virtual interviews. Following scheduling participants for the interview, the researcher reached out to them to follow up with them while also giving a clear focus on the study. The researcher continued to build rapport with participants by asking throw-away questions at the beginning of the interview.

## Self-Preparation

An in-depth literature review allowed the researcher to understand better the possible challenges Latinas face in navigating their lives and career. The extensive literature review assisted the researcher's awareness of possible sensitive topics, such as the impact of religion, family traditions or cultures, acclimation to White culture in the labor force, racism, and feminism have on the overall well-being of Latinas. The researcher piloted a mock interview with someone that was not a part of the study. To maintain sensitivity to Latino culture, the person who participated in the mock interview was a Latina with a

bachelor's in education who actively worked at least twenty hours per week. The mock interview aided the researcher by utilizing the feedback to enhance the interview questions' fluidity and create a comfortable space for participants to share their stories. The researcher was aware of and prepared for the study to naturally change or evolve due to its post-positivist paradigm (Morris, 2014).

### Diversity Issues

Possible diversity barriers from the study for both the researcher and the participants are age and culture. Age may have been an issue in recruiting candidates as the researcher appears younger than her stated age. To reduce ageism biases, the researcher professionally conducted herself while engaging with participants.

Another hidden factor was the possibility of cultural issues. To avoid cultural problems, the researcher practiced being in the present moment, listened non-judgmentally, utilized the knowledge gained from the literature review to understand better Latino culture's importance, was verbally sensitive to cultural barriers, and practiced cultural humility. The researcher is multiracial.

### Ethical Issues

Although conflicts of interest could have created concerns as the researcher did not partner with a specific agency and instead reached out to potential participants through the researcher's existing networks, including those in her workplace, only time will tell if any arise from the study. To best prevent



ethical dilemmas, the researcher identified themselves as Latina student and did not discuss work-related roles or functions.

Another ethical concern could be the researcher's unawareness of their biases. Since the researcher will be in direct contact with participants from the get-go, the researcher practiced reflecting on their personal beliefs, feelings, and values when hearing participants' own stories after each interview. The researcher utilized a journal to reflect on their thoughts throughout the study (Morris, 2014). The researcher also practiced not imposing personal beliefs or values onto participants by maintaining neutrality (Morris, 2014).

#### Political Issues

An underlying political problem in the study concerns the chosen post-positivist paradigm. There is a possibility concerning issues with power, where the researcher is seen as more powerful than the participants as the researcher has set the research agenda and determined the topics covered using the post-positivism approach (Morris, 2014). The researcher reviewed boundary settings with participants at different phases during the study to prevent political issues. The researcher recognized participants' roles in the research's data collection instead of collaborators (Morris, 2014).

#### The Role of Technology

While the post-positivist paradigm happens in a naturalistic setting due to COVID-19, the foundation of the study primarily consisted of technology usage.

The researcher heavily relied on technology in the engagement phase. The researcher utilized the Internet, emails, and messages through personal devices and applications, including Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Teams, and GroupMe, to communicate between the researcher, possible candidates, and selected participants. Since there were significant safety concerns regarding the pandemic mitigation, the heavy use of technology provided a natural setting for both the researcher and participants. Additionally, due to the study's chosen paradigm and qualitative method, the researcher gathered data and used computer programs, such as Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel, to interpret the data.

### Summary

Chapter two reviewed the engagement phases of the study. First, the chapter discussed the study's non-traditional approach of not partnering with a specific agency; the researcher instead outreached to the possible participants through the researcher's existing networks. Then, plans and strategies for self-preparation and potential issues relating to diversity, ethical, and political issues that may happen during the study were explained. Lastly, the chapter concludes describing the use role of technology for this study

## CHAPTER THREE: IMPLEMENTATION

### Introduction

This chapter explains the implementation stage for this study. An overview of the study participants and how they were selected is provided. This section also explains the methodologies for gathering data, the phases of data collection, data recording, and data analysis. A discussion of this study's procedures for follow-up and dissemination is included.

### Study Participants

This qualitative study focused on Latinas' experiences in navigating their ethnic identity within their career and personal lives. Participants for this study identified as first-generation Latinas who have a social work degree obtained in the United States of America. Study participants were actively working at the time of the interview. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2021) 39.4 percent of the population in California was Hispanic or Latino in 2019. Thus, participants were from the same or neighboring counties within the Southern California region. Latinas did not need to be bilingual to participate. However, if participants wanted to engage with the researcher in Spanish, the researcher accommodated the participants' needs. Lastly, the study participants were adults aged eighteen and over.

## Selection of Participants

As the study utilized a post-positivist approach, the sample size was driven by data collection, meaning the sample size is irrelevant as the quality of the sample was analyzed to address the focus problem (Morris, 2014). Latina women from various backgrounds and ethnicities participated in the study. To determine the selection of participants, purposive sampling, a form of non-probability sampling, was utilized. Using a combination of purposive sampling strategies presented a greater learning experience while also providing a better understanding of the study's problem focus (Morris, 2014). The researcher heavily practiced snowball sampling by utilizing networks between key people that potentially fit the study.

Additionally, the researcher applied emergent sampling when the researcher spontaneously felt the need to do so (Morris, 2014). The benefits of using different types of purposive sampling to select participants provided accurate data to address the study's focus problem. Selected participants provided consent to participate in the study. They were asked questions about the impacts of their traditional Latino values, including gender roles, and the impacts their professional responsibilities have on their quality of life.

## Data Gathering

This study used qualitative research methods where data was gathered in a naturalistic setting (Morris, 2014). The data gathered for the research project was collected through individual interviews. Additionally, all interviews were

conducted via Zoom, allowing the researcher to gather data through observations. Although data was also acquired from the literature review during the assessment phase, the researcher attempted to steer away from document reviews because they serve as data on subjective understandings of the research problem (Morris, 2014).

Data was collected from interviews by having participants provide qualitative information addressing the research focus. Since the post-positivist paradigm allowed for adaptability and change to ongoing data analysis as the study progressed, different categories of questions were used. Descriptive, structural, and contrast questions were practiced by the researcher during the interviews (Morris, 2014). Using a variety of categories of questions throughout the interviews explored patterns and regularities relating to this study's problem. Furthermore, mixing the three styles of questions allowed the researcher to make changes and accommodations as the study progressed to identify the research problem's patterns and regularities (Morris, 2014).

#### Phases of Data Collection

Data collection started by gathering the participants' consent to participate in this study. The researcher reviewed with the interviewees the purpose of the study, securing their consent (Appendix A) and understanding the research's purpose, reviewed with participants confidentiality and privacy settings, and answered questions for further clarification (Morris, 2014). Once consent was obtained, the researcher began asking the interview questions. Throughout the

interview phase, essential, extra, throw-away, and probing questions were used to gather data from the interviewees.

Development of focus, maintaining focus, and having awareness as the interviewer of switching roles as an actor, director and choreographer are phases within the interview process (Morris, 2014). To end the interviews positively, the researcher gradually used less intense questions toward the end. Interviews were terminated by providing interviewees with a synopsis of the interviewer's understanding of what was discussed (Morris, 2014). The phase within the interview process granted the interviewer the opportunity to seek feedback about the interview, clarify information shared, and address any of the interviewees' concerns. It provided the researcher the space to confirm that participants have the researcher's contact information in case needed and describe how data will be used and information shared about the study's findings. The last data collection phase involved the researcher reflecting on the interview (Morris, 2014).

### Data Recording

The student researcher asked for the participant's consent to record interviews conducted by video call (Appendix A) and to take notes concurrently. Some participants did not feel comfortable with video recording. Thankfully, participants provided consent for the researcher to document concurrently throughout the interview (Morris, 2014). To create a record of the interview and recall critical information, the researcher made notes on the following: identifying

information (date, time, place, and interviewee pseudo-name), conversations in the order conducted, reactions, feelings, and thoughts about the interview (Morris, 2014). The researcher ensured to have a copy of the record developed.

### Data Analysis

A bottom-up approach was used to analyze the data gathered from this study. According to Morris (2014), the benefits of using a bottom-up approach are the various stages and increased complexity of synthesis to interpret qualitative data. Using the bottom-up allows for creating theoretical statements about regularities from narrative texts. The researcher navigated four stages of synthesis: open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and conditional matrix (Morris, 2014).

Open coding allowed the student researcher to analyze the participant's responses during the interviewing. Thus, the researcher could break down the interview's narrative into categories. Since open coding is an inclusive process of interpreting collected data, the researcher created multiple themes, concepts, or categories from interview narratives (Morris, 2014). Open coding also served as a guide for future data collection, leading to axial coding, where a proposal of relationships between themes or categories is analyzed and articulated. The next synthesis stage was selective coding, where the researcher developed a theory based on the identified core themes (Morris, 2014). The last stage, conditional matrix, presented the researcher with the ability to apply the study's developed

theoretical statement to human experiences and macro and micro social work practice.

### Termination and Follow Up

The research project's estimated time frame for termination was planned, and interviews took place from May 2022 to June 2022. During the initial engagement with participants and key players, the researcher informed them of the planned termination date and reminded them of the time of termination as the study ended. Termination included expressing gratitude and appreciation to the participants for their time and participation in the study, answering any questions from participants, and offering and receiving feedback on the research focus.

The findings from this study raise awareness of what it means to be a first-generation Latina social worker in the American workforce. The researcher plans to share the study's findings with participants and key players, who are the target audience. Since the study meets the graduate-level research project requirement, the researcher will submit the research project and its findings to the researcher's university. The researcher will notify them once the results become available. The student researcher will use Microsoft PowerPoint to share the study's findings with key players and participants.

### Summary

Chapter three began by describing the characteristics of the study participants. After reviewing the study participants, the chapter discussed the



selection of participants and the sampling strategy. Next, the chapter explained the phases of gathering data. Data recording and data analysis were also reviewed in detail. Lastly, plans for termination and follow-up were presented.

## CHAPTER FOUR:

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the gathered qualitative data. The researcher analyzed the data using a bottom-up approach. Six interviewees participated in the study, and three consented to video recording. The interviewees' experiences, stories, and responses contributed to the research's focus. Their contribution added insight into first-generation Latina social workers balancing life and barriers concerning their ethnic identities and professional selves. Though the study is qualitative, some of the questions provided quantitative findings. Thus, this chapter includes demographics and interviewees' responses, where responses are broken down into themes and subthemes.

#### Demographics

A total of six participants met the study's criteria. Three of the six consented to video recording in their informed consent form. All interviewees identified as cis-gender females from their early twenties to early forties. Regarding race, three recognized themselves as Latinas. One member acknowledged herself as Hispanic, another as Mexican, and another as Hispanic Mexican-America. When asked to rate their level of Latinidad (Appendix A), one ranked herself a three, four scored themselves a solid four, and one notes it ranges from four to five.

The participants ranged in their academic degrees; one post-graduate recently acquired her bachelor's in social work, one student has her bachelor's in psychology and soon will graduate with her master's in social work by Spring 2023, three post-graduates have a master's in social work, and one Latina has obtained her master's in social work and Ph. D in social welfare. Of the six interviewees, three state their marital status as single, two are married, one is divorced (married once, currently single), and all who are married or were married have at least one child and no more than three children under their care. No reported single Latina stated having any children. All participants work a full-time schedule; two Latinas report having their current position for over a year, one said she has three years with her current employer, and the other three have over nine years working with their current agency.

### Findings

The study's data was analyzed using a bottom-up method. The researcher analyzed the responses by interpreting and categorizing them, creating themes, and making connections between the finding's broken-down concepts, literature review, and human experience. The study focused on how Latinas balance life and work. The researcher found eight dominant themes: 1) current job satisfaction versus dissatisfaction, 2) Latinidad, acculturation, and enculturation, 4) Labor sector discrimination and oppression, 5) *familismo* and *marianismo* projection toward Latina individualization, 6) feeling balanced or unbalanced, 7)

desire to contribute toward Latino studies, and 8) words of empathy or empowerment for the younger self.

### Job Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction

The first three open-ended questions asked to all interviewees were, “Is there anything or things you like about your work,” “Why do you think you enjoy that/those thing(s),” and “Is there anything or things you don’t like about your work?” One theme prevalent in the data was the satisfaction of being in a field related to their degree(s) and the dissatisfaction subthemes of feeling disconnected and lacking organization/collaboration. One participant stated:

“I am a director of research, so I lead a research unit within a department that focuses on social services or human services, training...I really like that it’s a perfect mix of my degrees. I get to do the research... it’s really practice focus, so everything I’m doing it’s feeding directly back into the field and into developing the workforce.”

She shared her professional displeasures:

My entire department’s very White...and I think that impacts the way they approach social services and how they think about clients and training...I can’t gauge whether it’s a safe place for me to talk about my life and my experience.

Another interviewee reported, “Yes, I really like what I do. I help people. I find it really rewarding that is why I went into this field,” followed by reports of her dissatisfaction, “Lately, I’ve been thinking about the amount of pay I am receiving

and the pay discrepancy. It kind of makes me feel not appreciated, we put in so much work and it feels like it is not appreciated.” One Latina shared she enjoys her job, “I love working with youth,” and recognized a dislike is, “the silent systems, it’s hard to work with other system because everyone has their own goals and have to go back and forth about the client’s needs/goals...programs should work hand-in-hand and there are many ways to approach the situation.”

The researcher found that most participants resonate more with things they enjoy than their dislikes about their current employment. It was also found that all interviewees were employed full-time in their desired professional field, as most are working toward a career instead of a job. Many participants shared needing their educational degree and knowledge to carry out their roles, which enhances their quality of life by giving back to their communities.

#### Latinidad, Acculturation, and Enculturation

All participants identified themselves as Latinas, specifically first-generation Latinas with post-educational degrees in social work. To understand the participants’ connection to their Latina identities, the researcher asked, “on a scale of 1-5, 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how much do you identify with your Latinidad?” Most Latinas scored their Latinidad a four. Only one participant reported growing up in predominantly White culture; however, she feels a stronger connection to her Latina heritage in her adulthood than when she was a child, mainly because her spouse is Latino. Another participant shared she rated herself as:

A four and not a five because I feel the generation that I am, we do challenge a lot of traditional norms with gender norms. I think that my family has encouraged keeping with language, traditions, religious values, visit family in Mexico, and we do challenge a lot of gender norms and encouraged to do so.

Another Latina, who also rated herself a four, explained, “I recognize a lot of influence on Latinidad, my thoughts but I don’t make them as a part of my life. The expectations don’t align with mine. I work forty to sixty hours a week.” One participant ranged her score of Latinidad as:

I’m something that has evolved unique identities...especially from an immigrant household...My cultural history, the values my parents instilled in me, the way I grew up...I know I’ve mostly lost my accent, I can speak the language and I can blend in my workplace. But that is still who I am and where I’m from, and it shapes every part of how I interact with the world and how people see me...and I feel I range from a four to a five.

Participants shared their experience as first-generation Latina social workers and the contrasts they see between their Latina identities, their families, communities, and White peers. Most participants reported feeling they challenge Latino traditions. At times, they are either encouraged to do so by families or members in their community or are a source of encouragement for their family members or other Latino to break away from cultural stigmas projected toward Latino individualization. There appears to be a cultural clash between their Latina

identities and their employment culture, with more emphasis on individualistic achievement than self or community advocacy or bonding.

### Discrimination and Oppression in the White Labor Sector

A major theme throughout the study was the challenges in the workplace regarding differential treatment from other races and oppression. Most participants reported feeling a difference in treatment from other races in their workspace. One participant stated:

I do feel other staff, who are Caucasian, are treated differently...the expectation is different, if I am not meeting my productivity it is brought to my attention, and with others, like someone who is Caucasian, they don't bring it to their attention. I feel me being a Latina and female plays a part in that.

Another participant shared similar feelings she experienced with a prior employer. She reported:

During the time Trump was elected, and one of my cousins had asked if they get deported, can I take their [number of children omitted to maintain confidentiality] kids. It was rough couple of weeks of developing emergency plans for them...My supervisor made a comment not understanding the impact of something like the presidential election on my community and on me, assuming because I have degrees...the issues that people without my level of privilege or experiencing aren't going to impact me. the level of my people are experiencing does not affect

me...There's a ton where bosses don't understand the role I played in my family... I'm the eldest girl, and then again immigrant family...Why am I prioritizing my siblings needs over my work life or over my career... I was one of those people who worked all the time, would work overtime, would work on weekends, and then it's just like, why, this person clearly does not care about me as a person, they only care about what I produce for them. So why am I stretching myself, and now I don't.

Another participant noted her challenges in her workplace as:

Not specifically related to my Latinidad because I am White passing, but one barrier is my age. I am a decently young social worker working with foster youth clients, I have to provide parenting classes to parents and clients, and at times some ask me if I have kids or how much do I know because I appear young. I relate with some of my clients, we listen to the same music, share the same culture.

Many participants reported they are White passing, due to their fair or light complexion. However, most shared stories of how they faced discrimination and oppression due to their race, gender, age, socioeconomic status, or academic achievements/degrees. Participants come from immigrant families and most shared how their family's values, beliefs, and customs affect them personally and professionally.



### Familismo, Marianismo, and Latino Individualism

Within Latino families, the strong bond, connection, and unity between family members carry on *familismo* core values. As aforementioned, participants are first-generation Latinas with immigrant family backgrounds. Most participants went against traditional customs by seeking higher education, independence, or individualism. Along with *familismo*, *marianismo* is embedded in Latino culture, especially for those pursuing higher education and career. To gain insight into the impact of *familismo* and *marianismo* on the participants, the researcher asked, “What barriers or challenges have you come across or experienced in your personal life as a working Latina? Can you tell me more about any cultural clash you experience in your personal life being a working Latina?” Most participants shared stories that have a negative projection toward individualization brought on by *familismo* and *marianismo*. One interviewee explained:

I my former marriage, that was a big conflict of having expectations of having lunch or dinner ready, attending to my former partner and his needs, leaving me behind and neglecting my own needs. That was something difficult. Now as a single mom, I don't see it as much now, but there are expectations that may affect me, like the home duties, like cooking and cleaning, and expectations like sowing and I'm not really big on that.

Another Latina shared, “I think there is a challenge of choosing to go to school and putting yourself first, you know you normally put yourself as a mom

first, it's a battle within myself. Putting my needs before others is hard." Another participant shared a similar response, stating:

Yes, because, if we're considering the factors of student, mother, and working, I would be considered to be at home. Instead I am working toward my degrees and family time is emphasized in my family and I'm missing out because of work, school, or being a mom.

One participant reported, "I think being a female and Latina has a stereotypical culture. I am expected to have it all together, at home and work. My family doesn't say that directly, but if I wasn't doing that then I'd feel judged."

Another participant shared:

Specifically working in the field, the expectations in the home and family, children, maintaining my living domain and making myself readily available for my family and the weekends are not up for grabs, only for family.

One Latina shared:

I think my family stopped asking when I was going to get married and have kids when I hit thirty. But before then, there were comments made by compadres about me going to [university name withheld to maintain confidentiality] as a single woman... I've gotten a lot of push back, mostly from my dad and the extended family...I've chosen a path that is not typical...My aunts married very young...When I graduated undergrad and then decided to go to grad school, they were like, what are you going to do with your life if you are in school forever, you're never going to get married,

you're never going to have kids...my priority is my career...My family doesn't understand that...they also don't understand what social workers do.

All the participants shared being impacted by their culture to perform and maintain roles in their personal and professional lives. The findings from the data show there are unspoken or spoken expectations for working Latinas to do it all. There appears to be expectations for first-generation Latina social workers to be able to fully commit to their career/work role and family role, leaving little room for autonomy or individualization. Most participants shared their cultural struggles in seeking independence when they sought a higher education.

#### Feeling Balanced/Unbalanced and the Coronavirus

Another prevalent theme gathered from the responses is whether Latinas feel they are successfully balancing their lives. One question that naturally progressed and later on asked to some participants was, "How do you balance life and work?" One participant reported, "I don't know, it's going to be different that I'm not in school. Shutting off work, letting work go before entering a new situation at home. Being able to not take things personal, being kind to myself."

Another participant shared:

I recognize when I need a mental health day off work. I am good at recognizing, even if it is to spend an extra day with my [child's gender hidden to maintain confidentiality]. Before I was a workaholic, and now my mom role takes a priority, my family takes a big priority. My self-care is important to me.

One participant explained her challenge in finding what works for her:

I don't do a good job of it. I'm trying. During the semester putting aside two hours has done that...I don't work weekends at all. Even if I have nothing to do on Saturday and I feel anxious about Monday, I will not touch my computer. I am trying to spend time visiting my families that live in other areas, try not to touch emails...I feel my romantic life has been paused because of Covid...Most of my work life has been being by myself and placing boundaries.

Another participant added insight into balancing work and life, reporting, "It's hard to achieve that balance on your own, without your agency's support, and how far you feel you can go for yourself and your clients."

Although the question was not asked to all participants, it provided insight into Latina social workers balancing life and career. The balance or unbalance also had an additional element, the pandemic. It is difficult for the researcher to categorize this theme without attaching it to the coronavirus.

#### Desire to Contribute toward Latina Studies

One common theme found across all responses was the natural interest in contributing to Latina studies. All participants shared why they decided to join the study, and the stories behind their reasonings to participate were commonly motivated by their willingness to contribute to ethnic studies, particularly ethnicities they represent. One participant reported, "Anytime there is a study that

pertains to Latinas, I am familiar with the literature and studies done on Latinos, it is underserved.”

Another Latina pointed out, “I think it sounded interesting, I would want to share that a lot of this information is for other Latinas, and if it can help or make a difference in any way, why not.” One participant responded, “This is a really important topic, one we don’t know a ton about, and there are so few of us Latinos who do go on to pursue higher education and graduate degrees.” One interviewee shared:

Specifically, this is about Latina social workers, my cohort was specifically Latinas, a minority, and people saw and noticed, total of about twenty of us and three were male Latinos, maybe about five White females, and the rest mostly minority Latina.

All participants shared their readiness to add to the study’s focus, setting aside time to meet with the researcher and share their stories. Most spoke about their hopes to provide insight into their Latino culture. Some shared studies about Latinos are few, and it is an underserved minority population that can benefit from future studies. One participant reported, “I am always interested in any way learning about my culture. Anytime there is a study about a woman or Latina, I want to participate.”

#### Words of Wisdom for the Younger Self

The final central theme touched on advice interviewees would give their younger selves to balance life and work. Most participants shared similar

responses, providing insight into letting go of significant stress from work as one participant reported, “To not over schedule myself at work or burden myself with perfectionism versus progress. To strive for progress instead of perfectionism.” Another participant shared if she could go back in time, knowing what she knows now, she would tell herself, “Better time management. It’s not going to get done by just sitting and thinking about it. Just do it. I think it would have saved me from a lot of stress and anxiety.”

Many participants resonated with learning to slow down and enjoy the present or find other ways to enhance their quality of life. One participant engaged in conversation, feeling her younger self missed out, “To slow down, pause, and enjoy the moment. I think my younger self was always hoping and dreaming about the future and not living in the present...I missed out on a lot because I didn’t live in the moment.” Another shared:

Work is not everything. Your work does not care about you, your work will not take care of you...So work as a means to an end, and you can use it, to do good things, but you need to find other ways to fill yourself and feel fulfilled outside of your work.

### Summary

This chapter included a presentation of the study’s data and results. The data collected presented both quantitative and qualitative findings. The quantitative results included information on demographics, such as gender, race, age, educational degrees, marital and family status, years in their current

workplace, and Latinidad rating. Themes and subthemes were analyzed and reviewed. The researcher found all six participants strongly identify with their Latinidad through their storytelling and desire to contribute to Latino studies. The qualitative data includes the impacts first-generation social worker Latinas face balancing life and career while staying true to their Latina identities.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

### Introduction

Chapter five provides a review of the research focus and the findings yielded by the interviews, including a discussion if the study's focus and literature review are supported or not by the results of the participants' storytelling. Next follows an exploration of limitations. The chapter concludes with implications for future ethnic studies and social work practice.

### Review and Discussion

The findings of this study consisted of central themes and subthemes that also reflect themes from the literature review and this research's focus, including, Latinidad, acculturation, and enculturation; discrimination and oppression in the workplace, projections of *familismo* and *marianismo* concerning individualism; feeling balanced/unbalanced; and advice for the younger self to balance life and career successfully. Participant responses highlighted the Latina's uniqueness, each sharing a story like other Latinas while having specific differences in their Latina experience.

Participants openly shared barriers they experienced or continue to face being first-generation Latina social workers. The responses also provided viewpoints on Latino culture's effect on their Latina identities and quality of life. Their stories support themes from the literature review despite most participants'



desire to avoid harmful cultural traditions and attempt to maintain strong familial relationships.

One participant expressed feeling unacknowledged by an employer due to her cultural values of *familismo*, birth order, and gender role; she is the oldest daughter of an immigrant household and feels responsible for caring over her younger siblings. Another participant explained she maintains a strong relationship with her Latinidad by practicing *familismo* and *compadrazgo*; she visits family in Mexico and celebrates Mexican holidays with *la familia*. Other participants voiced their experience with cultural clashes between their identities and workplace culture. One participant expressed her workplace has high regard for individualism and little care for collectivism. She noted individualism is praised through promotions, and collectivism is misunderstood through an individualization lens. Another participant shared she has been working since her teenage years. She encountered a cultural clash with a previous employer and felt disconnected from her Latinidad as she was not able to speak Spanish in the workplace.

One participant stated she did not recognize a cultural clash between herself and her present employer. However, her employer is a family-run organization. She shared the difficulties she experiences with her Latina identity and her families' cultural values regarding *familismo*, *marianismo*, and *respeto*, noting her work and personal boundaries are skewed within *la familia*, student life, and work.

This study demonstrates first-generation Latina social workers have complex elements, such as intergenerational, acculturation, and enculturation to White American mainstream and the White labor sector complexities that impact how they balance their careers and life.

### Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. The study aimed at gaining a better understanding of first-generation social worker Latinas born in the U.S balancing life and career. However, it was not inclusive to first-generation Latina social workers born in Mexico who possibly immigrated at a young age. The study also disregarded first-generation Latinas with post-graduate degrees, limiting the sample size only to fit those with a social work degree. After completing the data collection for this research project, all participants identified their gender as cis-females. The study did not include first-generation social worker Latinas who identify with LGBTQI+.

Additionally, all interviews with the six participants occurred via video conference calls (Zoom) because of Covid-19 restrictions. One potential candidate informed the researcher she did not feel comfortable meeting via Zoom because of her poor Internet connection. Thus, the role of technology limited this study. Another observed limitation was the age population of the participants. There were no participants over forty-five. Another limitation is the researcher's limited time meeting with each participant. The researcher completed the interview questions within forty-five minutes. Lastly, one limitation

that possibly affected the study's data collection was that the researcher did not ask questions to explore the participants' support systems or what has worked for them or added to their resiliency despite their challenges.

## Recommendations

### Suggestions for Future Ethnic Studies

There are two leading suggestions for future ethnic studies. The first relates to researching underserved or minority groups. This study's findings included stories provided by first-generation Latina social workers. When the researcher began her literature review, it was disheartening to yield no results for post-graduate working Latinas. Thus, the researcher suggests future researchers continue their ethnic study, even if the literature review is bare or non-existent. Another recommendation is that future research is desperately needed to learn about post-graduated first-generation Latinas' experiences. Future studies can provide beneficial information into successful coping skills for other Latinas that seek to balance their Latinidad, life, and career.

### Suggestions for Social Work Practice

Overall, no studies focus on social work practice concerning first-generation social worker Latinas balancing life and career. One suggestion is that at the micro level, social workers in educational settings or roles can advocate developing a course specific to first-generation Latinas that address traditional Latino values and the different ways their values can impact Latinas while in college. Additionally, workshops, seminars, or conferences,

discussing/reviewing *familismo*, *marianismo*, and the desire for first-generation Latina can benefit Latinas and their families. Since first-generation Latinas, especially all the participants in this study, shared having a solid bond with their families, the educational review can provide support at the mezzo level. Another micro and possible mezzo recommendation is for the advocacy of support groups, possibly facilitated by first-generation Latina social workers. At the macro level, educational training about cultural acculturation and enculturation impacts minorities can provide better insight to those overseeing departments, programs, or personnel. The education training can also aid employers in practicing cultural humility and learning a language to avoid insensitive comments, remarks, or biases.

### Summary

The number of first-generation Latinas seeking higher education and working toward a career is increasing. Nevertheless, there is no research to support Latinas in learning how to balance career and life successfully. Future Latino studies and social workers can provide future Latina generations with the skills, knowledge, and solid foundation to go from higher education to the workforce while maintaining Latinidad identities.

APPENDIX A:  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

March 15, 2022

**CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**

Administrative/Exempt Review Determination

Status: Determined Exempt

IRB-FY2022-188

Armando Barragan Jr. Angelica Venegas  
CSBS - Social Work  
California State University, San Bernardino  
5500 University Parkway  
San Bernardino, California 92407

Dear Armando Barragan Jr. Angelica Venegas:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "First-Generation Post-Graduate Latinas Balancing Life and Career " has been reviewed and determined exempt by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of CSU, San Bernardino. An exempt determination means your study had met the federal requirements for exempt status under 45 CFR 46.104. The CSUSB IRB has weighed the risks and benefits of the study to ensure the protection of human participants.

This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional campus approvals which may be required including access to CSUSB campus facilities and affiliate campuses. Investigators should consider the changing COVID-19 circumstances based on current CDC, California Department of Public Health, and campus guidance and submit appropriate protocol modifications to the IRB as needed. CSUSB campus and affiliate health screenings should be completed for all campus human research related activities. Human research activities conducted at off-campus sites should follow CDC, California Department of Public Health, and local guidance. See CSUSB's [COVID-19 Prevention Plan](#) for more information regarding campus requirements.

You are required to notify the IRB of the following as mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and CSUSB IRB policy. The forms (modification, renewal, unanticipated/adverse event, study closure) are located in the Cayuse IRB System with instructions provided on the IRB Applications, Forms, and Submission webpage. Failure to notify the IRB of the following requirements may result in disciplinary action. The Cayuse IRB system will notify you when your protocol is due for renewal. Ensure you file your protocol renewal and continuing review form through the Cayuse IRB system to keep your protocol current and active unless you have completed your study.

- **Ensure your CITI Human Subjects Training is kept up-to-date and current throughout the study.**
- **Submit a protocol modification (change) if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your study for review and approval by the IRB before being implemented in your study.**
- **Notify the IRB within 5 days of any unanticipated or adverse events are experienced by subjects during your research.**
- **Submit a study closure through the Cayuse IRB submission system once your study has ended.**

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the Research Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7082, or by email at [mgillesp@csusb.edu](mailto:mgillesp@csusb.edu). Please include your application approval number IRB-FY2022-188 in all correspondence. Any complaints you receive from participants and/or others related to your research may be directed to Mr. Gillespie.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

*Nicole Dabbs*

Nicole Dabbs, Ph.D., IRB Chair  
CSUSB Institutional Review Board

ND/MG

APPENDIX B:  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM



The study you are being asked to participate in is designed to evaluate how first-generation post-graduate Latinas balance their personal life and career. This study is being conducted by Angelica Venegas, a graduate student, under the supervision of Dr. Armando Barragán, Associate Professor of the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at California State University, San Bernardino.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study is to evaluate how first-generation post-graduate Latinas balance life and career.

**DESCRIPTION:** You will be asked to participate in an individual interview conducted via Zoom. The interview includes questions about your identity, values, and culture as well as balancing career life.

**PARTICIPATION:** Your participation is completely voluntary, and you do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You may skip or not answer any questions and can freely end participation at any time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** The information you provide will be handled as confidentially as possible. As with all research, there is a chance that confidentiality could be compromised; however, the researcher will take precautions to minimize this risk. The conversations will be recorded only with your permission. Any notes, recordings, or transcriptions will be encrypted and password protected. To maintain confidentiality, you can decide whether you want your name used or assigned pseudonym. Once the results of this study are published or presented, your name and other personally identifiable information will not be used.

**DURATION:** Each interview should take 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

**RISKS:** Although not anticipated, there may be some discomfort answering some of the questions. You do not have to answer and can skip the question or end participation at any time without any consequences.

**BENEFITS:** Although there is no direct benefit to you from participating in this evaluation, findings from this study will provide information on how post-graduate first-generational Latinas navigate life and career.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions about this study, please don't hesitate to contact Dr. Barragán at [Armando.Barragan@csusb.edu](mailto:Armando.Barragan@csusb.edu).

**RESULTS:** Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks database (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after July 2023.

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I agree to have this Zoom interview recorded: \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older to participate in your study, have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

\_\_\_\_\_

Place an X mark here

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

APPENDIX C:  
RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Hello [Insert Name],

My name is Angelica Venegas, and I am a current student at California State University, San Bernardino, working towards my master's degree in Social Work. As part of my program, I am conducting a research study that focuses on first-generation Latina social workers currently employed. My research supervisor is Dr. Armando Barragán, Associate Professor of the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). This study has been approved by the CSUSB IRB-FY2022-188. My study focuses on balancing personal and professional life and culture. For my research study, I am looking to interview individuals who meet the following criteria:

- Born in the United States
- Self-identify as Latina
- Be the first in the family to graduate with a social work degree
- Currently employed in California, working at least 20 hours a week
- Be over the age of 18 years old
- Have at least one parent who self-identifies as Latino/a

Participants will partake in individual interviews via Zoom, which will take anywhere between 30 and 45 minutes. If you identify with the study criteria and want to learn more or confirm participation in the study, please contact me at [angelica.venegas4017@coyote.csusb.edu](mailto:angelica.venegas4017@coyote.csusb.edu).

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Your participation in this study will provide valuable insight on how to best support Latinas balancing work and life.

Kind regards,

Angelica Venegas  
Graduate Student  
School of Social Work  
California State University, San Bernardino

APPENDIX D:  
FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

Dear [insert name of contact],

Thank you for your interest in participating in my research study. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and includes an interview conducted by a video call. The Zoom interview may last anywhere up to 45 minutes.

I want to schedule a meeting day and time convenient to both of our schedules. Please send me three dates and times that you are available to meet. Also, please take the time to read and sign the informed consent form included in the attached to partake in this study and email it to me before our meeting date. After confirming scheduling a meeting day and getting your informed consent, I will be sure to call you by Zoom to conduct the interview. If you decide you no longer want to participate, you don't need to complete and send me the informed consent form, and you won't be able to move forward in the research study.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thanks again for your interest in participating in the study.

I look forward to meeting you!

Kindly,

Angelica Venegas  
Graduate Student  
School of Social Work  
California State University, San Bernardino

APPENDIX E:  
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

## **Script**

Hello. My name is Angelica Venegas. I am the student researcher and thank you for participating in my study. Before we get started, I would like to share with you that you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to, and you could stop the interview at any time. I will begin by asking you some general questions. As the interview progresses, the questions will become more personal. If at any time during the interview you would like to withdraw from the study, please let me know, and we will stop the interview, and your participation will end right then. If you choose to no longer partake in this study, I will not use any information you shared with me. Do you have any questions, comments, or concerns you'd like to address before moving forward?

## **Interview questions**

1. How do you identify? Gender, race, ethnicity? What is your age?
2. Are you single, married, divorced/widowed? Do you have children?
3. What degrees or certificates do you hold?
4. How many years have you been working?
5. Is there anything or things you like about your work?
6. Why do you think you enjoy that/those thing(s)?
7. Is there anything or things you don't like about your work?
8. What does an average workday look like for you?
9. What does an average evening at home look like?



10. On a scale of 1-5, 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how much do you identify with your Latinidad?
11. Why do you think you gave yourself that score?
12. Do you feel your ethnicity, culture, heritage, gender, or language is hindered at your workplace? If yes, could you tell me why so?
13. Do you think your culture in your workplace conflicts with your personal identity? If yes, could you elaborate why you think so?
14. Are there any barriers or challenges you have come across or experienced in the workplace being a Latina or related to your personal identity? Can you share further why it/they was/were a problem(s) and how you resolved it/them?
15. Are there any barriers or challenges have you come across or experienced in your personal life as a working Latina? Can you tell me more about any cultural clash you experience in your personal life being a working Latina?
16. How do you balance life and work?
17. What made you say yes to participating in this study?
18. If roles were reversed, is there anything relating to the study's focus that you, as the researcher, is there anything you would ask me? Do you want to share your response(s) to your question(s)?
19. What advice would you give your younger self to balance work and life?

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