Latina Immigrant Women’s Experiences of Higher Education and Leadership: An Intersectional Perspective

Isabella Alencar Maroja Chaves, Western University

Supervisor: Gardiner, Rita A., The University of Western Ontario
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Education
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Abstract

This study investigates the career progression of Latina immigrant women to achieve leadership positions in higher education. The purpose of this research is to examine, from an intersectional perspective, the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in higher education in Southwestern Ontario. The central point of this research is the study of the lived experiences of Latina women navigating the obstacles of being immigrants and women attaining educational leadership positions. The intersectional perspective, via the lens of Latina feminist theory, serves as both a conceptual framework and a theoretical approach. Considering the methodological approach, this study adopts a qualitative narrative methodology and semi-structured interviews of selected participants as my method. This study gives voice to its participants and seeks solutions for higher education institutions to build more fair environments supporting immigrant women's leadership development.

Keywords:

Latina immigrant women; intersectionality; higher education; leadership development; career progression; Latina feminist theory
Summary for Lay Audience

This study investigates the career progression of Latina immigrant women to achieve leadership positions in higher education. The purpose of this research is to examine the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions in higher education in southwestern Ontario. The focus of this research is the study of the lived experiences of Latina women navigating the obstacles of being immigrants and women reaching positions of educational leadership. The intersectional perspective analyzes social identities not in isolation but as a set of identities that can represent barriers or privileges. This study also approaches Latina women's leadership through the lens of Latina feminist theory. Six Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles were interviewed and shared how their social identities as women, immigrants, Latinas, and mothers impact their career progression. This study gives its participants a voice and seeks solutions for higher education institutions to build fairer environments that support the development of immigrant women's leadership. This study makes recommendations brought by participants in their interviews, such as the creation or construction of a space for Latinos at the university for connections and exchange of experiences and opportunities; the adoption of a Family-Friendly policy that suits the needs of academic mothers; and expanding the equity, diversity, and inclusion policies that are essential to opportunities for Latinos and other racialized groups. An educational system that values equity and diversity is critical to Latina immigrant women's access to leadership.
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Chapter 1

1 Introduction

Nowadays, it is almost impossible to investigate women by looking only at their gender identity and ignoring all the other identities and subjectivities that shape their lives. As women, we are many, and we are plural, filled with identities that form us and that can make our experiences easier or more laborious. When exploring the experience of Latina immigrant women and all the identities that permeate them, a close look at all of these intersecting identities is helpful. For this reason, intersectionality presents itself as a necessary research and acknowledgment tool.

The statement of the problem of this research is the career progression of Latina immigrant women to achieve leadership positions in higher education in Southwestern Ontario, Canada. The purpose of this study is to conduct an investigation and learn more about women who, as Latina immigrants, strove to overcome socially generated obstacles. Such difficulties were influenced by the intersectionality of their visible identities (Alcoff, 2006). For those, intersections of Latino identity with race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, and age are often potentiated by their immigration status.

This research aims to examine, from an intersectional perspective, the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in higher education in Southwestern Ontario. The study of the lived experiences of Latina women navigating the obstacles of being immigrants and women attaining educational leadership positions. Furthermore, Latina feminist theory and the concept of intersectionality compose, respectively, the theoretical approach and the conceptual framework of this research. For the sake of this research study, career progression
in educational leadership refers to how Latina immigrant women manage their experiences and identities to achieve their career success.

This study is based on three research questions:

1. What factors characterize the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in Southwestern Ontario?

2. How do Latina immigrant women discuss their identities in their professional experiences in educational leadership?

3. How do Latina immigrant women describe the barriers they faced in their professional careers in educational leadership?

Answering these questions through the lens of intersectionality and Latina feminist thought sheds light on the aspects that define the experience and struggles of Latina immigrant women in one university setting. I have chosen a university setting since existing literature on the lived experiences of Latina immigrant women, specifically in educational leadership positions, is scant and limited in scope. This research is important because it seeks to investigate the elements that most significantly influenced and characterized Latina immigrant women in their pursuit of social mobility in Canadian educational leadership. In addition, the difficulties and achievements of the Latina immigrant women in this study are considered via a framework that incorporates Latina feminist theory and intersectionality to tease out how their diverse social identities influenced their careers.

As a woman, I am concerned about persistent gender discrepancies. I feel that education is the most effective way to address this issue, so as to enable the successful integration of immigrant women into their new country. In addition, as a graduate student and Latina
immigrant in Southwestern Ontario, Canada, I hope to contribute a unique perspective to my research by applying my viewpoint and experience living and studying in a foreign country.

In this study, I investigate Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions in higher education in Southwestern Ontario, emphasizing the need for an intersectional approach to women's leadership development. I seek to give voice to some lived experiences and possible challenges that Latina immigrant women face in their career progression. More than that, this research will attempt to seek solutions for higher education institutions to build more fair environments that support the leadership development of immigrant women. According to Moorosi et al. (2018), such an approach could also aid women in identifying the intricacies of their identities and in problematizing what it means to be a woman and a leader in different contexts. In addition, I use Latina feminist theory to emphasize how diverse identities impact the lives of Latina women.

Moreover, I recognize that there is an academic discussion about how intersectionality should be used in research, whether as a theory or a methodology (Rice et al., 2019). I consider, in this study, intersectionality as theoretical and epistemological support in the face of complexity and multiple oppressions that form the identities I address in the object of this research. However, according to Esposito and Evans-Winters (2022), intersectionality is both a theory and a methodology that understands that oppression cannot be comprehended as a single axis or identity. In this study, intersectionality is used as the analytical framework, which frames my methodological approach that concentrates on the stories and lived experiences shared by the participants of this research.
1.1 Locating Myself in the Research

My initial interest in women's studies and feminist research began with personal questions and annoyance about gender disparity. My previous Master’s study was based on the vulnerability of women in situations of violence. This theme was widely discussed in Brazil in 2006 with the enactment of a specific law for the prevention, combat and punishment of violence against women in my country of origin.

I recognize that I have always occupied a privileged space in Brazilian society as a white, heterosexual woman who had access to education throughout her life. I come from a middle-class family, which supported my academic life. I graduated in law and became a lawyer. Still, my desire to deepen my knowledge of women's studies led me to a master's degree, where I researched violence against women and public policy, exploring the sheltering of women at risk of death.

Still my practical experience working as a lawyer in Brazil, and the lack of women occupying leadership positions in that field made me question why women were considered unfit for such positions. I was a partner in a law firm, and, despite having the same role and position as my male partner, it was evident that clients respected and valued his opinions more than my own. At the same time, my mother was the director of the blood donation center in the state of Paraiba and the vice-director, a man, was invited to meetings and conferences, while she was not. I share these experiences to highlight how my own lived experiences influenced my research.

When my family and I decided to move to Canada, my motivation was to study women and leadership. In this master's research in Canada, I aim to illuminate the diverse challenges of Latina immigrant women in their career progression into educational leadership positions. I seek to explore the factors that characterize their professional journeys and the challenges faced
through the intersectionality of their identities. Pursuing this study helps me to learn, contribute and support these women in the development of this professional field with which I identify. In my view, all researchers have situated and embodied knowledge; consequently, I incorporate my own subjective perspectives into this research process (Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2022).

1.2 Definition of Terms

Career progression: the path of university-educated Latina immigrant women who develop educational leadership roles in higher education in Southwestern Ontario, Canada.

Educational leadership: employment in an educational management or leadership position.

Ethnicity: the fact or condition of belonging to a social group with a shared national or cultural heritage.

Immigrant: a person who moves temporarily or permanently from one country to another.

Intersectionality: The intersection of identities that shape an individual or group of people, which may reflect oppression or privilege.

Latina/o American: a person who comes from South and Central America.

Latino identity: According to Alcoff (2006), Latino identity is a visible identity that belongs to "people from an entire continent, subcontinent, and several large islands, with diverse racial, national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic aspects" (p. 227).

Racialization: As McDonnell and Lourenco (2009) explain, "Racialization is the process of attaching racial meaning to people and social phenomena and often provokes a response from the people being racialized." Recently, the 2021 Canada Census considered South Asians, Chinese, Blacks, Filipinos, Latin Americans, Arabs, Southeast Asians, West Asians, Koreans, and Japanese as the ten racialized groups in Canada.
**Racialized Women:** a term that describes all non-White women and experiencing racialization and marginalization due to race and/or ethnicity (Leblanc, 2019).

**Success:** the achievement of one's own goals and desires.
Chapter 2

2 Literature Review

In this chapter, I situate my study on aspects of Latina immigrant women, women in educational leadership, and racialization, providing an overview of the literature on such subjects. It is essential to locate my research here because my project is concentrated on addressing Latina immigrant women's challenges in educational leadership and their career progression in higher education. To begin, I first outline the background of the problem and official statistics on racialized groups in Canada. Then, I offer literature involving the intersection of Latina immigrant women and the process of racialization. To conclude, gender inequality in educational leadership positions is highlighted.

2.1 Background of the Problem and Official Statistics

According to Statistics Canada (2023), the 2016 Census shows more than one-fifth of Canadians are people of colour. To better understand the category of people of colour, Teelucksingh (2006) defines this population as South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean, and Japanese. In the Canadian public sphere, this population received the termination of “visible minorities.” Statistics Canada informs that the people of colour in Canada represented 22.3% of the total population in 2016. In the same year, women were 51.5% of all people of colour, and women of colour were 11.5% of Canada's total population. The proportion of people of colour among Canada's youth is also rising. More than a quarter (27%) of young Canadians aged 15–34 self-identified as a member of a diverse racial/ethnic group in 2016. The median age of people of Color in 2016 was 33.9, compared to the overall population's median age of 40.7.
As informed by Statistics Canada (2023), people of colour represent a higher share of university graduates between 2018 and 2019. Among students completing undergraduate degrees in 2017 and 2018, 40% self-identified as people of color, an increase from only 13% in 1999–2000. Also, between 2018 and 2019, 44% of first-year graduate students identified themselves as people of colour. In 2016, the labour force's population of people of colour was 66.5%. Women of colour represented 61.9% and men of colour 71.5%. However, women of colour occupy only a tiny percentage of total management positions (6.5%).

In the 2021 Census, the term "visible minority" was replaced by the terms "racialized population" or "racialized groups," reflecting a shift in the use of these terms in the Canadian public sphere. Based on the 2021 Census, immigrants (non-permanent residents) were three times more likely to be part of a racialized group (83.1%) than the rest of the Canadian population (25.1%). South Asians (31.7%), Chinese (11.8%), Blacks (11.8%) and Latin Americans (8.6%) were the most common racial groups among immigrants, accounting for about two-thirds (63.9%) of this specific population. Blacks (36.3%), Latin Americans (17.7%) and South Asians (14.2%) were the top three racial groups among asylum seekers. South Asians were the top racialized group among immigrants with work and/or study permits. According to the Canadian government, Chinese were especially prominent for those with study permits only (22.0%).

In terms of education, the percentage of the Canadian population with a bachelor's degree or higher is on the rise, which is especially significant given the current high demand for skilled workers. Regarding various racialized groups, two major issues stand out. In Canada, racialized groups are typically highly educated. South Asians, Chinese, Blacks, Filipinos, Latin Americans, Arabs, Southeast Asians, West Asians, Koreans, and Japanese are among the ten racial groups
for which the Population Census (2021) accumulates a wealth of information. While racialized
groups made up more than a quarter (27.3%) of the population between the ages of 25 and 64,
they made up nearly 40% of those in that age group with a bachelor's degree or higher.

According to Statistics Canada (2023), both educational attainment and connections
between education and the labour market vary not only across racial groups, but also within each
racial group based on factors such as immigrant status, generational status, country of origin, and
place of study. When attempting to comprehend the factors that influence racialized groups, the
immigrant and generational statuses are particularly relevant characteristics. More than 75% of
the working-age population (aged 25 to 64) was comprised of first-generation immigrants (born
outside of Canada; primarily immigrants and non-permanent residents) for all races except the
Japanese. The majority of the remainder were second-generation Canadians born in Canada to at
least one immigrant parent. The only racialized groups where more than 2% of the working-age
population was in the third generation or older (born in Canada to Canadian-born parents) were
the Japanese (31.7%) and Black (5.0%) populations. Canada's immigration system includes
education as one of its selection criteria, so immigrants are typically highly educated. Second-
generation populations also tend to have an above-average educational level; contributing factors
include their parents' high educational level and the individuals' own high expectations for their
educational level. Despite their high levels of education, immigrants with foreign degrees face
above-average rates of overqualification (having a bachelor's degree or higher while working in a
job that typically requires only a high school education). This is especially true for racialized
people. Even among those with Canadian credentials, some racialized people continue to
experience disproportionately high rates of overqualification.
This section of the literature review highlighted some official statistics and information about the immigrant population in Canada. Official data from the 2016 and 2021 census in Canada were used, with emphasis on racialized groups, the former visible minority, to which the participants in this study belong. The next section of this chapter will focus on immigrant Latina women and racialization.

### 2.2 Latina Immigrants and Racialization

Women from Latin America are generally considered racialized in North America. Thus, this research explores racialized women for their ethnicity, which bears some similarities to black women and their racial identity. According to Alcoff (2006), Latino identity can represent challenges with political repercussions, but that also demands us to consider the philosophical assumptions that underpin popular notions of race and ethnicity. Alcoff explains that Latino identity challenges some authentically new questions about the standard way in which minority and racialized identities are contextualized. She argues that the term 'Latino' means "people from an entire continent, subcontinent and several large islands, with diverse racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic aspects to their identity" (p. 227). Despite all its variability between whites, blacks, and mestizos, it is possible to observe how Latino identity operates as a visible identity in public and social spaces and has political effects related to being considered non-white.

In the same vein, McDonnell and Lourenço (2009) conducted a study on Brazilian women in Massachusetts, USA, and analyzed the barriers of not being white, considering Latina immigrants. The authors explain that the accent presents itself as the first limit of belonging and, consequently, the imposition of the immigrant condition and a foreign identity that refers to the process of racialization and marginalization. In the same study, McDonnell and Lourenço (2009)
highlight, the relationship between gender and racialization since the racialization of women is
doubly incarnated in their condition as an immigrant and a woman. Thus, the racialization of
immigrant women influences their race/ethnicity and gender. Most women who participated in
the study mentioned above were aware of the racialization of their identities, even if they
disagreed with it, and considered themselves white in Brazil. In this study case, women were
racialized, in the United States, for various reasons, including skin colour, perceived ethnicity or
nationality, language, accent, gender, or a combination of factors (McDonnell & Lourenco,

An interesting aspect draws attention to the study by McDonnell & Lourenco (2009). In
the context analyzed by the authors, although few participants reported not feeling racialized
because they were considered white, they highlighted their accent as a determining factor for the
marginalization. Indeed, the study shows that even white women can suffer racist attitudes
because of their accents. Warner (2012) argues that racialization may be disguised as ethnicity,
class, politics, culture, or nationality. The process of racialization, for example, occurs when
ethnicity is used to create, demarcate and racialize "others" or those deemed non-whites. In her
study of racialization in Canadian cities, Teelucksingh (2006) argues that ethnic diversity within
racial groups results in distinctions based on racial meanings, even though race is not the primary
identity of a specific social group.

To understand Latina women's characteristics, struggles, and resistance, Latina feminism,
according to Ortega (2016), focuses on the material realities of individuals, particularly women.
She studies the conflicts caused by the confluence of histories that generate connections among
gender, citizenship, race/ethnicity, sexuality, class, community, and religion. Ortega argues that
people of colour, immigrants, exiles, border dwellers, and others on the margins have paid
attention to those particularities, recounting their stories and highlighting the obstacles that define their own identities.

Exploring the intersection of race and racialized people is thus crucial to comprehending better the identities that shape Latina immigrant women. Race has long been the most critical factor in establishing socioeconomic class in North America, particularly in the United States. However, Sensoy & DiAngelo (2017) explain that the social construction of race has few similarities in the United States and Canada. Whites are the dominant group in the United States and Canada, and people of colour mean the non-Whites: Black people, Indigenous people, and immigrants (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Therefore, racism means racial/ethnic and cultural prejudice and discrimination, supported by institutional power and authority, and used to the advantage of whites and disadvantage of racialized people. According to Waters (2008), most Latin immigrants can tolerate the initial discriminatory treatment they receive as a minority in the United States because of their ethnicity/race. For a time, the newly arrived immigrant is unaware of the local bigotry and prejudice and believes they have control over their destiny (Waters, 2008).

Furthermore, the desire for a job and cash to support relatives left at home becomes a big concern for Latin immigrants. Alternatively, in the case of a whole family's migration, the primary goal is to meet the family's fundamental necessities while developing a new immigrant attitude toward upward social mobility (Holder, 2007; Waters, 2008). As a result, the economic condition takes precedence over social reality.

Most Latin immigrants who came to North America for a better life are said to be of African heritage (Russell, 2009). To comprehend the immigrant's journey in this new country, it is vital to look at identity through the lens of racialized construction. Living in a place where
they are not the minority, Latin immigrants have come across identities that are a relic of a race-based enslavement and colonization history they have left. For example, enslaved Africans in the United States went through a socioeconomic, political, and intellectual process of racialization. As a result, African Americans developed negative racial identities that have persisted in many cases (Leblanc, 2019; Warner, 2012). In addition, racial/ethnic classifications used to categorize immigrants, such as Black, Hispanic/Latin, and Asian, are not contested in the United States and Canada (Teelucksingh, 2006; Warner, 2006). Indeed, members of the host community in the United States and Canada and immigrants have formed and reconstructed the substance of these categories. For example, 2021 Census Canada started using the term racialized group to refer to such a group of immigrants, as explained in the previous section.

According to Hall, Everett and Hamilton-Mason (2012), Black and racialized women suffer the same obstacles as White women because of gender inequality, but confront additional challenges due to race and/or ethnicity. Intersectional scholars assert that Black and racialized women are discriminated against in ways that do not fall neatly into the legal categories of racism or sexism but rather as a mix of the two (Crenshaw, 1991). Leblanc (2019) explains that sexism is legally defined as the injustices that all women endure, whereas racism refers to the injustices that all Blacks, immigrants, and other people of colour face. According to Crenshaw (1991), Black and racialized women are routinely rendered legally invisible and without redress under this paradigm.

This section discussed the racialization process that Latina immigrants and other immigrant of the racialized group have faced in North America. The following section of this chapter will highlight the gender inequality and the obstacles for women in leadership positions.
2.3 Gender Inequality: women in leadership

As the number of women in leadership positions increases, new theories that account for the intersections of gender and other identities are required, given that this may represent barriers for racialized women in leadership positions. Intersectionality, which considers various identity characteristics, complicates women's notions of oppression based on gender and different identities. According to Moorosi et al. (2018), although an intersectional framework has been included in many disciplines, it is still rarely used to problematize women's experiences as leaders. Ngunjiri and Gardiner (In press) explain how an intersectional framework aids in illuminating the challenges and opportunities, oppressive and privileged moments in women's experiences as leaders in various organizational contexts. Additionally, employing an intersectional framework can assist us in comprehending the complexities of power and privilege in the workplace (Ngunjiri & Gardiner, In press).

Blackmore (2013) analyzes the underrepresentation of women in leadership from a feminist critical perspective. She explains that distinctions in class, race, ethnicity, and gender are manifestations of the legacy of injustices. Such differences have been socially constructed through organizational structures, processes, and cultures. She further claims that feminists recognize the historical practices of racialization and gendered leadership. The representation of women in leadership positions and gender inequality in career advancement are well-documented but largely unaddressed problems in academia (Khan et al., 2019). Moreover, women continue to face challenges while making academic progress and exhibiting abilities. Analyzing women as leaders in academia, Nidiffer (2010) believes that while there has been progress in some areas, women continue to trail behind their male counterparts in assuming leadership positions in these organizations. According to her, the number of female assistant
professors is comparable to that of male assistant professors in many areas. In contrast, the
total number of female tenured and other leading academics is far lower. Even when women are in
leadership positions on par with males, they tend to remain in less respected fields. Further, in a
Canadian context, Smith and Bray (2019) argue that women in leadership positions deal with
more than just underrepresentation and less important work. The academic leadership pipeline
remains dominated by white men. Women also work in institutions and departments that have
particular workplace cultures, operating procedures, and belief systems that embody concepts
about gender, race, class, age, and other identity complexities (Smith, 2010).

Some published studies on women and leadership highlight some more salient issues,
especially those related to the intersection of other identities and educational leadership. Madsen
(2012) emphasizes the beneficial aspects of women in educational leadership positions. She says
that when women leaders collaborate with male and/or female students, instructors, staff, and
administrators, these individuals will likely have life-changing encounters. In addition, these
women can act as influential role models and mentors for younger women who are beginning
their leadership journey. Madsen argues further that advancements have been made by women in
the sphere of educational leadership. In practice, it is feasible to observe some improvement, but
more work remains.

Storberg-Walker and Gardiner (2017) analyze the relationship between leadership and
different identities through a critique of authentic leadership. The authors explain that "a
complicated social/relational process relevant to authentic leadership has to do with stereotypes
and the impact of stereotype threats on a leader's identity" (p. 356). Therefore, it can be said that
the professional life of a leader is built and shaped through their identities. Such critical thinking
by Storberg-Walker and Gardiner is critical to exploring the intersection of leaders' identities that
are often invisible and overlooked or hyperdimensional to reinforce social discrimination. They argue:

When leaders are perceived as marginalized, it will be harder for them to lead authentically. Authenticity is not only complex and sometimes contradictory but the desire to be seen as an authentic leader can be thwarted by social prejudice. Such social discrimination may – implicitly or explicitly – have specific notions of what it is to be authentic. (Storberg-Walker & Gardiner, 2017, p. 357)

In addition to that, through an autoethnography, Ngunjiri and Hernandez (2017) use intersectionality to highlight the complexity of their multiple identities in their experiences as educational leaders. They assert their social identities as women, born outside the United States, phenotypically black, mothers, and teachers who act as leaders and followers within higher education institutions. In their study, they offer an analysis of their own life stories as leaders at the intersections of multiple identities such as gender, race, and other identities and roles to deconstruct existing theorizations of authentic leadership.

Within a Canadian context, according to Motapanyane and Shankar (2022), although there has been an increase in the enrollment and graduation rates of black, indigenous, and racial minority women at the undergraduate and college levels, the numbers decrease significantly as leadership positions advance, resulting in a negligible presence in higher education leadership. Gill and Donaghue (2016) also emphasize the significance of intersectional thinking in higher education leadership to attempt to challenge organizational norms. Thus, the realization that social positions and identities are relational and that they can contribute to a more diverse and equitable academic leadership is essential. Gardiner (2015) expands the definition of what constitutes authentic leadership to explain the ways in which we live and lead, exploring how
people without positional authority can deeply change their communities. In this context, the lived experiences of people in leadership, through the intersection of identities, especially racialized identities, are crucial for thinking about the interconnections between gender, authenticity and leadership through good initiatives and equitable practices. Evidently, it is necessary to make accessible the numerous positions that make up daily life and the power relations that are central to it.

Given the disparities racialized women face in leadership positions, it is vital that institutional leaders in higher education evaluate how to train and mentor this demographic. For Latinas, sexism, racism, xenophobia, and a variety of deficiency viewpoints coexist (Macias & Stephens, 2017). In order to educate higher education institutions to confront social justice challenges, they contend that educational leadership programmes must incorporate social justice topics from a historical and global perspective. Macias and Stephens (2017) argue that even Latinas who hold managerial roles in schools that primarily serve minorities are subject to prejudice and racial discrimination. Research shows that race and gender are obstacles for Latinas aspiring to leadership positions. Many successful Latino educators have discovered that ignoring stereotypes, informal mentoring, support networks, and a dedication to becoming change agents are effective strategies for overcoming these obstacles (Bordas, 2013; Macias & Stephens, 2017). Therefore, the support of institutions is essential to give space to diversity in educational leadership in a broad way. The aspects of women in higher education and the disparities in academic leadership will be discussed in the next section.

2.4 Women in Higher Education

Recent research indicates that women are underrepresented in higher education leadership positions in Canadian and American institutions (Silberg et al., 2022). In a Canadian context,
Smith and Bray (2019) showed the results of a study at the Academic Women's Association which concluded that even after more than 30 years of equity initiatives, leadership positions in higher education are still occupied predominantly by white men. That study revealed that 80% of presidents were white, and 86.7% identified themselves as men; 92.2 percent of deans were white, 32 percent identified as female, and only 7.7 percent were a visible minority (Smith & Bray, 2019; Motapanyane & Shankar, 2022). Although recognized advances have been observed over the years, such statistical data reflect a cruel reality in relation to educational leadership positions occupied by women in general. However, this reality is significantly worse when considering black, indigenous, and other racialized women within academia (Khan et al., 2019).

In higher education, work is based on research and productivity, as explained by Moodly and Toni (2017). The efficacy of research and productivity and its validation through published work play a crucial role in ascending to positions of leadership. This is where the majority of women in higher education fail to obtain access to positions of leadership. According to Obers (2014), the research results of men in peer-reviewed publications surpass those of women by more than 60 percent. In a study on the experiences of Canadian academic women in educational leadership, Acker (2014) states that women even in leadership positions, opportunities are considered in intermediate or lower leadership positions. Acker further explains that this changing environment has a detrimental effect on women as it represents the interests of a corporate university. Factors such as the glass ceiling, the wage gap between men and women and the burden of motherhood, among other prejudices and forms of discrimination in educational leadership positions in higher education, are invisible barriers that prevent women from reaching such positions (Silberg et al., 2022). Such factors to which women are subject are intensified in the case of racialized women, as stated by Khan et al. (2019). In addition, the aforementioned factors
contribute to a smaller number of women in higher education leadership and possible gaps in recruitment, retention and leadership within institutions.

Considering the inequalities and gaps that affect women in higher education leadership, Augustus (2021) states that this is based, in part, on motherhood and childcare, and justified by idealized social norms. According to Wilton and Ross (2017), in most cases, women are more likely than men to take career pauses for childcare, which places them in a difficult position. When women resume their professions, they are more likely to return to part-time work, which may result in a career setback (Blau & DeVaro, 2007). In higher education, motherhood expectations aligned with production research expectations demonstrate that institutions still have a system male-centred and this can lead to an increase in women's sense of failure and the consequent removal of them from leadership positions (Augustus, 2021; Wyatt-Nichol et al., 2012). Neoliberal views increasingly present in higher education institutions, and the unilateral role of motherhood act to increase inequalities between men and women (Yildirim & Eslen-Ziya, 2020).

Recently, the global COVID-19 pandemic has made inequalities between men and women more evident, especially in higher education. Several surveys show how this pandemic has accelerated the change in work practices so that the workload, especially for women, has increased rapidly. In higher education, according to Augustus (2021), teaching and learning activities had to be conducted rapidly online, necessitating additional training in the use of new technologies pertinent to distance learning. The study conducted by Yildirim and Eslen-Ziya (2020) demonstrated that the COVID-19 pandemic had a disproportionate impact on the daily routines of female academics with children. In addition to that, women with children are less productive academically than men (Augustus, 2021; Collins et al., 2020). Moreover, the volume of men's and women's search activities differs. Such data demonstrate that the COVID-19
pandemic has reaffirmed gender inequalities in higher education and that equality initiatives need to be resumed by higher education institutions so that, in the first moment, the damage caused by the pandemic is repaired and, in the second stage, women in higher education can pursue leadership careers.

In this section, I discussed women in leadership in higher education, highlighting the challenges faced by women in achieving leadership positions. In the next section, I discuss intersectionality and the main Latina feminist perspectives relevant to this research, as well as the connections between the study and the theories I am drawing from. I begin by briefly presenting the intersectionality and its perspective around social identities and how the intersection of this can mean additional layers of barriers or privileges. Then, I focus on giving an account of the theory from the Latina feminist point of view, which serves as the theoretical approach for this study.

2.5 Intersectionality

Intersectionality is used in this research as a conceptual framework to explain how the intersection of social identities of Latina immigrant women can create barriers to their experiences in educational leadership positions in higher education. Under the migratory context, social identities can be analyzed from their interrelationships of power and oppression. Thus, intersectional research is a suitable alternative for social analysis since traditional research treats inequalities independently of each other (Dill & Zambrana, 2009). In this study, intersectionality framed the investigation of the identities of Latina immigrant women that revealed the complexities of their experiences in educational leadership.

In this study, intersectionality is essential for understanding the experiences lived by a specific group of racialized people. Thus, intersectionality is essential to theorize and explain
inequality in the sense of social relations (Anthias, 2013). Intersectionality requires considering social reality as multidimensional, experienced identities as interconnected, and oppressive systems as interconnected and mutually constitutive. Intersectionality must incorporate both privilege and oppression to encompass the entire continuum of identity-power relations (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016; May, 2014; Yuval-Davis, 2011).

The concept of intersectionality was created to challenge barriers and complex oppressions derived from intersections of identities (Figure 1). Crenshaw (1991) argues that multiple facets of identity intersect with contending power relations and oppressions. Thus, an intersectional framework is required to account for the interrelationships between multiple identity dimensions and oppressions of power (Crenshaw, 1991; Cho et al., 2013; Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). Intersectionality is used to theorize, analyze, and expose oppression while having social justice as a goal (Rice et al., 2019). Justice transformations are prompted by examining structures and obstacles to inequalities and oppression (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). Engagement with intersectionality is thus a political act undertaken in pursuit of transformation. Consequently, intersectionality creates the potential for social transformation by revealing the inequalities most frequently found in locations of identity and power (McAll, 2005).

**Figure 1**

*Intersectionality map*
In conclusion, identity and the oppressions related to the identities, such as explored in this research, gender/sexism or ethnicity/race/racism, are the central focus of intersectionality. According to Myers (2019), instead of prioritizing a single aspect of identity, such as race in critical race theory or gender in feminist research, intersectionality considers multiple dimensions of identity without necessarily privileging one identity over another. Intersectionality contests the oversimplification of social identities and unique social locations, such as race or gender, which produce deceptive hierarchies and fail to represent experiences.

This section explored some conceptual aspects of intersectionality, highlighting its importance for this research. In the next section, I explore my theoretical adoption of Latina feminist thought focusing on the migratory social context in which the participants are located.
2.6 Latina Feminist Theory

In this research, I choose to use the term “Latina,” as many authors identify with this term. In addition, this study focuses on Latina immigrant women (or people who identify as such), highlighting a specific gender profile, which makes it essential to maintain an emphasis on their contributions and forms of identification.

Latina feminist theory addresses notions of individuality, social identity, and the rich and varied experiences of embodied being. Over the years, Latina authors have begun to distance themselves from specific philosophical approaches to focus on core issues of individuality and identity within feminist theory (Pitts, 2021). In this sense, Anzaldúa (1987) addresses the relationship between racial, sexual, gender and cultural identities, in addition to reflections on the understanding of what “border” means. This question goes beyond the simple division of being here or there; and something more profound and relates to psychological, social, and cultural aspects. Lugones (1987) also brings up the idea of migration when she reflects on Latinas and women of colour in their efforts to move between white/Anglo communities. Such communities might include the academic spaces of feminist theory. Thus, she claims that many women of colour inhabit and travel through different “worlds.” This analogy about the world and different people is relevant to my study on Latina women in educational leadership because it focuses on people who have migrated and have lived in different places.

Many Latina feminists speak about their lived experiences of marginalization, oppression, and resistance as central points of their discourses. Lugones (1987), for example, uses the term the “world-travelling” in which she describes a deep self that runs through all these experiences. Lugones opposes the downgrading of certain individuals and ethnic groups, in addition to discussing forms of resistance to oppression. In addition to including gender relations
and the intersection with categorizations of race/ethnicity, class and sexuality, Lugones' theory (1987) emphasizes resistance to power and the decolonization of subjectivities.

In another sense, Ortega (2016) describes a self between worlds; the multiple self is a being-between-worlds and a being-in-the-worlds, an in-between-self. This multiplicity of selves is found in Latina feminist theory bringing the idea of someone living across borders. Anzaldúa (1987) describes a multiple self that inhabits borders in her division between the United States and Mexico and, in her experience, divided between cultures, races, languages, and genders. It highlights the relationships, characteristics, and material conditions specific to human beings. One of Anzaldua's great contributions is her detailed description of the new *mestiza* as a being who is thrown across borders and has to negotiate her various social identities in this complex in-between territory. This notion of living on frontiers, of negotiating old and newly acquired identities in the new place and in new relationships, leads to this study in order to understand the lived experiences of Latina immigrant women, the new mestizas.

In this chapter, I highlighted aspects of Latina immigrant women, educational leadership, racialization, and women in leadership, highlighting the disparities in academic leadership and providing an overview of the literature on such subjects. Understanding the barriers faced by Latina immigrant women is essential to investigate the impacts of this on their career progression in educational leadership and how these issues are addressed in the literature. Also, this chapter has described intersectionality and Latina feminist theory as my theoretical framework to explore the barriers faced by them. In later chapters, we will see how the lived experiences of Latina women offer insight into institutional barriers that informed their leadership journeys. The following chapter will detail the precise methods I employed in this research, showing the move from framework to research practice.
Chapter 3

3 Methodology and Methods

This research aims to examine, from an intersectional perspective, the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in higher education in Southwestern Ontario. The study of the lived experiences of Latina women navigating the obstacles of being immigrants and women attaining educational leadership positions is the central point of this research. Furthermore, Latina feminist theory and the conceptual framework of intersectionality compose the theoretical foundation of this research. For the sake of this research study, career progression in educational leadership refers to how Latina immigrant women manage their experiences and identities to achieve their career success.

This study is based on three research questions:

1. What factors characterize the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in Southwestern Ontario?

2. How do Latina immigrant women discuss their identities in their professional experiences in educational leadership?

3. How do Latina immigrant women describe the barriers they faced in their professional careers in educational leadership?

This research sheds light on those aspects that define the experience and struggles of Latina women in an immigration setting.
3.1 Research Design

The qualitative method of narrative analysis was utilized to investigate the lived experiences of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions in one higher educational institution in Southwestern Ontario, Canada. Mertens (2020) argues that qualitative research methodologies are utilized to provide an in-depth description of a particular programme, activity, or setting. In addition, she contends that "qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world" (p. 243). This signifies that qualitative researchers examine things in their natural surroundings, aiming to understand or interpret events based on people's meanings.

Therefore, using narrative analysis, the researcher focuses methodologically on narratives and aims to collect stories (Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2022). More than that, with shared life stories as its primary point, the narrative analysis seeks to gain a glimpse of understanding of lived experience. Using this methodological approach, the researcher can see that both research participants and researchers have a history (Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2022). According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), narrative, or storytelling, is an excellent academic tool for making sense and giving voice to lived experiences and exploring the relationship to the world, society, cultures, ourselves, and others, and is thus a primary source of information for social science investigation. In addition to that, using the thematic analysis, the researcher can contextualize the themes that emerged from the interviews within the theoretical framework and looks for similarities and discrepancies in the data (Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2022). The narrative and thematic analysis approach matches the objective of my research since it can help me obtain a deeper understanding of the participants’ diverse situations. As such, it can help me
consider the experiences of Latina immigrant women who play leadership roles in higher education.

This chapter clarifies the two main phases of my research, which included interviews and visual maps, and describes my research methodology. Each of these distinct phases contributed to shedding light on the lived experiences of Latina immigrant women in leadership positions, navigating barriers and opportunities. The methods used to carry out this study include interviews and visual maps. The interviews provide information about the participants and their lived experiences in their career progression. At the same time, visual maps reveal the identities of Latina women and makes it possible to visualize the intersection between such identities during their professional careers. The interviews constituted the initial stage of the research procedure. In this chapter, I describe the participant selection and interviewing processes. In addition, I discuss how the anonymity of participants was preserved throughout the research procedure.

Following the interview section, a summary of the data analysis process for this intersectional study is provided. The final phase of the investigation, visual maps, was informed by data analysis. The purpose of the visual maps in this study was to disclose the Latina immigrant women's identities and the impact of it on their leadership careers. Consequently, I depict the visual mapping procedure, outlining how the visual illustration of the intersection of these identities was constructed. I began by connecting the identified interview themes. Then, I emphasized similarities and differences between the conversations, identifying how the participants perceive and discuss their identities and how these identities impact their career progression.
After the thorough description of the visual mapping processes, I close the chapter by concentrating on the validity of the study process and findings. I explain the ethical implications and reliability of my research in which the ethical considerations included ensuring the anonymity of participants and informing them of the potential risks and benefits of the study. Member checking and reflexivity ensured the trustworthiness of this research.

3.2 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process for my research followed two distinct phases. The first phase included interviews with Latina immigrant women in higher education educational leadership positions at a university in Southwestern Ontario. The second phase mapped the participants' social identities, as well as highlighted key themes illuminated in the first phase. During both phases, I remained reflective.

I began the research process with interviews, gathering stories and experiences of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions. The participants all attended a single university in Southwestern Ontario, and their experiences served as the starting point for my research. Semi-structured interviews were used to capture each of the individual narratives. The second stage of the research was completed by visual mapping the social identities which shape the participants' selves and experiences. The visual mapping process involved connecting the experiences to the impact of those social identities on their career progression.

3.3 Interviews

This investigation began with interviews with Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions at a university in southwestern Ontario. In qualitative research, the focus is on the participants' perspectives and interpretations of the social world (Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2022). In my study, I seek to give voice to participants' life experiences on their career
progression. Throughout the interview process, the emphasis was not only placed on exploring the aspects of their identities but also investigating the impact of the intersection of their identities on their professional careers. Specific attention was given to how Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions describe their identities through their lived experiences. Thus, in the interview phase, it is necessary to capture the perspective of the participants, observing how they identify their lived experiences and "how they come to share those stories." (Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2022, p. 88)

The interviews were conducted with current Latina immigrant women leaders at a single Southwestern Ontario university. I searched for a comprehensive account of their leadership experiences during the interviews, exploring the reflection on their identities. I regarded the interviews as an investigation of the participants' lived experiences to understand their interpretations of their own stories. Through the narratives of Latina immigrant women, I aimed to identify the relationships, discourses, and institutional policies that shape their career experiences.

**Participants**

I selected six participants for this study based on convenience, purpose, and criterion sampling. The participants are immigrants from five Latin American countries. The criterion for selecting participants was that each woman in the study was currently employed at an institution of higher education in southwestern Ontario, Canada. One of them is a graduate student in a Ph.D. program at the university. I used invitations to recruit participants. After the approval from the Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) at Western University, the participants were contacted using publicly available email addresses. Human participants necessitated the consent of a research ethics committee prior to the study's implementation. Potential participants who
were interested in participating in the study responded with an email and a signed Letter of Information (LOI) and Consent.

Starting each interview, I introduced myself before inviting them to participate in the research. In total, six Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions agreed to participate in the study, and interviews were scheduled. In the next section, I describe the interview process through the semi-structured interviews that were carried out.

*Interview Process*

Interviews were the primary data collection method for this narrative analysis. In one-on-one interviews – conducted virtually due to COVID-19 health measures - participants were asked to narrate their stories in one semi-structured interview designed by the researcher. Mertens (2020) stated, "qualitative researchers also use technology to conduct and record interviews” (p. 404). This fact is essential for subsequent transcribing, and all participants consented to this action. Esposito and Evans-Winters (2022) explain that the desire of any interview is to attain a deeper discernment of how the participant perceives or feels about a topic, event, text, etc. As a qualitative researcher, I am seeking for the viewpoints and interpretations of the participants toward the social world.

I provided an overview of the LOI at the beginning of each interview and prompted if the participant had any concerns or required additional explanation. As stated in the LOI, I reminded the participants that the interview would be recorded. In addition, I assured the women that every effort would be made to maintain confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study. Priority was placed on maintaining confidentiality during the study process to safeguard participants and their careers.
Each interview lasted approximately 40 to 60 minutes. The Latina immigrant women discussed their identities, sharing their lived experiences. The semi-structured format is appropriate to give fluidity in response to the participant's comments. I asked each of the research participants to provide insight into any career obstacles or supports within the university.

As previously indicated, consent for interviewing and recording interviews was acquired before the interview. Using Zoom's record function, appropriate recording techniques, as recommended, were implemented (Creswell, 2013; Mertens, 2020). All study participants provided their consent to be recorded, and pseudonyms were employed to protect their anonymity.

After the interview process concluded, I transcribed the audio/video recording word-for-word. All the participants had the option to provide a member check of the transcribed interview, during which they could provide feedback and make edits if they so desired. As part of the research procedure, member checking enables participants to approve their transcript, ensuring its veracity and relation to their experiences (Mertens, 2020). In addition, member verification gave participants control over the description of their own experiences, which is crucial to narratives analysis.

**Participant Anonymity**

Priority was placed on protecting the anonymity of participants throughout the research process. Due to the study's focus on Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions who are presently employed at the institution, identifying the participants could have had negative consequences for their careers. In addition, the women all worked at the same institution; thus, the danger of identifying one participant could lead to the identification of all of
them. Specific details, including the name of the institution, the educational background of each participant, and their faculty departments, were kept confidential. In addition, I used numbers as pseudonyms instead of providing individual profiles.

Some similarities link the participants of this study, even though anonymity was a priority. All participants identified themselves as women and expressed this, in addition to family, education was a priority. For example, they all have PhDs in their respective fields, conduct research, and conduct students in classrooms. Some participants expressly asked me not to mention their origin countries, linking this information to their quotations as a way of ensuring anonymity.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Open coding is an essential link between data gathering and interpretation, while participants’ stories are investigated in terms of their narrative structure and content (Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2022). In this study, the open coding and the intersectional approach helped to begin the analysis process by distinguishing relevant interview transcript themes. Using these specific data analysis procedures, I could identify preliminary pertinent material based on the purpose and central questions of the research (Appendix D).

Given the narratives are the core of my research, I undertook an analysis of both the video recording and the interview transcripts, paying close attention to the interviewees' tones and emotions while focusing on the plots and themes of the stories. I also conducted a theme analysis of the participants' accounts of their experiences as Latina immigrant women aspiring to leadership roles in higher education in Southwestern Ontario, Canada.


**Interview Analysis**

I started data analysis after the interviewing phase and continued it throughout the duration of the research endeavour. I began by recording notes, key concepts, and queries that arose throughout each interview in a journal I did before and after each interview. After completing and transcribing the interviews, I began organizing the transcripts into themes (Figure 2). Four steps were required to categorize the experiences of each participant into distinct themes.

**Figure 2**

*Themes emerged from the interview process*

As described by Merrian and Tisdell (2016), data analysis “is a process of making sense out of data” (p. 193). Thus, the steps aim to determine the optimal method to organize the data into a narrative account of the findings. Open coding was used to identify each interview's principal concepts and explanations as the initial step in interview analysis. Open coding entailed highlighting any particularly intriguing, or significant information to the interview questions.
The following stage involved condensing the stories into keywords and phrases, which led to highlight similarities and differences between the interviews. After identifying key terms, the next step was axial coding, connecting the phrases and words that appeared throughout the interviews. In the final stage, I identified recurring themes throughout the interviews. This process uncovered similarities and patterns among Latina immigrant women's individual identities, experiences, and perceptions in their career progression.

3.5 Visual Mapping

According to Wheeldon and Ahlberg (2019), visual maps are ideally adapted for qualitative research because they can be linked to the theoretical starting point that is typically associated with qualitative research. The purpose of the visual maps in this study was to explore the identities of Latina immigrant women and its impact on their leadership careers. Consequently, I describe the visual-mapping process, elaborating on how the visual illustration of the intersection of these identities was produced. I began by connecting the identified interview themes. I then emphasized key similarities and differences between the conversations, describing how the participants perceive and discuss their identities, as well as how these identities impact their career advancement. By providing a creative means of engagement, maps can be used to investigate the "backstage" of participants' experiences and perceptions. They represent a new strategy that seeks to go beyond soliciting a prescribed form of narrative that precludes more spontaneous responses (Hathaway & Atkinson, 2003; Wheeldon & Faubert, 2009).

Since a map depicts the initial visual construction of a participant's experience, researchers can more precisely design subsequent phases of data collection and use participant-generated themes to guide more in-depth analysis (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2019). Thus, it is
possible to see significant connections between visual mapping and data analysis. The purpose of the visual mind map is to visualize the social world that interviews and transcriptions illuminate (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

*Social identities and key themes*
In the context of my research, I was curious about how the participants understand and discuss their identities, as well as how the intersection of these identities impacts their career progression. The intersectionality theory itself uses maps as a visual device to demonstrate the intersection of social identities and how this can reflect on privilege or oppression, as described in Figure 1. It was this visual tool that I sought to bring to my research and that enabled me to represent the social identities of the participants and the key themes that emerged in the interviews.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

For leading this research, many ethical considerations were considered. Creswell (2005) categorized the ethical difficulties as informed consent processes; deceit or covert actions; secrecy toward participants, sponsors, and coworkers; benefits of study participants above dangers; and participant requests that go above and beyond. This study examined each of the previously listed ethical categories.

As this study involved human subjects, Western University Research Ethics Board approval was requested and in approved sequence, as evidenced in the Appendix C (Ethics Board Approval Letter). The study was conducted in strict accordance with Western ethical standards. Participants entered the study willingly and were free to leave at any time during the research. All data acquired throughout this study were kept private and were used for research purposes. To ensure the security of the data, the audio/video recording and the transcripts were kept on two password-protected external storage drives.

All participants were notified via email of the purpose of this research, confidentiality protection measures, methods for conducting the interviews, data collection, including audio/video recording and transcription, and how the information was used and stored in order to
make sure that everyone was aware of what to expect at each stage of the process. To ensure that participants were fully informed, they signed consent forms containing all the information before the study began. Each participant received the researcher's contact information so they could get in touch with the researcher at any time during the research.

All participants’ written consent was required prior to interview scheduling. After the conclusion of the interviews, participants were allowed to audit the transcripts to confirm their answers to the researcher's questions. This allowed participants to corroborate what was said and make any modifications they deemed necessary, thereby enhancing the accuracy of the transcripts. In addition, participants were permitted to remedy any errors and add clarifications. The participants were given two weeks to communicate any necessary modifications to the transcripts. After the period of two weeks, I did not receive any changes from the participants, I presumed they had accepted the original transcription.

Throughout the study, anonymity were also crucial ethical considerations for this endeavour. This investigation lacked titles, names, and other identifying information. Thus, no interview comments that could have identified the participant were used. I informed the participants that their information was strictly confidential, and this was also clarified prior to the interviews. No names or any information will be included in the publication of the study's results. There were no hazards associated with participation in this study. However, it was necessary to communicate the prospective benefits of the research to the participants. Although participants were not compensated, the information collected may shed light on the challenges and support of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership careers.

The relationships between researchers and participants in this study merit particular consideration. In this chapter, I reiterate the interaction between the participant and researcher
positions. When conducting this research, I share the social-cultural environment and understandings with the participants. Throughout the research, I endeavoured to cultivate a mutually beneficial and cordial rapport with my participants and an empowering and secure environment for sharing personal life stories.

3.7 Trustworthiness

In this study, data collected through interviews, personal notes (journal), and visual mapping were analyzed and triangulated to identify emerging themes, eliminate overlapping areas, and provide validity to the findings (Creswell, 2013). In addition, the researcher can employ methodological triangulation, which entails using multiple data collection techniques, such as interviews, observations, notes, questionnaires, and documents (Esposito & Winter-Evans, 2022). In order to increase the validity of this study, I employed these multiple data collection methods: interviews and visual mind maps. Using the different methods to explore the lived experiences of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles within a higher education institution in Southwest Ontario, Canada, I was able to elucidate, confirm, and corroborate the information gathered on the participants to determine themes and perspectives, thereby enhancing the study's findings (Creswell, 2013).

There are methods for ensuring the reliability of a research study. I have identified triangulation as a technique used in research to confirm the validity of studies by employing two or more data collection techniques in narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008). In this study, specific measures were taken to improve the reliability of the research procedure and the results. Member checking and reflexivity were utilized as distinct methods.
**Member checking**

According to Riessman (2008), qualitative researchers employ one or more approaches to assure reliability and validity regularly. In addition, they can choose between member-checking, triangulation, thick description, peer reviews, and external audits. Creswell (2013) recommended member-checking, which includes “taking data, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions back to the participants so that they can judge the accuracy and credibility of the account” (p. 252).

I conducted member checking with all interviewees after completing the transcripts. As a result of their confirmed responses to each question, I could assert that the participant's knowledge and understanding of their social identities and the impact that has on their career progression in educational leadership were reflected in the transcripts. I sent transcripts to each participant and allowed two weeks for corrections. No participant made modifications, additions, or alterations upon review.

**Reflexivity**

When attempting to immerse oneself in the cultural context, rapport is not enough (Esposito & Winter-Evans, 2022). Remaining self-reflective during the research makes it possible to develop the reliability of my study and establish a relationship of trust with the participants. The authors also explain that, in intersectional research, although it is important to share a similar gender, racial and ethnic identity or sexual orientation with research participants, this alone does not automatically guarantee that the researcher will have full access to their lives. It does not happen because of some shared identity. More than that, it is essential to recognize the various social identities that shape the selves of the participants. This was the objective and concern of this study, in which I kept myself reflective during the research process by keeping a personal journal before and after each interview. I tried to remain reflective, trying to understand
the narratives of the participants from the point of view of their stories. I believe that having
shared identities with them helped me to understand the narratives and facilitated the relationship
of trust between the researcher and participants.

This chapter summarizes my research design, including the methods and data analysis
procedure. Included in the discussion of the main phases of the research was a description of the
interview and visual-mapping procedure. The data analysis procedure has aided in highlighting
how the participants perceive and discuss their identities and how these identities impact their
career progression. Additionally, key ethical considerations were highlighted, alongside
trustworthiness of the study. The next chapter will emphasize my findings from the semi-
structured interviews I conducted with six Latina immigrant women in educational leadership
positions at a Southwestern Ontario university.
Chapter 4

4. Findings

The data of this study represent two specific phases of research analysis that were highlighted, involving interviews and visual mapping. Challenges, barriers, supports, opportunities, and experiences are discussed in this chapter as other themes that have emerged from the interview process. Interviews with six participants from a single higher education institution were conducted to understand the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions in higher education through their lived experiences. The interviews provided participants with the chance to discuss their social identities and how the intersection of these influences their professional journeys. The data were coded according to themes that reflect the participants' experiences in their leadership positions. The themes that appeared from the conversations with study participants are used to categorize the findings from these interviews.

4.1 Being Latina

When I talked to the participants of this study about what it means to be Latina, they were unanimous in mentioning the main and most common characteristics of Latina women. Joy, happiness, a sense of humour when facing difficult situations, and the ability to laugh and joke in bad moments, a positive attitude are mentioned in all interviews. For example, Participant One says, "I think that the first thing that comes to my mind is happiness, which is very close to our hearts. I would say the joy that we usually have (...) we have a lot of like humour and confronting situations the best way possible." Participant Five highlights Latinos “being good at soft skills,” which include communication, time management, network building, empathy, critical thinking, being proactive and self-awareness (Schulz, 2008).
Participants demonstrate political, economic, and cultural awareness that characterize Latin American countries, which despite their differences and complexities, have many common characteristics. They talked about resilience and resistance as a consequence of dictatorial governments, struggles against drug trafficking and other problems faced in several countries in South America. Complex themes are remembered, but also the ability to resist and resilience are demonstrated as something positive in the sense of not giving up.

We have a shared history. And maybe this is something that has been grown in me as a result of being an immigrant I think we have this natural instinct to resist. Like there's this natural resistance in our hearts. We can recognize injustice, and there's this desire to resist systems that are oppressive in that way because I think I just, historically, we've had to do that in order to survive in our history. There are many instances in which we haven’t. And there's been great suffering as a result, right? Like we all had military dictatorships and, I think, we recognize that shared history and, and so things that I think people here have had to learn are things that we have needed to do in order to survive as a collective.

(Participant Three)

In terms of being Latina and being an immigrant, the accent appears very strongly in the narratives. The accent is something that marks and reinforces the non-belonging to the new place. This is perceived as a barrier in the participants' career progression, but at the same time, this is seen as something personal which is part of their life experiences. For example, Participant Four believes that her accent has a negative impact on communicating with the colleagues she leads. Participant Two states that she always receives comments about her accent in her teaching evaluations and that this is a problem for her. However, Participant Three states:
I think being multilingual is certainly a positive thing. And even though sometimes people will comment on the accent or I know sometimes one of the negatives is sometimes, I can tell when someone is distracted by the accent instead of hearing what I have to say. But I think it's a great asset. I think most of my colleagues only speak English. And so even that, it's just a great opportunity to meet people certainly in leadership positions. It has allowed me to expand those opportunities, whereas others have not been able to do so because they only speak one language. (Participant Three)

Another aspect of being Latina highlighted by participants in this research is the importance of family for Latina women. Participant Six stated "I think that is very distinct. Latin American essence of who we are is just how close we are with our families, especially as an immigrant in a country that is very individual-centred and where nuclear families are so close-knit and sometimes isolated from others."

Similarly, another participant emphasizes the sense of community as a consequence of the familial role for Latina women:

I think that one of the things that are really seen as part of our identity is trying to do our best to help others. I think we have a strong sense of community, which is very different from what we encounter here in terms of society. The Canadian society is very individualistic, which is not a bad thing. It is just different, right? Our countries are very community-oriented, and I think it is because family is special to us. (Participant One)

By understanding the importance of the family, the participants argue about flexibility and work-life balance. They claim that, throughout their professional careers, there was a need for them to be flexible because of their role as a wife and mother. Participant Six describes her experience during her PhD:
I had two groups. One group of people I worked with was flexible, and the other wasn’t. I guess, in the end, when choosing groups, I will choose the people that understand my situation and when things that happen, like life events or external situations, are able to help me with that flexibility (…) I have been a professor, and I have tried to be flexible with my students. (Participant Six)

In the same way, talking about pressure and expectations in academia, Participant One says: “I feel like the university really, really puts a lot of pressure in terms of what they are expecting from you. There is not a lot of flexibility in that sense, sadly.” Her experience as a mother and a wife in the academic world demonstrates the complexity of being divided between family and work. She continues: “My supervisor was not a mother, so obviously, she didn’t understand, and her priority was cultural, I guess. For her, I needed to be here most of my time. I think our lives need and have to be aligned with what the university wants.” The flexibility is also explored by Participant Five, who considers that Latina women are more flexible and understanding in relation to issues that concern the family. The participants also expressed the lack of space for connection between Latinos at the university so that there can be exchanges of experiences and opportunities, in addition to the representativeness of Latinos in leadership positions.

These stories, along with other discussions, show how participants perceive and discuss their Latino identity (Alcoff, 2006). In addition, it was clear that the intersection of participants' identities - as a mother, as a wife, as an educational leader and a professional - has a relevant impact on their career progression in educational leadership positions. The challenges of being a woman and being a leader in academia lead to the next theme identified.
4.2 Women in Educational Leadership in Higher Education

The theme of women in educational leadership in higher education is one of the central themes of this research, especially Latin women in such positions. The participants were able to talk about their experiences, highlighting gender inequality in education and giving examples of lived situations. Reflecting on her personal experience, Participant Five indicated that there is still a huge lack of representation of women in educational leadership, "speaking of Latina women even more." In connection with Participant Five, Participant One explains:

A hundred percent being a man would have helped me to be more successful for many reasons, but, in general, if you see the leadership group, the majority are men. If you think of people listening to other people, they will listen to a man a lot more. If you think about time, usually when you are a woman, an immigrant, and a mother and a wife, there is a lot that's going to be on your plate. You are going to have to juggle a lot of things, and this is, this is something that I have seen a lot is that many, many women who are in leadership positions. (Participant One)

Participant Four also reinforces the lack of women in leadership. She states: "More recently, they want women in leadership. I think it is positive because they encourage us to go and take these leadership roles, but it is only recently." She also explains that she was the only woman in her department for several years. In her reflections, it is possible to perceive the intersection of being a woman and a foreigner, "I applied for several positions in leadership roles, but I did not get success. Probably, if I were white, male, Canadian, my chances would have been better." (Participant Four)

Talking about her experience at university in the area of education, Participant Two shared her perspective on the disparity between men and women in leadership. She states:
As a woman, you have to work harder. Here or in Latin America, the gender disparity is huge. If you are not a man, you are not a Canadian is a disadvantage. You always have to prove yourself. You have to prove to yourself that you can do it, that you can be as good or as efficient, or that you can be as successful as anybody. All the men come to academia, and the next month they are full professors. (Participant Two)

Participant Six shared a similar thought: “I think females have to show that they are competent, whether they are single or not. And I think I am trying my best, but I know the path is harder for us.” In the same vein, Participant Three discusses her experience in educational leadership. She points,

I think the discourse has changed, but the infrastructures have not. We still have to fight for not being discriminated against in our salaries compared to men. I still think the infrastructure in the academic world is very, it is very oppressive towards women, and it does not necessarily, it is not necessarily conducive. (Participant Three)

Interestingly, Participant Five highlighted some differences that she notices in daily conversations with her male colleagues.

When we have a conference, they always comment that their wives make hotel reservations and flights. I have the same duties as them at the university and do all that alone. I get home, and I realize that we still have things to do. I have the kids, dinner, and the house. I share activities with my husband, but I still realize that our journey is even bigger. (Participant Five)

Participant Three also offered a unique perspective, bringing the expectations for women in academia and the conflict between family and work.
I think higher education and leadership are still very much disproportional, even if they are not dominated in discourse. I do think that has changed. I think the discourse is no longer "women cannot." The discourse is that women should, which I think is equally damaging, because you are a woman, not only can you do anything you want, you should, you should do. And I am not sure that that is as liberating as think as people think it is. I think in academia, for example, in higher leadership, what I experienced is that there is this expectation that because I am a woman from a visible minority, ethnically or racially, I should do it all. I think it is another form of oppression that other people get to dictate. Oh, so it is no longer "you cannot," it is now "you should." You are still telling me that. You are still framing what my actions look like. My kids, my marriage, my work, conferences. We need to negotiate that. So, I do feel that pressure. (Participant Three)

This section highlighted the participants' lived experiences in their professional careers, especially their experiences with gender inequality in educational leadership positions. However, another theme is present in all interviews—specifically, the challenges of motherhood in academia, which will be addressed in the next section.

### 4.3 Challenges for Mothers in Academia

Aligning with the key theme of women in educational leadership, challenges for mothers in academia was a predominant theme highlighted by four participants. They reported on their responsibility with young children, the division of time between academia and family, and how mothers have been treated in academic spaces, in addition to an interesting comparison with the career progression of their husbands. For example, Participant Six complains:
In terms of being a female, I would say not necessarily just being a female, it is about being a mother that the expectations of productivity are not the same. So, I had to create a construct of myself in which productivity was not the end goal but the whole process till the end. And I have also talked with other peers that as soon as the university knows that you are pregnant, they remove any opportunity. So, if you are a mother, you are supposed just to be with your children and, you know, and they remove stuff from you. I think it is a pattern, they call it benevolent paternalism in which, “Oh, she is busy. Well, let's remove that.” And in some cases, it is true, but I think I should be the one making the choice of what projects I should do or not. This is more identified with being a female and a mother. And I know peers that are just females that do not have the same problems of motherhood. (Participant Six)

Participant Six works as a teaching assistant and wants to keep her career in research. She is an example of being divided between family and academia.

If they are not going to hire me because I am a mother, I think that is a place where I will not work. That is probably not flexible for me. Professionally, it is a disadvantage, but at a personal level is an advantage. I will not. I would not forfeit my family. The internal locus of the reason why I am doing work is because of my family. I have to have time for my family. (Participant Six)

Participant One shared the same idea of being a mother in academia. She says:

So, for example, having kids, if the environment is not very inclusive, will be a problem. Because if you have to pick up your kid, if you have to call in and say, “I cannot come in because I have to stay home because my kid does not feel well today” that is a problem. For many people here, that is a problem. So, definitely, being a man is different because,
you know, if your children get sick, most times they want to be with their mom. And most times, the mom knows how to take care of them, what to give them the medicine and what to do in general. (Participant One)

She also makes an interesting comparison with the career progression of her husband:

And my husband has been getting promotion after promotion, and I am like, struggling to get to where I want to go. And I feel like I am devoting a lot more time to my kids and the house and the family, and he has benefited from that a hundred percent. The academic world is not fair for mothers. (Participant One)

Participant Three agrees, “But then the reality still is that I get to work, like those of us who are women here get to work later because we have children who need us, and we need to, you know, we need to navigate that.” Participant Three also shared an example of the challenges for mothers in academia, as follows:

The other day, one of my superiors called a meeting at four, and I was telling one of my colleagues, another woman, I was like, "Who calls a meeting at four? Men!" Or who doesn’t have kids, you know, honestly, who starts a meeting at four with the expectation at four to six? That's the time where you have to go get kids, and you have to get that. So, the discourse may say, women who want to participate, and that was a leadership thing. It is a team of people. It is a leadership situation. So yes, we welcome all the women to participate in this opportunity, but if you have to be home at five, then do not participate because the meeting starts at four. It is unbelievable, but that is true. That happens a lot. (Participant Three)
Some participants talk about some women not taking up educational leadership roles due to this time demand. They also talk about being able to progress in their careers only when their children grow up. About this reality, Participant Five adds:

Even though the university offers us leadership training or leadership positions and opportunities, we are burned out too because we still have to take care of the house of the kids and so on, and say, “oh, you know, I'm not going to bother in trying to pursue more this thing.” More responsibility demands more time. (Participant Five)

In the same sense, Participant One states:

I'm going to be speaking about the flexibility in that piece, and this is something that I've heard over and over again, working remotely or having the flexibility to say, “I'm not going to be able to come. This day at this time, or I have to leave at this day, at this time because I need to do something with my family”, for example, which is again, the most important part of my identity would be my family, right? I'm a mother, so I got in lots of trouble because I said, for example, “I need to leave early today,” or “I need to do this or, or that and or I need to pick up my daughter”, whatever. That was just a huge problem. And, again, my supervisor was not a mother, so obviously she did not understand.

(Participant One)

She continues to explain about mothers with youth children and their obstacles to maintaining productivity and career promotions:

I love my job. Like I enjoy it very much, but that is not the most important thing to me (...) That piece, for me, has been the hardest thing. So, I have felt that has, that has improved with time only because my kids grew, only because of that. But, if I was still at a stage where my kids were seven, or nine, which is not like super young, but they still
need you. That has been the biggest piece for me where we, the university and I, collide a lot. Because you have to be there. You have to be for them, you have to be there to pick them up. You have to be there for their sports, you have to be there for support. Just have to be there. And I do not think the academia understands that. (Participant One)

This section highlighted challenges for moms in academia as described by participants. Specifically, they reported on their responsibility with young children, the division of time between academia and family, and how mothers have been treated in academic spaces. The following section explores the feeling of racialization and exclusion narrated by the participants and the difference between their lived experiences.

4.4 Racialization and Exclusion

Although considered subtle, five participants spoke about racialization and exclusion in their lived experiences. The participants talked about the feeling of non-belonging and exclusion, both in their personal lives and at the university. Reflecting on her personal experience, Participant Two indicated that she felt racialized at university. She states:

I wouldn't say that there is overt racism within Canada, but there is certainly, certainly subtle racism and many times, I would say that even within the university as a researcher, you're not taking it seriously, because, again, you're not Canadian enough. You're racialized, but you can also pass (...). You kind of become aware that, you know, you do not belong here, again, in very subtle ways. It certainly means you don't belong here, like the language, the way in which we need to behave. (Participant Two)

Participant Four shares the same feeling. For her, in the past, there was more discrimination; now, she thinks it is subtle. She felt discouraged to be taking or doing something, especially because she comes from a third-world country.
Participant One further reflected on her experience navigating a different culture in a different country, but more than that, she reflected on feeling excluded because she is different. She explains that:

I think that the piece of having to navigate a different culture for everything as a mother, as a daughter, as a wife, as part of the community of at the university, having to navigate all of those differences has been really, really difficult. I've found that approaching Canadians, or like people who are not Canadians who have lived and grown up here, they're really nice, very nice, but I haven't seen kind of like the willingness to say, "okay, I want to open my doors to you. I'm going to not, not only like welcome you, but I'm going to say, I'm going to use the word include you." Right? So, kind of like this, this is what we are doing here. This is, I want you to be part of my life, which is something that we do very often as Latin Americans, we do that very often. That is something that I have not really found here with Canadians, honestly, like it's very hard. I think maybe I can, I can count with like less than my whole hand, maybe two people I've met that are really taking that time to say, "oh, I want to share with you and I want to learn about you and, and I want you to learn about me too." So, navigating those cultural pieces like that is not, that is a big obstacle. (Participant One)

While she talked about leadership and her experience at university, she expressed her feeling about being racialized.

Yes, many times that process in my mind, it is there, and many people remind me that that's there because of, for example, maybe microaggressions, if I'm talking a lot with leaders at university, I remember it a lot just because I am different, right? Like most of our leaders are white and I'm just different. Like, I don't think like them, I don't speak like
them, I don't act like them. And I think that is really the asset that I bring to the table, but
still, it puts me in a position that is sometimes not very comfortable. So yeah, that's what
I think. (Participant One)

This feeling of exclusion in work relationships was highlighted by other participants. Participant
Five also shared her experience saying:

The first experiences that I had working here, at the beginning were I thought it was
going to be super positive, but then just because I was surrounded by people who were
not different, there wasn't a lot of diversity in the spaces that I navigated at the beginning
of my career here. So that was, not great because I felt many times, I felt excluded. I felt
like I don't belong here. Like I cannot participate in these conversations because they are
talking about topics that I do not know, that I didn't grow up here. (Participant Five)

In the same vein, Participant Three shared an experience in her career at university when she was
being hired. She states:

I think it is still problematic that people feel the need to separate ethnic or racial identity
from the work that someone does. I remember a meeting where my CV was kind of being
considered for an opportunity at the university. And the explicit comment was made that
like we, you know, like “we're very happy to have a woman who's from a diverse racial
ethnicity because I think that would add diversity. But of course, we're not, like when it
comes to your CV, we do not… you as a Latino woman, we just see you as a researcher
and an educator, and we're just looking at the quality work. So those are two different
things for us.” And I knew what they were saying, but I want them to, and I said that as
much. I said, “Well, I understand where you're coming from, but I would hope that you
do see those two things as one, that it's… I don't do quality work in spite of being a
Latina woman. I do quality work because I am a Latina woman. Like that has shaped the way that I have engaged in my work. Thus, you should see them." So, there were situations like that. I felt the discrimination there. (Participant Three)

On the other hand, this feeling of racialization on the part of Latinos is not always perceived in Canada or in Canadian institutions. Participant Six has a lived experience different from the other participants in this study. She lived in the United States before moving to Canada and had a very negative and prejudiced experience about her Latino identity. She often denied seeing herself as Latina.

In terms of the Latina perspective, I don't use that identity that much. I don't see that in Canada being as strong as it would be in the United States, where culturally, people from the outsider would say to me, “you are Latina here.” I don't see that. What I see is you're female, you know, and, because a female, I'm a female and a mother, so my identity has been geared more toward being a mother and a female in academia more than being a Hispanic. (Participant Six)

The denial of her Latino identity was brought up by her in many moments in our conversation. It is interesting to see how personal experience is significant in storytelling. About her experience, she explains:

In the United States, I would not identify myself as a Latina as much as I can because there are negative repercussions for that. I would say, negative expectations as well. If I were in the United States, I would shy away from identifying myself from any type of identity, minority identity, not just Latina. I think that would have an impact. If I had to start from scratch, I would not go into that. I think that would not be beneficial. If I wanted to make collaborations with others, but that would be in the United States. I don't
feel so the same here in Canada. I think Canada is much more open to the whole minority thing. (Participant Six)

She concluded her reflection by saying:

To be honest, here in Canada, the Latina identity has not bothered me at all. Anything, if anything has driven any of my experience, it's about the female, mother identity. I haven't used the Latina identity at all. The only place I used the Latina identity there was forced and imposed on me. It was in the United States in which I was, you know, like, you know, there's certain perceptions or stereotypes. So, so they tried to impose that on me. I don't think it hinders me; it hasn't hindered me at all here in Canada. Not at all. I think I've talked with other females who are in the United States, and it has been a hindrance to them, but that's a different culture. That's a different context. And minorities over there, particularly black and Latinos, I have negative connotations here, not so. No hindrance whatsoever. (Participant Six)

Although unpleasant, experiences of prejudice or racialization can also be seen in a positive light, as Participant Three explains:

I've certainly experienced prejudice like in Canada. But I do think that, for the most part, I've experienced it as a positive thing. As like, even when I haven't liked it, it doesn't necessarily mean that the outcomes have always been what I wanted, but I, I feel it is a positive thing to get to fight and advocate for those things. So, I think it is a privileged position to be in a situation where you actually get to push back on those prejudices and where you actually get to say, No, like, let me push back on that, or let me question where that is coming from. And, so, I think even when the outcome has been kind of prejudice or situations where I've been excluded from certain spaces or conversations, I think it's
actually been an asset to be able to say, well, even in this exclusion, there is a statement that is being made and here's, here's the one I am making. (Participant Three)

This quote represents one of the characteristics of the Latin identity that was highlighted by the participants of this study earlier in section 5.1 of this chapter. Positivity and resilience are visible in overcoming difficult moments such as prejudice and exclusion.

This section highlighted participants' experiences with racialization and exclusion in the academic workplace. The feeling of not belonging was shared by some participants, as well as an experience different from the others was highlighted. In addition, positivity, characteristic of Latino identity, can also be found even in uncomfortable situations. In the following section, I share participants' experiences with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policies at the university.

4.5 Experiences with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policies

Another central theme highlighted in the context of the experiences of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions was the mention of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policies adopted by the university. This theme came up in the conversations in a surprising way for me and was mentioned by all six participants. Such policies are controversial since there are different points of view regarding their practice in the institution. Participant Five explains, “Once you come here, then and you become a student in Canada, then there are also opportunities for us Latinos, and there are even scholarships tailored towards minorities and Latinos and Asians and opportunities for inclusion, EDI policies.”

Talking about opportunities, Participant One considers that the EDI policies were beneficial for her to get her first job at university:

I think, in my case, being Latina was helpful because, well, I mean the hiring for the office of EDI, the hiring is usually you're going for equity serving group members.
You're... you want to get equity serving group members in the team. So, I think that my supervisor was very aware of that piece and, and making sure that we had, like, in the process of hiring, they had and considered not only like the best candidates, but also like, they were from equity group members, which would be in my case as a Latin American woman. (Participant One)

The same idea is shared by Participant Three. She considers the opportunities she had is due to EDI policies. She says:

Ethnic, racial identity... that has most been helpful to me in my career progression. I think if I wasn't a Latino woman, I would not have been able to access some of the opportunities I have because that's, that positioned me uniquely to understand certain challenges and to be the one to address them. I think the reason I was able to get those opportunities it is because as a Latino woman I understand, I was able to understand what research looks like in various contexts and not just what research looks like when there's the funding to. (Participant Three)

One of the interview questions asked the participants about how the interception of their identities influences the way they lead. Participant Three also mentioned EDI policies:

So, I think that has changed the way that I lead. I think, too, it has changed the way I approach diversity. I think, as I was mentioning at the beginning in academia, like in higher education now there. It's almost like the hot topic is equity, diversity, and inclusion. And everybody wants to include an equity, diversity, and inclusion statement in their applications. And in some ways, I mean it's progress, but in some ways it feels somewhat artificial. Like it's... like we need EDI - equity, diversity and inclusion, but no one really knows what that actually looks like in the day-to-day. But I think, for me, it
has very much shaped how I interact with my students, how I try to be mindful of their own cultural identities of trying to understand how they respond to power structures.

(Participant Three)

Nonetheless, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (and Decolonization, in a Canadian context) policies are not always perceived as good practices and facilitators in terms of opportunities to contribute to diversity in the academic environment.

Participant Six reflected on EDI policies at the university, “I do think that has shifted as people have been more pressed to consider Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in education and in leadership. And so, I think suddenly it's like, sometimes it can be a tokenism, right?” In the same sense, Participant Four states: “Even though they say they can change, EDI is such a big thing that we need to change. But in the end, the university is very conservative. So then, when you look at the higher all leadership roles, they are mostly Canadians, male, white. You see, that's the reality.”

Participant Two offered her perspective, discussing her experiences and the higher education system. For her, EDI policies are merely formal and do not have the ability to offer opportunities for diversity in leadership positions. She claims:

That should change maybe... of course, the system should change. Of course. This is a, you know, male-oriented based competition system, and it should certainly change. I'm not sure that universities are capable of changing to support other ways of being. Like if you think about EDI or EDID. What is it called? Equity, Inclusion of Diversity, and Decolonization. It just becomes another neoliberal mode of regulation and disciplining when I'm not sure that it changes any of anyone's experiences, so. I didn't get any opportunities at university because of this. (Participant Two)
It was evident through the stories described in this chapter that the experiences in leadership positions in higher education of Latina immigrant women are impacted by their identities. Specifically, the six women provided insight into their career progression as leaders within the higher education institution they are in. Through the interviews, the lived experiences of each participant enabled the emergence of five central themes. These central themes included being Latina, women in educational leadership in higher education, challenges for mothers in academia, racialization and exclusion, and experiences with equity, diversity, and inclusion policies.

In the next chapter, I discuss and analyze the results of the interview analysis. Through this discussion, I look farther the individual experiences of Latina immigrant women and the intersection of their social identities which shape their experience. The aim is to shed light on the impact of identities on the career progression of the participants in this study and how such identities are perceived by them in their educational leadership positions. Also, recommendations for improvement are outlined with a focus on addressing institutional practices.
Chapter 5

5. Discussion

Addressing storytelling and lived experiences is an exciting process for two reasons. First of all, it is clear to see how different people can feel the same subject differently and simultaneously, the stories have a lot in common. The other reason is to try to see and understand the story from the other person's perspective, but respecting our own view or our own bias.

In this chapter, I explore the narrative of Latin immigrant women who participated in this study from the theoretical perspective of Latina feminist theory and the conceptual framework of intersectionality (presented in Chapter 2), illuminated by the themes presented in the mind maps and in the literature. To facilitate the discussion, this chapter is divided into the themes that were brought up in conversations with the participants of this study. In conclusion, specific recommendations are provided for the education system to support Latina women in educational leadership roles.

5.1 The Intersection of Being Latina and Immigrant

During the interview process, when I asked participants about what it means to be Latina, they all mentioned common characteristics of Latina women. Joy, happiness, a sense of humour in the face of difficult situations, the ability to laugh and joke in bad times, and a positive attitude were cited by them as shared characteristics. The joy of the Latin people is known all over the world, and this identity and culture have already been the subject of research (Rojas, 2018). This characteristic can be explained by the prevalence of familial affection and other social relationships (Quintana & Scull, 2009). Rojas (2018) explains that research on happiness has shown that relationships are essential for people's happiness and that positive relationships are abundant in Latin America.
Latin American culture is characterized by a focus on cultivating warm and close interpersonal relationships with relatives and friends, the centrality of the family (nuclear and extended), social relationships that value and encourage the experience and expression of emotions (Hernandez et al., 2013; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). It is possible to say that human relations are central to Latin American culture. In explaining contentment in Latin America, these cultural characteristics play a central role. Bordas (2013) explains Latinos and their We culture. It revolves around people-centred values. For Latinos, it is based on human-centred values. These include generosity, service, and reverence for others. To maintain healthy relationships, Latinos endeavour for unity, harmony, and pleasant social interactions.

The We orientation is evident in the family, which is not exclusively bonded by blood or legal relationships, but broadly refers to a group with a special affinity for each other. The familia is e-l-a-s-t-i-c and expands to include padrinos or madrinas as godparents at baptisms, weddings, confirmations, and other special events. Tios and tias are honorary aunts and uncles and close family friends. Primos, or cousins, include anyone who is even vaguely (and sometimes mysteriously) connected to your family (Bordas, 2013, p. 101).

Culture influences the significance of affective and evaluative aspects of life, the manner in which they are related, and the weight that certain explanatory factors have in explaining them. The affective experiences of well-being are highly relevant to the satisfaction of Latin Americans (Quintana & Scull, 2009; Rojas & Garcia, 2017; Yamamoto, 2016). As stated by the participants, the predominance of familial and kinship-based interpersonal relationships is evident, as is the abundance of disinterested and cooperative interpersonal relationships. In other words, the reason for the relationship is the existence of close family connections.
Despite their differences and complexities, Latin American nations share many political, economic, and cultural characteristics. Latin America also has serious social and political problems, of which the participants demonstrated awareness. For the participants, being Latina means being aware of these problems and their complexity. They noted some of the problems are structural and result from historical processes, such as weak political institutions, high levels of corruption and high-income inequality that exacerbate poverty. Proximity to the world's largest drug market, coupled with a misguided strategy aimed at repressing production rather than reducing consumption, has exacerbated drug-related violence and contributed to alarmingly high crime rates in certain regions of Latin America. Poor interpersonal civic relations, high rates of corruption and an increase in the prevalence of materialistic values in recent decades also facilitate this process of escalating violence. Such problems were mentioned by the participants. However, all of them believe that, as explained by Rojas (2018), in Latin America, the presence of social problems and economic difficulties reduces happiness but does not inherently indicate a low level of happiness. Positive factors in the region, especially the nature and abundance of close and warm interpersonal relationships, and the capacity to laugh and make fun of unpleasant situations (Participant One), contribute to Latino’s high levels of life satisfaction.

The Latino identity, although recognized by Latinos, is enhanced when living outside their country of origin. The participants talked about how, before migration, they only saw themselves as the nationality of their countries. However, living abroad made it possible to broaden their understanding and belonging to a specific group of people. As I explained earlier, I make use of the Latino notion of identity brought by Alcoff (2006). On the subject addressed by the participants, she says:
Latino identity generally signifies one’s situatedness outside of Latin America. This spatial referentiality brings the concept, the identity, and the experience under the domain of North American symbolic systems and conceptual schemas to a greater extent, which is one reason some give to reject the label entirely (Alcoff, 2006, p. 228).

This notion of the spatiality of Latino identity is also elaborated by Latina feminist theory. Ortega (2016) explains about "the place" where the Latina immigrant woman stays in her new country, in which she wanders between the two places without fitting into either of them. Participant Two argued about this in our conversation. Anzaldua (2009) also explains this "tierra desconocida" that she calls Nepantla, which is a space of constant displacement that induces a sense of discomfort and unease. However, it is also the home of the new mestiza.

Regarding the intersection of being Latina and an immigrant, the accent is highlighted in the narratives. The accent is a signifier and reinforcer of not belonging to the new place. As said before, this is perceived as a barrier to the participants' career advancement, but it is also seen as a personal aspect of their life experiences. According to McDonnell & Lourenco (2009), the accent is presented as the first limit of belonging and, consequently, of the imposition of the immigrant condition and a foreign identity that alludes to the process of racialization and exclusion. Participant Four mentioned how her accent hindered her relationship and communication with her peers. In the same sense, Participant Three spoke of the accent as relevant to the definition of her own identity and how her colleagues perceived this as a distraction while she was talking to them. The accent, therefore, can affect social dynamics and prevent the building of relationships, especially when there is negative support for trying something new; therefore, many Latinos are in previous relationships. In a survey of students, Torres and Hernandez (2007) showed that the accent made them feel embarrassed by being
around native English speakers. This influenced whom students developed relationships with, as they preferred to be around Latinos who would understand and not criticize their accents. (Torres & Hernandez, 2007; McDonnell & Lourenco, 2009).

Being an immigrant is not easy, especially for those coming from a culture where family is very present and offers a vast support network. Being involved in the academic environment requires time and dedication and, therefore, flexibility was mentioned so often by the participants. The need for flexible working hours or flexibility for academic productivity was brought up as part of the Latino culture of finding a balance between work and family. Wilton and Ross (2017) advocate flexibility as a key factor in achieving balance. However, a successful balance is largely determined by factors external to university/work; in particular, the presence of close relatives to help with childcare and a stay-at-home spouse, part-time worker, who also has a flexible career path. For those without this kind of support, it becomes much more difficult to give their careers the attention they demand and feel they need. This fact is more challenging for the female faculty, who, as already mentioned by some participants, still carry most of the responsibility for managing their family lives and doing the second shift at home (Wilton & Ross, 2018; Wyatt-Nichol et al., 2012). For the Latin immigrant women participating in this research, the convenience of flexibility would be beneficial for prioritizing important moments and weekends with the family (Participant Three), for the possibility of changing work hours and being present at school, sports, and other events needs of the children (Participant One), in addition to the flexibility to have different types of career plans (Participant Six). These three factors are interrelated. Obviously, faculty must be present and available during specific hours, office hours, and various meetings and service obligations, but the remainder of the week is up to them. Occasionally allowing faculty to prioritize home and family can be extremely beneficial.
This section highlighted some characteristics of the Latino identity, as mentioned by the participants in the previous chapter, and brought reflections on the intersection of being Latina and being an immigrant in a different country. The following section will discuss challenges for women in educational leadership positions, emphasizing aspects of Latino identity as a leader.

### 5.2 The Intersection of Being a Latina Woman and Leader in Higher Education

Although we can talk about advances and measures to face the gender inequality present in educational leadership positions, according to the participants, reality still reflects and reproduces the predominance of male culture in power spaces. As Henry et al. (2017) explain, even though decades of discussion about equity, diversity, and inclusion in society and the academy, the Canadian demographic transformation is not reflected in the academy, and its absence is particularly glaring in the composition of faculty and leadership, which remain disproportionately white and predominantly male. According to the narratives, educational leadership positions are still mostly held by men, structured by men and for men. The findings witnessed in this study stand out that, although progress has been made in some areas, women continue to fall behind male colleagues in moving into academic leadership roles. Nidiffer (2010) explains that it starts at the college and university faculty level, as women represent many fewer full professors. Recent research shows that women still are underrepresented in educational leadership positions in many Canadian and American higher educational institutions (Macias & Stephens, 2017; Silbert et al., 2022). Also, women with disabilities, trans and non-binary individuals, and women from racial minorities are notably underrepresented in leadership positions (Hamilton-Page, 2021).
Blackmore (2013) argues that the emphasis on women and leadership has been a symbolic battle based on the demand for representational justice, which means that in any democratic society, the absence of women in leadership positions is indicative of broader educational and gender inequality. As mentioned by the participants, if they were men, this would have made their career progression much more accessible. This highlights Blackmore and the ways in which gender still remains central to maintaining unequal power relations in the organizational and educational environment. Also, as Stewart (2009) advocates, women in educational leadership roles, while leading and managing, can act as agents of change, fighting for equity and social justice in organizational environments that have marginalized and trivialized real equity work. The reality is that the representation of women in educational leadership roles and gender differences in career progression are well-documented but under-addressed challenges in both global research and academia (Khan et al., 2019).

The interviews highlighted the underrepresentation of racialized people in leadership positions in higher education. According to Motapanyane and Shankar (2022), while White women, in general, have steadily risen in educational leadership positions, the reality does not reflect the same trajectory for minorities and racialized people. This can be partially explained by the barriers that still exist in education that prioritize whiteness at the leadership level. These barriers create a shortage of Latino educators and a subsequent shortage of Latino educational leaders (Hernandez-Scott, 2017; Macias & Stephens, 2017).

Considering the inequalities towards racialized women in leadership, it is appropriate for higher education institutions to evaluate how to prepare and guide students, faculty, and staff toward inclusive policies and practices. Khan et al. (2019) defend that barriers to career progression in academia are not only related to gender, as they states, "evidence suggests that
barriers related to ethnicity might be even more significant than for gender and that gender intersects with ethnicity, creating an increased vulnerability to bias among ethnic-minority women." (p. 594). According to the participants' narratives, in addition to sexism, subtle racism, discrimination and exclusion are faced by Latina immigrant women. From this perspective, it is imperative that educational leadership programs address social justice topics with a historical and global perspective to prepare institutions for issues of social justice and structural racism in education. Macias and Stephens (2017) argue that race/ethnicity and gender are inseparable barriers for Latinas who aspire to educational leadership positions. Participants in this study agree that often ignoring certain stereotypes, accepting their identities and talking about them, in addition to support networks and commitment, their stated ability to push back and to resist, can be agents of change to combat these barriers and challenges.

Regarding the small number of racialized women in positions of educational leadership, Khan et al. (2019) argue that the lack of leadership opportunities for this group of people is made possible by the intersections of racial, gender, and economic inequality. Moreover, Motapanyane and Shakar (2022) confirm that, in higher education, the underrepresentation of women from ethnic minorities in senior academic leadership and in the domain of academic leadership development persists. In addition to that, Smith (2021) explains that although public commitments and statements on racial justice, the leadership and knowledge divide during the pandemic has only widened. Higher education institutions need to prioritize initiatives and opportunities for racialized women to occupy spaces of power and leadership to achieve a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive campus. Such actions are essential for Latinas and other racialized women in educational leadership positions.
But after all, what factors characterizes the Latino leadership? Participants shared some of their characteristics as Latinas and as leaders. Latino educational leaders often possess unique leadership qualities that reflect an emphasis on sensitivity, empathy, and a sense of community and collectivity, as opposed to other characteristics often associated with white male leadership (Bordas, 2013).

Treating people like family, being generous, having respect for everyone regardless of status or position, always keeping one’s word, and being of service are the pillars of Latino leadership. By being kind, friendly, and accessible, respected leaders become part of the extended family. Keeping positive and congenial relationships is the best approach to ensure that Latinos will work hand in hand with the leader. The bond between leaders and their people has been a motivating force keeping the community together through generations of struggle and challenge (Bordas, 2013, p. 110).

People, relationships, and cooperation are fundamental aspects of Latino culture, which is transforming leadership into a collaborative and participatory process. As a leader, relationships are formed in familiar ways; a leader has genuine feelings for people, listens to them, and treats them with respect and courtesy; actions and words are consistent, which promotes congruence and builds trust. Respectful living involves valuing family, demonstrating gratitude, and respecting cultural traditions. Latinos demonstrate respect through their body language, tone of voice, deference, apologies, and explanations. Obviously, this is all intertwined with courteous behaviour, such as expressing gratitude and praising others. Respect also necessitates tolerance for divergent viewpoints. Respect for one another fosters harmonious relationships, cooperation, and mutual support (Alcoff, 2006; Bordas, 2013; Ortega, 2016).
This section highlighted the intersection of Latina identities, as perceived by the participants, of being a woman and a leader, highlighting the barriers to be overcome with regard to gender inequality, amplified by the challenges of being Latina immigrants, racialized in an environment still dominated by white males. I also explored what characterizes Latino leadership, as perceived by the participants. All these identities have an impact on the career progression of women within the institution. The next section will examine in more detail the challenges of being an academic parent and their ability to attain and maintain work-life balance.

5.3 The Intersection of Being a Latina Woman and Being a Mother in Academia

In recent years, there have been significant changes in the role of women in social, political, and cultural terms, including the guarantee of their rights, the occupation of women in various spaces, and their participation in education and the labour market. However, we cannot recognize about such changes, particularly considering the role and duty of care. According to Wilton & Ross (2017), "contemporary mothers in Western societies spend more time caring for their children today than in the past, regardless of whether they are single or partnered, housewives or working full-time outside the home" (p. 66). In order to engage in intensive mothering practices, mothers forego work, sleep, and relaxation. In addition to caring for children, parents must also work to support their families. Although the amount of time spent on housework has decreased in recent years, women continue to perform the majority of housework (Wall, 2010).

Almost all participants in this study reflected on their responsibility with young children, the division of time between academia and family, and how mothers have been treated in academic spaces. For many women, marriage and motherhood introduce additional responsibilities in maintaining the home and caring for others. As stated by Wyatt-Nichol et al.
(2012), this "mommy penalty" can manifest itself as diminished leisure time and a constant sense of urgency. Participant Four talked about how this overload can negatively impact the psychological health, physical health and interpersonal relationships of women. As reported by Participant One, for women who work in academia, this "penalty" can contribute to difficulties in balancing work and family responsibilities, decreased productivity, invisibility, both as mothers and professionals, discrimination in the workplace, delay in promotion and lower overall success and job satisfaction (Mattingly & Sayer, 2006; Wyatt-Nichol et al., 2012).

The participants argued there is still a disparity between men and women in academia. One of them mentioned her husband's promotions and how she was only able to advance in her career when their children grew up. In recent years, the number of women enrolled in graduate programs and the labour force has increased (Wilton & Ross, 2017). However, the number of women entering full-time tenure-track positions and advancing through the ranks is much smaller, and women are also more likely to work in contingent positions (Wyatt-Nichol et al., 2012). According to Frasch et al. (2007), in research at the University of California, Berkeley, freshly minted male PhDs with young children were twice as likely to enter a tenure-track position as newly minted female PhDs with children under six years old. In the same vein, Augustus (2021) argues that women are still expected to leave their careers to care for children, which leaves them fall behind their peers regarding their career progression. In addition to that, discriminatory stereotypes are also a barrier to mothers in academia.

Women in the academe continue to be plagued by ascribed reasons for success. The success of men is often perceived to be the result of knowledge, skills, and ability while the success of women is perceived to be the result of external factors such as being in the right place at the right time or as recipients of preferential hiring policies. Men are often
extended opportunities in admissions, hiring, and promotions based on their potential rather than past performance or experience, while women with comparable credentials tend to be judged more harshly (Wyatt-Nichol et al., 2012, p. 117).

As stated earlier, Latinos have solid family ties, and those connections are very matriarchal; for example, the grandmother is a powerful figure in the Latina family structure (Bordas, 2013). Therefore, the participants reflected on the difficulties and challenges imposed by the academy for mothers. The educational structure, as described and exemplified by the participants in the previous chapter, demonstrates that the women in leadership positions in higher education must prioritize their work responsibilities; this does not involve the family or motherhood. As stated by Wilton and Ross (2017), this also does not fit mothers. The model of competitiveness and pressure for productivity seems to be developed for men because it requires a commitment to work and reduces the quality time available for other activities, such as family life, childcare and housework (Moodly & Toni, 2017). Participants identified the pressure imposed, work events and meetings outside regular hours, the demands of work, and feelings of not doing enough as barriers to achieving a good balance between work and family. According to Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004), the ideal faculty member can also be contrasted with the "ideal" mother. Current social norms regarding motherhood emphasize the significance of a mother's presence, particularly during the child's early years, as her nurturing affection is deemed essential for the child's emotional, physical, and intellectual development. This overemphasis on the mother's role makes her the scapegoat for everything that goes wrong and places immense pressure on mothers to obtain unattainable levels of perfection (Wall, 2010; Ward & Wolf-Mendel, 2004; Wilton & Ross, 2017).
Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the disparity between men and women and the imbalance between work and life. Yildirim and Eslen-Ziya (2020) state that with the closure of schools and day care centers, women with children noticed an increase in responsibilities with children and housework, in addition to those who started to work remotely. Furthermore, as explained by Collins et al. (2020), home environments have become places for children to learn and parents to work. For instance, the lockdown necessitated a sudden increase in childcare responsibilities and housework, especially for women, who were already burdened with rearing children and maintaining their own employment (Augustus, 2020). As described by the participants, gender inequality within higher education institutions is reinforced by structures that benefit men's work to the detriment of women's work and the pandemic is an example of that. The impact of this pandemic for women and mothers is far-reaching, causing a decline in psychological well-being and health problems as well as impeding their career development and advancement (Blau & DeVaro, 2007; Yildirim & Eslen-Geliya, 2020).

The feeling of division between academia and family was present in the interviews and showed a complex reality for women, especially mothers. This dichotomy between work and family can establish a wrong understanding that motherhood is incompatible with higher and leadership positions in education and mothers who are postgraduate students. Furthermore, setting work up in a way that positions men's lives as usual and women's as problematic puts working mothers at a disadvantage. There is a clear need to adopt family-friendly policies so that the disparity between men and women, especially mothers, is reduced and a fairer and more equal academic environment is created for all.

This section discussed the challenges of motherhood and academic life for Latina immigrant mothers in higher education educational leadership positions, addressing the
intersections of various social identities that make up this specific group of people - gender, nationality, motherhood - and the overlapping difficulties of each identity. The following section reflects on the racialization and exclusion of Latina women due to their immigrant status.

5.4 The Intersection of Being a Latina and Being Racialized

Latino identity is an ethnic identity that is racialized in North America, as well as Asians and Africans (Alcoff, 2006). In North America, Latinos are typically regarded as racialized due to the aforementioned challenges and obstacles. Despite its variability among whites, blacks, and mestizos, it is possible to observe how Latino identity functions as a visible identity in public and social spaces and has political effects associated with being deemed non-white (Alcoff, 2006).

Although considered subtle, five participants discussed their personal experiences with racialization and exclusion. The participants discussed feelings of non-belonging and exclusion in both their personal and academic lives.

In a Canadian context, Teelucksingh (2006) explains that racialized people do not represent a fixed group and that the process of racialization is not simply translated to race. Some minority groups, especially those considered to be white ethnicity, have entered and exited the racialization process over time. Historically, the racialization of white ethnic groups has been associated with immigration and diasporic experiences, which make them susceptible to discrimination in Canadian society (Henry et al., 2017). Currently, the racialization process includes South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean, and Japanese (racialized groups as described in 2021 Census Canada) and Indigenous people. Brunette-Debassige (2023) reports the results of a study on the experiences of indigenous women leaders working in Canadian universities, which revealed huge gaps between the reconciliation policies and the lived experiences of indigenous women leaders. Indigenous
leaders continue to confront a university system shaped by colonial structures, based on an education system structured by racism, sexism, and colonialism (Battiste, 2018; Brunette-Debassige, 2023).

The feeling of non-belonging and situations of exclusion experienced by some participants demonstrate that racialization may be hidden in the uncritical acceptance of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism allows minority groups, including racial groups and immigrant groups, to maintain their own culture while still embedded in a new and different culture. This concretizes the symbolic image of Canada as a “cultural mosaic” formed by a wide range of people with different cultures. According to Sensoy and DiAngelo (2017), since the 1970s, multiculturalism has been one of the main strategies for managing racial diversity. The United States' "melting pot" ideology was ineffective in Canada, in part because it imposes assimilation on the so-called two founding colonizing nations, France and England. The ongoing difficulties in maintaining the Canadian Federation necessitated an ideology that portrayed Canada as a tolerant, pluralistic, multicultural society. For these reasons, "mosaic" has supplanted "melting pot" as the predominant metaphor for describing the racial and ethnic diversity of Canada (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017, p. 123). Racial harmony, which is considered an integral component of multiculturalism, makes it easier for Canadians to claim that racism does not exist in Canada. This was reinforced by some participants when talking about the subtle ways in which they experienced discrimination in different ways. The idea of "different" and "other" is very present in some narratives.

According to participant interviews, educational leadership positions are widely viewed as a traditional institutional position dominated by whites and men. However, the institution has taken measures to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment for its racialized faculty.
Some of the interviewees said that they could perceive a significant change in the implementation of equity policies. However, subtle situations of discrimination still persist, as reported by Participants One and Two. Obviously, inclusive institutional policies increase diversity in numbers, but beyond the focus on numerical representation, it is necessary to look at everyday experiences with racism and discrimination and to broaden the practical application of the ways in which institutions create an understanding of equity and the effectiveness of mechanisms to deal with inequalities. Motapanyane and Shankar (2022) explain that,

“Specifically, institutional exclusion and discrimination is implemented through resistance to diverse leadership styles and prioritization of too narrow and ethnocentric leadership model, racist and gender discrimination in pay and promotion, disproportionate mentorship and service commitments, and the cloning effect—in which white males (and increasingly white females) are recruited and oriented excessively into high-level positions” (Motapanyane & Shankar, 2022, p. 5).

As already discussed, the accent presents itself as the first limit of belonging and, consequently, of the imposition of the immigrant condition and of a foreign identity that refers to the process of racialization and marginalization. McDonnell and Lourenço (2009) highlight the relationship between gender and racialization since the racialization of women is doubly incarnated in their condition as an immigrant and as a woman. Although according to Warner (2012), the racialization of Latina immigrant women can occur for many reasons, including skin colour, perceived ethnicity or nationality, language, accent, gender, or a combination of several factors.

Participant Three reflected on how important it is that faculty members and those hired with diversity in mind enter an institutional climate in which their presence is valued for the differences, experiences, and perspectives that diversity brings. According to her reflection, the
academic contribution goes beyond the barriers "I do not do quality work in spite of being a Latina woman. I do quality work because I am a Latina woman" (Participant Three).

Conversely, Participant Six has a different perspective from the other participants in this study. She lived in the United States before moving to Canada. The negative and prejudiced experience lived by her has two results: The first one is that she denies her Latino identity, refusing to understand herself as such. The second result is that she cannot see any kind of discrimination, however subtle. For her, there is no racialization in Canada. Alcoff explains such a position presented by Participant Six,

"The first option is to refuse a racialized designation and understand ‘Latino’ to signify an ethnicity (or perhaps a related group of ethnicities). This would avoid the problem of racial diversity within Latino communities and yet recognize the cultural, social, and political links among Latinos in the North." (Alcoff, 2006, p. 229)

Indeed, prejudice against Latinos in the United States has been the subject of several studies. According to Waters (2008), most Latino immigrants can tolerate the initial discriminatory treatment they receive as a minority in the United States because of their race/ethnicity. The motivation is being able to get a job and money to support their family, often left in their country of origin. This is a major concern for Latino immigrants in the United States. Alternatively, in the case of whole-family migration, the primary objective is to meet the fundamental needs of the family while developing a new immigrant attitude toward upward social mobility (Holder, 2007; Waters, 2008).

It is crucial to examine identity through the lens of racialized construction in order to comprehend the immigrant's voyage in this new country. Living in a place where they are not a minority, Latino immigrants are confronted with identities that are remnants of a history of
slavery and colonization based on the ethnicity they abandoned (Leblanc, 2019; Warner, 2012). In the United States and Canada, the racial/ethnic classifications used to categorize immigrants, such as black, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian, are not uncontested (Teelucksingh, 2006; Warner, 2006). In fact, members of the host community in the United States and Canada, as well as immigrants, constructed and reconstructed these categories.

This section discussed the intersection of being a Latina woman, and immigrant and being racialized as stated by the participants. The next section discusses a theme emerged from the interviews in which explores the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (and Decolonization) Policies and the different perceptions and experiences of the participants.

**Discussing EDI Policies – Contradictions**

As stated in the previous chapter, another central theme highlighted in the context of the experiences of Latino immigrant women in educational leadership positions was the mention of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policies adopted by the university. This theme was mentioned by all six participants, to my surprise. Such policies are controversial, as there are two points of view about their practice in the institution. On the one hand, some participants consider EDI (or EDID) policies to be fundamental to supporting diversity at the university and consider that this was an essential tool in relation to the opportunities obtained by them. While on the other hand, other participants consider such policies as mere formalities without practical action at the university. Motapanyane and Sankar (2022) argue that equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are adopted by institutions as a business product, without due attention to racial discrimination, violence and microaggressions faced by racialized professors and students in universities.
In Canada, institutions of higher education have, in some fashion, embraced the EDI principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion. This collective action represents an effort to identify and address systemic issues of marginalization and exclusion of racialized groups in higher education (Turner, González & Wood, 2008). EDI action plans, which are now the governing documents of some institutions, are operationalized through a variety of practices, such as hiring, pedagogy, support, and recruitment strategies (Fradella, 2018). While EDI statements tend to use similar language, institutions continue to define and implement EDI differently in practice (Garcia et al., 2010). However, Henry et al. (2017) provide evidence of experiences and outcomes of faculty, which point to persistent systemic inequities and underrepresentation of racialized faculty. This underrepresentation occurs not only in the recruitment but also in the progression and promotion of racialized scholars.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are perplexing and frequently debated concepts, both in their definition and use. Typically, diversity is defined in terms of colour, gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, and disability, as well as religion, education, and immigration status. As Ahmed (2012) points out, diversity is more than a collection of classifications. It encompasses the ideals of inclusion, the awareness and appreciation of difference, and the capacity to participate in society in an equitable manner. The term "equity" is frequently used interchangeably with the concept of fairness. Numerous researchers view equity as a way to acknowledge systematic power and privilege in higher education (Brennan & Naidoo, 2008). Ahmed (2012) also noted that different conceptions of equity result in divergent educational policy foci: for example, a view of equity as fairness suggests policies centred on redistribution, whereas a view of equity as inclusion and recognition suggests policies centred on mitigating the negative effects of social and cultural difference.
The recruiting and employment equity issues have been a central theme in Canadian higher education literature (Henry et al., 2017; Osborne, 2012). Scholars have highlighted discrepancies in the representation of coloured faculty and their limited impact on the university's power, prestige, and influence. Unconscious prejudices have significantly influenced the career paths of coloured and Indigenous scholars, as well as women, in the contemporary academy (Henry et al., 2017). Moreover, Al Shaibah (2023) argues that study leaders, whose social positions are farthest from a lived experience of racial and/or gender inequality, tend to more frequently display discursive barriers to equity and anti-racist organizational change. This fact demonstrates the importance of representing diversity in spaces of power so that anti-racist discourses are not empty and inefficient. Even though the discrepancies, Participants One and Three shared their experiences, opportunities, and grants at the university due to equity, diversity, and inclusion policies.

To advance equity, diversity, and complexity in the university, greater emphasis must be placed on power positions and the ways in which they reflect and represent historical and social realities such as decolonization and diversity. Despite decades of discourse on equity, diversity, and inclusion in society and the academy, this demographic transformation is not reflected in the academy, and its absence is particularly glaring in the composition of faculty and leadership, which remain predominantly white and predominantly male.

By problematizing institutional practices in the application of EDI policies, the findings of this research illuminate that this can indeed offer great opportunities for people who represent diversity to be included in leadership positions and thus help in the development of higher education. Deconstructing the idea of male and white hegemony in leadership is essential for
higher education to be truly fair and inclusive. The recommendations in the section that follows were formulated with this in mind.

5.5 Recommendations

The research recommendations are presented from the interviews and from the point of view of the participants. I believe that listening to people who are involved in the university is the best way to find faults and create possible solutions for them. Creating a space for Latinos, developing family-friendly policies, and expanding EDID policies will be discussed as valuable methods to address the challenges faced by Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions in higher education.

Latino Community at the University

The participants identified addressing the absence of connection within their institution's Latino community as a crucial improvement area. Participants described limited opportunities to engage with other Latino immigrants - students, faculty, and staff - within the university. Limited engagement with other Latino members of the academic community proved to be detrimental, as women talked about a perceptible lack of connection with other Latinos. Building bonds with other Latina women are essential for university engagement. For young Latinas, seeing women of the same identity in educational leadership positions means representativeness, as described in the interviews.

For Latina immigrant women to feel assisted and for institutions to become involved, it is necessary to establish university-based communities. Providing disparate individuals in varying positions with opportunities to support and engage one another has the potential to bring about change. As Latina immigrant women share support, ideas, scholarships, and resources from their
life and work experiences, they can learn that they are not alone in their struggles. Through participation as a group, structural inequalities can be identified and addressed.

Despite the challenge that institutionalized male and white dominance presents, Latina communities can provide the opportunity for other Latinos, especially Latinas, at the university to share concerns, opportunities, and passions and deepen their knowledge and experiences. Thus, spaces for participation between Latina women within the university community are essential, especially when looking for support and opportunities.

The findings of this research highlight the power of sharing lived experiences. Getting Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles to share, converse, and engage within the academic community provides a chance to learn from their own and other Latino's experiences. Thus, it is necessary to prioritize collaboration spaces between Latinos (students, faculty members and staff) to share knowledge and opportunities within the university.

**Family-Friendly Policies**

Although it is not appropriate to generalize the results from this small study, the interviews showed the reality of academic mothers and the importance of adopting family-friendly policies. Wyatt-Nichol et al. (2012) explain the “need for formal work-life balance policies to reduce discrimination in academia, procedural fairness in applying these policies, and an organizational culture that supports faculty members who choose to utilize such policies” (p. 121). Participants reported situations such as pressure for productivity, misunderstanding when they need to leave early because of their children, or when they need to work remotely to care for a sick child. Thus, institutions, when adopting formal family-friendly policies, should seek ways to raise awareness of discrimination and structural inequality against academic mothers.
In addition, in practical terms, institutions should assess the position and status of academic mothers within their own institutions in order to evaluate measures that favour the balance between family and work. Members of the induction and promotion committee should also be trained in the proper interpretation of family-friendly policies, for example, stalling or extending the induction clock, when making tenure and promotion decisions. According to the narratives, some measures may include tenure-clock extension/paralyzation for parents with young children, allowing faculty members a reduction in their job responsibilities, usually for one semester or term, without any reduction in their payments and tracking the career progression of faculty members who have used family-friendly policies. Participants also mentioned the need for more childcare within the university, which could help academic mothers in their routine activities within the university and maintain their productivity. Although there is childcare at the university, the number of vacancies is very limited and does not meet the demand.

Faculty participation is crucial for attracting, retaining, and encouraging the highest quality faculty work, so leadership support is required. Family-friendly policies are crucial for academic mothers in terms of their loyalty, desire to participate, productivity, and ability to be effective ambassadors for their institutions with colleagues, students, and the general public.

**Expanding EDID policies**

The results of this research also demonstrate the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion policies in obtaining opportunities from more straightforward positions to leadership. Although some participants consider such policies and practices at the university a mere formality or tokenism, for others, EDI policies meant opportunity and career progression. Thus, the positive experience of some participants shows the relevance of this policy for increasing the
inclusion of diversity by offering opportunities. Just as it is necessary to increase women in educational leadership, it is necessary that we have diverse leaders who can help break white and male hegemony and ensure social justice in all academic environments.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion, and more recently decolonization, and their practices, including commitment, admission, and recruitment, are fair and beneficial strategies to be pursued at all levels and organizations seeking to strive to create a culture of inclusion. In addition, inclusion can result in greater innovation, efficiency, and development. Diversity has a profound impact on the aspect of representativeness in institutions, especially educational institutions.

The provided recommendations aim to improve support issues for Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions in higher education while acknowledging the realities of academic life and university work. By highlighting how dominant structures hold up, it reveals how institutions can best support immigrant Latina women in leadership positions. In the next chapter, I will conclude by offering a review of the effects of this study, highlighting the key findings and the implications of this research.
Chapter 6

6. Conclusion

This conclusive chapter aims to review the study findings and reflect on the understandings and knowledge acquired during the course of this study. The first section provides a summary of the research process. Then, I clarify the concluding thoughts, reflecting on my comprehension and involvement as a Latina immigrant woman and a graduate student. The study limitations will then be discussed, followed by implications for future research. I focus on essential reflections on the research process and findings, intersectional research, and their implications for Latina immigrant women in educational leadership in higher education.

This study aimed to explore the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in higher education. Through an intersectional perspective, I explored the lived experiences of Latina women navigating the obstacles of being immigrants and women attaining educational leadership positions by asking the following questions:

- What factors characterize the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in Southwestern Ontario?

- How do Latina immigrant women discuss their identities in their professional experiences in educational leadership?

- How do Latina immigrant women describe the barriers they faced in their professional careers in educational leadership?

This research illuminates some aspects that define the experience and struggles of Latina women in an institutional setting. The qualitative method of narrative analysis was utilized to investigate the lived experiences of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions
in one higher educational institution in Southwestern Ontario, Canada. The first stage of the research process involved interviewing Latina immigrant women. Six women shared and described their experiences as educational leaders at a single higher education institution. The perspective of the women who participated in this study served as the entry point into the social relationships that I sought to uncover with this thesis. The participants provided insight into the barriers and challenges in their career progression within the institution.

After gaining insight from each interview, the second step of the study involved analyzing the data through an interpretive lens. This study primarily employs visual mapping and thematic analysis to analyze data collected in the form of personal narratives. The study found that Latina immigrant women in leadership positions in higher education face a number of challenges in trying to obtain leadership positions and develop academic careers. The challenges that participants spoke about most frequently lack of female representation in power spaces, specifically in educational leadership, which is still a role more played by men; in terms of Latino identity, the characteristics that often impact their professional careers and the experiences of racialization, discrimination, and exclusion; as mothers, the challenges imposed by the academia and the difficulty of finding a balance between family and work, since they live in another country and do not have the support network that is very common in Latina families.

The gender inequalities that are still present are the result of the male and white dominant culture that continues to privilege specific spaces of leadership over others. It was clear from this study that immigrant Latina women continue to confront barriers once they are in educational leadership roles. Still, they are racialized and discriminated against because of their identities. In addition, it is necessary to rethink the academy that undervalues academic mothers, who need to deal with the pressure for productivity and, at the same time, seek to achieve a balance between
personal and professional life. For this reason, the adoption of family-friendly policies, combined with the expansion of equity, diversity, and inclusion policies, can change the reality of these women and guarantee the scope of spaces and opportunities that are currently limited.

The findings of this research prompted a reconsideration of career progression practices and processes to better support Latina immigrant women in educational leadership and address the ethnic and gender inequality. Specific recommendations include creating a space for Latinos, developing family-friendly policies, and expanding EDI policies will be discussed as valuable methods to address the challenges faced by Latina immigrant women in educational leadership positions in higher education. In the section that follows, I discuss the concluding thoughts from the research procedure described previously.

6.1 Reflections and Concluding Thoughts

This study has been intellectually and personally enriching for me. I have also reflected on my own perspective, experiences, intentions, and the connections between intersectionality, Latina feminist ideas, and my research. As the researcher, I would like to conclude this thesis with my reflections and thoughts on this endeavour. I am a Latina immigrant woman with a law degree from Brazil, where I worked as a lawyer for many years, a master's degree in sociology, and I am presently pursuing a master's degree in education as an international graduate student in Canada. In addition to these positionalities and social identities, I consider myself a feminist, or a feminist student who is still learning and endeavouring to comprehend society and the numerous inequalities we experience in this multicultural world. My journey in this programme has been a challenge and a significant growth in my academic and personal life through all the knowledge acquired. For the first time in my academic career, I am doing research with which I identify myself, with which I position myself and which makes me reflexive. Despite already having a
certain knowledge of some feminist theories, the contact with Latina feminism ideas was a great and pleasant surprise. When Ortega (2016) addresses this place in-between worlds in which Latina immigrant women find themselves, I can see myself crossing this border. It is at this point that I fit into this research and that I share this place with the participants of this study.

Latina feminist theorists argue (Ortega, 2016; Anzaldúa, 1987; Lugones, 1987) that people of colour, immigrants, exiles, border dwellers, and others on the margins have paid attention to these identities and particularities, telling their stories and highlighting the obstacles that define their own individualities. My own lived experience and personal point of view inevitably inform my assumptions, interpretations and approaches in doing this study. The opportunity to move away from my point of view and reflect on the stories told by the participants was an exercise in reflection. Finally, the way in which the participants perceive and discuss their identities and how they recognize these identities and the impact of this on their career progressions was an excellent learning opportunity for me.

In light of this, I believe that my life experiences enabled me to conduct this research with integrity and dependability. My perceptions, biases, and participants narratives support my position as a researcher who employs Latina feminist theory and intersectionality to examine the reality of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in higher education. As a Latina immigrant woman, my experiences became a valuable asset that enabled me to communicate with my participants, relate to them, and comprehend their perspectives with sensitivity and reflexivity.

This study investigates and documents the challenges and barriers immigrant Latina women in educational leadership in higher education face, placing these women at the centre of knowledge and comprehension of their lives through their own voices. This legitimizes women's
knowledge and awareness of the social structure and power dynamics which keep them in marginal positions in society and their demands to occupy power spaces and to be able to act to reduce the inequalities they face.

6.2 Limitations

The lack of generalizability and the small sample size of this study are limitations. The research investigated the narratives of six Latina immigrant women educational leaders at one Canadian university. While the study provides insight into the landscape of racialized women, it in no way reflects the difficulties and opportunities faced by all immigrant women. Consequently, the small sample size is acknowledged as a limitation of this research. In addition, as the principal investigator, I am aware of the perspectives, values, views, and beliefs I contribute to the research process. As a continuous self-reflection with personal experiences through a personal journal, I have endeavoured to make my biases, perceptions, and values apparent rather than concealed in this research. I was identifying my ontological and epistemological assumptions, for instance.

6.3 Implications for Future Research

From an intersectional perspective, the lived experiences of Latina immigrant women in their career progression into educational leadership positions in higher education are shaped by their identities. As understood, the intersection of various social identities will determine how oppressed or privileged that group of people is (Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins & Bilge, 2020; Rice et al., 2019). Based on this study, it is evident that the lived experiences of racialized women leaders are shaped by white male dominant culture. Such a culture creates barriers for women, especially for Latina immigrant women. Racialized women leaders are therefore
discriminated against and excluded because of their social identities and are also confronted the
difficulty of achieving work-life balance.

This study's findings provide guidance for future policy and leadership practices to address the obstacles that women, particularly racialized women, confront in their career progression in leadership. The findings also demonstrate the need for increased support from institutions, that include educational opportunities, through the creation of spaces for Latinos and the implementation of equity initiatives. Today, racialized women in leadership positions are faced with the individual obligation to advance their positions while navigating institutional barriers. This study instead argues for institutional commitment and accountability to create and perpetuate structural changes that address the dominant white male culture.

This research is significant because it acknowledges the need for institutional support for racialized women in educational leadership roles. Even though this group of women faces complex and discreet obstacles, they are not impossible to overcome (Eagly & Carli, 2004). This study provided institutions with the knowledge necessary to address gender and ethnic disparities in educational leadership. From here, it is hoped that opportunities for adequate and equal education and professional development, creating spaces for Latinos, and policy reforms can be established.

In conclusion, this research has encouraged me to speak out about the need for Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in higher education and how the institution continues to maintain and perpetuate gender and ethnic inequalities. Some current practices that offer barriers to racialized women because of their “differences” need to be rethought and reimagined to support the leadership of Latina immigrant women and other racialized women.
References


Government of Canada, S. C. (2019, June 17). *Data Tables, 2016 census*. Visible Minority (15), Generation Status (4), Age (12) and Sex (3) for the Population in Private Households of


https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800307


**Letter of Information and Consent**

**Project Title:** Latina Immigrant Women’s Experiences of Higher Education and Leadership: An intersectional perspective

**Document Title:** Letter of Information and Consent

**Principal Investigator + Contact:**

**Student Researcher + Contact:**

1. **Invitation to Participate**
   You are being invited to participate in a research study aimed at examining, from an intersectional perspective, the career progression of Latina immigrant women in educational leadership roles in higher education in Southwestern Ontario. You are invited because of your current educational leadership role at a Canadian university.

2. **Why is this study being done?**
   Despite increased participation for women in leadership, women are still underrepresented in educational leadership positions. In particular, Latina immigrant women and their intersections of Latino identity with race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, and age are often aggravated by their immigration status. The study will
be based on the lived experiences of Latina women navigating the obstacles of being immigrants and women attaining educational leadership positions. This research will seek to give voice to some lived experiences and possible challenges that Latina immigrant women faced in their career progression. Besides, it will seek solutions for higher education institutions to build more fair and equitable environments that support the leadership development of immigrant women.

3. How long will you be in this study?
You will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview - conducted virtually via Zoom due to COVID-19 health measures - lasting 45-60 minutes.

4. What are the study procedures?
If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take part in an interview. The purpose of this interview is to obtain a better understanding of your lived experiences. Specifically, you will be asked about, as a Latina immigrant woman, how you discuss your identities in your professional experiences in educational leadership. The interview will be audio/video-recorded for accuracy using Zoom's record feature. Participants cannot take part in the study if they do not wish to be audio/video-recorded. All participants' names and identities will stay confidential. After the completion of the interview, participants will receive an email that has a debriefing/member-checking form attached to it. The member checking form will include a secure link to OWL that has the transcript from the interview. This process of member-checking enables you to make changes to the transcript within two weeks of receiving the email.

The interview will take place over the Western-hosted Zoom platform (Canada). You may read more about Zoom Privacy on their website: https://zoom.us/privacy. Privacy cannot be completely guaranteed when information is transmitted over the internet. There is always a risk that a third party may intercept your responses. Further, while researchers will not collect or use IP addresses or other information which could link your participation to your computer or electronic devices without informing you, there is a risk, with any such platforms, that data collected on external servers may fall outside the control of the research team. We want to make you aware of this.

5. What are the risks and harms of participating in this study?
Although there are no known or anticipated risks associated with participating in this study, there might be some discomfort in discussing challenges that you have faced during your career. You can always choose not to answer a certain question, and in case of emotional discomfort, here is a list of wellness support services at Western and in Ontario:
Mental health resources at Western:
https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html

After hours Good 2 Talk helpline:
1-866-925-5454

Ontario Mental Health helpline:
1-866-531-2600

6. What are the benefits of participating in this study?
You will be given the opportunity to represent your voice, share your experiences and reflect on them. Through participation in this study, you may obtain increased awareness of your own educational leadership experiences as a Latina immigrant woman. Your perspectives on your career would benefit the community by illuminating any additional support necessary for both current and aspiring women in educational leadership. Furthermore, your experiences can offer insight into leadership strategies to support the future development and of Latina immigrant women in leadership positions in Canadian universities.

7. Can participants choose to leave the study?
If you decide to withdraw from the study, you have the right to request withdrawal of information collected about you at any time before the final submission of the study. If you wish to have your information removed, please let the researcher know.

8. How will participants’ information be kept confidential?
The study participants' data that will be reported in the dissemination of results will be comprised of both de-identified descriptors and direct quotes. A master list of the first name of the individuals and their pseudonyms and email addresses will be kept on a password-protected and encrypted USB. The data set will be stored on a secure university server. Electronic copies of the audio files will be saved on a password-protected USB stick, and transcripts will be kept on the university’s server, which is protected by a password. The stored transcripts will only have pseudonyms. All research data will be destroyed after seven years, as per Western University’s policy. Participants will receive the full de-identified transcript and/or a preliminary review of the data analysis upon request.

If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used. However, the researcher might use and publish quotes that are not directly attributable to an individual.

9. Are participants compensated to be in this study?
Participants will not be compensated in this study.
10. **What are the rights of participants?**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to be in this study. Even if you consent to participate, you have the right to not answer individual questions or to withdraw from the study at any time. You do not waive any legal right by signing this consent form.

11. **Whom do participants contact for questions?**

If you have questions about this research study, please contact: 

[Redacted]

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Human Research Ethics [Redacted]

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.
Consent Form

Project Title: Latina Immigrant Women’s Experiences of Higher Education and Leadership: An intersectional perspective

Document Title: Letter of Information and Consent

Student Researcher + Contact: [Redacted]

Principal Investigator + Contact: [Redacted]

I consent the use of unidentified quotes obtained during the study in the dissemination of this research

☐ YES    ☐ NO

I consent to the use and publishing of any unidentified observations obtained during the study in the dissemination of this research

☐ YES    ☐ NO

I have read the letter of information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Print Name of Participant ____________________  Signature ____________________  Date (DD-MMM-YYYY)

My signature means that I have explained the study to the participant named above. I have answered all questions.

Print Name of Person Obtaining Consent ____________________  Signature ____________________  Date (DD-MMM-YYYY)
APPENDIX B: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

1. What comes to mind when you think about Latino identity (as a social identity)?

2. In your leadership career, what are/were the positive experiences? What are/were the negative experiences?
   
   Prompt: Explain further

3. How did you identify yourself racially/ethnically before migrating?
   
   Prompt: Could you tell me more about this?

4. Do you believe that your racial or ethnic identity has changed? If it has, explain how.

5. Do you believe that this identity has impacted your career progression?
   
   Prompt: How? Could you give me some examples?

6. How did being a Latina woman influence your professional experiences?

7. Can you describe how the intersection of your Latino identity and other identities has influenced your way of leading? Can you give some examples?

8. Being a Latina immigrant woman in this journey, did it help or restrict you in your leadership role?
   
   Prompt: Do you believe being a man would have helped you to be more or less successful?
   
   Why? Why Not?

9. Do you consider your identities an advantage or a challenge in your career progression?

10. How do the people you lead perceive your identities? Is there a specific example or situation of it?

11. How should the higher education system change to support Latina immigrant women as educational leaders?
12. Can you describe a time when your desire to be true to yourself and your identities was at odds with institutional needs? How did this make you feel?
APPENDIX C: Ethics Approval

Date: 7 December 2022
To: Dr. Rico Gutierrez
Project ID: 121047

Study Title: Latina Immigrant Women’s Experiences of Higher Education and Leadership: An intersectional perspective

Short Title: Latina Immigrant Women’s Experiences of Higher Education and Leadership

Application Type: NMREB Initial Application

Review Type: Delegated

Full Board Reporting Date: 13 Jan 2023
Date Approval Issued: 07/Dec/2022 12:45
REB Approval Expiry Date: 07/Dec/2023

Dear Dr. Rico Gutierrez,

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the WREM application form for the above mentioned study, as of the date noted above. NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the expiry date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

This research study is to be conducted by the investigator noted above. All other required institutional approvals and mandated training must also be obtained prior to the conduct of the study.

Document: Approved:

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The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario. Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB. The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mr. Zoe Leri, Research Ethics Officer on behalf of Dr. Fantale Graham, NMREB Chair

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system that is compliant with all regulations).
APPENDIX D: First Visual Map
APPENDIX E: Curriculum Vitae

Name: Isabella Alencar Maroja Chaves

Post-secondary: Universidade Estadual da Paraiba
Education and Degrees: Campina Grande, Paraiba, Brazil
Degrees: 2001-2006 B.A.

Universidade Federal da Paraiba
Joao Pessoa, Paraiba, Brazil
2015-2017 M.A.

The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada
2021-2023 M.A.

Honours and Awards: CAPES - Brazil
Awards: 2016-2017

Western University Entrance Scholarship
2021-2023

Related Work: Research Assistant – Pandora Research Group
Experience: Universidade Federal da Paraiba
2015-2017

Publications:
