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## ABSTRACT

A national survey investigated the perceptions of Hispanic women administrators in higher education concerning factors that positively influenced or hindered their advancement to leadership positions, and developed a profile of the Hispanic woman senior level college administrator. Respondents were 68 women in four major subgroups (Central/South American, Cuban, Mexican American, Puerto Rican) occupying senior administrative positions (president, chancellor, provost, vice president, or dean). The five major factors in the professional category seen as positively influencing career advancement included education and training, goal-setting, networking, knowledge of mainstream system, and knowledge of the advancement process. Traditional Hispanic cultural values and ethnicity were seen to hinder advancement. Within the category of family factors, personal economic status, parental economic status, and children were perceived to positively influence advancement, and household duties and other family responsibilities were hindrances. In the support category, family/friends, colleagues/peers, spouse/significant others, and non-Hispanic administrators were identified as positive influences, and institutional faculty/staff as hindrances. Other positive influences named included non-Hispanic male and female mentors and affirmative action; discrimination was seen by some as a hindrance, by others as non-applicable. (Contains 56 references.) (MSE)

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**HISPANIC WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION:  
FACTORS THAT POSITIVELY INFLUENCE OR HINDER  
ADVANCEMENT TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**

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## Introduction

For some people, success is measured on the basis of advancement in the workplace. Whether the workplace is in business or education, the concept of advancement implies forward movement. In the process of moving forward, both seen and unseen forces may influence advancement. These forces or factors may also be perceived as positive or negative. For women, forces/factors influencing advancement appear to be negative; women do not hold most of the top level administrative positions in the workplace (Feminist Majority Foundation, 1991; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991).

According to various demographic projections, the face of the workforce in the United States has changed and will continue to change dramatically (Castro, 1990). Women are and will continue to be a major part of the workforce in the United States. By the year 2000, approximately two-thirds of all workforce entrants are expected to be women (Feminist Majority Foundation, 1991) with projected changes indicating an increase in the importance of women and also of minorities in the workforce (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991).

Though the focus of this study was on the advancement of Hispanic women in higher education administration, the literature reviewed at the time of this study indicated that leadership advancement for women (especially Hispanic women) in higher education administration appeared to be limited, with minimal increases predicted for earning doctorates and securing positions as professors or administrators (Bauman, 1984; Lopez, 1984; Washington & Harvey, 1989).

Studies on Hispanics or Hispanic women in higher education administration have been conducted, however, they are few in number and have been regional or state specific rather than national. Many reasons may be attributed to the paucity of studies on Hispanics or minorities in higher education. One major reason is attributed to the issue of scholarship, an issue, that in turn may have implications for the hiring and promotion of minorities in higher education. Given that education and the social and behavioral science fields are the fields in which most minorities obtain their doctorates, scholarship in minority subjects or from a minority or "ethnic" perspective is often viewed as less than first-rate work (Wilson & Melendez, 1988; Padilla, 1994).

In seeking information about Hispanic women and their leadership status in higher education contexts, it became increasingly evident that to learn about Hispanic women, it was necessary to have an understanding of the influences or hindrances to the advancement of all women in this country. Consequently, the review of the literature for this study was structured to

obtain a broad-based perspective of the status of women in the workforce from a general to a more narrow focus on Hispanic women in higher education administration.

### **Overview of the Literature**

Over the last twenty-five years, the status of women in the workforce has changed in agreement with demographic projections predicting increases in the number of women and minorities entering the workforce (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). Women have become more visible within all areas of the workforce; to some extent in nontraditional positions previously occupied primarily by men. This visibility has been assisted in part by the enactment of major legislation designed to promote changes to benefit the women in the workforce (Rhode, 1990; Touchton & Davis, 1991).

Analyses on the status of working women in light of gender equality and employment equity provide information on the positive impact of legislative, administrative and judicial mandates on equality in formal treatment of the sexes (Rhode, 1990). Although the impact has been positive to some extent, continued disparity in actual status is reported. Barriers broken over the last twenty-five years, as a result of enacted legislation have been primarily at the entry levels of nontraditional employment. Furthermore, most occupations remain segregated or stratified by sex (Rhode, 1990; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). Though equal pay for equal work has been mandated, relatively few men and women do the same work. The average full-time working man, with only a high school diploma, has been found to earn more than the average full-time working woman with a college diploma (Rhode, 1990). For African American, Asian American and Latina (Hispanic) women, the pay equity situation is even worse (Feminist Majority Foundation, 1991; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991).

The increased visibility and participation of women in the workforce have led to changes such as more women working full-time, a somewhat diminished wage gap, and modest advances for women entering the professions at all levels such as business, engineering, the military, science and Congress (Rix, 1990). Nevertheless, factors such as sex-based discrimination (Rhode, 1990), pay equity, job assignments and low job status continue to contribute to women's unequal workforce status and to impede their advancement (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988; De Sole & Butler, 1990; Feminist Majority Foundation, 1991; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). Perceived equality between men and women has not been accomplished and women continue to

play subordinate roles to men (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988; De Sole & Butler, 1990; Feminist Majority Foundation, 1991; Jundrud, 1991; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991).

Within the business and corporate world, advancement for women in the managerial areas is limited (Feminist Majority Foundation, 1991). Women are often perceived to be "outsiders" and not "insiders" as are their male counterparts (Hennig & Jardim 1976; Shakeshaft, 1987). The literature revealed that whether within the corporate or educational arenas, women have had to adapt to men's rules for team playing--but still don't fit in as "one of the boys" (Bickel, 1980). Because women are functioning within a male dominated management structure they find themselves bumping into a transparent "glass ceiling"; so strong it prevents advancement simply "because they are women" (De Sole & Butler, 1990; Feminist Majority Foundation, 1991; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). Existing research evidence gathered by universities, non-profit organizations, executive recruiters and the United States Department of Labor, documents "a dearth of minorities and women at management levels due to the so called "glass ceiling" (De Sole & Butler, 1990; U.S. Department of Labor, 1990).

Factors discussed in the literature that serve as barriers to the advancement of all women include gender-stereotyped patterns of differential treatment, unfamiliar team playing skills, issues of equity, lack of power, social developmental differences in boys and girls (Gilligan, 1982; Tannen, 1990), lack of self confidence, a masculine value system, perceptions of leadership traits and differential leadership strategies.

The literature suggests that successful women in leadership positions must engage in gender-stereotyped team play activities whether at the corporate or higher education administrative levels. This implies that women seeking advancement must adapt to rules established by the men in power or be willing to engage in similar activities (Korda, 1975). However, the literature also reveals that women pursuing advancement, who assume characteristics attributed to males in similar situations, also run the risk of being perceived negatively by their peers (Gale, 1988).

A number of forces have influenced and shaped women's leadership in higher education (Shavlick & Touchton, 1984). Some of the major forces include federal legislation, leadership training programs and public and private philanthropy. Since 1972, various laws, regulations and executive orders have been issued to advance the cause of women in education (Shavlick & Touchton, 1984; Touchton & Davis, 1991). These legal mandates have pushed higher education institutions to initiate changes that are influential in creating a better climate for the acceptance of

women as leaders and in increasing the demand for them (Shavlick & Touchton, 1984).

Although affirmative action is often cited as contributing to the advancement of women, research on affirmative action, according to Ost & Twale (1989), has also shown no substantial increases in the hiring of traditionally underrepresented groups (minorities and women).

Women are found to occupy fewer positions than men at every level of higher education administration (Touchton & Davis, 1991) and women administrators are found to be clustered in lower level positions and receive lower salaries than men (Feminist Majority Foundation, 1991; Moore, 1984, 1988; Tinsley, 1984; Touchton & Davis, 1991; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). The literature on women in higher education reflects that they are not well represented within the academic or administrative structures; consistent with the literature on women in the workforce and women in the corporate sector.

No substantial increases in the numbers of traditionally underrepresented groups within higher education were revealed in the review of the literature. Further, upward mobility for women in higher education through the hierarchical ladder of higher education administration is often hindered by a lack of "time in line" experience (Jundsrud, 1991); experience that men appear to acquire at least ten years before women do (Moore, 1984). Given the few women hired for senior administrative positions, the time requirement has been found to place women at distinct disadvantages in career advancement (Jundsrud, 1991; Moore, 1984; Ost & Twale, 1989). By requiring the "time-in-line" experience, Ost and Twale (1989) concluded that higher education institutions are missing out on the talents of creative and innovative female administrators. Hiring success rates for women are often limited to positions of directorships (inclusive of assistant or associate levels) usually classified as staff positions within the higher education management structure (Bowker, 1980; Feminist Majority Foundation, 1991; Haro, 1990; Jundsrud, 1991; Lopez, 1994; Ost & Twale, 1989; Rhode, 1990; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991).

Appropriate academic preparation including the acquisition of a terminal degree is perceived as contributing to advancement for women (Hispanics in particular) in higher education (Esquibel, 1977, 1992; Mills-Nova, 1980). Doctorates awarded to all women and minorities increased in 1990 with a slight increase for minority women. However, it appears that institutions of higher education seeking to hire women and minorities appear to be satisfied with the numbers as they stand. This is evidenced by the continued disproportionate



underrepresentation of women in the tenured ranks, women concentrated in the lower academic ranks and women receiving lower salaries than men.

By the year 2000 more than one-third of the American population is predicted to be composed of minorities (Shaw, 1990). In 1980, minorities comprised 17 percent of the total population and in 1990, 20 percent, accounting for nearly half of the population of the nation as a whole (Waggoner, 1991). This phenomenon is an indication of the extent to which minorities will become more visible and a part of the society in the years to come. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the 1990 population counts confirm the predictions that the United States is becoming more diverse. During the eighties, for example, the Hispanic population grew by 53 percent and demographic projections indicate that the Hispanic population in the United States will increase to approximately 64.2 million by the year 2040 (Waggoner, 1991). A key demographic feature of the Hispanic population is its youth (Carter & Wilson, 1990; O'Brien, 1993); a factor that has implications for the nation and the higher education community in terms of adequate preparation and training for the future.

Women appear to encounter more barriers than contributors to advancement than men. The addition of a racial or ethnic minority identification only serves to compound existing barriers for women (Basset, 1990; Escobedo, 1980; Nieves-Squires, 1991; Shakeshaft, 1987). Women in higher education are found to experience isolation, stress and lack of power; experiences often attributed to barriers such as lack of training, institutions themselves, lack of female role models, and the inability to participate in the "old boys network" (Bickel, 1980; Hennig & Jardim, 1976; Merrion & Thompson, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1987). Within the higher education community women are perceived to be operating outside the prestige system (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988; Bickel, 1980; Hennig & Jardim, 1976; Merrion & Thompson, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1987). Also within the higher education community, some men experience discomfort in working with women and some women in higher education experience difficulty working with other women (Eaton, 1984, Gale, 1988). Additionally, women in higher education may be challenged by attempting to balance career, marriage and family (Hansl, 1987; Jundrud, 1991; Metcalf & Hecht, 1991; Ost & Twale, 1989).

Within the higher education context, Hispanic (and other minority) women have faced two overriding factors detrimental to their advancement--gender and race (Basset, 1990; Escobedo, 1980; Hennig & Jardim, 1976; Jundrud, 1991; Ost & Twale, 1989). Even though, studies on the advancement of Hispanic women are few, especially in the area of higher

education administration, there appears to be an increased interest in the potential for Hispanic advancement due to the projected rise in population and the realities that must be faced by the nation in terms of needed education and training.

Studies on Hispanics included in the review of the literature identify factors positively influencing advancement such as professional training, academic preparation, social origins, networking, Spanish speaking ability, family support and knowledge of institutional process for advancement and mentoring. Interestingly, some of the factors suggested in the literature that can positively influence advancement for Hispanics, excluding those related to language, are similar to those that can positively influence advancement for all women.

National studies on Hispanics in higher education administration, especially on Hispanic women, were noticeably lacking in the literature. With the exception of the Latino National Political Survey (LNPS) conducted by De la Garza, et al. (1992), studies conducted on Hispanics, especially those in higher education administration, have been conducted primarily on a state or regional basis. The literature suggests that American colleges and universities must be prepared to meet new challenges in education and training given changing demographics and projected increases of Hispanics and women in the workforce by the year 2000. To meet these challenges, the higher education community must become familiar not only with the population they will be preparing, but also with the factors that can positively affect the advancement of Hispanic and other women within higher education (O'Brien, 1993; Padilla, 1994).

The literature discloses that private, rather than public institutions of higher education, appear to offer women better opportunities for advancement (Touchton & Davis, 1991). This may mean that women interested in higher education administration will be looking to private institutions for attaining career goals (Ost & Twale, 1989).

Factors identified in the literature, contributing to the advancement of women in higher education, include better education and training, attainment of a terminal degree, commitment to career goals, increased job satisfaction with increasing administrative status, empowerment, increased development of skills and strategies, networking, commitment to excellence, and mentoring. Emerging trends within higher education suggest that leadership development programs, improved career opportunities, development of supportive institutional environments and the establishment of women's centers can also contribute to the advancement of women.

The United States Department of Labor (1991) refers to existing evidence showing significant gains made by women and minorities entering the workforce. These gains are



attributed to the changing demographics, the emergence of a more global economy and equal employment and affirmative action practices (Shavlick & Touchton, 1989; Touchton & Davis, 1991).

Over the last twenty years, efforts have been made within higher education to increase the number of women in higher education administration positions (Sullivan, 1989). Millions of dollars have been expended by foundations in support of projects designed to promote administrative advancement for women (Bernstein, 1984). Leadership training efforts initiated by the American Council on Education (ACE) and others have had some success in promoting women for leadership positions in higher education administration (Shavlick & Touchton, 1989).

Although there is evidence of women in higher education having moved up the administrative ladder, advancement has been slow (Winship & Amey, 1992; Pearson, Shavlick & Touchton, 1989). Granted that there are few women in senior level administrative positions in higher education; there are even fewer minority women. In 1992 for example, women Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) in U.S. colleges and universities totaled 348 (12%) of CEO's for 3,000 regionally accredited institutions. Of those, 14% were women of color (26 African American, 17 Hispanics, 5 American Indians and 2 Asian Americans) (American Council on Education, 1992). More recent ACE (1995) data indicate an increase in the number of CEO's. They report that in 1995, there were 453 women serving as CEO's in U.S. colleges and universities. From that total, 72 (16%) are women of color (39 African American, 7 American Indian, 2 Asian American, 24 Hispanic).

Higher education participation rates show that along with the increases of all women, the number of Hispanic women has also increased (Alsalam & Rogers, 1990; O'Brien, 1993). Increases in the attainment of other degrees notwithstanding, from 1981 to 1991 there was an 85.2 percent increase in the number of doctorates awarded to Hispanic women; in 1993 there was a 12 per cent increase in the number of doctorates awarded to Hispanic women (Carter & Wilson, 1993, 1994).

Given the projected demographic and workforce changes and an apparent lack of women and minority (especially Hispanic) women represented in senior level administrative positions in higher education, there appears to be a compelling need for the higher education community to encourage Hispanic women enrolled in higher education institutions to pursue positions of leadership.

As the overview of the literature reveals, women (especially Hispanic or other minority women) aspiring to leadership positions in higher education administration often encounter forces that may affect their advancement. This finding, along with an interest in learning about the status of Hispanic women in senior level administrative positions, contributed to the decision to conduct the study described below.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine, from the perspective of Hispanic women representing the four major Hispanic subgroups (Central/South American, Cuban, Mexican American, Puerto Rican) occupying senior level administrative positions (President, Chancellor, Provost, Vice-President, Dean) in higher education institutions across the United States, their perceptions of factors that positively influenced or hindered their advancement to leadership positions and to develop a profile of the Hispanic woman senior level higher education administrator during the fall of 1991 and spring 1992.

The study was designed to be national in scope and to focus on the four Hispanic subgroups. Additionally, it was to (a) add to the body of literature on Hispanic women in higher education administration, (b) provide information for use by institutions and other entities interested in developing strategies for increased participation of Hispanic women in higher education administration and (c) serve as the basis for stimulating others to conduct studies on other issues related to the advancement of Hispanic women.

Factors influencing or hindering the advancement of women to positions of leadership in various contexts were taken from the literature. For the purposes of this study, factors positively influencing or hindering the advancement of Hispanic women within a higher education administration context were of special interest. Findings from various studies contributed to the development of a framework of factors included in the survey used in the study.

Factors such as perceived lack of interest in advancement, societal traditions, leadership ability, mentoring and networking, underrepresentation of minorities in higher education institutions, discrimination and male chauvinism mentioned in the literature were selected for inclusion in the framework. Studies such as those conducted by Jundrud (1991), Taeuber (1991) and Ost and Twale (1989) also highlighted factors that have hindered the advancement of women to leadership positions.

Hispanic specific studies such as those by Esquibel (1977, 1992) focusing on Chicano (Hispanic) higher education administrators in the southwest and by Bauman (1984) on Mexican American women doctorates employed by Texas institutions of higher education also contributed to the identification of factors related to academic and professional goal attainment that were included in the framework.

As stated above, between 1980-1990 the Hispanic population in the United States increased by 53 percent from 14.6 million to 22.4 million (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1991). Demographic projections indicate that the Hispanic population in the United States will increase to approximately 64.2 million by the year 2040 (Waggonner, 1992) and the number of women in the workforce is also projected to increase significantly by the year 2000 (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). Therefore, it may be assumed that (a) the projected increases in women and Hispanics in the workforce will impact both the elementary and secondary school and higher education systems of this country, (b) the economic future of this country will be dependent on well educated and prepared Hispanic and other citizens and (c) the higher education system will need Hispanic and other women administrators to provide leadership and serve as role models.

### **Methodology**

This study was conducted with 68 Hispanic women holding senior administrative positions in institutions of higher education within the United States out of a net sample size of 80. For the purposes of this study, senior administrative positions included deans, vice presidents, chancellors, provosts and presidents (inclusive of those in interim or acting capacities). The study was limited to Hispanic women in U.S. higher education institutions; women holding similar positions in Puerto Rico were excluded.

A survey was used to gather data from the participants. Although the surveys were mailed out in November 1991, it took six months to retrieve a significant number of them. The data was collected, coded numerically and entered into The George Washington University Computer System using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate a program for analysis. The Chi square statistical procedure was used to answer one of the research questions. However, a lack of representation in each of the cells forced a decision to use descriptive

statistics. Frequency of numbers and percentages for each item of the survey instrument (also mean and standard deviation for selected items) were employed to answer research questions.

The qualitative method of analysis was used to analyze the responses to the two open-ended questions at the end of the survey. In analyzing the written responses, only the highlights and similarities from which conclusions could be drawn were noted. Findings and conclusions drawn from the data analysis relate to the research questions posed for the study. A profile of the Hispanic woman holding a senior level position in higher education administration in the fall of 1991 and spring of 1992 was also an outcome of the investigation.

### **Subjects**

Sixty-eight Hispanic women, representing the four major Hispanic subgroups (Mexican American, Central/South American, Puerto Rican, Cuban) and holding senior administrative positions in institutions of higher education within the continental United States, participated in the study. Selection of the study participants was based on Hispanic surname, the senior administrative position held within higher education institutions and the Hispanic subgroup represented. Although there were 68 (85%) respondents out of a net sample of 80, only 66 of them identified the Hispanic subgroups they represented. The majority, 40 (60.6%) indicated they were Mexican American, 12 (18.2%) Puerto Rican, 7 (10.6%) Cuban American, 4 (6.1%) Central/South American and 3 (4.5%) indicated they represented groups other than those listed. The "Other" groups listed by respondents were Southwest Hispanic, Spanish American and Dominican; subgroups that fit into the subgroups already identified for them.

### **Problems Encountered**

Identification of study participants was difficult given that a national listing of higher education administrators by ethnicity is non-existent. Sources used to identify the target sample included the *HEP 91: Higher Education Directory*, a list of 600 Hispanic higher education administrators compiled by a Hispanic Vice Chancellor for an Arizona community college system, a list compiled by the American Council on Education (ACE), Office of Women in Higher Education and suggestions made by Hispanic women in leadership positions. The Arizona and ACE lists were the most helpful since most of the women were Hispanic; however,

women identified in the HEP Directory and on other lists were by surname, resulting in the inclusion of non-Hispanic senior level administrators and the exclusion of senior level Hispanic women with non-Hispanic surnames. The original sample size was 113 and included all Hispanic surnamed women identified from the various sources. Non-Hispanic women, with Hispanic surnames, were dropped from the original study sample as they were identified through follow-up telephone calls.

The survey was to be sent out in early fall of 1991. However, due to unexpected delays, the surveys were not sent out until November. Although a large percentage of the study participants (52%) returned the surveys within a two-week period, many did not. Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays and the beginning of the spring 1992 semester contributed to delays in responses from study participants. Follow-up continued through April 1992 and consisted of sending another survey form to non-respondents and placing telephone calls to encourage them to complete and return the survey. Reasons for non-response included: secretaries that screened the surveys received and decided which to forward or not (this was true primarily in the case of some women presidents); participants who felt that some of the items were too personal; individuals with good intentions (receiving up to three copies of the survey) with promises to fill it out "as soon as they received another copy to replace the one they had misplaced."

The study was designed to determine the relationship between the factors listed in item # 9 (Part Two -- Professional Data) on the survey and the Hispanic subgroup represented by the respondent. However, several attempts to use the Chi Square statistical procedure to determine the relationship between the subgroups and the identified factors proved unsuccessful. Lack of success was attributed to the small number of women represented within the subgroups other than the Mexican American subgroup.

### **Instrument**

The survey instrument, entitled *Hispanic Women in Higher Education Administration: Profile 1991 -- A National Study of Factors Which Influence or Hinder Advancement of Hispanic Women to Leadership Positions in U.S. Colleges and Universities*, was 16 pages long and included 66 questions/statements and was an adaptation of a survey entitled *Women College Presidents: Profile 1985-- A National Study of Women Chief Executive Officers in U.S. Colleges*

and Universities developed by the American Council on Education (ACE), Office of Women in Higher Education.

The survey instrument included items used in the ACE study, items selected or modified from instruments used in other studies and factors identified from the literature as positively influencing or hindering the advancement of women aspiring to positions of leadership in higher education institutions. The survey included both open and closed response formats and was divided into five sections: Part One -- Administrative Position; Part Two -- Professional Data; Part Three -- Personal Data; Part Four -- Institutional Data; and Part Five -- Personal Opinions. Nineteen (29%) of the items were exactly the same as those in the ACE survey; thirteen (20%) were re-written; and thirty-four (51%) focused on the target population of the study.

The package mailed to the study participants included a cover letter, an abstract of the study and the survey. Also included was an explanation and rationale for the study, a request for completion of the questionnaire, a self-addressed stamped envelope and as an incentive to encourage the women to respond, a gold or silver pencil imprinted with the words *Mil Gracias* (a thousand thanks). Non-respondents were contacted both by mail and telephone at least twice; non-respondents to the second contact were dropped from the study.

### **Major Findings**

Thirty-two factors identified in the literature and from other surveys as contributing to or hindering advancement were listed under Part Two -- Professional Data (item # 9) of the survey. The respondents were asked to "circle those factors which you perceive may have positively influenced or hindered your career advancement." The factors were listed according to five categories -- Personal/Professional; Family; Support; Institutional; and Other. The factors selected by all of the Hispanic subgroups and by the individual subgroups are listed below:

#### **All Hispanic Subgroups**

The five major factors selected by the respondents as positively influencing advancement within the Personal/Professional Category were education and training, goal setting, networking, knowledge of mainstream system and knowledge of the advancement process. The selection of these particular factors suggests that the respondents believed that attainment of their senior level



position was enhanced by (a) being adequately prepared, (b) having a focus, (c) working the mainstream system to their advantage and (d) functioning within the majority culture as well as the Hispanic culture. Traditional Hispanic cultural values and ethnicity were perceived by some respondents to have hindered advancement. The selection of these two factors may indicate that unpleasant career experiences were perceived by some respondents as attributable to ethnicity and/or that some may have faced personal or family conflicts over expectations related to the traditional Hispanic role for women versus career goals.

Within the Family Category, personal economic status, parental economic status and children were perceived to positively influence advancement whereas household/child caring duties and other family responsibilities were perceived to have hindered advancement. One possible reason that personal economic status was selected as having influenced advancement may relate to the fact that many of the respondents received their doctorates after they had children suggesting enhanced financial security later in their careers as opposed to when they were completing their first two degrees. On the other hand, financial assistance may have been provided by spouses or parents. The selection of household/child caring duties and other family responsibilities as factors hindering advancement suggests that some respondents may have been torn between family responsibilities and their careers.

Family/friends, other colleagues/peers, spouses/significant others, and non-Hispanic administrators were perceived as having positively influenced advancement within the Support Category. In pursuing a senior level administrative position, the findings indicate that family/friends, colleagues/peers, and spouse/significant other appear to be very important. The selection of non-Hispanic administrators within the institution as influencing advancement was not surprising given the limited number of Hispanic administrators in higher education institutions in the U.S. Within this category, institutional policies were perceived by an equal number of respondents to both positively influence and hinder advancement. Institutional faculty/staff were considered by some of the respondents to hinder advancement. Possible explanations for these selections may relate to the particular institution with which the respondents were affiliated, its needs, location and expectations. These selections also suggest the possibility of unmet needs for support that some of the respondents may have felt they deserved for furthering their career goals, although support from other administrators within the institution appears to have been forthcoming.

Factors perceived to have positively influenced advancement within the Institutional Category included internal recognition, internal personal contacts, appointments/responsibilities and external personal contacts. The selections under this category suggest that for the majority of the respondents, the type of appointments or positions held as well as internal and external contacts and recognition were all major factors influencing advancement.

Assignments/responsibilities in minority related areas, perceived by some respondents to have positively influenced advancement, were perceived as not applicable and also as hindering advancement by others. This finding may indicate respondents with unsatisfactory experiences within these areas. As supported by the literature, women and/or minorities hired as administrators in higher education institutions may encounter superiors or other administrators with unrealistic expectations resulting in overextended, overcommitted individuals dealing with all minority related issues in addition to their primary job responsibilities.

Within the Other Category, factors perceived as positively influencing advancement included non-Hispanic male and female mentors and affirmative action. The selection of these factors suggest that (a) since most of the administrative positions are held by white males and/or females, they may be logical choices for mentors, (b) affirmative action and the women's movement have contributed in some degree to advancement for minorities, and (c) in communities with high percentages of Hispanics there may be pressure for the recruitment and hiring of Hispanic faculty and administrators in local institutions. Discrimination was perceived to have hindered advancement and also found as not applicable to advancement by an equal number of respondents, suggesting that personal experiences may account for the selection of certain factors.

### Individual Subgroups

Insofar as the relationships between the identified factors and the subgroups that Hispanic women senior administrators represented, the four subgroups were primarily in agreement, with minor exceptions, as to the factors they perceived to have positively influenced or hindered their advancement.

All of the subgroups selected education/training, networking and knowledge of the mainstream system as three of the top five factors influencing advancement within the Personal/Professional Category. Goal setting was selected by the Mexican American, Puerto

Rican and Central/South American subgroups as one of the top five factors influencing advancement. The Puerto Rican, Cuban and Central/South American groups also selected knowledge of the advancement system as one of the top five factors positively influencing advancement. Although all of the subgroups indicated that ethnicity positively influenced advancement, it was one of the top five factors selected by the Mexican American subgroup. Adoption of the majority culture lifestyle was one of the top positively influencing factors selected by the Cuban subgroup. Ethnicity and traditional Hispanic cultural values were selected as factors hindering advancement by all four subgroups.

Within the Family Category all four subgroups included household/child care responsibilities and other family responsibilities as factors hindering advancement. For the Mexican American subgroup, parental financial status and children were also perceived to hinder advancement. The Central/South American respondents selected all five factors within this category as hindering factors. The majority of the Puerto Rican women identified parental and personal economic status as factors that positively influenced advancement.

The majority of the respondents for all four subgroups selected family/friends and spouse/significant other as factors positively influencing advancement within the Support Category. With the exception of institutional policies, the majority of the Mexican American and Puerto Rican respondents considered all of the factors within this category as positively influencing advancement. The Cuban women considered all but institutional faculty/staff as factors positively influencing advancement.

All of the factors within the Institutional Category were perceived by the majority of the subgroup respondents to positively influence advancement. The one factor perceived by some of the respondents in each of the subgroups as hindering advancement was assignments/responsibilities in minority related areas.

**Profile**  
**Senior Level Hispanic Woman Higher Education Administrator**  
**(Fall 1991 -- Spring 1992)**

In responding to various items in the survey, the respondents provided personal and other information within five categories (Administrative Position, Professional Data, Personal Data, Institutional Data, Personal Opinions). The information from the various items within those categories was summarized to develop the following profile.

The senior level Hispanic woman higher education administrator, at the time of the survey, was Mexican American, born in Texas, California, New Mexico or Colorado and lived in an urban community until graduating from high school.

She was 45 years old, married, Catholic and had 1 or 2 children between the ages of 16 - 25. She completed her BA before and her doctorate after having children. Most of her education was financed by a combination of sources including family assistance, scholarships and work.

As the oldest in her family she had between 1 - 3 siblings. Her father may have held either a blue or white collar job and her mother was probably a homemaker/housewife. The family income was probably at the lower or lower middle level.

If her mother worked, she always worked or worked more than five years in service type jobs such as a domestic, child care provider, seamstress or cafeteria cook. Some mothers may have held a professional position.

Her parents may have been born in either the United States or Mexico. If her parents were born in another country they came to the United States for financial reasons. Her father was in or completed grammar school while her mother may have completed both grammar and high school.

Spanish was her first language and was the language of preference in her parent's home. Literature in both Spanish and English was available in the home and her advancement as a senior level Hispanic woman higher education administrator was influenced by her bilingualism.

She is highly fluent in English when making oral presentations, writing articles, handling business correspondence and within social settings. Although she considered herself highly fluent or fluent in Spanish, within the same categories as those for English fluency, she might have experienced difficulty in writing professional articles in Spanish.

She held a permanent position as dean (rather than acting or interim) and had held the position from 1-5 years or for six or more years. Her appointment to a senior administrative position occurred during the 1980's, probably between 1986 - 1989. Prior to her appointment she may have been a director or dean or held a combination of positions.

The attainment of her position may have been the motivating factor to reach her goal as she moved up the administrative ladder. To make her intent known for seeking her administrative position, she increased her professional visibility, told well-placed male colleagues of her interest and increased her participation in professional development activities.

She had probably not been an active candidate in other administrative searches after her first senior administrative appointment. She may have been directly appointed to the position held at the time of the survey or applied without a previous nomination. She may also have been an internal candidate of, or external to, the institution prior to being selected for the position.

The one factor she perceived to have been important to the search committee, as well as to herself, is experience. She also perceived experience to have positively influenced her advancement. A factor she perceived as important to the execution of her duties was being a member of the Hispanic community.

Public speaking, knowledge of institutional politics, experience in the administrative ranks, conflict resolution and negotiation skills are the five major experiential/training areas that she brought to her position.

Before assuming her position she would have liked to have had experience and training in financial management, more research publications, federal/state policy issues, political lobbying and fund raising.

While negotiating for her position, she may have initiated the discussion of topics such as consulting opportunities, salary, and teaching responsibilities. In retrospect, topics she wished had been addressed during the negotiations include club and professional memberships, evaluation, sabbaticals, staff assistance for social functions, salary and entertainment budgets.

Although she believed she was doing a good job and worked well with predominantly male administrators, she may have had unsatisfactory or somewhat satisfactory feelings about her position. If she was the president of a higher education institution, she felt that she worked well with her board.

She had probably not withdrawn from senior or presidential searches as a finalist for those positions. However, if she had, she may have done so for reasons related to institutional fit.

Institutional factors that may have influenced her to accept another senior level administrative position include institutions with a stronger funding base, more prestigious institutions, institutions with a different set of problems or institutions with larger Hispanic student bodies or emphasis on student diversity.

Personal factors that may have influenced her to accept another position include an interesting challenge, higher salary and family considerations.

Her responsibilities included supervising from 1 - 33 staff members, including administrators and professors, handling budgets from \$1 - 4 million dollars, dealing with community outreach and public relations as well as a wide range of other tasks. She may not have had teaching responsibilities, but if she did, she taught 1 - 2 courses.

Her doctorate was probably in education and human development and was completed between 1971 - 1990 at a public higher education institution in the southwest. If she worked while completing her graduate degree program, she was a teaching assistant, instructor, research assistant, graduate fellow or trainee.

Her first job after completing her bachelor's degree was in a public school system in the southwestern area of the United States.

She had worked in higher education from 11 to 20 years and had probably not been out of the job market during her career except for maternity leave, child care responsibilities or the pursuit of an advanced degree.

The position she held prior to the one at the time of the survey may have been as a director, department chair, or professor within a higher education institution in California or Texas.

She had actively participated in networking, serving on community service boards, serving as a board member or officer of a national, regional or state organization, working as a paid consultant or directing major grants/contracts.

Networking and directing major grants/contracts are the two activities she perceived to have the strongest relationship to advancement. Other activities she strongly attributed to advancement included serving as a board member or officer of a national, regional or state organization and the publication of books, monographs or articles.

At the time of the survey, she may have been serving on a community service board, educational or professional boards, college or university boards and corporate boards.



Her annual salary ranged between \$60,000 and \$80,000. She was affiliated with an urban, public, two-year or comprehensive coeducational institution, with a range of from 1,000 to 14,000 full-time equivalents (FTEs).

The student body at her institution was comprised primarily of white non-Hispanic students, although Hispanic students were the second largest group represented.

She valued and appreciated her role as a leader within an institutional context because of the opportunities to influence policy and have an impact on institutional direction, curriculum and the welfare of students and faculty.

She appreciated the opportunity to be a community role model, was proud of her work, her integrity and leadership abilities. She also enjoyed the respect and admiration of her peers, students, faculty and community.

Hispanic women aspirants following in her footsteps, as successful senior level administrators, were strongly encouraged to obtain a good education, appropriate credentials and well-rounded experience. They were also encouraged to network, be flexible and maintain a sense of who and what they are.

The Hispanic woman senior level higher education administrator promotes scholarship, integrity, fairness, confidence, strength, pride and a sense of humor. Overall she encourages other Hispanic women to "go for it!"

Study findings may be used as a frame of reference by Hispanic women as they face similar situations in pursuing a career in higher education administration in the 1990's and beyond or by others interested in similar studies.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A review of the data and study findings reveals that the Hispanic women participating in this study appear to be no different than other women in their perceptions of factors that may positively influence or hinder advancement. This finding is supported by the literature from which the factors included in this study were drawn. Most of the factors, excluding those dealing with ethnicity and culture, affect most women in similar ways as they move up the career ladder.

If institutions of higher education are serious about gender equity and minority representation within their administrative ranks, it is hoped that the findings of this study will assist them as they revise and update current recruitment and promotion guidelines and restructure to meet the needs and demands of a changing multiethnic student body and society.

If the Census and other demographic predictions hold true, Hispanics, as the largest growing minority group in the United States will become a more viable and more visible part of the workforce. Even though recognition, acceptance and advancement have been difficult for Hispanics in the workforce, the literature reveals increasing visibility in some arenas.

This national investigation of Hispanic women (representing the four major Hispanic subgroups) and the factors that positively influenced or hindered their advancement within higher education administration can do its part in meeting the challenge of the higher education community by expanding the research pool and contributing to the needed knowledge base.

Study results (a) provide information about the perceptions of Hispanic women senior level administrators in higher education institutions of the factors that positively influenced or hindered their advancement in relation to the Hispanic subgroup they represent, (b) provide a profile of the Hispanic woman holding a senior administrative position in higher education institutions in 1991-1992, (c) contribute to the literature on women in higher education administration and (d) enhance the higher education community's awareness of Hispanic women as viable administrators.

Additionally, study findings may be used by institutions of higher education and other entities in the (a) re-evaluation of recruitment, hiring, promotion and tenure policies and guidelines to ensure that they are objective in terms of gender equity and ethnic/minority representation and equality and (b) for developing strategies for use in the training and development of Hispanic and other women for leadership positions.

The following statements summarize the need for equity and equality within higher education administration especially as it relates to women in general, Hispanic and other minority women in particular.

- ▶ "Inequality in access to leadership positions is ultimately as costly to institutions as it is a waste of human resources that could contribute to postsecondary education (Gappa, 1977)."
- ▶ "If no minorities or women serve on a university's leadership team or head its classrooms, no amount of rhetoric will obscure the deficiency (Shaw, 1990)."

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