Master's Theses   Master's Theses and Graduate Research

1986

A study of the coping mechanisms and resources used by Mexican-American divorced women

Elisabeth White Chapman
San Jose State University

Recommended Citation

Chapman, Elisabeth White, "A study of the coping mechanisms and resources used by Mexican-American divorced women" (1986). *Master's Theses*. 5290.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.9sk2-z6n5
https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses/5290

A STUDY OF THE COPING MECHANISMS AND RESOURCES
USED BY MEXICAN-AMERICAN DIVORCED WOMEN

A Special Project

Presented To The Faculty of The School of Social Work

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of The Requirements For The

Degree of Masters of Social Work

By

Elisabeth White Chapman

May 1986

Acknowledgements

This research project is dedicated to my husband, Steve Chapman, for his support, love, and encouragement, for helping me believe in myself, and most of all, for being there.

My special thanks to my mother, Robbie Huffman, for her love, support, and for the use of her computer, and as I always tell her, for being a good mother. Also, thanks to the rest of my family for being the loving people they are.

My sincerest appreciation to the chairperson of my committee, Dr. Ismael Dieppa, for his knowledge and invaluable assistance, and to my committee members, Dr. John A. Brown and Dr. Winfield W. Salisbury II, all of whom gave freely of their time, offering their knowledge, and for guiding me towards the finished product.

I wish to express my appreciation to the 25 Mexican-American women who willingly participated in my study, for without their experiences, this study could not have been possible.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Purpose of Investigation

This research project is an exploratory investigation of the coping mechanisms of Mexican-American women dealing with the crisis of divorce. Demographic factors such as class, age, education, urban/rural origin, generation, and level of acculturation will be analyzed for their impact on the coping process of the subjects in their divorce situations. The project will also explore and analyze the effectiveness of the resources utilized by these women. The researcher hopes to gain insight concerning the possible relationships between cultural factors and the manner in which the divorce is handled.

Research Objectives

The following research objectives reflect the focus of the project:

a. To identify coping mechanisms and/or resources used by Mexican-American women in a divorce crisis.

b. To evaluate the effectiveness of the coping mechanisms or resources used by Mexican-American women in a divorce crisis.

c. To determine if demographic factors such as class, age, education, urban/rural origin, generation, and level of acculturation impact the resolution or coping process of the divorce situation.

1

Rationale For Study

The review of professional social work literature reveals a
lack of information about divorce among Mexican-American women,
Uhlenberg suggests that, "Clearly new types of data must be collected,
if marital instability as a form of adaptation by Mexican-Americans to
their socioeconomic environment is to be fully understood."[1] As
adequate information and research findings are lacking in this area,
the identification of coping mechanisms used by women of this ethnic
group may be useful to the field of Social Work, specifically, San
Jose State University School of Social Work, and practitioners in
California.

In an attempt to develop more effective intervention methodologies
for working with minority families, researchers and educators in the
field of Social Work have placed considerable emphasis on cultural and
ethnic perspectives of individual and family functioning among
minorities. The emerging literature may enhance the effectiveness of
the services available to these families, as social agencies become
more responsive and sensitive to their needs.

It is hoped that this study will provide a basic understanding
of the experience of divorce in a group of Mexican-American women and
the resources and coping mechanisms utilized. In addition, the study
may provide a perspective about the possible relationship between
demographic and cultural factors, and divorce among a group of
Mexican-American women.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used in this research project:

1. <u>Acculturation</u>: The modification of the culture of a group
or an individual through contact with one or more other cultures and
the acquiring or exchanging of culture traits.[2]

2. <u>Class</u>: The ranking by a society of people according to income
or way of living. It can usually lead to prejudice, due to a labeling
process.

3. <u>Coping Mechanism</u>: Internal (psychological) or external means
or way used to deal with the stress of a crisis or unexpected event.

4. <u>Crisis</u>: A serious interruption in a normal way of life of
an individual or group, resulting from the occurance of an unexpected
situation for which the individual or group is not prepared, and which
raises problems for which customary responses are not adequate. It
is a problem that develops slowly through a long series of events,
finally reaching a stage where it is so disruptive to the normal life
of an individual or group that it can no longer be ignored.[3]

5. <u>Divorce</u>: An institutional arrangement for terminating the
marriage relationship and allowing each partner the right to remarry.[4]

6. <u>Ethnic Minority Group</u>: Any recognizable racial, religious,
or ethnic group in a community that suffers from some disadvantage
due to prejudice and discrimination. It often refers to categories
of people rather than groups, sometimes to majorities rather than
minorities. Though women are neither a majority (but rather a social
category) nor a minority, they are sometimes called a minority group
because the male dominated society discriminates against women. A
minority group need be neither a minority nor group, so long as it
refers to a category of people who can be identified by a sizeable
segment of the population as objects of prejudice and discrimination.[5]

7. <u>Kinship</u>: A social relationship based on family relatedness, as culturally defined. The culture determines which family relationships are considered significant, what the rights and organizations of specific types of related persons are, and what forms of organization exist among related persons. It is relationships based on ties of blood, or relationships based on marriage. [6]

8. <u>Maladapted</u>: Poorly suited to a particular condition or purpose. [7]

9. <u>Mexican-American</u>: A person of Mexican descent in the United States. Frequently the term is used synonymously with Hispanic, Chicano, depending on the geographical area. Chicano/Chicana are widely accepted terms by the Mexican-American people, with identification of political activism in the 1960's. [8]

10. <u>Resolution</u>: The act of resolving or determining, as upon an action or course of action, method, procedure, etc. [9]

11. <u>Resource</u>: A familial, private, or public source of assistance, including financial, shelter, food, health care, emotional, and moral support or counseling.

12. <u>Stress</u>: Physical, emotional, or mental tension. It can be caused by a situation or factor. It is the physical pressure exerted on one thing by another. [10]

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter will review relevant literature within the context

of the proposed research problem. The review of the literature will

focus on Mexican-Americans, particularly women and aspects of their

socio-cultural experience which may be related to the resolution of

the divorce crisis.

The chapter will include the following socio-cultural aspects:

the Mexican-American family structure as a support system, the tradi-

tional and changing male/female roles within the culture, the impact

of the Catholic religion on the Mexican-American family and its views

on divorce, and the impact of divorce on Mexican-American females in

the resolution process.

The Mexican-American Family: A Research Perspective

Various studies have been done on the Mexican-American family as

a support system. Wagner's study on the support system of the Mexican-

American family found that "Mexican-Americans had geographically

closer and more intact family support networks, and their relationships

were less disrupted by the necessity for relocation."[11] Wagner found

that the location of the family, and cultural values against divorce,

can create complications for Mexican-American women in the adjustment

to being alone.

Mexican-Americans tend to value the family as the primary source

of identity and support in times of crisis.[12]

Familism among Mexican-Americans is also related to stress
and conflict. It tends to be negatively related to seeking
professional services, and it may generate stress when
individuals become isolated from their families or when the
family becomes dysfunctional.[13]

The Mexican-American family includes not only the parents and

children, but also an extended circle of relatives. Madsen observed

that "the nucleus of the Mexican-American family consists of parents

and their offspring, but the bond between parents and children

extends over generations."[14] Even though the nuclear family main-

tains a separate household, research has indicated that the extended

family is usually within close proximity.

Social relations between extended kin networks and Mexican-

American women seem to be altered after a divorce occurs, resulting

in less contact with the absent husband's kin. "There is a consensus

in the kinship literature that while relationships with blood relatives

and in-laws rest upon different bases, consanguinal and official kin

are equally likely to be seen as long as one's marriage remains

intact."[15] Because women may not be able to maintain a relationship

with their in-laws, they neglect the opportunity to acquire assistance

from these members.

Regardless of marital status, most women remain in close contact

and receive help from their close kin members. Their ex-husband's

kin are generally unlikely to be seen and cannot be relied upon for

aid or help unless the ex-husband intervenes. "However, they do

not show whether the resident spouse's kindred compensate for this
loss of contact and potential help and do not indicate whether differ-
ences in the child's relationships with maternal and paternal kindred
result."[16]

Women's own kinship systems play a role in the adjustment from a
divorce. Kin often provide help by making their homes available,
offering services like childcare, providing companionship, and lending
money.[17] Spanier and Hanson indicate that "kin may not know how to
handle the separation, and thus may hesitate to become involved."[18]
Studies have shown that when the kinship or familial network does
become involved in the support process, it helps the divorced woman
develop a more positive self concept and function adequately within
society.[19] Most of the literature on divorce and the extended family
concentrates on the amount and kinds of support offered to divorcing
spouses, and changes in interaction with the larger family system.
Although the Mexican-American woman relies on the family for support,
the system can either be a positive or negative force of support in
the divorce adjustment process. Values are internalized and generally
have some influence over how Mexican-American women handle divorce
or any other crisis.

<u>Male and Female Roles Within A Cultural Context</u>

There have been many studies done on the traditional male and
female roles within the Mexican-American family and how these roles
are changing. The literature states that the sex roles are differen-
tiated by the concepts of "machismo" for the male, and "hembrismo" for

the female. These sex role patterns designate how an individual

functions within a family of Mexican-American origin, as well as

within the community.

"Machismo" is a system of behavioral traits that teaches the male

to be aggressive, fearless, courageous, and to dominate not only

women, but other men as well. "While the macho is supposed to be the

protector of all women, especially his sisters and his mother, he

is at the same time supposed to attain as many sexual conquests over

women as possible."[20] The male becomes dominant after the marriage.

He is taught to be emotionally detached, especially with his own

children, and frequently has a busy social life outside the family.

He takes care of all family business, and keeps his social life

separate and private. The ideal of "machismo" or "muy hombre"

(manliness or virility) dictates that men be aggressive, sexually

experienced, courageous, and protective of their women (who include

mothers, sisters, and wives) and their children.[21] "Machismo is the

much-publicized Mexican trait of manliness, in which the man constantly

tries to express and looks for signs in others that his manliness is

being recognized."[22] The literature on the male role within the

traditional Mexican-American family is important to this study because

the characteristics of the "machismo" are opposite of the "hembrismo"

or female roles, and tend to dominate over them within the family

structure.

"Hembrismo," the female role, is characterized by extreme femininity,

passivity, and self-abnegation. The female is taught from early

childhood how to strive for feminity. Her social relationships and
duties are confined primarily to the home. She is taught to respect
the male members of the family and to obey them without question.
The traditional roles of the female are to be a wife and mother.
Since both the traditional Mexican male and female roles are rigidly
defined, the alteration of such rôles could cause a crisis within a
relationship or family network, where noticeable change would take
place. "In the United States, the large population of Americans of
Mexican descent has been described as adhering to the same family
patterns as the traditional Mexican family."[23]

Although traditional male/female roles are still prevalent
within the Mexican-American culture, studies indicate that there is
an alteration of roles occurring in third and fourth generation
Mexican-Americans.

The Changing Roles of the Mexican-American Woman

The acculturation of Mexican-American women was enhanced by the
Chicano movement from 1960-1970, which was an effort to establish equal
rights for Mexican-American people in an Anglo dominated society.
In the Chicano movement, women wanted to establish equal rights for
themselves as individuals, and they wanted their needs to be addressed.
"The Chicano movement has changed the traditional views of many
Mexican-American women, such as the belief that women exist primarily
to serve their husbands and children. Mexican-American women began
to want to work outside of the home."[24] Working outside the home also

became an economic necessity. In the United States, women are allowed

more freedom and equality. "An important factor is the frequent inability

of the Mexican-American male to compete in the skill-conscious

industrial economy."[25] Financial pressures force the wife into the

labor market and she assumes responsibilities formerly assumed by

the male. Sheer necessity will force the husband to allow his wife

to work, but often he looses his self-respect and dignity. The

acculturation of the Mexican-American person often results in a

stressful relationship, as roles are altered and confused. Although

the traditional roles are still there, it is frequently by necessity

that the male/female roles may be altered.

> Many marriages reveal conflict on the question of authority
> and the roles of the spouses. The most even-tempered marriages
> are those which follow a middle course: the wife does little
> to challenge the authority of her husband and the husband is
> not too overbearing toward his wife.[26]

Third generation urban Mexican-Americans in California have

the highest incomes and the lowest marital instability compared to

other cultural groups.[27] According to various studies, the cause

of instability in Mexican-American marital relationships is due to

the weakening position of the male. The inability of many Mexican-

American males to adequately support their families, due to low wages

and widespread unemployment, leads to marital strain and can result

in divorce. "When females are then able to take over the economic

responsibilities of the family, they have a stronger position

than the male, which intensifies the conflict for males who accept

the ideal that males should be head of household."[28] If this

is so, then the inability of males to achieve this goal becomes

important as a possible source of marital strain.

Evidence suggests that marital instability and divorce among Mexican-Americans has resulted from a higher educational level among females and has strengthened their bargaining power in marriages. The bargaining position among females is also made stronger by the State, through its offer of welfare payments to female headed families. This makes the females less dependent upon males for economic support.

> There are increasing rates of broken marriages as Mexican-Americans move away from their traditional past. The increased freedom of sex roles certainly has some benefits, but it may also create problems when it results in large numbers of broken families and in the absence of stable homes for children.[29]

If marital instability increases among Mexican-Americans, the future economic advances for this minority will be hindered and an increase in the number of broken homes will retard the achievement of future generations.

The Influence of Religion

Religion also had a significant impact on the Mexican-American value system. The majority of this population is Catholic. The Catholic church emphasizes marriage and family unity. Although the Catholic church is seen as a support structure within the Mexican-American culture, the Church dictates values that don't accept divorce as an alternative to an unhappy marriage. "Although the Catholic church doesn't believe in divorce, it will permit it when circumstances require civil proceedings as a legal solution."[30] The Church presently recognizes the need for civil divorce as a means

to protect certain human God-given rights, which might be destroyed
through an intolerable marriage. "The Catholic Church defines divorce
as a judgment or decree handed down in a civil court declaring the
dissolution of a marriage."[31] The Catholic Church also believes in
the couple working things out in their relationship, and dictates
that a divorce occurs because the couple failed and is no longer
trying to negotiate their differences. Catholic religious views
remain an influential factor in the daily lives of many Mexican-
American families.

"Family help is less likely to be provided when the families are
themselves experiencing life change events and disapprove of the
divorce situation."[32] Lack of support from the family and the Church
can cause difficulty for the Mexican-American women in the divorce
process. Many of these women are confused about the reaction of the
Catholic Church to a divorce. The divorce causes a crisis within the
family, which often results in an embarrassment or loss of dignity
within the Church. Although some literature suggests that the
Catholic Church is supportive when a divorce occurs and does not
single out a divorced Catholic from other members of the Church,
Rue states that "as long as a divorced Catholic does not remarry,
according to the present teachings of the Church, he/she may partici-
pate fully in the life of the church."[33] This view appears to be
contradictory and the literature indicated a confusion among Mexican-
American family members, especially the divorcing couple, on the
Church's views on divorce. "It is believed that many Catholics think

they will be excommunicated from the Catholic Church after a divorce, but lack of correct information fueled by powerful emotional responses to the divorce may help deter the confused Catholic from the practice of his/her faith."[34]

Because of the lack of support for members going through a divorce, many Mexican-Americans turn to other sources for support. Sometimes the views of the Church on divorce cause family members to become non-supportive of a divorced family member. A person's denial of membership within the Catholic Church because of a divorce can result in that person turning to other religions for support. Although the roles and values of the Mexican-American population are changing, the views of the Catholic Church remain traditional. There seems to be some confusion over values concerning divorce among Catholics in general, which may affect Mexican-Americans more specifically.

Mexican-American Women and Divorce

Many factors contribute to the impact of divorce among Mexican-American women. The rate of marital instability among Mexican-Americans is increasing. Uhlenberg compares third generation Mexican-Americans living in California to the Black population, stating that the former have a level of marital instability which closely resembles the Black population. "When the Mexican-American population is separated into sub-groups defined by generation and place of residence, a striking trend toward increasing marital instability can be seen."[35] The literature reveals that in 1960, Mexican-Americans occupied a position between whites and other non-whites in their degree of marital instability.

"While Mexican-Americans are more similar to other whites than to the
highly unstable non-white population, they nevertheless have a higher
proportion in each of the three categories--married more than once;
widowed; and divorced, separated, or husband absent--than do other
non-whites."[36] Among women ages 25 to 44, one-fourth of all married
Mexican-Americans are not living with their first husbands. Even
though Mexican-Americans tend to have a more stable family than whites,
marital instability in Mexican-American relationships has increased.
Uhlenberg indicates that "longitudinal data on marital instability
among Mexican-Americans is not available to verify this trend toward
increasing instability."[37]

The Effect of Social Networks on
the Adjustment to Divorce

During the last decade, researchers have given some attention to
the relationship between social network changes and the adjustment
to divorce. Although this literature is not specific to the Mexican-
American female, it provides a perspective on the divorce resolution
process.

> Some recent studies have moved from a focus on intrapsychic
> factors to the exploration of demographic factors in the
> adjustment to divorce process. Sex and age have been shown
> to relate to the emotional adjustment to divorce, with men
> generally experiencing more changes in overall mood, as a
> result of divorce, than women and older respondents tending
> to experience more stress from the marital dissolution than
> younger ones.[38]

Divorce may be a response to social network pressures or may
cause reverberations throughout the divorced person's social context.
The circumstances surrounding the divorce need to be examined, if

intervention strategies are to be developed for those experiencing this
life change. "Changes in network relationships of individuals tend to
increase the stress precipitated by the marital dissolution, although
this degree of stress appears to be dependent upon the significance of
network relationships to the individual."[39]

There is a significant relationship between the individual's
personal satisfaction with their network relationships and their level
of maternal role satisfaction. "Annetwork which involves many people
who interact with each other in a closely knit group with much face to
face contact, tends to arrive at a consensus on norms and exerts
pressure on individuals within the network to conform to the norms."[40]
A divorce which occurs within a network based on the norm of marital
stability, will precipitate the evaluative functions of the network
and potentially cut off family support. Since the literature states
that Mexican-Americans tend to rely on their familial systems for
support in times of crisis, one can assume that the members are of
utmost importance in the divorce resolution process.

Lack of family support in times of crisis, can increase feelings
of isolation and depression in the Mexican-American female, resulting
in a loss of identity and a prolonged process for the divorce trauma
to be resolved. "Other research, while not specifically focusing on
kinship systems, has found indications that the amount of support
available to one-parent families is important for maternal performance."[41]
"Divorced women who could cheerfully cope with their families, usually
had a network of families and friends to draw upon. Without this

assistance, the mothers seemed to feel depressed, isolated, and worn out in the struggle to keep their families together."[42]

A lack of support from family and friends tends to make the divorce resolution process more difficult. Caplan and Killea define support systems as: "forces at person-to-person and social levels which enable people to master the challenge and strains of their lives."[43]

When support is provided to help individuals through the divorce process, many of the harmful effects of stressful situations may be reduced.

> For the emotional divorce process to be carried to its natural
> conclusion and resolution, it is essential that the death of
> the marriage be recognized, and the loss be mourned, which includes
> the relinquishing of the hopes and dreams that spawned and
> sustained the marriage. This painful process is expressed in
> an emerging understanding and acceptance of one's own role
> in contributing to the marital disharmony and the demise of
> that marriage.[44]

Divorce Among Mexican-American Women:
An Emerging Research Problem

Overall, more research needs to be conducted on the divorce resolution process within the Mexican-American culture. Literature related to the coping mechanisms used by the Mexican-American female during the divorce resolution process is also lacking.

> Between 1964 and 1974, women of all ages throughout the
> country became more liberated in the way they saw themselves,
> in relation to men, marriage, children, and work. The
> egalitarian spirit took hold in a wide range of women,
> not just educated middle class women who are the most out-
> spoken about feminist issues.[45]

There is an apparent lack of literature relating to the effects of this movement on women from different ethnic backgrounds, especially Mexican-American women.

"There has been an emphasis on 'natural' support systems in social science literature on Hispanics and other populations in need."[46] This could lead to the assumption that minority populations have less need for social services.

"Mexican-American women may experience a heightened vulnerability during this life juncture because they are faced with potential deviations from the traditional role, yet the model for the new role is not clearly defined and it is continuously changing in modern times."[47] There is apparent lack of literature written on the effect of role change and the acculturation of Mexican-American women. Assumptions have been made as to the reasons why Mexican-American women tend to rely on family members for support, rather than social resources. Because Mexican-American women tend not to use outside resources as frequently as other women, there seems to be a lack of studies about the effectiveness of these resources during the divorce resolution process.

"Previous theory and research on extended kin relations and marital dissolution led to the prediction that kin interaction and support are variables which contribute to better adjustment to marital separation."[48] Although studies have been done on the kinship support system within the Mexican-American culture, there is a need for more research to be done on its effectiveness as a means of support during the divorce resolution process. "Most of the literature on divorce and the extended family concentrates on the amount and kinds of support offered to divorcing spouses and the changes in interaction within the larger family system."[49]

There tends to be an assumption that divorce has the greatest impact (mostly negative) on the parents of the divorcing spouses, when in fact, it has a greater impact on the people divorcing. As the divorce encompasses both the nuclear family and the extended family, as well as the kinship system, in the Mexican-American culture, more research needs to be done on the relationship between the divorcing woman and the other family members. "Little research exists on the dynamics of relationships within the extended family after divorce and remarriage."[50] There is a need for more research to be done on the impact of divorce on the Mexican-American extended family, if the divorce resolution process is to be fully understood.

Despite the prevalence of marital disruption in the United States, relatively little research is available on how support systems change after a divorce. "Limited research, done on the amount of contact with kin, has shown that divorced women receive more assistance from their own kin than from kin of their former spouse."[51] It is unclear whether this is true for Mexican-American women also. None of the research done so far, focused on kinship and divorce, has gone beyond an examination of the quality of contact, to a consideration of its importance in family functioning. Although research has found indications that the amount of support available to one-parent families is important for maternal role performance, no data is available on the actual relationship between the support systems used and their impact on maternal role performance of Mexican-American women during the divorce resolution process. "Little information is

available on single mothers of other minority backgrounds, such as

Asian-Americans and particularly, Hispanics, who are a rapidly

increasing component of the population throughout the Southwestern

states."[52]

Literature on the Mexican-American population tends to be focused

on the intact nuclear and extended family. "It does appear to be true

that Hispanics, especially Mexican-Americans, have a lower incidence

of divorce or separation than Blacks."[53] Because it is believed that

Mexican-Americans have a lower incidence of divorce, studies have

emphasized the effects of divorce on cultures where its occurrence

is more prominent, such as Anglos and Blacks. "Mexican-American women

may experience different risks to adjustment, such as different

frequencies of response from their support networks, differences in

informal resources available to them, and differing attitudes and

expectations as they begin the psychosocial adjustment process to

single parenthood."[54]

The existing literature has not focused on the Mexican-American

female population and how it copes with divorce. The majority of

the literature on Mexican-American females covers role specialization

within the family, but does not examine role changes before and after

a divorce occurs. The literature also is lacking studies in the area

of religion and its impact in the divorce resolution process. Assump-

tions have been made that since the Catholic Church has not been

supportive of divorce in the past, that Mexican-American women turn to

other sources for support. Brown indicates that society's view of

divorce "is accentuated by our modern mythology, which gives gold
stars for sticking it out, for not being a quitter, and for making
the best of the situation."[55] Literature written on the Catholic
Church seems to indicate a view of divorce, as a matter of individual
failure at not being able to work things out in a relationship. More
studies need to be done on the relationship of the Mexican-American
female with the Catholic Church, as a means of support after divorce.

It is clear that the events of a divorce have a significant
effect on the nuclear family unit, as well as the extended family and
kinship systems, as previously mentioned. "Earlier studies on the
restructuring of kinship ties, examined only the effects of divorce
on the relationships between adults and former affines. This, of
course, fails to recognize that kin members may relate independently
to children, regardless of the state of the divorces' relationship."[56]
There is a need for more studies to be done on relationships of kinship
systems within the Mexican-American culture and their support in the
divorce resolution process. "As the incidence of divorce increases,
there emerges a critical need for data which accurately reflects both
quantitative and qualitative aspects of family interactions."[57]
Further studies would challenge professionals to develop a mutual
understanding of critical variables, if the changes in family, such
as divorce, are to be fully understood. There is a need for further
exploration of the social network relationships of divorced persons
prior to divorce and after, and to delineate the network changes which

take place and the ways in which these changes affect the adjustment

process. Daniels-Mohring and Berger suggest that there is a need for

clinical interventions to be designed to deal with divorced people.[58]

Previous research findings suggest that changes in the social networks

of individuals from pre to post divorce tend to increase the quality of

a person's adjustment to a life crisis.

Future research needs to address divorce as a process of adjust-

ment, instead of negatively associating it with a grief process or

trauma, of debonding of emotional attachment. More literature needs

to be written on the demographic factors such as sex, age, and ethnicity,

and their relation to the emotional adjustment to divorce. "Socio-

economic level is directly related to the ability to recover from

divorce, with individuals in higher income brackets having an easier

adjustment process."[59]

While the literature related to the Mexican-American has increased

significantly during the past 25 years, there is a need to update the

available information and to conduct new research in light of demo-

graphic changes. The literature indicates that the United States has

just begun to recognize the Mexican-Americans as being the second

largest minority group. For this reason, it is obvious that there is

a great need for studies to be done on various aspects of this

population, especially on the impact of divorce on the female.

> In looking back over what has been written about Anglo-
> American kin versus Mexican-American kin ties, it is clear
> that researchers have rarely been objective about the subject.

> Either Anglo-American ties have been made to appear weak
> and insignificant in contrast to Mexican-American kin ties
> or Mexican-American extended families have been characterized
> as pathological and maladaptive in urban industrial society,
> where the Anglo norm is believed to be better suited.[60]

The literature suggests that neither perspective is accurate, and that

there is a need to clarify the cultural definition of close family

ties, which differs between Anglo and Mexican-Americans, in order to

be able to understand the comparative dynamics involved in the divorce

resolution process among both groups.

> It is imperative that human service providers stop using
> 'a deficit model', that is, a model derived from a culture
> of poverty, when working with Hispanics and other ethnic
> and racial groups. By making a concerted effort to identify
> cultural strengths first, providers will have taken a major
> step toward recognizing natural support systems and collaborat-
> ing with inherent cultural strengths.[61]

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Description of Study

This research project is of an exploratory/descriptive nature. "Descriptive research describes and interprets what is."[62] Exploratory research attempts to offer reason for a given phenomenon. This project is an exploratory study designed to find out: a) how a group of Mexican-American women cope with the process of divorce, b) what resources they use as a means of support, and c) what demographic factors may influence the resolution of the divorce crisis.

Data Gathering Instrument

Data will be collected through the administration of a questionnaire by the investigator to the research subjects. The data will be analyzed and inferences will be drawn from it.

Problem Statement

A source written in 1980, reports that one out of three marriages will end in divorce. Within the past five years, the number of divorces have been steadily increasing, and a number of these involve children. The source states that, . . ."The situation is most serious in California, where it is estimated that one out of two marriages will fail, and that 70 percent of these will involve children under twelve. Family disputes, resulting in divorce or legal separation comprise the largest category of civil matters handled by our legal system."[63]

Divorce is a crisis which can end in adaptive or maladaptive behavior within a specific time span. For example, women from different cultural and ethnic groups may respond differently to the divorce crisis. The coping mechanisms and resources used by women to resolve the socio-economic, familial, and emotional problems may also be influenced by ethnic and cultural factors. The coping mechanisms employed by Mexican-American women during the divorce crisis are not explicated in the existing literature on the subject. An objective of this investigation is to identify the coping mechanisms and resources, and evaluate their effectiveness. This knowledge will be useful in planning programs for effective intervention with this population based on this knowledge.

Research Objectives

The research project proposes to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify the coping mechanisms and resources used by Mexican-American women during the divorce process.

2. To explore the relationship between demographic, socio-cultural, and familial factors, and the coping mechanisms used by Mexican-American women during the divorce process.

3. To identify, the resources perceived by Mexican-American women as effective in the resolution of their divorce.

Research Questions

The review of the literature and the preceeding problem statement guided the researcher in developing the following research questions.

1. What are the coping mechanisms used by Mexican-American Women during a divorce crisis?

2. Does the approval of the familial system influence the coping mechanisms used by Mexican-American women as a means of support?

3. Does religion have any influence in the divorce resolution process?

4. How does the acculturation process of Mexican-American women influence the coping mechanisms used when going through a divorce?

5. Are education or level of income indicators of the coping mechanisms used by the Mexican-American women when going through a divorce?

6. What coping mechanisms are perceived by Mexican-American women as effective during the divorce process?

Research Design

An exploratory design is more appropriate for this research project because the research and literature focusing on the problem of divorce among Mexican-Americans is very limited. The design consists of a questionnaire used to interview a group of 25 Mexican-American divorced women selected through an accidental sample.

> Many exploratory studies have the purpose of formulating
> a problem for more precise investigation or of developing
> hypotheses. An exploratory study has other functions, such
> as increasing the investigator's familiarity with the phenomenon
> he wishes to investigate in a subsequent, more highly structured

study, or with the setting in which he plans to carry out
research gathering information about practical possibilities
for carrying out research in real life settings; providing a
census of problems regarded as urgent by people working in a
given field of social relations.[64]

The researcher believes that an exploratory study is an appropriate

method of research to survey a group of Mexican-American women, in

order to explore the coping mechanisms and resources used in the divorce

resolution process.

Focus of the Study

The focus of this exploratory study is to identify the coping

mechanisms and resources used by Mexican-American women involved in

the process of divorce. Twenty-five Mexican American women were

interviewed by the researcher using a questionnaire format. The

women were selected from the Judean Society, ESO (Economic Social

Opportunities for Women), and MACSA (Mexican-American Community

Services Agency), all located within Santa Clara County. The women

interviewed from these agencies were both client and staff members.

In addition, a newspaper advertisement in the Pot Pourri free news-

paper (Appendix 1) was utilized because the total number of women

needed could not be derived from the designated agencies. Individual,

in depth interviews were conducted with each of the women, using

the questionnaire as a guide to obtain information from the women.

Whenever possible, the interviews were held in their home environ-

ments, in order to gain a perspective of how the divorce has affected

them, their families, as well as their surroundings.

The Interviewing Process

Before beginning the interviews with the women, their rights,
as participants were explained to them. The participants in the
study signed a form stating their rights had been explained to them
and that they agreed to participate in the study, before the interviews
could begin. It was explained to the participants that the questionnaire
included: demographic/background information, marital informa-
tion, information about the divorce, the coping process, and the
effectiveness of the resources utilized.

The questionnaire contained forty multiple choice and open-ended
questions. It was devised to limit the interviewing process to approxi-
mately one hour. "Surveys conducted by personal interviews have an
additional advantage over surveys conducted by mailed questionnaires,
in that they usually yield a much better sample of the general popu-
lation. Most people are willing to cooperate in a study when all they
have to do is talk."[65]

Limitations of Study

The project represented a limited study, since only twenty-five
Mexican-American divorced women were interviewed. The sample is
accidental because all the women were self-referred, and cannot be
considered to be representative of the larger Mexican-American divorced
female population. The data gathered in the study cannot be considered
as representative of how all Mexican-American women cope with divorce.
Since the interviewer is neither Mexican-American nor Spanish-speaking,
the participants responses might have been influenced by this factor.

It was felt that the time and place of the interview might cause
distractions for the women, and might limit the answers given during
the interviewing process. The time of the interview had to be
coordinated with each of the women to avoid conflict with mealtime or
other scheduled appointments. Furthermore, a place had to be selected
that would have a limited number of distractions during the interviews.
Sometimes, the fact that the participants' children were at home
caused some distractions during the interviewing process and the
answers given were somewhat limited. Consequently, the findings of
this investigation cannot be generalized to other Mexican-American
women who are in divorce situations. The geographical location,
and the ethnicity of the investigator may have had some bearings on the
findings of this project.

Data Analysis

Data will be analyzed and presented, using tables for the
demogrphic aspects of the study. A narrative form will be used to
present the major findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

Findings and Data Analysis

The research population is defined as twenty-five Mexican-
American divorced women. The respondents were obtained through a
newspaper advertisement in the Pot Pourri and from various agencies:
The Judean Society, ESO (Economic Social Opportunities for Women),
and MACSA (Mexican-American Community Service Agency). Demographic
data was obtained from the respondents, as well as background informa-
tion pertaining to their marriages. In addition, the respondents
were also asked questions pertaining to the coping mechanisms used
in the divorce resolution process.

This chapter will analyze the data collected and present the
findings of this investigation. The data will be presented in tabular
and narrative form.

Demographic Data

Of the total population sampled (25), more than half identified
themselves as Mexican-American (N=14 or 56%), with the other half
identifying themselves as Chicana (N=6 or 24%). Table 1 illustrates
this data.

Table 1

Ethnicity of Respondents

Ethnicity	Respondents	
	No.	%
Mexican-American	14	56%
Chicana	6	24%
American	5	20%
	N=25	100%

The ages of the respondents varied. Almost half of them were 31-40 (N=12 or 48%), with the rest of the sample being 31-40 (N=5 or 20%), or 41-50 (N=7 or 28%). One respondent was over 50 (N=4 or 1%). This result is demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Ages of Respondents

Age	Respondents	
	No.	%
26-30	5	20%
31-40	12	48%
41-50	7	4%
50+	1	4%
	N=25	100%

When asked what generation they were in the United States, the largest number of respondents stated that they were the 2nd generation (N=9 or 36%), 4 (16%) identified themselves as being 1st generation, 7 (28%) identified themselves as the 3rd generation, and 5 (20%) were 4th generation or more. See Table 3.

Table 3

Respondents' Generation in the United States

Generation	Respondents	
	No.	%
1st	4	16%
2nd	9	36%
3rd	7	28%
4th+	5	20%
	N=25	100%

With respect to proficiency of both the Spanish and English languages, more than half of the respondents spoke Spanish fluently, 17 (68%); 4 (16%) stated that they spoke it moderately, and only 4 (16%) spoke little Spanish. An interesting finding was that all of the respondents (25) spoke English fluently. Table 4 consists of a distribution of the number of respondents by their language proficiency.

Table 4

Proficiency of the Spanish and English Languages

Proficiency of Language	Respondents	
	No.	%
Fluent Spanish	17	68%
Moderate Spanish	4	16%
Little Spanish	4	16%
Fluent English	25	100%
	N=25	100%

Of the total population sampled (25), almost half (11) had 1-2 years of college (44%), 3 (12%) did not complete High School, 6 (24%) had received their High School Diplomas or had an equivalent, 4 (16%) had completed 3-4 years of college, and only 1 (4%) respondent had completed 5 or more years of college. A distribution of the respondents by levels of education is reported in Table 5.

Table 5

Respondents' Levels of Education

Levels of Education	Respondents	
	No.	%
Didn't Complete High School	3	12%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	6	24%
Had 1-2 Years of College	11	44%
Had 3-4 Years of College	4	16%
Had 5+ Years of College	1	4%
	N=25	100%

When questioned about their levels of income, most of the respondents (11 or 44%) revealed that they made 10,001-20,000 dollars per year. Of the other respondents, 2 (8%) made under $6,000, 4 (16%) made between $6,001-$10,000 per year, and 8 (32%) made $20,001-40,000 per year. See Table 6.

Table 6

Respondents' Levels of Income

Levels of Income (Per Year)	Respondents	
	No.	%
Under $6,000	2	8%
$6,001-10,000	4	16%
$10,001-20,000	11	44%
$20,001-40,000	8	32%
	N=25	100%

The data revealed that a large number of the respondents, 10 (40%), owned their own homes, with another large number, 8 (32%), renting their homes. Four of the respondents (16%) stated that they lived in an apartment, and 3 (12%) lived in relatives' homes. See Table 7.

Table 7

Respondents' Housing Status

Housing Status	Respondents	
	No.	%
Own Home	10	40%
Rent Home	8	32%
Apartment	4	16%
Homes of Relatives	3	12%
	N=25	100%

Of the total population (25), only 3 (12%) were born in Mexico, almost half, 12 (48%), were born in California, with a large number of respondents, 9 (36%), identifying their birth places as being in the southwestern states of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Only 1 (4%) respondent stated her birth place as being in a country outside the United States and Mexico (Libya).

Table 8

Birthplaces of Respondents

Birthplaces	Respondents	
	No.	%
Mexico	3	12%
California	12	48%
Southwestern States	9	36%
Another Country (Libya)	1	4%
	N=25	100%

Almost all of the respondents, 22 (88%), had lived in the United States all their lives, with 3 living in the United States for more than 15 years. See Table 9.

Table 9

Respondents' Length of Time in the United States

Time in United States	Respondents	
	No.	%
15 or More Years	3	12%
All Life	22	88%
	N=25	100%

When asked about their occupations, three-quarters of the respondents, 19 (76%), stated that they had professional jobs, 3 (12%) had sales occupations, and 3 (12%) were in the electronics field. Table 10 reports a distribution of respondents by their occupation.

Table 10

Occupations of Respondents

Occupations	Respondents	
	No.	%
Professional	19	88%
Sales	3	12%
Electronics	3	12%
	N=25	100%

When asked about the location of their extended families, most respondents gave more than one location. More than half, 14 (56%) stated that they lived closeby in San Jose, 9 (36%) indicated that members lived closeby in California, 3 (12%) that they had relatives in Texas, only 1 (4%) had relatives in Mexico, 1 (4%) person had relatives in another country, and 1 (4%) person stated that she had no relatives presently living. See Table 11.

Table 11

Location of Extended Family

Location	Respondents	
	No.	%
San Jose	14	56%
California (other than San Jose)	9	36%
Texas	3	12%
Mexico	1	4%
Another Country (Libya)	1	4%
No Family	1	4%
	N=25	100%

Of the total population (25), more than half of the respondents, 13 (52%), were close to oldest in their order of birth, with 7 (20%) being the youngest, and only 8 (12%) in the middle. There were 2 (8%) respondents that indicated that they did not have any brothers or sisters. The following data showing the order of birth is illustrated in Table 12.

Table 12

Respondents' Order of Birth

Order of Birth	Respondents	
	No.	%
Oldest	13	52%
Middle	3	12%
Youngest	7	28%
Only Child	2	8%
	N=25	100%

When questioned whether they have extended family members living in their households, 20 (80%) stated that they had no extended family living with them, 2 (8%) reported that their parents were living with them, 1 (4%) had a sister in her household, and 3 (12%) had cousins living with them. The following data is explicated in Table 13.

Table 13

Extended Family Members Living In Household

Family Members	Respondents	
	No.	%
No Family in Household	20	80%
Parents	2	8%
Sister	1	4%
Cousin	3	12%
	N=25	100%

Of the total population samples (25), 17 (68%) still had their
children living with them after the divorce, and 8 (32%) stated that
their children were no longer living in their households. Of the number
of children per respondent, 3 (12%) revealed that they had no children,
and 3 (12%) indicated that they had 5-6 children. Thirteen respondents
(52%) had both male and female children, 5 (20%) stated that they
had only male children, 4 (16%) had only female children, and as
previously stated, 3 (12%) revealed that they had no children. When
asked about the ages of their children, the following answers were given:
2 (8%) had children between ages 0-2, 7 (28%) had children 4-6,
another 7 (28%) had children 7-10, 7 (28%) respondents indicated
they had children ages 11-13, 2 (8%) had children between the ages of
14-16, and 10 (40%) had children over 16. Some of the respondents
had children in more than one age group. Table 14 will illustrate
the number of children living in the respondents' households, as well
as those no longer there.

Table 14

Children Living with Respondents

Children	Respondents	
	No.	%
Living in Household	17	68%
Not Living in Household	8	32%
	N=25	100%

The Use of Coping Mechanisms and Resources

The respondents were asked five questions related to the coping mechanisms and resources used during the divorce crisis. It appears that the way the questions were phrased, they elicited responses that identified the external coping mechanisms or resources used, instead of internal or psychological coping mechanisms.

Research Question 1: What are the coping mechanisms used by Mexican-American women during a divorce crisis?

The first question asked (Number 33) stated: What have you done or what means have you used to be able to cope with the divorce situation? In response to this question, most of the respondents stated that they used more than one resource. Seventeen (68%) used family as a means of coping with the divorce and 17 (68%) stated that they used friends. Fifteen (60%) admitted to using agencies for assistance, 4 (16%) found the church helpful, and 4 (16%) stated that they coped with the divorce by themselves. Table 15 illustrates that the majority of the respondents used family and friends to cope with the divorce situation.

Table 15

Coping Mechanisms/Resources Used

Coping Mechanisms/Resources	Respondents	
	No.	%
Family	17	68%
Friends	17	68%
Agency	15	60%
Church	4	16%
Self	4	16%
	N=25	100%

Question 35 was also focused on the use of coping mechanisms: What specific agencies have you used to help you through the divorce situation? In response to this question, some gave more than one answer. Three respondents (12%) stated that they used the counseling services at Alum Rock Counseling Center, 2 (8%) went to the The Judean Society, and 1 (4%) received counseling at WOMA (The Women's Alliance). Six respondents (24%) went to private counselors for assistance, and 1 (4%) received job training at ESO (Economic Social Opportunities for Women). Six respondents (24%) received financial assistance from Public Welfare (AFDC), 4 (16%) turned to the church for support, and 6 (24%) stated that they didn't go to agencies at all. The responses indicate that this is a well-informed group, who tend to be slightly acculturated because the majority turned

to agencies for support in the divorce resolution process. This
interesting data will be presented in Table 16.

Table 16

Specific Agencies Used

Agencies Used	Respondents	
	No.	%
Alum Rock Counseling Center	3	12%
Judean Society	2	8%
WOMA	1	4%
ESO	1	4%
Private Practice	6	24%
Welfare	6	24%
Church	4	16%
None	6	24%
	N=25	100%

The sample population was then asked Question 37: What,
specifically, were the services provided by the agencies that were
effective in helping you and your children through the divorce process?
In response to this question, 16 individuals (64%) stated that they
used individual counseling services at agencies, 1 (4%) respondent
used individual and group counseling, and 8 (32%) admitted that they
had not used counseling at all. The responses seem to indicate that
individual counseling is preferred more than group counseling, as

a means of support.   Table 17 illustrates these results.

Table 17

Services Used At Agencies

Services Used	Respondents	
	No.	%
Individual Counseling	16	64%
Individual and Group Counseling	1	4%
No Counseling	8	32%
	N=25	100%

When the respondents were asked: What services do you desire
from agencies that could be more effective in helping your family
and other families through a divorce situation? (Question 38), they
gave the following responses.   More than half of the respondents,
14 (56%), stated that they didn't desire any services, 10 (40%)
desired group counseling, and only 1 (4%) indicated a desire for
individual counseling.   Most of the respondents in individual
counseling revealed that they desired group counseling, but didn't
know how comfortable they would feel within the context.   Respondents
who reported "no additional counseling needed" had received counseling
before.   The data is presented in Table 18.

Table 18

Services Desired From Agencies

Services Desired	Respondents	
	No.	%
Individual Counseling	1	4%
Group Counseling	10	40%
No Additional Counseling Needed	14	56%
	N=25	100%

The sample population was then asked Question 39: How did you find out about the agencies or services? Not all respondents responded to this question due to them not using agencies or services. Almost half of the respondents, 12 (48%), stated that they found out about the agencies through their places of employment, 6 (24%) stated that they were informed by friends, 1 (4%) indicated that a priest gave her agency referrals, and 1 respondent (4%) was informed by friends and through work. The data seems to indicate that friends and workplaces of the respondents were well informed of agency services. The results are presented in Table 19.

Table 19

Means of Agency Referral

Means of Referral	Respondents	
	No.	%
Workplace	12	48%
Friends	6	24%
Priest	1	4%
Friend and Workplace	1	4%
No Response	5	20%
	N=25	100%

Effectiveness of the Resources Utilized by the Respondents

Research Question 6: What coping mechanisms or resources are perceived by Mexican-American women as effective during the divorce process?

The respondents were asked three questions related to their perception of coping mechanisms or resource effectiveness. The first question asked in this area was Question 34: How effective are these means in helping you through the divorce process? In response to this question, most respondents had more than one source that they found effective in the divorce resolution process. Seventeen respondents (68%) indicated that they found their families to be an effective means of support, another 17 (68%) found their friends to be supportive, 13 (52%) stated agencies as being helpful, and 2 (8%) felt that they could resolve the divorce themselves. Only 2 (8%)

felt that agencies weren't an effective means of-support, and 2 (8%)
felt that their workplaces had been non-supportive. The results seem
to indicate that even though the respondents appear to be somewhat
acculturated, they tend to feel more comfortable talking to people
they know well about their problems, such as family and friends. The
data is presented in Table 20.

Table 20

Effectiveness of Coping Mechanisms/Resources Used

Coping Mechanisms/Resources	Resources	
	No.	%
Family	17	68%
Friends	17	68%
Agency	13	52%
Self	2	8%
	N=25	100%

The respondents were then asked Question 36: How effective were
the services that the agencies provided to you and your family (children)?
In response to this question, 19 (76%) found agency services to be an
effective means of support in coping with the divorce, and 6 (24%)
found them to be non-supportive. The data seems to indicate that
even though the respondents had other means of support, they tended to
turn to agencies for additional services. The results are illustrated
in Table 21.

Table 21

Effectiveness of Agency Services

Agency Services	Respondents	
	No.	%
Positive	19	76%
Negative	6	24%
	N=25	100%

The third question posed to the respondents related to the
effectiveness of the resources utilized, Number 40: What resources
(agencies or services) did you find the most effective in the divorce
resolution process? In response to this question, most respondents
found more than one resource to be effective, and some respondents
didn't use any resources. Two respondents (8%) stated that they
found their families to be the most effective in the divorce resolu-
tion process, 2 (8%) found their friends to be the most supportive,
4 respondents (16%) indicated that agencies were the most helpful,
4 (16%) were impressed with the supportiveness of their workplaces,
and 1 (4%) stated that she had not found any resources to be effective.
The findings seem to indicate that even though family and friends
were found to be effective, a higher number of respondents found that
agencies and their workplaces were more supportive. Although many
of the respondents had tried agency services and found them to be
helpful, most felt more comfortable talking with family members or

friends. It was interesting that almost half of the respondents, 12 (48%), hadn't used any resources. The results are displayed in Table 22.

Table 22

Resources Most Effective

Resources	Respondents	
	No.	%
Family	2	8%
Friends	2	8%
Agency	4	16%
Workplace	4	16%
None	1	4%
Didn't Use Resources	12	48%
	N=25	100%

The Family and Marriage: Interrelated Factors

Research Question 2: Does the approval of the familial system influence the coping mechanisms used by Mexican-American women as a means of support?

The respondents were asked five questions related to the marriage process and family approval. The first question asked in this area was Question 19: What was the length of courtship before your marriage? In response to this question, almost half of the respondents, 10 (40%), revealed they dated their ex-husbands for 1-2 years before

marriage, 9 (36%) stated that their length of courtship had been less than 1 year, 3 (12%) indicated that they had dated for 3-4 years before marriage, and 3 (12%) stated that their length of courtship before marriage was 7-8 years. The data seems to indicate that the marriage occurred quickly. The following Table 23 reveals these results.

Table 23

Respondents' Length of Courtship

Length of Courtship.	Respondents	
	No.	%
Less than 1 Year	9	36%
1-2 Years	10	40%
3-4 Years	3	12%
5-6 Years	0	0%
7-8 Years	3	12%
	N=25	100%

Item 25 was the next question asked of the respondents: What were your ages at the time of marriage? (Your age and your spouse) Almost half of the respondents, 10 (40%), stated their ages and those of their spouses as being between 21-24 at the time of their marriages, 2 (8%) revealed that they were under 17 when they got married, 8 (32%) stated their ages as being between 17-20, and 5 (20%) were 25-30. Six respondents (24%) revealed their spouses ages as being between 17-20 at the time of marriage, and 9 (36%) said their spouses were

25-30. The data seems to indicate that the marriages took place

at an early age. See Table 24.

Table 24

Distribution of Ages at Time of Marriage:
Respondents and Spouses

Ages	Respondents		Spouses	
	No.	%	No.	%
Under 17	2	8%	0	0%
17-20	8	32%	6	24%
21-24	10	40%	10	40%
25-30	5	20%	9	36%
	N=25	100%	N=25	100%

Table 25 reports the answers of the subjects to Question 20:
What was the reason for your marriage? More than half of the
respondents, 16 (64%), indicated that they were married because of
being in love, 3 (12%) were married because of pregnancy, 1 respondent
(4%) stated that her marriage was prearranged, and 5 (20%) were married
to get out of the house.

Table 25

Reason for Marriage

Reason	Respondents	
	No.	%
In Love	16	64%
Pregnant	3	12%
Arranged	1	4%
Get Out of House	5	20%
	N=25	100%

Question 22 was the next item asked of the respondents: Did either of your families approve of the marriage? In response to this question, almost half of the respondents, 12 (48%), stated that their families approved of the marriage, another 12 (48%) revealed that their families had disapproved, and 1 (4%) indicated that their approval was unknown. Fifteen of the respondents (60%) revealed that their spouses' families had approved of the marriage taking place, 8 (32%) indicated disapproval, and 2 (8%) said their approval was unknown. The data seems to indicate that more of the spouses' families approved of the marriages than those of the respondents, and just as many of the respondents' families approved as disapproved. The following data is displayed in Table 26.

Table 26

Family Approval of Marriage

Approval	Respondents		Spouses	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	12	48%	15	60%
No	12	48%	8	32%
Unknown	1	4%	2	8%
			N=25	100%

The fifth question asked in this category was Question 23: Where did the marriage take place? In answer to this question, almost half of the respondents, 10 (40%), stated that their marriages had taken place in San Jose, 5 (20%) named California as the location, 6 (24%) got married in Nevada, 3 (12%) revealed Texas as the location, and only 1 (4%) got married in Mexico. The data seems to reveal that most respondents preferred to have local weddings because family members tended to live closeby. Table 27 illustrates this information.

Table 27

Marriage Location

Location	Respondents	
	No.	%
San Jose	10	40%
California	5	20%
Nevada	6	24%
Texas	3	12%
Mexico	1	4%
	N=25	100%

Religion and Other Cultural Factors and Divorce

Research Question 3: Does religion have any influence in the divorce resolution process?

The respondents were asked four questions related to religion and the decision to divorce. The first question asked in this area was Question 24: What are your religious backgrounds? (Yours and your spouse's) In response to this question, 20 respondents (80%) stated that they were Catholic, and the other 5 (20%) revealed their religions as being Baptist or Protestant. Seventeen of the respondents (68%) indicated that their spouses were Catholic, and 8 (32%) stated either Baptist or Protestant for their spouses. The findings seem to reveal that all of the respondents and their spouses were either Catholic or other religions with similar beliefs. See Table 28.

Table 28

Religious Background

Religion	Respondents		Spouses	
	No.	%	No.	%
Catholic	20	80%	17	68%
Other	5	20%	8	32%
	N=25	100%	N=25	100%

Item 25 was the next question posed to the sample population: What was the length of your marriage? The answers given were: 5 (20%) had been married for 1-2 years, 2 (8%) stated the years of marriage as being 3-4 years, 7 (28%) were married for 5-6 years, 2 (8%) indicated

that they had been married for 7-8 years, 2 (8%) were married for 9-10 years, and 7 (28%) had been married for over 10 years. The results seem to reveal that the respondents' marriages were short-term. Table 29 illustrates these results.

Table 29

Length of Marriage

Length	Respondents	
	No.	%
1-2 Years	5	20%
3-4 Years	2	8%
5-6 Years	7	28%
7-8 Years	2	8%
9-10 Years	2	8%
Over 10 Years	7	28%
	N=25	100%

The next set of questions presented in this section included Item 26: What was the reason for the divorce? Over half of the respondents, 14 (56%), stated that the reason for the divorce was because change had occurred--both had grown in separate directions, 5 (20%) indicated that their spouses had an affair, 5 (20%) revealed that battering had taken place, and 3 (12%) said their spouses were alcoholics. Two respondents gave more than one answer. The data seems to indicate that in most of the marriages, change had occurred,

where the parties involved had grown apart, not together. The

following information is presented in Table 30.

Table 30

Reason for Divorce

Reason	Respondents	
	No.	%
Change/Grown Apart	14	56%
Affair	5	20%
Battering	5	20%
Alcoholic	3	12%
	N=25	100%

The fourth question (Item 27) in this set asked the respondents:

Who initiated the divorce? In answer to this question, 19 (76%) of the

respondents indicated that they had initiated the divorce process

themselves, 4 (16%) revealed the spouse as being the divorcer, and

2 (8%) stated that the divorce had been a mutual agreement. The

findings seem to indicate that the sample of respondents appear to be

highly acculturated because they are less dependent on their husbands

and appear to be self-sufficient. Table 31 illustrates these

interesting findings.

Table 31

Initiation of Divorce

Initiation	Respondents	
	No.	%
Self	19	76%
Spouse	4	16%
Both	2	8%
	N=25	100%

Divorce as an Experience Among the Respondents

The first question asked in this category was Question 28: What was the outcome of the divorce proceedings? In response to this question, most respondents gave more than one answer. Sixteen respondents (64%) stated that they were awarded custody of the children as a divorce outcome, 14 (56%) indicated that they also receive child support, 15 (60%) revealed that their ex-husbands had child visitation rights, 12 (48%) indicated that they received the house in the divorce settlement, 2 (8%) stated that they received other items, such as boats or campers, and 3 (12%) indicated that nothing had been awarded to them. Table 32 illustrates this data.

Table 32

Outcome of Divorce

Outcome	Respondents	
	No.	%
Custody	16	64%
Child Support	14	56%
Visitation (Spouse)	15	60%
House	12	48%
Other	2	8%
Nothing	3	12%
N=25*		100%

* Because most of the respondents received multiple awards in the above categories, the total number does not add up to 25.

The sample population was then asked Question 29: What effect has the divorce had on you personally? (social, financial, psychological, physical) In response to this question, most respondents gave more than one answer. The responses were divided between positive effects and negative in the areas mentioned. On the positive side, 9 (36%) indicated that they were better off psychologically, and 9 (36%) stated that they were also physically better off. On the negative side, 12 (48%) indicated that their social lives had been damaged after the divorce, 15 (60%) stated that their financial status had decreased, 14 (56%) revealed that they were worse off

psychologically, and 14 (56%) were worse off physically. The data seems to indicate that in most cases, the divorce was damaging in all four areas. The above data is presented in Table 33.

Table 33

Effect of Divorce on Respondents

Effect	Positive		Negative	
	No.	%	No.	%
Social	9	36%	12	48%
Financial	7	28%	15	60%
Psychological	9	36%	14	56%
Physical	9	36%	14	56%
	N=25*	100%	N=25*	100%

* Note: Because respondents gave more than one answer in each of the four categories in the table, N does not add to 25.

The effect of the divorce of the children was explored in the next Question 30: What effect has the divorce had on your children? (social, physical and psychological) Seventeen of the respondents (68%) stated that the divorce had a negative effect on the children, 3 (12%) said that the children were now better off, 2 (8%) stated that the divorce had no effect on the children, due to their young ages, and 3 respondents (12%) had no children. The results seem to indicate that the divorce had a traumatic effect on the children. Table 34 presents this data.

Table 34

Effect of Divorce on Children

Effect	Respondents	
	No.	%
All Negative	17	68%
All Positive	3	12%
No Effect	2	8%
No Children	3	12%
	N=25	100%

Another question addressing the effect of the divorce was Item 31:
What effect has the divorce had on your family of origin? In response
to this question, 12 (48%) stated that their families were happy
about the divorce, 9 (36%) indicated that the divorce had a negative
impact on family members, and 4 (16%) said that the divorce did not
affect their families at all. The findings seem to reveal that the
families of the respondents tended to have mixed feelings about the
divorce, and therefore might or might not be supportive in the resolu-
tion process. This interesting data is illustrated in Table 35.

Table 35

Effect of Divorce on Respondents' Families

Effect	Respondents	
	No.	%
Positive	12	48%
Negative	9	36%
No Effect	4	16%
	N=25	100%

The fifth question in this category asked (Question 32): What effect has the divorce had on your spouse and his family of origin? In answer to this question, 7 (28%) stated that their spouses were glad about the divorce, 11 (44%) said that the divorce had a negative effect on their spouses, 5 (20%) indicated that it had no effect at all, and 2 (8%) admitted that they didn't know if their spouses had been affected by the divorce. With regard to the spouses' families of origin, 6 respondents (24%) said that they were happy about the divorce, 13 (52%) stated that it had a negative effect, 4 (16%) thought that they were unaffected, and 2 (8%) really didn't know what effect the divorce had on them. The data seems to indicate that the divorce had a negative effect on both the spouses and their families, and in that case, the families probably would not be an effective means of support for the respondents and their children. Table 36 illustrates the data.

Table 36

Effect of Divorce on Spouses and Their Families

Type of Effect	Effect on Spouse		Effect on Family		Respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Positive	7	28%	6	24%	7	28%
Negative	11	44%	13	52%	11	44%
No Effect	5	20%	4	16%	5	20%
Unknown	2	2%	2	18%	2	2%
	N=25	100%	N=25	100%	N=25	100%

Data Analysis

The examination of the demographic data and the coping mechanisms seems to indicate that there may be a relationship between education and level of income as indicators of coping mechanisms used by the Mexican-American women going through a divorce. The cross-tabulation of the respondents' levels of income with their levels of education, revealed that the respondents in higher income brackets tended to have higher levels of education. It also suggested that this group of respondents tended to be more informed about the resources available to them and utilized them effectively.

After comparing the respondents' levels of income with their generations in the United States, it was found that the respondents who were third generation or above tended to be the ones in higher income levels than those of first and second generation. In contrasting

the respondents' occupations with their levels of income, the data seemed to indicate that those in professional occupations had higher incomes than those in sales and electronics. The respondents who were in higher level occupations tended to have higher levels of education and had been in the United States for most or all of their lives.

In contrasting the respondents' ages at the time of marriage with the reason for divorce, the data seems to indicate that those who get married at a young age, because of being in love, tended to get a divorce within 5 years. These women stated the reason for the divorce as growth among partners, or husband having an affair. In most of these cases, it was the women who initiated the divorce process. This seems to indicate that these women were more self sufficient at the time of divorce than before their marriage, and were also less dependent on their husbands.
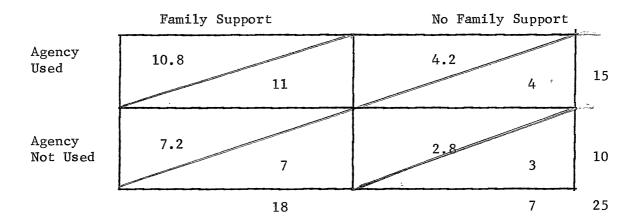
Research question number 1 focuses on the coping mechanisms or resources used by the respondents during the divorce crisis. The data clearly provides evidence that this group of respondents preferred to use their family and friends as support mechanisms during the divorce crisis. The respondents stated that they felt more comfortable talking to people close to them about their problems. They said that to take the problems outside of the family, to an outside agency, would indicate that the family was unable to deal with the problem. The use of agencies by some respondents seems to indicate that they felt comfortable going to outside sources for help.

as well. As previously mentioned, this group of respondents were more
highly educated than similar groups of minority women, had professional
jobs, and average salaries of $10,000-$30,000 per year. Another factor
influencing their use of agencies is that this group of respondents
could speak English fluently, and therefore, felt comfortable going
to English-speaking agencies for assistance.

Research question number 2 focuses on whether the approval of
the familial system influences the coping mechanisms or resources
used by this group of women as a means of support. The data supports
the conclusion that family members and friends were used most and
determined the most effective in providing support for this group of
women. Generally, the data seems to indicate whether the respondents'
families approved of the marriage or not, they still were supportive
during the divorce crisis. But because most of the women initiated
the divorce process, the families of the spouses were not available
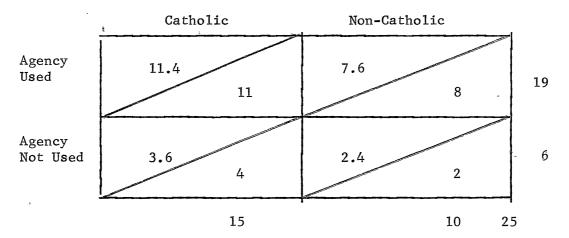for support for the women.

Table 37

Influence of Familial System on Coping Mechanisms

	Family Support		No Family Support		
Agency Used	10.8	11	4.2	4	15
Agency Not Used	7.2	7	2.8	3	10
	18		7		25

The focus of research question number 3 is on the religion and whether it has any influence in the divorce resolution process. The majority of the respondents and their spouses were Catholics. This group indicated that when they were divorced, they felt uncomfortable attending the same church that they had with their spouses. They knew that their churches were not in favor of the divorce and indicated that they had to switch to a church where their marital background and present status was not known. The respondents indicated that the church was not an effective means of support, due to its emphasis on reconciliation within a marriage.

Table 38

Influence of Religion on Coping Mechanisms

	Catholic	Non-Catholic	
Agency Used	11.4 / 11	7.6 / 8	19
Agency Not Used	3.6 / 4	2.4 / 2	6
	15	10	25

Research question number 4 asked: Does the level of acculturation and demographic characteristics of Mexican-American women influence the coping mechanisms they used when going through a divorce? The majority of the respondents were highly educated, had professional occupations, and had been in the United States for most or all of their lives. The data seems to indicate that the respondents are

highly acculturated but retain some traditional values, such as
using their families for support.

Research question number 5 focuses on whether education and
levels of income are indicators of the coping mechanisms used by
Mexican-American women. The data seems to indicate that this was a
group of women with an average educational experience of 1-2 years
of college and who were in professional occupations, with salaries
ranging from $10,000-$40,000 per year. Over half of the respondents
had used outside resources for support. These results seem to indicate
that because these women were highly educated, had high enough incomes
to afford agency services, and all spoke English, that they tended
to agency services for support in coping with the divorce. Also, the
data indicates that these women were well informed about the resources
available to them.

Table 39

Influence of Education on Coping Mechanisms

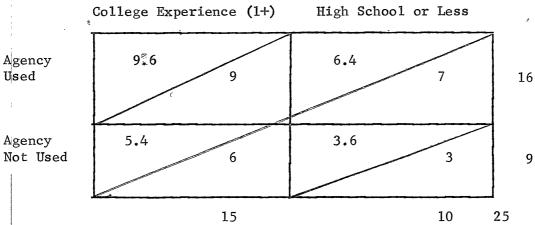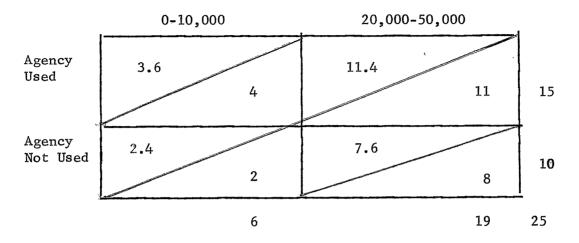|	College Experience (1+)	High School or Less	
Agency Used	9.6 9	6.4 7	16
Agency Not Used	5.4 6	3.6 3	9
	15	10	25

Table 40

Influence Level of Income on Coping Mechanisms

	0-10,000	20,000-50,000	
Agency Used	3.6 / 4	11.4 / 11	15
Agency Not Used	2.4 / 2	7.6 / 8	10
	6	19	25

The focus of research question number 6 is on the respondents'
perceptions of the coping mechanisms and resources that were the most
effective during the resolution period. The respondents indicated
that they felt most comfortable talking to family members and friends;
they found them to be the most supportive and available for help
anytime. Some of the women indicated that individual counseling was
effective in the resolution process, and others felt that their work-
places were supportive. Generally, the respondents felt more comfortable
talking to familiar faces about their divorces, and therefore, few
had tried group counseling as an alternative.

The data seemed to support the literature review in that most of
the respondents tended to rely on their families and friends more as
a means of support. This indicated that these respondents felt more
comfortable talking to people they know well about their problems, than
going to strangersin agencies for help. Also, another interesting
finding was that most of the respondents felt more comfortable

talking to an individual counselor about the divorce, than within

a group. Again, this reveals the traditional values of not wanting

to talk to strangers about problems because then it seems that you

can't handle them on your own or within the family. However, it

should be noted that over half of the respondents utilized agencies

and considered them as effective.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Restatement of Purpose

This research project was an exploratory investigation of the coping mechanisms and resources utilized by Mexican-American women dealing with the crisis of divorce. Demographic factors such as class, age, education, urban origin, generation, and level of acculturation were analyzed, to see what impact they had on the coping process of the subjects in their divorce situation. The project also explored and analyzed the effectiveness of the resources utilized by these women. The researcher gained some insight concerning the possible relationships between cultural factors and the manner in which the divorces were handled.

Interpretation of Results

It appears from the results of this study that demographic factors such as class, age, education, urban/rural origin, generation, and level of acculturation did have some impact on the coping processes of this sample of 25 Mexican-American divorced women. This sample of women were highly acculturated; the majority of them were third generation and beyond, and had been in the United States for most or all of their lives. All of the respondents were fluent in English and spoke either fluent or moderate Spanish. Most had received 1-2 years of college education or more, and were in professional occupations.

68

The yearly incomes of most of these women ranged from $10,000-$40,000 with 8 (32%) from $20,001-$40,000. The majority of the women had been born and raised in urban locations within California and the Southwest; there were only three women born in Mexico. Most of the respondents interviewed were in the age group of 31-40.

The analysis of the demographic data led to the following conclusions. As previously mentioned, this was an unusual sample of Mexican-American women; they were highly educated, were in professional occupations with moderate to high yearly salaries, spoke fluent English and had been in the United States for most or all of their lives. The data seems to indicate that this group of women married at young ages because of being in love, but divorces occurred between five to ten years of marriage. The researcher concluded that change had taken place within the marriage, and that the women were more independent and self-sufficient at the time of divorce; in almost all of the marriages, it was the women who initiated the divorce process.

The findings seem to indicate that these women were well informed about resources, such as agencies and individual counseling, and had the salaries to utilize these services. The data also seems to indicate that although this was a highly acculturated group of women, they also retained some traditional values; the majority of the respondents preferred to use their families and friends as support networks and found them to be the most effective in the divorce resolution process. The locations of family members were closeby, so the respondents felt comfortable using them as a means of support.

The women stated that they preferred to talk to people that they knew well about their problems, rather than going to an outside source for help. These women also indicated that if they did go to an outside source for help, they preferred to receive individual counseling as opposed to talking in a group. Individual counseling was utilized by the respondents more than groups; they indicated that they felt more comfortable talking to someone individually about their divorces than within a group setting.

Due to the difficulty of obtaining respondents for the interviews, the researcher did not pretest the questionnaires. Such a pre-test would have helped determine which questions needed to be rephrased, in order to obtain more accurate answers. For example, Question 33: What have you done or what means have you used to be able to cope with the divorce situation? It appears that the way this question was phrased, it elicited responses that identified the external coping mechanisms or resources used, instead of internal or psychological coping mechanisms. The researcher feels that this question could have been rephrased to elicit the internal coping processes of the women interviewed. Although some aspects of the study could have been done differently, it is felt that the information elicited provided a perspective on the divorce resolution processes used by a group of Mexican-American women.

The six research questions identified in this study helped to identify key areas for research investigation. The data indicated that even though this group of women was highly acculturated and seemed to be well informed about the services available to them,

there was an indication they retained traditional values. Most of

the respondents indicated a preference for the utilization of familial

and friends networks as a means of support. These women felt more

comfortable talking about their problems to familiar faces, instead of

going to outside sources for help. Another conclusion can be made

from the data analysis. The respondents stated that although they

felt more comfortable using family and friends as support networks,

they had utilized some agency services. The respondents indicated

that they had utilized individual counseling services from agencies,

but felt that a group approach would also be helpful to them. They

indicated that groups should be established to accommodate divorced

women from all minority groups. Because of their unusually high

levels of education and adequate incomes, they felt that they could

afford to utilize such services.

The respondents indicated that because their family members

lived close, they felt secure in using them as a means of support.

The data seems to indicate that even though family members had not

approved of the marriage, they could be utilized as support in the

divorce resolution process. These respondents did not feel comfortable

using the families of their spouses for support for themselves or the

children.

The data seems to indicate that these women were well informed

about the divorce process. They indicated that after they had

initiated the divorce process, they knew how to proceed from there.

In most cases, the women indicated that they had received what they

had asked for through the divorce settlement. Most had requested

custody of the children, and in most cases the spouses had not objected. Even though the majority of the respondents had received custody of the children, most of the spouses had been granted visitation. In most cases, it was indicated that the divorce left the spouses and the children worse off and through the resolution process, they grew closer together.

As a result of this study, it is hoped that an insight will be gained about the coping processes of this group of 25 Mexican-American divorced women. Because there is a lack of research and literature in this area, it is hoped that this study will enhance the interest to conduct further studies in the area of divorce and Mexican-Americans. Although this study cannot be generalized to the entire population of Mexican-American women and how they cope with divorce, it is hoped that it can be used as an initial guide for additional studies on Mexican American divorced women. It is felt that further studies could help professionals by providing effective services to Mexican-American women during and after the divorce process.

The project suggests the following research questions for future investigation: 1) What coping mechanisms (internal) or resources (external) do Mexican-American women use in the divorce resolution process? 2) How can agency services or outside resources be more effective in helping Mexican-American women and other minority women through the divorce process? 3) How do monolingual Spanish-speaking women cope with the crisis of divorce? 4) How does the coping process of Mexican-American divorced women differ from other minority groups? 5) What are

similar and different coping mechanisms and resources used by

Mexican-American women from varied socio-economic backgrounds and

varied levels of acculturation?

APPENDIX A

Newspaper Advertisement

College student seeks confidential interviews with Mexican-American divorced women for college thesis. Five dollars offered for interview.

The Questionaire For Data Collection

Demographic Information(Please Circle One)

1. AGE GROUP: 20-25   26-30   31-40.   41-50   Over 50

2. ETHNICITY: Mexican-American   Chicana   Other_____

3. GENERATION IN THE U.S.:   1st   2nd   3rd   Other_____

4. PROFICIENCY OF LANGUAGE SPOKEN: English   Spanish
    a. Fluent   Level_____   Level_____
    b. Moderate
    c. Little
    d. None

5. LEVEL OF EDUCATION: a.   Did not complete high school
    b.   High school diploma or equivalentt
    c.   Completed 1-2 years of college
    d.   Completed 3-4 years of college
    e.   Completed 5 or more years of college

6. LEVEL OF INCOME(per year):   a.   Under 6,000   e.   30,001-40,000
    b.   6,001-10,000   f.   40,001-50,000
    c.   10,001-20,000 g.   Over 50,000
    d.   20,001-30,000

7. HOUSING STATUS: a.   Own home   c.   Apartment,
    b.   Rent Home   d.   Other(specify)_____

Demographic Information(Fill in the Blank)

8. PLACE OF BIRTH:_____

9. LENGTH OF TIME IN THE U.S.:_____

10. WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION?:_____

11. HOW MANY CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE?:_____

12. WHAT ARE THE AGES OF YOUR CHILDREN?:_____

13. HOW MANY MALES AND HOW MANY FEMALES?:   MALES_____   FEMALES_____

14. HOW MANY OF YOUR CHILDREN STILL LIVE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?:_____

15. LOCATIONS OF THE REST OF YOUR FAMILY(your children, your brothers and sisters, and your parents):_____
_____

16. HOW MANY BROTHERS AND SISTERS DO YOU HAVE?:_____

17. IN WHAT ORDER OF BIRTH ARE YOUR?:_____

18. WHAT OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS ARE PRESENTLY LIVING IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD, AND WHAT IS THEIR RELATION TO YOU?:_____
_____

Attitudinal and Feeling Data(Fill in the Blank)

19. LENGTH OF COURTSHIP BEFORE MARRIAGE:_____

20. REASON FOR MARRIAGE:_____

21. WHAT WERE YOUR AGES AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE?:   YOUR AGE_____
                                                   YOUR SPOUSE"S AGE_____

22. DID EITHER OF YOUR FAMILIES APPROVE OF THE MARRIAGE AND WHY?:_____
_____

23. WHERE DID THE MARRIAGE TAKE PLACE?:_____

24. WHAT ARE YOUR RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS?:   YOURS_____   YOUR SPOUSE_____
_____   _____

25. LENGTH OF YOUR MARRIAGE:_____

26. REASON FOR THE DIVORCE:_____

27. WHO INITIATED THE DIVORCE?:_____

28. WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME OF THE DIVORCE PRECEEDINGS?:_____
_____

29. WHAT EFFECT HAS THE DIVORCE HAD ON YOU PERSONALLY(social, financial,
psychological, physical):_____
_____

30. WHAT EFFECT HAS THE DIVORCE HAD ON YOUR CHILDREN(social, physical,
and psychological):_____
_____

31. WHAT EFFECT HAS THE DIVORCE HAD ON YOUR FAMILY OF ORIGIN?:_____
_____

32. WHAT EFFECT HAS THE DIVORCE HAD ON YOUR SPOUSE AND HIS FAMILY OF
ORIGIN?:_____

33. WHAT HAVE YOU DONE OR WHAT MEANS HAVE YOU USED TO BE ABLE TO COPE
WITH THE DIVORCE SITUATION?:_____
_____

34. HOW EFFECTIVE ARE THESE MEANS IN HELPING YOU THROUGH THE DIVORCE
EXPERIENCE?:_____

35. WHAT SPECIFIC AGENCIES HAVE YOU USED TO HELP YOU THROUGH THE DIVORCE
SITUATION?:_____

36. HOW EFFECTIVE WERE THE SERVICES THAT THE AGENCIES PROVIDED TO YOU
AND YOUR FAMILY(children):_____

37. WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, WERE THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE AGENCIES THAT
WERE EFFECTIVE IN HELPING YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN THROUGH THE DIVORCE
SITUATION?:_____

38. WHAT SERVICES DO YOU DESIRE FROM AGENCIES THAT COULD BE MORE EFFEC-
TIVE IN HELPING YOUR FAMILY AND OTHER FAMILIES THROUGH A DIVORCE
SITUATION?:_____

39. HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE AGENCIES OR SERVICES(please specify):

                       a. Family

                       b. Priest

                       c. Friends

                       d. Other:_____

40. WHAT RESOURCES(agencies or services) DID YOU FIND THE MOST EFFEC-
TIVE IN THE DIVORCE RESOLUTION PROCESS?:_____
_____

Notes

[1] Peter Uhlenberg, "Marital Instability Among Mexican-Americans: Following the Patterns of Blacks?" Social Problems 20, No. 1: 56.

[2] G. A. Theodorson, and A. G. Theodorson, The Modern Dictionary of Sociology (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1969), p. 3.

[3] Theodorson, p. 88.

[4] Theodorson, p. 118.

[5] Theodorson, p. 259.

[6] Theodorson, p. 221.

[7] J. Stein, ed., The Random-House Dictionary (New York: Ballentine Books, 1978), p. 542.

[8] M. B. Melville, Twice A Minority: Mexican-American Women (Missouri: C. V. Mosby Company, 1980), p. 5.

[9] Stein, p. 765.

[10] Stein, p. 877.

[11] Roland Wagner, Ph.D., "Psychosocial Adjustment During the First Year of Single Parenthood: A Comparison of Mexican-American and Anglo Women," (1985): 1.

[12] Wagner, p. 1.

[13] Jack Rothman, Larry M. Grant, and Steven A. Hnat, "Mexican-American Family Culture," Social Service Review, University of Chicago (June 1985): 203.

[14] William Madsen, Mexican-Americans of South Texas (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1973), p. 181.

[15]Donald F. Anspach, "Kinship and Divorce," _Journal of Marriage and Divorce_ 38, No. 2 (May 1976):   323.

[16]Anspach, p. 323.

[17]Anspach, p. 234.

[18]Graham B. Spanier and Sandra Hanson, "Role of Extended Kin in the Adjustment ot Separation," _Journal of Divorce_ 5, No. 6 (1981-83):   47.

[19]Spanier, p. 47.

[20]Alex Gonzales, "Sex Roles of the Traditional Mexican-American Family," _Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology_ 13, No. 3 (September 1982):   330.

[21]Fernando Penalosa, "Mexican Family Roles," _Journal of Marriage and the Family_ (November 1968):   684.

[22]Penalosa, p. 684.

[23]Gonzales, p. 331.

[24]Maria Cortera, "Feminism: The Chicana and Anglo Versions," _Twice A Minority: Mexican-American Women_, Margarita B. Mellville, ed. (Missouri: C.V. Mosby Company, 1980), p. 223.

[25]Robert Staples, "The Mexican-American Family: Its Modification Over Time and Space," Phylon 32, No. 2 (1971):   184.

[26]Staples, p. 184.

[27]Uhlenberg, p. 54.

[28]Uhlenberg, p. 54.

[29]Uhlenberg, p. 35.

[30]James J. Rue, Ph.D. and Louise Shanahan, _Catachism for Divorced Catholics_ (Illinois: Herald Press, 1978), p. 1.

[31]Rue, p. 5.

[32] Dory K. Beatrice, "Divorce: Problems, Goals and Growth Facilitation," <u>Social Casework: The Journal of Contemporary Social Work</u> 60, No. 3 (March 1979): 157.

[33] Rue, p. 5.

[34] Rue, p. xi.

[35] Uhlenberg, p. 51.

[36] Uhlenberg, p. 51.

[37] Uhlenberg, p. 51.

[38] Debbie Daniels-Mohring and Michael Berger, "Social Network Changes and the Adjustment to Divorce," <u>Journal of Divorce</u> 8, No. 1: 18.

[39] Daniels-Mohring, p. 19.

[40] Nancy D. Colletta, "Support Systems After a Divorce: Incidence and Impact," <u>Journal of Marriage and the Family</u> (1979): 837.

[41] Colletta, p. 837.

[42] Colletta, p. 69.

[43] Gary Caplan and Michael Killea, <u>Support Systems and Mutual Help</u> (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1976), p. 69.

[44] Committee for the Advancement of Psychiatry, <u>Divorce, Child Custody and the Family</u> (California: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1980), p. 100.

[45] Bertram S. Brown, M.D., "How Women See Their Roles: A Change in Attitudes," <u>New Dimensions in Mental Health</u> (September 1976): 2.

[46] Ramon Valle and William Vega, <u>Hispanic Natural Support Systems</u> (California: Department of Mental Health, 1980), p. 25.

[47] Roland Wagner, Ph.D., "Changes in Extended Family Relationships for Mexican-American and Anglo Single Mothers," (1984): 18-19.

[48] Spanier, p. 47.

[49]Brown, p. 57.

[50]Michael Duffy, "Divorce and the Dynamics of the Family
Kinship System," American Journal of Divorce 5: 3.

[51]Colletta, p. 838.

[52]Wagner (1985), p. 1.

[53]Wagner (1985), p. 2.

[54]Wagner (1985), pp. 2-3.

[55]Brown, p. 163.

[56]Duffy, p. 9.

[57]Duffy, p. 17.

[58]Daniels-Mohring, p. 18.

[59]Daniels-Mohring, p. 18.

[60]Susan E. Keefe, Amado M. Padilla, and Manuel L. Carlos, "The
Mexican-American Extended Family As An Emotional Support System,"
Human Organization 38, No. 2 (Summer 1979): 68.

[61]Melvin Delgado and Denise Humm-Delgado, "Natural Support Systems:
Source of Strength in Hispanic Communities," Social Work 27, No. 1
(1982): 88.

[62]John W. Best, Research and Education (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall
Inc., 1959), p. 102.

[63]Committee . . ., p. 1.

[64]Claire Selltiz, M. Jahoda, M. Deutsch, and S. W. Cook, Research
Methods in Social Relations (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.,
1964), p. 51.

[65]Selltiz, p. 241.

Bibliography

Anspach, Donald F. "Kinship and Divorce." _Journal of Marriage_
and Divorce 38, No. 2 (May 1976): 323-30.

Beatrice, Dory K. "Divorce: Problems, Goals and Growth Facilitation."
Social Casework: The Journal of Contemporary Social Work 60,
No. 3 (March 1979): 157-65.

Best, John W. _Research and Education_. New Jersey: Prentice Hall
Inc., 1959.

Bohannon, Paul. _Divorce and After_. New York: Anchor Books, 1971.

Bowen, Gary L. "Social Network and the Maternal Role Satisfaction of
Formerly-Married Mothers." _Journal of Divorce_ 5, No. 4 (Summer
1982): 77-83.

Brown, Bertram S., M.D. "How Women See Their Roles: A Change in
Attitudes." _New Dimensions in Mental Health_ (September 1976):
2-5.

Brown, Emily M. "The Impact of Divorce on the Extended Family."
Journal of Divorce 5, No. 6 (1981-83): 159-65.

Caplan, Gary and Killea, Michael. _Support Systems and Mutual Help_.
New York: Grune and Stratton, 1976.

Colletta, Nancy D. "Support Systems After a Divorce: Incidence and
Impact." _Journal of Marriage and the Family_ (1979): 837-45.

Committee for the Advancement of Psychiatry. _Divorce, Child Custody_
and the Family. California: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1980.

Cortera, Maria. "Feminism: The Chicana and Anglo Versions." Twice
A Minority: Mexican-American Women. Margarita B. Mellville, ed.
Missouri: CV Mosby Company, 1980.

Daniels-Mohring, Debbie, and Berger, Michael. "Social Network Changes
and the Adjustment to Divorce." Journal of Divorce 8, No. 1: 17-31.

Delgado, Melvin and Humm-Delgado, Denise. "Natural Support Systems:
Source of Strength in Hispanic Communities." Social Work 27,
No. 1 (1982): 83-89.

Duffy, Michael. "Divorce and the Dynamics of the Family Kinship
System." American Journal of Divorce 5: 2-17.

Falicov, Celia J. "Mexican Families." Ethnicity and Family Therapy.
Monica McGoldrick, John K. Pearce, and Joseph Giodano, ed.
New York: The Guilford Press, 1982.

Gonzales, Alex. "Sex Roles of the Traditional Mexican-American
Family." Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology 13, No. 3
(September 1982): 330-37.

Grebler, Leo; Moore, Joan W.; and Guzman, Ralph C. The Mexican-
American People: The Nation's Second Largest Minority. New
York: The Free Press, 1970.

Keefe, Susan E. "Real and Extended Familism Among Mexican-Americans
and Anglo-Americans: On The Meaning of Close Family Ties."
Human Organization 43, No. 1 (Spring 1984): 65-69.

Keefe, Susan E.; Padilla, Amado M.; and Carlos, Manuel L. "The
Mexican-American Extended Family As An Emotional Support System."
Human Organization 38, No. 2 (Summer 1979): 144-48.

Kitson, Gay C., Ph.D.; Noir, Robin N., M.D.; Mason, Peyton R., Ph.D.
"Family Social Support in Crises: The Special Case of Divorce."
American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 52, No. 1 (January 1982): 161-64.

Kranau, Edgar J.; Green, Vicki; Valencia-Weber, Gloria. "Acculturation
and the Hispanic Woman: Attitudes Toward Women, Sex-Role Attribu-
tion, Sex-Role Behavior and Demographics." _Hispanic Journal of
Behavioral Sciences_ 4, No. 1 (1982): 21-39.

Madsen, William. _Mexican-Americans of South Texas_. New York: Holt,
Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1973.

Norton, Arthur J. and Glick, Paul C. "Marital Instability in America:
Past, Present, and Future." _Journal of Social Issues_ 32 (1976):
5-20.

Penalosa, Fernando. "Mexican Family Roles." _Journal of Marriage and
the Family_ (November 1968): 680-88.

Rothman, Jack; Grant, Larry M.; and Hnat, Steven A. "Mexican-
American Family Culture." _Social Service Review_. University
of Chicago (June 1985): 203.

Rue, James J., Ph.D., and Shanahan, Louise. _Catachism for Divorced
Catholics_. Illinois: Herald Press, 1978.

Selltiz, Claire; Jahoda, M.; Deutsch, M.; and Cook, S.W. _Research
Methods in Social Relations_. New York: Holt, Rinehart and
Winston, Inc., 1964.

Sluzski, Carlos E., M.D. "Migration and Family Conflict." _Family
Process_ 18, No. 4 (1979): 379-90.

Spanier, Graham B., and Hanson, Sandra. "Role of Extended Kin in the
Adjustment to Separation." _Journal of Divorce_ 5, No. 6 (1981-83): 33-48.

Staples, Robert. "The Mexican-American Family: Its Modification
Over Time and Space." <u>Phylon</u> 32, No. 2 (1971): 179-92.

Tharp, Roland G.; Meadow, Arnold; Lennhoff, Susan G.; and Satterfield,
Donna. "Changes in Marriage Roles Accompanying the Acculturation
of the Mexican-American Wife." <u>Journal of Marriage and the Family</u>
(1968): 404-12.

Uhlenberg, Peter. "Marital Instability Among Mexican-Americans:
Following the Patterns of Blacks?" <u>Social Problems</u> 20, No. 1:
49-56.

Valle, Ramon, and Vega, William. <u>Hispanic Natural Support Systems</u>.
California: Department of Mental Health, 1980.

Wagner, Roland, Ph.D. "Changes in Extended Family Relationships for
Mexican-American and Anglo Single Mother." (In Print) (1984):
1-19.

Wagner, Roland., Ph.D. "Psychosocial Adjustment During the First
Year of Single Parenthood: A Comparison of Mexican-American
and Anglo Women." (In Print) (1985): 1-15.