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Parasocial Interaction Between Latino Newscasters And Their Viewers: A Cultural Pluralism Perspective

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PARASOCIAL INTERACTION BETWEEN LATINO NEWSCASTERS AND THEIR VIEWERS: A CULTURAL PLURALISM PERSPECTIVE

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Dedication

I dedicate my thesis to my husband and family. All my thanks and love to my husband for his constant support. I could not have done it without him. I also thank my very large family, my mother and six siblings. My mother in law, father in law, and sister in law were very supportive as well. This is for my father, who is with the Lord in peace. It was his constant love and support throughout my life that pushed me to achieve this success.
PARASOCIAL INTERACTION BETWEEN LATINO NEWSCASTERS AND THEIR VIEWERS: A CULTURAL PLURALISM PERSPECTIVE

by

LAURA A ALVARDO, B.A.

THESIS

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Abstract

Latino identity is in a hybrid state that is continuously evolving to include many factors. Latinos no longer feel the need to assimilate and renounce their cultural identity. Multiculturalism proposes the maintenance of Latino identity to include many variables. A Latino today can maintain their identity as well as include many factors to compose a multi-faceted identity. Therefore, a Latino today can listen to both Spanish-language and English-language radio programs. The present study investigates parasocial interaction between Latino respondents and Latino/White newscasters. Parasocial interaction serves as a medium to study the strength of ethnic identification in Latinos. This study contributes to the research on multiculturalism and cultural pluralism as well as the field of communication.

Keywords: Parasocial Interaction, Multiculturalism, Cultural Pluralism, Latino identity
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose of This Study

The purpose of this quantitative study is to investigate whether and how Latinos engage in parasocial interaction with Latino newscasters. This study will determine if the newscasters’ ethnicity and gender affect parasocial interaction between respondents and Latino newscasters. Through parasocial interaction, this study will determine if there is any influence of ethnic identity on the respondents. This study maintains that participants will engage in equally strong parasocial relationships with both Latino and White newscasters, thus promoting a cultural pluralist view.

Horton and Wohl (1956) fully defined parasocial interaction as a face-to-face relationship between spectator and performer; the persona is familiar and inclusive in the intimate sphere of one’s friends. Additionally, the persona offers a continuing relationship that becomes routine and familiar to the spectator. This research will determine if participants identify more with Latino newscasters. This research will contribute to the field of multiculturalism if there is no significant difference between newscasters with different ethnic backgrounds.

Cultural pluralism signifies the retention of an ethnic group’s culture while still participating in the American culture. Ethnic identity will be a moderating variable in that ethnic identity does not determine parasocial interaction. A moderator variable is one that changes the strength or direction of a direct relationship (Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond, McCroskey, 2008). Therefore, a Latino participant who has a multi-dimensional identity is just as likely to construct a parasocial relationship with a Latino as with a White newscaster. Multiculturalism, cultural pluralism, and ethnic identity are clarified in the literature review to explain how this study will contribute to these areas of study.

Multiculturalism purports a multi-facet ethnic identity that is based on various factors beyond solely race or ethnicity. Today, Latinos compose their identity based on different factors distinct from past generations; Immigration status is not a viable factor since many Latinos are born in the
United States. Latino identity is in a hybrid state that includes various components such as social group membership, level of education, and media influence. Furthermore, the location of Latinos determines their characteristics and even then these characteristics vary. As an example, the population of the University at Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is Latino/a but identification varies into three categories with different characteristics: Mexican Nationals, Mexican Americans, and non-Latino students (Carpenter, Zárate, & Garza, 2007). Assimilation is not viable to a changing Latino population, as Latinos do not want to undergo assimilation into the dominant culture. Latinos demand to retain their multi-facet identity intact with no desire to conform. Therefore, multiculturalism and cultural pluralism purpose a better understanding of the construction of Latino identity today. In addition, parasocial interaction between newscasters and Latino participants will be analyzed. It is anticipated that ethnic identity and gender of the newscasters will not factor into the parasocial relationship. Thus, this study contributes to the research on multiculturalism and cultural pluralism.

1.2 Justifications for a Latino Sample

This study will differ due to its exclusive Latino sample. Parasocial interaction studies have exclusively used non-Latino, primarily White samples. Many viable reasons exist for a solely Latino sample. By 2050, it is projected that the Latino population will nearly triple from 49.7 million to 132.8 million (Saenz, 2010). Saenz (2010) further emphasized that Latinos could represent three out of every ten persons in the United States by 2050. The Latino population grew by 37 percent between 2000 and 2009, while the U.S. population increased by 9 percent. The Latino population grew four times more rapidly than the U.S. population. Saenz (2010) further augmented that Latinos “accounted for slightly more than half of the nearly 26 million people added to the U.S. population during this past decade” (p.1). Furthermore, the Latino population more than tripled from 14.6 million to nearly 48.4 million between 1980 and 2009. The majority of Latinos, 63%, were born in
the United States. Mexican, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Cuban, Dominican, Guatemalan, Colombian, Honduran, Spaniard, and Ecuadorian constitute 94% of the Latino population. Mexicans are the largest representing 31,689,879 of the Latino population (Saenz, 2010). Almost half, 47% of the Latino population lives in Texas and California. Saenz (2010) asserted the following:

Latinos will increasingly be part of all societal institutions as both consumers and purveyors of services. Latinos need to be viewed as an asset that provides major benefits for the economy rather than as a liability that drains the economy. (p. 6)
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 An Overview of Multiculturalism

Van Oudenhoven, Ward, and Masgoret (2006) emphasized that acculturation research is broken into two fields: unidimensional and multidimensional. The unidimensional standpoint represents “cultural change on a linear bipolar continuum, going from the heritage culture to the host culture” (p.640). On the other hand, the multidimensional standpoint is “where acculturation processes are seen to take place independently in the home and host cultures and may also involve multiple domains” (p. 640). Early studies of acculturation included assimilation and later biculturalism that failed to incorporate multidimensional aspects of ethnic groups. Immigrants had to abandon their culture and adapt the culture of the host society through assimilation (Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006). This model was solely unidimensional and did not incorporate the many facets of ethnic groups. Biculturalism was created to replace assimilation but failed in that the heritage and host cultures were still seen as interdependent and not independent (Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006). Biculturalism failed to incorporate those who identified strongly or weakly with both cultures (Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006).

Currently, research centers on the more inclusive viewpoint that acculturation is a multidimensional process (Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006). Multidimensional theories include two viewpoints of the acculturation process: 1. “It occurs in various domains, such as in attitudes, values, behaviors, language and cultural identity.” 2.“The home and host cultures are seen as separate domains” (Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, as cited in Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006, p. 640). Berry (1980, 1997) developed an acculturation model based on the second criterion (as cited in Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006). According to Berry, immigrants must answer two inherent questions: 1. “Is it of value to maintain my cultural heritage?” 2.“Is it of value to maintain relations with other groups?” (Berry, as cited in Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006, p.641).
Furthermore, Berry listed four categories that immigrants elect on the premise of the two inherent questions listed above: integration, assimilation, separation, or marginalization (Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006). Integration and assimilation are pertinent to many studies in the acculturation process. It is a discourse that centers on integration defined as “the maintenance of both cultural identity and positive relations with the host society,” as opposed to assimilation where “only positive relations with the host society are important” (p. 641). Van Oudenhaven et al. (2006) further elaborated that prevailing studies today address whether ethnic groups must assimilate or integrate. Many researchers agree, “that integration is the most preferred and most ‘adaptive’ strategy for immigration” (p. 641). Moreover, Berry stressed that ethnic groups may transfer from one station to another and the host culture may incorporate many cultures rather than one majority culture (Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006).

Even within multiculturalism, researchers suggest a more encompassing range that can include other elements. Bailey and Harindranath (2006) stated that multiculturalism and the politics of communication ostracize minorities and does not allow for inclusive participation in the media. Bailey and Harindranath (2006) reason that:

Perhaps what is needed is not only the recognition of the role of ethnic-diasporic media in multicultural western societies but their political and material inclusion in a multi-ethnic public sphere, or a more complex multiculturalism where the quest for 'differentiated citizenship' can be articulated and a 'multiculti’ (c.f.Baumann 1999:141) media environment can flourish.... the relationship between media and public spheres in "multi-ethnic" societies may soon become central to questions of multiculturalism, democracy and legitimacy. (p. 313)

On the other hand, Dong, Day, and Collaco (2008) concluded in their study that high levels of intercultural communication sensitivity and multiculturalism reduce ethnocentrism. Furthermore, Dong et al. (2008) promote the integration of intercultural communication sensitivity and multiculturalism “at
Zárate (2010, 2011) examined cultural inertia, resistance to change or allowing change once it occurs, in Latinos. Ethnic minorities support multiculturalism, while majority groups defend assimilation through cultural inertia (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). “Cultural inertia has little to do with prejudice toward the actual group, but rather, how much effort will be needed to change the self to accommodate the group” (Carpenter et al., 2007, p. 54). Zárate (2011) concluded that if ethnic minorities feel less pressure to assimilate through multiculturalism, there is a positive attitude toward the majority culture. Moreover, the cultural inertia model “has critical implications for the initiation of cultural change” (p.19). Carpenter et al. (2007) elaborate on cultural inertia:

Cultural inertia can help explain both majority and minority reactions to immigration as Latino immigrants move to all parts of the country. Like other models, cultural inertia recommends the simultaneous maintenance of cultural subgroup identities and creation of overarching superordinate identities. It adds to other models, though, in that it identifies perceptions of change as the culprit behind the prejudice between minority and majority groups. (p.54)

Additionally, Carpenter et al. (2007) conducted two experiments to demonstrate “that highlighting differences while simultaneously focusing on the self reduces prejudice, although similarity mediates the relationship with those who are perceived as more different” (p.83). Mexican Americans, Mexican Nationals, and White Americans experienced a reduction in prejudice but not Black Americans (Carpenter et al., 2007).

2.2 An Overview of Cultural Pluralism

Cultural Pluralism, in unison with multiculturalism, provides a broad spectrum of components for Latino/a identity construction. Latinos shape their identity to include many variables and characteristics. As an example, a Latino can alternatively listen to a Spanish radio station and an NPR
station on a drive home (Ruggiero & Yang, 2011; Hernández, as cited in Valdivia, 2008). Higham (1984) defended “a system of “pluralistic integration” that asserts a common U.S. culture to which all individuals have access, but it also supports the efforts of minorities to preserve and enhance their own cultural integrity” (as citied in Martin & Midgley, 2003, p.36). Likewise, Lawrence Fuchs, a scholar of immigration, used “the term kaleidoscope” to emphasize the dynamics of change: Immigrants adapt and change, and so does American society” (p.36).

Ruggiero and Yang (2011) stressed cultural pluralism as a full-bodied theory capable of predicting Mexican Americans' media language choice. Mexican Americans chose English-language media content over Spanish-language media content, while participants who identified as Mexican selected Spanish-language content. Ruggiero and Yang argue, "Media language choice is not necessarily predictable by one's degree of ethnic identity, but by more culturally pluralistic variables such as gender, education, income and generational status" (p. 5). Therefore, Ruggiero and Yang (2011) concluded that lack of unity in Media language choice further broadened cultural pluralism; Situational and demographic factors, more than ethnic identity, constructed attitudes toward Media language choices. Likewise, Soruco (1996) listed two causes for Cubans' preference of English-language media: program quality and program availability. Spanish-language television focused on soap operas and movies, while English-language television primarily centered on entertainment and news (Soruco, 1996). In south Florida, a twenty-to-one ratio of English-language to Spanish-language channels determined viewing habits.

In addition, Faist (2009) investigated diversity within two perspectives: diversity at the individual and organizational levels and how organizations interact with cultural pluralism. Diversity at the individual level is the progress of migrants in organizations and public spheres, the organization level, through a set of programs, addresses cultural pluralism. Focus is particularly on how organizations
deal with cultural pluralism. Diversity can extend the influence of multiculturalism as more ethnic
groups participate in the public sphere and organizational level.

2.3 An Overview of Ethnic Identity

Latinas discussed these portrayals and several themes came forth: customization, misrepresentations,
and internalization (Dávila, 2002). Customization is lumping all Latinos into a monolithic group and
naturalizing differences among Latino nationalities (Dávila, 2002). One misrepresentation was
typecasts of Latinas in telenovelas or soap operas with whiter protagonists and the typical darker maid.
Furthermore, Puerto Ricans and Dominicans criticized Mexicans and Cubans for a constant usage of
whiter and Mediterranean Hispanic models (Dávila, 2002). Hispanic Caribbean, Puerto Ricans, and
Dominicans, and to a lesser extent Cubans are represented in the Spanish media as all dark or black
(Dávila, 2002). These representations address the dominance of some Latino subgroups over others, not
that Mexicans and Cubans are closer to these representations of whiteness (Dávila, 2002).

Misrepresentation of Latino leads to internalization, constant critique of one group versus
another, and revalidates whiteness and the non-ethnic (Dávila, 2002). Internalization of stereotypes
occurs where one group will state a false descriptor of the other group, without realizing the
internalization factor (Dávila, 2002). Thus, the participants still argued for better representation in
mainstream media despite their internalization of stereotypes. U.S. born Latinos had higher levels of
anger of these misrepresentations than recent immigrants. Immigration and length of stay affect the
participant's awareness of U.S. racism; multiple factors enter into the identity of a Latino identity
(Ruggiero & Yang, 2011; Glascock & Ruggiero, 2006; Kim, 2006).

Even the label Hispanic causes tension in the creation of an ethnic identity. The label Hispanic
does not represent Latinos because it implies a monolithic group, thus eradicating the diversity among
Latinos (National Research Council, 2006). The National Research Council stated, "whether "Hispanic"
might become a symbolic identity or whether it will be an enduring marker of ethnic and minority group status is highly uncertain" (p.51). Saenz (2010) clarified that Latinos are torn between the terms Hispanic and Latino. “Hispanic excludes the group’s indigenous roots centered in Latin America and Latinos ignores people originating from Spain” (p.5). Today, both terms are used but there is tension (Saenz, 2010). Additionally, a Pew Hispanic Center survey indicated that 42 percent of respondents did not have a preference for either term, 36 percent preferred the Hispanic label, and 21 percent opted for the Latino label (p.5).

Language trends suggest integration in the Latino population, which is critical in cultural pluralism (National Research Council, 2006). Cultural pluralism allows for the maintenance of both origin culture and an overall American identity. In particular the younger Latino generations speak only English, but cultural pluralism purports that speaking only English is not a denial of their ethnic identity. Other variables might be present to compose a multi-facet identity, as an example, speaking more than one language or Spanglish. The National Research Council does recognize spanglish, combination of Spanish and English, as a "powerful symbol of hybrid identities that cut across national, racial, and social boundaries" (p.49). Spanglish is yet another variable that is crucial in the construction of a Latino identity.

Latino youth today are more adaptable when change occurs and engage with different media outlets unlike past generations. They have various layers that constitute their identity. Hernández (as cited in Valdivia, 2008) centered on media patterns for Tijuana youth, regarding their media preference for either Spanish-language or English-language programming. Tijuana youth preferred English-language programming because it contributed to their knowledge. Latinos add this newly acquired knowledge into their identities. Tijuana youth find Mexican news "depressing" due to constant coverage on violence (Hernández, as cited in Valdivia, 2008). On the other hand, "young viewers confirm the
legitimacy of U.S. television because, for them, it allows greater playfulness, educate, strategic, and pragmatic uses than Mexican television" (Hernández, as cited in Valdivia, p.230).

Ethnic identity is fundamental for other ethnic groups and integral for their well-being. Sigelman, Tuch, and Martin (2005) analyzed "the preference of either "black" or "African-American" for Americans of African descent" (p.429). Sigelman et al. (2005) concluded that respondents were almost split in half over the selection of either term. Factors of term selection included: respondents' degree of racial group consciousness, age, region, and the size of city of residence. Chinese immigrant women could not easily establish a multi-cultural identity. They struggle with dichotomy in incorporating two worlds that include mainstream American culture and Chinese patriarchal standards (Shi, 2008). "Chinese immigrant women cultural practices are either exoticized as the "Other," or subjugated to the imperatives of assimilation" (p.148). In order to participate in a multicultural society, Chinese immigrant women must shed their cultural identity and acquire traits acceptable by mainstream society. On the contrary, multiculturalism and cultural pluralism allow for a multi-variate identity that does not require the abandonment of cultural practices.

Different levels of group identification exist even within an ethnic group (Kim, 2006). Garza, DeSipio, Garcia, Garcia, and Falcon conducted a survey indicating that “despite the strong fear expressed by those who adhere to identity maintenance at any cost, the study further indicates that a large majority of Hispanics are moving toward mainstream American culture and that 60% or more say the purpose of bilingual education is to learn both languages…” (as cited in Kim, 2006, p.290). Furthermore, the study revealed that Latinos evenly relate to Whites as they do members of other Latino groups and express strong loyalty to the United States. Kim’s central argument implicates a composite between one’s ethnic identity and American values is attainable; a balance must be struck that fits in the middle of the assimilation and pluralism spectrum. Additionally, studies suggest the same integration of
one’s ethnic identity and American values situated in the middle of the assimilation and pluralism spectrum (Wolfe, 1998; Kim, Lujan, & Dixon, 1998).

In addition, Glascock and Ruggiero (2006) found Latino students perceived White instructors to be more caring and competent than Latino instructors. This remained constant despite respondents’ ethnicity. Some plausible explanations included: it is possible that White instructors were more experienced in the classroom, held higher professional status, and taught higher-level courses or Latino students internalized stereotypes or negative perceptions held by the majority group. Furthermore, the ABC hit television show, Ugly Betty, promotes a new definition of Latino identity situated within an American framework (Avila-Saavedra, 2010).

Hughes, Witherspoon, Rivas-Drake, West-Bay (2009) examined preparation for bias and cultural socialization in the process of ethnic-racial socialization among early adolescents. Preparation for bias had negative consequences, while cultural socialization had positive consequences (Hughes et al., 2009). Adolescents in this study reported moderate levels of cultural socialization. Cultural socialization is when “parents from diverse ethnic backgrounds try to instill ethnic-racial pride and knowledge about heritage in their children” (Hughes et al., 2009, p. 120). Adolescents with more cultural socialization had positive affirmation about themselves and their ethnic group, along with favorable results in academic and behavioral outcomes. In addition, Black adolescents, consistent with other studies, reported more cultural socialization than White adolescents. Preparation for bias is the extent to which the adolescents’ parents warned them on possible discrimination and stereotypes due to their ethnic group. Results indicated that adolescents reported relatively infrequent preparation for bias and Black youths received more preparation for bias than their White counterparts.

2.3.1 Ethnic Identity and Gender as Independent Variables

Ethnic identity is integral to the Latino population and essential to their well-being. Different variables determine the level of identification Latinos have with their culture. Ethnic identity consists of
different components incorporated from the Latino culture as well as American culture. Research illustrates how important ethnic identification is in the United States today. The degree to which people identify with their ethnic groups is examined in various studies (Reich, Ramos, & Jaipal, 2000; Phinney 1989; Tajfel, 1981). Ethnic identity is not a fixed category but fluid and dynamic as individuals become aware of their ethnicity within society, and it is constantly modified throughout life (Phinney, 2003). On the other side, other studies suggest that Latinos’ identity is composed of both American and Latino characteristics (Kim, 2006; Wolfe, 1998; Kim, Lujan, & Dixon, 1998; Avila-Saavedra, 2010). This present study will measure if gender, along with ethnic identity, has a significant effect on parasocial interaction. It is of particular interest in this study whether newscasters’ gender will have an effect on parasocial interaction.

Ethnic identity is fundamental in the assimilation/multiculturalism spectrum. In order to measure how ethnic identity affects parasocial interaction, it will be an independent variable in this study. Parasocial interaction is used as a vehicle to analyze if the newscasters’ ethnicity has a significant effect. Newscasters’ ethnicity should not factor into parasocial interaction. Respondents will participate in parasocial interaction will Latino and non-Latino newscasters, and add to research on multiculturalism/cultural pluralism.

2.4 An Overview of Parasocial Interaction

Horton and Wohl (1956) fully developed parasocial interaction as a face-to-face relationship between spectator and performer; the persona is familiar and inclusive in the intimate sphere of one’s friends. Additionally, the persona offers a continuing relationship that becomes routine and familiar to the spectator (Horton & Wohl, 1956). The viewer feels as if the media personality is an intimate friend. Parasocial interaction exists in various forms of entertainment that include the world of broadcast journalism. Latino newscasters are slowly becoming part of network programs, but further research on parasocial interaction between viewers and Latino newscasters is necessary. In particular, research on
parasocial interaction between Latino viewers and Latino newscasters is a new component to examine. Most studies have used White participants; this study will focus on the parasocial relationship between Latino viewers and Latino newscasters. Furthermore, will Latino viewers identify more with Latino newscasters than with non-Latino newscasters. Latinos might not engage in parasocial interaction with Latino newscasters solely since cultural pluralism is a robust theory encompassing many factors, which build ethnic identity (Ruggiero & Yang, 2011; Faist, 2009).

Newscasters, in particular, are situated to engage the viewer in parasocial interaction. They address viewers directly and incorporate viewers into the camaraderie between the newscast team (Rubin, Perse, & Powell, 1985). The natural, down-to-earth personality is emphasized through local community involvement (Rubin et al., 1985). Newscasters are chosen more for their attractiveness, audience appeal, personality and style than their journalistic skill (Rubin et al., 1985). “Local television news is the correct medium to analyze because it provides salient media content for examining parasocial interaction” (Rubin et al., p.161). Local news is broadcast two or three times a day, thus it meets the criteria for one tenet of parasocial interaction that is consistency of presentation. Before delving into local television news and parasocial interaction, it is vital to present a history of parasocial interaction and the numerous fields of research it has influenced.

Research of parasocial interaction is prevalent in multifarious studies that give insight into this experience. Various topics have been studied in relation to parasocial interaction, enabling a glimpse into the perplex development of parasocial interaction. Parasocial interaction came to be from the conceptualization of pseudo-gemeinschaft developed by Merton with Fiske and Curtis in order to study a vastly profitable U.S. War Bond radio marathon by Kate Smith (Sood & Rogers, 2000). Pledges for war bonds rose to 39 million instead of the previous pledges of 1 million and 2 million. Merton with Fiske and Curtis thus defined pseudo-gemeinschaft as a “false friendship between an audience individual and a
media character” (pg. 387). Horton and Wohl were impacted by Merton’s concept of *pseudo-gemeinschaft* in their advancement of parasocial interaction.

Horton and Wohl (1956) fully defined parasocial interaction as a face to face relationship between spectator and performer; the persona is familiar and inclusive in the intimate sphere of one’s friends. Additionally, the persona offers a continuing relationship that becomes routine and familiar to the spectator (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Many studies include Horton and Wohl’s parasocial interaction interwoven with other theories. Rubin and McHugh (1987) examined the parasocial interaction process through uncertainty reduction and uses and gratifications; the premise was a path from social and task attraction to parasocial interaction, resulting in a sense of relationship importance. In conclusion, parasocial interaction related profoundly to social and task attraction toward the media character and to the significance of relationship maturation with the media character (Rubin & McHugh, 1987).

The affiliation between loneliness and parasocial interaction is at the center of numerous studies. Wang, Fink, and Cai (2008) found that parasocial interaction did not substitute social or romantic loneliness; lonely people do not find parasocial interaction to sufficiently replace face to face communication. However, Wang et al. (2008) ascertained parasocial interaction as an alternative for some types of loneliness. Parasocial interaction was a functional alternative for women suffering from family loneliness, while for men it occurred in relation to chronic loneliness (Wang et al., 2008). Family loneliness is the absence of quality relationships with family members, and chronic loneliness occurs over time (Wang et al., 2008).

Perse and Rubin (1990) analyzed the influence of chronic loneliness on local news and soap opera; thus hypothesizing that chronic loneliness would relate to less interpersonal interaction, more electronic media use, and passive television use. In this study, loneliness resulted in less interpersonal interaction and somewhat more media use. There was not a significant increase in media use due to the college student sample using television as a secondary media resource when feeling lonely; turning to
movies when lonely was prominent with this sample. Findings related to the attributional explanation of loneliness defined as “the chronic lonely react with greater passivity and withdrawal in social interaction” (p. 19).

Expansion of parasocial interaction in other facets of communication is evident with the emergence of many studies. Eyal and Cohen (2006) analyzed a parasocial breakup after the culmination of Friends and “discovered similarities and differences between parasocial and social relationships” (p.502). The main purpose of the study was to identify the predictors of parasocial breakup. Parasocial breakup is defined as a situation that occurs after the character goes off air thus ending the parasocial relationship. Furthermore, Auter’s (1992) research contributed to the demonstration that parasocial interaction is related to the program content; breaking the fourth wall allows viewers to experience a higher level of parasocial interaction. The fourth wall is broken when a media personae actually speaks directly to the audience.

Parasocial relationships are as complex and authentic as interpersonal relationships. Cohen (1997) explored viewers’ parasocial relationships with their favorite television personality and results demonstrated differences based on gender. Through parasocial relationships, “women attempt to complement secure attachments and men deal with fears of abandonment” (Cohen, 1997, p.525). Parasocial relationships are similar to interpersonal ones with relation to physical and social attraction, shared values, attitudes, background and similarity in communication styles (Cialdini, as cited in Cohen, 1997).

Hoffner (1996) analyzed children’s wishful identification and parasocial interaction with favorite television characters. Hoffner (1996) defined wishful identification as “a desire to be like or behave in ways similar to the character” (p. 390). Results demonstrated sex differences in choice of favorite characters, because boys chose same-sex characters but girls did not (Hoffner, 1996). Male characters chosen by boys and girls included the one trait of intelligence, but attractiveness was the main trait in
female characters chosen only by girls (Hoffner, 1996). Female characters’ portrayal in roles based on physical appearance and stereotypical interpretations continues, whereas this situation does not factor with male characters.

Sood and Rogers (2000) conducted a qualitative content analysis of 763 letters to illustrate that parasocial interaction is not a one-dimensional concept. Furthermore, an entertainment-education approach can take several forms, such as cognitive, affective, interaction, behavioral interaction, referential involvement, and critical involvement. Focus was not on the characteristics of the authors, but on the motivation for writing letters in order to better comprehend parasocial interaction (Sood & Rogers, 2000).

2.4.1 Dimensions of Parasocial Interaction

Various dimensions, in particular attractiveness and perceived similarity, are evident in parasocial interaction. Perceived attractiveness intensifies parasocial interaction (Hartmann & Goldhoorn, 2011; Schiappa et al., 2007). Hartmann and Goldhoorn (2011) developed a new Experience of Parasocial Interaction (EPSI) scale to examine viewers’ parasocial interaction with a TV performer, and results demonstrated stronger parasocial interaction with an attractive TV performer. Studies associate perceived similarity as a facet of parasocial interaction (Rubin et al., 1985; Rubin & Step, 2000; Rubin & Rubin, 2001). Viewers perceive similarity or homophily to a media personae as relevant and rewarding, resulting in attraction and liking (Tian & Hoffner, 2010). Perceived similarity with regard to “personality, behavioral tendencies, or life experiences should influence people’s ability and willingness to take the perspective of a media figure during media consumption” (Cohen, as citied in Tian & Hoffner, 2010, p.253). Eyal and Rubin (2003) found perceived similarity or homophily between viewers and aggressive television characters.

2.4.2 Local News/Parasocial Interaction
Parasocial relationship development between media personalities and viewers is at the forefront in a media dominated world. Perse (1990) analyzed cognitive and emotional involvement in two local news effect: parasocial interaction and information holding. Perse (1990) concluded that parasocial interaction is predicted by emotional involvement and interpersonal theories can somewhat explain parasocial interaction. Furthermore, results indicated that feeling happy while watching news was associated with parasocial interaction, but feeling sad or angry did not correlate to parasocial interaction (Perse, 1990). “Happiness is most likely associated with parasocial interaction because it is a pleasant emotion that signals interpersonal interaction and identification” (Smith & Ellsworth, as cited in Perse, 1990, p.31). Results exhibit a further understanding of the development of parasocial interaction with local newscasters.

Rubin et al. (1985) aimed to develop a reliable empirical measure of parasocial interaction in order to “enhance an understanding of parasocial interaction and the concept’s relevance for communication research, and link psychological need to media use and its outcomes” (p.163). Rubin et al. (1985) found more success with the first objective then with the last, subsequently there was no relationship between parasocial interaction and loneliness. Despite this lack of correlation between loneliness and parasocial interaction, other significant findings came forth to better understand the relationship of parasocial interaction and local news. Rubin et al. (1985) found that parasocial interaction related considerably with both news affinity and perceived news realism; news realism pertains to the mannerisms and styles of communication used by newscasters to assimilate face to face interaction. Another key finding was that parasocial interaction is an “active, more goal directed pattern of instrumental television use” (p.175). This signifies that viewers are active participants in their media usage by selecting and using television content to satisfy their needs.

Levy’s (1979) study confirmed that parasocial interaction with newscasters is a common variable of audience interaction with television news: 53% agreed with parasocial interaction propositions. “This
overall finding strongly suggests that para-social interaction with news personae is a common feature of the audience experience with television news” (Levy, 1979, p.72). More than half of respondents agreed that newscasters are almost like friends one sees every day, which indicated that parasocial interaction develops over time and is based in part to shared experiences (Levy, 1979). Parasocial interaction also occurred through strong identification with the following propositions: 1. “I like hearing the voices of the newscasters in my house.” 2. “When the newscaster shows how he feels about the news, it helps me make up my mind about the news item.” 3. “Television shows you what people in the news are really like” (Levy, 1979, p. 73).

In addition, Houlberg (1984) identified parasocial interaction between TV newscasters occurs with professional and physical newscaster attribute items, as well as parasocial items. Professional items were: objective and fair reporting, reliable information, warm and friendly, honesty, qualified and competent, voice quality, and intelligent and educated. Physical items included hairstyle, physically attractive, and clothing. Parasocial items included: daily visit helps make my problems easier to handle, talk to as if actually in my home, like to know more about off the job, almost like an everyday friend of mine, and everyday visit helps make me feel contented.

2.4.4 Parasocial Interaction as a Dependent Variable

It has been established that news is the medium to analyze parasocial interaction. More importantly, parasocial interaction is a vehicle to analyze ethnic identity. If the respondents engage in parasocial interaction with a newscaster of a different ethnicity, multiculturalism is supported. Parasocial interaction has been studied with children’s favorite television characters (Hoffner, 1996); interpersonal relationships (Cohen, 1997); parasocial breakup (Eyal & Cohen, 2006); loneliness (Wang et al., 2008; Perse & Rubin, 1990); newscasters (Levy, 1979; Rubin et al., 1985), and other areas as mentioned previously. This present study will differ in that parasocial interaction will be analyzed in relation to ethnic identity.
2.5 Demographics as Moderating Variables

Demographics will moderate the relationship between newscasters’ ethnicity and gender, ethnic identity, and parasocial interaction. Studies have analyzed the effect of demographics as well as ethnic identity (Hoffner, 1996; Glascock & Ruggiero, 2006; Kim, 2006; Shi, 2008; Sigelman et al., 2005). The effect of other demographics, such as parents’ generational status and parents’ ethnicity, will be analyzed. More importantly, this study will study the moderating effect of respondents’ gender on the relationship between newscasters’ ethnicity and gender, ethnic identity, and parasocial interaction. Latino respondents might possibly engage in parasocial interaction specifically with Latino newscasters.

2.6 Theoretical Model

An overview of multiculturalism and ethnic identity along with previous scholarly research are the foundation for this proposed theoretical model. Each conceptual model leads to the core of this study, and lays the foundation to measure the importance of ethnic identification on Latinos.

Figure 2.1: Theoretical Model
2.7 Research Questions

In order to test the independent variables on the dependent variable, the following research questions address the main purpose of this study. In conjunction with the theoretical model presented above, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ1: Does ethnic identity affect parasocial interaction between respondents and newscasters?
   RQ1-1: Does ethnic identity (ethnic identity search and affirmation, belonging, and commitment) predict perceived similarity in parasocial interaction?
   RQ1-2: Does ethnic identity (ethnic identity search and affirmation, belonging, and commitment) predict empathy in parasocial interaction?

RQ2: Does ethnicity of newscasters affect parasocial interaction between respondents and newscasters?

RQ3: Does gender of newscasters affect parasocial interaction between respondents and newscasters?

RQ4: Do demographics (such as ethnicity, gender, and generational status) affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?
   RQ4-1: Does the gender of the respondents affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?
   RQ4-2: Does ethnicity of mother and father affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?
   RQ4-3: Does generational status of mother and father affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?
CHAPTER 3: Methodology

The goal of this research is to gain better insight into Latino ethnic identity through parasocial interaction. In order to accomplish this goal, an experimental design with a questionnaire was developed in order to analyze parasocial interaction with newscasters. Parasocial interaction with White and Latino newscasters supports a cultural pluralist perspective; ethnic identity is not a factor in parasocial interaction. This study was designed with the quantitative research approach in order to analyze the relationship between newscasters’ gender and ethnicity on parasocial interaction. This section discusses the methodological approach and data collection conducted in this study.

3.1 Selection of Research Method

Quantitative research follows a scientific process that consists of proposing a theory, defining a hypothesis, making observations and using empirical generalizations to describe a set of natural phenomena (Wrench et al., 2008). Content analysis, experimental design, and analytical survey are commonly used statistical methods in quantitative research. Content analysis is a method used in quantitative research for “summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method…and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented” (Neuendorf, as cited in Wrench et al., 2008, p.10). Content analysis is not the correct statistical method applicable to this research since the content or context of the communicative messages are not under study.

Experimental design alternatively is the correct statistical procedure for this study. Experimental design allows for a demonstration of causal relationships, the researcher measures the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable through manipulation (Wrench et al., 2008). Parasocial interaction was measured through the manipulation of the newscasters’ gender and ethnicity. Furthermore, a factorial design experiment is adopted when multiple independent variables are manipulated (Wrench et al., 2008). A 2 x 2 factorial design experiment was suited to the purpose of this
study because the two independent variables were manipulated: newscasters’ gender (male and female) x newscasters’ ethnicity (Latino and non-Latino).

Self-administration through the Internet was the best option for this study. Telephone and face-to-face interviews require trained interviewers not possible due to time and cost constraints. The advantages of an online administered survey include the instant availability of worldwide information in real time, links that explain unfamiliar or difficult questions, prompt reminders to respondents, and the ability to make complex skip pattern questions invisible to respondents (Fink, 2009). The data process is made easier by downloading the data into a spreadsheet, data analysis package, or database (Fink, 2009). The survey instrument for this study was constructed and administered through SurveyMonkey. Before the commencement of the survey, Institutional Review Board (IRB) was obtained. See appendix B for IRB approval letter.

3.2 Instrumentation Design

Respondents were recruited to go online to SurveyMonkey and watch a short, about 20-30 second, video clip. Then, the respondents answered a self-administered Internet questionnaire. Internet administered survey is the best option because the researcher can reach a large number of research participants in a short period of time, and eliminate an interviewer affecting the sample inadvertently (Wrench et al., 2008). Mass administered surveys are viable when there is a large group of possible participant in a single location, such as college students (Wrench et al., 2008).

The experimental design inserted was a 2 x 2 factorial design as newscasters’ gender has two levels, female or male, and two levels for newscasters’ ethnicity, Latino and non-Latino. An online administered questionnaire allows for true randomization into four groups with different conditions. The four conditions included newscasters of a different ethnicity in each one. Each experimental condition is listed below.
Figure 3.1: Experimental Condition 1 with Latina newscaster

Figure 3.2: Experimental Condition 2 with Latino newscaster
Figure 3.3: Experimental Condition 3 with female White newscaster

Figure 3.4: Experimental Condition 4 with male White newscaster
Video clips of the newscasters were animated to avoid discrepancy in the results due to preference of certain traits. Recording a video clip with actors might interfere, as respondents might dislike a certain feature such as a big nose. Animated anchors eliminate any variance that may interfere with this study. Furthermore, parasocial interaction is an emotional connection the viewer develops with newscaster; it is just as likely for a participant to engage in parasocial interaction with an animated newscaster as a real-life newscaster. The script for the newscaster is attached as Appendix C. The newscaster script contained a mundane script about a city council meeting in order to avoid confounding variables. The script was not dramatic or sensational since respondents would focus attention on the story and not engage in parasocial interaction.

3.3 Instrumentation Development

After the video clip, participants answered a survey-questionnaire about parasocial interaction with the newscasters. The survey questionnaire had scale items from the Parasocial Interaction Scale (PIS) developed by Rubin, Perse, and Powell’s (1985). The following questions were selected for the purpose of the current research: “I think my favorite newscaster is like an old friend,” “I find my favorite newscaster to be attractive,” and “I would like to meet my favorite newscaster in person.” Statements were modified to include: I think this newscaster is like an old friend or I find this newscaster to be attractive. Participants will rate each statement from a low of 1 for “strongly disagree” to a high of 5 for “strongly agree.” Cronbach’s alpha for the Parasocial Interaction Scale is .95 (Rubin et al., 1985).

Perceived similarity was established as a dimension of parasocial interaction. Therefore, five questions from Auter and Palmgren’s (2000) Audience-Persona Interaction Scale (APIS) were added to the parasocial scale. Questions included “I can identify with my favorite character,” and “My favorite character reminds me of myself.” These questions were modified in this study: 1. I can identify with this
This newscaster reminds me of myself. Cronbach’s alpha for the APIS scale is .87 (Tian & Hoffner, 2010).

Phinney (1992) developed the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) scale, a 14-item measure, in order to analyze ethnic identity based on self-identification. MEIM measured the importance of one’s ethnic group in their daily lives. The second half of the questionnaire measured ethnic identification and affirmation with a revision of Phinney’s (1992) multigroup ethnic identity measure (MEIM) scale published in Roberts et al. (1999): “I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group,” “I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to,” and “I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me” are questions that will be used from the MEIM scale. Participants will rate each statement from a low of 1 for “strongly disagree” to a high of 5 for “strongly agree.” The MEIM scale has been used in various studies and has a good reliability with alphas at .80 and above (Roberts et al., 1999).

Based on the three scales listed above, a 33-item survey questionnaire was developed for the purpose of analyzing the importance of ethnic identity among Latinos. Respondents first viewed the video clip with the newscaster, and then answered questions obtained from the PIS (1985) and APIS (2000) scales to measure parasocial interaction (Questions 1 - 12). The ethnicity of the respondents was determined by a 7-point nominal question (Question 13). Ethnic identification was measured through questions obtained from MEIM (1999) scale (Questions 14 – 26). Ethnicity of the respondents’ father and mother was ascertained through a 7-point nominal question (Questions 27 – 28). Respondents disclosed the generational status of their mother and father through a 5-point nominal question (Questions 29-30). Gender was determined by dichotomous question of male/female (Question 31), and respondents listed their exact age (Question 32). The last question in the survey questionnaire asked the respondents to identify the ethnicity of the newscasters (Question 33).
Questions 1-12: Parasocial interaction (5-point Likert scale - Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree intervals).

Question 13: Ethnicity of respondent (7-point nominal scale - Asian or Asian American, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, White or Caucasian, American Indian or Native American, Mixed: Parents are from two different group, and Other).

Questions 14 – 26: Ethnic Identification (5-point Likert scale - Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree intervals).

Question 27 - 28: Ethnicity of father and mother (7-point nominal scale - Asian or Asian American, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, White or Caucasian, American Indian or Native American, Mixed: Parents are from two different group, and Other).

Question 29 - 30: Generational Status of father and mother (5-point nominal scale - First Generation, Second Generation, Third Generation, Fourth Generation, or Mexican National).

Question 31: Gender of the respondent (Female or Male).

Question 32: Age (inserted their exact age).

Question 33: Ethnicity of the newscaster as identified by the respondent (8-point nominal scale - Asian or Asian American, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, White or Caucasian, American Indian or Native American, Mixed: Parents are from two different group, Other, and not sure).

3.4 Data Collection & Data Cleaning

From May 5, 2012 through May 25, 2012, the researcher collected responses from a total of 512 individuals through SurveyMonkey.com. The researcher eliminated 112 questionnaires not completed fifty percent to procure a better sample. After the data collection, the researcher reviewed each completed survey and coded each response to facilitate input into the research program SPSS. Each
question and answer choice was coded accordingly in the research codebook. Once the coding was completed, the researcher and a research volunteer inserted the data into excel and SPSS.

3.5 Research Sample

The research is intended to study the perceptions of Latinos regarding ethnic identification. Therefore, this study utilized a sample of Latinos from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). This university is prominently Latino: 70 percent Latino, 10 percent Mexican National students (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). UTEP students were recruited from all level Department of Communication classes through flyer distribution with the hyperlink to the online survey. The flyer is attached as Appendix D. All participants were 18 years or older. Furthermore, the survey was mass administered through SurveyMonkey to student’s de-identified emails as an email invitation. See Appendix A.

3.6 Sample Characteristics

This study included the participation of 400 respondents. Out of the respondents, 263 (65.8%) were female, 136 (34%) were male and one person (.2%) preferred to be identified as other. The largest distribution for age was between 20-29. The age distribution was compromised of: 204 (51.4%) were between 20-29, followed by 73 (18.4%) under 20, 64 (16.1%) were between 30-39, 32 (8.1%) were between 40-49, and 24 (6%) were 50 and over. This total excluded 3 participants who did not disclose their age.

The ethnicity of the participants was composed of: 295 (74.3%) Hispanic or Latino, 56 (14.1%) White, 27 (6.8%) had parents from two different groups, 8 (2.0%) Asian or Asian American, 5 (1.3%) Black or African American, 4 (1%) Other and 2 (.5%) American Indian/Native American. The total above excluded 3 participants who did not disclose their ethnic identity.
Table 3.5
Demographic Data of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics Characteristics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>136</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
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<td>51.0</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
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<td>16.0</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian or Asian American,</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including Chinese, Japanese,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino,</td>
<td></td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including Mexican</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>and others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Caucasian, Anglo,</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>56</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Native</td>
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<td>.5</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed; Parents are from two</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>different groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not identify</td>
<td></td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The investigator analyzed the results once the experiment/questionnaire closed on SurveyMonkey. Based on the information gathered, findings would lead to the importance of ethnicity through parasocial interaction. These findings have significance for Latinos in the United States.

4.1 Preliminary Data Manipulations

This study examined the relationship between gender and ethnicity of newscaster on parasocial interaction. It also analyzed the effect of ethnic identity as well as demographics in the above relationship. In order to measure the effect of ethnic identity on parasocial interaction, preliminary data manipulations were conducted.

4.1.1 The Computation of Parasocial Interaction Index

The parasocial composite variable was further decomposed into two variables: Empathy (EM) is a composite average of seven items, and perceived similarity (PS) is a composite measure of five items. Cronbach’s α for the PIS composite was 0.89 and 0.88 for the APIS composite.

4.1.2 The Computation of Ethnic Identity Index

The effect of ethnic identity on parasocial interaction was measured through the MEIM (1999) scale. Ethnic Identity Search (EIS), a composite average of four items, and Affirmation, Belonging, and Commitment (ABC), a composite average of nine items, are the two variables derived from the MEIM (1999) scale. Cronbach’s α for the ABC composite was 0.93 and 0.75 for the EIS composite. The independent variable, ethnicity of newscaster, was split into two categories that included Latino and non-Latino: 73.8% of the sample was Latino and 26.2% was non-Latino. This was executed in order to conduct multivariate analysis of covariance and test the relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

4.1.3 Construct Validity and Reliability
Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Test or Cronbach’s α is the most consistently reported reliability test in the social sciences, including communication (Wrench et al., 2008). Cronbach’s α should generally be greater than 0.70 in order to deem an instrument unidimensional (Wrench et al., 2008). Furthermore, factor analysis with principal component analysis and varimax rotation was conducted to ensure how the variables were grouped together and determine construct validity. In Table 4.1, two factors were extracted with Eigenvalues greater than 1.0 (Wrench et al., 2008). Table 4.1 also lists the Cronbach’s α for each statement. Factor 1 items formed the empathy (EM) variable of parasocial interaction and factor 2 items composed the perceived similarity (PS) variable. Factor analysis further confirmed the validity of the creation of EM and PS in parasocial interaction.

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parasocial Interaction Measures (Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation)</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This newscaster seems like a potential friend.</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to meet this newscaster in person.</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This newscaster is a natural, down-to-earth person.</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like hearing the voice of the newscaster.</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to be more like this newscaster.</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This newscaster is attractive.</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The newscaster makes me feel comfortable, as if I am a friend.</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This newscaster reminds me of myself.</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the same qualities as this newscaster.</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When I’m watching this newscaster, I feel as if I am part of his/her group.

I can imagine myself as this newscaster.

I can identify with this newscaster.

Factor 1 items formed the affirmation, belonging, and commitment (ABC) variable mentioned above, while Factor 2 items formed ethnic identity search (EIS). Table 4.2 lists Cronbach’s α for each statement. Factor analysis further validated the ethnic identification scale variables of ABC and EIS.

**Table 4.2**
Ethnic Identification Measures (Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel good about my cultural background.</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel good about my ethnic background.</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am happy to be a member of the group I belong to.</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.

In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.

I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.

I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.

### 4.2 Restatement of Research Questions

This study collected empirical data to answer the following research questions:

**RQ1:** Does ethnic identity affect parasocial interaction between respondents and newscasters?

**RQ1-1:** Does ethnic identity (ethnic identity search and affirmation, belonging, and commitment) predict perceived similarity in parasocial interaction?

**RQ1-2:** Does ethnic identity (ethnic identity search and affirmation, belonging, and commitment) predict empathy in parasocial interaction?

**RQ2:** Does ethnicity of newscasters affect parasocial interaction between respondents and newscasters?

**RQ3:** Does gender of newscasters affect parasocial interaction between respondents and newscasters?

**RQ4:** Do demographics (such as ethnicity, gender, and generational status) affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?

**RQ4-1:** Does the gender of the respondents affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?

**RQ4-2:** Does ethnicity of mother and father affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?
RQ4-3: Does generational status of mother and father affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?

4.3 Effect of Ethnic Identity on Parasocial Interaction

A principal component of this study was to examine the role of ethnic identity through parasocial interaction. Thus, simple linear regression was conducted to determine any predictability effect in the above relationship. Simple linear regression is employed to predict one variable from another on the basis of the relationship between two variables (Cronk, 2004). This relationship will form a straight line, a regression line, which predicts the tendency of the dependent variable based on the independent variable (Frey et al., 2000). In this study the dependent variable was parasocial interaction, as composed of perceived similarity and empathy based on several studies (Rubin et al., 1985; Auter & Palmgreen, 2000; Levy, 1979; Houlberg, 1984; Rubin & Step, 2000; Rubin & Rubin, 2001; Tian & Hoffner, 2010; Eyal & Rubin, 2003). Focus of this study was the tendency of parasocial interaction based on the independent variables of newscasters’ gender and ethnicity. Two models were used in the linear regression to test the effect of ethnic identity in RQ1: one on the empathy variable of parasocial interaction and another on perceived similarity variable of parasocial interaction. The statistically significant findings which were positive are indicated with a “+” and the statistically significant findings which were negative are indicated with a “-.”

4.3.1 Effect of Ethnic Identity on Perceived Similarity in Parasocial Interaction

RQ1-1 examined the predictive effects of ethnic identity search (EIS) and affirmation, belonging, and commitment (ABC) toward perceived similarity (PS) in parasocial interaction. In order to determine this predictability, linear regression analysis was performed. It was predicted that there would be a negative relationship between ethnic identity search and perceived similarity. With these variables considered, the regression model for determinants of perceived similarity in parasocial interaction is as follows:
PS = a + b₁EIS + b₂ABC + e

**Table 4.3**

Regression Variables, Definitions and Expected Sign to Dependent Variable for Perceived Similarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Expected Sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variable</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Perceived Similarity (PS 1, 3, 2, 5, 7)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identification Indicator</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Affirmation, Belonging, and Commitment (E12, E13, E9, E5, E6, E11, E7, E3, E10)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identification Indicator</td>
<td>EIS</td>
<td>Ethnic Identity Search (E4, E8, E1, E2)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ABC ($M=3.88, SD=.80$) and EIS ($M=3.13, SD=.86$) indicated strong ethnic identification.

Despite this, only ethnic identity search ($β=.21, t=3.37, p=.001<0.01$) predicted perceived similarity and had a positive statistical significance. There was a positive relationship in view of ethnic identity search predicting perceived similarity. See Table 4.4. These factors explained 5.0 percent of the variance in perceived similarity of parasocial interaction could be accounted for by an individual’s ethnic identity search.

**Table 4.4**

Results for Regression on Perceived Similarity

| Variable | Coefficient | t-statistic | Significance Level | Predicted Sign |
|----------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| (Constant) |             | 8.448       | .000               | N/A            |
| ABC      | -.02        | -.352       | .725               | -              |
| EIS      | .21         | 3.371       | .001               | +              |
*Dependent Variable: Perceived Similarity  
R Square=.05  
Adjusted R Square=.04  
Standard Error=.80  
N=400  
Durbin-Watson Statistic=1.94

### 4.3.2 Effect of Ethnic Identity on Empathy in Parasocial Interaction

RQ1-2 examined the predictive effects of ethnic identity search (EIS) and affirmation, belonging, and commitment (ABC) on empathy (EM) in parasocial interaction. Negative predictors were expected in this relationship. With these variables considered, the regression model for determinants of empathy in parasocial interaction is as follows:

\[ EM = a + b_1 ABC + b_2 EIS + e \]

**Table 4.5**  
Regression Variables, Definitions and Expected Sign to Dependent Variable for Empathy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Expected Sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variable</td>
<td>EM</td>
<td>Empathy (PS 11, 10, 12, 8, 9, 6, 4)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identification Indicator</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Affirmation, Belonging, and Commitment (E12, E13, E9, E5, E6, E11, E7, E3, E10)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identification Indicator</td>
<td>EIS</td>
<td>Ethnic Identity Search (E4, E8, E1, E2)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in the other model, there was high ethnic identification with both ABC \((M=3.88, SD=.80)\) and EIS \((M=3.13, SD=.86)\) but only EIS \((β=.16, t=2.76, p=.006<0.01)\) was statistically significant. These factors explained 3.0 percent of the variance in empathy of parasocial interaction could be
accounted for by an individual’s ethnic identity search. Results indicted a positive relationship on account of ethnic identity predicting empathy. See Table 4.6 below.

**Table 4.6**

Results for Regression on Empathy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>Significance Level</th>
<th>Predicted Sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>2.032</td>
<td>9.766</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>-.367</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIS</td>
<td>.160</td>
<td>2.762</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dependent Variable: Empathy
R Square=.03
Adjusted R Square=.02
Standard Error=.79
N=400
Durbin-Watson Statistic=1.95

Linear regression was conducted in order to determine the strength of the linear relationship between the two variables: Ethnic identity search in ethnic identification predicted perceived similarity (PS) and ethnic identity search (EIS) in parasocial interaction. Linear regression indicated that the variables were correlated to one another, thus MANCOVA was the appropriate method to analyze the effect of newscasters’ gender and ethnicity on parasocial interaction. Additionally, MANCOVA is used in situations with multiple related dependent variables and one or more continuous covariates.

Pearson correlation was utilized to determine the strength of the linear relationship between two variables (Wrench et al., 2008). In order to test the correlation between ethnic identity and parasocial interaction, Pearson correlation was run for each experimental condition for Latinos solely and all other groups were removed. See Table 4.7. Pearson correlation tested for a relationship between ethnic identity and parasocial interaction. The second condition with the Latino newscaster
illustrated a moderate positive relationship between ABC in ethnic identification and PS in parasocial interaction ($r(67)=.33$, $p < .01$). See Table 4.8 below. These results indicated that the higher Latinos’ ethnic identification in regard to affirmation, belonging, and commitment, the higher the perceived similarity with newscasters. RQ1 was supported because ethnic identification, specifically ethnic identity search, predicted empathy and perceived similarity in parasocial interaction. Pearson correlation further established the effect of ethnic identity on parasocial interaction: the ABC variable in ethnic identification predicted PS in parasocial interaction.

Table 4.7.

Latino sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8

Correlation for Ethnic Identification toward Parasocial Interaction for Experimental Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>ABC</th>
<th>EIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.118</td>
<td>.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.307</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Condition 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ABC</th>
<th>EIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EM</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.329**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Condition 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ABC</th>
<th>EIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EM</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig.(2-tailed)</td>
<td>.976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Condition 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ABC</th>
<th>EIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EM</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.666</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Effect of Gender and Ethnicity of Newscasters on Parasocial Interaction

To examine the main effects of gender and ethnicity of newscasters on parasocial interaction (RQ2 and RQ3), Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) was utilized by entering gender and ethnicity of newscasters as fixed factors, and empathy and perceived similarity in parasocial interaction as dependent variables. MANCOVA with two independent variables, and two dependent variables was conducted to test the main effects and interaction effect of two independent variables. MANCOVA was chosen to conduct multiple tests on variance in two dependent variables simultaneously in order to avoid Type 1 error. Tests were conducted with gender and ethnicity as independent variables that showed significant relationships. MANCOVA procedures used to test the relationship between independent and dependent variables also used a solely Latino sample.

Results of the first MANCOVA test with gender and ethnic identity of newscasters as independent variables indicated that there was no main effect of gender of newscaster (F(2, 290)=.22, p >.05) on parasocial interaction. However, Wilks’ Lambda demonstrated that ethnicity of newscaster had a main effect (F(2, 290)=5.26, p <.01) on parasocial interaction. Wilks’ Lambda also showed no main interaction effect of both independent variables on parasocial interaction (F(2, 290)=1.70, p >.05). See Table 4.9 below. The main effect of newscasters’ ethnicity demonstrates how strong ethnic identity is for Latinos. Latinos had higher parasocial interaction than Latinas in empathy (M=2.59, SD=.71) and perceived similarity (M=2.42, SD=.75). See Table 4.10.

Table 4.9
MANCOVA Model 1 (with Gender of Newscaster and Ethnicity of Newscaster as Independent Variables)
## Table 4.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gender of Newscaster</th>
<th>Ethnicity of Newscaster</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Latino</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One-Way ANCOVA further demonstrated the main effect of newscasters’ ethnicity on PS (F(1, 291)=10.06, p < .01) but not EM (F(1, 291)=3.10, p > .05) in parasocial interaction. Newscasters’ gender had no main effect on either variable of parasocial interaction. As a result, RQ2 was supported but RQ3 was not supported. See Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11**

One-Way ANCOVA Model 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of</th>
<th>Empathy</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>2.59</th>
<th>.71</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Latino</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Latino</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of</th>
<th>Perceived Similarity</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>2.22</th>
<th>.89</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Latino</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Latino</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Latino</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One-Way ANCOVA further demonstrated the main effect of newscasters’ ethnicity on PS (F(1, 291)=10.06, p < .01) but not EM (F(1, 291)=3.10, p > .05) in parasocial interaction. Newscasters’ gender had no main effect on either variable of parasocial interaction. As a result, RQ2 was supported but RQ3 was not supported. See Table 4.11.
4.5 Moderating Effects of Demographics on Parasocial Interaction

Wilks’ Lambda determined a moderating effect of respondents’ gender (F(4, 576)=4.48, p<.01) in the relationship between newscasters’ gender, newscasters’ ethnicity, and parasocial interaction. See Table 4.12 below. One-ANCOVA further indicated a moderating effect of respondents’ gender on empathy (F(2, 289)=4.51, p<.01) in parasocial interaction but not on perceived similarity (F(2, 289)=1.64, p>.05). See Table 4.13. RQ4 was partially supported by RQ4-1.

Table 4.12

MANCOVA Model 2 (with Gender of Newscaster and Ethnicity of Newscaster as Independent Variables)
There was no moderating effect of the ethnicity of mother and ethnicity of newscaster (F(2, 278)=1.35, p >.05) on the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Wilks’ Lambda also reported no significant moderating effect of the ethnicity of father and ethnicity of newscaster (F(2, 278)=.39 >.05) on the relationship between independent and dependent variables. RQ4 was not supported by RQ4-3. See Table 4.14.
Table 4.14

MANCOVA Model 3 (with Gender of Newscaster and Ethnicity of Newscaster as Independent Variables)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Hypothesis Eta</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Observed Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>df</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity of Newscaster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Ethnicty of Father</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai’s Trace</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.392b</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.776</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.392b</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.776</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling’s Trace</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.392b</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.776</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy’s Largest Root</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.392b</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.776</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity of Newscaster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Ethnicty of Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai’s Trace</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>1.347b</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.419</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>1.347b</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.419</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling’s Trace</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>1.347b</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.419</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy’s Largest Root</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>1.347b</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.419</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was no significant moderating effect of generational status of either parent on the relationship between newscasters’ ethnicity and gender and parasocial interaction.

Wilks’ Lambda indicated no moderating effect of generational status of mother and ethnicity of newscaster (F(2, 278)=.73>.05) on the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

Generational status of the father and ethnicity of the newscaster (F(2, 278)=.06 >.05) had no moderating effect on the relationship either. RQ4 was not supported by RQ4-4. See Table 4.15.
Table 4.15

MANCOVA Model 4 (with Gender of Newscaster and Ethnicity of Newscaster as Independent Variables)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Partial Hypothesis Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig. Eta Squared</th>
<th>Observed Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity of Newscaster</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generational Status of Father</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai’s Trace</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.060&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>278.000</td>
<td>.942</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.060&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>278.000</td>
<td>.942</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling’s Trace</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.060&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>278.000</td>
<td>.942</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy’s Largest Root</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.060&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>278.000</td>
<td>.942</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Ethnicity of Newscaster | * | | | | | |
| Generational Status of Mother | | | | | | |
| Pillai’s Trace | .01 | .733<sup>b</sup> | 2.00 | 278.000 | .481 | .005 | .174 |
| Wilks’ Lambda | 1.00 | .733<sup>b</sup> | 2.00 | 278.000 | .481 | .005 | .174 |
| Hotelling’s Trace | .01 | .733<sup>b</sup> | 2.00 | 278.000 | .481 | .005 | .174 |
| Roy’s Largest Root | .01 | .733<sup>b</sup> | 2.00 | 278.000 | .481 | .005 | .174 |

Table 4.16 below summarizes the statistical findings in support or rejection of the research questions. Linear regression demonstrated support for RQ1 in that *ethnic identity search* predicts *perceived similarity* and *empathy*. The models for RQ-1 and RQ-2 indicated significant support for RQ1 since both models illustrated that *ethnic identity search* predicts *perceived similarity* and *empathy*. RQ2 was supported due to the significant main effect of newscasters’ ethnicity on parasocial interaction, in
particular on perceived similarity. RQ3 was not supported due to no significant main effect of newscasters’ gender on parasocial interaction. RQ4 was partially supported since there was a moderating effect of only respondents’ gender on the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction.

**Table 4.16**

Summary Table of Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1: Does ethnic identity affect parasocial interaction between respondents and newscasters?</td>
<td>Was supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1-1: Does ethnic identity (ethnic identity search and affirmation, belonging, and commitment) predict perceived similarity in parasocial interaction?</td>
<td>Was supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1-2: Does ethnic identity (ethnic identity search and affirmation, belonging, and commitment) predict empathy in parasocial interaction?</td>
<td>Was supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2: Does ethnicity of newscasters affect parasocial interaction between respondents and newscasters?</td>
<td>Was supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ3: Does gender of newscasters affect parasocial interaction between respondents and newscasters?</td>
<td>Was not supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ4: Do demographics (such as ethnicity, gender, and generational status) affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?</td>
<td>Was partially supported.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RQ4-1: Does the gender of the respondents affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?  
Was supported.

RQ4-2: Does ethnicity of mother and father affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?  
Was not supported.

RQ4-3: Does generational status of mother and father affect the relationship between ethnicity of newscasters, gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction?  
Was not supported.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This study analyzed parasocial interaction between Latino respondents and newscasters. The effect of ethnicity on parasocial interaction was also examined to determine if Latino respondents would identify with a Latino or non-Latino newscaster. The analysis used the theoretical model stated previously in order to determine if ethnic identity would play a role in communication in regard to newscasters. In order to determine if the above relationship existed, *empathy* and *perceived similarity*, two variables of parasocial interaction, were the dependent variables. Through parasocial interaction, the importance of ethnic identity to Latinos was analyzed. Therefore two variables of ethnic identification, *ethnic identity search* and *affirmation, belonging, and commitment*, were also examined. Ethnicity of newscaster and gender of newscasters were the independent variables. Respondents’ gender, parents’ ethnicity, and parents’ generational status were moderating variables in the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The findings for each research question are presented as each offers a perspective on ethnic identity through parasocial interaction.

5.1 Effect of Ethnic Identity on Parasocial Interaction

In order to examine the effect of ethnic identity, two components of parasocial interaction, *perceived similarity* and *empathy* were the dependent variables. Empathy and perceived similarity are the principal components of parasocial interaction that have been studied extensively (Rubin et al., 1985; Auter & Palmgreen, 2000; Levy, 1979; Houlberg, 1984; Rubin & Step, 2000; Rubin & Rubin, 2001; Tian & Hoffner, 2010; Eyal & Rubin, 2003). Perceived similarity is the ability to relate with those who are similar, and to “take the perspective of a media figure during media consumption” (Cohen, as cited in Tian & Hoffner, 2010).

Linear regression was conducted to determine the effect of ethnic identity on parasocial interaction. The two models were used in the linear regression: one on the *empathy* variable of parasocial interaction and another on the *perceived similarity* variable of parasocial interaction. The
predictive effects of ethnic identity search (EIS) and affirmation, belonging, and commitment (ABC) toward perceived similarity (PS) and empathy (EM) in parasocial interaction were examined. Ethnic identity search and affirmation, belonging, and commitment are from the MEIM scale and used in various studies with a good reliability of alphas at .80 and above (Roberts et al., 1999).

Linear regression indicated that ethnic identity search did predict perceived similarity and empathy. Ethnic identity search predicted perceived similarity and had a positive statistical significance. These factors explained 5.0 percent of the variance in perceived similarity of parasocial interaction could be accounted for by an individual’s ethnic identity search. Ethnic identity search was statistically significant, and predicted empathy in parasocial interaction. These factors explained 3.0 percent of the variance in empathy of parasocial interaction could be accounted for by an individual’s ethnic identity search.

Pearson correlation also found a correlation between the two variables in the Latino newscaster condition. Specifically, there was a correlation between affirmation, belonging, and commitment and perceived similarity in the second experimental condition with the Latino newscaster. Mean analysis found that Latinos had more empathy with the male Latino newscaster \((M=2.59, SD=.71)\) than with the male non-Latino newscaster \((M=2.26, SD=.86)\). Latinos also engaged more in perceived similarity with the male Latino newscaster \((M=2.42, SD=.75)\) than with the male non-Latino newscaster \((M=1.95, SD=.77)\). These findings demonstrate the importance of ethnic identity on Latinos.

Overall, ethnic identity search predicted both perceived similarity and empathy in parasocial interaction. Empathy and perceived similarity in parasocial interaction were influenced by the respondents’ active participation in their ethnic group. Ethnic identity affected parasocial interaction in the Latino newscaster only. Several studies relate the importance of ethnic identity to different groups (Reich, Ramos, & Jaipal, 2000; Phinney 1989; Tajfel, 1981; Phinney, 2003). Other research focuses on identity as a composition of an
American identity mixed with cultural identity as well (Kim, 2006; Wolfe, 1998; Kim, Lujan, & Dixon, 1998; Avila-Saavedra, 2010). These findings demonstrate the importance of ethnic identity on Latinos. Ethnic identity is still a very important component, especially in a border region.

5.2 Effect of Ethnicity of Newscaster and Gender of Newscaster on Parasocial Interaction

Based on the correlation between the independent and dependent variables, MANCOVA was the appropriate method. The main purpose of this study was to test the effects newscasters’ gender and ethnicity on parasocial interaction. In order to test the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables on Latinos, all other ethnic groups were removed from the analysis. MANCOVA demonstrated that there was no main effect of newscasters’ gender on parasocial interaction, but newscasters’ ethnicity had a strong main effect on parasocial interaction. One-Way Anova further demonstrated that newscasters’ ethnicity had a stronger effect on the perceived similarity variable of parasocial interaction.

The acculturation process continues to occur within Latinos in the United States, and this study supports this viewpoint. Integration and assimilation define acculturation, but integration is “the most preferred and most ‘adapative’ strategy for immigration” (Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006). Integration is defined as “the maintenance of both cultural identity and positive relations with the host society” (Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006, p.641). Berry emphasized that ethnic groups may transfer from one station to another and the host culture may incorporate many cultures rather than one majority culture (Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006). Immigrants must decide if it is of value for them to maintain their culture and relations with other groups (Berry, as cited in Van Oudenhaven et al., 2006). This research demonstrated that assimilation is not a viable option since Latinos have high ethnic identification. It is vital to look beyond the bipolar nature of assimilation/multiculturalism to other theories.

5.3 Moderating Effects of Demographics on Parasocial Interaction
MANCOVA indicated no moderating effect of any of the demographics in the relationship between newscasters’ ethnic identity and gender and parasocial interaction as defined by perceived similarity and empathy with the exception of respondents’ gender. Mother’s ethnicity and father’s ethnicity had no effect on the relationship between independent and dependent variables. There was also no significant moderating effect of generational status of either parent on the relationship between ethnicity and gender of newscasters and parasocial interaction. Mexican national was inserted as an option in generational status due to the respondents’ parents being from Mexico. In fact, 31.8% (n=127) of the respondents’ father generational status was Mexican national, while it was 32.3% (n=129) Mexican national for the mother’s generational status. This might explain why generational status had no moderating effect.

Parents’ ethnicity had no effect on the relationship between newscasters’ gender and ethnicity and parasocial interaction. This might indicate that respondents are more acculturated and parents’ ethnicity does not factor in Latino identity. Other factors such as social group, media, socio-economic status, and education might have entered in this moderation analysis that require further analysis. Latino respondents’ gender was the only demographic that had a moderating effect on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Gender had a stronger moderating effect on empathy in parasocial interaction, which signifies that Latinos relate more with newscasters of the same gender. Latinos had more empathy toward newscasters of the same gender. This implies that gender is important to Latinos in relation to broadcast media.
Chapter 6: Conclusions

6.1 Summary of Key Findings

The central focus of this study was to examine the effect of newscasters’ gender and ethnicity on parasocial interaction, and the effect of ethnic identity through parasocial interaction. If there was an effect of newscasters’ gender and ethnicity on parasocial interaction, then ethnicity does factor in communication in regard to broadcast media. Linear regression and pearson correlation measured the effect of ethnic identity on parasocial interaction. Linear regression determined that ethnic identity did predict parasocial interaction, specifically ethnic identity search predicted both perceived similarity and empathy. Pearson correlation also found an effect of ethnic identification in the Latino condition only. MANCOVA procedures determined no moderating effects of demographics: mother’s ethnicity, father’s ethnicity, mother’s generational status, and father’s generational status. Latino respondents’ gender was the only demographic that had a moderating effect on newscasters’ gender and parasocial interaction. This moderating effect signifies that a Latino related strongly with a newscaster of the same gender.

6.2 Implications of the Findings

Results are insightful for the field of communication with regard to broadcast journalism. This study revealed that ethnic identity is relevant in the news medium since it predicted parasocial interaction. Newscasters’ ethnicity had a strong effect on parasocial interaction especially in relation to perceived similarity. Specifically, Latino respondents identified strongly with the Latino newscaster. Latino respondents’ gender affected the relationship between newscasters’ gender and parasocial interaction. Latinos felt empathy toward Latino newscasters of the same gender. This study contributes to the research on parasocial interaction in that it offers a new viewpoint to examine Latino ethnic identity. Furthermore, this study adds to local news/parasocial interaction studies in that newscasters’ ethnicity does affect parasocial interaction.
This study provides a valuable perspective on Latino identity as Latinos grow into the largest minority by 2050. In this study ethnic identity did predict parasocial interaction, in particular ethnic identity search predicted empathy and perceived similarity. The importance of ethnic identity cannot be undermined. Ethnic identity is formed throughout life especially in college; therefore ethnic identity search was high and correlated with parasocial interaction. Assimilation is not an option for Latinos. Higham (1984) emphasized that with pluralists “persistence and vitality of the group comes first” (p.235). Furthermore, “individuals can realize themselves, and become whole, only through the group that nourishes their being” (Higham, 1984, p.126).

Assimilation/multiculturalism debate has various implications for the future of ethnic groups. Higham (1984) provides an integral perspective:

The essential dilemma, of course, is the opposition between a strategy of integration and one of pluralism. Although the contrast has many dimensions, it can be summed up as a question of boundaries. The integrationist looks toward the elimination of ethnic boundaries. The pluralist believes in maintaining them. (p. 234).

Assimilation theories are no longer relevant to an evolving Latino population. Many studies note that submergence into the dominant culture is not an option. Minorities are situated in a continuing “interplay between a changing dominant society and dynamic subcultures” (Marden & Meyer p.126). This interplay is still relevant today.

Multiculturalism indicates a model of integration into the dominant culture with the retention of one’s culture. This research did not support a cultural pluralist perspective because ethnic identity affected the Latino newscaster only and not the conditions with the White newscasters. There was even a negative correlation with the White newscaster. The main insight of this study is to look beyond the bipolar nature assimilation and multiculturalism. In regard to Latino ethnic identity, there are other models that can give better insight into the construction of Latino identity.
Cultural inertia is one such model that explains the driving forces of integration. “Assimilation and multiculturalism are often perceived of as two distinct endpoints on a continuum. Cultural inertia, however, suggests that there is a common process driving preferences for these two models of cultural integration” (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). After all, each Latino labels their identity differently and incorporates different variables. Carpenter et al. (2007) elaborate on cultural inertia:

Cultural inertia can help explain both majority and minority reactions to immigration as Latino immigrants move to all parts of the country. Like other models, cultural inertia recommends the simultaneous maintenance of cultural subgroup identities and creation of overarching superordinate identities. It adds to other models, though, in that it identifies perceptions of change as the culprit behind the prejudice between minority and majority groups. (p.54)

Individual differences such as identity centrality and openness to changes must be considered in regard to each ethnic group; Identity centrality is how much one individual identifies with their group (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). High identifiers react negatively to the belief that they will have to abandon their identity to accommodate the majority group (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). High identifiers unlike low identifiers center their daily activities on their ethnic group membership, and their identity is immersed in their group identity (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). Therefore, high identifiers have a longer journey to travel in abandoning their identity than low identifiers (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). Based on the findings of this study, Latinos are high identifiers and might find it more difficult to abandon their identity.

Change is the culprit in cultural inertia; the majority and minority group must ask themselves how much they will have to change to accommodate the other group (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). Those with high ethnic identification have higher prejudice to other groups when they have to change to accommodate the other group, thus the majority group prefers assimilation while the minority group prefer multiculturalism (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). Latinos ethnic identity cannot be discarded, and cultural inertia is the model that can pave the way to understanding the importance of ethnic identity to Latinos.
6.3 Limitations

Future studies might consider using video clips with real-life Latino newscasters to analyze ethnic identification. Other samples with larger ethnic groups not solely Latinos should be studied. A parasocial interaction study with a large Black or Asian American sample and newscasters of the same ethnicity will yield revealing insights.
References


Rubin, A. M., & Step, M. M. (2000). Impact of motivation, attraction, and parasocial interac-


immigrants and host societies. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 30* (6), 637-651.


Appendix A: Email Invitation

By means of this e-mail I seek your voluntary participation in a short survey regarding your perceptions of newscasters. As a graduate student at the University of Texas at El Paso, I am reaching out to you for assistance.

The survey seeks to learn about current perception about newscasters and Latino ethnic identity. This survey is confidential and data will only be collected for research purposes. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

If you choose to take the survey please click here.

If you have any questions about the project or would like clarification about the survey, please contact me at your convenience at 915-490-1313 or via e-mail at lauraer2003@yahoo.com or at laerrickson@miners.utep.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your participation as a research subject, please contact the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915-747-8841) or irb.orsp@utep.edu.

I thank you in advance for your support and help in this academic project.

Best regards,

Laura Alvarado
Appendix B: IRB Approval Letter

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
Office of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Projects
Institutional Review Board
El Paso, Texas 79968-0587
phone: 915 747-8841 fax: 915 747-5931
FWA No: 00001224

DATE: April 20, 2012

TO: Laura Alvarado
FROM: University of Texas at El Paso IRB

STUDY TITLE: [329483-1] Parasocial interaction between Latino newscasters and their viewers: A Cultural Pluralism Perspective
IRB REFERENCE #: 329483-1
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: April 20, 2012
EXPIRATION DATE: April 20, 2013
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. University of Texas at El Paso IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This study has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after termination of the project.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Athena Fester at (915) 747-8841 or afester@utepe.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.
Appendix C

Newscaster Script

Newscaster: City Council held its weekly meeting at City Hall today. Autism Awareness Month, 2012 The International Year of Cooperatives, and El Paso Fashion Week were items on the agenda. If you are interested in volunteering for projects held for Autism Awareness Month, please call Norma Ruiz at 915-365-9832.
ATTENTION
UTEP Students:
Do you want to help a graduate student and participant in a survey to better understand ethnic identity?
Log on to surveymonkey.com
**TABLE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parasocial Interaction Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.  The news program shows me what the newscasters are like.</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.  When the newscasters joke around with one another it makes the news easier to watch.</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.  When my favorite newscaster shows me how he or she feels about the news, it helps me make up my own mind about the news story.</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.  I feel sorry for my favorite newscaster when he or she makes a mistake.</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.  When I'm watching the newscast, I feel as if I am part of their group.</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.  I like to compare my ideas with what my favorite newscaster says.</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.  The newscasters make me feel comfortable, as if I am with friends.</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.  I see my favorite newscaster as a natural, down-to-earth person.</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.  I like hearing the voice of my favorite newscaster in my home.</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. My favorite newscaster keeps me company when the news is on television.</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I look forward to watching my favorite newscaster on tonight's news.</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. If my favorite newscaster appeared on another television program, I would watch that program.</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. When my favorite newscaster reports a story, he or she seems to understand the kinds of things I want to know.</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I sometimes make remarks to my favorite newscaster during the newscast.</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. If there were a story about my favorite newscaster in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it.</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I miss seeing my favorite newscaster when he or she is on vacation.</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I would like to meet my favorite newscaster in person.</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I think my favorite newscaster is like an old friend.</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I find my favorite newscaster to be attractive.</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I am not as satisfied when I get my news from a newscaster different than my favorite newscaster.</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Means ranged from a low of 1 for "strongly disagree" to a high of 5 for "strongly agree" with each statement.
Appendix F

In this country, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian American, Chinese, Filipino, American Indian, Mexican American, Caucasian or White, Italian American, and many others. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

Please fill in: In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be ____________________

Use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

(4) Strongly agree    (3) Agree    (2) Disagree    (1) Strongly disagree

1- I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
2- I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.
3- I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.
4- I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.
5- I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.
6- I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
7- I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.
8- In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.
9- I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.
10- I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.
11- I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
12- I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

13- My ethnicity is
    (1) Asian or Asian American, including Chinese, Japanese, and others
    (2) Black or African American
    (3) Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
    (4) White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic
    (5) American Indian/Native American
    (6) Mixed; Parents are from two different groups
    (7) Other (write in): ________________________________

14- My father's ethnicity is (use numbers above)
15- My mother's ethnicity is (use numbers above)
**Appendix G: Survey Instrument**

This survey seeks information about your perceptions of television newscasters. It is comprised of ten questions and should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. By clicking on the next button you are volunteering to take the survey. You are free to leave the survey at any time by exiting this page.

Your feedback is very important and it will be used for academic research conducted at the University of will be confidential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This newscaster reminds me of myself.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I'm watching this newscaster, I feel as if I am part of his/her group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the same qualities as this newscaster.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The newscaster makes me feel comfortable, as if I am a friend.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can imagine myself as this newscaster.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This newscaster is attractive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can identify with this newscaster.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like hearing the voice of the newscaster.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to be more like this newscaster.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like to meet this newscaster in person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>This newscaster seems like a potential friend.</td>
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<tr>
<td>This newscaster is a natural, down-to-earth person.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. My ethnicity is

- Asian or Asian American, including Chinese, Japanese, and others
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
- White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic
- American Indian/Native American
- Mixed; Parents are from two different groups
- Other (please specify) ____________________________

3. Please continue on to the next section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am happy to be a member of the group I belong to.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.

I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.

In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.

I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.

I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.

I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

I feel good about my cultural background.

I feel good about my ethnic background.

4. My father's ethnicity is

- Asian or Asian American, including Chinese, Japanese, and others
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
- White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic
- American Indian/Native American
- Mixed; Parents are from two different groups
- Other (please specify) ____________________
5. **My mother's ethnicity is**
   - ☐ Asian or Asian American, including Chinese, Japanese, and others
   - ☐ Black or African American
   - ☐ Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
   - ☐ White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic
   - ☐ American Indian/Native American
   - ☐ Mixed; Parents are from two different groups
   - ☐ Other (please specify) _____________________________ ☐

6. **Father’s Generational Status**
   - ☐ First Generation
   - ☐ Second Generation
   - ☐ Third Generation
   - ☐ Fourth Generation
   - ☐ Mexican National

7. **Mother’s Generational Status**
   - ☐ First Generation
   - ☐ Second Generation
   - ☐ Third Generation
   - ☐ Fourth Generation
   - ☐ Mexican National

8. Sex
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Male

9. Age ______

10. The **ethnicity** of the newscaster I just viewed is:
    - ☐ Asian or Asian American, including Chinese, Japanese, and others
    - ☐ Black or African American
    - ☐ Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
    - ☐ White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic
☐ American Indian/Native American
☐ Mixed; Parents are from two different groups
☐ Other (please specify) __________________________
☐ Not sure

Thank You for completing the survey!

Thank you very much for completing the survey. Your feedback is greatly appreciated and will be used for research purposes only.

Have a Great Day!
Laura A Alvarado was born in Chicago, Illinois but has lived in El Paso since the age of seven, and considers herself a native El Pasoan. She is the oldest child of Brooks Lewis Erickson and Carmen Garcia Erickson. In 2007, she received her B.A. in Organizational Communication from the University of Texas at El Paso. She entered the Graduate school at the University of Texas at El Paso in the fall of 2009 where she pursued her Masters in Communications under the College of Liberal Arts. She has extensive experience in management, sales, and marketing. After obtaining her Masters, she hopes to teach and pursue a Ph.D.

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El Paso, TX 79936

This thesis was typed by Laura A Alvarado.