ABSTRACT

ENGAGING WITH NEW GENERATIONS: INTEGRATION AMONG YOUNG ENGLISH-SPEAKING HISPANICS IN A SPANISH-SPEAKING CONGREGATION

by

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The Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza in Cleveland, Tennessee is a Hispanic Pentecostal Church composed mainly of first-generation Spanish-speaking congregants. The congregation is an ethnically diverse Hispanic group represented by Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Argentinians, and Peruvians. There are different age groups represented in the congregation. However, ages fourteen through nineteen (high school and college-aged) are not represented in the church's demographics. This age group is not present at the church, even though their parents are church members. The parents of this age group were asked why and stated that their absence was because this second- and third-generation of Hispanics uses English as their first language. They do not understand what is being sung, taught, or preached. Thus, the experience at church has become irrelevant for them. They have left the church and joined other English-speaking congregations. They are fully engaged in worship, discipleship, and ministry. Language has become a barrier that prevents these youth from fully participating in church ministries with the first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanics.

The challenge that first-generation Spanish-speaking Hispanics faces is to create an environment for second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanics to engage in the life of the congregation. Such conditions could make a first-generation Spanish-speaking Hispanic church relevant and appealing to a second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanic youth. Participating in ministry could prevent high school and college students from joining non-Hispanic churches or from leaving the church altogether.

This research identified effective ways that second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanics could be integrated into worship, discipleship, and ministry within the first generation of a Spanish-speaking Hispanic congregation.

ENGAGING WITH NEW GENERATIONS: INTEGRATION AMONG YOUNG ENGLISH-SPEAKING HISPANICS IN A SPANISH-SPEAKING CONGREGATION.

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CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter previews how to address the problem of losing young generation of English-speaking Hispanics due to language barriers at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza in Cleveland, Tennessee. Cultural and language dynamics at the church are examined to determine possible causes that prevent English-speaking Hispanics from fully engaging in ministry. The church is trying to reach the Hispanic community in Cleveland, Tennessee and realizes that English-speaking Hispanics are part of this community. Different ministry models and field research were used as a guide to develop best practices for helping a young generation of English-speaking Hispanics engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry in the church.

Personal Introduction

I have been appointed as senior pastor for Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza, located in Cleveland, Tennessee. I moved from Puerto Rico to the mainland United States in 2017. As I was preaching my first sermon, the first Sunday at the church, I noticed two adolescents who seemed distracted. There was no connection between the altar and their pew. For me, it was strange because my sermons are known to be simple and easy for every listener to understand. At the end of the service, as I was greeting the congregation, I approached the adolescents. I greeted them with my usual "Dios les bendiga, ¿como están hoy?" (God bless you, how are you today?). The two adolescents looked at me as if I was speaking in tongues. They did not understand what I said. This experience was my first encounter with English-speaking Hispanics. They ate "arroz, habichuela y pernil" (rice, beans, and roasted pork) as I do, loved the Puerto Rican flag as

I do too, but did not speak Spanish. Daniel Rodriguez calls this group of Hispanics *native-born* Latinos, whereas I am considered a *foreign-born* Latino (Rodriguez and Ortiz 46). We were all Puerto Ricans but speak different languages. This culture shock inspired my Ministry Transformational Project.

Comunidad de Esperanza is a Hispanic congregation composed primarily of first-generation Spanish-speaking congregants. The church has come of age in the more than forty years since its foundation. It is known to be the first Hispanic church in the city from the Church of God denomination and the precursor for establishing two more Hispanic congregations in the Cleveland, Tennessee area. The church has a functional structure composed of pastors, an advisory board, a finance office, a Bible school, kids and teen ministries, adult ministries, music ministry, deacons, and building maintenance.

The church's demographics are 24% adult men, 32% adult women, 16% children eleven to thirteen years old, 5% adolescents fourteen to sixteen years old, and 2% youth seventeen to twenty-five. The age group of fourteen through nineteen (high school and college) is not well represented in the church's demographics, although their parents are church members. Language has become a barrier that prevents this age group from fully engaging in church ministries with the first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanics. Many of these English-speaking Hispanic adolescents have joined other English-speaking congregations where they are fully involved in worship, discipleship, and ministry. Daniel Rodriguez, a second-generation Hispanic pastor, states that English-dominant Hispanics are being overlooked. Pastors and congregations unintentionally equate Hispanic ministry to Spanish ministry (Rodriguez and Ortiz 18). This might be happening at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza.

This goal of this research is to identify strategies to help create an environment where the second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanics can fully engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry. It is urgent to develop strategic plans to prevent these age groups from leaving the church.

The local church must become a community of faith where the whole Hispanic population is represented. The representation of all age groups should include native-born and foreign-born Hispanics. Not having this age group inhibits the church's vision to become a relevant community of faith to the Hispanic community. The challenge is to integrate languages within the Hispanic community to create one multi-generational, multi-lingual, and multi-cultural Hispanic congregation.

Statement of the Problem

Hispanic population growth is now driven by immigrants' children and grandchildren, as the population of Hispanic immigrants in the nation continues to decline. Antonio Flores reports from an analysis made of the US decennial data that since 1960 the nation's Hispanic population increased from 6.3 million to 56.5 million by 2015. It is projected to grow to 107 million by 2065. The foreign-born Hispanic population has increased to nearly 20 times its size over the past fifty years, from less than 1 million in 1960 to 19.4 million in 2015. The US-born Latino population increased six-fold. There are approximately 32 million US-born Hispanics in the United States. After increasing for at least forty years, the foreign-born Hispanic population began to decline after2010. Among all Hispanics, the percentage born in another country was 34.4% in 2015, down from approximately 40% earlier in the 2000s. The adult Hispanics who are foreign-born

began declining later; 47.9% of Hispanic adults were born in another country in 2015, down from 55.0% in 2007 (A. Flores, "Facts on US Latinos, 2015").

The Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza at Cleveland, Tennessee is composed mainly of first-generation Spanish-speaking congregants. The age group of fourteen through nineteen (high school and college) is not well represented in the church's demographics. This age group is mainly second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanics. English is their first or preferred language. Pew Research Center reports that English proficiency is rising among Hispanics ages five and older. In 2015, 69% of Hispanics said they speak only English at home, up from 59% who said the same in 1980. Most of this growth has been driven by US-born Hispanics, whose English proficiency share has grown from 71.9% in 1980 to 89.7% in 2015 (A. Flores, "Facts on US Latinos, 2015"). Due to this fact, the experience at church has become irrelevant to them. Some of these adolescents have left the church and others have joined English-speaking congregations where they are fully engaged in worship, discipleship, and ministry. Language has become a barrier that prevents this Hispanic age group from fully participating in church ministries with the first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanics.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to identify effective ways second- and third-generation English-speaking adolescents, ages fourteen through nineteen, become actively engaged in worship, discipleship, and ministry within a first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza.

Research Questions

Based on the problem detailed in the previous section, three questions guided this research:

Research Question #1

What practices within the congregation do pastors, first-, second-, and third-generation church members identify that motivate adolescents to actively engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry?

Research Question #2

What practices within the congregation do pastors, first-, second-, and third-generation church members identify that discourage adolescents from actively engaging in worship, discipleship, and ministry?

Research Question #3

What are best practices for actively engaging second- and third-generation adolescents (ages 14 – 19) in worship, discipleship, and ministry at church?

Rationale for the Project

First, this research is pertinent for ministry as it addresses why English-speaking Hispanic adolescents leave the church. The church's mission statement is "The Church of God Community of Hope exists to worship God and serve people -- reaching out to teach them and together be imitators of Christ(“Comunidad Hope”)." To reach out "desde adentro" (from within) would be of the most benefit to the church in its pursuit to retain this age group. Bridges must be constructed to make the church a safe place for all Hispanic. All age groups must find their space to fully engage with the church. David Ramirez makes a call to Hispanic leadership to exercise a creative and transcendent

Hispanic ministry. The Hispanic church needs a theology of worship that values the relationship between culture and faith and is well informed by its liturgy heritage and the renewal of contemporary praise and worship. This will help increase and promote participation in the congregation (Zaldivar et al. 220). This theology, should be articulated and applicable to a multi-generational, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual community of faith.

The second reason this research is pertinent to ministry is that it will bring awareness of the diversity within the Hispanic community in the United States which consists of different languages, generations, and cultures. Rodriguez calls this the new reality for US-born Latinos. US-born Hispanics are Hispanics at heart; most of them are English dominant or do not speak Spanish at all. Many of them do not maintain the same level of allegiance to their homeland's culture or religious commitments that their parents brought from their countries of origin. They have embraced many US cultural values and created a cultural distance between themselves and their foreign-born parents (Rodriguez and Ortiz 16).

On the other hand, new research reveals that most Hispanics or Latinos were born in the United States. Two-thirds of the Latino population in the US were born in this country, and the other third are immigrants. Three out of four of all Latinos are US citizens. The majority of Latinos speak English very well. Almost 60% of Latino adults and 90% of Latino children are proficient in English. One-third of all Latinos are fully bilingual (Malavé and Giordani 67-80). The awareness of this new reality would help the church not overlook any of these groups. Juan Fransisco Martinez makes a very assertive statement about ministry and language. Because of the relative value of language in the

United States, how minority languages are used in ministry gives a clear message about the relative value given to that language in relation to English. It also invites Christians to think about the role of language in ministry (Branson and Martínez, Loc. 1325).

Intentional strategies could be implemented to reach, evangelize, and disciple US-born Latinos whose preferred language is English. A Pentecostal approach for this research would reflect the event of the day of Pentecost narrated in Acts Chapter Two. The congregants "were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). The observers, to whom the gospel was preached, replied, "Why are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we each hear them in our language to which we were born?" (Acts 2:7-8). This is an invitation by the Spirit to the Spanish-speaking Hispanic church to speak a language that English-speaking Hispanic adolescents can understand.

The third reason this research is pertinent to ministry is that it studies ministry models for Hispanic youth. The field research performed will help articulate best practices for the Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza adolescents to engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry. These best practices can become a church ministry model to engage a second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanics and the first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanics in one congregation. The model would be in accord with Paul's analogy of the church as the body of Christ. "Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it" (1 Corinthians 12:37). There are different members but one body. The Scriptural analogy could be applied to this research. There are different generations, different languages, and different cultures but one congregation.

It would represent a means to link the Spanish-speaking and English-speaking Hispanics to the Kingdom in a broader sense.

Definition of Key Terms

Hispanic or Latino. The United States Census Bureau defines Hispanics or Latinos as people of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race (Bureau of Labor and Statistic, US Census Bureau). The definition is the product of a 1976 act of Congress and the administrative regulations that flow from the act (Passel and Taylor). The terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" refer to ethnicity and culture. They are groups based on shared culture rather than skin color, race, or other physical features. Hispanic refers to people who speak Spanish or who are descendants of those from Spanish-speaking countries.

In contrast, Latino refers to geography: specifically, people from Latin America, including Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. Hispanics refer to Spanish-language populations, while Latinos refer to Latin American countries and culture (Zambrana 1–3). For this study, the researcher used the term Hispanic to better identify the specific community at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza. In this community of faith, the group uses Spanish as their identity rather than their geographical place of origin.

First-Generation Spanish-Speaking Congregation. Hispanic ministry in the United States, which is conducted almost exclusively in Spanish. This ministry model is beneficial for reaching and nurturing first-generation Hispanics' faith; it is generally not successful when targeting the growing number of native-born English-dominant Hispanics in the United States. Spanish-speaking churches' effort to evangelize and disciple unreached native-born Hispanics is often hindered by linguistic, socioeconomic,

and cultural differences between first-generation and US-born Latinos (Rodriguez and Ortiz 24–25). In the United States, the term can often be used interchangeably.

Second-Generation English-Speaking Hispanics or Latinos. These are the children of first-generation Spanish-speaking Hispanics born in the United States. This group of people speak Spanish and are very fluent in the English language. Research demonstrates that almost 60% of Latino adults and 90% of Latino children are proficient in English. One-third of all Latinos are fully bilingual (Malavé and Giordani).

Third-Generation English-Speaking Hispanics. These are the grandchildren of the first-generation Spanish-speaking Hispanics. This group of people does not necessarily speak Spanish, and English is their first language. Hispanic population growth in the US is now driven by the third-generation of Hispanics, as the number of Hispanic immigrants in the nation continues to decline (*Latino Stats: American Hispanics by the Numbers*).

Delimitations

The research on identifying effective ways that second- and third-generation English-speaking adolescents become fully involved in worship, discipleship, and ministry within a first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation could include all first-generation Spanish-speaking congregations in the US. This research limits its scope to one specific congregation in the city of Cleveland, Tennessee. This congregation is Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza, a congregation composed mainly of first-generation Spanish-speaking congregants.

Even though there are three Church of God churches composed of first-generation Spanish-speaking congregants in the city, the language barrier's palpable problem is happening in the researcher's immediate ministerial area. It is a specific challenge to

Comunidad de Esperanza church and its adult and young members. Thus, the subjects that were interviewed were members of that congregation.

Review of Relevant Literature

In this section, relevant literature will be presented for the stated problem at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza. The Comunidad de Esperanza church must first realize that it is not preserving this age group and be willing to reach out to these adolescents.

The themes or disciplines that will drive the research and the literature review are the following: multi-generation elements in society, specifically among Hispanics; psychological and social elements in adults and adolescents; the learning experience for adults and adolescents, and multi-generation Hispanics in church for worship, ministry, and discipleship.

In *A Future for the Latino Church: Models for Multi-lingual, Multi-generational Hispanic Congregations* (Rodriguez and Ortiz 2011), the authors confront the fact that evangelical Hispanic churches have arrived at a crossroads moment. This moment is caused by the shift in the American Hispanic community from primarily foreign-born, Spanish-language-dominant people to a majority who are native-born and speak English. The author, a second-generation Hispanic who has learned Spanish as an adult, describes the shift in the American Hispanic community as living "in the hyphen," living between conflicting identities as a Mexican-American. The author's thesis is that Hispanic churches, to thrive in the future, must move from Spanish-language ministry that attempts to preserve the culture to English-language services. These services should be led by second- and third-generation Hispanic ministers who are American born. Effective

Hispanic churches of the future must be multi-lingual, multi-generational, and multiracial because of the Hispanic community's diversity (Rodriguez and Ortiz 145–59).

In the book *Faith, Family, and Ethnicity* (Crane), research conducted among the first and second generation of Latinos in Midwestern congregations reveals that the presence of the second generation in Latino congregations presents a challenge to the communities of memory, communities where moral and cultural values of Latino heritage and traditions are maintained and transferred to new generations. The second-generation youth are actors in the process of creating new forms of cultural and religious expression. Congregations where the second generation has active participation have become the "locus" of new cultural identities. A critical mass of second-generation youth pushes the community of memory to also become a community of change.

Regarding language preference among second- and third-generation Hispanics in "'I Like English Better': Latino Dual Language Students' Investment in Spanish, English, and Bilingualism," the authors report the results of a study performed on sixty-three students in a dual-language school (Babino and Stewart). Their findings indicate that although these students were native Spanish speakers in a school that delivers fifty percent of their instruction in Spanish, they prefer English both academically and socially. Although the students in the study are in a school that purports to value bilingualism and biliteracy, they tend to prefer the English language both socially and academically. The students viewed English as a language that will lead to more success. Spanish was viewed as an important but lesser language, primarily useful for speaking to those who do not know English.

A subject that cannot be overlooked in this research is the Hispanic identity and its impact on language. In *Bilingual Youth: Spanish in English-Speaking Societies,* the authors state that language has played a critical role in articulating identities and actively constructing them as speakers make choices in their social interactions in favor of some language over others (Rothman and Potowski). Not being able to speak a language restricts the ability to communicate and identify with that language's speakers. For this reason, language has played a key role in constructing and maintaining distinctive human identities by serving an important boundary-marking function between groups.

Rewarding adult and adolescent learning, *Adult Learning and Relationships* presents the *reciprocal learning principle* (Strom and Strom). All generations participate in certain aspects of social transformation together. Harmony and cohesion require the continued adjustment of more than one generation. Everyone should be aware of how age segments other than their own interpret events, know the values that guide their behavior, comprehend their vision of the future, and be willing to trade places in providing instruction whenever it is appropriate. A transition from customary hierarchical relationships to more equitable forms of interaction implicates significant changes in adults' and adolescents' attitudes.

Research Methodology

The research methodology includes surveys and interviews conducted with individuals. The research methodology will drive the research in finding a concrete answer as to what practices within the congregation motivate the adolescents to participate in worship, discipleship, and ministry in the church and what practices within

the congregation discourage the adolescents from participating in worship, discipleship, and ministry in the church.

Type of Research

The type of research will be pre-intervention. It will identify and fully describe effective ways second- and third-generation English-speaking adolescents become fully involved in worship, discipleship, and ministry within a first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza.

Participants

Three groups of the participant were used in the research. The first group of participants was adolescents ages twelve to nineteen. This is the age group that will be prompted to leave the church because of the language barrier. This group is the source to investigate why the second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanics do not engage within ministry with the first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanics. The second group of participants was first-generation Spanish-speaking adults. This group is the possible initiators in implementing effective ways to engage the English-speaking youth in church life. The third group of participants was made up of pastors and youth leaders who are currently implementing strategies to engage the English-speaking youth. This group will be a reference point for possible approaches to engage the English-speaking youth in church life.

Instrumentation

The instruments used with the adults and pastors-youth leaders for data collection were semi-structured interviews. The instruments for the English-speaking youth were

focus groups. Written questionnaires were used for adults and youth as a guide to answering the research questions.

Data Collection

The research was conducted in July 2020. Open-ended questions through semi-structured interviews were presented to an Adult Focus Group and an Adolescent Focus Group. The Adult Focus Group research was conducted in a pre-arranged classroom at the Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza. The research for the Adolescent Focal Group was conducted at the church's facilities in Cleveland, TN. The open-ended questions were aligned with the researcher's questions and purpose statement.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data generated during the research process was compiled into categories to communicate and interpret the data. The researcher observed and evaluated words, gestures, actions, and practices to give a fuller interpretation of the implied range of meaning during the focus group interviews.

Generalizability

The research goal is to develop a strategy to revert the tendency to lose the young generation from the church and to create an open space where these teenagers can visualize themselves fully engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry among the first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation. Such a strategy is a contribution to ministry to the Hispanic church in the United States. This challenge can integrate different generations and languages within the Hispanic community in one multi-generational and multi-lingual Hispanic congregation.

Project Overview

The second chapter presents the multi-generational elements in society and the psychological and social elements of adults and adolescents. It will also present Biblical and theological guides for worship, discipleship, and ministry for multi-generational churches. The third chapter presents an exposition of the research methods and data analysis. The fourth chapter presents the data from the interviews and survey, which leads to the major results of the study. The fifth chapter provides an interpretation of the findings, observations, and suggestions for effective ways that second- and third-generation English-speaking adolescents can become fully involved in church life.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter reviews literature relevant to identifying effective ways that second- and third-generation English-speaking adolescents can become fully engaged in ministry within a first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation. This project aims to identify ways to prevent adolescents from leaving the church due to language barriers. The literature review will be divided into three main sections. The first section will research the Biblical and theological foundations to address the relationship between different generations and how Scripture can present a guiding framework. The second section examines multi-generation elements in society including psychological and social traits of adults and adolescents as well as their learning experiences. The third section explores the interaction among Hispanics in a multi-generational environment. This interaction occurs at church in worship, ministry, and discipleship.

Biblical Foundation

The Scriptures present an evident pattern of relationship between generations of God's people. One generation is called to set an example and to be faithful in telling God's story to the next generation (Deut. 6:2, 7, 20-25; Exod. 12:26-27; 13:14-15; 1 Sam. 2.6; Lam. 5.19; Matt. 18.2-3; Luke 18.15-17; Acts 2.17; 1 Tim. 5.1; 2 Tim. 1.5; Tit. 2:3-4). Embedded in Israel's psalter is a call to tell God's mighty deeds to the next generations (Ps. 48.11-14; 72.5; 79.13; 102.12; 106.31; 135.13; 145.4). Psalm 78 reflects Israel's history, from the exodus from Egypt to the establishment of the Davidic dynasty. The poetic account of historical events is a lecture to the next generations of God's love and fidelity, contrasting to his people's constant infidelities and rebels. Verses two through four are a synthesis of one generation lecturing the next generation. "I will open my mouth in a parable…which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not conceal them from their children but tell the generation to come to the praises of the Lord, and His strength and the wondrous works that He has done (2-4)."

The values described in God's commandments were transmitted from one generation to the next (Exod. 20 5-6). This formed the foundation for the Israelite society. If God's story was to be relevant to the next generations (Dt. 26. 5-10), these generations had to identify with their forbears' experience in some way (Drane 49, 291). The Biblical narrative exposes the success and the failure of God's people to achieve this goal.

Old Testament

Moses admonishes Israel to treasure God's commandments in their hearts. The commandments of God are to be the center of God's people's daily lives. The elders are called to teach these statutes to the sons and daughters (Det. 6:6-7). The statutes were to

be taught and lived as a model of faithfulness to God (Det. 6.1). Every day, life is seen as an opportunity to reflect upon, share, and put into practice God's commands. The elders' teachings, which make up one generation, represent how God's commandments become central to the next generation's daily lives.

Joshua commanded God's people to erect a monument after crossing the Jordan River. He instructed Israel with the meaning of that monument (Josh. 4.4-7) to attend to God's actions and commandments. The monument was to become a memorial to Israel's sons and daughters forever so that the story of the crossing becomes the story of every generation (Matties 108). The memorial was a tangible icon that served as a guiding framework that encouraged fathers, sons, mothers, and daughters, to a reflective dialog of the wonders of God (Josh. 6). The initiative to the reflective dialog was initiated by the children, "when your children ask in time to come" (6a), implying the openness of a generation to listen to inquiries of the next generation, thus creating teachable moments. The children's questions suggest an explanation of the past and an invitation to generate hope for the future (Matties 109).

When a generation did not communicate God's story well to the next generations, the consequences were adverse to Israel. After Joshua's death and the generation who crossed the Jordan River passed, a new generation “arose after them who did not know the Lord, nor the work which He had done for Israel” (Jud. 2:8-10). Israel began its downward social spiral, which included moral and political unrest and religious apostasy, for the unwillingness of a generation to hear God's voice and transmit His word to the next generation (Martin 70). The word of God ought to be lived, embodied, and modeled to the next generation so that the next generation can also heed His voice. Although each

generation must enter into its own living religious experience, the younger group cannot continue relying on its past heroes' spiritual strength (Evans 49).

Rehoboam, a young ruler, made decisions that led to the fragmentation of the kingdom at the beginning of his reign. Israel's request was a claim for justice to lighten the yoke imposed by his father Solomon (1 King 12.6). Rehoboam first consulted the elders, who advised him to serve the people. They attempted to teach Rehoboam diplomacy by wisely pointing out that Israel would be his servants forever if he would be a servant to them today (Winslow 110). He rejected this advice and turned to the privileged youth, which advised to give a harsh answer to Israel's request. The response to the request was if his father's yoke was heavy, Rehoboam's was heavier. A young king's consequences not to abide by the elders' advice was a divided nation (1 King 12.16-18). In older generations, a new generation should see a source of wisdom and experience that will lead others along the path in constructing a fruitful future.

New Testament

Jesus' teachings about life together includes relationships among generations. First, a parallel between children and the next generation should be established. The disciples rebuked the children (next generation) brought to Jesus to be touched (Matt. 19.13). Jesus' response to the disciples' action was a counter order, "permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (14). Children ranked lower on the scale of personal worth in the culture of the time. When children reached adulthood, their value was realized. Jesus gave children greater status than they enjoyed in the time's culture (Hahn 219–20). The Kingdom belongs to

children too. The next generation should be regarded as part of the Kingdom and have an open space to participate in this kingdom's construction.

Paul is mindful of Timothy's sincere faith, which was handed down for three generations through a grandmother, a mother, and a son (2 Tim. 1.5). Timothy, Eunice, and Lois are a model of proper interrelations among generations to hand down the faith. Likewise, Simeon and Anna, as elders, passed down the faith through their commitment to God in the temple and their testimony when they both recognized the infant Jesus as Messiah (Luke 2.25-38). Paul admonishes Timothy to appeal to the older man as a Father (1 Tim. 5.1). He also advises the older woman to teach what is right and to encourage young women to love their husbands and to love their children (Tit. 2.3-4).

When they heard the new preacher Apollo, Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately (Acts 18.24-26). The action is a model of a generation who perceive God as working with the new generations and is willing to work hand in hand in the process of discipleship. There is a contribution the current generation has to offer to the new generation.

Language may be a barrier which prevents the faith of first-generation Spanish-speaking parents from being handed down to second and third generations of English-speaking adolescents. The answer may lie in the Pentecost narrative (Acts 2:5-17). The Holy Spirit was outpoured among Jesus' disciples (with a language, tongues, that became the Gospel message to a multi-lingual society. Whereas with the Tower of Babel, the tongues brought separation and alienation. Now the Spirit, in a redemptive way, connects every tongue for everyone to hear (González 61). The Spirit, with wind and fire, outpours a common language to connect multiple generations.

The fulfillment of the prophet Joel's words became a reality as the Holy Spirit empowered a new multi-generation community of faith where all generations have gifts to offer (Thompson 78). "And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2.17). The gift was not only for females and males but for the young and old as well. Simeon and Anna are elders (Luke 2.26-37), but Philips's daughters are young teenagers (Acts 21.9). Joel encompassed entire ranges by listing opposite extremes; young and old together mean people of all ages. The work of the Spirit could also be described as a leveling experience because the Spirit will be poured out upon "all flesh" (González 61). Sons and daughters, young and old, slaves, and both male and female are included in the work of the Spirit. The young and old will see visions and dream dreams and speak about what they have seen (Holladay 102). The "leveling" Spirit not only brings the next generation closer but levels them to a position where they can become co-workers (2 Cor. 6.1) with the Lord.

Theological Foundation

Engaging the next generation in God's story is constructed fundamentally through intentional and respectful relationships. These relations can be informed by reflecting on various theological aspects such as the relational Trinitarian God, the incarnation as an example of the willingness to enter into a new generation's world, and the Gospel's inclusiveness.

The Relational Trinitarian God

The relational Trinitarian God is a model for the interrelation among generations. God is best viewed as a social trinity (substance in relation), creating a divine community driven by communion and love (Grenz 12; Boff, Trinity and Society 53). The trinity as a

perfect sociality that embodies mutuality, cooperation, and unity in genuine diversity (Grenz) provides the basis of this trinitarian relationship. Diversity in unity of people mirrors the diversity in unity of the Trinity (Seamands 39).

As the doctrine of the Trinity developed in the church, and theologians searched for language to describe the mutual indwelling and interpenetration of the three persons, the idea of the Greek term perichoresis was introduced. The Cappadocians used it to explain the relationship between the Trinity with an ancient idea known as perichóresis. This idea translated as divine dance or interpenetration presented by the Cappadocians in the fourth century and expanded by John of Damascus in the 8th century (Boff, *Holy Trinity* 14). Seamands describes Perichoresis as the conveyer of several ideas. These ideas are "reciprocity, interchange, giving to and receiving from one another, being drawn to one another and contained in the other, interpenetrating one another by drawing life from and pouring life into one another as a fellowship of love" (Seamands 142). Perichóresis affirms the mutuality between the trinity and the formation that occurs between that mutuality. Thanks to the foundation of love among every person of the trinity, no person is higher than the others. They are the same in all because they are of the same substance. One yields to others because there is mutual trust (Estrada-Carrasquillo 66–67).

An analogy that describes the Perichoresis is like the three notes of a major triad, which, when played together, indwell each other and create the one sound of the chord even while retaining their distinctive identity. Theologians in the Middle Ages used the image of a divine dance to describe the dynamic sense of perichoresis (Seamands 143–44). LaCugna describes this divine dance as the triune persons experiencing one fluid

motion of encircling, encompassing, permeating, enveloping, outstretching. There are neither leaders nor followers in the divine dance, only an eternal reciprocal movement giving and receiving, giving again, and receiving again. The divine dance is entirely personal, expressing the essence and unity of God (272). The trinitarian circle where the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit indwell and are indwelt by one another is open, not closed. People have been invited into the circle to participate in the divine dance.

Molly Truman Marshall explains the idea of the perichoresis as the triune God's invitation to participate in the life of God by the power of the Spirit.

> The metaphor woven throughout the perichoresis concept is the idea that the Spirit is inviting all creation to join in the dance that characterizes God's life. The Spirit as God's inexhaustible, dancing power creates an ongoing movement between divine and creaturely being. Because the perichoresis of God is open for the participation of all creation, all find identity through this overarching rhythm of life. It is by the Spirit that we participate in the life of God, and God participates in our life together. In Scripture, the Spirit is often linked to communion (koinonia). I prefer to translate the word as participation, which suggests that we indwell and are indwelt by the lives of others. This is true of our relationship with God and with one another. It is a Trinitarian virtue to live life opened out in relationality in the power of the Spirit. (Marshall 150)

The perichoresis idea represents a theological foundation for constructing a model of the relationship among different generations. The concept of mutuality in the trinity and the invitation to participate in God's life lays the foundations for multi-generational relationships in the community of faith. This experience of participation must be mutual

and based on love. The mutual submission, the indwelling, and the interpenetration of the persons of the Trinity not only leads to an exchanged life and ministry as Christ abides in people, and they abide in him; it also leads to an exchanged life with others (Seamands 150). One generation should exchange their life experiences, life uncertainties, and life expectancies as a means of interpenetration between generations. The life exchanging with the next generation creates a reciprocal giving and receiving, strengthening relationships among generations.

Regarding the relation of the Trinity and the church, Boff states that "the starting point of the Trinity as the perfect community and that the communion of the divine Three makes then One then, another type of Church emerges. It is fundamentally community" (*Holy Trinity* 65–66). The church as a community is characterized by each one having their own characteristics and gifts. Still, all live for the good of all. The diversities are respected and valued as expressions of the means of the Trinity itself. In the trinity what unites the divine Three is the communion among them and the complete self-giving of one person to the others. The self-giving among generations is an open invitation to create community.

The incarnation

The incarnation is another theological foundation for a multi-generational Hispanic Church seeking unity to become mature and fruitful. There are three aspects of the incarnation that are relevant to the act of incarnating into the next generation. First, the Word became flesh (John 1.14a). Flesh indicates Christ's humanity. Paul calls this action self-emptiness of the Divine to become flesh (kenosis), to identify himself with humanity (Keener, The Gospel of John 408; Crisp 118). When the Word became flesh

and dwelt among humans, God's desire and intention to emptying himself into them and draw them into himself is fully revealed. Through this act of self-giving, divinity flowed into humanity, and humanity was drawn into divinity (Seamands 145). God created humanity in His own image (imago Dei). As such, human beings can open themselves to others. This action is the willingness of one generation to empty itself into the next generation. It is the action of identifying with the next generation by entering their world as they perceive and value it. The incarnation of one generation into the next generation carries the uncertainty of leaving what is familiar and moving into the unfamiliar.

Second, the phrase “and dwelt among us” provides another example (John 14b). A literal translation of the text suggests that the Word moved its tabernacle, or His tent, to live with people. Jesus Christ, "the Word," is the true locus of God's activity among humanity (Keener, *The Gospel of John* 410). "Dwelt among us" implies an intensely close relationship with one another beyond mere human cohabitation. The community of faith is not a gathering of individuals but a mutual inspiration and support fellowship (Seamands 150). This implies a willingness of one generation to participate, be part of, and become like the next generations for mutual support.

Third, “we saw His glory” (John 14c). Jesus Christ's glory is self-revelation through His signs and miracles (Keener, *The Gospel of John* 411). The visible representation of God (Lightfoot et al. 98) is the willingness of each generation to embrace each other thus carrying out acts that affirm God's presence among His people. Seamands affirm the presence of God by an incarnational approach to ministry. The incarnational acts will take into account the personal and cultural uniqueness of the youth that the church is attempting to reach. It will help individual members discover their

particular ministries based on their heart passions, spiritual gifts, natural talents, personality, and life experiences. The congregation is called to affirm and reflect on the variety of multicultural, multi-lingual, and multi-generational diversity of the body of Christ (125). The incarnation drives one generation to experience the next generation's existential realities. It empties themselves and opens themselves to others. The willingness of one generation to incarnate in the next generation is not exempt from risk and uncertainty. Still, it assures the presence of God's Spirit uniting His people.

The Inclusiveness of the Gospel

The inclusiveness of the Gospel and its proclamation of the Kingdom of God are crucial elements in the development of a framework to reach the next generation. The Kingdom of God is a new state of affairs where a new kind of social integration is introduced: unity based on diversity (Wright 381). This integration is possible through an interior experience of spiritual power. The Holy Spirit performs an internal transformation in the believers, which integrates every person into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12.13).

Estrada-Carrasquillo presents the church as a dialectic plurality-unity as it embodies the body of Christ described by the apostle Paul (1 Cor 12). The use of the word body underlines the plurality within the community without jeopardizing the unity that it must have as the body of Christ. The Church's community is called to embody agape, a non-selfish love, and Koinonia, intentional and communal service. This dialectic of plurality-unity in the life of the Church is modeled in the immanent trinity. This eternal companionship of divine love is characterized by unity in plurality and plurality unity (83–84).

The Genesis narrative of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11.1-8) provides a starting point as to how the fallen humanity deviates from God's purposes. Melba Padilla Maggay reflects on this narrative describing the human tendency to enforce unity by uniformity. The Tower of Babel project, as she describes it, is a human project of cultural uniformity. The people had "one language and few words," denoting cultural uniformity and common aspiration. This is not the design of God for the world and the people in it. God desires nations to rise and inhabit the whole earth and develop various cultures out of their geographies. They are not to get landlocked into the narrow confines of homogeneity (Maggay 44–50). On the other hand, the Holy Spirit is seen in Pentecost, in a redemptive way, working through language and cultural diversity. One generation's inability to communicate with the next generation lies in the insistence to impose uniformity in social relationships.

The book of Revelation, as the ultimate reality to which God's people are heading, defines unity within diversity in the Kingdom of God. John sees a "great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne" (Rev. 7.9). The multitude is united in one proclamation: God sits in the center of all power. This proclamation is a reaffirmation of unity in God's kingdom, but the diversity is affirmed as there was ethnic and language identity. To experience the Kingdom of God, one generation and the next generation should be able to coexist in this dimension, proclaiming one truth and affirming the other's identity. One generation does not absorb the other's identity nor create a new identity but transformed identities in Christ.

John Christopher Thomas presents a very interesting detail from this narrative. The great multitude is described as having palm branches in their hands singing a hymn. The only other occasion in the New Testament where a multitude has palm branches in their hand is upon Jesus' triumphal entry to Jerusalem (Jn. 12.13), and the crowd greets Him shouting, "Hosanna; blessed is the one who comes in the name of the name of Lord and king of Israel" (Thomas 269). In that crowd, young people also praise the Lord (Mt. 21.5), implying that there is room for the next generation in the Kingdom of God.

Fields of Study that Contributed the Research

Recent Hispanic Migration of Hispanics to the US

The United States of America is a nation of immigrants. Every ethnic group struggles to maintain its identity and cultural beauty. Ethnic diversity is observed very early in the nation's history. Hispanics are not newcomers to the United States. The first European language spoken in this nation was Spanish. Spain established the first city of America in St. Augustine, Florida in 1565. In 1848 the territory within Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah was part of Mexico. The Spanish established the city of Santa Fe in New Mexico in 1598. San Juan, Puerto Rico, a US territory, was founded in 1521(Betancourt Hispanics: Their History 25; Zaldivar et al. 9). Military and political events caused borders to change overnight during the nineteenth century. France sold the territory of Louisiana (1803); Spain sold the territory of Florida (1821), and Mexico ceded the territory of Alta California, New Mexico, and Texas (1845-1848) to the expansionist North American nation (Zaldivar et al. 14). These historical events provide a context for recent Hispanics' migration to the US from the year 2000 through 2019.

The immigrant population in the US by 2017 was 44.4 million. This accounts for 13.6% of the nation's population. The immigrant population has grown fourfold since 1960, when only 9.7 million immigrants lived in the US, accounting for just 5.4% of the total US population. Though growth has begun to slow in recent years, the number of immigrants living in the United States is projected to double by 2065 (Radford).

The US Hispanic population reached 59.9 million in 2018, up from 47.8 million in 2008. This makes Hispanics the nation's second-fastest-growing ethnic group after Asian-Americans. Hispanics made up 18% of the US population in 2018, up from 5% in 1970 (Krogstad and Noe-Bustamante). By 2050, minority populations (Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, and others) combined will outnumber the non-Hispanic white population, thus forming a "New Majority." The Hispanics, representing a projected 112 million in the United States, will represent the largest share of this "New Majority" (Krogstad and Noe-Bustamante; US Census, *Population*; Malavé and Giordani). The majority of Hispanics in the United States are not immigrants. Of the 58.9 million Hispanics living in the US in 2017, 33 million, or almost two out of three, were born in the United States and its territories, including Puerto Rico (US Census Bureau). Among all Hispanics, the percentage born in another country was 34.4% in 2015, down from approximately 40% before the year 2000 (A. Flores, "Facts on US Latinos, 2015").

Hispanics in the US are categorized into three groups: first generation, second generation, and third generation or higher. First-generation Hispanics were born outside the United States or on the island of Puerto Rico (63%). Second-generation Hispanics were born in the United States to immigrant parents (19%). Third- or higher-generation Hispanics were born in the United States to US-born parents (17%) (US Census,

Population; Malavé and Giordani, 11). With 63% of adult Hispanics categorized as the first generation, it is important to look at an additional division that can be made within this group to comprehend the diversity among the Hispanic population. Hispanics born outside of the United States and Puerto Rico are divided into those who arrived in the United States before the age of 10 (10%) and those who arrived after the age of ten (90%). Since much of their life and upbringing has occurred in the United States, immigrants who arrived by age 10 tend to be more similar to second-generation Hispanics than their later-arriving immigrant counterparts. Thus, they are sometimes referred to as "generation one and a half" or "Generation 1.5." Those who arrived after the age of ten will most likely have had more of an actual immigrant experience. Many consider them the true first-generation (Pew Research, Generational Differences).

Among the nation's immigrants, Spanish is by far the most spoken non-English language; 43% of immigrants say they speak Spanish at home. The number of Hispanics in the US who speak English proficiently is growing. In 2017, 70% of Hispanics ages five and older spoke English proficiently, up from 59% in 2000. US-born Hispanics are driving this growth. In 2017, 36% of foreign-born Hispanics spoke English proficiently (Krogstad and Noe-Bustamante 4).

The issue of education is important for Hispanics. Eight out of ten (83%) expressed education as very important and alongside the economy and health care as top issues. Over the past decade, the Hispanic high school dropout rate has dropped dramatically. The rate reached a new low in 2014, falling from 32% in 2000 to 12% in 2014 among those ages 18 to 24. This helped lower the national dropout rate from 12% to 7% over the same period (Krogstad; Radford). Even so, the Hispanic dropout rate

remains higher than that of blacks (7%), whites (5%), and Asians (1%). Hispanics are participating in college enrollment (Krogstad). In 2014, 35% of Hispanics ages 18 to 24 were enrolled in a two- or four-year program. Even though more Hispanics are getting a postsecondary education than ever before, Hispanics still fall behind other groups in obtaining a four-year degree. As of 2014, among Hispanics ages 25 to 29, just 15% of Hispanics have a bachelor's degree or higher compared with whites (41%), Blacks (22%), and Asians (63%). For many Hispanics, economic factors remain an obstacle to college enrollment. In 2014, 66% of Hispanics who got a job or entered the military directly after high school expressed the need to help support their family as a reason for not enrolling in college, compared with 39% of whites (Krogstad; Pew Research, Between Two Worlds).

In 2014, Hispanics accounted for 16.1% of the 146.3 million employed people in the United States. Among major industries, 27.3% of workers in construction were of Hispanic ethnicity in 2014. Other industries include agriculture (23.1%) and leisure and hospitality (22.3%). Hispanics had the lowest share of employment in public administration (11.4%), financial activities (11.3%), and information (10.5%). The median income of Hispanic households was $47,675 in 2016. In January 2018, the employment-population among adult Hispanic men was 76.9% and was 55.7% for adult Hispanic women. Hispanic men and women had unemployment rates of 4.3% and 4.6%, respectively (Bucknor 14; US Census; *Bureau of Labor Statistics*). A majority (54%) of Hispanic immigrants send money to relatives in their home countries. In 2012 their remittances to Spanish-speaking Latin American countries totaled $41 billion. Of the foreign remittances received in Mexico, 98%, or nearly $22 billion, come from US residents, accounting for almost 2% of Mexico's GDP. The United States is the largest source of

remittances sent to seventeen Spanish-speaking Latin American countries, sending $41 billion of the $52.9 billion (78%) received in the region (Cohn et al.; Morse).

Hispanics face high poverty rates, endure employment discrimination, and are often relegated to low-wage jobs. Despite this fact, the young Hispanic population is expanding economic growth in the United States. More than half of new homeowners in 2012 were Hispanics, which helped the economic recovery. Hispanics contribute billions of dollars in taxes and to the Goss Domestic Product (GDP). Though they earn less, Hispanics are less likely than white Americans to take advantage of government benefit programs and receive less assistance when they do. The 15 million Hispanics earning over $50,000 annually are vital contributors to Latinos' purchasing power (US Census; Cohn et al.). Hispanics currently have $1.7 trillion in purchasing power, a number that is sure to rise in the years to come. There are three international television stations, 500 radio stations, and 175 magazines serving the Hispanic population (Morse; Betancourt Hispanics: Their History 54). Hispanics are becoming the face of small businesses. In 2013 alone, 3.1 million Hispanic small businesses contributed a projected $468 billion to the American economy. Their numbers are growing, with Latina entrepreneurs starting small businesses at a much higher rate than the national average. With rising educational attainment rates, more Latinos have a chance at upward social mobility (US Census; Malavé and Giordani).

Religion is significant in the lives of immigrant Hispanics. Besides being the fastest-growing ethnic group in the United States, Hispanics are also the fastest growing in the Evangelical-Protestant and Roman Catholic church. More than two-thirds of Hispanics (68%) identify themselves as Roman Catholics. The next largest category, at 15%, is made up of born-again or evangelical Protestants. Nearly one in ten (8%) Hispanics do not identify with any religion. Differences in religious identification among

Hispanic coincide with essential differences in demographic characteristics. Catholics have a more predominant immigrant population than evangelicals. Given current demographic trends, Hispanics are projected to become an ever-increasing segment of the Catholic Church in the US *(*Pew Research, Changing Faith; Betancourt: Hispanics: Their History 54).

The churches most frequented by Hispanics have distinctly ethnic characteristics. The majority of those in the congregation are Hispanic; some Hispanics serve as clergy, and liturgies are available in Spanish. The growth of the Hispanic population leads to the emergence of Latino-oriented churches in all the major religious traditions across the nation. While the prevalence of Hispanic-oriented worship is higher among the foreign-born, with 77% saying they attend churches with those characteristics, the phenomenon is also widespread among the native-born, with 48% saying they attend ethnic churches (Pew Research, Changing Faith).

Dynamics of Second-Generation Migrants' Experience

The Hispanic population growth is now driven by immigrants' children and grandchildren, as the population of Hispanic immigrants in the nation continues to decline. The foreign-born Hispanic population increased nearly 20 times its size over the past half-century, from less than 1 million in 1960 to 19.4 million in 2015. After rising for at least four decades, the portion of the Hispanic population that is foreign-born began declining after 2000 (A. Flores, "Facts on US Latinos, 2015"). This fact makes Hispanics the largest and youngest minority group in the United States. Their median age (27) makes them younger than blacks (31), Asians (36), and whites (41). The youth of the Hispanic population is driven by the emergence of the second generation. One-in-five

schoolchildren are Hispanic. One-in-four newborns are Hispanic. The numbers reveal that these young Hispanics, when adults, will help shape the kind of society the US becomes in the 21st century (Pew Research, Between Two Worlds). This particular ethnic group navigates the complicated borders between the two cultures they inhabit; American and Latin American. Rodríguez calls the dilemma of living between the Latin-American and the Euro-American cultures as living between the hyphens (Rodriguez and Ortiz 37).

Regarding identity, second and third-generation Hispanics are being socialized in a family setting that emphasizes their Latin American roots. Parents have often spoken to them of their pride in their family's country of origin in contrast with their parents talked to them about the pride in being American. Young Hispanics have often been encouraged to speak in Spanish instead of being encouraged to speak only in English. When young Hispanics receive these kinds of influence from their parents, they are more likely to refer to themselves first by their country of origin (Adam; Pew Research, Between Two Worlds). The use of the term "American" as a primary term of self-identification is more prevalent among second and third-generation Hispanic youths than among the foreign-born.

In counterpoint, two trends: a long-standing high intermarriage rate and a decade of declining Latin American immigration are distancing some Hispanics from their Latin American roots, reducing their likelihood of calling themselves Hispanic. Among the estimated 42.7 million US adults with Hispanic ancestry in 2015, 89%, or about 37.8 million, self-identify as Hispanic. But another 5 million (11%) do not consider themselves Hispanic. By the third generation, a group made up of the US-born children of US-born parents and foreign-born grandparents. This number self-identifies as

Hispanic falls to 77%. And by the fourth or higher generation (US-born children of US-born parents and US-born grandparents), just 50% of US adults with Hispanic ancestry say they are Hispanic (López et al.).

The language usage patterns of Hispanics change dramatically from the foreign-born generation to the native-born. Among foreign-born Hispanics ages 16 to 25, 36% say they can speak English proficiently, whereas 98% of native-born Hispanics speak English proficiently. For the children of foreign-born Hispanics and later generations, embracing English does not necessarily mean abandoning Spanish. At least 79% of the second-generation and 38% of the third-generation Hispanics report that they are proficient in speaking Spanish. These figures demonstrate the resilience for the use of Spanish for several generations after immigration (Krogstad and Noe-Bustamante; Malavé and Giordani; Radford).

On the other hand, there is a contrast among adults Hispanics and speaking Spanish as an identity element. Hispanic adults say speaking Spanish is not required to be considered Hispanic. Even among foreign-born Hispanics, a majority holds this view about Spanish and Hispanic identity. Among second-generation Hispanics and third or higher generation, Hispanics (the group farthest from their family's immigrant roots) say speaking Spanish does not make someone Hispanic (Adam; *Diverse Origins*; Radford).

Second and third-generation Hispanics are satisfied with their lives, optimistic about their futures, and highly value education, hard work, and career success. Over the past decade, the Hispanic high school dropout rate dropped from 32% in 2000 to 12% in 2014 among the 18 to 24 ages. Hispanics are participating in college enrollment; in 2014, 35% of Hispanics ages 18 to 24 were enrolled in a two or four-year college (Krogstad;

Pew Research, Between Two Worlds). Yet, they are more likely than other American youths to drop out of school and become teenage parents. They are more likely than white and Asian youths to live in poverty and have high exposure to crime. These are attitudes and behaviors that have often been associated with the immigrant experience through history. But most Hispanic youths are not immigrants. Two-thirds were born in the United States, many of them descendants of the big, ongoing wave of Latin American immigrants who began coming to this country around 1965 (Roof and Manning 171; Radford).

Dynamics of First-Generation Migrant's Experience

Latin America is not Mexico. The US Hispanic population is diverse. Nearly 60 million individuals trace their heritage to Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America and Spain, each with distinct demographic and economic profiles. The Venezuelan population in the US increased 76% to 421,000 in 2017, the fastest growth rate among Hispanic origin groups. Dominicans and Guatemalans had the next fastest growth. Their populations grew by 37% and 30%, respectively, during 2017. Puerto Ricans, the second-largest origin group, saw their population increased by 20%, to 5.6 million in 2017. Puerto Rico is a US territory with a population of 3.2 million. Mexicans are the largest origin group, making 62% of Hispanics with a population close to 37 million. The Mexican population grew by 11% from 2010 to 2017, tied for the lowest growth rate among other Hispanic groups (Noe-Bustamante; Malavé and Giordani 4; US Census). By 2017, 78% of foreign-born Latinos had lived in the US for more than ten years and 22% less than ten years. (US Census, *Population*).

The main reason Hispanic immigrants come to the United States is economic opportunities, family reasons, and educational opportunities. The majority of Hispanics migrant believes that the United States offers more opportunities to get ahead, is better for raising children, and treats the poor better. For some Hispanic ethnic groups, endemic poverty and its related social ills have been a part of their families, "barrios,(towns)" and "colonias(cities)" for generations, even centuries. Two-thirds of Latino immigrants plan to permanently stay in the United States (Taylor et al.; Radford). The self-identification among foreign-born Hispanics is cultural rather than nationalist in nature. When they speak with affection of their country of origin, they speak of family, friends, culture, and heritage. Foreign-born Hispanics view being American in terms of the value of the political freedoms available in the US and of the opportunities this nation provided them. The commitment of the foreign-born Hispanic to the US is made implicit by choosing to reside here or explicitly by taking an oath of citizenship. When Hispanic groups in the US wave flags of their home countries, they are not expressing loyalty to their home countries over the US but instead are expressing their identity as a cultural group within the US (Monsivais 134; Malavé and Giordani; Pew Research, Between Two Words).

English proficiency varies significantly between first-generation Hispanic adults and their children. Only 23% of first-generation Hispanics can carry on a proficient English conversation. The transition to English dominance occurs at a slower pace at home than it does at work. Spanish is the primary language spoken at home by foreign-born Hispanics (97%), whereas half of their adult children do. By contrast, 29% of foreign-born Hispanics speak mainly English at work, and 43% speak mainly Spanish on the job (Hakimzadeh and Cohn; Noe-Bustamante; Malavé and Giordani). Among newly-

arrived immigrants, 54% of those who hold college degrees report that they speak English proficiently. The number rises to 82% among foreign-born college graduates who have lived in the US for more than 26 years. Among newly-arrived immigrants who graduated from high school but do not hold a college degree, just 14% say they speak English proficiently. Immigrants with this level of education who have lived in the United States are more likely to report they speak English very well. Only 5% of newly arrived immigrants without a high school education report speaking English proficiently (Hakimzadeh et al.).

This data represents characteristics of the Hispanic community in the United States. Each study and survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, the US Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics validate the Hispanic ethnicity's particularities within the amalgamation of other ethnicities in this nation. The studies reveal that Hispanics have a protagonist role in the social, economic, and political arena of the United States of America. The church's challenge is to express the reality of the gospel in ways that both celebrate the differences and draw all ethnic groups toward unity in Jesus Christ and into the Kingdom of God.

Multi-generational elements in society among Hispanics: Assimilation, Acculturation, and Biculturalism

Multi-generational elements in society among Hispanics cannot be studied as elements of one particular ethnicity. Their histories, cultures, and social experiences are very diverse. Still, there are common bonds of heritage and experience that create a Hispanic or Latino identity, an identity that continues to be strong for first-, one-and-a-half-, and second-generation Hispanics (Roof and Manning 174; Zaldivar et al. 5-16;

Betancourt, Hispanic: Their History 44). From a social perspective, Hispanics differ in their skin color, in their food and dress, and in their family traditions. In addition to the heritage that combines the indigenous people from the Americas and Spanish ancestry, there is an Afro-American heritage reflecting intermarriage with African natives, an Indo-Asian heritage due to Asian influence, and an Anglo-European heritage related to an English background (Betancourt, Hispanics: Their History 39-41; Zaldivar et al. 5-15; McLemore 656). This diverse heritage has become a mosaic of hues and shapes (Roof and Manning 174–75), more diverse than most other ethnic groups in the US. For these reasons, Hispanic groups in the US cannot be categorized into a single, monolithic ethnic group.

Sculptured in that mosaic of hues and shapes, there are one-and-a-half- and second-generation Hispanics who have lived experiences in the US, which differentiate them as a cultural group from that of first-generation immigrants. Having grown up in a new country and been more exposed to the American environment, they constitute a growing group committed to living in the US while at the same time holding on to their heritage (Rodriguez and Ortiz 49-51; Ortiz 61-62). This experience would appear to be similar to the experience of children of immigrants from earlier European groups in the US. For second-generation Europeans, the process of acculturation generally took the pattern of increased exposure to the host culture. At the same time, members held on to some roots in the immigrant community. They were the transitional generation, neither completely members of the culture of origin nor yet fully assimilated into the new culture (Roof and Manning 175). The generation was in the transition toward assimilation into the American mainstream culture.

On the other hand, some distinctive experiences do not follow the same course of assimilation for second-generation Hispanics. Assimilation in the United States in the 1990s and the twenty-first century is not the same as in the 1890s or the 1920s. The context of Hispanic immigrant groups' experiences and the social-psychological elements of assimilation are very different today (Roof and Manning 176; Smokowski and Bacallao 3-5). For example, second-generation Hispanics have been influenced by the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which raised awareness of ethnicity, pride, and identity. Hispanics were made conscious of the importance of ethnic cultures. Ethnic pride led to political and economic gains and a place in society (Lee 35-39; Behnken 42-45).

Another element that prevents the assimilation of Hispanics is the closeness of their countries of origin. Hispanics continue to move back and forth from their native lands, which reinforces a deeply rooted culture. For example, Mexican-Americans can maintain close relationships with Mexico as they realize that a portion of the Southwest today claimed to belong to the US as a contested Mexican territory, which produces divided loyalties to the country. Because of their proximity to their homelands and history of conflict between groups, Hispanics have an ambivalent identity concerning the US (Zaldivar et al. 17-25; Betancourt, Hispanics: Their History 39-40; Roof and Manning 171-172). The uncertain identity concerning the US is an element that makes first-generation immigrants be guided by the cultural norms of their native culture, whereas second- and one-and-a-half-generation members interact more with the American mainstream culture creating thus a more pluralistic culture (Falicov 140).

These paradoxes reflect a different pattern of assimilation, yielding to a multicultural America. Young Hispanics, on the one hand, hold to a communal vision like that of the American mainstream culture; yet, on the other hand, they insist on maintaining a sense of Latinness reflected in the retention of language and culture (Smokowski and Bacallao 104-106; Rothman and Potowski 9-11; Falicov 69-70). The result is a new model of communal coherence built upon diversity to understand that the American culture is not synonymous with Anglo culture. It is the conception of ethnic identity in relation to the broader culture (Smokowski and Bacallao 106–17), where Americans can also be Latino. At the same time, Latino is not Anglo (Roof and Manning 78). The notion of assimilation for the one-and-a-half and second generations is perceived as an addition rather than a substitution (Smokowski and Bacallao 108-09). This notion confronts older patterns of assimilation where the immigrant's culture and language are substituted by the host culture. One-and-a-half and second generations promote the creation of a multicultural ideology (Falicov 138; Smokowski and Bacallao 111). Assimilation becomes less accommodating to the host culture and more inclusive in the communal order combined with preserving ethnic culture in the private realms (Ortiz 59; Rodriguez and Ortiz 32).

Psychological and Social Elements

A psychological and social element in first-generation Hispanic adults is their commitment to their native culture. In contrast, second-generation Hispanic adolescents are less committed to their parents' culture (Ortiz 61-63). First-generation Hispanic adults might view change as denying the cultural values they believe in and rejecting their past. When adults realize that their adolescent sons or daughters do not follow their cultural

ways, it can be perceived as offensive to their cultural identity. The effort adult Hispanics invest to maintain their cultural identity creates a boundary that limits their relationships to those in the extended family or the same ethnic group. First-generation Hispanic parents are concerned that their English-dominant, second-generation children will lose their culture if they forget their heritage language (e.g., Spanish). There is a fear of losing the intimacy shared in the Spanish language (Ortiz 81; Falicov 139; Rodriguez and Ortiz 50). As second-generation adolescents develop their social skills between the Hispanic culture and the American mainstream culture, subtle conflicts can occur between parents and adolescents with acculturation elements like American fashion and music. Sometimes the combination of the parents' dependency and their excessive control of the young person, out of cultural and contextual concerns, can become oppressive and lead to distress symptoms (Falicov 139; Ortiz 63).

On the other hand, the Hispanic adolescent is split between two worlds, the one experienced at home and the world experienced at school and the community. As Hispanic children grow into adolescence, the value and language aspects of their parents' culture are pushed into a new reality. Adolescence is a time where questions about identity are asked by all. Hispanic adolescents will also ask about their cultural identity (Ortiz 80-81). Youth social and psychological development is mediated by stressful event experiences. For example, for younger adolescents, a stressful experience might be the preoccupation of establishing relationships with same-sex peers, while for older adolescents, a stressful experience might be intimate-partner relationships. For Hispanics, adolescents' cultural differences are stressful factors that mediate in their psychosocial development and any typical stressful experience common to adolescents. Hispanic

adolescents gravitate toward stronger family ties that endure later into their adolescent years than for youth in the American mainstream culture (Cervantes and Cordova 139; Niemann-Murcia and Rothman 201; Ortiz 62-63). Hispanic American youth are caught up in a clash of cultures. They want to preserve their cultural heritage, which they enjoy in the family's strength and stability. They also want to be more fully a part of American mainstream culture (Rodríguez and Ortiz 49-52; Cervantes and Córdova 346-349; Niemann-Murcia and Rothman 307-308). Furthermore, one-and-a-half- and second-generation youth are confronted with decisions about how culturally rooted they want their personal lives to be and how far they can integrate into the American mainstream society when they are faced with the social and racial realities that may impede their full integration into American society (Falicov 138).

Language and Identity

When families migrate to a different country and raise their families in different linguistic and sociocultural environments, socialization among the members of the families is impacted. Daily interactions between the immigrant's family and the host community are precursors of cultural and linguistic differences. Interactions between home and school are often characterized by significant social and psychological discontinuities that challenge and reshape home language, culture, and members' identities (Niemann-Murcia and Rothman 16-18; Rothman and Potowski 91-92).

The strong emphasis of first-generation Hispanic adults in maintaining Spanish as the conversational language at home might represent stress to the one-and-a-half- and second-generation adolescents who are becoming English proficient (Rodriguez and Ortiz 18; Ortiz 62). On the other hand, language acquisition is also a stress event that

poses an emotional challenge to Spanish-speaking youth, which might be overwhelming and result in youth feeling inadequate, hopeless, and stressed (Cervantes and Cordova 342). Likewise, bilingual youth living in Spanish-speaking homes have the extra burden of serving as family translators. Serving as a family translator can affect family communication, family roles, and authority positions (Cervantes and Cordova 343; Falicov 79; Niemann-Murcia and Rothman 37-38). When research is done on family relationships, heritage language (e.g., Spanish) proficiency is associated with the quality of adolescents' relationships with their parents and the strength of adolescents' identification with their ethnic group (Oh and Fuligni 215-219; Arriagada 614-617; Portes and Rumbaut 928). The strong emphasis of first-generation Hispanic adults to maintain Spanish as the conversational language at home might have the benefit of strong family relations.

Research over the past thirty years has found a shift to English among immigrant populations by the third generation. This language shift is evident in studies conducted in the Southwest, California, Miami, and Chicago (Rothman and Potowski 65–66). These studies point to the shift from the Spanish language to English within three generations, with some degree of bilingualism in the shifting process. To this fact, Potowski and Gorman question whether or not the shift in language affects the claimed Hispanic identity and the extent to which Spanish language proficiency is related to Latino ethnic identity (66).

The answer to that question might lie in research performed by Rodriguez and Ortiz. They agree that while knowing or learning the language of a host culture is critical, language does not convey everything a person needs to develop a Latino identity

(Rodriguez and Ortiz 32). Latinos who do not speak Spanish or do not speak proficiently can nevertheless become enculturated into a Hispanic culture through other communication systems. Other communication systems include values, beliefs, and behaviors associated with the use and sharing of resources such as family, community, gender-appropriate modes of speech, dress and conduct, and instruction, games, humor and play, and conflict resolution including health procedures and beliefs (Hall 38-59; Lingenfelter and Mayers 27-29). The contention on identity and language defies paradoxes of different patterns of assimilation, where langue is not a determinant factor to enculturate a Latino identity in second-and third-generation Hispanics.

Bicultural individuals have moderate acculturation levels and have successfully internalized two cultures that are alive inside the person. Some researchers hypothesize that moderate acculturation levels, a balance between culture-of-origin and US cultural identity, are the most advantageous for cultural adaptation (Smokowski and Bacallao 111–12). Many bicultural individuals report that their internalized cultures take turns guiding their thoughts and feelings (LaFromboise and Coleman 395; Hong et al.710-12). Maintaining moderate levels of acculturation in both the host US culture and the culture of origin is associated with the least incidence of psychosocial problems and the best adjustment. Proponents of the bicultural theory of cultural acquisition contend that there is great value in maintaining a culture of origin affiliation while acquiring the second culture. The bicultural individual experiences less stress and anxiety because they can access skills and resources from both cultural systems to handle stressors (Smokowski and Bacallao 164-66; Falicov 147-48).

Becoming bicultural is an option for the twenty-first-century bicultural American Dream (Smokowski and Bacallao 184-85; Falicov 149-52), which is characterized by maintaining the immigrant cultural roots while successfully meeting the demands of the more extensive socio-cultural system through cultural knowledge. Cultural knowledge is the understanding of different cultural models, beliefs, norms, and behavior that work as a frame by which a bicultural person acts according to a specific situation. Even when interacting in a different cultural system that could be conflicting, a bicultural person can perform a cultural frame switching that grasps each cultural system's multidimensionality, which leads to the representations of both the culture of origin and the host culture (Smokowski and Bacallao 169).

These conclusions are supported by research performed by John Berry and colleagues. They conducted an elaborate investigation of acculturation and adaptation in immigrant youth in a study that encompassed youth from twenty-six different cultural backgrounds in thirteen countries; 7,997 adolescents participated, including 5,366 immigrant youth and 2,631 host culture youth, the youth whose country-of-origin was the host country. The result of the research is as follow:

> The youth in the study ranged in age from thirteen to eighteen years old, with a mean age of fifteen. Biculturalism was the predominant adaptation style, with 36.4 percent of immigrant youth fitting this profile (22.5 percent displayed an ethnic profile; 18.7 percent, an assimilation profile, also called a national profile; and 22.4 percent, a diffuse or marginalized profile). This bicultural way of living included reporting diverse acculturation attitudes, having both ethnic and host cultural identities, being proficient in both their ethnic language and the host

> culture language, having social engagements with both ethnic and host culture peers, and endorsing the acceptance of obligations to family and parents as well as believing in adolescents' rights. This high level of biculturalism (i.e., integrative cultural adaptation style) in youth supports earlier findings with adult immigrants. (Berry et al. 303–32)

These findings reflect a different pattern of acculturation assimilation, yielding from assimilation to multiculturalism, from Melting Pot to Simmering Stew. Biculturalism, or having the ability to competently between two different cultures, is the optimal endpoint for the process of cultural acquisition. For the immigrant person and the family, to alternate between two cultures supports integrating cognition, attitudes, and behaviors from both the culture of origin and the culture of acquisition (Smokowski and Bacallao 21- 22).

Cognitive and Developmental Elements: the Hispanic Latino Reality

The transition of children from home to school is a difficult one for families worldwide, but more so for families whose parents have no formal education. That is the reality for most Hispanic immigrants. For immigrants, this transition requires flexibility at a time when parents and children may still be emotionally, socially, and culturally weakened by childhood to adolescent development. Hispanic families have the challenge of coping with a new culture and a new language and raising a family without the cognitive skills to help their children at school(Falicov 254).

Among those who immigrate as children, the process of acculturation and their educational experience can vary significantly depending on whether their migration occurred during early childhood, middle childhood, or adolescence. They are at different

life stages at the point of migration and begin their adaptation processes in very different social contexts. Pre-school children (ages 0-5 at arrival) retain little memory of their country of birth, are too young to have learned to read or write in the parental language in the home country, and are largely socialized in the host country; they typically learn the new language without an accent, and their educational experiences and adaptive outcomes are most similar to the second generation. Primary school-age children, ages six to twelve, typically arrive having learned to read and write in their native language at schools in their countries of origin. Still, their education is completed in the host country. They are the one-and-a-half- generation and are most likely to adapt between two worlds and become fluent bilinguals. Adolescents ages thirteen to seventeen at arrival may not have come with their families of origin nor attended secondary schools after arrival and may go directly into the workforce; their experiences and adaptive outcomes are closer to the first generation of young immigrant adults than to the native-born second generation. (Rumbaut 349-55; Falicov 137-38; Rothman and Potowski, 333-34).

Hispanic adolescents have high expectations for their own educational achievement. Still, educational achievement outcomes for Hispanic young adults are low on average. Limited scholarship links Hispanic adolescents' educational expectations with achievement in adulthood. College degrees became more common for Hispanic adolescents. Most Hispanic young adults attained less education than they expected. However, because first-generation youth may be more likely to face challenges such as limited English proficiency and low socio-economic status, second-generation youth are best positioned to excel academically (May and Witherspoon 2651-52; Krogstad; Radford).

However, Loyola University in Chicago, the University of Denver, the University of California, Los Angeles, and New York University examined demographic, cultural, and parental influences on academic achievement among immigrant and US-born Latino middle-school students. The study revealed that students who reported higher levels of parental monitoring earned higher grades in the spring semester. Also, being female or having greater English language proficiency was associated with higher grades. On the other hand, greater identification with mainstream cultural values was associated with lower grades. Higher acculturative stress was also associated with lower grades, particularly among US-born Latino students (Santiago et al. 742–43). Parental involvement has shown that Latino students benefit from parents' participation in educational activities and has also been associated with positive youth adjustment, including academic achievement. Thus, intervention with Latino families could encourage appropriate parental involvement while balancing adolescents' need for increasing autonomy (Halgunseth et al. 1287-90; Cross et al. 484-94).

Regarding language preference in school among second- and third-generation Hispanics, a study performed on sixty-three students in a dual-language school revealed that although these students were native Spanish speakers in a school that delivers fifty percent of their Spanish instruction, they prefer English both academically and socially. Although the students in the study are in a school that purports to value bilingualism and biliteracy, they tend to favor the English language both socially and academically. The students viewed English as a language that will lead to more success. Spanish was considered an important but lesser language, primarily useful for speaking to those who do not know English (Babino and Stewart 23-25; Hakimzadeh and Cohn).

Hispanics in Multi-generation Worship

Historically, the church has a central role in the issue of migration. Local churches have provided crucial institutional mechanisms for coping with the hardships of immigration, reestablishing community, preserving cultural values and identity, and negotiating societal acceptance (Crane 7-8; Martínez 177-78; Falicov 32). Latino congregations have been characterized by a legacy of serving as an extended family to those in the congregation. They have and are a central source of social support and development by implementing outreach efforts that cover basic social needs for those in the community, such as immigration counseling services and English courses for those learning the language, as well as food and clothing distribution. Relocating and restarting life in a new place where social, political, cultural, educational, and linguistic dynamics are different is challenging, and immigrant families need additional support. Many congregations have risen to fill this gap (Tamez Méndez 151).

Before migration, the immigrants had their community of faith traditions that provided the symbolic meaning to their cohesive, communal life. The local church in their country of origin provided the meaningful center of life for most of the migrants; it was the repository of the sacred symbols of community existence. The necessity to re-establish communal life leads to the establishment of ethnic congregations (Crane 8).

Ethnic congregations in the United States have historically been a means of reclaiming communal life where intimate, close interaction with co-ethnics can take place. Immigrant churches in the US came to serve an ethnic role; they helped to provide ethnic group identity in a diverse and complex society (Crane 8-9; Roof and Manning 171). The church was the primary organizer of ethnic groups as community systems providing the social space to maintain cultural traditions.

Nevertheless, every new generation of Latino has learned how to fit within US society and has adopted a US identity. Many Latinos have resisted fitting into US society because it includes the loss of the Latino culture and identity. Most Latinos see the importance of their culture and ethnic identity within their faith (Martínez Kindel location 1676–78). The problem gets complicated by the one-and-a-half and the second generation of Hispanics. These are the children of immigrants or children and adolescents who are struggling with their identity problems in addition to all the issues related to adolescence. Young Hispanics also must deal with the social pressure to leave their Latinness behind.

Hispanic churches have worked on this issue, using different approaches. Some congregations assume that the church should be a place for maintaining ethnic identity. Churches that have assumed this model equate Hispanic ministry with a ministry that is conducted exclusively in Spanish. This is a useful model to reach and disciple the first-generation Latinos, but generally unsuccessful when used to reach the growing number of second-generation Latinos born in the US and proficient in English. Efforts to evangelize and disciple the churches that predominantly minister in Spanish are obstructed by linguistic and cultural differences between the first generation of Latinos and Latinos born in the United States (Martínez Loc.1688; Rodriguez and Ortiz 65).

Other Churches take on a different model by assuming that the children and adolescents will be fully assimilated into the congregation. Programs for their children and youth are programs developed by English-speaking ministers. Another model is to adjust the programs depending on the language trends among the teenagers themselves (Martínez Loc. 1688).

On the other hand, second- and third-generation youth have their struggles of identity. Sometimes, the church becomes the battleground between different generations. The Latino youth ministry has the challenge of dealing with the issues of adolescence and ethnic identity within a multi-generational community where the main point of contention is often language (Martínez Loc. 1710). The commitment to serve, evangelize and discipline the US-born Latinos compels church leaders to adopt contextual models of ministry competent for English-speaking Latinos who often are out of place in churches that minister exclusively in Spanish but who are also unwilling to assimilate into US mainstream churches (Rodriguez and Ortiz 65; Ortiz 124-125).

One of the most common problems for the Latino church is to define the mission of the church. The question that arises is whether it is the responsibility of the church to help preserve the language, culture, and traditions of the immigrant generation (Rodriguez and Ortiz 65–66) or whether the task of the church is to reach all generations by all means, including using the proficient language, to lead all generations to the Kingdom of God. The answer to the question is no easy task because Latino churches have often been one of the few places where a new generation learns formal Spanish. Even though schools teach in English and want children to make a language shift, the Latino churches have usually been one of the places where Spanish has been encouraged and defended (Martínez Loc. 1682-86).

Correlation of Language to Ministry

For the second and third generation of US-born Hispanics, intergenerational relations also must deal with the issue of language. The first generation of Hispanics can assume there is a common language. In contrast, for the second and third generations,

there are multiple, interrelated languages. Even though the US is the fourth-largest Spanish-speaking country in the world, English is the preferred language for second- and third-generation Hispanic (Branson Loc. 935-40; Babino and Stewart 18-29). Even so, many denominational and local church leaders continue to equate Hispanic ministry with ministry conducted almost exclusively in Spanish (Rodriguez and Ortiz 65; Ortiz 84).

Youth who have recently immigrated may enjoy Spanish. Most of those born or raised in the United States will likely feel more comfortable with English. However, language preference is related to the issue of ethnic identity for Hispanics in the US. Churches debate whether it is essential to maintain a Hispanic identity within the mainstream culture. Hispanic Churches try to define programs to reach out with the message of the Gospel to a second and third generation of US-born Hispanics who have become bicultural. Based on the position that a Hispanic church assumes on maintaining the Hispanic identity, people might be drawn toward or away from a Hispanic church. Hispanics who are monocultural are not likely to be attracted to a non-Latino Latino church because it is outside of their normal experience. These Latino churches are likely to reflect Latino culture in all their activities. Spanish is expected to be the principal or only language of worship and interaction (Martínez Loc. 1710; Smokowski and Bacallao 130; Roof and Manning 182).

On the other hand, Hispanics who have assimilated into US mainstream culture are not likely to be drawn to a Latino church because it is outside their cultural framework. They are of Hispanic descent, but their ethnic background does not shape their culture or identity. These Hispanics will likely be in the same churches as their non-Hispanic neighbors. Likewise, bicultural Hispanics might not be attracted to a

monocultural church. The bicultural people compartmentalize their ethnic and cultural identity by expressing certain cultural traits in one environment and claiming a strong ethnic identity in another. These types of people are most likely to move between Latino and non-Latino churches or look for a church that addresses the complexities of their cultural experience (Martínez Loc. 2822; Smokowski and Bacallao 132; Roof and Manning 183).

The previous description directly impacts second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanic youth's attitude towards actively participating in ministry, discipleship, and worship with a first-generation Spanish-speaking church. Hispanic congregations are providing the necessary support for immigrant Latinos trying to worship with other Latinos of their language, culture, or nationality. There is a strong tendency for the Hispanic congregations not to consider native-born Latinos as evangelism targets. There is a considerable difference between the first-generation immigrant Latinos and the third and fourth generations in language, sociocultural dynamics, acculturation levels, worldview, and perception. Second-, third-, and fourth-plus generations of Latinos born and acculturated into the US mainstream culture are predisposed to bilingualism and are English proficient making the effort to evangelize even more of a challenge. Latino people in the US are complex, diverse, multicultural, multi-lingual, multi-generational, and multiracial (Rodríguez 677-79; Tamez Méndez 56-57; Pagan 17,28).

Nevertheless, emerging Latino congregations can be described as “transitional Latino congregations” (Rodríguez 678), which are beginning to face today’s US Latinos’ acculturation realities. These congregations express concern about the restlessness among children, adolescents, and college-age Latinos, who are increasingly pressuring for a

worship service that meets their propensity for English as part of their regular communication. The pastors of these congregations are beginning to see the need to add English to their formational and worship life to meet the bilingual children and youth's language needs. These congregations understand that the future liturgy must include some level of English if the church is willing to keep and reach out to the youth in the church (Rodríguez 678; Tamez Méndez 54-55).

Although language and identity might affect the interrelation between first, second, and third generations of Hispanics at church, all generations should work together and celebrate their common identity in Jesus Christ through worship and ministry activities. The different generations in the church should work to form one congregation amidst the diversity (Branson Loc. 935-940; Ortiz 119).

Multi-generational and Multi-lingual Spaces in the Church

A paradigm shift is emerging in the Latino ministry, as shown in the following tendencies. The sociodemographic data on Latino migration to the US continues to decline. This represents the long-term residency of Latinos in the United States. Latino congregations and pastors are experiencing the pressure from the US-born children and adolescent youth to include English in the congregational liturgy and programs. This occurs in first-generation Spanish-speaking congregations with second and third generations represented within their midst. English is being adopted as the preferred language among the US-born Latinos, as they are educated in the US. There is an accelerating pace of Latino acculturation among native-born Latinos, reflected in their US lifestyles and a steady upward trend of social and economic mobility. There is a significant increase in Latino intermarriage with non-Latinos (Rodríguez 674-75;

Hakimzadeh and Cohn; Flores; Malavé and Giordani 69-70). This paradigm shift represents a challenge to churches looking to keep, reach, and disciple the native-born Latinos.

Churches have the challenge of developing strategic and contextualized programs for native-born Latinos seeking a congregation that fits their cultural identity but cannot assimilate into US mainstream churches. Likewise, reaching, discipling, and engaging Latino youth requires effective strategies since their needs are different and unique from what traditional youth ministry models have been designed to do. Youth ministries should work towards constructing relevant models that integrate and uplift Latino cultural beliefs, traditions, and values (Tamez Méndez 143). The challenge is not an easy task nor is there one approach that fit all native-born Latinos given that the approximately fifty-eight million Latinos in the United States come in a different range of nationalities, races, cultures, languages, and ethnicities; are spread across different cultural regions of the country, and possess unique acculturation levels, language propensities, and immigration status (Radford; US Census; Flores). The shift in Latino socio-demographics and cultural and language acculturation urgently calls for the development of a more inclusive and comprehensive Latino evangelism, discipleship, and retention strategy designed to meet the worshiping and spiritual needs of the US Latinos, whether they be Spanish speaking, English speaking, or both (Rodríguez 681).

Various approaches to minister to US-born Latinos have been researched to address this challenge. One approach is to focus on youth leadership development for church ministry. Part of this leadership development should be aimed at high-school and college-level youth. The strategy should include developing a Latino culture and

language program that affirms the Latinness of the US-born Latino identity. Any strategy should strengthen and build on existing youth ministries, particularly those youth ministries emerging as transitional Latino congregations (Rodríguez 681). Critical for youth ministry development is the fact that youth ministries must address the core needs of adolescents: a sense of security (psychological and emotional), sense of connection (physical and social), identity development (self, ethnic, sexual, etc.), desire to learn (cognitive), meaning in life (depth, direction, contribution, and empowerment), and spiritual growth (transcendence, convictions, and values) (Tamez Méndez 143-144; Falicov 378-380). A holistic approach to youth ministry manages all six core needs of youth since the youth are in a formative stage that will guide the rest of their lives. Latino youth ministries cannot focus exclusively on tending to spiritual needs and growth. To truly see the youth flourish and have a profound encounter with Christ, the other aspects of their lives also need to be nurtured through youth ministries. This approach will create meaningful, profound, and lasting connections with young people, which will support their engagement with and contribution to the congregation in addition to their spiritual development (Tamez Méndez 148-50; Ortiz 148-49).

This approach promotes the concept that youth should be seen as assets to be developed and not problems to be managed. Youth should be recognized and valued for their potential and the positive characteristics they possess, including their interests, skills, abilities, and talents, which can be further developed when a congregation invests in finding ways to nurture them and provides youth with opportunities to put them to use (Tamez Méndez 56-57). An example of this approach is embracing the fact that Latino youth can take on a more adult role in their congregations. Latino adolescents are

acquiring essential skills which they can put to use in their congregations in areas such as technology and music as these can be challenging areas for adults in their congregations (Tamez Méndez 143-44; Ortiz 83).

Another approach is to develop strategic discipleship programs contextualized to the US-born Latino youth. These discipleship programs should work as mentoring strategies where first-generation and second-generation congregants share personal stories of life and faith. Youth have much to teach to if adults are willing to listen and observe. This approach promotes spiritual modeling and strengthens intergenerational relationships. Congregation can also shift their activities from youth activities to congregational activities. The adults in the congregation play a part, and the youth in the congregation play another, thus creating intergenerational work teams. For example, the youth could organize special events for the younger kids and serve as mentors to them (Ortiz 165-166; Tamez Méndez 172).

This approach serves as a mentoring mechanism and empowers the youth in the church by strengthening their leadership abilities. The discipleship programs would empower the youth, providing opportunities for being active and contributing members of the congregation. The second and third generation of English-speaking youth should be considered a vital part of the congregation. They should have a sense of ownership and full contribution since youth have a desire to play an important role and be fully included in church life (Tamez Méndez 182). Activities such as the administration of social media, multimedia use for worship meetings, maintenance of sound and lighting systems, and music administration are empowering activities that create a sense of collaboration and participation. Empowering the youth also includes giving them opportunities to grow and

exercise their abilities such as public speaking, leading groups, serving the community, and administrative assistance. Dr. Elizabeth Tames, in her research on youth ministries, writes:

> We have the opportunity to be congregations where Latino youth receive and experience - what they seldom see in other social spaces - a community of faith where they find acceptance and respect, where they belong, are valued, and are received with open arms and loved, where they receive active support in overcoming their greatest social struggles, where Scripture is taught and modeled, where they are known, heard, and empowered, and where they are given opportunities to contribute and build their leadership capacity in the process. (Tamez Méndez 190)

Lastly, another approach is to study, evaluate, and emulate Latino congregations that have incorporated a Latino worship group or have established a bilingual pattern in their worship life. These congregations can evolve into multicultural, multi-generational, and multi-lingual congregations, which could be considered the logical worship place for most multi-generational Latinos since they are bicultural, multiracial, and bilingual. The bilingualism of the one-and-a-half, second, and third generations contributes to developing a more authentic form of bilingual worship (Rodríguez 681-683; Pagan 166-169; Rodriguez and Ortiz 157).

This approach must also acknowledge that native-born, English-dominant Latinos' needs go beyond a preference for programs and ministries in English. The barrier between foreign-born Latinos and US-born Latinos is not just linguistic but also cultural (Rodriguez and Ortiz 157-158). The use of the English language in a Latino church is an

element within a contextualized worship framework. One place where this is most obvious is in corporate worship, where linguistic and cultural differences between foreign-born and native-born Latinos often require significant adjustments in styles of attire, music, worship, and preaching. However, even among highly acculturated Latinos, Hispanic ethnic identity or Latinness persists. Therefore, responsive pastors and churches are careful to integrate distinctly Latino flavors even in worship services conducted entirely in English. For example, popular music styles used in English worship services among English-speaking Latinos include salsa, reggaeton, hip-hop, rap, and rock, as well as contemporary Christian music in English (Rodriguez and Ortiz 159; Pagan 28; Rodríguez 677; Martínez Loc. 1460).

Likewise, passion is still an essential component of Hispanic culture, even among US-born Latinos. Most of what Hispanics do is done with enthusiasm, whether it be socializing, working, or praising God. For Latinos, the church is regularly embraced as an extended family, the household of God, in a way that the US mainstream culture finds difficult to understand. This ecclesiology implies that the Hispanic church is the place where the deepest and most powerful emotions to God are expressed. In churches across the United States that successfully target native-born English-speaking Latinos, corporate worship services are enthusiastic and Spirit-filled family gatherings where joy and sorrow are expressed in uninhibited ways. Language is never a barrier to heartfelt worship (Rodriguez and Ortiz 59; Betancourt, En el Espíritu y Poder de Pentecostés 55-56; Dario-López 29,47).

There are other actions that church can do to actively engage one-and-a-half-, second-, and third-generation Hispanics into the church's life. The development of social

capital is an important aspect for reaching youth. Social capital refers to the social wealth and assets a person obtains by knowing and being connected to other people. This can create mutually-beneficial collective action (Sikkink and Hernandez 13-14). Latino congregations are good at bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and interconnecting people, information, and resources which help families thrive and access needed social and community services. The ministerial role of a congregation is to provide a hub of protective factors that help young people overcome risk factors by providing them with specialized support, information, tools, and a caring, supportive, and engaged community (Sikkink and Hernandez 17; Tamez Méndez 63).

A risk factor is education under-achievement within Latino youth (Pew Research, Educational Attainment). In regards to education, congregations need to be places that provide Latino youth with ties and connections that support their academic efforts, give them guidance in processes towards acquiring higher education or vocational training, and expose them to new opportunities and experiences that allow interaction with alternate sources of educational and career paths (E. Flores 105; Sikkink and Hernandez 18) Various practical actions to provide educational social capital to Latino youth include emphasizing the importance of education by regularly including dedicated times of prayer for students, teachers, and school administrators, setting aside special times to recognize and celebrate students' academic achievements, and being intentional about addressing the importance of education as part of discipleship programs (Tamez Méndez 63–65).

The challenge of actively engaging English-speaking youth in ministry, discipleship, and worship is unique to the church. To this fact, Dr. Elizabeth Tamez Méndez has stated:

> The lives and future of our young people depend on our openness to lead differently! What do young people need from our congregations? As leaders, how can we best reach out and serve them? We don't have the luxury of copying what others have done - but rather need leaders who love and are passionate about youth, who take the time to know the youth in their circle of influence, who are creative innovators, and who explore relevant ways of reaching their heart. It is a call to lead inversely, not simply "differently," rather, inversely - for such a term denotes "contrarywise, in reverse, inside out" - and this is what Latino youth need to thrive - trailblazers who lead from the inside out, who know and understand youth, their heart, their pain, their culture and values, their concrete needs, and their aspirations - and from there, begin to build ways of connecting which make sense to our young people and their families - after all, such is the Kingdom of God - an inversed structure where children always come first. (Matt. 18:1-6,10, 19:13-15, NIV) (Tamez Méndez 178)

The late Orlando Costas stated it more simply, “It is when the gospel makes somebody out of nobodies of society when it restores the self-worth of the marginalized when it enables the oppressed to have a reason for hope when it empowers the poor to struggle and suffer for liberation and peace, that it is the truly good news of a new order of life, the saving power of God (Rodriguez and Ortiz 160).”

Research Design Literature

This qualitative research project identifies effective ways that second-and third-generation English-speaking adolescents, ages fourteen through nineteen, become actively engaged in worship, discipleship, and ministry within a first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza in Cleveland, TN. The literature review provided background to answer the following research questions: What practices within the congregation do pastors, first-, second-, and third-generation church members identify that motivate or discourage adolescent engagement in worship, discipleship, and ministry? What are the best practices for actively engaging second- and third-generation adolescents in worship, discipleship, and ministry? The literature review ensured basic knowledge about the topic, in order to potentially make an original contribution to ministry (Saldaña 68).

The instruments used for data collection were written questionnaires for laypeople, interviews with pastors, and the creation of focus groups with one-and-a-half-, second-, and third-generation Hispanic youth, all of which will address the research questions. Focus groups are group discussions that are open, discursive processes concerned with understanding how people make sense of their world (Keegan 73).

The qualitative data generated during the research process was compiled into categories for communication and interpretion. Purposive samples (Sensing Loc. 2262) were used from participants who had an awareness of the problem statement and met the criteria and attributes essential to the research. The researcher observed and evaluated words, gestures, actions, and practices to give a fuller interpretation of the implied range of meaning during the focus group interviews.

Since this a pre-intervention project, the goal was to develop a strategy to revert the tendency of the church to lose members of the second and third Hispanic generations and to create an open space where the youth can visualize themselves actively engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry among the first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation. The interventionist method is a type of action research where the researcher becomes a co-participant with the community to gather and interpret data to enable new and transformative modes of action (Sensing Loc. 1736). This work will be a contribution to the ministry of the Hispanic church in the United States. This challenge is an opportunity to integrate different generations and different languages within the Hispanic community in one multi-generational and multi-lingual Hispanic congregation.

Summary of Literature

This chapter presented the multi-generational elements in Hispanic society and the psychological and social aspects of adult and adolescent Hispanics. It also presented the Biblical and theological foundation for the relationship between one generation and the next generation. The literature review ensured basic knowledge about the subject from primary academic sources.

From a Biblical and theological perspective, the Scriptures present a pattern of relationship between generations of God's people. One generation is called to set an example and be faithful in telling God's story to the next generation (Det. 6:6-7). The values described in God's commandments, which were to be transmitted from one generation to the next, formed the foundation for the whole Israelite society. If God's story was to be relevant to the next generations, then these generations had to identify with their forbearers' experience in some way (Matties 109).

The inclusiveness of the Gospel and its proclamation of the Kingdom of God is a crucial element in the development of a framework to reach the next generation. The Kingdom of God is a new state of affairs where a new kind of social integration is introduced: unity based on diversity (Wright 381). The Holy Spirit performs an internal transformation in the believers, which integrates every person into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12.13), implying that there is room for the next generation in the Kingdom of God.

Hispanic population growth is now driven by immigrants' children and grandchildren, as the population of Hispanic immigrants in the nation continues to decline. This fact makes Hispanics the largest and youngest minority group in the United States (Pew Research, Between Two Worlds). Young Hispanics, including one-and-a-half-, second-, and third-generation Hispanics, try to integrate into American mainstream culture by becoming English proficient, yet insist on maintaining a sense of Latinness reflected in the retention of their language and culture (Smokowski and Bacallao 104-106; Rothman and Potowski 9-11; Falicov 69-70). The result is a new model of communal coherence built upon diversity with the understanding that the American culture is not synonymous with Anglo culture. Americans can also be Latino (Smokowski and Bacallao 108-09).

A paradigm shift is emerging in the Latino ministry. Latino congregations and pastors are experiencing pressure from US-born children and adolescents to include English in the congregational liturgy and programs. This is seen in first-generation, Spanish-speaking congregations where second and third generations are also represented. English is being adopted as the preferred language among US-born Latinos as they are

educated in the US (Rodríguez 674-75). This paradigm shift represents a challenge to churches hoping to retain, outreach to, and disciple native-born Latinos.

Churches and youth ministries have the challenge of developing strategic and contextualized programs for native-born Latinos seeking a congregation that fits their cultural identity and cannot assimilate into the US mainstream churches. Likewise, outreaching to, discipling, and engaging Latino youth requires effective strategies as their needs are different and unique from what traditional youth ministry models have been designed to do. Youth ministries should work towards constructing relevant and holistic models that integrate and uplift Latino cultural beliefs, traditions, and values (Tamez Méndez 143).

Various approaches for ministering to US-born Latinos have been researched to address this paradigm shift. One approach focuses on youth leadership development for church ministry aimed at high-school and college-level youth (Rodríguez 681). This approach promotes the concept that youth should be seen as assets to be developed. The youth are recognized and valued for their potential and the positive characteristics they possess, such as interests, skills, abilities, and talents, which can be further developed when a congregation invests in finding ways to nurture them and provide the youth with opportunities to put them to use (Tamez Méndez 56-57; Ortiz 148-49).

Another approach is to develop strategic discipleship programs contextualized to the US-born Latino youth. These discipleship programs should work as mentoring strategies where first-generation and second-generation youth share personal stories of life and faith. This will promote spiritual modeling and strengthen intergenerational relationships (Ortiz 165-166; Tamez Méndez 172). These approaches serve as a

mentoring mechanism and empower the youth in the church by strengthening their leadership abilities and opportunities for being active and contributing members of the congregation.

Another approach is to study, evaluate, and emulate congregations that have incorporated a Latino worship group or have established a bilingual pattern to their worship. These congregations can evolve into multicultural, multi-generational, and multi-lingual congregations, which could be considered the logical worship place for most multi-generational Latinos since they are bicultural, multiracial, and bilingual. The bilingualism of the one-and-a-half, second, and third generations contributes to developing a more authentic form of bilingual worship service (Rodríguez 681-683; Pagan 166-169; Rodriguez and Ortiz 157).

This literature review laid the foundation to identify effective ways second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanic youth become actively engaged in worship, discipleship, and ministry within the first-generation, Spanish-speaking congregation at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter describes the research methodology used for this transformational ministry project. The nature and purpose of the project, the project's research questions, and the instrumentation employed to address the research questions are presented. Cultural context and a description of the participants are given as a background for the

research. The process of data collection and analysis is also described to assert the validity and reliability of the study.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

This project responded to the need of English-speaking Hispanics to fully interact with Spanish-speaking Hispanics at the Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza in Cleveland, Tennessee. This congregation is a Hispanic Pentecostal Church composed mainly of first-generation, Spanish-speaking congregants. There are different age groups represented in the congregation. The age groups consisting of adolescents and young adults are not represented in the demographics of the church. It seems that language has become a barrier that prevents this Hispanic age group from fully participating in church ministries with the first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanics.

The purpose of this research was to identify effective ways in which English-speaking Hispanics could be integrated into worship, discipleship, and ministry in a Spanish-speaking congregation. The research on these effective ways could become a model of church ministry that would prevent the absence of adolescents and young adults in the church. The research could also bring awareness to the congregation of the diversity within the Hispanic community in the United States, which consists of different languages, different generations, and different cultures.

Research Questions

The research questions guided the researcher in the selection of appropriate methodological procedures and the range of options for the final interpretations and implications of the study. “Research questions are a mechanism to make the theoretical assumptions and conceptual frameworks explicit and delineate what needs to be known

most and first" (Sensing Loc. 769). The researcher designed three instruments to collect data for the research questions. The instruments were prefixed, Engaging New Generations (ENG) as a qualifier for the study. The instruments were: "ENG English-Speaking Hispanic Youth Focus Group" which was conducted with eight pre-selected English-speaking adolescents ages fourteen to seventeen; "ENG First Generation Spanish-Speaking Adult Interview" which was done with six Spanish-speaking adults (this instrument was translated to Spanish), and "ENG Pastor or Youth Leader Interview" which was conducted with three Church of God Hispanic pastors and youth leaders.

Research Question #1

What practices within the congregation do pastors, first-, second-, and third-generation church members identify that motivate adolescents to actively engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry?

The purpose of this question was to identify elements in the church ministry that at the present time already motivate adolescents and young adults to actively participate in the church program. The questions to collect data for this research questions are, for each instrument, ENG Youth Focus Group questions #2, #3, #4, #7; ENG First Generation Spanish Speaking Interview or Focus Group questions #1, #2, #6, #8; and ENG Pastor or Youth Leader Interview questions # 2, #3, #4, #8.

Research Question #2

What practices within the congregation do pastors, first-, second-, and third-generation church members identify that discourage adolescents from actively engaging in worship, discipleship, and ministry?

The purpose of this question was to identify elements in the church ministry that are discouraging adolescents and young adults from actively participating in the church program at the present time. The questions to collect data from each instrument are ENG Youth Focus Group questions #6, #8, #9; ENG First Generation Spanish Speaking Interview questions #3, #4, #7, and ENG Pastor or Youth Leader Interview questions # 1, #7.

Research Question #3

What are best practices for actively engaging second- and third-generation adolescents (ages 14 – 19) in worship, discipleship, and ministry at church?

The rationale for this question is to discover best practices in the church ministry that could become ways to help adolescents and young adults actively participate in church life. The best practices will be the byproduct of the reflection and the discussion by all groups interviewed. The questions to collect data for each instrument are ENG Youth Focus Group questions #5, #10, #11, #12; ENG First Generation Spanish Speaking question #5; and ENG Pastor or Youth Leader Interview questions # 5, #6.

Ministry Context

The Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza is a Hispanic congregation within a middle-working-class community in Cleveland, Tennesee. The City of Cleveland, TN has a population of 43,276 people with a median age of 34 and a median household income of $39,151. Hispanics in Cleveland represent 10% of the population (4,317); there are 77% (33,388) white residents and 8% (3,468) Black residents. Spanish is the second most common spoken language in the city. Twenty-three percent (23.4%) of the population in

Cleveland, TN lives below the poverty line; a number that is higher than the national average of 14% (“Cleveland, TN”).

Comunidad de Esperanza is a Hispanic congregation composed primarily of first-generation, Spanish-speaking congregants. The church has come of age in the over forty years since its foundation. The demographics of the church are 30% adult men, 40% adult women, 20% children under twelve years old, and 10% teenagers under 14-year-old (*"Comunidad Hope"*). The age group of fourteen through nineteen (high school and college) is not well represented in the demographics of the church. This age group is not present at the church, even though their parents are members of the church. Language has become a barrier that prevents this age group from fully engaging in church ministries with the first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanics. Many of these English-speaking Hispanic adolescents have joined other English-speaking congregations where they are fully involved in worship, discipleship, and ministry. Comunidad Esperanza, even as a Hispanic church, follows the tendency of other ethnic-specific churches (Branson and Martínez, Loc. 129-132).

The local church must become a community of faith where all the Hispanic population is represented among its congregants. In the United States, the representation of all age groups at the church should include native-born and foreign-born Latinos. Not having one age group in the church inhibits the church’s vision of becoming a relevant community of faith to the Hispanic community. This research could help in the creation of an environment that allows non-Spanish-speaking Hispanic youth to engage in the local church life.

Participants

Criteria for Selection

The criteria for selection followed the assertions by Creswell on ethnographic research where the researcher will describe objectively how a cultural group works and explore the beliefs, language, and behavior on issues such as cultural dominance and resistance (69). Two generational groups of Hispanic individuals and a group of Hispanic pastors or youth leaders were invited to participate in the research. The two-generational groups were first-generation Spanish-speaking and second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanics. The recruitment for the two-generational groups was conducted at the Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza at the Bible School meetings. The research study was described and announced for three consecutive sessions at the Adults, the Middle-School, and the High-School and College Bible classes. A sign-up sheet was provided for potential participants to sign-in. The recruitment of potential Hispanic pastors or youth leaders was conducted by invitation through e-mail and phone calls where the research study was described.

A research team, composed of three experts in research, were invited as advisors to the researcher. The researcher, with the advice and collaboration of the research team, selected the participants that represented the generational spectrum of the research.

Description of Participants

The first group of participants included the English-speaking Hispanics. This group was composed of one-and-a-half-, second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanics, fourteen to nineteen years of age. These are adolescents and young adults

whose primary langue is English and who came to the United States before their tenth birthday or who were born in the United States. This age group represents the foundation for which the research study was conducted. The researcher selected eight participants that met these criteria: four males and four females.

The second group of participants was made up of first-generation Spanish-speaking adults. First-generation Spanish-speaking persons refers to people who were born outside the United States, who migrated to the United States, and whose primary language is Spanish. These Hispanics are also known as foreign-born Hispanics. The research selected six participants that met these criteria They included two males and four females.

The third group of participants was pastors or youth leaders of one-and-a-half, second and third generations of English-speaking Hispanic adolescents. Pastors and youth leader shared insights and experiences which helped map best practices to actively engage English-speaking Hispanic adolescents. The researcher selected two pastors and one youth leader, all males.

Ethical Considerations

Four core ethical principles, as described by Sensing, guided the research practices. The principles were non-malfeasance, beneficence, autonomy, and justice (Loc. 1116). The research instruments were created adhering to the policies and laws regulating human subject research under the jurisdiction of the Tennessee Board of Regents, which also adheres to federal standards on the ethical conduct of human subject research (“Office of Policy and Strategy”). The research instruments were also evaluated

and approved by the Institutional Review Board at the Asbury Theological Seminary. The selected participants were asked to sign an informed consent letter, which included an abstract of the nature of the study. Parents and guardians of adolescent minors were required to signs an informed consent letter authorizing the participation of the minor. The informed consent letters are included in Appendix B.

The focus group with English-speaking Hispanic adolescents was conducted at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza in Cleveland, Tennessee. The participants' names were not used in order to safeguard their privacy and confidentiality. A code was used instead of the name. The code system follows. For the English-speaking Hispanic adolescents, the code was AD01 through AD08. The prefix AD stands for Adolescent. For the First-generation Spanish-speaking Hispanic adults, the code is SS01 through SS08. The prefix SS stands for Spanish Speaker. For the pastor or youth leader, the code is PY01 through PY03. The prefix PY stands for Pastor or Youth Leader.

The transcribed interview responses and focus group discussions were stored on the researcher's computer in a folder identified as ENG-Transcribed-data. The digital audio recordings were stored in the researcher's computer in a folder identified as ENG-Voice-recordings. The researcher's computer access is password protected. The hardcopy data, such as notes taken by the researcher or the transcriber, was stored in a cardboard folder identified as ENG-Interview-notes. The folder was then stored at the Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza's administrative office in a key-locked drawer assigned by the church's administrator. Only the researcher had the keys to the key-locked drawer. The ENG-Transcribed-data and the ENG-Voice-recordings folders were stored at the researcher's computer until July 2020. In July 2020, both folders were deleted from the

computer hard disk (including the Recycle Bin). The ENG-Interview-notes folders were also stored at the church administrative office until July 2020. The folder was then shredded in the church's paper shredding machine.

Instrumentation

Three instruments were employed in this research project: a focus group and two sets of individual interviews, one for Spanish-speaking adults and one for pastors and youth leaders. As suggested by Sensing on focus groups,

> Through group interaction, data and insights are generated that are related to a particular theme imposed by a researcher and enriched by the group's interactive discussion. The synergy of the group will often provide richer data than if each person in the group had been interviewed separately. One person's response may prompt or modify another person's memory of an event and its details. Because not everyone will have the same views and experiences, participants influence one another. Differences in age, gender, education, access to resources, and other factors will prompt a variety of responses that may not emerge in a homogeneous group setting or from the individual interview. (Loc. 2934)

On the other hand, individual interviews allow individuals to describe their situations, opinions, and experiences that otherwise are not available to the researcher by observation or within a group interview. The individual interview helps the researcher to recognize the legitimacy of the interviewee's views (Sensing Loc. 2636). Both instruments were developed using semi-structured questions, which were correlated to the research questions and the problem statement. The semi-structured questions and the relation to the research questions and problem statements are included in Appendix A.

The focus group was composed of one-and-a-half, second and third generations of English-speaking Hispanics, age 14 to 19 years of age. The group was asked to answer a series of semi-structured questions related to the research on what practices within the congregation motivated or discouraged English-speaking adolescents to actively engage in the church life. The discusión took place at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza. Each participant received a document with the questions that were discussed by the researcher. The group discussion was recorded, and after the session was concluded the recording was transcribed.

The individual interviews were conducted with the first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanic adults and with pastors and youth leaders. The first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanic adults who were interviewed were asked to answer a series of semi-structured questions designed to research what practices within the congregation motivated or discouraged English-speaking adolescents to actively engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry. The interviews took place at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza. Each participant received a document with the questions that were discussed by the researcher. The interview was recorded, and after the session was concluded the recording was transcribed.

The pastors and youth leaders were asked to answer a series of semi-structured questions designed to research best practices that motivated English-speaking adolescents to actively engage in church life. The interview took place at the pastor or youth leader's office or via a Zoom conference call. The participant received a document with the questions that were to be discussed by the researcher. The interview was recorded, and after the session was concluded the recording was transcribed.

The information gathered from the focus group and interviews were synthesized with findings from the literature review to identify effective ways in which English-speaking Hispanics could be integrated into worship, discipleship, and ministry in a Spanish-speaking congregation.

Pilot Test or Expert Review

The researcher invited three expert reviewers to comment on the design of the instruments employed in this project. The reviewers were Dr. Ellen Marmon from Asbury Theological Seminary and Dr. Wilmer Estrada Carrasquillo and Dr. Miriam E. Figueroa from the Pentecostal Theological Seminary. Dr. Marmon guided the researcher to use a focus group as an instrument for the second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanics to gain more in-depth information from the adolescents. Dr. Estrada suggested adding a question that could reveal the importance of Spanish to the second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanic group to understand their relation to their heritage language. Dr. Figueroa guided the researcher in the redaction of the questionnaire for it to be understood by adolescents. The recommendations by the reviewers were all included in the instruments.

Reliability & Validity of Project Design

The researcher followed the grounded theory design in the research to assess accurate and practical information. Creswell describes the purpose of grounded theory study as:

> The intent to generate or discover a theory, an abstract analytical schema of a process. The participants of the study would all experience the process, and the development of the theory might help explain practice or provide a framework for

> further research. A key idea is that that the theory-development does not come "off the shelf" but rather is generated or "grounded" in data from participants who have experienced the process. Thus, grounded theory is a qualitative research design in which the inquirer generates a general explanation (theory) of a process, action or interaction shaped by the view of many participants. (62–63)

For this project, a focus group of English-speaking adolescents, first-generation Spanish-speaking adults, and pastors or leaders of youth ministries were employed to identify effective ways in which English-speaking Hispanics could be integrated into worship, discipleship, and ministry in a Spanish-speaking congregation. The framework of the instruments used was developed by the researcher and the expert reviewers to give a coherent correlation between the questionnaire and the research questions. The data generated by the focus group and individual interviews were then analyzed to find common ideas and redundancies as the participants described their own experiences. Commonalities in their responses were collected under the heading of "best practices" for ideas that contributed to the engagement of English-speaking adolescents in church life. Other commonalities in their responses were collected under the heading of "non-engaging factors" for those ideas that prevented the engagement of English-speaking adolescents in the church life.

Since this project's research questions investigated the various approaches to engaging the new generations in church life, the focus group and individual interviews provided the best instruments for validity and reliability as this method allowed for the in-depth exploration of the perspectives of English-speaking adolescents, Spanish-speaking adults, and pastors and youth leaders. On the other hand, the semi-structured

interviews facilitated comparison. They provided the flexibility that permitted questions to be adjusted for deeper engagement. Sensing says, "qualitative studies are designed to investigate an issue in great depth" (Loc. 2258). The synthesis of the data with the contextual observations regarding the Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza adolescents allowed the creation of a comprehensive strategy of best practices to engage English-speaking adolescents in the church life within a Spanish-speaking congregation.

Data Collection

The type of research is pre-intervention, for it describes the current situation at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza. The project identifies factors that cause English-speaking Hispanic adolescents to engage in church life in a Spanish-speaking congregation or keep them from engaging in it. As a pre-intervention project, the goal is to develop a strategy to revert the tendency of losing the second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanic adolescents. The project does not result in the development of a model that could be measured as with post-intervention research.

The methodology used in this project is qualitative research. Saldaña defines qualitative research as:

> An umbrella term for a wide variety of approaches and methods for the study of natural social life. The information or data collected and analyzed is primarily (but not exclusively) nonquantitative in character, consisting of textual materials such as interview transcripts, field notes, and documents, and/or visual materials such as artifacts, photographs, video recordings, that document human experiences about others and/or one's self in social action and reflexive states. (3–5)

Qualitative research is a holistic account that tries to develop a complex picture of the problem under study. It involves reporting multiples perspectives and factors involved in the situation and sketching a larger picture that emerges(Creswell 39). In addition, Sensing says that “qualitative research produces culturally specific and contextually rich data critical for the design, evaluation, and ongoing health of institutions like churches” (Loc. 1638). This project consisted of a focus group and individual interviews to hear and record the experiences from English-speaking Hispanic adolescents, Spanish-speaking adults, and pastors and other youth leaders, which will help to sketch a map of best practices to engage English-speaking adolescents in the church life within a Spanish-speaking congregation.

Two qualitative instruments were employed, a focus group and individual interviews. The focus group instrument was used with eight English-speaking Hispanics ages fourteen through nineteen years of age, both male and female. The individual interview instrument was used with six Spanish-speaking adults, both male and female. This instrument was also used with two pastors and one youth leader director, all male. The literature review for this research provided the necessary structure to develop a framework by which the questions for the semi-structured interview questionnaires were constructed.

The focus group was conducted at the Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza, where the questionnaire was discussed among the participants in an open table format. Each participant was invited to share his or her point of view for each question presented. The audio recordings were transcribed and examined to identify common ideas. A wide-ranging list was made of the prevailing ideas which were then considered “best practices”

and “non-engaging factors.” The individual interview for Spanish-speaking adults was conducted at the local church. The adults were interviewed individually on different days and times. The questionnaire was discussed and followed the same framework as the focus group. The individual interview for pastors and youth leaders was conducted via video conference call. The questionnaires were sent via e-mail a week ahead of the conversation so that the interviewee had enough time to reflect on the questions. The questionnaire was discussed using the same framework as the focus group.

Data Analysis

The transcripts of the focus group and individual interviews were examined by the researcher to identify common ideas. The prevailing ideas were given a name to describe their content. “BP” for best practices or “NEF” for the non-engaging factor. The names were arranged under the headings of the framework for each group interviewed. The titles were “English-speaking youth," “Spanish-speaking adults,” and “Pastors and Youth director.” The identified common ideas were numerically labeled under each heading (E.g., the title “Spanish-speaking adult” would contain BP1…BP3, etc. and NFF1…NEF3).

A wide-ranging list was created from the six separate listings and manually examined for similarities and differences. Notes were made on findings from the interaction of all the listings. These results were synthesized with conclusions of the literature review and contextual observations pertaining to the youth and adults of the Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

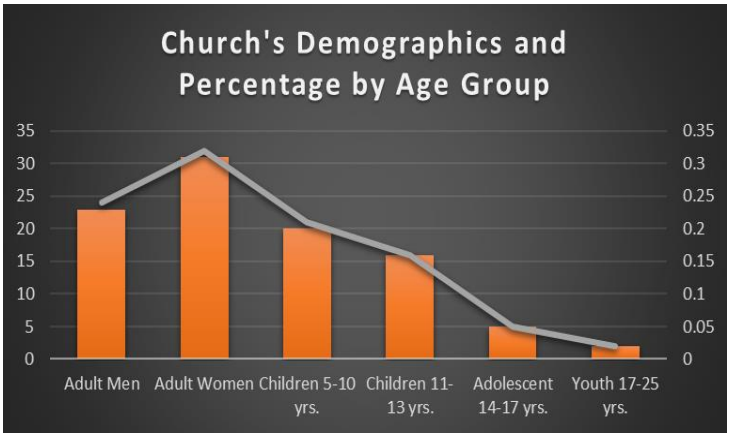
Overview of the Chapter

The Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza at Cleveland, Tennessee is composed mainly of first-generation Spanish-speaking congregants. The age group of fourteen through nineteen, which represents high school and college, is not well represented in the church's demographics. Of the ninety-eight congregants, five adolescents are fourteen to sixteen years of age. There are three young congregants ages seventeen to twenty-five, representing eight percent of the total congregants (see graphic 4.1).

On the other hand, twenty children ages five to ten years old and sixteen children eleven to thirteen years of age represent a combined thirty-six percent of the total congregants. The disproportionate representation of adolescents triggers a concern about where the age group eleven to thirteen go when they reach fourteen years of age and older. The fourteen and older age group is mainly second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanics. English is their first or preferred language. Most of these adolescents and youths have left the church; others have joined other English-speaking congregations, where they are fully engaged in church life. Language has become a barrier that prevents this Hispanic age group from fully participating in church ministries with the first generation of Spanish-speaking Hispanics.

The purpose of this project was to identify effective ways second- and third-generation English-speaking adolescents, ages fourteen through nineteen, become actively engaged

in worship, discipleship, and ministry within a first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza. This chapter describes the people who participated in the study. It shares the qualitative data collected from the focus groups and the semi-structured interviews (for a summary of the qualitative data collected see tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3). Finally, this chapter presents five significant findings gathered from the collected data.



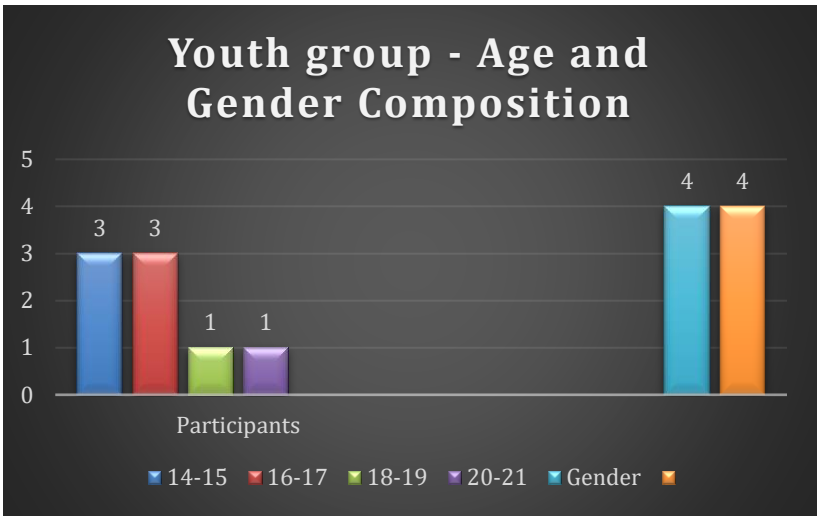
Graphic 4.1 Church Demographics and Percentage by Age Group (N=98)

Participants

The participants were composed of eight second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanic youth, ages fourteen to seventeen (four males and four females, see graphic 4.2). Two Hispanic pastors, one Hispanic youth director, and seven first-generation Spanish-speaking adults were also included. The second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanics participated in a focus group discussion. The first-generation Spanish-speaking adults participated in individual semi-structured interviews.

The school level for the second and third-generation Hispanic youth ranges from high school to college. The first-generation Spanish-speaking adults have been in church for ten to forty years, and all have or have had youth in the church. Their countries of

origin are Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. One of the two Hispanic pastors ministers in a Spanish-speaking congregation with an average attendance of one hundred youths. The other pastor ministers in a bilingual congregation with an average attendance of three hundred youths. The Hispanic youth director oversees youth ministries in the East-Central Hispanic Church of God region, reporting approximately seven hundred youths among seventy-five churches.



Graphic 4.2 Youth Group – Age and Gender Composition (N=8)

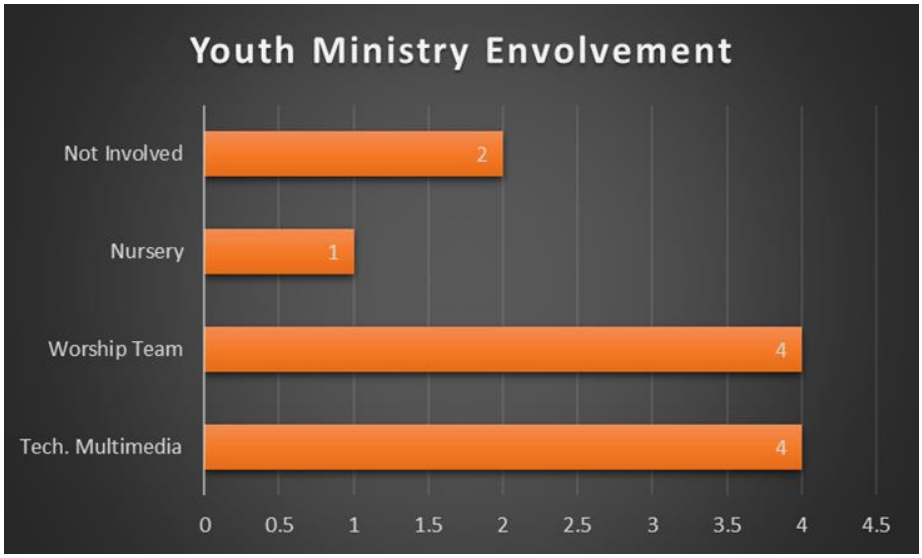
The participants' names were not used, to safeguard their privacy and confidentiality. A code was used instead of their names. The code system is as follows: for the English-speaking Hispanic adolescent, the code was AD01 through AD08. The prefix AD stands for adolescent. For the first-generation Spanish-speaking Hispanic adults, the code is SS01 through SS08. The prefix SS stands for Spanish Speaker. For the pastors or youth leader, the code is PY01 through PY03. The prefix PY stands for Pastor or Youth Leader.

Research Question #1: Description of Evidence

What practices within the congregation do pastors, first-, second-, and third-generation church members identify that motivate adolescents to actively engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry?

Second- and Third-Generation Youth. The instrument ENG Youth focus group questions #2, #3, #4, #7 were used to address research question number one.

In which area of ministry are you involved in (Q2)? Six out of eight (75%) participants were serving in technology and worship ministries. Four of the participants actively participated in multimedia. The other four participated in worship teams interchangeably, and one volunteered in the nursery. Participants AD05 and AD07 stated that they were "confident in the role they play within the church." On the other hand, participants AD01 and AD03 identified themselves as not part of any church ministry (see graphic 4.3).



Graphic 4.3 Youth Ministry Involvement

Describe our worship meetings in one or two words (Q3)? Four words emerged to describe the worship meeting: "impactful" (AD01, AD02, AD04, AD05), "different" (AD01-AD08), "unpredictable" (always changing, AD01-AD08), and

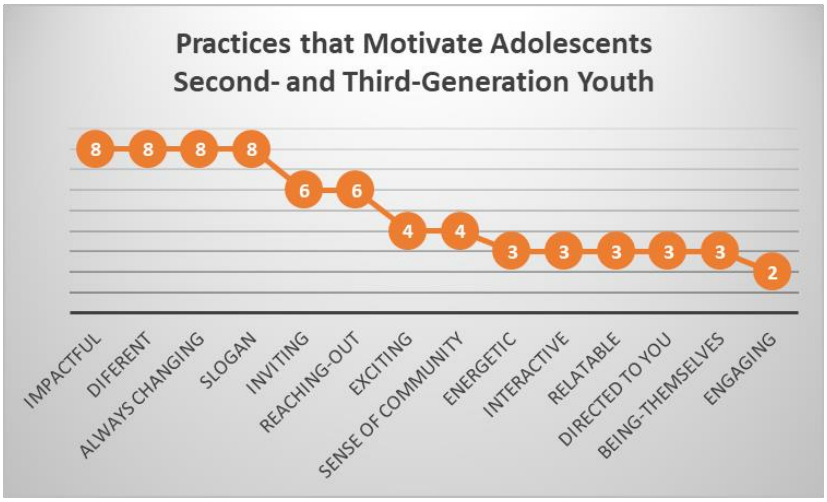
"energetic" or "exciting" (AD03, D04, AD05). All the participants agreed that they appreciate the unpredictable (ever-changing) aspect of the church's worship meetings.

Describe the youth Bible class (Q4). The term that was repeated by most of the participants to describe the youth class was "inviting" (AD01, AD02, AD03, AD05, AD07, AD08). The participants described the class as a "small, engaging group" (D04, D06) and "relatable to their needs" (AD01, AD04, AD08). Also, the Bible class was described as "interactive" (AD02, AD03) and "fun" (AD07).

What are some things that the church does that are important to you and that you like (Q7)? Almost all the participants stated that what they like about the church is how it reaches out (AD02, AD03, AD04, AD06, AD07, AD08). The church slogan "Somos la Iglesia de las Puertas Abiertas, la Casa Grande Donde Todos Caben" (We are the Open Doors Church, The Big House Where Everyone Has a Place) is something the youth are proud of (AD01 – AD08). They stated that the church has created an atmosphere where they can "be themselves" (AD01, AD02, AD03). They perceive that in the church's core lies the importance of community, which is a visible value to them (AD04, AD05, AD06, AD07). Participant AD08 stated a compelling argument by saying, "the community is not just the people who regularly attend to the church but anyone who enters through the church's door regardless of their cultural background, so it must be open to other cultures."

Based on the responses from the focus group questions, the terms that described activities, programs, perception, and spiritual practices that motivate adolescents to engage in church life were "impactful," "different," "always changing," the church's slogan (8 mentions), "inviting" and "reaching out" (6 mentions), "exiting" and "sense of

community" (4 mentions), "energic," "interactive," "relatable," "directed to you" and "being themselves" (3 mentions), and "engaging" (2 times). See graphic 4.4.



Graphic 4.4 Practices that Motivate Adolescents. Second- and Third-Generation Hispanic Youth.

Pastor or Youth Minister Leader. The instrument ENG Pastor or Youth leader questions #2, #3, #4, #8 of the semi-structured interviews were used to address research question number one.

How do you engage English-speaking adolescents in church life (Q2)?

PY01 stated that resources must be obtained to reach and influence second- and third-generation youth effectively. These resources can be English-speaking Latino preachers, English music, and participating at conferences or concerts of speakers and bands that appeal to the youth. For PY02, a proven approach to engaging the second and third generation is the invitation to participate in a Small Discipleship Group. These small groups can meet in schools, homes, or the marketplace giving them room and space to invite others into their own environment. PY02 also stated that leaders should encourage parents to also get involved in their children's spiritual growth; "Parents must be

responsible too.” At PY02's church, they start delegating responsibilities to the youth at an early age. This approach helps them be involved in church life and develop a sense of ownership to the ministry they are assigned to help. With this approach, the youth sees the church as their "own." For PY03, youth events should be organized and led by youth. This approach allows the youth to demonstrate their gifts and callings.

Describe the youth you serve based on age, origin, attendance, scholarly, Hispanic generation type (Q3)?

PY01 stated that the East-Central Hispanic Church of God serves approximately eight hundred youth in five states. Generally speaking, the youth are first-generation Spanish- and English-speaking Latinos of twenty to twenty-five years of age. Also, second- and third-generation English-speaking Latinos that are twelve to twenty years of age. Some young people in the region are polyglot because they speak three or more languages (English, Spanish, and dialects). Their countries of origin are Mexico, Central American, and Caribbean. This population of youth spans high school, the majority, to college. Due to immigration status, most of the youth join the workforce after high school.

PY02 serves a youth congregation of around three hundred youth, mainly Tex-Mex. Tex-Mex is the Hispanic who is not considered Mexican or mainstream American but Texan, a regional pride. As time has passed, the number of first-generation immigrants from Central America has grown exponentially. Natural disasters or political circumstances have caused new Latino communities to move to the cities. Today's churches in the United States have a wide variety of members from different nationalities. The education level of the youth goes from high school to college and bachelor's degrees.

PY03 serves approximately one hundred youth, mainly from Guatemala. Their age group varies from twelve to twenty-nine years of age. They minister to first-generation Spanish-speaking Latinos and second- and third-generation Latinos fluent both in English and Spanish. The church has become a place to reinforce Spanish because the worship meetings, Bible school, and social activities are conducted in Spanish. The youth that have legalized their immigration status have pursued their education in college. The rest, which is the majority, join the workforce after finishing high school.

How do you minister to both Spanish and English-speaking youth(Q4)?

PY01 noted the need to use the appropriate language, the one that the youth understand. They use English to communicate with the second and third generation and Spanish-speaking youth to communicate with the first-generation youth. PY02's goal is to have multi-generational retention, where the first, second, and third generations would remain at church. PY02 states that "we must always be sensitive to people. We are receiving new generations of immigrants who speak only Spanish with their particular culture and faith experiences." For PY03 worship and fasts services, prayer meetings, and Bible studies, children and young people must be present with the adults. These activities are conducted in Spanish. Younger children participate in a Bible class during preaching. Those classes might be conducted in English.

Do you think it is important for the different generations to participate in some activity together as a community of faith? Why or why not (Q8)?

PY01 states that a culture of inclusion and integration must be created. This approach must put the first, the second, and the third generations of young people "together at the same table." Even if they are oriented to the youth, all activities should be

a focus on the family. PY02 states that the events outside the Churches are essential because they serve to create unity among the different families of different generations. PY03 notes that social events in church like watching movies, playing sports, and having food promote unity among different generations.

Based on the responses from the semi-structured interviews with pastors and youth leader, the activities, programs, perception, and spiritual practices that motivate adolescents to engage in church life were: participating in small groups (PY02, PY03), the use of English music and speakers (PY01, PY02), family participation in the process of discipleship (PY02, PY03), the delegation of responsibilities (PY01, PY02, PY03), participating in decision making, interrelating with the first-generation (PY02, PY03), and creating a culture of inclusion (PY01, PY02). See graphic 4.5.

Graphic 4.5 Practices that Motivate Adolescents. Pastors and Youth leader.

First Generation Spanish-Speaking Layperson.

The instrument ENG First Generation Spanish-speaking layperson questions #1, #2, #6, #8 of the semi-structured interviews were used to address research question number one.

In what ways does this church serve the youth (Q1)?

SS01 and SS05 noticed that the church puts a lot of emphasis on the youth, providing them with opportunities. SS02, SS04, and SS06 stated that the English Bible class has become a social group that spiritually helps youth. SS03 and SS07 noted that the youth are integrated into the different ministry areas of the church.

In what areas of ministry are the youth participating (Q2)?

SS01 mentioned that the youth participate in evangelism and social work when the church engages in those activities. SS02-SS06 sees the youth involved in ministry areas such as multimedia, music, worship, reception, and the nursery. SS07 stated that "there is an integration of the youth into different areas of ministry. From a young age, it is noticeable the participation in the church. Some of the youth are leaders in the church."

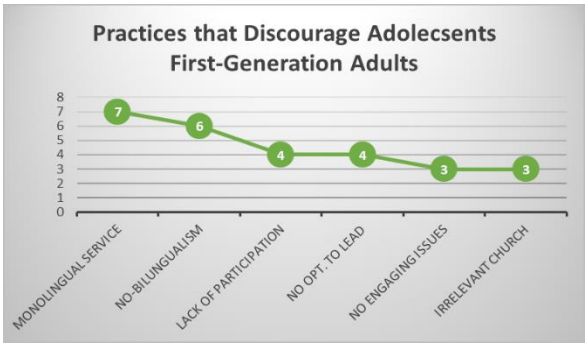
What do you think youth like about this church (Q6)?

SS01 mentioned that for his son and daughter, it was difficult to connect with the church. His son joined a Baptist church, and his daughter was influenced by school friends and left the church. SS02 and SS03 stated that the youth are well treated at the church, "they like the way they treat them, they feel at ease in church." SS04 said that their adolescent sons describe the church as "not the typical church. They welcome you with love and is open to changes to improve. It is worship with joy. God's presence is there in our community." SS005-SS07 mentioned they let the youth know that they are essential to the church. SS06 testified that the church taught them to have a family altar at their house. Their youth have learned to read the Bible and pray at their homes.

Do you think it is important for the different generations to participate in some activity together as a community of faith? Why or why not (Q8)?

SS01 and SS03 stated that when they participate in activities together, the generational gap is being filled. SS01 stated that "the youth sees us as different, but we can become a reference frame by partaking with them." SS04 indicated that the youth should speak in the language they feel comfortable with when participating in shared events. SS05 mentioned that "separating ourselves from the youth prevents us from knowing each other. We like the fact that we are together in worship, in the temple as a family." SS02, SS06, and SS07 stated that participating together is relevant because they can learn from each other and promote unity. SS07 stated that "being together allows us to see how they understand the world and how they see things. The ‘chamacos’ (youth) have a way of expressing themselves."

Based on the responses from the semi-structured interviews with first-generation Spanish-speaking adults, the practices that motivate adolescents to engage in church life were: the creation of open spaces where the youth could develop leadership and their abilities (6 mentions), pastoral vision that includes the younger generations in all the activities in the church (4 mentions), an active youth ministry and leadership that could care for them (3 mentions), bilingual worship services and Bible classes (7 mentions), and the creation of a multi-generational environment to share Hispanic values and culture (6 mentions). See graphic 4.6.



Graphic 4.6. Practices that Motivate Adolescents. First-Generation Adults.

Research Question # 2: Description of Evidence

What practices within the congregation do pastors, first, second, and third-generation church members identify that discourage adolescents from actively engaging in worship, discipleship, and ministry?

Second and third generation youths. The instrument ENG Youth focus group questions #6, #8, #9 were used to address research question number two.

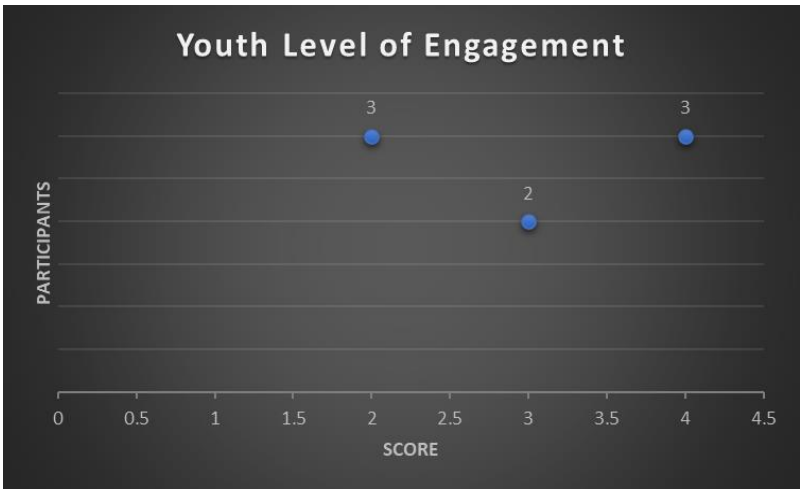
If you could give yourself a score between 1 -5 on church engagement, what could it be (Q6)?

Three out of eight gave themselves a score of four because they serve in multimedia media during the service, helping them stay engaged during the service. Their role in the church service motivates them and makes them feel part of the service. Two out of eight score themselves as three because though they serve in the service through multimedia, they expressed that it does not necessarily mean that they are engaged in the worship. Three out of eight scored themselves as two because though they are engaging in the worship or something before the sermon, once the sermon begins, they lose engagement (see graph 4.8).

Would you invite a friend or family to the youth Bible class? Why? Why not (Q8)?

The eight participants answered affirmatively. They would all invite a friend or family to the church. AD01-AD5, AD07, and AD09 stated that they had already invited friends and family to the church. AD03, AD04, AD06 stated that "the lessons are engaging, always different, and they are always learning." AD03 mentioned that they feel

comfortable in the church's atmosphere and would be confident to guide visitors during the worship meeting. AD07 and AD08 expressed that the youth Bible class is a good way to transition people to a Sunday worship service. See graphic 4.7.



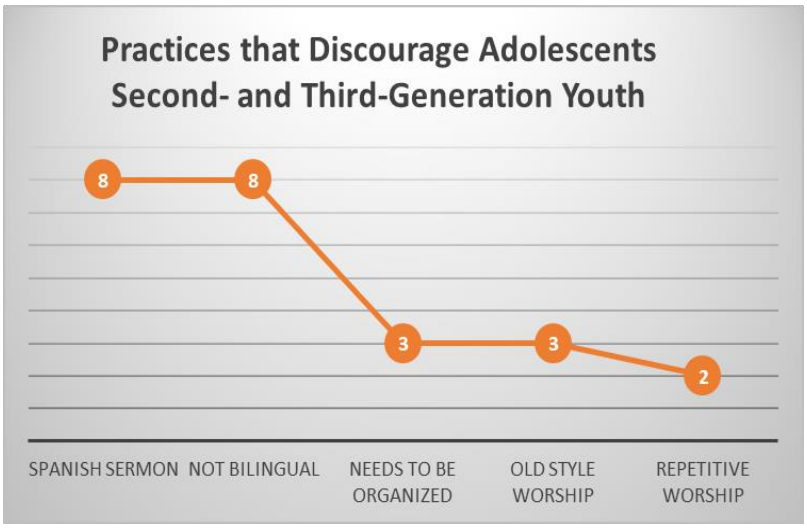
Graph 4.7 Participant Level of Engagement (N=8)

How would you describe our worship time (Q9)?

AD03, AD04, and AD05 described the worship time at church as "unpredictable" because of the worship meetings' charismatic nature. AD01 and AD02 stated, "they are different; you never know what will happen." AD02, AD07, and AD08 describe the worship as "repetitive, needs to be more organized, and the music sound old style." All participants (AD01-AD08) agreed that the worship meeting should be bilingual, so the non-Spanish-speaking youths could better engage in worship. AD03, AD05, and AD06 stated that they "love the Hispanic taste in worship."

Based on the responses from the focus group questions, the activities, programs, and perceptions that discourage adolescents from engaging in church life were Spanish sermon (8 mentions), repetitive worship (3 mentions), worship needs to be more

organized (3 mentions), non-bilingual worship (8 mentions), and old-style worship (3 mentions). See graphic 4.8.



Graphic 4.8 Practices that Discourage Adolescents. Second- and Third-Generation Hispanic Youth.

Pastor or Youth minister leader. The instrument ENG Pastor or Youth leader questions #1, #7 of the semi-structured interview questionnaire were used to address research question number two.

Describe your ministry approach to the second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanic youth (Q1).

PY01 stated that:

To have a successful approach to the English-speaking youths, one must understand the great cultural diversity in the United States' Latino churches. The culture of a Guatemalan English-speaking youth is different from a Mexican English-speaking youth and a Puerto Rican English-speaking youth. We must understand the culture behind the language being spoken. The leader must approach the youth by promoting cultural pluralism. On the other hand, English speaking Latino youths are more prompt to

mainstream Christian dynamics. They are more related to music, Christian celebrities, events, and social media platforms. It is quite common for English speaking Latinos to perceive the Spanish-speaking congregation as too traditional. The English-speaking congregations are perceived as more dynamic and modern. These elements must be taken into consideration if we want to call the attention of English-speaking youth.

For PY02, the process to engage the second and third generation of Latinos is by engaging the family first. The discipleship process begins with the family at a young age. Parents are taught that they must be responsible for the growth of their children. PY02 also stated that the church cannot be the primary source of a child's spiritual growth. The church begins at home; "Prayer at home is one of the most essential resources for families to get acquainted with the church for new members and members who are already spiritually mature."

PY03 responded that "to connect with the second and third generation of Latino youth in this country, it takes fifty percent speaking English and the other fifty percent understanding their culture." Open communication must be encouraged to understand the background and context of the people being served and ministered. The whole family must be involved to engage with the English-speaking Latino generation. The church program must include a program for the youth.

How relevant is the second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanic adolescents to speak and understand Spanish (Q7)?

PY01 states that it is relevant and important to encourage second- and third-generation youth to know more than one language. PY02 states that it is important that families maintain the Spanish language and that culture and language are not lost. The

second and third generations must speak Spanish. That way they will communicate, relate to, and honor first-generation community members who do not speak English. PY03 states that it is relevant for new generations to speak and understand Spanish because Spanish is linked to their families, especially for the first-generation family who speaks a dialect.

Based on the responses from the semi-structured interviews with pastors and youth leader, the activities, programs, perception, and spiritual practices that discourage adolescents from engaging in church life were not understanding different Hispanic cultures (PY01), too traditional program or worship service (PY01, PY02), not engaging the family (PT02, PY03), Spanish-only activities or program (PY01, PY02, PY03), and no youth program (PY02-PY03). See graphic 4.9.

Graphic 4.9 Practices that Discourage Adolescents. Pastors and Youth leaders.

First Generation Spanish Speaking. The instrument ENG First Generation Spanish-speaking layperson questions #3, #4, #7 of the semi-structured interview questionnaire were used to address research question number two.

How do you perceive the youth participation during service (Q3)? What would you recommend to motivate their participation?

SS01 and SS06 stated that if the youth were taught to lead the worship service, this could boost their participation. Teaching them to read the Bible and pray in public could strengthen and affirm their faith. SS01 also stated that "even as some youth participate in the multimedia and music ministry, it would be good to participate in other ministry areas. This could motivate the youth that is not participating at church." SS02-SS05 and SS07 thought that participation during service was minimal. Most of them attributed this perception to the language barrier. Translating the service and singing in English could probably promote more involvement in the service. SS07 added that "I am against dividing the church by language groups; this will negatively affect the family. My recommendation is that different generations should worship together with the translation."

Are the youth learning Christian values at the Bible school (Q4)? What would you recommend to improve Bible classes for the youth?

SS01, SS02, SS05, and SS07 stated that the youth are learning values at the Bible class, but the language barrier is a problem. Having bilingual or English classes could better serve the youth. SS03 testifies,

> I love what they teach in the Bible class. The youth leader provides them confidence. I see in my house the values that they have learned. They can make a comparison between what they see in the streets and what the church teaches. It has been a fundamental part of the development of their personality. The house

> and the church complement each other. They are motivated young persons through the church.

SS05 pointed out that "it is in the home that the youth should start to learn about the Bible and moral values." SS06 stated that the Bible class has become a guide to their youth and also noted that the testimonies shared in class attract youth attention.

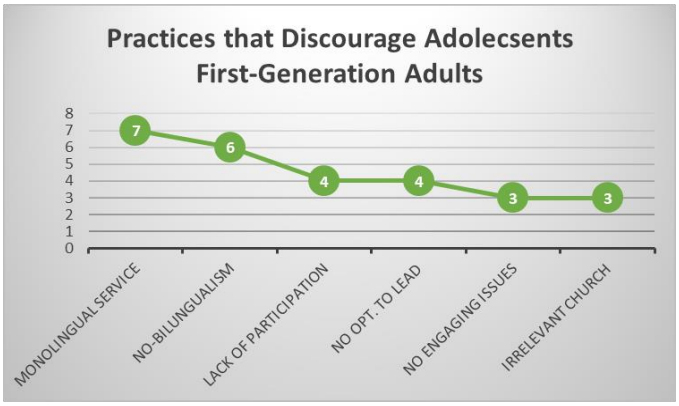
How relevant is for a second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanic adolescents to speak and understand Spanish (Q7)?

SS01 thought that it is at home where the Spanish language should be taught. Many immigrants do not speak English; thus, youth can help those in a transition process. SS02-SS04 and SS07 stated that teaching the youth to speak Spanish is important because it will benefit them. It will open a door of opportunities for them. Similarly, it is important to handle the two languages. SS01 stated that “we do not want them to lose their culture. In the church, they can be a bridge between those who speak English and those who do not speak English. They represent help wherever it is needed. For someone to know multiple languages is to be able to do the mission with others.” SS05 stated that

> I want to be able to communicate with my children's children in Spanish. Spanish is important for our way of life. Many of our young people understand both languages. We can teach more Spanish; if we are a Hispanic church, we must strengthen Spanish. Spanish classes at church could help. In the house, we strengthen Spanish, and in the church, we can affirm it.

SS06 noted that "Speaking Spanish is important and relevant. Knowing two languages is knowing two worlds. Bilingualism is possible; this gives them a future. In the ministry, you can reach Hispanics and English speakers in the same way."

Based on the responses from the semi-structured interviews with first-generation Spanish-speaking adults, the practices that discourage adolescents from engaging in church life were: monolingual worship services (7 mentions), ignoring the importance of bilingualism (6 mentions), lack of participation in liturgical activities such as public praying and Bible reading (4 mentions), lack of opportunities to lead (4 mentions), not engaging with issues affecting youth such as bullying, sexuality, and education (3 mentions), and the perception that the church is irrelevant to the community (3 mentions). See graphic 4.10.



Graphic 4.10 Practices that Discourage Adolescents. First-Generation Adults.

Research Question # 3: Description of Evidence

What are best practices for actively engaging second- and third-generation adolescents (ages 14 – 19) in worship, discipleship, and ministry at church?

Second and third generation youths. The instrument ENG Youth focus group questions #5, #10, #11, and 12 were used to address research question number three.

If you could change something about the church, what could it be (Q5)?

AD01-04, AD07, and AD08 mentioned that it would be good to have an English service with bilingual music. AD08 stated that "the sermons should be more engaging. It

seems that the pastor is preaching to the adults only." AD03-AD05 and AD07 recommended an English youth Bible study on Sundays during the sermon because of the language barrier. AD07 and AD08 recommended the use of translators then. AD02 recommended inviting guest speakers to the Wednesday night Bible class. The researcher found it interesting that for these questions, the participants did not suggest removing or replacing an aspect of the church program for something newer but rather the expectation that the church will grow to evolve into a church that can meet their needs (AD01-AD05). The suggestion for English service and more translators confirms the fact that English is their preferred language. The participants also see the need to receive preaching that is more targeting toward their age group and, therefore, suggested an English Bible class on Sundays. There is an openness to hearing other voices from the church on Wednesdays; consequently, they suggest guest speakers. AD08 stated that they would like to listen to the older generation in the church on Wednesday nights. A consensus remark within the participants is that "though the church is great is not meeting all their spiritual needs and is not that the church is not providing them, but the language barrier prevents them from receiving it."

What would make worship more meaningful to you (Q10)?

AD01, AD03, AD04, and AD06 stated that having the opportunity to lead the worship team could make worship more meaningful. AD07 and AD08 mentioned that new music, bilingual songs, and "revamp[ed] worship" would make a more meaningful worship service. AD01-AD04 suggest integrating a youth band for the worship service. AD01 stated that "they would like the older generation to trust them and allow them to show them what why can bring to the table."

How important is it for you to speak and understand Spanish (Q11)?

All participants agreed that speaking and understand Spanish was especially important. AD08 commented that "though Spanish is only used with their family, Spanish is significant because it keeps them connected to the Hispanic world." All participants agreed with that statement. AD02 and AD03 mentioned that they would like to pass the language to their children. AD01-AD06 stated that speaking and understanding Spanish is a great skill to have in the workplace. AD02, who identified himself as Hispanic through blood, pointed out that "though other qualities make you Hispanic, the language is very important." AD02 explained to the researcher that Hispanics through blood are "the kids from mixed parents (Anglo and Latino) who identified themselves as Hispanic, but they don't speak the language."

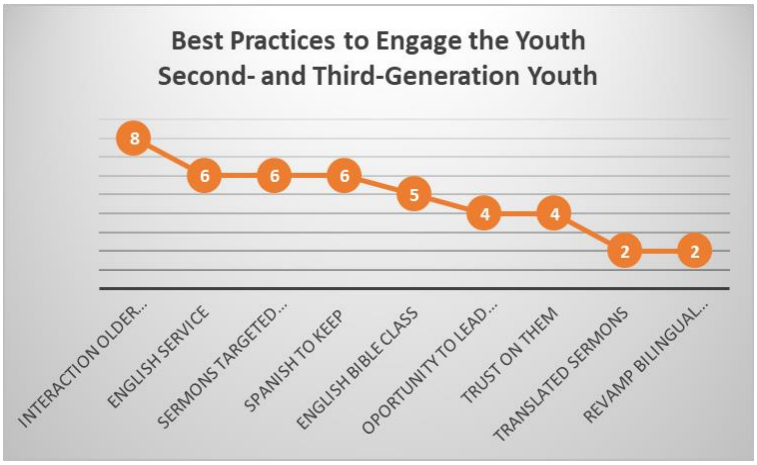
Do you think it is important for the different generations to participate in some activity together as a community of faith? Why or why not (Q12)?

All participants agreed that it was important to interact with different generations as a community of faith. AD05 and AD06 stated that they are acknowledged and part of the church when the older generation interacts with them. A remarkable statement by AD07 is that "he understood water baptism as something that connects them on a deeper level to the older generations."

Based on the responses from the focus group questions, the ideas that described the best practices for actively engaging second- and third-generation adolescents in church life were: celebration of an English service (6 mentions), bilingual music (6 mentions), sermons targeted to the youth (6 mentions), translated sermons (2 mentions), interactive activities with older generations (8 mentions), use of Spanish to connect with

Hispanics (6 mentions), English Bible class (5 mentions), opportunity to lead worship (4 mentions), revamped music (2 mentions), and trust in the youth. See graphic 4.11.

Pastor or Youth Minister Leader Interview. The instrument pastor or youth leader interview questions #5, #6 of the semi-structured interview questionnaire were used to address research question number three.



Graphic 4.11 Best Practices to Engage the Youth. Second- and Third-Generation Hispanic Youth.

What advice could you give me to better serve the second and third-generation English-speaking youth (Q5)?

PY01 states that the way youth are kept connected within the church is when they are empowered to make meaningful changes within the church. New generations must be given responsibilities and empowerment. In church business meetings, youth should be given the freedom to speak the language in which they feel most comfortable. If they prefer English, then speak English; if they prefer Spanish, then speak Spanish. PY01 added: "to have generational retention, opportunities must be given to those generations that have been instructed in the nurseries, in the children's and youth rooms and now are

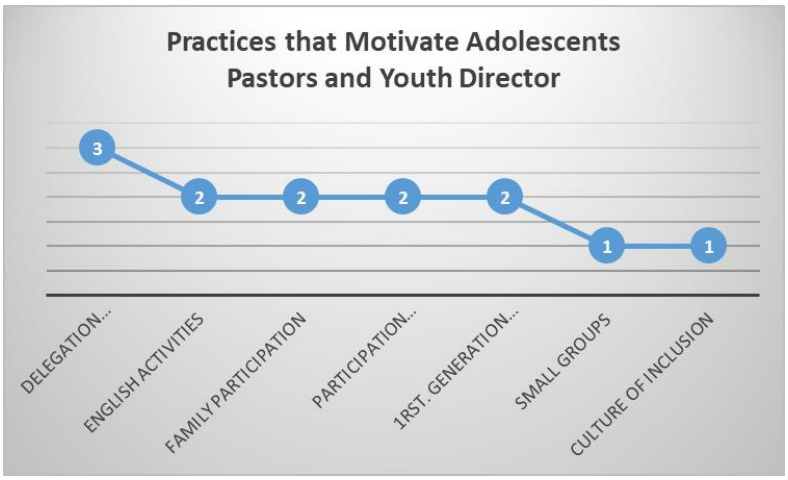
going to participate in the sanctuary." The English-speaking generation must find their space and sense of contribution to the church.

PY02 states that leaders must give young people space to provide ideas that may attract other young people. The youth must be empowered. Pastors must develop a legacy of continuity. The church must continue to work on God's mission affecting the new generations so that the church can be perceived as young and relevant even if the pastor is of age. For PY03, youth events should be led by youth, since in this way, the youth can demonstrate their gifts and callings. Age segregation in churches can cause a great division in which future generations may be lost. Children and adolescents might be disconnected from the dynamics of the church.

How have you involved first-generation members with second- and third-generation members (Q6)?

PY01 states that for Spanish and English-speaking youth, there must be bilingual events. To help the first-generation youth who might feel overwhelmed in the middle of the second and third generations the church must minister broadly and individually to each age and language group. PY02 states that the church's youth have come with relevant ideas to engage the first generation with the second and third generation. A bilingual environment was created to engage both generations. For PY03, the second and third generations get involved with the first generation by participating in church activities. Social events in church like watching movies, playing sports, and having food sales or raffles to raise funds are conducted in both languages. Sometimes the church activities would look bilingual, but they are conducted mainly in Spanish.

Based on the responses from the semi-structured interviews with pastors and the youth leader, the programs, perception, and spiritual practices could encourage adolescents to engage in church life were: empowering the youth (PY01), willingness to implement changes (PY01, PY02), opportunities to lead (PY01, PY02, PY03), interaction among generations (PY02, PY03), celebrate bilingual events (PY01, PY02, PY03), creation of youth spaces (PY02, PY03). See graphic 4.12.



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Graphic 4.12 Best Practices to Engage the Youth. Pastor and Youth Leader.

First Generation Spanish Speaking. The instruments ENG First Generation Spanish-speaking layperson questions #5, of the semi-structured interview questionnaire, addressed research question number three.

What recommendations would you give to the church to better serve the youth (Q5)?

SS01 stated that the youth must feel important and accepted. Also recommended is to celebrate more activities and pastoral visits to encourage them, "one encouraged youth will encourage others." SS02, SS03, and SS06 stated that the church needs to open

spaces for the youth to develop leadership. SS04 mentioned that "the adults should prepare them and make them part of everything we do." SS05 suggested the following:

> We want the youth to master both languages, and we want them to participate in the church activities. We recommend simultaneous translation. We must not separate them. If we worship together, we promote unity. The bilingual translation is good because we would reach the English-speaking youth. We can sing in English, and we can sing in Spanish. We should not be afraid of us singing in English. We will reach them by understanding their style and forms. We must celebrate youth participation without forgetting the adults. Both generations must be bridge makers.

SS05 argued that the teachings the youth receive should include topics relevant to "what is happening in our midst."

Based on the responses from the semi-structured interviews with first-generation Spanish-speaking adults, the best practices that can engage adolescents in church life were: active participation in the worship service (7 mentions), train and mentor the youth to participate in different ministries (6 mentions), teach the youth intentionally on topics of personal interests (3 mentions), transition to bilingual services (6 mentions), and reinforce Spanish to become fully bilingual (2 mentions). See graphic 4.13.

Graphic 4.13 Best Practices to Engage the Youth. First-Generation Adults.

Summary of Qualitative Data Collected

Table 4.1 Practices that Motivate Adolescent to Actively Engage.

Second/Third generation English Speaking	Pastors Youth Leader	First Generation Spanish Speaking
Impactful worship service	Delegation of responsibility	Bilingual worship
Different worship service	English Activities	Open spaces to develop leadership
Always changing program	Family Participation	Multi-generational environment
The Slogan of the Church	Participation in decision making	Inclusiveness
Inviting environment	First-generation interaction	Active youth ministry
Church's reach-out initiative	Participation in small groups	
Exciting program	Culture of inclusion	
Sense of community		
Energetic preaching		
Interactive Bible class		
Relatable Bible class		
Directed to them class		
Allowing to be themselves		
Engaging church program		

Table 4.2 Practices within the Congregation that Discourage Adolescents from Actively Engaging.

Second/Third generation English Speaking	Pastors Youth Leader	First Generation Spanish Speaking
Spanish sermons	Spanish only sermons	Monolingual worship services
Not bilingual service	No youth program	No bilingualism
Not organized worship service	Too traditional worship service	Lack of participation
Old style worship	Cultural differences	Non opportunity to lead
Repetitive worship		Irrelevant church

Table 4.3 Best Practices to Actively Engage Second- and Third-Generation Youth.

Second/Third generation English Speaking	Pastors Youth Leader	First Generation Spanish Speaking
English Service	Empowered Youth	Active participation
Sermons targeted to the youth	Opportunity to lead	Training and mentoring

Interaction with First generation	Bilingual events	Transition to bilingual services
Know Spanish to be connected	Willingness to change	Topics of personal interest
English Bible Class	Interaction among generations	Reinforce Spanish language
Opportunity to lead worship service	Creation of youth spaces	
Trust on the youth		
Translated sermons		
Revamp bilingual music		

Summary of Findings

The data gathered from the instruments used and the participant subjects of this qualitative research have produced an understanding of best practices to engage the second and third generations of English-speaking Hispanic youths at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza. A summary of the findings is as follows.

1. First-generation congregations that have transitioned to bilingual worship services or church activities are more likely to engage the second- and third-generation English-speaking youth.

2. Congregations that intentionally invest in developing young people's gifts and abilities establish strong youth ministries.

3. All three generations acknowledge the need for bridge-building and integration through a multi-generational setting that makes room for mutual respect and understanding.

4. Involving adolescents as worship leaders beyond the sound booth raises their investment in and motivation for worshiping with the entire congregation.

5. Parental participation in the development of spiritual disciplines with their children at home is an essential building block to motivate youth at an early age to engage in church life.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

The Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza at Cleveland, Tennessee is composed mainly of first-generation Spanish-speaking congregants. The age group of fourteen through nineteen (high school and college) is not well represented in the church's demographics. This research project investigated effective ways second- and third-generation English-speaking Hispanic youth become actively engaged in worship, discipleship, and ministry within the first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza.

This chapter identifies five findings from this research project and explain how they correspond to personal observations, the literature survey, and the Biblical-theological framework of the project. Then, limitations of the research study, unexpected observations, and recommendations for further study are presented.

Major Findings

First Finding: First-generation congregations that have transitioned to bilingual worship services or church activities are more likely to engage the second- and third-generation English-speaking youth.

Researcher's Observations

Three elements that comprise this finding. First, first-generation congregations that have transitioned to a bilingual worship service or church activities see the transition as a means of reaching out to the second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanics. The transition to a bilingual service is seen as part of the Church's mission. Thus, it is imperative to use the appropriate language that the second- and third-generation youth can understand. So is the case of PY02, whose vision is to have a multi-generational and multi-lingual congregation where the first, second, and third generations would participate in Church together. In this congregation, the English language is used to communicate with the second and third-generation youth. In contrast, the Spanish language is used to communicate with first-generation youth.

Along with the appropriate language, it is necessary to effectively obtain resources to influence the second and third-generation youth. These resources could be English-speaking Hispanic speakers, English music, or participation at conferences or concerts that appeal to the youth. This observation was made by attending an East Central Hispanic Region Church of God youth summer camp. PY01 coordinated the event with four hundred youth assembled and engaged in a bilingual youth concentration.

First-generation Spanish-speaking adults at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza agreed that the youth should speak in the language they feel comfortable with when participating in shared events. Thus, bilingual worship service should help the second and third-generation youth engage in church life. The interviewed first-generation adults envisioned transitioning to a bilingual worship service as a worship meeting where all the family can worship together versus holding a separate, specific English language worship service. Similarly, all second- and third-generation English-speaking youth that

participated in the study agreed that the worship meeting should be bilingual, so the non-Spanish-speaking youths could better engage in worship. One interesting comment among the interviewed youth is that they loved the Hispanic taste in the worship services.

Second**,** bilingual worship service is about reinforcing the use of both English and Spanish. Most second and third-generation youth acknowledged the importance of using Spanish to communicate with the first generation of Spanish-speaking adults and youth. At PY03 Church, the youth and adults assemble for worship, prayer, and Bible study meetings. These meetings are conducted in Spanish whereas the younger children participate in a Bible class during preaching. Those classes might be conducted in English.

On the other hand, PY02, which has implemented an English worship service for English-speaking Hispanics, recognized that new generations of immigrants who speak only Spanish with their culture and faith experiences are being integrated into the Church. So the bilingual meetings are more oriented towards using Spanish for the new generation of immigrants. Transitioning to bilingual worship service or activities is more likely to engage the English-speaking youth and connect with the Spanish-speaking congregants as both languages are reinforced. One of the first-generation adults interviewed noted that speaking Spanish is important and relevant. To know two languages is to know two worlds. Bilingualism is an option because this gives the youth opportunities in the future. In the ministry, English-speaking and Spanish-speaking can be reached in a bilingual environment.

Third, the transition to bilingual service includes intentionally allowing the English-speaking youth to participate in the worship service or activity. PY02 noted that

the Church's youth have come with relevant ideas to engage the first generation with the second and third generation. The bilingual environment has engaged both generations as they actively participate in the Church's program. The interviewed English-speaking youth also suggested a bilingual service and more active participation in the worship service. Even some Spanish-speaking adults stated that the Church needs to open spaces for the youth to develop leadership. A Spanish-speaking adult mentioned that the adults should prepare the youth and make them part of everything in the church. A common statement among the interviewed adults is that the youth should master both languages and participate in all the church activities.

Literature Review

The Hispanic population growth is now driven by immigrants' children and grandchildren, as Hispanic immigrants in the nation continue to decline. The foreign-born Hispanic population has increased to nearly twenty times its size over the past half-century. It grew from less than 1 million in 1960 to 19.4 million in 2015. This fact makes Hispanics the largest and youngest minority group in the United States. Their median age (27) makes them younger than blacks (31), Asians (36), and whites (41). The youth of the Hispanic population is driven by the emergence of the second generation (A. Flores, “Facts on US Latinos, 2015”).

The churches most frequented by Hispanics have distinctly ethnic characteristics. A majority of those in the congregation are Hispanic; some Hispanics serve as clergy, and liturgies are available in Spanish. The Hispanic population's growth leads to the emergence of Hispanic-oriented churches in all the major religious traditions across the nation. While the prevalence of Hispanic-oriented worship is higher among the foreign-

born, with 77% saying they attend churches with those characteristics, the phenomenon is also widespread among the native-born, with 48% saying they attend ethnic churches (Pew Research, Changing Faith).

Rodriguez states that there is a shift in the American Hispanic community from a majority of foreign-born, Spanish-language-dominant people to a majority who are native-born and English-speaking Hispanics. To thrive in the future, Hispanic churches must move from Spanish-language ministry to preserve the Hispanic culture to bilingual services led by second- and third-generation Hispanic ministers. Effective Hispanic churches of the future must be "multi-lingual," "multi-generational," and "multiracial" because of the diversity in the Hispanic community (Rodriguez and Ortiz 2011). The research reported in the Journal of Latinos & Education reveals that native Spanish speaker students preferred English both academically and socially. The students viewed English as a language that will lead to more success. Spanish was an important but lesser language, primarily useful for speaking to those who do not know English (Babino and Stewart).

Crane's research reveals that the second generation in the Hispanic congregations presents a challenge to the communities where moral and cultural values of Hispanic heritage and traditions are maintained and transferred to new generations. The second-generation youth are in the process of creating new forms of cultural and religious expression. Congregations where the second generation has active participation have become the "locus" of new cultural identities. A critical mass of second-generation youth pushes these communities to become communities of change (Crane). On the other hand, while the prevalence of Hispanic-oriented worship is higher among the foreign-born, with

77% saying they attend churches with those characteristics, the phenomenon is also widespread among the native-born, with 48% saying they attend ethnic churches (Pew Research, Changing Faith).

Regarding the Hispanic identity and culture among second and third generations, Pew Research finds that second-generation Hispanics are being socialized in a family setting that emphasizes their Latin American roots. Parents have often spoken to them of their pride in their family's country of origin in contrast with their parents talked to them on the pride in being American. Young Hispanics have often been encouraged by their parents to speak in Spanish instead of been encouraged to speak only in English. When young Hispanics receive these kinds of influence from their parents, they are more likely to refer to themselves first by their country of origin, creating a strong Hispanic cultural identity (Adam; Pew Research, Between Two Worlds).

The language usage patterns of Hispanics change dramatically from the foreign-born generation to the native-born. Among foreign-born Hispanics ages 16 to 25, 36% say they can speak English proficiently, whereas 98% of native-born Hispanics speak English proficiently. For the children of foreign-born Hispanics and later generations, embracing English does not necessarily mean abandoning Spanish. At least 79% of the second-generation and 38% of the third-generation Hispanics report that they are proficient in speaking Spanish. These figures demonstrate the resilience for Spanish use for several generations after immigration (Krogstad and Noe-Bustamante; Malavé and Giordani; Radford).

On the other hand, there is a contrast being being Hispanics and speaking Spanish. Hispanic adults say speaking Spanish is not required to be considered Hispanic.

Even among foreign-born Hispanics, a majority holds this view about Spanish and Hispanic identity. Among second-generation Hispanics and third or higher generation Hispanics (the group farthest from their family's immigrant roots) most say speaking Spanish does not make someone Hispanic (Rodriguez; Adam; Radford).

Churches debate whether it is essential to maintain a Hispanic identity within the context of the US mainstream culture. From the ambivalence of this position, the Hispanic Churches create programs to reach out with the Gospel's message to a second and third generation of US-born Hispanics who have become a bicultural generation. Based on the position that a Hispanic church assumes on maintaining the Hispanic identity, people might be drawn toward or away from a Hispanic church.

Nevertheless, emerging Hispanic congregations can be described as "transitional Hispanic congregations" (Rodríguez 678), which are beginning to face today's US Hispanic world's acculturation realities. These congregations express concern about the restlessness among a good number of children, adolescents, and college-age Hispanics who are increasingly pressuring for a worship service that meets their propensity for English as part of their regular communication. These congregations' pastors are beginning to see the need to add bilingual or English to their formational and worshiping life to meet the bilingual children and youth's language needs. These congregations have understood that the future liturgy must include some English if the Church wants to keep and reach out to the youth in Church (Rodríguez 678; Tamez Méndez 54-55). The bilingualism of the one-and-a-half, second, and third generations contributes to developing a more authentic form of bilingual worship service (Rodríguez 681-683; Pagan 166-169; Rodriguez and Ortiz 157).

Furthermore, this approach acknowledges that native-born, English-dominant Hispanics' needs go beyond a preference for English programs and ministries. More challenging is the need to recognize that the barrier between foreign-born Hispanics and US-born Hispanics is not just linguistic but also cultural (Rodriguez and Ortiz 157-158). The use of the English language in a Hispanic church is an element within a contextualized worship framework. One place where this is most obvious is in corporate worship, where linguistic and cultural differences between foreign-born and native-born Hispanics often require significant adjustments in styles of attire, music, worship, and preaching. However, even among highly acculturated Hispanics, Hispanic ethnic identity or Latinness persists.

Biblical/Theological Framework

From a Biblical perspective, the Scripture presents an evident relationship between generations of God's people. One generation is called to set an example and to be faithful in telling God's story to the next generation (Deut. 6:2, 7, 20-25; 1 Sam. 2.6; Lam. 5.19; Matt. 18.2-3; 1 Tim. 5.1; 2). The values described in God's commandments, which were to be transmitted from one generation (Exod. 20 5-6) to the next, formed the foundation for the whole Israelite society. For God's story to be relevant to the next generations (Dt. 26. 5-10, Exod. 20 5-6), these generations had to some way identify with their forbears' experience (Drane 49, 291). The Biblical narrative exposes the success and the failure of God's people to achieve this goal.

Jesus’ teachings about life together includes relationships among generations. The disciples rebuked the children brought to Jesus to be touched (Matt. 19.13). Jesus' response to the disciples' action was a counter order, "permit the children (next

generation) to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (14). Paul is thoughtful of Timothy's faith, which was handed down for three generations through a grandmother, a mother, and a son (2 Tim. 1.5). Timothy, Eunice, and Lois are a model of proper interrelations among generations to hand down the faith. Likewise, as elders, Simeon and Anna passed down the faith through their commitment to God in the temple and their testimony when they both recognized the infant Jesus as Messiah (Luke 2.25-38). Paul admonishes Timothy to appeal to the older man as a Father (1 Tim. 5.1). He also advises the older woman to teach what is right and to encourage young women to love their husbands and to love their children (Tit. 2.3-4).

Language might become a barrier which prevents the faith of first-generation Spanish-speaking parents from being handed down to the second and third generations of English-speaking adolescents. The Pentecost narrative (Acts 2:5-17) is a bridge across the language barrier. The Holy Spirit was outpoured among Jesus' disciples (men and women; old and young) with a language (tongues) which became the Gospel message to a multi-lingual society. Whereas with the Tower of Babel, the tongues brought separation and alienation. Now the Spirit, in a redemptive way, connects every tongue for everyone to hear (González 61). The Spirit, with wind and fire, outpours a common language to connect multiple generations.

The incarnation is a theological framework for a multi-generational Hispanic Church seeking unity to become mature and fruitful. The Word became flesh (John 1.14a). Flesh indicates Christ's humanity. Paul calls this action self-emptiness of the Divine to become flesh, to identify himself with humanity (Keener, The Gospel of John 408; Crisp 118). When the Word became flesh and dwelt among the world, God's desire

and intention to empty himself into them and draw humanity into himself is fully revealed. Through this act of self-giving, divinity flowed into humanity, and humanity was drawn into divinity (Seamands 145). God created humanity in His own image (imago Dei). As such, human beings can open themselves to others. This action is the willingness of one generation to empty itself into the next generation. It is the action of identifying with the next generation by entering in their world as they perceive and value it.

The congregation is called to affirm and reflect on the variety of multicultural, multi-lingual, and multi-generational diversity of the body of Christ (Lightfoot et al. 98). The incarnation drives one generation to experience the next generation's existential realities. It empties themselves and opens themselves to others. The willingness of one generation to incarnate in the next generation is not exempt from risk and uncertainty. Still, it assures the presence of God's Spirit uniting His people.

Second Finding: Congregations that intentionally invest in developing young people's gifts and abilities establish strong youth ministries.

Researcher's Observations

PY02's Church starts delegating responsibilities to the youth at an early age. This approach helps them be involved in church life and develop a sense of ownership to the ministry they are assigned to help. PY02 states that leaders must be empowered to provide ideas that may attract other young people. The Church's youth have come with relevant ideas to engage the first generation with the second and third generations. The pastor has an underlying mission to develop a legacy of continuity. The Church must continue to work on God's mission affecting the new generations so that the Church can be perceived as young and relevant even if the pastor is of age.

Likewise, PY01 states that the way they keep youth connected within the Church empowers them to make meaningful changes within the Church. Assignments and responsibilities are means to empower the new generations. The youth are encouraged to participate at Church's business meetings where they have the freedom to speak in their preferred language. For PY03 congregations, youth events are planned and led by youth. Using this approach, the congregation can see the youth's gifts and callings.

The first-generation adults interviewed agreed that the Church needs to open spaces for the youth to develop leadership. Four of the interviewed youths expressed that having the opportunity to lead the worship team could make worship more meaningful. A common statement among the youth was that they would like the older generation to trust them and demonstrate what they can contribute to the Church. The statements expressed by the adults and the youth at Iglesia Comunidad de Esperanza might suggest there is a call to empower the new generations in the Church.

Literature Review

Research on migration and religion has revealed that there is a paradigm shift emerging in Hispanic ministry. Hispanic congregations and pastors are experiencing pressure from US-born children and adolescents to include English in the congregational liturgy and programs. This can be seen in first-generation Spanish-speaking congregations with second and third generations represented within their midst. There is an accelerating pace of Hispanic acculturation among native-born Hispanics, reflected in their US lifestyles and their steady upward trend of social and economic mobility (Rodríguez 674-75; Hakimzadeh and Cohn; Flores; Malavé and Giordani 69-70). This

paradigm shift represents a challenge to churches looking to keep, reach, and disciple the second and third generation of native-born Hispanics.

A common problem for the Hispanic church is defining the mission of the Church. The question that arises is whether it is the responsibility of the Church to help preserve the language, culture, and traditions of the immigrant generation (Rodriguez and Ortiz 65–66) or whether the task of the Church is to reach all generations by all means, including using the proficient language, to lead new generations to the Kingdom of God. Churches have the challenge of developing strategic and contextualized programs to become the answer for native-born Hispanics seeking a congregation that fits their cultural identity and who cannot assimilate into the US mainstream churches. Likewise, to reach, disciple, and engage the Hispanic youth requires effective strategies since their needs are different from the goals of traditional youth ministry models. Youth ministries should construct relevant models that integrate and uplift Hispanic cultural beliefs, traditions, and values (Tamez Méndez 143). As a congregation, the ministerial role needs to provide a hub of protective factors that help young people overcome risk factors by providing them with specialized support, information, tools, and a caring, supportive, and engaged community (Sikkink and Hernandez 17; Tamez Méndez 63).

Biblical/Theological Framework

From a Biblical perspective, the narrative of the encounter of Jesus and the disciples with children denotes a parallel between children and investing in the next generation. The disciples rebuked the children brought to Jesus to be touched (Matt. 19.13). Jesus' response to the disciples' action was a counter order, "permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these”

(14). Children ranked lower on the scale of personal worth in the culture of the time. When children reached adulthood, their value was realized. Jesus gave children greater status than they enjoyed in the time's culture (Hahn 219–20). The Kingdom belongs to children too. The next generation should be regarded as part of the Kingdom and, as such, have an open space to participate in the construction of this Kingdom.

Paul admonishes Timothy to appeal to the older man as a father (1 Tim. 5.1). He also advises the older woman to teach what is right and to encourage young women to love their husbands and to love their children (Tit. 2.3-4). When they heard the new preacher Apollo, Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and explained the way of God more accurately (Acts 18.24-26). The action is a model of a generation who perceive God as working with the new generations and is willing to work hand in hand in the process of discipleship. There is a contribution the current generation has to offer to the new generation.

From a theological perspective, the analogy of the incarnation described by John states that the "Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1.14). A literal translation of the text suggests that the Word moved its tabernacle, or His tent, to live with people. Keener states that Jesus Christ, "the Word," is the true locus of God's activity among humanity (Keener, *The Gospel of John* 410). To "dwelt among us" implies an intensely close relationship with one another beyond mere human cohabitation. The community of faith is not a gathering of individuals but a mutual inspiration and support (Seamands 150). This implies a willingness of one generation to participate, be part of, and become like the next generations for mutual support.

Third Finding: All three generations acknowledge the need for bridge-building and integration through a multi-generational setting that makes room for mutual respect and understanding.

Researcher's Observations

PY01 promotes cultural inclusion. As they stated, this approach put the first, the second, and the third generations together at the same table. PY02 and PY03's congregations conduct events outside the church building (e.g., watching movies, playing sports, and having food sales to raise funds and raffles), which create unity among the different families from different generations. These social events are conducted in both languages**.** PY03 noted that age segregation in churches can cause a great division in which future generations can be lost because children and adolescents might be disconnected from the Church's dynamics as a community of faith. The pastor of these congregations agreed that open communication must be encouraged to understand the background and context of the people being served and ministered.

Then again, two of the first generation of adults interviewed at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza stated that the generational gap is being filled and that bridges are constructed when they participate in activities together. Three of the adults agreed that participating together is relevant because they can learn from each other and promote unity. Being together allows them to see how the youth understand and see the world. They stated that adults will reach the youth by understanding their style and forms. One of the adults stated that adults must celebrate youth participation without forgetting the adults and that both generations must be bridge makers.

For the participating youth, all participants agreed that it was important to interact with different generations as a community of faith. Two of the interviewed youth acknowledged that they see themselves as part of the congregation when the adults interact with them.

Literature Review

Second- and third-generation youth have their struggles of identity, and sometimes the Church becomes the battleground between different generations. The Hispanic youth ministry has the challenge of dealing with the issues of adolescence and ethnic identity within a multi-generational community where the main point of contention is often language (Martínez Loc. 1710). The commitment to serve, evangelize and discipline US-born Hispanics compel church leaders to adopt contextual ministry models. Competent models for English-speaking Hispanics acknowledge the need for bridge-building and integration through a multi-generational setting (Rodriguez and Ortiz 65; Ortiz 124-125).

Research has shown that Hispanics who have assimilated into mainstream US culture are not likely to be drawn to a Hispanic church outside their framework. They are of Hispanic descent, but their ethnic background does not shape their culture or identity. These Hispanics will likely be in the same Church as their non-Hispanic neighbors. Likewise, bicultural Hispanics might not be attracted to a monocultural church. Bicultural people compartmentalize their ethnic and cultural identity by expressing certain cultural traits in one environment and claiming a strong ethnic identity in another. These people are most likely to move between Hispanic and non-Hispanic churches or look for a

church that addresses the complexities of their cultural experience interaction (Martínez Loc. 2822; Smokowski and Bacallao 132; Roof and Manning 183).

Branson and Ortiz agree that although language and identity might affect the interrelation between the first, second, and third generations of Hispanics at Church, all generations should work together and celebrate their common identity in Jesus Christ through worship and ministry activities. The different generations in the Church should form one congregation within a bicultural and multi-generational framework (Branson Loc. 935-940; Ortiz 119). This will promote spiritual modeling and strengthen intergenerational relationships. One recommendation is for the congregation to shift their activities from youth activities to congregational activities. The congregation's adults play a part, and the youth in the congregation play another, thus creating intergenerational work teams (Ortiz 165-166; Tamez Méndez 172).

Biblical/Theological Framework

From a Biblical perspective, multi-generational and multi-lingual understanding could be viewed in two ways. At the Tower of Babel, the tongues brought separation and alienation. Now the Spirit, in a redemptive way, connects every tongue for everyone to hear (González 61). The Spirit, with wind and fire, outpours a common language to connect multiple generations. The book of Revelation, as the ultimate reality to which God's people are heading, defines unity within diversity in the Kingdom of God. John sees a "great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne" (Rev. 7.9). The multitude is united in one proclamation: God sits in the center of all power! This proclamation is a reaffirmation of unity in God's Kingdom, but the diversity that was affirmed there was

ethnic and language identity. To experience the Kingdom of God, both generations should be able to coexist, proclaiming one truth and affirming the other's identity. One generation does not absorb the other's identity nor create a new identity, but the two create transformed identities in Christ.

From a theological perspective, the relational trinitarian God is also a model for the interrelation among generations. God is best viewed as a social trinity (substance in relation), creating a divine community driven by communion and love (Grenz 12; Boff Holy Trinity 53). The Trinity as a perfect sociality that embodies mutuality, cooperation, and unity in genuine diversity (Grenz) provides the basis of this trinitarian relationship. Diversity in unity among people mirrors the diversity in unity of the Trinity (Seamands 39). The perichoresis idea presented by the early Church to describe the relationships within the Trinity represents a theological foundation for the construction of a model of the relationship among different generations. The concept of mutuality in the Trinity and the invitation to participate in God's life lays the foundations for multi-generational relationships in the community of faith. This experience of participation must be mutual and based on love. Seamands states that the mutual submission, the indwelling, and the interpenetration of the persons of the Trinity not only leads to an exchanged life and ministry as Christ abides in people, and they abide in him, it also leads to an exchanged life with others (Seamands 150). One generation should exchange their life experiences, life uncertainties, and life expectancies as a means of interpenetration between generations. The life exchanging with the next generation creates a reciprocal giving and receiving, strengthening relationships among generations.

Fourth Finding: Involving adolescents as worship leaders beyond the sound booth raises their investment in and motivation for worshiping with the entire congregation.

Researcher's Observations

PY01 has generational retention, and opportunities are given to young generations to participate in the nurseries, in the children's and youth rooms, and in the sanctuary. The youth must find their space and sense of contribution to the Church. For PY02 a proven approach to engaging the second and third generation is the invitation to participate in small discipleship groups. These small groups can meet in schools, homes, or the marketplace giving them room and space to invite others into their own environment.

Similarly, two of the first-generation adults stated that if the youth were taught to lead the worship service, this could boost their Church participation. They also noted that even as some youth participate in the multimedia and music ministry, it would be good for them to participate in other ministry areas. This statement suggests that the first-generation adults at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza are willing to create the spaces for the second and third generation to lead beyond technical chores, which will raise their investment in the Church. Three of the interviewed youth stated that serving in multimedia during the service helps them stay engaged. Their role in the church service motivates them and makes them feel part of the service.

Literature Review

Various approaches to minister to US-born Hispanics were researched to find best practices to address the youth's motivation to engage in church life. One approach is to

focus on youth leadership development for church ministry. Part of this leadership development should be aimed at high-school and college-level youth. The strategy should include developing a Hispanic culture and language program that affirms the Latinness of the US-born Hispanic identity. Any strategy should also strengthen and build on existing youth ministries, particularly those youth ministries emerging at transitional Hispanic congregations (Rodríguez 681). Critical for youth ministry development is the fact that youth ministries must address the core needs of adolescents: a sense of security (psychological and emotional support), a sense of connection (physical and social), identity development (self, ethnic, sexual, etc.), a desire to learn (cognitive), finding meaning in life (depth, direction, contribution, and empowerment), and spiritual growth (transcendence, convictions, values) (Tamez Méndez 143-144; Falicov 378-380). A holistic approach to youth ministry manages all six core needs of youth since the youth are in a formative stage that will guide the rest of their lives. Hispanic youth ministries cannot focus exclusively on tending to adolescent spiritual needs and growth. To truly see the youth flourish and have a profound encounter with Christ, the other aspects of their lives also need to be nurtured through the youth ministries. This approach will allow making meaningful, more profound, and lasting connections with young people, which supports not only their spiritual development but also their engagement with, and contribution to, the congregation (Tamez Méndez 148-50; Ortiz 148-49).

Youth should be seen as assets to be developed and not problems to be managed. Youth are recognized and valued for the potential and positive characteristics they possess, such as interests, skills, abilities, and talents, which can be further developed when a congregation invests in finding ways to nurture these and provides them with

opportunities to put them to use (Tamez Méndez 56-57). The second and third generation of English-speaking youth should be considered a vital part of the congregation. They should have a sense of ownership and full contribution since youth desire to play an important role and be fully included in church life (Tamez Méndez 143-44; Ortiz 83). Activities such as social media administration, multimedia use for worship meetings, management of sound and lighting systems, and music administration are activities that can create a sense of collaboration and participation. To empower the youth also includes giving them opportunities to grow and exercise their abilities such as public speaking, leading groups, serving the community, and providing administrative assistance. Tamez Méndez states that the congregation has the opportunity to create a space where Hispanic youth are known, heard, and empowered and are given opportunities to contribute and build their leadership capacity in the process (Tamez Méndez 190).

Biblical/Theological Framework

From a Biblical perspective, the fulfillment of the prophet Joel's words became a reality as the Holy Spirit empowered a new multi-generation community of faith where all generations have gifts to offer (Thompson 78). "And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2.17). Keener states that the gift was not only for females and males but for the young and old. Simeon and Anna are elders (Luke 2.26-37), but Philips's daughters are young teenagers (Acts 21.9). Joel encompassed entire ranges by listing opposite extremes; young and old together implies people of all ages (Acts 862). The work of the Spirit could also be described as leveling because the Spirit will be poured out upon "all flesh" (González 61). Sons and daughters, young and old, slaves, and both

male and female are included in the work of the Spirit. The young and old will see visions and dream dreams and speak about what they have witnessed (Holladay 102). The "leveling" Spirit not only brings the next generation closer but levels them to a position where they can become co-workers (2 Cor. 6.1) with the Lord.

From a theological perspective, Estrada presents the Church as a dialectic plurality-unity as it embodies the body of Christ described by the apostle Paul (1 Cor 12). The use of the word body underlines the plurality within the community without jeopardizing the unity that it must have as the body of Christ (83–84). A multi-generational congregation embodies this principle. The Church's community, that includes the first and second generation and Spanish and English speakers, is called to embody agape (a non-selfish love) and Koinonia (intentional and communal service). The congregation has the challenge to intentionally experience a plurality-unity in creating the spaces where the youth get involved in all aspects of the Church's life.

Fifth Finding: Parental participation in the development of spiritual disciplines with their children at home is an essential building block to motivate youth at an early age to engage in church life.

Researcher's Observations

PY02 and PY03 engage the second and third generation in Church life, and parents must be involved in the process. Both pastors agreed that parents are a part of their children's spiritual growth. The Church cannot be the primary source of a child's spiritual growth. The Church begins at home. The pastors also agreed that engaging the second- and third-generation youth is done by engaging the family first. The discipleship

process begins with the family at a young age. Parents are taught that they must be responsible for the growth of their children.

Two of the first-generation adults mentioned that the Church taught them to have family prayer time at their homes. Their youth have learned to read the Bible and pray at their homes. Another adult agreed that it is in the home that the youth should start to learn about the Bible and moral values. The home and the Church complement one another.

Literature Review

Research performed by Loyola University, the University of Denver, the University of California at Los Angeles, and New York University examined demographic, cultural, and parental influences on academic achievement among immigrant and US-born Hispanic middle school students. The study revealed that students who reported higher parental monitoring levels earned higher grades during the semester (Santiago et al. 742–43). Research has shown that Hispanic students benefit from parental participation in educational activities, and parental involvement has also been associated with positive youth adjustment, including academic achievement (Halgunseth et al. 1287-90; Cross et al. 484-94). Likewise, parental participation in the development of spiritual disciplines with their youth at home motivates youth at an early age to engage in church life as described by the pastors and youth directors.

Regarding family relationships, heritage language proficiency, like Spanish, is associated with the quality of adolescents' relationships with their parents and the strength of adolescents' identification with their ethnic group (Oh and Fuligni 215-219; Arriagada 614-617; Portes and Rumbaut 928). First-generation Hispanic adults' strong emphasis on maintaining Spanish at home might benefit strong family relations. For

Hispanics, the Church is regularly embraced as an extended family, the household of God, in a way that the mainstream culture finds it difficult to understand. This ecclesiology implies that the Hispanic Church is the place where Hispanics express the deepest and most powerful emotions to God. As one would expect, in churches across the United States that successfully target native-born English-speaking Hispanics, corporate worship services are enthusiastic and Spirit-filled family gatherings where joy and sorrow are expressed in uninhibited ways because language is never a barrier to heartfelt worship (Rodriguez and Ortiz 59; Betancourt En el Espíritu y Poder 55-56; Dario-López 29,47).

Biblical/Theological Framework

From a Biblical perspective, Joshua commanded God's people to erect a monument after crossing the Jordan River. He taught Israel the meaning of that monument (Josh. 4.4-7) which was to attend to God's actions and commandments. The monument was to become a memorial to Israel's sons and daughters forever (7) so that the story of the crossing becomes the story of every generation (Matties 108). The memorial was a tangible icon that served as a guiding framework that encouraged fathers, sons, mothers, and daughters, to a reflective dialog of the wonders of God (Josh. 6). The dialogue about the wonders of God was a family conversation that started at home. The notion of God, the ritual, and liturgical practice started at home. The children's questions suggest an explanation of the past and an invitation to create hope for the future (Matties 109).

Paul is mindful of Timothy's sincere faith, which was handed down for three generations through a grandmother, a mother, and a son (2 Tim. 1.5). Timothy, Eunice, and Lois are a model of proper interrelations among generations to hand down the faith.

The interrelation among generations that occurred began at home. The early Church celebrated a domestic cult. This means that the early Christian meeting place was in the family houses, which created the house-church. The house-churches were the center of all Christian teaching and activity (Cianca 81). The faith that was handed to Timothy by his mother and grandmother would likely have taken place at his house. Home is the starting point to live and model faith.

From a theological perspective, the best environment in which to engage children in church life is home. It is at home where secure spaces are created to dialog, share information, and hand down the faith. It is at home where explanation leads to understanding. When parents exemplify principles and values with God's word, the impression upon the child will carry into adulthood (Stanley).

Ministry Implications of the Findings

The research reveals that Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza faces a challenge in the mission of reaching and retaining second and third-generation youth who use English as their preferred language. Comunidad de Esperanza must first realize a shift in the American Hispanic community where most youth are native-born and English-speaking Hispanics. The church must transition from a Spanish-language ministry to a multi-lingual and multi-generational ministry. The one-and-a-half, second, and third generations must intentionally participate in the planning and implementing the transition. Second, parental participation is essential in the development of spiritual disciplines with the youth at an early age to encourage engagement in church life. The process to engage second- and third-generation youth starts with engaging the family.

Third, the research reveals that the process of transitioning to a multi-lingual and multi-generational ministry does not mean a transition to segregate generations by language or culture. The transition process must construct bridges where all generations see each other as part of the community of faith. The interaction among the first, second, and third generations fills the generational gap as different generations learn from each other. Fourth, the church needs to open spaces for the youth to develop leadership. A tangible way to develop youth leadership is by empowering them to make meaningful changes within the church. The first-generation leadership must train the youth to make them part of everything that happens at the church. The delegation of responsibilities is meant to empower the new generations and help them develop a sense of ownership in the ministry they are assigned to serve. Likewise, the second and third generation must have a voice at the church's business meetings. In these spaces, the youth can have the option to speak in their preferred language and demonstrate what they can contribute to the church. The Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza must continue to work on God's mission affecting the second and third generations of English-speaking Hispanics to be perceived as a relevant congregation in the new reality of the Hispanic church in the US. The challenge of actively engaging English-speaking youth in ministry, discipleship, and worship is unique to the church because it has to do with the Kingdom of God's work, which Christians have been unavoidably called to do.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of the study is that this research did not consider the Hispanic cultural differences within the Comunidad de Esperanza congregation which includes Mexicans, Guatemalans, Puerto Ricans, and others. Further research in multicultural

relationships among second and third generations of English-speaking youth could give more insight into establishing best practices to engage the youth in church life.

Unexpected Observations

One unexpected observation was that the youth interviewed at Comunidad de Esperanza did not suggest replacing any aspect of church programming for something more appealing to them. The expectation was instead that the congregation will evolve into a church that meets their needs. Another unexpected observation was that the first-generation adults at Comunidad de Esperanza were ready to evolve into a bilingual worship service but lacked the leadership and strategy to transition to this worship service type. Also unexpected was the emphasis that both interviewed pastors placed on the need for parental involvement to engage the youth at an early age in church life.

Recommendations

This study established effective practices to engage the English-speaking Hispanic youth in Spanish-speaking congregation. While the results are encouraging, the following recommendations can help determine effective practices to engage emerging generations.

1. Pastors and leaders of the church must be open to affirm and validate the youth's suggestions about practices that might motivate or discourage participation in church life. The new generation must perceive a genuine interest in the leadership of the congregation to reach their generation. Open conversations must be encouraged so that the youth can express what makes the church a significant place for them.

2. The language barrier should be seen as a ministry opportunity to a new group of people, the sons and daughters growing up in a different culture. The congregation

must be willing to learn and invest in a bilingual environment to reach an English-proficient generation.

3. The youth should be invited to participate in the church's programs and events. This invitation should intentionally engage them as part of the community of faith as they execute their talents. The new generations must find a place at the table of the community of faith where they can experience God.

4. An open dialogue between the first generation of Spanish-speaking adults and the second- and third generation of English-speaking youth should be established. This will help each to better understand the other generations' worldviews. This approach will construct bridges of understanding.

Postscript

My journey through this research project can be described in two terms: research and development. Research because it motivated me to investigate the causes of a problem in the congregation where I am the pastor. In the experience of research, I was able to value and understand more of my Hispanic roots. I was also able to hear the voices of academics, theologians, and pastors who raised the causes and possible solutions to the problem. The research process enriched my ministry and gave me the tools to articulate a strategy that represented a viable solution. Development because the result of the research was developing a strategy that will benefit the church. Establishing a possible strategy that will solve a problem in the church is a high sense of contribution to the ministry. This study will join other studies about the emerging second- and third-generation Hispanics in the United States.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Focus groups and Semi-Structured Interview Questionnaire.

Included are the dissertation proposal, the research questions, and the instruments. The dissertation proposal is the description of the project. The research questions are the questions that guide the research. The instruments are the mechanisms used to guide the field research. I'm using interviews as my instruments. All the instruments have the ENG prefix, which means Engaging New generations. Each instrument comprises a series of questions used to collect data to answer the research questions. Each question in the instruments is correlated to a research question. You will see the correlation in the research question.

Dissertation Proposal:

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to identify effective ways second and third-generation English-speaking adolescents, ages fourteen through nineteen, become actively engaged in worship, discipleship, and ministry within a first-generation Spanish-speaking congregation at Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza.

Research Questions

RQ #1What practices within the congregation do pastors, first, second, and third-generation church members identify that motivate adolescents to actively engage in worship, discipleship, and ministry?

Instruments:

ENG Pastor or Youth minister leader interview

ENG First Generation Spanish-speaking layperson interview

ENG Second and Third Generation English-speaking Hispanic Youth focal group interview.

The questions to collect data:

ENG Pastor or Youth leader interview: Questions # 2, #3, # 4, #8.

ENG First Generation Spanish speaking: Questions #1, #2, #6, #8.

ENG Youth focal group: Questions #1, #2, #3, #4, #7.

RQ #2

What practices within the congregation do pastors, first, second, and third-generation church members identify that discourage adolescents from actively engaging in worship, discipleship, and ministry?

Instruments:

ENG Pastor or Youth minister leader interview

ENG First Generation Spanish-speaking layperson interview

ENG Second and Third Generation English-speaking Hispanic Youth focal group interview.

The questions to collect data:

ENG Pastor or Youth leader interview: Questions # 1, # 7.

ENG First Generation Spanish speaking: Questions #3, #4, #7.

ENG Youth focal group: Questions #6, #8, #9

RQ #3

What are best practices for actively engaging second and third-generation adolescents (ages 14 – 19) in worship, discipleship, and ministry at church name?

Instruments:

ENG Pastor or Youth minister leader interview

ENG First Generation Spanish-speaking layperson interview

ENG Second and Third Generation English-speaking Hispanic Youth focal group interview

The questions to collect data:

ENG Pastor or Youth leader interview: Questions # 5, #6.

ENG First Generation Spanish speaking: Questions #5.

ENG Youth focal group: Questions #5, #10, #11, #12.

Instruments

ENG First Generation Spanish-speaking layperson interview.

First-generation layperson questionnaire:

1. In what ways does this church serve the youth?
2. In what areas of ministry are the youth participating?
3. How do you perceive youth participation during service?
    a. What would you recommend to motivate their participation?
4. Are the youth learning Christian values at the Bible school?
    a. What would you recommend to improve Bible classes for the youth?
5. What recommendations would you give to the church to better serve the youth?
6. What do you think youth like about this church?

7. How relevant is it for the second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanic adolescents to speak and understand Spanish?
8. Do you think it is important for the different generations to participate in some activity together as a community of faith? Why or why not?

ENG First Generation Spanish-Speaking interview (Spanish version)

Entrevista para personas que son primera-generación de hispanos cuyo idioma principal es el español.

Cuestionario para hispanos de primera generación:

1. ¿De qué manera esta Iglesia sirve a los jóvenes?
2. ¿En qué áreas del ministerio participan los jóvenes?
3. ¿Cómo percibe la participación de los jóvenes durante el servicio
    a. ¿Qué recomendaría para motivar su participación?
4. ¿Los jóvenes están aprendiendo valores cristianos en la escuela bíblica?
    a. ¿Qué recomendaría para mejorar las clases bíblicas para los jóvenes?
5. ¿Qué recomendaciones daría a la iglesia para servir mejor a los jóvenes?
6. ¿Qué cree que a los jóvenes les gusta de esta iglesia?
7. ¿Cuán relevante es para le segunda y tercera generación de adolescentes que hablan inglés hablar y entender español.
8. ¿Piensa usted que es importante que las distintas generaciones participen de alguna actividad juntos como comunidad de fe? ¿Por qué si o por qué no?

ENG Second and Third Generation English-speaking Hispanic Youth focal group interview.

Youth questionnaire:

1. What is your age, and what grade are you in?
2. Which area of ministry are you involved in?
3. How would you describe our worship meetings? One-two words.

4. Describe the youth Bible class.
5. If you could change something about the church, what could it be?
6. If you could give yourself a score (between 1-5) on church engagement, what could it be?
7. What are some things this church does that are important (or you like) to you?
8. Would you invite a friend or family to the youth Bible class? Why? Why not?
9. How would you describe our worship time?
10. What would make worship more meaningful to you?
11. How important it is for you to speak and understand Spanish.
12. Do you think it is important for the different generations to participate in some activity together as a community of faith? Why or why not?

ENG Pastor or Youth minister leader interview.

Pastors or Youth ministry leader questionnaire:

1. Describe your ministry approach to the second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanic youth.
2. How do you engage English-speaking adolescents in church life?
3. Describe the youth you serve based on age, origin, attendance, scholarly, Hispanic generation type?
4. How do you minister to both Spanish and English-speaking youth?
5. What advice could you give me to serve the second and third-generation English-speaking youth better?
6. How have you involved first-generation members with second and third-generation members?
7. How relevant is it for the second and third generation of English-speaking Hispanic adolescents to speak and understand Spanish?
8. Do you think it is important for the different generations to participate in some activity together as a community of faith? Why or why not?

APPENDIX B

Ethical Considerations Worksheet

Consent Forms Templates

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR PASTOR AND YOUTH LEADER

ENGAGING WITH NEW GENERATIONS: INTEGRATION AMONG YOUNG ENGLISH-SPEAKING HISPANICS IN A SPANISH-SPEAKING CONGREGATION.

You are invited to be in a research study being done by José W. Pimentel from the Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are a pastor or youth leader of 1.5, 2nd, or 3rd generation English speaking Hispanic, adolescent. The generations above describe people who came to the United States before their 10th birthday or who were born in the US and whose primary langue is English.

The purpose of this study is to identify effective ways English-speaking adolescents, ages 14 – 19, become actively engaged in worship, discipleship, and ministry within a Spanish-speaking congregation.

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to participate in a one-time interview to answer a series of semi-structured questions that are part of the research. The interview will be recorded. The recording of the group discussion is for the sole purpose to transcribe the answers to the questions.

The time and place of the event will be notified by e-mail or phone call. The participation in this event is solely on voluntary bases and does not include any monetary remuneration.

If anyone else is given information about you, they will not know your name. A number or initials will be used instead of your name. If something makes you feel bad while you are in the study, please tell José W. Pimentel If you decide at any time you do

not want to finish the study, you may stop whenever you want.

Signing this paper means that you have read this or had it read to you and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or even if you change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do.

_____

Name and signature of Person Agreeing to be in the study.

_____

Date Signed

E-mail or phone number: _____

Researcher contact information: cel. (939) 717-1475; email: jose.w.pimentel@asburyseminary.edu

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR FIRST-GENERATION ADULT

ENGAGING WITH NEW GENERATIONS: INTEGRATION AMONG YOUNG ENGLISH-SPEAKING HISPANICS IN A SPANISH-SPEAKING CONGREGATION.

You are invited to be in a research study being done by José W. Pimentel from the Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are a first-generation Spanish-speaking person. First-generation Spanish-speaking persons refer to people who were born outside of the United States, moved to the US, and whose primary language is Spanish.

The purpose of this study is to identify effective ways English-speaking adolescents, ages 14 – 19, become actively engaged in worship, discipleship, and ministry within a Spanish-speaking congregation.

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to participate in a one-time interview to answer a series of semi-structured questions that are part of the research. The interview will be recorded. The recording of the group discussion is for the sole purpose to transcribe the answers to the questions.

The time and place of the event will be notified by e-mail or phone call. The participation in this event is solely on voluntary bases and does not include any monetary remuneration.

If anyone else is given information about you, they will not know your name. A number or initials will be used instead of your name.

If you decide at any time you do not want to finish the study, you may stop whenever you want. You can ask José W. Pimentel questions any time about anything in this study. Signing this paper means that you have read this, or had it read to you and that you

want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or even if you change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do.

_____ _____

Signature of Person Agreeing to be in the Study Date Signed

E-mail or phone number: _____

Researcher contact information: cel. (939) 717-1475; email: jose.w.pimentel@asburyseminary.edu

I, the parent or guardian of_____, a minor_____years of age, ***permit*** *his/her participation in a program of research named above and being conducted by José W. Pimentel. It was explained to me that the interviews will be recorded, the recording device will be kept in a secure location, and the recordings will be destroyed by July 2020.*

_____ _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian *Date*

_____

Please print your name here.

Consent of Parents or Guardian of a Minor

Your son or daughter was invited to take part in a study done by José W. Pimentel from the Asbury Theological Seminary. The goal of the study is to identify helpful ways for English-speaking teenagers 14 to 19 years old to become actively involved in a Spanish-speaking congregation. Your approval is needed.

Your son or daughter will be sharing in a group conversation to answer questions that are part of the study. The group conversations will be recorded to write down the answers of the questions. The recorded group conversations and the recorder will be kept in a safe location. The recordings will be destroyed by July 2020.

The dangers in this study are slight. There are no risks to your child in this study. Participation in this meeting is voluntary and does not include any money as payment. The conversation will not last more than 2 hours. If at any point, during the study, you, your son or daughter feels like ending the study, he or she can do so.

This study will take place at the Church of God Community of Hope's building. The time and date of the meeting will be notified by e-mail. If you have any questions about the study, you should contact José Pimentel at jose.w.pimentel@asburyseminary.edu.

Consent of Parents or Guardian of a Minor

Please fill in the following approval form.

I, parent or guardian of _____, understand the study by José W. Pimentel.

- I agree with the participation of my son or daughter in the group conversations.
  Yes_____ No _____
- The investigator explained to me that
  - the conversations will be recorded
  - the recordings and the recorder will be kept in a safe location,
  - the recordings will be destroyed by July 2020

  Yes_____ No_____

_____ _____

Signature of parent Signature of Researcher

_____ _____ _____

Name of parent Date Name of Researcher

Consentimiento de Padre o Tutor de un menor

Su hijo o hija fue seleccionado para participar en un estudio realizado por el pastor José W. Pimentel. El objetivo del estudio es identificar maneras útiles para que los adolescentes de 14 a 19 años de edad y cuyo idioma principal es el inglés participen activamente en una congregación cuyo idioma principal es el español. Su aprobación es requerida.

Su hijo o hija compartirá una entrevista grupal para responder preguntas que forman parte del estudio. La entrevista grupal se grabará para anotar las respuestas. Las conversaciones grabadas, las anotaciones y equipo de grabación se mantendrán en un lugar privado y seguro. Las grabaciones serán destruidas en julio de 2020.

Los peligros en este estudio son mínimos. No hay riesgos para su hijo o hija en este estudio. La participación en esta reunión es voluntaria y no incluye dinero como pago. La entrevista grupal no durará más de 2 horas. Si en algún momento, durante el estudio, usted o su hijo o hija quieren terminar el estudio podrán hacerlo.

Este estudio tendrá lugar en el edificio de la Iglesia de Dios Comunidad de Esperanza. La hora y la fecha de la reunión serán notificadas por correo electrónico o llamada telefónica. Si usted tiene alguna sobre el estudio, favor de comunicarse con el pastor Pimentel al 939.717.1475 o al correo electrónico jwpimentel59@gmail.com.

Consentimiento de padre o tutor de un menor

Por favor, llene el siguiente formulario de aprobación.

Yo, padre o guardián de _____, entiendo el estudio que realiza José W. Pimentel.

- Estoy de acuerdo con la participación de mi hijo o hija en la entrevista grupal.
  Si_____ No _____

- El investigador me explicó que
  - las entrevistas serán grabadas
  - las grabaciones y la grabadora se mantendrán en un lugar privado y seguro
  - las grabaciones serán destruidas en julio de 2020

  Si_____ No_____

_____ _____

Firma del padre tutor Firma del Investigador

_____ _____

Nombre del padre o tutor Nombre del Investigador

_____

Fecha

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR 14-17 YOUTH

You are invited to be in a research study being done by José W. Pimentel from the Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are a 1.5, 2nd, or 3rd generation English speaking Hispanic, age 14 to 17 years of age. The generations above describe people who came to the United States before their 10th birthday or who were born in the US and whose first langue is English. This age group is the base for the study. The goal of the study is to identify helpful ways for English-speaking teenagers 14 to 19 years old to become actively involved in a Spanish-speaking congregation.

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to participate in a one-time focus group discussion. Then you will answer a series of questions that are part of the study. The interview will be recorded. The recording of the group discussion is only to write down the answers to the questions.

The time and place of the event will be notified by e-mail or phone call. Participation in this event is only voluntary and does not include any payment.

Your parent or guardian will know that you are in the study. Although privacy will be encouraged it cannot be assured due to nature of a focus group. No one outside the focus group will not know your name, a number or initials will be used instead of your name. The recorded group conversations and the recorder will be kept in a safe location. The recordings will be destroyed by July 2020. If something makes you feel bad while you are in the study, please tell José W. Pimentel. If you decide at any time you do not want to finish the study, you may stop whenever you want. You can ask José W. Pimentel questions any time about anything in this study. You can also ask your parents

any questions you might have about this study. Signing this paper means that you have read this, and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or even if you change your mind later.

_____ _____

Signature of Person in the Study Date

E-mail or phone number: _____

Researcher contact information: cel. (939) 717-1475; email: jose.w.pimentel@asburyseminary.edu.

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR 18-19 YOUTH

You are invited to be in a research study being done by José W. Pimentel from the Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are a 1.5, 2nd, or 3rd generation English speaking Hispanic, age 18 to 19 years of age. The generations above describe people who came to the United States before their 10th birthday or who were born in the US and whose first langue is English. This age group is the base for the study. The goal of the study is to identify helpful ways for English-speaking teenagers 14 to 19 years old to become actively involved in a Spanish-speaking congregation.

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to participate in a one-time focus group discussion. Then you will answer a series of questions that are part of the study. The interview will be recorded. The recording of the group discussion is only to write down the answers to the questions.

The time and place of the event will be notified by e-mail or phone call. Participation in this event is only voluntary and does not include any payment.

Although privacy will be encouraged it cannot be assured due to nature of a focus group. No one outside the focus group will not know your name, a number or initials will be used instead of your name. The recorded group conversations and the recorder will be kept in a safe location. The recordings will be destroyed by July 2020. If something makes you feel bad while you are in the study, please tell José W. Pimentel. If you decide at any time you do not want to finish the study, you may stop whenever you want. You can ask José W. Pimentel questions any time about anything in this study. You can also ask your parents any questions you might have about this study.

Signing this paper means that you have read this, and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or even if you change your mind later.

_____ _____

Signature of Person in the Study Date

E-mail or phone number: _____

Researcher contact information: cel. (939) 717-1475; email: jose.w.pimentel@asburyseminary.edu.

Confidentiality/Anonymity

April 27, 2020

Mr./Mrs.

Data integrity.

The Internal Review Board (IRB) at Asbury Theological Seminary requires all persons that are assisting my research to understand the importance of data integrity when collecting the research. Specifically, at times when family members are helping in the process.

Please take notice of this requirement.

Thank you for your help.

José W. Pimentel

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