ETHNIC IDENTITY AMONG PEOPLE OF MEXICAN DESCENT:
A COMPARISON OF SELF REFERENCE, PERCEPTION OF
SIMILARITY, AND INTERACTION PREFERENCE

by

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ABSTRACT: Using the 1979 Chicano Survey, this thesis examines three measures of ethnic identity as they relate to ethno-political attitudes and hypothesized structural determinants. While this study indicates that the three measures may each tap into separate dimensions of the self concept, it is determined that statement of interaction preference is the measure most suited to contemporary theories of ethnic identity.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Ethnicity and ethnic mobilization are perennial concerns of the sociologist, undergoing constant re-conceptualization and redefinition. The concept of "identity" has often been evoked in this process, and continues to offer a constructive element in our examinations of this complex phenomenon.

This thesis examines the relationships between three different ways in which ethnic identity has been conceptualized and contrasts these approaches in their relationships toward factors said to effect and to derive from ethnic identity among people of Mexican descent (PMDs)\(^1\) in the United States. It is hoped that this analysis may improve our understanding of the role played by ethnicity in the future formation of mobilized collectivities among this group, in particular by clarifying the approaches taken toward studying them.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Ethnic identity has always been an important area of
sociological interest, and a large body of research has now been produced in this area. Yet the diversity of theoretical and methodological approaches together with a lack of analysis comparing these approaches, has hampered the refinement of measurement and the ability to extrapolate from the research of others (Yinger, 1985; Broman, Neighbors and Jackson, 1988).

This thesis examines three alternative measures of ethnic identity in their relations to structural and attitudinal factors with ethnic mobilization among Mexican descent U.S. residents. By this approach, I hope to further our understanding of ethnic identity among this important segment of our society, as well as our understanding of the concept of ethnic identity itself.

The three measures used were derived from differing perspectives taken toward ethnic identity. The first measure uses self referent in a manner consistent with the Twenty Statements Test of Kuhn and McPartland (1954, p.72-74). The importance of self referent as a predictor of assimilation was demonstrated by Philip Lampe (1978, 1981) in his studies of Mexican American school children. It also serves as the basis of current Census data gathering. The emphasis of this measure is on the self label. Labels are viewed as creating situated identities which affect behavior (Schneider,
Hastorf, and Ellsworth, 1979, p.101-106), a means of maintaining self continuity, and as means of communicating roles to others.

What I have termed **perception of similarity**, the second measure, is taken almost directly from the work of Gurin, Miller and Gurin (1980) and is derived in part from theories of cognitive differentiation as the basis of group formation. The emphasis of this measure is on ethnicity as it derives from perceived similarities to one ethnic group in contrast to others. It is thus premised in part on cognitive social psychologies use of "schema" as a foundation for identity processes.

The third measure, which I have termed **interaction preference**, is a derivative of an emphasis on "orientational others" (Kuhn, 1964). Geertz (1963) and Greeley (1974) share a similar perspective (though by no means the same) in defining the "longing not to belong to any other group" as the defining characteristic of ethnicity. Drawing upon Rosenberg's notion of the consonant context (1981, 1986; Rosenberg and Kaplan, 1982) and the sociological literature on ethnic entrepreneurial enclaves, the tendency of ethnic individuals to "stick together" will be examined as a measure of personal identification.
It is not at all clear that three different processes are occurring, but by the same token no one has examined whether they are the same. By examining the strength of the relationship between the three measures, and between identity, its hypothesized structural determinants, and the behaviors said to derive from it, we may gain an understanding of ethnic identity as it is experienced by U.S. residents of Mexican descent.

Based on this study we should be able to ascertain whether these three measures relate to the same underlying conceptual processes, or whether there are three independent dimensions relating to different aspects of ethnic expression. These findings should lend focus to future studies of ethnic identity and its effects on social phenomena, and hopefully contribute to our understanding of an important sub-population of the United States.

Finally, it should be noted that "identity" is perceived to be an intervening variable (Kohn, 1989). As the sum of identification processes (E. Eriksen in Evans, 1967; Dashefsky, 1972), identity is the internalization of social experience, and thus the means by which sociological variables become transferred into action. Identity elements
should thus predict subjective ethnic expressions above and beyond the purely structural variables such as language group, generation, and residential concentration. This will be examined, and the results will be presented and discussed.

ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY

The use of "identity" as a construct in the examination of ethnic groups has a long history in sociology. Max Weber [1922] defined ethnic groups as those having a subjective belief in common descent, and thus sharing a common "identity."

"We shall use the expression 'ethnic' group to describe human groups (other than kinship groups) which cherish a belief in their common origins of such a kind that it provides a basis for the creation of a community. This belief may be based on similarities of external custom or practice or both, or on memories of colonization or migration. The question whether they are to be called an 'ethnic' group is independent of the question whether they are objectively of common stock. The ethnic group differs from the 'kinship' group in that
it is constituted simply by the belief in a common identity, whereas a kinship group is a genuine 'community,' characterized by genuinely communal activity. By contrast, the sense of a common ethnic identity (as the expression is being used here) is not itself a community, but only something that makes it easier to form one. It facilitates the formation of widely varying kinds of community, but chiefly, judging by empirical evidence, of political communities. Conversely, it is often the political community, even when formed in a highly artificial way, which gives rise to beliefs in ethnic identity which survive even its downfall, unless there are such obstacles as extreme differences in custom or practice or, most important of all, language (Weber, [1922], p.364)."

This definition of ethnicity as a subjective belief in common origins continues to be utilized (Yinger, 1985; Alba, 1990), and is implicit in such disparate definitions as Gordon's (1978) "sense of peoplehood" and the emergent ethnicity perspective presented by Yancey, Ericksen and Juliani (1979).²

The continued use of an identity oriented approach to ethnicity is largely related to a rejection of assimilation
models. Joane Naegel (1984) and Susan Olzak (1985) both argue that the inadequacy of the assimilation model has been demonstrated by the upsurge in ethno-nationalism at the precise historical point that models predict its decline. While some continue to utilize the assimilation perspective (e.g. Gellner, 1983), Sally Falk Moore (1987) has pointed out that the continued increase of ethnic movements in the industrialized states for which the assimilative model was originally developed gives credence to a variety of competitive perspectives. The notion that ethnicity is "mobilized" is an important ingredient in these alternative theories. As J. A. Fishman (1977) has pointed out:

"The study of 'ethnic strategies' has been termed the 'sociological thrust' in the investigation of ethnicity... [I]t remains evident that ethnicity is not inherently a backward-looking ('past oriented') appendage (as claimed by de Vos, 1975) but that it can be as activatable, purposive and dynamic as any other 'modern' collectivity rationale (p.35)."

ETHNO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

If Weber and these other authors are correct, than ethnic identity should be indicative of a willingness to act
upon the basis of one's ethnicity in forming political communities and taking political action. However, this process is by no means clearly specified, and the elements and stages by which it proceeds are problematic.

One attempt to specify the process by which individuals come to define social categories as significant, and to act on the basis of their membership within a given category, is the "stratum consciousness" approach of Gurin, Miller and Gurin (1980; Hurtado and Gurin, 1987; Gurin and Markus, 1989). Stratum consciousness refers to the attitudes, beliefs and action-orientations which constitute an individual's predilection to mobilize with others in the same social stratum. Referring to a large body of work tracing back ultimately to Karl Marx, these authors argue that three elements are widely accepted as essential to such mobilization: power discontent, a belief that one's own stratum has too little power in relation to other groups; rejection of legitimacy, a rejection of a "victim blame" approach in favor of blaming the system; and "generally" a collectivist orientation, favoring a collective effort to redress the perceived inequality.

This framework creates a cognitive model of how group membership is translated into an actionable criterion for
making the individuals concerns co-incide with those of the group. These concepts are still undergoing study, but the recognition of these factors by many authors (Broman, Jackson, Neighbors, 1989; Demo and Hughes, 1990; Hurtado and Gurin, 1987; Rodriguez and Gurin, 1990) makes this convenient for comparison to other studies as well as specifying a set of relationships for analysis.

Gurin's emphasis on "stratum" consciousness is clearly derived from class analysis and is meant to refer to fairly stable structures within a social hierarchy. Ethnicity tends to display pluralistic as well as hierarchic characteristics in American society, at least for white Americans (Waters, 1990). In order to increase the accuracy of my statements, I will refer to this set of attitudes as ethno-political consciousness. We can expect that the strength of one's ethnic identity will be strongly related to measures of ethno-political consciousness, and thus the dynamics of identity and consciousness are of special concern when we examine the changing ethnic character of U.S. society, and, in particular, People of Mexican Descent.

PEOPLE OF MEXICAN DESCENT

The fact that social movement success is often related to the number of people mobilized (Tilly, 1978; Nielsen,
1985), means that changing demographics tend to be arbiters of social change. The current upsurge in the U.S. Hispanic population is proving to be no exception. Demographers have projected that by the year 2010 Hispanics will replace Blacks as the largest U.S. minority group (Exeter, 1985). This trend has already affected corporate marketing strategies (O'Hare, 1987), and promises to give Hispanics greater influence in state and national politics (Kirschten, 1983). Some have even argued that their increasing visibility may already be engendering a backlash in the form of the official English movement (Amorose, 1989; James, 1989).

People of Mexican descent are by far the largest of the "Hispanic" populations, and have a long and colorful history in the United States (Arreola, 1985). This demographic shift would in itself justify a closer examination of identity among people of Mexican descent (PMDs). In addition, this population offers fertile ground for analysis in that they straddle virtually all lines of social demarcation: race (Forbes, 1968; Arce, Murquia, and Frisbie, 1987; Melville, 1988), class (Barrerra, 1984; Melville, 1988), region (Arreola, 1985), and, of course, gender (Amaro, 1988).
2.1 INTRODUCTION

The history of the term "identity" in sociology and social psychology is fraught with cross currents of influence between various thinkers, paradigms, and disciplines (Weigert, Teitge and Teitge, 1986). One useful way to approach the concept is by recognizing that "identity" is in some ways a higher-order concept, encompassing different types or forms of identity.

Dashefsky (1972) has explicated the notion of identity by reference to those who do the defining (ego or alter) and by content of the definition. Within Dashefsky's categories we are concerned here with identity as the social position elements of the self concept. This is the way in which most symbolic interactionists approach the concept. As Rosenberg and Kaplan (1982) have defined it: "social identity elements consist of the groups, statuses, or social categories to which the individual is socially recognized as belonging... In addition, these social identity elements themselves constitute components of the self concept. Not only are
individuals socially defined as parents, engineers, Americans, and so on, but they also define themselves accordingly (p.210)."

From this perspective, identities are objectified aspects of the self which can be perceived, defined and evaluated. Expectations, interests and attention, and processing of information are organized around identities which each represent one's participation in a particular location of structured social relations (Stryker, 1968, 1981, 1991; Burke, 1980; Gurin and Markus, 1989).

IDENTITY AS COGNITION:

ROOTS OF THE THEORY IN SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

As identities are internalized representations of social locations, the concept of "identity" is dependent upon theories of self. The most significant roots of identity theory in sociology can be traced back to symbolic interactionism and the conceptions of self proposed by Cooley, Dewey, Mead and James. These four theorists all emphasized the importance of symbols and social relations in the definition of self.

Sheldon Stryker (1968) points out that from a symbolic
interactionist perspective human behavior is not based on the stimulus-response model, but rather:

"Behavior is premised on a 'named' or classified world, and 'names' or class terms carry meaning consisting of shared behavioral expectations emergent from the process of social interaction. One learns, in interaction with others, both how to classify objects with which he comes into contact and how he is expected to behave toward these objects (p.201)."

John Lofland (1969) describes this process in colorful terms, emphasizing that human beings seem impelled to separate everything down into more minute categories and then shift gears to start clustering categories into larger classes. These "peculiar animals" go even further in determining pivotal categories to simplify the process by serving as a short hand symbol for various categories that are perceived as clustering together.

Classification is the beginning of symbol creation, and of the uniquely human way of acting in the world. The transformations that occur allow us to react to things as symbols, and we apply this transformation to ourselves as well as external objects.
"Humans assess not only the bodies they encounter for correspondence to models of pivotal categories: they also assess themselves. They assign themselves as instances of, or as being, one or another kind of social object. This subjective process may be referred to as personal identification (Lofland, 1969, p.129)."

From this conception of the process of mind, then, cognitive classification and "naming" are the most basic processes of identity formation (Foote, 1951). Indeed, the term identify often refers to the process of placing an object within a category, and placing a name to an object. This then will serve as the "base model" of identity, to which other models will be compared. It is represented in this study by the measure of self referent, whereas the other two measures derive from more elaborated models of self.

RELATIONSHIP OF MEASURES TO COGNITIVE CLASSIFICATION

Three dimensions of identity will be examined in this thesis. The first, derived directly from the implications of the above discussion, is the focus on classification and
labeling. This focus emphasizes that the placement of self into social categories and the objectification that occurs through labeling have effects on cognitions and behavior in and of themselves. Thus, the relevant variation of identity lies in whether or not one takes on an identity, and on where that identity lies within a hierarchy of salience.

The second dimension focusses on the cognitive process by which identification occurs. Differentiation and classification take place along perceived similarities and differences, or schema. In this framework identities have less rigid boundaries. Based on the perceived degree of similarity to others in a social group or classification, identity will vary in strength. This variance should affect the behavior of individuals in social interaction.

The third dimension is interaction preference, or commitment. While less stringently studied than the other two dimensions, this dimension has always been important in the work of sociologists studying ethnicity. Commitment refers to the importance of ties to a particular group for an individual, and thus emphasizes a more affective process. However, the degree to which an individual prefers ingroup activity has obvious implications for the aspects of behavior based on classification of self.
The first attempt to measure identity as a variable was the Twenty Statements Test. At first glance, this test seems rather un-sophisticated. Subjects are given a blank sheet of paper and are instructed to complete the statement "I am..." as if talking to themselves. They are asked to do this twenty times (thus the name), or as many as the respondent can think of in fifteen minutes (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954).

Behind this simplicity, however, lies a rather sophisticated theory of self-reference. The test was developed in large part from the theoretical stance of Mead (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954). According to Mead, the beginning moment in the development of self occurs when one acquires terms for self reference such as I, me, myself (Cuzzort and King, 1980). Since human beings think and act on the basis of symbols, these symbolic representations of self allow the treatment of self as object, the perception, assessment and communication of the self.

While Mead's treatment of the self tended to be as a holistic unified entity, his primary argument was that the
development of self was a reflection of societal structure (Stryker, 1981). Thus, the sheer number of social positions that an individual must move through and occupy in the modern world can be seen as generating various identities (Marx, 1980). This position was articulated by James who observed that every individual "has as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he cares. He generally shows a different side of himself to each of these different groups. Many a youth who is demure enough before his parents and teachers, swears and swaggers like a pirate among his 'tough' young friends. We do not show ourselves to our children as to our club companions, to our customers as to the laborers we employ, to our own masters and employers as to our intimate friends" (James, 1950 cited in Rosenberg, 1981, p.594).

SALIENCE

Different positions in the social structure (classifications, groups, and statuses) tend to create multiple differentiated identities in much the same manner as sociologists conceptualize roles (McCall and Simmons, 1966), and these require different referent terms which are accepted as relevant, or are rejected. I am a graduate student, a Virginian, white, a son, etc. I am not an
undergraduate, a Minnesotan, black, a daughter.

By the same token, these identities are not just a matter of "am I or am I not?" The positions and identities relate to each other and the outside world in terms of salience. Salience can be defined generally as the "centrality of the identity to our sense of self," or more specifically as "the probability, for a given person, of a given identity being invoked in a variety of situations (Stryker, [1968])."

As Stryker points out ([1968], 1981), identities tend to be called up by the situation, thus salience should be thought of more in terms of the "threshold of invocation" for an identity. This notion is particularly relevant for notions of ethnic identity, since the invocation of ethnicity is a possibility in almost all situations.

SELF REFERENCE AND ETHNIC BOUNDARIES

Self referent terms are not arbitrary. They arise through social interaction, and define that interaction. The terms are learned, and their proper usage negotiated and reinforced through communication. The use of a term as a self referent is a communicative act and reflects the
subjective status of the self.

Khleif (1979) summarizes this position as it relates to ethnicity by focussing on ethnic boundaries:

"Language forms our thoughts. It determines the categories by which we experience the world. It reflects and reinforces the structure of social relations. It makes reality a matter of definition, a socially constructed activity; it makes identity a deadly game of recognitions, non-recognitions, and counter-recognitions...[I]f boundaries create insiders and outsiders and separate -even through pollution barriers- in order to unite the ingroup, then language becomes, by definition, the chief marker of boundaries and ethnolinguistic labels the symbols and arbiters of distinctiveness (p.159)"

Language is not, of course, the only ethnic boundary. In their study of language and ethnicity in Belize, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) found through extensive interviewing that physical features, provenance, language, family descent and race, nationality, culture, and religion (as well as others) were used to differentiate between ethnic memberships. These criterion get reflected in the
self referent (and vice-versa) thus demonstrating the point made above on the impact of language use. Ultimately, ethnicity comes down to the conception they have of themselves, and the label they use to represent it.

This is demonstrated in the selections from the surveys presented by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller. For example, when asked "You wouldn't say you were Creole, or Spanish, or..." one subject who referred to herself as "Belizean" responded "How can I say that? I cannot say I am Creole because I'm not, I can't say I'm English, because I am not (p.212)."
Another respondent who had said she would answer "Arab" if asked what she was because her parents were half Arab/half Spanish clung to that label despite the fact that the criterion that she was objectively using would allow her to be placed in either category.

The strength of self referent is such that if the conception of self alters drastically, so will the term used for self description. Barth ([1969], 1986) pointed out that when due to economic difficulties a Pathan can no longer fulfill the obligatory feasting expected of Pathans, he (it is a patriarchal society) will turn to a Baluchi chief for sponsorship and cease being Pathan. Henceforth, he is Baluchi.
The newly converted Baluchi represents a dramatic response to a threat towards one's identity. More common, is the effort to redefine what it means to be whatever ethnic identity you happen to hold; this generally requires a shift in self referent. One prominent example in the U.S. has been the shift from "Negroes" to "Blacks" to "Afro-Americans" (Khleif, 1979). The reason for this shift is due to the associated meanings that words "carry" with them; in order to leave behind the stereotype, it may be necessary to leave behind the referent term. Self referents are manufactured to enhance the sense of self, and act as prescriptions for action (Barth, [1969]; Khleif, 1979; McCall and Simmons, 1980; Stryker, 1968).

From the above premises it follows that reported self referents may be the most direct route to measurement of ethnic identity. If people sense themselves to belong to a particular ethnic group, then they will report a concurrent ethnic label. The more often an identity is drawn upon, the more likely it is to be recalled in response to questioning. This is a fundamental assumption of Kuhn and McPartland (1954; McPartland, Cumming, Garretson, 1961), and it has received some empirical support in studies of women's identities (Gurin and Markus, 1989) and more general identity analysis (Serpe, 1991).
Controversy over the classification of People Of Mexican Descent in the U.S. census (Rosales, 1985; Nelson and Tienda, 1985) is another indicator that, no matter what the classification is that the person feels they belong to, people want the researcher to get their identity correct. Arturo Rosales (1985) has shown how redefinitions in the racial and ethnic definition of the Mexican American in Houston has been a source of political and social conflict since the first years of the twentieth century.

**SELF REFERENT RESEARCH AMONG MEXICAN DESCENT SAMPLES**

Most studies of identity among people of Mexican descent have used self referent as the primary measure (Gutierrez and Hirsch, 1973; Montenegro, 1976; Lampe, 1978; Miller; Hurtado and Arce, 1986; Mainous, 1990; Hurtado and Gurin, 1987). The politicization of certain segments of the PMD public during the 1960s became a focus of research, with particular attention paid to those calling themselves "Chicano." Researchers sought to discover the extent to which those adopting this label differed from those maintaining more traditionally accepted referents.

Most of these studies were local to areas of particular attention. Gutierrez and Hirsch (1973) conducted a study at
one high school in Crystal City, Texas which had been the arena of a recent effort of PMDs to increase their representation on the local school board and in the city government. This study found no difference in adherence to the "success ethic" (as measured by one's perceived chance to succeed if they work hard) between Chicanos and those adopting other labels, but they found significant differences between identifying oneself as Chicano and the perceived importance of human rights, the belief that the criminal justice system was discriminatory against PMDs, and a willingness to participate in collective political action.

Montenegro (1976) conducted a study at a high school in East Los Angeles which had recently been the scene of a strike by Mexican descent students. Montenegro found that labeling oneself "Chicano" was significantly related to a decrease in Catholicism, a rejection of the work ethic, a rejection of military service, perceived discrimination against PMDs, a desire for a college education (though not actual attainment of such an opportunity), and more liberal attitudes toward family roles between men and women.

The hypothesis underlying the Montenegro and Gutierrez and Hirsch studies was that there was an increase in usage of the term Chicano as a self referent, and that this
increase was related to the growing civil rights movement among PMDs. The settings were chosen that would highlight that possibility. Philip Lampe (1978) approached the problem slightly differently. Framing his analysis from within Milton Gordon's (1964, 1978) theory of assimilation, Lampe conducted a study of eighth graders in the city of San Antonio. He found that those labeling themselves Chicano scored lower on overall measures of assimilation than those adopting other terms. In addition, Chicanos were more likely to attend public than parochial schools, to be male than female, to perceive discrimination, and to have fewer ethnically exogamous primary relationships.

Michael Miller, in a study of high school sophomores in the border region of Texas, found general support for the previous conclusions: Chicanos were more likely to be male, of lower socio-economic status, to be primary Spanish speakers, and to belong to families of migrant farm-workers. In addition, Miller is able to demonstrate that the adoption of different ethnic terms reflects more than arbitrary whim, in that those choosing the term "Mexican American" expressed a marked dislike for the term "Chicano." This would seem to indicate that students were aware that the terms carried different connotations, and represented some differentiation among them.
These studies indicated that self-referent terms were important, and that different terms indicated different contents of the underlying identities. However, as Miller notes, such terms are geographically and historically situated. Self-referents change with time and place. Thus, Miller found that some negatively associate the term "Chicano" with the tactics and strategies of militant organizations, and found a much smaller percentage of students who adopted the term than did the earlier studies.

Hurtado and Arce (1986) used the 1979 Survey of Chicano Americans to examine general differences between people of Mexican descent. Dividing their sample into four groups based on birth in Mexico or the U.S., and on primary language of either Spanish or English, they found that U.S. born, English speaking PMDs used the term Chicano more than the other three groups, but also found that the terms "Mexican/Mexicano" were the most used self-referents in all categories.

All of these studies were premised on the belief that different reference terms would reflect different self concepts among PMDs, and found some support for that hypothesis. More relevant to this study is the presence or absence of a Mexican descent referent term. Since these
scholars have been interested in political attitudes and assimilation the distinctions between terms had more relevance; the focus on identity as a person of Mexican descent makes such distinctions less relevant then the salience of whichever term is chosen in relation to non-ethnic based identity terms (such as "father," "blue-collar worker," etc.).

**Self Referent Terms and Schemata**

Finally, it should be noted that while the collected self referents from this type of measure can be classified in any number of ways (consensual, non-consensual; religious, ancestry, national; minority, majority; etc.), the basis of differentiation and membership (schemas) is not revealed. These tests can be described as blind, in that there is no assumption of the schema people will use in assigning themselves to a particular group. For example, if a person describes themself as a "Mexican American," we do not know if they made that judgement on the basis of their parents' nationality, the language spoken in their home, their weakness for Mexican foods, or any other criterion.

Even with very specific terms which seem to indicate the schema used such as "Spanish speaking," or "Mexican
descent" we can not assume that the schema that is implied is the actual dimension at work. For example, Eriksen's (1990) study of the national Census of Mauritius found that respondents would say that they spoke one language when in fact they spoke another out of a desire to express their ethnic affiliation. The term "Spanish speaker" may be used in the sense of having parents who spoke Spanish, the ability to speak Spanish, residence in a Spanish speaking neighborhood, or any other criterion.

We can not even say with any certainty that the cognitive placement is based on cognitive differences. Affect may have motivated the respondent to assume a cognitive identity. A young boy who has seen lots of western movies might feel enough sympathy for the Indians (and guilt at being White) to wish to be one. He may on this basis assume an Indian identity.

This blindness is not necessarily a weakness. It may well be the case that for some people affect is the most powerful schema for identity formation whereas similarity is for others. It may also be true that simple identification with no sophisticated cognition or affect behind it may create the grounds for ethnic mobilization.
Henri Tajfel has seemed to show that this may be the case. Tajfel, Flament, Billig and Bundy (1971) conducted a series of experiments, in which subjects acted to the benefit of ad hoc group assignments even at the expense of the overall subject group. In a survey of children six to twelve years of age, he found that even before the concept of nation is secure in children's minds they tend to develop a preference for their own nation (Tajfel, 1981).

Thus, simple assignment to a category can create ingroup preference. In addition, people tend to react to labels in a generic sense as well. People labeled positively for a particular behavior tend to increase their commitment of such behavior. People labeled negatively may either accept the negative label, or strive harder to avoid the label. Studies of people who have given to charity indicate that those labeled "giver" tend to increase their next gift; there was a slight tendency in reverse for those labeled non-giver. These same effects were replicated in a study of children and neatness (Schneider, Hastorf and Ellsworth, 1979, p.101).

These studies tend to indicate a continuity of self in the face of other appraisals. Thus, the very commitment to accept an ethnic label may create its own pressures toward
mobilizing on that basis—even if cultural similarities and affective commitment toward interaction with others is minimal.

**SELF REFERENCE SUMMARIZED**

This section has tried to demonstrate that self referent terms have strong theoretical and empirical support as a measure of identity. I have argued that such a measure is based on a cognitive model which establishes that the *process of naming* will in and of itself have some effect on ethnic mobilization, and that tests based on such a model can measure the degree of salience involved. However, such a model does not assume or reveal dimensions which are assumed to be important and form the basis of the next two measures discussed.
2.3 MEASURES OF SIMILARITY

One perspective on ethnic identity has received increasing currency in the sociological literature, that based on closeness, or similarity. This perspective has been used to demonstrate the effect of degree of identification on political attitudes of blacks, whites, age groups, men and women (Gurin, Miller, Gurin, 1980), on voting and political behavior (Conover, 1984), and on black self esteem (Hughes and Demo, 1989). In addition, several studies have examined demographic, contextual, and socialization effects on identity using this measure (Broman, Neighbors, Jackson, 1989; Broman, Jackson and Neighbors, 1990; Demo and Hughes, 1990).

IDENTIFICATION AND CONSCIOUSNESS

In 1980 Gurin, Miller and Gurin published a study which differentiated between identification and consciousness as two different types of cognition. Identification refers to cognitions of a relation to others within a given stratum, and as such encompasses "awareness of having ideas, feelings, and interests similar to others who share the same
stratum characteristics (p.30)." Consciousness is subsequently defined as cognition of a stratum's position within the broader society, and is composed of "political beliefs and action orientations arising out of this awareness of similarity (p.30; emphasis mine)."

This distinction should not be confused with that of McKay and Lewins (1976), who differentiate these terms by degree of salience. McKay and Lewins define ethnic awareness (used interchangeably with identity in the text) as the knowledge that one carries a particular trait. Consciousness is said to be present when the given trait "assumes considerable importance vis-a-vis other personal characteristics to the extent that ethnic identification can be the mode of identification (p.418)." This definition makes the concepts dichotomous, and it seems to accord poorly with a world in which the combinations are almost countless (Martinelli, 1986). It is this exact complexity which led to analysis of the self in terms of an internal hierarchy (Stryker, 1968), and contextual dimensions (Rosenberg, 1982).

In contrast, Gurin, Miller and Gurin have more clearly differentiated between the two notions based on the type of cognition involved. Identity is very similar to the
framework established in relation to self referent measures above- it is placement of self in a social category. Consciousness as they have formulated it, is much closer to the Marxist conception of "class consciousness," i.e. the awareness of common concerns and interests with others in your class. While consciousness is related to identification, it is more than just salient identity.

The contrast to McKay and Lewins is also helpful in demonstrating the role that perceived similarities play in identification processes. When McKay and Lewins argue that identification is awareness of a similar trait, they are reverting to a cultural, not identification model of ethnicity. They are treating ethnic membership as an ascriptive trait that is recognized. In contrast, the perspective advanced by Gurin is that ethnic or other identification arises out of perceived similarities of traits and interests.

**SELF-SCHEMATA**

Conover (1984) has pointed out that this perspective is ultimately one of self-schemata, a connection made clear by the combined work on gender identity by Patricia Gurin and Hazel Markus (1989). A self-schema refers to the application
of a cognitive schema (criterion used for discrimination between categories) of classification to the self (Markus et al, 1982). Thus similarity counts for more than just a sharing of a trait, it stands as an internal representation of belonging to a social category (Gurin and Markus, 1989).

In this sense, identity is here traced to a cognitive not affective process (in fact, the similarity between psychological cognitive theories such as schemata, and sociological identity theory has been recognized by several authors. Some argue that a convergence of thought is occurring. Stryker, 1991; Seeman, 1981; Skevington and Baker, 1989). However, as noted above, separation into ingroups and outgroups can in itself create ingroup preference and discriminatory behavior. Competition has been shown to heighten this effect dramatically (Sherif and Sherif, 1953). The schematic approach implies that identities have effect by their consequences on perception (Conover, 1984). By categorization attention is directed toward information that is relevant to the category; memory of relevant information is enhanced; and future judgements are informed by "domain' interests (Markus, 1977; Conover, 1984; Gurin and Markus, 1989). The higher the salience of a given identity, the larger the effect.
SALIENCE VS. SIMILARITY

One of the primary differences between the symbolic interactionist perspectives expressed in measures of self referent and the self schema theory utilized by Gurin is that the first emphasizes definition of self, the placement of self in a cognitive category, while the second emphasizes cognitive association. With the concept of association, it is possible to discuss the degree to which one is definable as a given identity.

While Stryker (1968) advanced the notions of salience and commitment, neither of these look to the extent to which one holds themselves to be identified with others. Salience only relates the importance of one identity to the importance of alternative identities in the self, and commitment (as Stryker advances the concept) refers to the extent to which a relationship requires identity maintenance. The introduction of schemata allows that people differentiate along dimensions of perceived similarity/dissimilarity, and thus people will hold themselves to be more or less similar, more or less identified.

In this sense, Gurin and Markus (1989) argue that for political mobilization, more is needed than centrality of
identity, more than just knowledge of categorization. It requires a "sense of common fate." In relation to female gender identity they write:

"We hypothesize that it is the sense of being connected and interdependent with other group members that galvanizes the politicization of group membership. A woman can treat her gender almost as a physical trait, like being tall or fat or young. When she does, gender identity, even if central to her self-conception, is not likely to generate beliefs about the social and political significance of gender. It is when her gender identity includes representations of relations to other women, particularly that of shared fate, that it propels her to ponder intergroup relations (Gurin and Markus, 1989, p.156)."

This notion of relationship they operationalize by asking "How much due you have in common with most women?" and "To what extent will what happens to women generally in this country affect what happens in your life?" This is a revision of the earlier test which simply included the first of these questions. They tested the above hypothesis by a regression of "sense of common fate" and cognitive centrality ("How much time in your everyday lives do you
have to think about being a woman and what you have in common with women and men?" on feminist orientation controlling for traditional and non-traditional gender role-orientation.

While the authors are able to demonstrate that identification does operate as a self schemata, the mixed results when separating for role orientation leaves certain questions as to the effect of measurement of similarity vis-a-vis measures of salience. By utilizing the measure of similarity and contrasting the effect of a self referent measure among People of Mexican Descent we can test the above hypothesis and determine the efficacy of one approach over the other as it refers to ethnic mobilization among this population.

To my knowledge, no study of the Mexican descent population of the U.S. has examined the relationship between this similarity measure and attitudes toward collective action. The literature does suggest, though, that higher degrees of perceived similarity will correlate to higher degrees of political activism. In a study of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), Maurilio Vigil (1990) emphasizes that one role of the ethnic organization is to increase group consciousness. They do
this, he states, by emphasizing cultural commonalities and by providing forums of communication to allow the different segments to relate to one another's problems. This has been a common approach of organizations which formed the Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s (Estrada, Garcia, Macias and Maldanado, 1981).

By refining the concept of identity such that it incorporates the dimensions expected to motivate people to act collectively, we can expect to find a stronger relationship between this measure and the self referent measure outlined above. There is, however, a third approach which rivals these two: group commitment and interaction preference.
2.4 MEASURES OF COMMITMENT AND INTERACTION PREFERENCE

The third aspect of identity that I shall examine in this study has been less clearly conceptualized than the first two. However, one's interaction preferences are gaining increasing theoretical significance with identity theorists, while at the same time representing one of the oldest traditions in sociology which view such affective commitment as the sine qua non of ethnicity.

CONSONANT CONTEXT AND CONTINUITY OF SELF

In his work on the self-concept, Morris Rosenberg (1981, 1986, Rosenberg and Kaplan, 1982) has increasingly drawn attention to the effects of "context" on self esteem and self-concept stability. Working from theoretical background on reference groups and reflected appraisals, Rosenberg argues that whether a person's group context is consonant (comprised of similar others) or dissonant (comprised of dissimilar others) will have major consequences on self-perception and self evaluation.

Focussing on research from studies of school integration, he finds that contextual dissonance tends to
generate lower self-esteem. For example, Pitts (1978) found that French Canadian men educated in English speaking schools had lower global self esteem than did those educated in French speaking schools despite their gaining entry into occupations with higher status (Rosenberg, 1981, p.609). His own studies of schools in Boston and New York supported this general conclusion, and out of this research he draws an ideal type to demonstrate the prima facie reasons:

"Consider a Ceylonese or Korean or French child who, for reasons beyond his control, finds himself in an American school. We might call him a 'marginal child.' Even in the total absence of direct prejudice against his race or nationality -an unlikely event- such a child may feel strange, different, peculiar. He does not belong, he does not fit, he is 'out of it'... Superimposed on these disadvantages is the fact that those qualities which he has been at such pains to cultivate, often constituting major sources of pride to him are frequently unappreciated in the new cultural context (Rosenberg, 1986, p.113)."

In addition, children in dissonant racial or ethnic contexts are more likely to have unstable self-concepts than are those in consonant settings, due to the same set of
social sources. More students from dissonant settings demonstrate inconsistency in beliefs as to who they are and how well they like themselves than do those from consonant settings (Rosenberg, 1986, p.119-121). This instability of self concept was significantly associated with psychological disturbance even when level of self-esteem was controlled for.

As Rosenberg (1981) points out, self-concept and self-esteem are not only social products, but social forces as well. They act as motivational forces contributing to people's behavior (see also Gerken, 1981 for a general review of the literature on self esteem as motivation). One implication of this notion of context is that people will attempt to enter contexts congenial to positive reinforcement, and hence consonant with self concepts and identities. Thus, youngsters with low global self-esteem will attempt to avoid jobs that require high levels of competition, assumption of leadership roles, or working under close supervision (Rosenberg, 1965). In this way they avoid the negative reflected appraisals from dissonant competence, values, and communication contexts.

Similarly, consistency of self seems to motivate action. Cohen and Taylor (1972) argue that men in prison
will try to maintain their "historical self" when behind bars. Smith-Lovin (1991) and Burke (1991) point out that individuals manipulate and control their environments so that it reinforces self meaning (identity); as, for example, when we decorate our homes to be more "us," when we put bowling trophies on the mantle, bring pictures of our family to work, etc. (Burke, 1991, p.203).

Even prisoners may seek to manipulate their environment, but those of us with freedom of movement probably exercise most of our choices by selecting which setting to enter at all. Where we live, which restaurants we eat at, where we get our hair cut, who we hang out with, which bar to frequent after work are usually decisions made with at least partial freedom of will. In order to maintain self identity through positive reflected appraisals and reinforcement, people may choose to enter those contexts more consonant with self, to limit interaction to those of their own kind. This tendency to "hang together" has been observed for certain occupational groups which face disaffection such as poultry workers (Bryant and Perkins, 1982) or are characterized by high degrees of uncertainty and danger such as police officers (Hopper, 1987).
SEGREGATION AS CONSONANCE

Voluntary segregation (or consonant context selection) does, of course, occur among ethnic groups (minority and majority) as well. Yuan (1963) lists White colonists in Africa and American Mennonite communities as examples of voluntary segregation, the New York Chinese community and Jewish ghettos as examples of mixed voluntary and involuntary segregation. To these lists could be added such diverse groups as Black separatist communities in the U.S. (Bittle and Geiss, 1957), the Canadian Doukhobors (Ardener, 1963), the Cuban community in Miami (Portes, 1981), enclave peoples more generally, as well as those suburbs developed through "white flight" (Adubato and Krickus, 1973).

Sociological theorists have traditionally approached this process under the rubrics of assimilation and acculturation; however, the focus on the use of culture and values as measures of integration is now shifting to the examination of allegiance and commitment (for example, see Hechter 1986, 1987; Rex, 1986). Identity in this context is portrayed as a factor of orientation, of "consciousness of kind" (Giddings, 1896). Melvin Seeman (1981) has succinctly summarized this position as: "Consciousness of kind involves a certain sympathetic identification with others in the same category; but the basis of that identification is not
necessarily, nor even typically, any difference in shared values, but more a matter of in-group associational ties in the context of out-group distance and discrimination (p.405)."

ETHNIC ENTREPRENEURS

As Seeman points out, the subfield which is perhaps best representative of this position is that of ethnic entrepreneurialism. The seminal work in this regard was Ivan Light's Ethnic Enterprise in America (1972). Light argued that the variance in entrepreneurial rates for the various minorities could be traced in part to the survival of particular cultural forms of capital generation, namely rotating credit associations. While cultural determinacy (and the culture of poverty thesis) are prevalent in this work, it highlighted the importance of "ethnic resources" in entrepreneurialism (Light, 1984). Those following Light are now less likely to refer to specific cultural forms, and to focus on ethnic resources as a reflection of the groups' marginal status in society. Pyong Gap Min (1987, p.177) points out that "ethnic resources" are now viewed as coterminous with "organizing capacity," which is to say family/kin ties and in-group solidarity.
The tendency to hold together and prefer to deal with others of one's own kind encourages the development of paternalistic labor relations (Waldinger, 1984; Portes, 1987), the exclusion of competition from majority businesses and the development of a dedicated clientele (Min, 1984, 1987; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Cardenas, de la Garza and Hansen, 1986), and lateral connections with other businesses and external markets (Duany, 1989; Min, 1984; Portes, 1987). These authors have presented a strong case that a general preference for interaction with similar others has a direct impact on people's behavior in the market place and gives instrumental advantages to some groups.

**INTERACTION PREFERENCE AND COGNITIVE CATEGORIZATION**

Mainstream identity theory tends to view solidarity/commitment in a more offhand manner. Serpe (1991) views solidarity (or in his terms "affective commitment," the "intensiveness of affect attached to the potential loss of social relationships and activity associated with a given identity") as a "social structural variable representing society (p.59)." In this he parallels the above authors by locating its determinants in social interaction and structural variables; however, he disallows the notion that such affective commitments constitute an aspect of self.
Affective commitment is defined as a quality of the relationships one has with others, and thus affects the reflexive process of self development without an anchorage in a given identity. The social structure determines affective commitment which in turn affects identity salience, not the other way around (p.59-60).

This position is consistent with its structural symbolic interactionist roots. Kuhn, in his review of the concept of reference group (1964), explicitly rejects affiliation as a significant dimension of self:

"Ordinarily one keeps himself together and headed in the right direction by remembering who he is. If he remembers saliently that he is a second lieutenant, it is not, dynamically, because all second looies clutch him to their bosoms and think of him as one of them, but because the people with whom he is in continual interchange of communicative symbols think of him saliently, and in respects significant to themselves and their mutual interaction, as a second lieutenant (p.183)."

Thus, the import of ethnic groups lies in their existence as categories by which expectations are formulated
and as orientational others who provide the individual with the symbols and categories used to communicate and define oneself (p.181-182). Identities are cognitive categories first and foremost, and Stryker and Serpe continue that emphasis (Stryker, 1991; Serpe, 1991).

POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIPS OF INTERACTION PREFERENCE TO IDENTITY

From these arguments it is possible to cull three distinct positions regarding the commitment shown to ones ethnic group. The first, that of Seeman and the more traditional ethnic theorists, view ones commitment as a fundamental aspect of self. It arises through interaction and learning, but preference for interaction with the ethnic group serves as a primary attitude in determining one’s actions. It is the "stuff" of ethnicity, and such behaviors as the retention of traditional culture and political mobilization depend upon the strength of that affective bond, on one's desire to belong to that group more than any other (Geertz, 1963; Greeley, 1974; McKay and Lewins, 1976).

While Serpe argues that commitment to interaction in the group is not an aspect of self, but rather a quality of
relationships; he maintains that it will exert influence on self categories (identities) without having a direct impact on actions. The "self-as-process" will be affected by the strength of such ties in determining the salience hierarchy of identities. Stated in statistical terms, this perspective would hypothesize a high correlation between social structural variables and interactive preference, but would not expect that preference to be highly correlated with specific attitudes and actions.

The third position lies between the previous two in the degree of importance placed on ethnic solidarity. Rosenberg's emphasis on the role of situational context places cognitive identities in the role of primary determining factors. One's desire to remain within ethnic boundaries of interaction will be an expression of the drives for self-esteem and self continuity. In the search for positive (and consistent) reflected appraisals people seek to insulate themselves within a consonant context. Interactive preference is thus an expression of one's perceived similarities with the ethnic group, and in this sense it is in agreement with Gurin. Interactive preference is an ethnic behavior in the same sense as cultural retention and political consciousness, it is the result of schemata attached to identities.
Interaction preference is then an indirect measure of identity, but one which would seem worth contrasting to that of perceived similarity. Given the emphasis which this affective process has received in the literature cited above, the comparison of these two measures in predicting attitudes toward collective mobilization is expected to be the most interesting result of the study.
CHAPTER 3: METHODS

3.1 RESEARCH ISSUES AND EXPECTATIONS

The literature cited above establishes three different approaches for conceptualizing and measuring ethnic identity. These conceptualizations will be operationalized as a measure of self reference, of perceived similarity, and of interaction preference (summarized in the appendix as figure 1). The first concern of this thesis will be to examine the correlation between these items, their relationships to the ethno-political variables, and their relationships to several variables with hypothesized effects on identity and consciousness. Based on this analysis, I will attempt to draw conclusions about the relationships between the measures. The primary question to be addressed is whether or not these items all measure the same internal dimensions or not. If not, then which conceptualization provides the best approximate measure for ethnic identity.

If the results of the regression equations demonstrate different relationships for the different measures, this will have a direct impact on the theories and methods currently in use. For example, tests using measures of similarity have found relationships between these measures
and those of consciousness, thereby concluding that schematic domain interests and a sense of common fate are the most germane for studies of mobility orientations. However, if one or the other alternative measure provides for improved prediction, then this approach will require modification.

In addition, the general preference for examining people of Mexican descent in terms of self reference may be supported by this study if such a method provides the strongest predictions. If one of the other alternative measures proves more efficacious, then it would be possible to improve future analysis by utilizing a less geographically and temporally situated measure. If the identity measures relate differently to the dependent variables, then it may be efficacious to use different measures when examining a population for different effects.

3.2 DESCRIPTION OF DATA SET

The data set for this study was derived from the 1979 National Chicano Survey, conducted by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan and obtained through
the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. Interviews for the study were obtained from a probability sample of Mexican-ancestry households in five Southwestern states (Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas) as well as the Chicago metropolitan area. Of 11,000 households interviewed, 1,300 were of Mexican descent (defined as those in which at least one adult resided who had at least two grandparents of Mexican origin). Nine hundred and ninety-one interviews were completed in either Spanish or English as the respondent preferred. All interviewers were completely bilingual.

In its final composition, the survey sample is representative of between 88 and 90% of the total U.S. population of Mexican Ancestry as identified by the 1970 U.S. Census. In comparison to estimates derived the March, 1979 Current Population Survey the median age of the sample was only slightly lower (20 as to 21), mean amount of education was only slightly lower (9.4 years as compared to 9.8 years among those over 14), 38% of the respondents were born in Mexico (all of the above obtained from Arce, Murguia and Frisbie, 1987).

The survey was designed to obtain a comprehensive data set on the social, economic and psychological status of
people of Mexican descent and thus offers an exceptional opportunity for in-depth analysis. A sub-sample of 796 interviews containing complete answers to the questions used in this study was selected out to simplify analysis and enhance comparability between measures.

3.3 IDENTITY VARIABLES

The three measures of identity were derived through manipulation of self report items.

Self Referent:

Early in the interview, the respondent was handed 32 cards, each with an identity label, and were told to: "Look at each one and keep all the cards that describe how you think about yourself. Give the card back to me if you don't think of yourself that way." Labels covered family, gender, class, race and ethnic, and other possible identities. In subsequent questions they were asked to "please pick the three that best describe how you feel about yourself," and "of these three, which really describes you best."

A four point scale was created, using terms referring to Mexican, Mexican American or Hispanic identities (terms included are: Pocha/o, Mexican, American of Mexican descent,
Mexican American, Hispanic, Brown, Latina/o, Chola/o, Chicana/o, Raza, and Mestiza/o). The terms Spanish speaker, Indian, and Immigrant were excluded due to the ambiguity of their referent.

Those who handed back all of these ethnic terms in response to the first question (thereby indicating that the terms did not refer to them) were assigned a score of 0. Those who kept at least one term for the first question but none in response to the request for the three best descriptors were assigned a score of 1. Those who kept an ethnic label as one of the three best descriptors but not the best were assigned a score of 2. Those who kept an ethnic referent as the one best descriptor were coded with a score of three.

It should be noted that by providing a list of possible terms, some flexibility and range of the Twenty Statements Test was lost. However, this arrangement provides an answer to the two most common complaints about the Twenty Statements Test: that it may miss the identity dimension under investigation (in this case identity as a person of Mexican descent), and the lack of a clear cut measure of salience (Burke and Tully, 1977; Stryker, 1968).
In this test, evaluation of subjective salience is accomplished through self report of "goodness of fit" for the term as a descriptor. Since choice of descriptor still lies with the subject, this test is viewed as an adequate scale of the subjectively perceived salience of Mexican descent relevant self reference.

**Similarity:**

The similarity scale was constructed using three items asking how similar the respondent felt to Blacks, Whites or Anglos, and People of Mexican descent. Original responses were coded as either similar or not similar. A scale was constructed such that anyone indicating they were similar to Blacks and/or Whites but not similar to PMDs were coded 0. Those who responded not similar to all three were coded 1. Those who indicated similarity to PMDs but to one of the other categories as well were coded 2, and those who were similar to PMDs but not to Whites or Blacks were coded 3.

The advantage gained by utilizing all three items was the ability to tap into social comparison. Identities are constructed based on our similarities with others in contrast to some alternative identity (Stryker, 1982; Burke,
1980). The category "White" would make no sense without a category of non-white. While the actual schema are less well revealed by this test than that used by Broman, Neighbors and Jackson (1988) and Hughes and Demo (1989) from items in the National Survey of Black Americans, it is believed that the advantage of contrast might prove to make up for some of that loss.

**Interaction Preference:**

Scores on this measure were obtained by taking the mean from five items asking: "Would you prefer that other people at a restaurant be mostly of Mexican descent, mostly not of Mexican descent, a mixed group, or do you care at all," "people at a private party," "people where you work," "your neighbors," "your children's friends?"

Original scores were recoded with preference for non-Mexican descent being assigned the low score, 1; both "mixed" and "don't care" assigned the same value, at 2; and Mostly Mexican descent being assigned a score of 3. The mean score was then calculated from the five items, or from four if one item was missing, and this served as the score on interaction preference. The reliability of this scale was
measured using the Alpha reliability model of SPSS-X to calculate a Cronbach's alpha of .8133.
3.4 ETHNO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

This group of variables represent attitudinal aspects of self relating to the propensity to base political behavior upon ethnic criteria. They are based primarily on the work of Gurin, Miller and Gurin (1980), and include their measures of power discontent, and rejection of legitimacy (here labeled system blame).

"Collectivist orientation", is modified to a "political orientation" measure. This shift is made in order to incorporate non-collectivist action orientations that are still motivated by one's ethnic identity. Gurin, Miller and Gurin note that the collectivist orientation is not universally accepted, and the wide variety of ideological orientations to race and ethnicity in the United States (Winant, 1990) indicates that action can be motivated by ethnic identity without conforming to collectivist tactics.4

Also included are measurers of the respondents preference for Mexican and Spanish language cultural forms, and the degree of perceived discrimination against people of Mexican descent. A strong relationship of ethnic mobilization and cultural preferences has been noted by a
variety of authors (Alba, 1990; Labov, 1977; Smith, 1984, 1989). Participation in social movement organizations is often premised on participation in traditional ethnic activities, or is done in order to glorify the cultural heritage of the group. This seems to have been particularly true among the Chicano Movement of the 1960s (Estrada, Garcia, Macias and Maladanado, 1981), and among the efforts to unionize migrant farm workers such as Cesar Chavez' United Farm Workers (Jenkins, 1983; Vigil, 1990). For this reason, it was decided to include the variable cultural preference for Mexican influenced cultural forms.

Perception of discrimination, system blame, and cultural preference are all combined indexes already constructed by the survey's authors. My independent reliability analyses confirmed the alpha values, and the only changes I found necessary was some minor recoding of missing data.

Power discontent:

Scores on this variable were derived from a single item scale asking respondents if they thought that people of Mexican descent had "too much power, just the right amount
of power, or too little power?" This item was included with
13 other age, ethnic, class, and occupational groups.

One alternative measure for this variable was used by
Hurtado and Gurin (1989) who operationalized this variable
by combining scores on two items referring to the power of
Blacks and of Whites/Anglos. The operationalization I have
chosen is closer to the original concept, however, in that
it refers to the perception of an individual about his-or-
er own social stratum.

Discrimination:

This variable measures the degree of perceived societal
discrimination against PMDs. Respondents were asked to give
their opinion (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly
disagree) to nine statements expressing discrimination such
as "The police do not respect people of Mexican descent as
much as they do Anglos," and "In this town, social security,
health clinic, welfare, and other public agency workers do
more for Black people than for people of Mexican descent."
The items were recoded so that higher scores represent
stronger perceptions of discrimination, and individual
scores on the index were derived by taking the mean of the
valid responses (if at least five were valid). Reliability
analysis yielded an alpha of .849.

System blame:

This measure was again previously constructed by the authors of the survey, and measures the extent to which the problems of PMDs are ascribed to individual fault or to systemic causes. Scores for this variable were derived by multiplying by 10 the mean of the valid responses (if at least 3 are valid) to five questions such as: "If people of Mexican descent don't go to college, it is because... 1) They think education is not important, or, 2) The schools don't prepare them well." Alpha = .658.

Cultural preference:

This variable was designed to measure respondents' preferences for Mexican and Spanish language cultural forms. Respondents were given a list of six items and asked how much they would like to do these things (like it very much, quite a bit, like it a little, or not like it at all) if they were available. The list included watching Spanish language T.V., going to see Mexican entertainers, listening
to Spanish language radio, going to Mexican movies, and reading Spanish language newspapers or magazines. Scores reflect the mean of the valid responses (if at least four were valid) multiplied by ten. Reliability analysis yields an alpha of .773.

**Political Action Orientation:**

This variable was designed to measure the degree to which the respondent felt that collective action by PMDs on the basis of their ethnicity was appropriate. The variable was constructed by taking the sum of coded responses to seven questions. The respondents were given a list of seven items and asked whether they would be good things to do (yes or no). The four items initially chosen were specific to collective action by Mexican Americans and included getting a group of PMDs to vote for a candidate, boycott goods produced by companies Mexican American groups opposed, shop at stores owned by people of Mexican descent, and pressuring employers to hire more people of Mexican descent.

The initial scale failed to yield an alpha above .5150, so the list was expanded to include voting in order to
express ones opinion, and changing laws by peaceful protest. While these items make the index slightly less theoretically consistent, they are consistent with the other responses as measures of political action orientation and provided an alpha of .6046.
3.5 SOCIAL-STRUCTURAL VARIABLES

Several social-structural variables are included in this study to refine the analysis. These factors are included for their hypothesized effects on identity and assimilation.

**Gender** is included due to the fact that some research has demonstrated the higher likelihood for PMD males to identify as "Chicanos" and to hold the more confrontational political attitudes associated with the referent term (Gutierrez and Hirsch, 1973; Lampe, 1978; Miller). Gender is coded one for males and two for females.

**Total family income** is included together with **years of education** primarily as measures of socio-economic status and secondary structural assimilation (Gordon, 1978; Aguirre, Saenz and Hwang, 1989). Several researchers have argued that the manifestation of ethnic identity is largely a response to SES (Steinberg, 1981; Feagin, 1978), particularly among PMDs (Lampe, 1978, 1981; Miller; Melville, 1988).

The relationship between ethnic identity and language is too complex to be examined in great detail in this effort. Language is, however, too important to ignore. The
connections are so profound, that LePage and Tabouret-Keller (1988) label language choice in a given context an "act of identity" (see also Eriksen, 1990). Language spoken at home has been used as a measure of identity among people of Mexican descent (Hwang and Murdoch, 1988), and measures of identity have been used to predict attitudes toward bilingualism among PMDs (Hurtado and Gurin, 1987).

In addition to the effects identity may have on language choice, however, it is clear that language has a contributory effect on identity as well. Williams (1979) has argued convincingly that language choice is constrained to some degree by the social context, and that the opportunities and contacts dependent on language ability form group boundaries that may serve as synonymous with ethnic boundaries (also Fishman, 1977). Garcia (1984) very properly pointed out that retention of Spanish is not necessarily a rejection of English, but that the ability to use English and the ability to use Spanish can exert separate effects on ones life chances in employment. Both English and Spanish abilities are thus used in the analysis and are based on responses to queries as to the respondents ability to understand, speak, read, write, and carry on conversations in either language. Responses ranged from "not at all" (1), to "very well" (5). These items were summed in
order to create an additive scales.

Personal interactions with other people of Mexican descent, and interaction with non-Mexican descent people are also included due to the arguments that such contacts will either reinforce or counteract ethnic identity. Interaction with members of the majority culture is the cornerstone of assimilative models, in that it is through interaction that the dominant culture is learned, and that structural integration is effected (Gordon, 1978). While there is some evidence that outgroup interaction can increase ethnic solidarity by confronting individuals with prejudice and discrimination (Portes, 1984), most analysis has demonstrated that exogamous interaction leads to decreasing perceptions of discrimination (Aguirre, Saenz and Hwang, 1989), more conservative political attitudes (Rodriguez and Gurin, 1990), and higher degrees of structural integration (Kim, 1977).

Finally, generation has always been a primary concern in studies of ethnicity. Hansen (1952) argued that early generations are forced to ignore their cultures, but that by the third generation there is a "resurgence of ethnicity." Alba (1990), Waters (1990), and Lieberson (1989) have demonstrated that as generations pass their is "ethnic
drift," as people forget their objective ancestry. For the first two generations the evidence indicates a process of ethnic decline and re-identification with the new host country (Alba, 1990; Gans, 1979).
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 INTERRELATIONSHIP OF IDENTITY MEASURES

Correlations and regression analyses were used to evaluate the relationship between measures of identity and structural variables. The results of this analysis are presented in the appendix as Table 3, with the first column under each heading presenting the zero-order correlation between items, and the second column presenting the standardized correlation coefficients from a regressions of the identity measure on the eight structural factors. Means and standard deviations for all variables and a complete correlation matrix are presented in the appendix as Tables 1 and 2.

INTER-CORRELATIONS

The first three rows of Table 1 presents the zero-order correlations between the three identity measures. These coefficients are not as strong as the analysis presented in the literature review might indicate. Perceived similarity is positively and significantly correlated with both alternatives; however, self reference and interaction preference have no significant relationship, and if the data
suggest any relationship, it appears to be negative.

4.2 RELATIONSHIPS TO STRUCTURAL VARIABLES

The correlations with structural variables indicate very different effects on self reference than on the other two identity measures.

Looking first at the correlations with self reference in the first column, we note that income, education, ability with English and the number of outgroup interactions are all positively correlated with self reference. Interaction with other's of Mexican descent is related negatively, and is highly significant. When the effects of other variables are controlled for through regression analysis (the second column), however, the only relationship that remains significant is the positive effect of income.

The analysis for perceived similarity (columns 3 and 4) is quite different from that of self reference. Ingroup interaction and Spanish ability are both positively correlated with similarity to a statistical significant degree. Generation, outgroup interaction, and English ability are all significant and negative. As with self reference, regression analysis reduces the significance of
several items, and the only two remaining significant effects are derived from the language variables.

Interaction preference (the last two columns) is the most responsive identity measure to the effects of the included structural variables. The patterns of effects are closer to those of similarity than self reference, but the regression analysis demonstrates differences between the effects on these two measures as well. The zero-order correlation analysis yields statistically significant negative coefficients for all variables except interaction with others of Mexican descent which is positive, and gender and Spanish ability which are non-significant.

When the effects of other variables are controlled for through regression analysis, education, non-PMD interaction and English ability continue to have a significant negative effects on interaction preference, inter-group interaction continues to exert a positive effect, but the negative effect of generation is transformed into a significant positive effect. One possible explanation for this transformation is suggested by the high inter-correlation between generation and measures of integration and assimilation such as education and English ability. It is possible that if it were not for all the factors
discouraging and preventing interaction between recent immigrants and majority group members, first generation immigrant might be more willing to interact with others outside the ethnic group. As a recent Polish immigrant wrote in 1913: "[M]y friends are polish people- I must live with them- I work in the shoes-shop with polish people- I stay all the time with them- at home- in the shop- anywhere. I want to live with american people, but I do not know anybody of american (reproduced in Handlin, 1959)."

**SUMMARY**

In sum, self reference does not seem to be significantly related to interaction preference, nor do they share the same predictors. The correlation between self reference and similarity is significant, but only at the .05 level. The only significant predictor of self reference included in the model was total family income, which is not significantly related to the other identity measures.

Degree of perceived similarity to other people of Mexican descent is related to both other identity measures; however, the highest correlation (that with interaction preference) is only .1241. The only significant predictors of perceived similarity were the two language ability
variables, with Spanish having a positive and English a negative effect.

Interaction preference was the identity measure most responsive to the model. Generation and interaction with PMDs had positive effects, while education, English ability and non-PMD interactions were negative. English ability was the strongest predictor.

4.3 ETHNO-POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Table 4 presents zero-order correlation coefficients, and regression analyses for the ethno-political consciousness variables. Each of the consciousness variables has three columns dedicated to it. The first presents the zero-order correlations, the second presents the standardized correlation coefficients from regression on the three identity variables, and the third column presents standardized coefficients from regression of the item on all identity and structural variables.

Analysis of the percentage of variance independently accounted for by identity and by the structural variables will be presented below.
CULTURAL PREFERENCE

Interaction preference is the only identity measure which serves as a significant predictor of cultural preference throughout all stages of the analysis. The correlation between cultural preference and similarity is statistically significant until the structural variables are added to the equation. Self reference, which did not correlate significantly with cultural preference, becomes significant (at the .05 level) with the addition of the structural control variables.

The expansion to the full equation demonstrates the large effects of what I have labeled structural variables on cultural preference independent of the identity measures. Income, years of education, interaction with non-PMDs, and ability to use Spanish are all significant predictors in the expected directions. The effects of generation, interaction with PMDs, and English ability are all reduced to non-significant levels.

POWER DISCONTENT

The full regression model explains only .011 of the variance in power discontent. This is possibly due to the
skewedness of the measure, with 72 percent of valid cases falling in the highest of the three possible response categories (the mean on this 3-point scale was 2.7). It is also possible that the concept is overly ambiguous, at least as operationalized. This might indicate that the measure used by Hurtado and Gurin (1987) (which asks the respondent whether Whites and/or Blacks have too much or too little power), or a measure combining perception of power for Anglos, Blacks, and people of Mexican descent would be more productive due to an increase in variance. However, initial comparisons and analysis of zero-order correlations (not reported) did not seem promising.

Due to the low level of variance explained and to the lack of any significant predictors, further analysis of this item will be dismissed.

DISCRIMINATION

Interaction preference and perception of similarity both demonstrate significant effects on perception of discrimination, even after the controls are added. Interaction preference has the strongest relationship for an identity variable. Of all the structural variables initially showing high correlations, only education remains significant in the full model, exerting a negative effect on
the perception of discrimination.

SYSTEM BLAME

When entered independent of the structural controls, both similarity and interaction preference produce standardized correlation coefficients significant at the .01 level. The coefficient for similarity is slightly higher at .1103. Inclusion of the structural controls accounts for interaction preference's decline below the .05 cut-off. Interaction with other PMDs is the only one of the structural variables remaining significant at the .05 level.

POLITICAL ACTION ORIENTATION

The correlation between similarity and this variable is no longer significant after the effect of the other identity variables is accounted for by entry into the minimal regression equation. Interaction preference remains significant even after inclusion of all the controls, but undergoes a steady reduction in strength and significance. Inclusion of the controls accounts for an additional 3.4 percent of the variance beyond the 5 percent obtained with the identity measures, but the only remaining significant effect from these controls derives from interaction with non-PMDs which has a positive effect on the perceived legitimacy of ethnic based political action.
ANALYSIS OF INDEPENDENTLY EXPLAINED VARIANCE

To gain some insight into the independent advantages of the identity measures, I calculated the independent effect of the set of identity measures and the set of structural variables on the explained variance ($R^2$). Results are presented in Table 5.

Identity was had its clearest independent effect in the case of system blame, for which it accounted for a higher percentage of explained variance than did structure. Discrimination and action orientation were next, followed by cultural preference. In each case, identity seems to exert some effect above and beyond the structural explanations.

INTERACTION OF GENDER AND IDENTITY

While gender has no independent significant effect on any of the ethno-political consciousness variables, one possibility was that this non-result was due to interaction between gender and identity. To test for this three interaction terms were created by converting gender into a dummy variable and multiplying by the various identity measures; however, none of these proved to have a statistically significant effect on the original relationships.
INTERACTION OF GENERATION AND IDENTITY

Generation is one variable that has received significant attention in the field of ethnic studies as a measure of assimilation (see for example Gordon, 1978; Alba, 1990; Aguirre, Saenz and Hwang, 1989). The lack of any significant relationship between generation and the consciousness variables when controlling for the other structural elements was therefore surprising.

One possibility, is that generation exerts its primary influence through identity, and effects attitudes through interaction. Hansen (1952) argued that third generation ethnics undergo an "ethnic revival," whereby they rediscover their unique cultural qualities which first and second generation immigrants were forced to forget due to the traumatic adjustments of Americanization. Gans (1979) argues that rather than an ethnic revival, third generation immigrants adopt a "symbolic ethnicity," which is characterized by a nostalgic allegiance to their ethnic traditions but has no effect on their everyday behavior.

In order to account for these various possibilities, generation was converted into two dummy variables (suppressing third generation). These were then converted to six interaction terms by multiplying them with the three
identity variables. Of the thirty possible combinations formed, four demonstrated significant effects on the unstandardized correlation coefficients of identity on a consciousness variable.

Among second generation PMDs the positive effect of similarity on perception of discrimination and on system blame is significantly reduced in relation to the third generation (significances of $T = .0071$ and $.0436$, respectively). Among first generation PMDs the positive effect of interaction preference on perception of discrimination and on orientation toward political action is decreased in comparison to third generation (significance of $T = .0340$ and $.0094$ respectively).

**SUMMARY**

Self reference is the weakest measure of identity in predicting ethno-political consciousness, with a statistically significant relationship to only one of the five variables, cultural preference. When only identity measures are used, similarity is a significant predictor for system blame, perception of discrimination, and cultural preference. Similarity continues to be significant for system blame and perception of discrimination even when the structural variables are controlled for.
Interaction preference is highly correlated with each of the ethno-political consciousness variables except for power discontent. In regression equations using only measures of identity it is related at the .001 level of significance with discrimination, cultural preference, and action orientation, and is significant at the .01 level in accounting for system blame. With the controls, it remains significant for discrimination, cultural preference and action orientation.

Ability to use Spanish and total family income are both significant predictors of cultural preference, but have no significant effect on the other consciousness variables. Years of education has a negative effect on both preference for Mexican culture and perception of discrimination. Interaction with non-Mexican descent people has positive effects on political orientation and on preference for Mexican culture. Interaction with Mexican descent others is significantly related to ethnic action. English ability, gender, and generation have no significant independent effects.

While the low degree of remaining independent variance in the interaction terms (all tolerance values are less than .05) makes all conclusions from the analysis tentative, it
does seem that interaction preference exerts a stronger
effect on perception of discrimination and action
orientation among third generation PMDs than among the first
generation. The same is true for similarity in its effect on
perceptions of discrimination and on system blame relative
to the second generation.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 DISCUSSION

The analysis undertaken in this thesis is largely a response to the argument by Broman, Neighbors and Jackson (1988; Broman, Jackson and Neighbors, 1989) and Yinger (1985) that varying conceptions and measures of ethnic identity need further comparative analysis. If ethnic identity is to be used in sociological explanation, we must attempt to relate the various conceptualizations and operationalizations by which its role is examined. This thesis has been one attempt to do just that by examining three alternate approaches to identity as they relate to each other, to structural determinants, and to hypothesized derivatives.

Among my concerns, were the questions of how well each measure fit the expected patterns of a measure of ethnic identity, the extent to which conclusions based on one conceptualization are generalizable to other conceptualizations, and the responsiveness and predictive power of the alternative measures relative to one another. The findings summarized above allow us to examine each of the measures as they relate to these issues.
SELF REFERENCE

Despite the popularity of self reference as a measure of identity among sociologists studying PMDs, it was by far the least significant predictor, and the least likely to fit the conceptual role identity is conceived as playing. The only significant predictor of self reference was income, which exerted a positive effect on self description in Mexican descent terms. Looking at the effects of identity on attitudes, we find that self reference is not significantly related to any of the four more direct ethno-political consciousness variables, and its positive relationship with cultural preference is secondary to the effect accounted for by interaction preference.

The results do demonstrate that ethnic self-labels are perceived of as important. The median score on the self reference scale was 2.00 indicating that at least 50 percent of respondents felt that an ethnic label was among the three best descriptors of self. In addition, this importance does not seem to decline with assimilation. None of the variables which can be conceived of as measures of assimilation (generation, years of education, interaction with non-Mexican Americans) had any strong negative effect on labeling oneself as a "Mexican" ethnic. The strong positive
correlation with income would seem to indicate that ethnic self labeling is more relevant as successful integration occurs.

The conclusion most consistent with these results is that self reference is really a measure of "symbolic ethnicity." Gans (1979) argued that as integration and assimilation increase, individuals will seek to maintain connections to their ethnic past in low-cost symbolic gestures. Rather than representing an associational principle, ethnicity becomes a means of maintaining continuity of self through low risk differentiation.

Recent research on "white" U.S. residents has demonstrates that in situations of complex, multiple ancestry individuals may simply pick one or the other possibility as "their own" ethnicity (Lieberson, 1985; Alba, 1990; Waters, 1990). In such situations, the relevance of ethnicity for daily life is primarily limited to eating ethnic foods, and retention of peculiar linguistic behaviors- such as the use of particular phrases or expressions deriving from the mother-tongue (Alba, 1990).

The measure of ethnic identity used in this study was chosen so that variance is derived from the salience of the
ethnic referent term. While this is consistent with identity theory, it does fail to measure the qualitative differences in role definition which may accompany the choice of which referent term is used. However, the dependence of this alternative approach on the vagaries of specific locale in time and space, and on other situational contexts limits its ability to measure ethnic identity in a consistent manner. Attempts at using different terms as predictors is dependent upon first establishing that these differences exist, which makes any use of the resulting hierarchy of referent terms for explanation tautological.

Earlier attempts at the self reference approach were small scale studies limited to a specific location (Gutierrez and Hirsch, 1973; Montenegro, 1976; Lampe, 1978; Miller). The availability of the 1979 Chicano Survey as a national sample has led to a large number of attempts at broader applications. However, such attempts have demonstrated that the preference for Mexican/Mexicano and Mexican American as self referent terms will be dominant within any stratified category (Hurtado and Arce, 1986). The result has been that studies either include non-ethnic reference terms and redefine the concept to include class, language and cultural factors (Hurtado and Gurin, 1987; Mainous, 1989) or they find no significant effects from
identity (Aguirre, Saenz and Hwang, 1989).
PERCEIVED SIMILARITY

The relationship between similarity and the other identity measures seems in many ways to be one of bridging between the two very different measures. Similarity is positively correlated with both, it is effected by different structural variables than is self reference and has effects on different aspects of political consciousness.

In reference to the cognitive model developed by the literature review, there seems to be little evidence for the reliance of self categorization on the degree of adherence to a given schemata. The zero-order correlation between similarity and self reference is significant, but at only .0735, it is difficult to conclude that they are dependent processes. Income appears to have more effect on self reference than does similarity. Nor do self reference and similarity effect the same dimensions of ethno-political consciousness. While self reference is associated with cultural preference, similarity has no significant effect on such choices. The effects of similarity are much more concentrated on the perception of discrimination, and on the ascription of system blame.

This offers some support to the initial claims by
Gurin, Miller and Gurin (1980) that people are organizing their experiences along a schema based in similarity. However, the earlier distinction between "stratum" consciousness and "ethno-political" consciousness is extremely important at this point. Rather than basing their perception of similarity on socio-economic terms (as would seem to be the case if income and education were significantly related), the factor which seems to be most significant is language ability. In addition, identity does not become translated into an "us versus them" mentality as a strong relationship with power discontent would demonstrate, nor with attitudes toward collective opposition to the problems encountered.

If self reference seems to fit the notion of "symbolic ethnicity," similarity might be portrayed as reflecting "traditional ethnicity." I mean by this that the measure should be taken at face value. People seem to be responding to the question based on there perceived similarity to or difference from their traditional conceptions of one's ancestral group. This is close conceptually to what Joe Feagin (1978) termed "ethnic consciousness," an awareness of one's ethnic heritage and cultural traditions, and the explicit relating of one's self to that background.
The only two structural variables to significantly affect similarity are English and Spanish ability. These language variables are the only two structural variables which might be termed ethnic boundary markers (Barth, [1969]). The importance of language variety (particularly Spanish retention, but regional dialect and local patois as well) as an ethnic boundary marker for Mexican Americans/Chicanos has been noted by numerous authors (Fishman, 1977; Ryan and Carranza, 1977; Rodriguez and Nunez, 1986). Those who score highly on the similarity scale seem to be those who culturally define themselves as similar to their Mexican ancestors and to other Mexican-Americans/Mexicanos in contrast to Anglos and Blacks, particularly along linguistic lines.

By focussing on the objective nature of ethnicity, this dimension would be particularly sensitive to the issues of discrimination and systemic disadvantages due to the sensitizing effect of schematic identification (Markus, 1977; Conover, 1984). However, the notion of "shared fate" upon which Gurin lays the greatest emphasis of her argument does not seem to be tested by the measure, or we would expect more affect on political orientation. The lack of specific reference to a shared fate (as is done by Gurin and Markus, 1989, in their study of women's identity) seems to
deplete the strength of the measure beyond the more limited notion of ethnic consciousness.

METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS FOR SIMILARITY AND SELF REFERENCE

Similarity proved to be a better predictor of the consciousness variables than was self reference in this analysis, and was significantly related to system blame and to discrimination. It is unfortunate, then, that (to my knowledge) this measure had not been applied to a Mexican descent sample. Despite its status as the original suggested measure of identity presented by Gurin and her colleagues, Gurin's recent analysis of Mexican descent Americans has relied on measures of self reference (Hurtado and Gurin, 1987; Rodriguez and Gurin, 1990).

This is unfortunate given the continued use of her original measure among sociologists studying the U.S. Black population (Broman, Neighbors and Jackson, 1988; Broman Jackson and Neighbors, 1989; Hughes and Demo, 1989; Demo and Hughes 1990). The use of the same measure among both populations would have allowed more specific analysis on the process of identity, and of the differences between Blacks and people of Mexican descent. It is difficult to compare
results gained when no standard for comparison has been created.

For example: while Broman, Neighbors and Jackson (1988) find no relationship between income and identity among Blacks, Hurtado and Gurin (1987) find a strong relationship among PMDs. Given the operationalization of Hurtado's and Gurin's model to include a category for which two of four responses are "working class," and "middle class" we are unable to discern whether the difference is due to dissimilarity in the measures or differences in the way Blacks and Mexican Americans react cognitively to increases in income.

By regressing similarity on income in the final model, I found no significant effect of income on perceived similarity. Thus it would appear that the contrary results are due to differences between the measures utilized.

The discontinuity between my findings and Hurtado's and Gurin's would seem to the result of my focus on ethnic identity. In operationalizing my self-reference measure I specifically excluded non-ethnic items and items for which ambiguity was large (such as Spanish speaker). This is not the case with the Hurtado and Gurin measure, for which a
person who describes themselves as middle class, Indian, U.S. Citizen and Spanish speaker would have a moderate score on all four dimensions of ethnic identity—without once having referred to any specific Mexican or Mexican American referent term.
INTERACTION PREFERENCE

Of the three measures examined in this study, interaction preference was by far the most sensitive to social structural variables that are said to effect identity, and was also the best predictor of ethno-political consciousness.

In regard to the structural variables, interaction preference was significantly responsive to five of the eight variables with hypothesized effects (excluding gender, Spanish ability, and income). English ability, interaction with people of non-Mexican descent and years of education had the expected negative effect, and ingroup interaction had the expected positive relationship.

Generation had an unexpected and statistically significant positive effect on interaction preference. Conclusions as to why this effect occurred would be largely conjecture; however, the lack of any significant negative impact on any measure of identity would tend to indicate that third generation may indeed have a positive independent effect on ethnic identification when the concurrent effects of increased education, English ability and other
assimilation variance are controlled for. The interaction effect of identity and generation would tend to support this conclusion, since they demonstrate that identity among the third generation has greater effect than in the second.

The literature review on interactive preference yielded three alternative assessments of interactive preference. Serpe (1991) argued that while interaction preference would be responsive to social structural variables, it did not constitute an aspect of identity and would not have a large effect on attitudes due to its status as a structural variable itself.

Rosenberg (1981, 1986) argued that interaction preference was the result of cognitive identities and the desire for positive reflected appraisals, and would thus be more responsive to identity as defined by schemata than to a given structural variable.

Finally, Seeman (1981) had argued that ethnic identity, or "consciousness of kind" is in large part a matter of sympathetic identification, and in-group associational ties. This perspective does not separate cognitive from affective aspects of identity, and emphasizes the effect of discrimination and other structural factors on interaction
The combined pattern of effects seems to lend itself best to the perspective offered by Seeman. Serpe's contention that interaction preference would have its largest effect through its influence on salience, was not supported. First, the zero-order correlation between interaction preference and self reference (the measure of salience) was not significant, and was negative in direction. Second, the effects of interaction preference out weighed those of self reference for every category of consciousness except for cultural preference.

Rosenberg's position on reflected appraisals seems more tenable, given the significant correlation between similarity and interaction preference. However, Rosenberg's argument would lead us to expect a larger independent effect of similarity on ethno-political consciousness. This would seem to hold particularly true for cultural preference and political orientation, neither of which was significantly affected.

The large effect of interaction preference on ethno-political consciousness tends to support the arguments of Seeman (1981) and the work on ethnic entrepreneurialism
(Portes, 1987; Waldinger, 1984; Duany, 1989) which argued that affective preferences constitute a vital aspect of self, and have an immediate impact on attitudes and behaviors.

While this result muddies the pure cognitive model developed in the literature review, we can console ourselves with having found a measure that significantly improves our ability to predict ethnic consciousness.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The variety of approaches taken toward the measurement of ethnic identity attest to the imagination of the sociologist, but have provided little common ground for comparison of results and of populations. This thesis has examined three measures of identity as they relate to structural constraints and ethno-political consciousness among people of Mexican descent.

Several issues still need to be addressed in future. The data set utilized in this thesis did not allow the measurement of "common fate" so important in the original work of Gurin. If possible, future studies should try to
incorporate this aspect of similarity.

More attention needs to be paid to "consciousness" in the future. This paper did not attempt to judge the efficacy of that approach, but rather adopted it wholesale as a standard for examination. These factors need to be examined in light of actual mobilization and ethnic movements if we are to continue to use them. This may be particularly true for "power discontent." The results of this study would indicate that the dimension is worthless, but this may be due to the ambiguity of the measurement. Rodriguez and Gurin (1990) have found some seemingly meaningful relationships using a different measure.

The variety and pattern of results indicates several important conclusions. The first of these is that, of the three measures of identity developed, interaction preference is the most sensitive to the effects of social structure, as well as the strongest predictor of ethno-political consciousness. While the current emphasis of research into ethnic mobilization has focussed on self reference or self schemata, interaction preference may provide for improved prediction and also give credit to the affective, sympathetic processes involved in consciousness raising and mobilization (Hirsch, 1990).
Following from this, it is concluded that the current dependence on self reference terms for research on the ethnic identity of people of Mexican descent in the U. S. is misplaced. The actual salience of terms seems to have little bearing on the actual attitudes of this population.

Finally, the patterns of affects between the measures and the theoretically important determinants and derivatives indicate that what is often labeled as a singular identification process is more than that. The structural school of symbolic interactionism has provided a cognitive model by which to relate these phenomena; however, self reference seems to be indicative of the more symbolic uses of ethnicity, similarity appears to measure the more objective process of self assessment, and interaction preference reveals the aspects of identity more open to activation by tapping into the affective undercurrents of the ethnic experience.

While more work will be required to establish the exact relationship between these measures, the results of this study indicate that generalizing from the results of any one measure would be mis-leading. I believe that such efforts can be remedied by more specific examination.
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<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<td>Similarity</td>
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N of Cases = 796
Table 2: Zero-order Correlation Coefficients and Probabilities

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Table 5: Percentages of Explained Variance for Identity and Structural Variables

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ENDNOTES

1. The issue of which referent term to use in referring to U.S. residents of Mexican descent is emotionally and politically charged (Miller; Gutierrez and Hirsch, 1973; Arce, 1981). I have decided to use "people of Mexican descent" as the most accurate, and the least connotatively loaded term. In the context that I use it here, people of Mexican descent refers to those U.S. residents whose ancestry traces to persons living within the confines of a Mexican state.

2. While the sources of ethnicity are left problematic by Weber's definition, ethnic groups are differentiated from other competing conceptions. One rejected alternative is the notion of the ethnic group as a biological entity. The perspective that ethnicity or race are determined genetically has been largely discounted in contemporary social science (Feagin, 1978, p.5-8). Studies have demonstrated that genetic diversity is greater within ethnic and racial groups than it is between them (Jones, 1981). As such, genetic examination of ethnicity seems misplaced.

A closely related idea, that of ancestry, has continued to influence people's perception of ethnicity. Simply put, ancestry refers to a person's forbearers and where they came from. This conception is often the unspoken definition of ethnicity used by authors, but it is also sometimes used as an operationally distinct category for comparative analysis (McKay and Lewins, 1978). This conception underlies most work in assimilation, when ethnicity is treated as ancestry and generation is used to differentiate between ethnic cohorts.

The ancestry approach has received its strongest critique from Richard Alba. Alba argues that the prevalence of mixed ancestry among whites (Alba and Chamlin,1983; Alba, 1990; Lieberson and Waters, 1986) de-legitimates the ancestral conception of ethnicity (1990, p.21). In fact, in his study, Alba has used an identity definition of ethnicity and shown that it is related to ancestry, but not coterminous (1990, chapter 2).

Equating ancestry with ethnicity is rejected by Weber for an additional reason. Weber recognized that people organize based on a belief in ancestry, not the actual blood ties. The appreciation of this fact is critical to understand the phenomenon of emergent ethnicity. Often ethnic affilliance develops in urban or regional experiences that may supersede ancestry as defining one's "ethnic/ancestry" group (Yancey et.al., 1976).
Finally, it must be noted that this focus on subjective orientations has been criticized for its difficulties in dealing with the stability of racial conflicts (see for example Omi and Winant, 1986). My position is that race is still a social construction of descent, marked by phenotypical characteristics or by genetic categories. This type of ethnic group is more stable than that based on cultural boundary markers because of its ascriptive quality, but it avoids the many contradictions involved in other approaches (such as those of Rex, 1986, p.20-22). Social distinctions and conflict based on "race" and culture can exist simultaneously as is the case of the United States today.

3. It is possible, given the definition of ethnicity utilized in this study, that different ethnic terms are indicative of different ethnic identities. It is possible that those choosing the term "Chicano" trace their ancestry to their indigenous, "native" American ancestors, or to migrant farm-worker ancestors, and differentiate themselves from those who trace their ancestry to their European roots and the patrones of the large ranches. However, their is little mention of this possible development in the literature.

While I did not run any specific tests on this potentiality, the frequency and distribution of various terms from this data set tended to lend little support (if any) to the possibility. Hurtado and Arce (1986) did label their four groups as Mexican, Chicano, Mexican American, and Pocho; however, these labels were determined by the authors' preferences, and did not represent the most commonly used terms within the group.

4. Collective action and individual action are two different strategies of action which individuals may choose between as the best way to enhance the stratum's position. They are not necessarily incompatible means to this end. Thus, the choice of a collectivist orientation rather than individualist would seem to be historically situated by systemic characteristics outside the presence or absence of ethnic identity. Since this analysis is concerned with ethnic mobilization rather than collective action, the dichotomy will be reunited.

5. To calculate the independent effects on explained variance I ran two separate regressions on each dependent variable. The first regression entered the identity variables first and calculated a partial $R^2$ before entering the structural variables, and calculating the full $R^2$. By subtracting the partial from the full $R^2$, dividing by the full
value, and multiplying by 100 I calculated the percentage of $R^2$ independently explained by the structural variables. This process was repeated to calculate the independent percentage accounted for by the identity measures.
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Basic Books.


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[Signature]

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