Innovation among Latinos: Exploring Differences across Genders

Innovación entre latinos: explorando diferencias entre géneros

Inovação entre latinos: explorando diferenças entre gêneros

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Abstract

This study begins the effort to understand how cultural diversity impacts innovation. In an attempt to assess the attitudes, opinions, and disposition of individuals with diverse backgrounds have towards innovation, a group of 781 Latino professionals were surveyed. Responses were tallied by gender to find out if there is a difference in how males and females in this demographic view innovation. Results show that for the most part the genders are in alignment, but there are several important areas in which they differ. These are in how innovation is defined, risk taking, where innovation provides the most value, and who is in the best position to initiate innovation.

Key words: innovation, culture, diversity, latino.

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Resumen

Esta investigación marca el comienzo de un proceso que ayudará a entender cómo la cultura influye en la innovación. El proposito del estudio fue medir las actitudes, opiniones y disposición respecto de la innovación de personas de múltiples culturas. Un grupo de 781 profesionales radicados en los Estados Unidos, de raíces latinoamericanas, respondió una encuesta relacionada con la innovación. Los resultados, que fueron tabulados teniendo en cuenta el género de los participantes, indican que los grupos femenino y masculino, por lo general, están de acuerdo en sus opiniones. Pero las opiniones son un poco diferentes en cuanto a cómo los grupos definen la innovación, cómo asumen riesgos, a su percepción acerca de dónde la innovación provee un mayor valor y a propósito de quién está en mejor posición para iniciar la innovación.

Palabras clave: innovación, cultura, diversidad, latinos.

Resumo

Esta pesquisa marca o começo de um processo que ajudará a entender como a cultura influi na inovação. O propósito do estudo foi medir as atitudes, opiniões e disposição para a inovação de pessoas de múltiples culturas. Um grupo de 781 profissionais nos Estados Unidos cujas raízes originais eram da Latino-América respondeu uma enquete relacionada com a inovação. Os resultados, que foram tabulados tendo em conta o gênero dos participantes, indicam que estes dois grupos pelo geral estão de acordo em suas opiniões. Mas as opiniões são um pouco diferentes em quanto a como os grupos definem a inovação, tomam riscos, sua percepção de onde a inovação provê um maior valor, e quem está em melhor posição de iniciar a inovação.

Palavras chave: inovação, cultura, diversidade, latino.

I. INTRODUCTION

Understanding and integrating innovative practices into organizational strategy can be important for a company that wants to differentiate itself. Consultants and researchers continue to develop concepts such as disruptive (Christenson, 2007) and open innovation (Igartua, Garrigós & Hervas-Oliver, 2010) that organizations attempt to integrate into their daily operations. Consequently, innovation has been studied primarily to comprehend, develop, and integrate methodologies (Giesen, Riddleberger, Christner & Bell, 2010), or to increase the innovative performance of teams (Katz, 2004). From a cultural perspective, the emphasis takes on an organizational view (Chalhoub, 2010) to understand and manage the research and development-marketing interface (Katz, 2004). Little focus is given to cultural backgrounds re-

lative to how they influence views on innovation and the perspectives and approaches employees bring to the table. Moreover, a dearth of research addresses the ways in which multinational firms approach workforce globalization and the innovation inherent in highly talented and diverse groups. Diversity management and innovation among diverse groups needs to be examined more extensively (Sippola & Smale, 2007).

Organizations are run by people operating from different backgrounds and paradigms. Firms must contend with differing thoughts, opinions, and attitudes inherent in heterogeneous groups. Corporations have embraced the integration of a diverse workforce for many years. They also realize the value of understanding these cultures in developing customized products for the multicultural markets they serve. Therefore, firms seek to have their workforce reflect the diversity that is representative of these markets (Cox, 2001). They place great emphasis on the value of the opinions that the differences in perspective, gender, race, religion, age, experience and other variables bring to them (Gupta, 2009). Combined, these variables make up cultural diversity. "Workforce diversity [is] an asset to be leveraged as it brought with it diversity of thought resulting in increased potential for innovative solution finding and enhanced performance" (Gupta, 2009: 109). Workforce diversity can help inspire innovation as diverse ideas are shared which can help firms enjoy a wider variety of ideas to consider. Ultimately, workforce diversity, gender, racial, as well as other kinds of diversity, can be an asset, enabling firms to differentiate themselves in order to attain greater success (Gupta, 2009).

Diversity is a product of multiple cultures existing in a common environment. Culture describes societies and defines institutions. It is the foundation upon which societies have developed laws (Beralho & Elisu, 2010) and has led to the building of wealth (Ramin, Firoz & Kwatang, 2010) for some societies. But when discussing societal cultures there is a significant void, or linkage, in connecting this diversity with innovation. Negroponte (2003) posits that diversity is a basic requirement of developing systems for innovation. But he does not offer methods that would have managers understand how to look at innovation through a cultural lens. Instead, he makes recommendations regarding risk taking, openness, and idea sharing. As a result, the purpose of this study is to connect the two variables of diversity and innovation in an effort to understand the attitudes, opinions, and dispositions of diverse groups towards innovation.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE AND DIVERSITY

Culture is a societal survival tool (Ramin, Firoz, & Kwarteng, 2010) with numerous components that impact how individuals will approach innovation: knowledge, morals, art, and beliefs, to mention a few. It is more important than ever to understand it because technology has enabled the world to accelerate the globalization process, and immigration patterns have also changed the cultural landscape of established economies (Song, 2005). This is due, in part, to many countries inviting workers to migrate because they have important skills while others receive migrants looking for a livelihood in an environment that offers a more favorable way of life for them. Global companies also seek to leverage their workforce around the world. In particular, consulting and outsourcing providers.

Many service providers have taken the lead role for some of their client's knowledge processing and innovation projects. This cross-continental approach also has its challenges in managing multi-cultural workforces. Adding to the complexity of managing these teams is the ability to understand a culture that may be located remotely and that may only provide occasional communication opportunities. Consequently, building knowledge of cultures and the specific triggers and sensitivities that people value are key success factors for companies that want to exploit their innovative resources. Thus, companies are functioning with teams that are more culturally diverse than ever, and each potentially approaching innovation with a different perspective. A firm can cast a wide net to make teams more innovative while unfortunately still not maximizing their efforts because they don't understand how individuals think.

In the last several decades, non-dominant or co-cultural groups, sometimes referred to as minority groups, have been recruited and integrated into the workforce more aggressively because companies believe their diverse opinions will add value to firms as they offer fresh perspectives on business (Cox, 2001; Cox & Blake, 1991). Recruiting diversity has become a skill most companies continue to embrace and develop (Cox, 2001). The challenge is to embed diversity throughout the organization and to manage this diverse workforce effectively. Some organizational members have become cynical of diversity initiatives because too many companies make the mistake of seeking warm bodies and numbers to appease the government rather than building a workforce comprised of highly talented staff that will give firms a competitive advantage (Cox, 2001). "The

challenges of integrating global diversity management were found to reside in normative and cognitive barriers related to the Finnish host context. In this regard, the Finnish institutional context proved to be both receptive and impervious to the principles of diversity and inclusiveness" (Sippola & Smale, 2007: 1913). Diversity management practices are needed to help firms integrate diversity and learn to gain the greatest benefit from it. Sometimes firms desire diversity but are not prepared for it. Organizations generate diversity management programs as a result of needs in the internal and external environment. However, implementation of the programs requires work and the ability to manage cultural differences (Pitts et al. 2010). The goal of diversity is not simply to generate numbers. Cox and Blake (1991) suggest that managing diversity well can give firms a competitive advantage. Hiring the right people and taking advantage of their skills can help firms become more innovative. Diversity has a plethora of benefits, and Cox (2001) introduces several arguments in favor of diversity. First, the cost of failure to properly integrate diverse workforces will increase. Second, the resource-acquisition argument suggests that the firm's reputation will be influenced by its ability to create an environment that is welcoming for women and non-dominant racial groups. Third, the marketing argument says that employees with roots in other countries may bring greater insight to the marketing table than firms would gather with monolithic or homogenous groups. Fourth, diversity will improve the level of creativity if the culture of the organization does not overly emphasize conformity. Finally, the problem-solving argument is that heterogeneous groups generate a wider variety of ideas and greater critical analysis in determining how to resolve conflicts. Diverse workforces can help firms gain competitive advantages when managed well.

Some organizations neglected to fully realize their potential with diverse workforces. For example, some non-dominant racial group members still report experiences of marginalization in organizations instead of empowerment to help advance firms. One Latino man shared his workplace experience:

Suggestions sometimes were muted when offered by Latino/a or Hispanic Americans. A teacher said that although he and his boss had mutual respect, he has witnessed negative differential treatment at various points throughout their relationship. "I noticed at faculty meetings, when we are generating ideas, because of my accent I feel that my ideas are not as important

or maybe, even [seen as though] I don't know what I am talking about. […] Somebody else would come and say, maybe my idea, the same idea, in other words [and get the credit]" (Gates, 2008: 664).

This suggests that at least in the experiences of the Latino above, freedom to generate or share ideas is not always widespread. Diversity can present some challenges for all groups as they strive to manage it well so as to maximize the benefits. Surprisingly, "while non-whites may be more likely to appreciate others and seek diverse experiences with others, they are not more likely to feel more connected to or comfortable with diversity than are whites" (Strauss, Sawyerr & Oke, 2008: 162). This research may be indicative of the need for all employees to adjust to changes that result from diversity initiatives. Some may openly embrace diversity while others shy away from it. Strauss et al. (2008) found that "people who pursue independent thought and action and favor change may seek experiences with diverse others but will not necessarily value (realistic appreciation) or feel more connected to diverse others (comfort with difference)" (162). Diversity sometimes results in interpersonal conflict. Sometimes cultural wars erupt in organizations when dominant cultural norms conflict with cultural norms of non-dominant groups (Turner, 2007). Global teams, such as with international mergers, can present interpersonal challenges for employees. Psychology and anthropology research can help firms understand cultural differences and devise strategies to overcome communication barriers. Hofstede's work has contributed to understandings of cultural differences (Turner, 2007). It is important to remember that dominant and non-dominant racial groups may have a lot in common in terms of class, age, and background. Just as similarities may exist across racial groups, organizational members must also remember that diversity exists within racial groups. This means that relying solely on stereotypes could prove problematic to companies. Getting to know employees and devising strategies to maximize their talents and skills could ultimately expand the resources and capabilities of organizations. Innovation can result when diversity is embraced and human resources are leveraged.

Although many performance enhancing methods that can be selected by a company exist, innovation is a source of competitive differentiation that is still very popular (Cooper & Edgett, 2010). If the value of having a diverse workforce lies in approaching solutions from different perspectives, then innovation efforts will benefit from this

as well. People from diverse backgrounds approach problem solving differently. Consequently, if firms understand this from a managerial perspective, they are in a position to elicit greater innovation and better performance from teams.

III. GENDER AND THE WORKFORCE

While race seems to play a salient role in the workplace experiences of many organizational members (Cox, 2001; Gates, 2008), gender differences also shaped perceptions of workplace experiences. Gender presents an interesting challenge within a cultural context. It adds another layer of complexity. Organizational members must recognize that diversity exists within races and across races, especially as these differences relate to gender. For example, Latino men might express experiencing vastly different organizational encounters than Latina women. However, the reality in some circles is that as we look at understanding multiculturalism, the opinions and views expressed by a particular group take a non-gender approach. That is, some individuals regard the workplace experiences of women and men from the same race similarly, as one opinion. This, nevertheless, is not the reality of lived, gendered experiences in many organizations. Echoing this sentiment, Song (2005) notes, different cultures do establish laws that treat genders differently. Thus, it is inferred that women will bring different views to organizations because they have been shaped by different circumstances within their own culture. Other scholarly writings assert that women and men have different organizational needs in order to thrive. For instance, Sircar (2009) maintains that women tend to thrive in environments whereby their immediate supervisors are nurturing, supportive, and caring. Gates (2008) also revealed that Latina women welcomed supportive relationships with their supervisors. Gender diversity is important as well because opinions may differ across genders and these differences may lead to greater variety in ideas and more innovative approaches to problem solving. Learning how to manage gender differences might help firms enhance tactics to become more innovative.

Galbraith (2010) pointed out that firms interested in cultivating female friendly environments can do the following:

> 1) Conduct a proper and well-designed survey to root out biases and barriers to women's advancement; 2) Make gender parity a serious top-management goal; 3) Make the business case for diversity; 4) Fill the pipeline; 5) Expand

> the recruiting tool; 6) Publicize internal job vacancies and encourage people, especially women, to apply for them; 7) Provide training and coaching programs to help senior executives develop a more collaborative style of management; 8) Make it easy to network and communicate by co-locating teams, instituting rotational assignments and cross-training exchanges, as well as sponsoring group training and problem-solving events; 9) Develop a mentoring program; 10) Remove barriers to success, and 11) Give women high-profile assignments and provide them the support to succeed. (Galbraith, 2010: 47)

While these steps might be a significant undertaking, they can lead to conditions in which women are more likely to thrive.

Gender is an important component of a diversified workforce for other reasons as well. The integration of women into the workforce has been ongoing in American society for decades. Women have also increased their representation in management and educational attainment. In 2010 they received more doctoral level degrees than men (Costas, 2010). Accordingly, their influence in the innovation process will continue to grow, and their approach to innovation is crucial to capture and understand. Thus, it justifies the undertaking of this study.

IV. IDENTIFYING THE FIRST GROUP

This study is the first in a series that will measure attitudes, opinions, and disposition towards innovation among diverse groups around the world. The study is called "Project Impact". As a starting point, it will compare views between genders among Latino professionals who reside in the United States, in order to understand whether differences are present in how genders in this group approach innovation. This group was selected because of its growth and importance to the future United States workforce.

In the United States, demographics are quickly shifting to reflect a more diversified population. Latinos –individuals who trace their descent to Spanish speaking countries from the Americas– are the largest ethnic co-cultural group, and by 2050 this growth is predicted to result in this group representing 31 % of the United States workforce (United States Census, 2006). Identifying the characteristics and key motivators that allow the workforce from this group to be innovative is an important strategic initiative that has significant organizational development and marketing based implications.

V. PURPOSE

The objective of this paper is to compare responses of women and men who are Latino. It will articulate the differences that emerged in the ways in which they view and experience innovation in the workplace.

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

Little research appears to connect cultural and ethnic diversity with innovation. Most of the work that is found is geared towards culture and innovation. However, these efforts look at teams and organizations as collective entities. Process, methodologies, and developmental efforts are studied in an effort to determine best practices in organizational innovation. Some research takes a case study approach to finding best practices that can be replicated.

Specific countries are also looked upon and many are benchmarked using Hofstede's measures (1998). It is clear that a gap does exist and that this study could profoundly add to this body of work. Nevertheless, an understanding needs to be reached related to what is important in the construction and development of knowledge that management can use to improve their innovation efforts. Thus, a multidisciplinary approach was taken to establish a foundation.

The recent work of several researchers in the fields of multiculturalism, leadership, innovation, and diversity provided a well rounded base. This approach also looked at multiple countries to determine commonalities or to establish differences through empirical work. Although other work was reviewed, the following had salient points on which to build.

An understanding of culture is fundamental to this study, and several definitions were observed. But Ramin, Firoz, and Kwateng (2010) found that culture has many characteristics. Some of them are that it is omnipotent, shared by members of a group, and acquired. Although many shared values and traits of cultures exist, differences seem to be more prevalent among them. Thus, the impact of culture in society is so important that it affects outcomes and long-term sustainability of a country.

Culture also influences business practices and can be seen in the work of Beralho and Elisu (2010). They found that culture impacts the legal system and how different nations establish bankruptcy laws. They make the case by citing examples throughout history and comparing these

laws in Scotland, Malaysia, Ukraine, China, Vietnam, and the USA.

Going into the diversity realm and taking a more detailed look at team performance, Kokt (2003) studied how bringing a team with a diverse ethnic background could function in various environments in South Africa. This researcher looked at the security industry and determined that how teams reacted to the team leader was the greatest indicator of success. Team leadership was instrumental in overcoming cultural norms in the workplace.

Religious diversity is becoming a more important source of workplace representation as companies expand their global reach, and the proliferation and permeation of religious beliefs makes its way into the workplace (Messarra & El-Kasser, 2010; Shechtman, Hiradinn & Zina, 2003). Mesarra and El-Kasser (2003) showed that being sensitive to customs, rituals, and holidays can contribute to the productivity of employees. They made their case in a study in Lebanon because this society's greatest diversity lies in religious beliefs. Key findings show that women had a higher level of education, and this is an important consideration because the higher the education level, the greater the sensitivity towards considering and respecting religious background in the workplace.

On the other hand, Shechtman, Hiradin, and Zina (2003) took a clinical and behavioral approach to ethnic groups in Israel. They looked at group behavior among Moslem, Druze, and Jewish adolescents in regards to self disclosure, group interaction, and outcomes. Their findings looked at risk-taking, an innovation success factor (Negroponte, 2003), and determined it is formed by group norms. This study also mentioned that leaders must be able to make adjustment towards group norms. This correlates well with Kokt's (2003) findings.

Rivera-Vázquez,Ortiz-Fournier,and Flores (2009) combined culture and innovation with an orientation towards overcoming barriers. But their efforts were oriented towards knowledge sharing as an initiative that contributed to innovation. Their work does, nevertheless, provide a Latino perspective. The extant research reveals a need to offer greater insight regarding the ways in which Latinos experience and perceive innovation in the workplace. This body of research can help scholars expand their understandings of Latinos in the workplace while simultaneously helping firms gain a competitive advantage by maximizing the effectiveness of diverse workforces.

VII. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative approach has been implemented through the administration of a survey instrument in the United States. This particular tool has been utilized in previous studies (Zhuang, 1995) and has undergone the rigors necessary to establish it as a valid and reliable artifact. The survey was administered electronically to the membership of the Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (HACE), a national, multi-disciplinary organization that provides networking and professional development opportunities for Latino professionals. Their membership is a cross section of respondents that range from entry-level positions to executives. The respondents also come from across industries, occupational categories, ages, genders, and education levels. The study was comprised of a wide range of respondents who are Latino.

The survey was divided into four sections with a total of 46 questions. The first nine questions captured demographic data, the second section had 11 questions that related to the person's work environment, the third had nine mostly multipart questions that related to general opinions on innovation, and the last section had 15 questions that were only for those individuals that identified themselves as software developers.

Descriptive statistics were applied to the data and then they were cross tabulated between men and women. Each of the innovation and environment responses were then reviewed for any significant variance in responses. This was accomplished through Chi-Square testing.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Background

A total of 781 Latino professionals responded to this survey, and 774 of the results were used in a cross tabulation. Although this survey was administered nationally, the majority of the group, 81,4 %, hales from the Midwest region. Women make up the bulk of the participants at 56,5 % (437) while 43,5 % (337) of the sample was comprised of men. The participants ranged in age from 17 to 65. Since education and knowledge are keys to the development of innovation (Negroponte, 2003; Rivera-Vázquez, Ortiz-Fournier & Flores, 2009), this was the first area of interest. Both genders were fairly even at achieving a baccalaureate degree: women, 47,6 % and men, 46,7 %. However, an inverse relationship emerges in education at the graduate levels. For master's degrees, men had an edge over women with 33,9 % to the women's 30,9 %. The numbers are more pronounced at the doctoral level, with 7,1 % of the men

obtaining their terminal degrees and only 2,1 % of the women attaining this level of education. This does not reflect the general population because in 2010, more women received doctoral degrees than men (Costas, 2010). Another interesting relationship in the workplace shows that men occupy 54,4 % of the managerial and supervisory positions while women represented 44,2 %. Technology has been the source for enabling innovation for several decades. The respondents who participated in this study have an overall representation of 25 % in that industry. However, a disparity or imbalance in representation does exist. A total of 37 % of the men in this study were in technology fields while only 15,9 % of women were.

B. Environment

Negroponte (2003) believes that creating an environment that encourages risk is crucial to building a culture that yields significant ideas. This facilitates success. However a barrier exists when certain groups are not predisposed to accepting risk. One's comfort with risk-taking often is shaped by culture (Kokt, 2003). Consequently, management must react through individual transactional or organizational transformational interventions. When looking at the Latino responses, certain patterns stand out. Although the group as a whole is not afraid to make mistakes (67,4 %), marked differences surfaced in how mistakes were viewed across genders. About 37,6 % of women indicated a fear of making mistakes while only 27,4 % of the men revealed this fear. This difference could be linked to reporter error as some men may not want to admit to fear simply because some men are socialized to mask fear in favor of what some might consider a more "manly" image, which would be that of courage. Society may be moving toward a space in which men are invited to express genuine feelings of concern or fear without the stigma of being weak. Women, on the other hand, don't seem to suffer the same fate when they express fear.

Another interesting observation related to how the groups view solving problems in an unorthodox manner. Unorthodox problem solving is when a solution is sought out through unconventional means that may not subscribe to accepted scientific methodology. This approach has been applied successfully in product design by re-purposing a products initial purpose. As a whole, the group of Latinos we studied viewed this method favorably at 87,3 %. However, males at 90,1 % have a stronger preference to seek unorthodox approaches than their female counterparts at 85,2 %.

In an area related to risk-taking, one finding suggests that some participants didn't reveal ideas out of fear of being ridiculed. In this case, the response rate of 82,8 % made by women indicated they are not expressing their ideas as often as men who are at 85,5 %. This is perhaps the most prominent of the differences and merited more in-depth analysis. Resultantly, Chi-Square testing was conducted and the findings are presented in upcoming tables. This shows women significantly differ from men on having their ideas ridiculed.

Crosstab

Count

		Afraid		Total
		1	2	
Gender	1	85	237	322
	2	159	269	428
Total		244	506	750

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9,678[a]	1	0,002		
Continuity Correction[b]	9,195	1	0,002		
Likelihood Ratio	9,793	1	0,002		
Fisher's Exact Test				0,002	0,001
Linear-by-Linear Association	9,665	1	0,002		
McNemar Test				,000[c]	
N of Valid Cases	750				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 104.76.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

c. Binomial distribution used.

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
(a)	1	0,7
(b)	1	0,686
(c)	1	0,606
(d)	1	0,716
(e)	1	0,384
(f)	1	0,615
(g)	1	0,616
(h)	1	0,677
(i)	1	0,807
(j)	1	0,788
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

IX. INNOVATION

A. Defining Innovation

A series of nine questions were asked to explore how the participants in this study regard and define innovation in general terms. For the most part answers from participants were congruent with the exception of how much of a difference existed between groups in the following areas.

Latino men believe, to a greater extent than their women counterparts, that innovation is about generating new ideas only. This belief by 55,5 % of the men is significantly higher than the 45,5 % of women that hold this belief. Further analysis may be warranted to understand the role of creativity and perhaps to implement management practices. Adopting something used elsewhere shows that women are more willing to make these adoptions than men. At 65,1 % for men versus 59,1 % for women they may be more open in this respect. Certainly, this finding is worthy of future exploration.

The services industry appears to be positioned better to leverage innovation than the other industries, according to men. This is expressed by the majority of men, 54%, and appears to be by a fairly wide margin over the opinion of women at 49%. From a representation perspective, there does not appear to be significantly more men in this sector than women. This response warrants more clarification and understanding to uncover the reason for this difference.

B. Innovation Value

The women and men in this study differed in how they regarded innovation generating the greatest value. Understanding why could help teams prioritize objectives and better manage conflicts. Men are more united in their beliefs in five areas over their women counterparts.

- Novelty of the innovation: men 46,4 % vs. women 39,6 %.
- How long it takes to develop: men 47,8 % vs. women 43,5 %.
- Profitability contribution: men 48,7 % vs. women 43,77 %.
- Advanced technology: men 56,7 % vs. women 52,3 %.
- Change it entails: men 66,3 % vs. women 60,10 %.

C. Position to Initiate Innovation

Leadership is important in the product development and innovation field (Cooper, 1988). Leaders can act as enablers or barriers of innovation based on their views, priorities, and personal preferences. Men tend to have greater representation in the managerial ranks. This comes with authority and decision-making responsibilities, but it also leads to extended relationships with influencers, decision makers, and approvers internally and at other departments. This could lead to positioning with executives and leveraging existing relationships. All keys to funding and resourcing innovation initiatives.

Women and men in this study differ on three important groups related to innovation initiatives. The first is marketing. Latinas have a stronger belief that marketing groups initiate innovation. The results were 76,2 % for Latina women compared to 69,2 % for Latino men. Conversely, men think engineers are better at initiating innovation at 85,9 %, and 76,3 % for women. In a research and development marketing interface environment, this difference of opinion could be significant. It has implications for product design, marketing strategy, and recruiting the right sponsor. Innovation comes with risks. It is further compounded when differences exist in belief systems or management influence. An interesting observation lies in the third group, accountants. Women believe this group is more influential. This may be an area that merits subsequent exploration.

D. Embark on Innovation

Two differing views related to taking the innovation path exist. First, women at 39 % are more in agreement than men at 32 % in their beliefs that increasing profits is the primary reason for launching innovation initiatives. A secondary reason is also noted with women at 38,7 % to men at 35,6 % agreeing that beating the competition is the most important aspect of launching innovation initiatives.

Creativity may be the variable most associated with innovation when one considers the efforts organiza-

tions place on brainstorming and other productivity sessions. It also can be the way some companies differentiate themselves. Thus, comprehending the perspective of the two genders can be crucial to firms gaining a competitive advantage via highly-talented personnel. It appears that men at 62,6 % subscribe to this more so than women at 58,5 %.

X. MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Numerous salient points in this study present opportunities for further research and understanding. Other factors also will impact a company's performance and require managerial intervention. First, it is apparent that differences exist in how the two groups approach and view certain aspects of innovation. Most notably is the concern about having their ideas ridiculed and who initiates innovation efforts for a company, especially in the research and development marketing interface. This may change as more women enter the ranks of the sciences. As higher educational attainments occur, the amount of women entering technically-oriented degree programs should also be considered.

Women responded to this survey in greater numbers, but their representation is disproportionate in managerial roles, technical roles, and graduate-level attainment. Although Latina women are underrepresented in comparison to Latino men, they also are lagging behind women in the general population. As this demographic begins to assert itself in the workforce, greater attention should be given to having them complete graduate education.

Knowledge based systems should start indexing innovation efforts and how teams are composed. Innovation is a product of the creativity and ingenuity that emanates from human beings. As the global workforce continues to become more diversified, individuals will bring with them differing attitudes, opinions, and dispositions toward innovation. This is shaped by the society and culture with which these individuals identify. This presents a challenge for the modern corporation in recruiting, training, and managing a diverse workforce that is geared to providing innovative solutions and approaches to managing a business.

XI. LIMITATIONS

This study focused on Latinos in the United States. Although the sampling size was good, and the group represents the proper level of skills,

other considerations were not covered. Therefore, this study is not intended to be all inclusive. Segmentation by regions and level of acculturation are not accounted for in the present study. Although this study admittedly has limitations, it nevertheless, helps to enhance understanding of how Latinos who participated in this study experience, enact, and define innovation.

A caveat may be appropriate here. This study measures opinions on innovation and should be used as a guideline. Managers need to consider the specific talents of their teams that coincide with these findings. Since this data was collected from Latinos who reside in the United States, it may not be consistent with the attitudes of other ethnic or non-dominant groups. Managers should not assume that individuals in other context will have the same experiences. Differences are also subject to the degree of differences managers believe is significant. In this study 3 % was used.

XII. FUTURE RESEARCH

Since the 1980's the general population of women in the United States obtained more baccalaureate and masters degrees than men. In 2010 that attainment was extended to the doctoral level. However, when comparing women who are Latina with their male counterparts, findings indicate that women only surpass men at the undergraduate level. Future research could determine if this reality is a consequence of culture or lack of opportunity? Many factors, such as the pressures placed on women to stay home and raise children while their husband's work, may contribute to this outcome. Other contributing factors influencing Latina women not obtaining advanced education could encompass existing careers, work-life balance, or ineffective preparation and mentoring. Each is worthy of a more in-depth analysis. But it is indeed an interesting area to develop due to the correlation of innovation and knowledge.

Using more advanced statistics to understand the preferences of each group is merited in the areas that stood out as having slightly divergent views. These are:

- Defining innovation.
- Identifying where innovation provides the best value.
- Leadership.
- Reasons to embark on innovation.

This study should also take a broader and more ambitious scope on three fronts. First, the general study should

extend to a broader set of diversified groups. One of the governmental demographic classifications can be used. Second, within those groups there should be a comparative indexing among each other and to the general population. Finally, a global effort should continue. The efforts of this work have already begun in various regions.

XIII. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to present findings regarding gender differences as they related to innovation. This work was generated from a larger project referred to as "Project Impact," a global study that illuminates understandings of innovation from the perspectives of individuals from co-cultural or non-dominant groups. More specifically the study examined cultural attitudes, opinions, and dispositions of participants toward innovation. The present study revealed both similarities and differences as they relate to how women and men who are Latino perceive and experience innovation. The salient differences, however, were: 1) how innovation is defined, 2) risk-taking, 3) where innovation provides the most value, and 4) who is in the best position to initiate innovation. The study concluded with recommendations for future research.

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