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**ABSTRACT**

Quilantán, M. Cristina, Mexican American Women: Unique Superintendents in Texas. Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.), May 10, 2002, 231 pp., references, 103 titles.

The number of Mexican American women educators is disproportionate to the number of Mexican American women in administrative positions, especially at the superintendency level. During the school year 2001 – 2002, there were 1,175 superintendents in the State of Texas; 939 male, 66 Mexican American males; 159 White females, and 10 Mexican American women. The stereotypical sex-role expectations are evident among Mexican American women; these expectations are governed by a value system that follows tradition and culture in which docility and passivity are inculcated at a very early age. The organizational structure of the public school system also marginalizes the involvement of the Mexican American women in the superintendency. This qualitative study offers personal and professional characteristics of 10 Mexican American women superintendents and one retired superintendent from the Texas public school system. The study reveals the positive effects that the participants have in their organization and it explains the stressors that they encounter in their position. The data was collected from interviews, surveys, public records, public meetings, and observations. All the active superintendents were interviewed, but five were selected for a more in-depth study; in addition, one community member, one

board member, and one colleague for each selected participant were also interviewed. The study contains six chapters. Chapter One is the introduction to the study; Chapter Two offers the review of the literature in four strands: leadership, the superintendency, organizations, and Mexican American leaders; Chapter Three explains the methods and procedures that were used; Chapter Four offers the presentation of the data; Chapter Five exhibits the analysis of the data; and Chapter Six presents the conclusions, implications and recommendations. The findings indicate that the Mexican American women superintendents encountered many barriers, but were able to successfully navigate the three worlds: womanhood, Mexican American, and superintendency. Two of the major obstacles that they experienced were the sex-role stereotype and the hierarchical structure of the organization. The author offers recommendations to change the mindset of the stockholders in the organization, they are titled: audacious universities, intrepid public school systems, and prolific professionals.