

## Dissertation Topic, Method & Plan

Maria Caban Alizondo | Leadership & Change in Healthcare - Antioch University

**Research Domain:** Latinx women's identities in health information management.

**Problem:** Latinx women's identities contribute to their career paths and potential advancement and may contribute to marginalization and silencing of their voice in the workplace.

**Background:** Latinx women in health information management face extraordinary challenges as they navigate the rapidly changing healthcare landscape. The many identities that Latinx women hold and reveal may contribute to their ability to be successful in their professional practice; these identities are grounded in culture, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, home and work roles. Latinx women must navigate the fast-paced, complex systems of healthcare and find ways to integrate themselves in ways that safeguard their personhood and that their voices are not lost.

- **Latinx:** The term Latinx is used to recognize the myriad Spanish-speaking, indigenous, and preferred gender pronouns of individuals from otherwise Spanish countries. The historically political terms of Hispanic and Latino specifically segregate large portions of this community along geo-political and gender lines. Latinx, "is emblematic of ... acknowledging border spaces... These spaces worked to transform male-dominated ideas about Latinx identity to be adopted by broader intersectional sectors of marginalized people" (Morales, 2018, p. 3).
- **The Profession:** A predominately woman profession, HIM is emerging and changing. Working to keep pace with healthcare, and balancing the tensions of integrating healthcare IT, regulatory compliance and organizational financial responsibilities HIM professionals are faced with an everchanging field that requires them to remain relevant and stay ahead of the game. This constant state of change-readiness may have specific impacts for Latinx HIM professionals.
- **Latinx Women:** Women hold numerous identities, at work and at in their personal lives. Latinx women hold complex identities in their culture, families, and the profession, and these identities are important to understand because they may influence career pathways, education, leadership, and advancement.
- **Identities:** The exploration of identities in this context is narrowly focused to include Latinx who work in positional leadership roles in HIM. My own identities and positionality are significant, as I am bi-ethnic, Puerto Rican and Austrian, and an HIM practitioner. My interest in this topic is centered on my own professional and personal experiences, and the experiences that other Latinx have shared. By grounding this work in identities, I hope to create a space for Latinx HIM professionals to delve deeper into the specifics of their cultural influences, roles, and ethnicities and how that understanding is used to guide their decisions about their professional practice and navigate the personal and professional social systems.

**Research Question:** *How do Latinx women's identities influence their HIM career paths?*

**Research Method:** Narrative Inquiry (Interpretative Phenomenology)

- Theoretical Lens:
  - o Taking a critical view of identity has led me to intersectionality theory. While identity theory and intersectionality theory allow for the multi-faceted views of relationships between people, it is intersectionality theory's more narrow interpretation that considers how "an individual's multiple social locations can culminate in complex combinations of privileges and disadvantages, where people could hold privileged and marginalized identities" (Booyesen, 2018, p. 17). Viewing health information management through this lens creates an appreciation for the variety of experiences, cultures and life stories that women in HIM bring to the work they do, at the same time it allows for deeper discussions into how these identities influence the groups they participate with, and possibly the decisions they make that may influence their career trajectory.

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The implications for women who work in the larger finance and informatics/information technology areas may be how they view their ability to navigate a mostly male profession and still be successful.

**Interview Prompt:** *Can you tell me stories about how your Latinx identities influenced your health information management career path?*

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**Methodologist:** Donna Ladkin, Ph.D.

**External Member:** Merida Johns, Ph.D., RHIA

### Dissertation Target Dates:

- Proposal – Fall 2019
- Completion – July 2021

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### References:

Booyesen, L., A. E. (2018). Workplace Identity Construction: An Intersectional-Identity-Cultural Lens. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management*. (pp. 1-32).

Morales, E. (2018). Why I embrace the Term Latinx. *The Guardian*. (page 8).