CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

LATINO COLLEGE STUDENTS' TRANSITION EXPERIENCES FROM A

CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE: AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF SOCIAL

PREPAREDNESS AND FAMILIAL SUPPORT

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

By

Raquel Michel

August 2014

The dissertation of Raquel Michel is approved:

_____   _____

Sharmakrenia Henderson, Ed.D.   Date

_____   _____

Gregory Knotts, Ph.D.   Date

_____   _____

Nathan Durdella, Ph.D., Committee Chair   Date

California State University, Northridge

Justin Kinney – I appreciate all your hard work in editing my dissertation. I am eternally grateful to you and your amazing skills.

ELPS CC11 cohort – we made it through the process while balancing our lives, thank you for your support. A very special shout out to Stephanie Nunez, Porsha Boyd, Jesus Vega, Deanecia Wright, and Donna Randolph – your support and encouragement was incredibly valuable.

To past and current students – thank you for teaching me patience, understanding, and allowing me to help you throughout your educational career.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this hard work to my family. My mother, Luz Maria Michel, and my father, Serafin Michel, who have always encouraged, motivated, and supported me in my educational career. My brother, Michael Michel, for being my motivation in life and keeping me on my toes. My niece, Alyssa Michel, for being patient with me when I could not hang out. To the love of my life, David Jackson, for encouraging and supporting me throughout this journey.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT

LATINO COLLEGE STUDENTS' TRANSITION EXPERIENCES FROM A

CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE: AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF SOCIAL

PREPAREDNESS AND FAMILIAL SUPPORT

By

Raquel Michel

Doctor of Education Degree in Educational Leadership

The purpose of this qualitative ethnographic case study was to examine first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students' social experiences and familial support during their transition from a charter high school to four-year universities. I conducted and recorded one-on-one personal interviews with Latino college students and their parents during the transition from a charter high school to their respective four-year universities. In addition, I observed Latino college students' social interactions with professors and peers while at their respective universities. I transcribed interview recordings and observations, and I used Atlas.ti to develop themes about Latino college students' social experiences and familial support. I found that maintaining communication and building relationships among high school and college peers, high school faculty and staff, and college professors was essential; also, having a supportive family was important during students' transition to college.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 2010, Latinos became the largest minority group in the United States (U.S.

Census, 2011). Moreover, it is anticipated that by 2050, Latinos will comprise 29% of

the U.S. population (Cohen & Passel, 2008). In 2003, it was projected that children of

Latino decent under the age of 18 would increase to 20% by 2020 (Liaga & Snyder). In

2011, however, the Latino population under the age of 18 surpassed the prediction from

2003 by almost 4%, as this segment of the population grew to 23.9% (Fry & Lopez,

2012). The number of Latino students continues to grow, but the number of Latino

students who graduate from high school, enroll in college, and graduate from college

remains low.

Although the Latino population has grown from 1980 to 2000, Latino college

student enrollment has increased at a slower rate compared to white student enrollment.

From 1980 to 2000, the percentage of Latinos enrolled in college as undergraduates

increased from 16% to 22% (Liagas & Snyder, 2003); during the same period, white

student college enrollment increased from 27% to 39% (Burciaga & Zarate, 2010).

Despite Latinos making an enrollment jump, there was still a four-year degree gap

compared to Caucasians; only 25% of Latino students who enrolled in college earned a

Bachelor's degree, compared to 36% of white students (Fry, 2004).

Many factors influence Latino students' degree attainment. Some Latino students

have a difficult time adjusting to their new life in college and often seek "cultural

knowledge, skills, and contacts from their home communities" (Yosso, Smith, Ceja, &

Solorzano, 2009, p. 677). When Latino students graduate from high school and

matriculate at a college, they transition into a different educational setting with institutional characteristics with which they may not be familiar. Frequently, the lack of social preparedness and the type of familial support may influence students' adjustment in college. Latino students' adjustment may take them away from focusing on their academics and potentially hindering their degree completion. Keup (2007) conducted a study with seniors in private high schools that addressed their social expectations before college and their social experiences in college, but no studies have been conducted in a charter high school setting that address social preparedness and familial support.

Research has shown that first-generation and low-income Latino college students struggle to adjust in college. Hernandez (2002) found that first-generation Latino college students did not adjust well either academically or socially to college life. Another factor that influenced college adjustment was students' socioeconomic status. Research has found that freshman Latino students who came from low-income backgrounds experienced distress, which affected their motivation and adjustment in college; mentors and/or family support influenced their adjustment to college as well. (Castillo & Hill, 2004; Saldaña, 1994; Torres Campos et al., 2009; Phinney, Dennis, & Gutierrez, 2005). For this reason, I explored first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students' social experiences and familial support. Specifically, I examined students' transitions from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities, primarily focusing on students' social and familial support experiences by capturing their first-year transition experiences.

In this chapter, I introduce the research problem that leads to the purpose and significance of the study in order to address what low-income, first-generation, college-

bound Latino charter high school students' experiences are as they prepare for college. In addition, I articulate the research questions, which help answer how students' social and familial support experiences help their transition from high school to college. Finally, I present an overview of the methodology and the limitations and delimitations in the study, which provide information about the participants, settings, and methods.

Problem Statement

This study examined the lack of information related to social preparedness and familial support for first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students during their transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities. Consequently, this study explored how the lack of social preparedness in high school and a general lack of familial support shape Latino college students' adjustment to college life and may determine whether students remain in school. Some Latino students did not participate in social experiences on campus and relied on incorporating their home experiences into their college world (Munoz & Maldonado, 2011; Yosso et al., 2009). In addition, the lack of preparedness at the high school level impacted students' academic development in college in regards to the level and pace of college work (Hernandez, 2002). Collectively, these experiences hindered Latino students' success in college. For this reason, preparing students for college life and expectations would help students adjust socially.

In the same fashion that Latino college students struggled academically and socially, family obligations provided insight into whether low-income Latino college students stayed in college (Sanchez, Esparza, Colon, & Davis, 2010). Through participant observations and personal interviews, I sought to establish whether first-

generation Latino college students' familial support experiences affect the way they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California. Although research was limited on the topic of social preparedness during high school, my study helped understand how social preparedness influenced students' social experiences and how this issue could be addressed prior to those students attending college. Additionally, addressing familial support may also help understand how that influences students' social preparedness during their transition and how that affects their social experience in college. Lastly, familial support may indicate how low-income families are supportive of the transition process from high school to college. This information could help address various families' concerns about how best to help their students through the transition process. With the findings from this study, I plan to develop a handbook for urban high school students on how to prepare themselves socially for college.

Purpose and Significance

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to explore the social preparedness and familial support experiences of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students' during their transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California. In 2011, 76.3% of all Hispanics between 18 and 24 years old had a high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED) degree (Fry & Lopez, 2012). As the Latino population increased in the United States, Latino students' ambition to attend college also increased (Brown, Santiago, & Lopez, 2003). According to Brown et al. (2003), most Latino students who attended college were the first in their family to do so, came from a low-

income household, and were not academically prepared. Moreover, Latino undergraduates had "different family responsibilities" (Fry, 2004, p. 16) compared to white students. All of these factors indicated that Latino students' transition experiences were different than those of white students. Although studies have addressed Latino college students' social experiences, a study has yet to address this student population's social preparedness and familial support during their transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities.

Additionally, Attinasi (1989) argued that the "nature of college-going in freshman year is influenced profoundly by experiences that occur much earlier in life" (p. 272); thus, prior college knowledge could help bridge the social gap for first-generation Latino college students. With this study, I intend to help high schools prepare and disseminate information to low-income, first-generation, college-bound Latino charter high school students ahead of their transition to four-year universities. In addition, this study informs the practices of colleges and universities related to Latino college students' social and familial support experiences during their transition to college. For example, this study may help modify first-year seminar curriculum and activities on campuses.

<center>**Research Questions**</center>

In order to understand the social preparedness and familial support influences Latino college students' transition from a charter high school to college, I explored the following questions:

1. What are the social experiences of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California?

<center>5</center>

2. How do first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students experience familial support as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California?

These questions helped guide my study to understand Latino college students' experiences during their transition. I collected data through interviews and participant observations.

Theoretical Framework

I used social capital theory to guide the development of and interpret the results of my study. Bourdieu (1986) stated that social capital provided access to resources when building networks with groups of people. When building relationships, people would have access to others' networks of people and resources, which open up the door to an array of opportunities. In essence, building networks would assist students in their preparation to attend regional urban public universities. Coleman (Häuberer, 2011) added that in order for social capital to occur, people needed to reciprocate information and resources. Additionally, Coleman emphasized that trust, authority, information, and norms among people and/or groups were essential in order to maintain social capital.

Various studies have identified that social capital was essential for students to establish networks in order to navigate the educational system. For example, Liou et al. (2009) stated that information networks were necessary when providing college-going information to students. In addition, McDonough (1995) found that high schools needed to establish tight networks within their school in order to efficiently promote college access. In another in-depth study, Jarsky, McDonough, and Nuñez (2009) stated that a college-going culture required the following components: a strong leadership that would

6

positively influence faculty and staff mindset, family involvement, and an abundance of resources in order to obtain a well-rounded approach and support for students. Lastly, Perez and McDonough (2008) specifically found that students talked to their parents and extended family about their college plans rather than other networks and relationships.

Definition of Key Terms

The following are definitions of key terms used throughout the study.

Charter school. A charter school is a public-funded school that is given a charter in order to find innovative ways to increase student achievement. Charters are issued by districts (Chudowsky & Ginsburg, 2012).

First-year. Describes a student who graduated from high school and is enrolled in their freshman year at a four-year university.

First-generation. A student who is the first in their family to attend a four-year university and whose parents did not obtained a post-secondary degree (Garrison & Gardner, 2012).

Hispanic. Hispanic is a term used to identify Spanish-speaking people from Central America, South America, Mexico, the Caribbean Islands, or Europe (O'Meara, 2012).

Integration. O'Meara (2012) defined integration as "the normative attitudes and values of peers and faculty in the institution and abides by the formal and informal structural requirements for membership in that community" (p.13).

Latino/a. In this study, I used the term Latino/a instead of Hispanic. I did not use the term Hispanic because it is a term that has been imposed since the 1980s, rather Latino/a is the term with which I identify.

Low-income. Individuals are considered low-income when in the previous year they did not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

Parental support. Parental support includes school-based involvement by attending meetings, conferences, and volunteering. Another form of support is home-based involvement, which consists of homework help and course selection. (Pomerantz et al., 2007). In addition to school- and home-based involvement, parental support includes encouragement given to students. Parents also provide emotional support by trusting their child in their decisions (Kolkhorst, Yazedjian, & Toews, 2010).

Social integration. O'Meara (2012) defined social integration as "the movement of minority groups and underprivileged sections of society into the mainstream of society" (p. 12).

Overview of Methodology

In this study, I used an ethnographic case study design to facilitate descriptions and interpretations of a cultural group within a bounded system (Creswell, 1996, p. 58; Creswell, 1996, p. 61). I explored the experiences of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students during their transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California. I used a criterion strategy for my study, which set requirements for inclusion in the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012), to select the site and the student participants. I also used a chain- or network-sampling strategy, which occurs when participants identify and refer others with similar characteristics (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Chain or network strategy allowed me to recruit students eligible to participate in the study by collaborating with the school

counselor. The chain or network strategy also allowed me to recruit parents who participated in the study.

Once I confirmed student participants, I mailed invitation letters to family members, and I followed up by calling family members in order to determine if they wanted to participate in the study. I conducted one-on-one personal interviews with students and parents. Further, I conducted descriptive, focused, and selected participant observations and usually relied on informal interviews during the observations. I analyzed data by creating domains, which helped create a taxonomy of detailed domains and, in turn, help define cultural terms. As a school counselor at the site, I conducted interviews and observations during the summer and fall semesters of each participant's freshman year, at locations where the participants felt comfortable.

Limitations

Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) defined limitations as "conditions that restrict or constrain the study's scope or may affect the outcome" (p. 8). The limitations in this study may be restricted by the site that was used and the participants' ethnic backgrounds. The setting that I selected was a charter high school that helped students prepare and apply for two-year community colleges and four-year universities. If research were conducted in a non charter, public comprehensive high school it is possible that the study would produce different results. Another limitation was choosing to focus on Latino students only; a study focusing on another group of students who have difficulty transitioning to college would be beneficial. Also, a limitation was the setting's conversion from a public school to a charter school. Conducting a study at a public or charter school that has not gone through recent conversion or drastic changes could

provide different data. A final limitation is the small number of participants in this study; therefore conducting a study that has a larger number of participants in a similar study.

Delimitations

Delimitations are "conditions or parameters that the researcher intentionally imposes in order to limit the scope of a study" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 8). The delimitations in this study included a specific time frame in a student's life in which the study was conducted, and the assessment of other factors that may influence a student's transition. Since this was a bounded case study, this study addressed students getting ready to transition from high school into college, through the summer and fall of their freshman year. Conducting a longitudinal study from the senior year in high school through the second year of college would help to understand how Latino students prepare when transitioning to college and what their experiences are when they transition into college. Analyzing this timeframe would provide insight on how educators should prepare and help students remain in college. Another delimitation was looking at social and familial experiences in first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students' lives. Consequently, a study on the financial concerns of this student population can help provide support for students.

Organization of Dissertation

This study addressed the experiences of low-income, first-generation, college-bound Latino charter high school students as they prepared to transition to regional urban public universities in Southern California. Chapter 1 introduced a general overview of the study by describing the growing number of Latinos in the U.S., and the increase of Latinos enrolling in higher education yet failing to earn a degree. This problem leads to

the purpose and significance of the study: addressing what student experiences were as they got ready to go to college. A brief overview of the methodology, limitations, and delimitations help the reader know what to expect in the following chapters.

In Chapter 2, the literature review sets the foundation for the study. The literature about Latino college and high school students describe their experiences when trying to adjust academically and socially. Chapter 3 introduces, in great detail, the methodology of the research. The methodology addresses the research design used, the setting in which the study was conducted, information about the sample and data sources, the instruments used, how the data was collected and analyzed, and my role as a researcher in this study. Chapter 4 introduces the qualitative results of the study, while Chapter 5 interprets the results and makes recommendations for future research and practice.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to explore the social preparedness and familial support experiences of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students during their transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California. The problem that this study examined was the lack of information on social preparedness and familial support for Latino college students. Further, this problem extended beyond these students and their social preparedness and familial support; it also included an absence of information on how their status as charter high school students related to their college transition experiences. Accordingly, I explored how Latino charter high school students were socially prepared and how their families played a role in their preparation and transition to college. In this chapter, I introduce the literature related to Latino high school students' college-going experiences; in addition, I look at what influences a college-going culture among Latinos. The purpose of analyzing the college-going culture of these students was to understand the type of familial support available to low-income and first-generation Latino high school students. Moreover, through the literature, I hope to examine how a college-going culture influences Latino high school students.

At the same time, I look at Latino college students' experiences, which are divided into first-year experiences and more general undergraduate experiences in the second year and beyond. For that reason, the first section addresses literature about first-year Latino student experiences, while the second section addresses general undergraduate Latino student experiences. In these two sections, I hope to understand

12

some of the challenges that influence and affect their social experiences. In addition, I explore literature on first-generation and low-income Latino college experiences; incorporating this literature helps to gain an understanding of what influences low-income and first-generation Latino college students' social and familial support experiences. Ultimately, I tie in the challenges that low-income, first-generation, college-bound Latino high school students within a college-going culture experience with how those experiences influence Latino college students' first-year transition.

Finally, I introduce the conceptual framework of social capital theory, which guided this study, and connect it with the empirical literature. Social capital theory (Häuberer, 2011) states that when one builds relationships with people, they have access to their networks and resources. Through social capital, I draw upon the connections Latino college students have built in high school and college as well as the relationships they share with their family. I then determined how they develop socially and receive familial support during their transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California.

Latino College-Going Culture

College-Going Culture

Oakes (2003) defined a college-going culture as an environment where school staff/faculty and parents helped students prepare for college and high achievement in college. College-going culture exposed students to experiences that would foster their adjustment in college. Oakes (2003) stated that monitoring the seven conditions that affected disadvantaged minority students helped to determine the achievement and college-going barriers. Oakes (2003) concluded that a strong college-going culture

provided high expectations for students, support from parents and school staff, and dissemination of information and intervention programs for students; therefore, students had better opportunities to learn and created greater educational opportunities for themselves. A college-going culture was important in order to prepare students for higher education, but tends to work better in smaller settings.

In addition, a college-going culture addresses how a high school's size influences students' access to college information. Holland and Farmer-Hinton (2009) defined a college-going culture as one where information and resources were disseminated through conversations that addressed preparation, enrollment, and graduation from higher education. In a large quantitative study, Holland and Farmer-Hinton (2009) found that small urban public high schools and learning communities had better access to and more involvement in a college-going culture. Small high schools and learning communities had greater access to college preparation information and resources, and allowed for personalized relationships with faculty and staff. Holland and Farmer-Hinton (2009) also noted that the smallest high schools and learning communities primarily enrolled low-income, first-generation, African-American students. Exploring a study with low-income, first-generation Latino students and how a college-going culture at a small urban school affected their transition to college, Oakes (2003) stated that a college-going culture encouraged students' adjustment to college life. In particular, addressing social preparedness and familial support in high school helped to understand how a college-going culture influenced students' college adjustment. In addition to relationships and college information, rigorous courses and partnerships with colleges and universities foster a college-going culture and motivate students toward a post-secondary education.

Moreover, students who choose to pursue higher education rely heavily on motivation. McDonough (1995) stated that college was voluntary and students were driven by their achievement and motivation. On the other side, college access required high schools to establish a tight network within their school in order to allow college access for their students. McDonough (1995) suggested that incorporating preparatory and advanced placement courses, providing access and disseminating college information on high school campuses, and developing relationships with colleges and universities built a college-going culture. In conducting the study, McDonough found that the guidance office was not aware that high- and low-socioeconomic students (SES) required different levels of support, and those of high SES were likely to take advantage of the resources and provide information to their friends of low SES. In addition, McDonough found that low-income students required a high level of support. Further, taking into consideration low-income students and their college-going challenges in high school would help to provide information on how socially prepared they are for college. Including first-generation students in the process could provide a different lens on how Latino high school students experience a college-going culture and how they are socially prepared for college. Exploring low-income and first-generation Latino charter high school students' college-going culture experiences through their access to college information and social preparedness could help understand how students benefit from these types of supports while in college.

Latino High School Student Experiences and College-Going Culture

Another important point is for high schools, institutions, and organizations to collaborate with each other in order to disseminate college information. In a qualitative

15

multisite study that used a large sample of 9th and 11th grade high school students in Milwaukee and Los Angeles, Liou, Antrop-Gonzalez, and Cooper (2009) found that information networks, such as teachers and counselors, were important in creating a college-going culture. The study suggested that a large comprehensive high school setting did not allow for a supportive and inclusive college-going experience, and it further implied that accounting for the high school's size may have provided a different college-going culture experience for students. While the study addressed the dissemination of college knowledge information from networks, it did not take into consideration the social preparedness needed in high school in order to adjust smoothly in college. In addition, Liou, Antrop-Gonzalez, and Cooper found that familial involvement in a student's college-going culture experience influenced how they transitioned to college.

On the other hand, it is necessary for everyone in a school to buy into the process in order to build a college-going culture. In a case study done by Jarsky, McDonough, and Nuñez (2009), they explored a partnership between middle and high schools, a non-profit organization, and a university program in order to determine how to improve college-going rates. The study found that, in addition to strong leadership, changing the mindset of faculty and staff, incorporating family, and having an abundance of resources in order to create a well-rounded approach and adequate support for students were all essential to the establishment of a college-going culture. A similar study addressed the college-going culture for students by incorporating family, school, community, and a university program (Calaff, 2009). The article lacked information on how a college-going culture influences Latino charter high school students' social knowledge and

familial support during the college process and the transition to college, which could provide information on how students adjust.

Precollege expectations and college experiences provided information on how students transition into college. In a one-year longitudinal qualitative study, Keup (2007) used a small sample of diverse private high school students and followed them to their respective universities in order to understand students' precollege expectations. In the study, students felt that first-year college services would have helped them adjust smoothly if they would have been promoted better. Most students felt that they struggled getting along with their roommates, which made it difficult to adjust. By contrast, this study looked specifically at low-income, first-generation Latino college students who graduate from an urban charter high school; these factors could provide different results. Additionally, familial involvement during a child's preparation for college and transition to college was not addressed in Keup's study, but familial support should be considered in order to understand how it influences a student's transition to college.

Educational support and motivation are different across families because of their educational experiences. Calaff (2009) conducted an ethnographic study with a small sample of low-income, first-generation Latino high school students from immigrant families and explored how their family, school, community, and the College Support Program (CSP) helped motivate and support them in their educational endeavors while in college. The study found three different groups of families: 1) "immigrant," 2) "middle class," and 3) "tough life." Although each group was different, they motivated and supported their children, ultimately accomplishing the same end result for each child: college aspirations. In addition, the school promoted on-campus diversity and high

expectations; the community provided families and students with resources necessary for them to survive; and CSP provided them with college preparation and guidance. However, this study did not address how familial support influenced students' college experience during their transition to college.

Communication during the process of choosing a college tend to help students make an informed decision. Perez and McDonough (2008) analyzed how Latinas/os navigated the college-choice process and how family, peers, high school staff, and other networks played a role in the college-choice process. The study found that, rather than seeking help from various relations and other networks, students talked to their parents about their college plans and relied on extended family to guide them through the college-choice process. Calaff (2009) stated that families encouraged students differently, yet still managed to instill college aspirations. However, we did not know how familial support encourages students' ability to communicate with high school networks, college networks, or any other relationships in order to obtain information and guidance during their transition.

Both college knowledge and the college process are important when Latino families become involved in helping his or her child. In a qualitative focus study, Carden (2007) sampled Hispanic students, parents, and guidance counselors; the results showed that neither students nor parents were familiar with the college-going process. Carden attributed the limited knowledge of the college process to the lack of guidance from high-school counselors, due to large caseloads that prevented them from disseminating information to students and families. Further, Carden (2007) stated that parents' and students' lack of college information was caused partly by the lack of a college-going

culture. Additionally, a Family Science program helped rural and low-income

elementary, middle, and high school Hispanic students and their parents build a college-

going culture where both benefited from thinking about college (McCollough, 2011).

Building information networks supported the dissemination of information (Liou et al.,

2009), which helped build a college-going culture. Ultimately, it was important to have

information on how students can socially prepare during their transition to college. It

was also important to know how Latino college students' families support them during

their transition to college.

Factors That Affect College-Going Culture Among Latinos

One key point that may hinder Latino high school students' academic success and

college eligibility is the challenge to relate to academic material. Constantine, Kindaichi,

and Miville (2007) addressed factors that influenced Latino and Black high school

students as they got ready to transition to higher education. Results from the study found

that academic material, poverty, racial discrimination, and cultural values limited the

general belief that adolescents could succeed in higher education. The study brought to

light certain things that challenged students who wished to pursue their educational goals.

By contrast, Constantine, Kindaichi, and Miville's study considers how school faculty,

administration, and parental involvement can help shape Black and Latino students'

educational attainment goals. However, Constantine, Kindaichi, and Miville failed to

consider how low socioeconomic status influences familial support and student social

preparedness, both of which can impact educational attainment.

A college-going culture is essential in order for first-generation and low-income

Latino high school students to pursue their post-secondary goals. In a small qualitative

multiple case study, Kiyama (2011) explored the present funds of knowledge and how they could help with future outreach support. This study found that the families had college process information, when others, school administration and teachers, thought families did not. Parental involvement in the educational process was essential in understanding how familial support influences and affects low-income, first-generation, urban Latino charter high school students during their transition to four-year universities.

<p style="text-align:center">Latino College Student Experiences</p>

First-Year Transition Experiences of Latino College Students

Students tend to persist during their transition from high school to college because of the support systems available to them. Zalaquett's (2005) qualitative study explored the factors that led a small sample of Latina/o college students to college, as well as the barriers they faced. The study found that the students received encouragement from their families, but the families were not able to guide them through the college process; students valued education, felt a sense of accomplishment that they made it to college, and believed that this achievement would make their families proud; however, misinformation regarding college processes led them to make poor choices; lastly, peer and community relationships encouraged them to overcome challenges. While Zalaquett studied the factors that led students to college, Jarsky, McDonough, and Nuñez (2009) emphasized that a strong leadership was essential to establishing a college-going culture in high school, which would ultimately increase the college-going rate. However, most studies neglected to place an emphasis on the importance of social preparedness and familial support during low-income, first-generation Latino students' transition to college. Support systems encourage students to remain in college.

Transitioning and adjusting to college can be difficult for first-generation Latino college students. In a qualitative study with a small sample of first-generation Latino college students in the mid-Atlantic, Hernandez (2002) found that Latino students did not adjust academically nor socially. In addition, Hernandez found that students' families encouraged them to go to college yet rarely demanded they go; some students did not want to get involved in campus activities because they wanted to adjust to college life; and students had a difficult time trying to balance college assimilation and cultural identity. This study relied exclusively on interviews, so utilizing a case study design where observations are incorporated would provide a holistic approach. Attinasi (1989) suggested that Mexican American college freshman persisted due to their earlier experiences in life, while Hernandez (2002) recommended looking into the "lack of preparedness in high school" (p. 78) and how that affected students' college adjustment. Incorporating first-year Latino college students who transition from a charter high school to four-year universities would shed light on the social areas in which they are not prepared, as well as the types of familial support they receive from their family.

Aside from the social and academic adjustment to college, Latino college students tend to balance family with responsibilities. Using a phenomenological study, Sanchez, Esparza, Colon, and Davis (2010) examined the way family obligation attitudes and socioeconomic status determined the experiences Latinos faced while transitioning to college. The study found that Latino attitudes toward family obligations influenced whether students continued on to post-secondary education, delayed education, or neither. Although socioeconomic status and family obligations were explored, we still do not know how first-generation status influences the transition from high school to

college. A case study would help explore in-depth and detailed information of students' behavior and expressions by examining familial support and social experiences.

General Latino Undergraduate Student Experiences

In addition to first-year experiences, some Latino college students may continue to find challenges throughout their stay in college. A qualitative study (Attinasi, 1989) that used a small sample of Mexican American freshmen found that students persisted because of their exposure to college knowledge; anticipatory socialization influenced the decision to attend college and remain in college; social integration allowed Mexican American university students to decide how they would manage the university environment; and lastly, persistence also included what was learned in their environment. While this study found that college knowledge helped students adjust in college, what we still did not know was how first-generation, low-income Latino college students receive support from their family nor how they adjust socially during their transition from high school. In fact, a case study approach would expand on the topic and provide detailed information on the social barriers Latino college students experience during their transition to college.

Moreover, academic and social integration are important for the success of students in college. In Gonzalez and Ting's (2008) quantitative study, they sampled a large number of Southeastern Latino college students to examine how they integrated academically and socially in college. In the study, some students joined Latino organizations that created a sense of belonging. Results from the study indicated that students adjusted well academically and socially, which was attributed to students' confidence and goals. Stanton-Salazar (1997) argued that students needed to build

relationships and decode the educational system, while Gonzalez and Ting's (2008) study suggested that students who acculturated themselves to the U.S. norms had perhaps already built relationships. Conducting a study that analyzes low-income Latino college students' social confidence and goals during their transition to college could potentially provide a different result.

Family support, ethnic identification, and peer support influenced Latino college students' adjustment. Schneider and Ward (2003) examined how social support influenced ethnic identity and Latinos' college adjustment. The study found that family support determined how Latino college students adjusted academically and emotionally. In the study, Latinos at the university composed three percent of the campus population, which may have been the reason why general peer support, rather than Latino peer support, helped with students' social adjustment. Lastly, students who were attached to their Latino ethnic background were less likely to adjust in college. The study suggested that family support, less attachment to Latino ethnic identification, and general peer support allowed students to adjust in college. Even with the findings from this study, knowledge about how first-generation, low-income Latino college students at urban universities prepared themselves socially and the type of familial support they received during their transition was limited.

Another important factor that influences success for Latino college students is self-efficacy. Torres and Solberg (2001) used a large sample of Latino college students and examined academic self-efficacy, academic stress, social integration, and family support. The quantitative study found that family support may have influenced students' self-efficacy. While self-efficacy influenced social integration, persistence, and stress,

the study showed that stress affected mental and physical health. This domino effect affected students' persistence in college if family support and self-efficacy began to decline. We still have yet to see how students are socially prepared and how familial support influenced Latino college students' transition from a charter high school to a four-year university.

Although college knowledge is an indicator of remaining in college, Latino college students also experience social hardships. In a large qualitative grounded theory study, Ceja, Smith, Solorazno, and Yosso (2009) explored Latina/o students' campus racial climate experience at three different universities. The study found that Latinas/os dealt with negative and hostile campus racial climates. The study suggested conducting research on the effects that racism had on Latino undergraduates and whether it influenced the way Latino college students interacted socially. In addition, Hernandez (2002) found that freshman Latino college students felt it was difficult adjusting to college. However, I argue that a case study approach would focus on how Latino college students are prepared socially in terms of adjusting to the campus climate; a negative social environment surely affects Latino students in college.

Latino community college students experience their adjustment to college slightly different than four-year university students. A qualitative study analyzed Latina/o community college students and their psychological experiences in terms of student development, family, and faculty support (Zell, 2009). The study found that Latino community college students experienced hardship and distress but rewards and personal growth as well. An important result of Zell's study was that supportive experiences with family and faculty encouraged students' perseverance in college. Research has shown

that Latino college students have found it difficult to adjust in a four-year university (Hernandez, 2002), but examining the level of social preparedness available in high school and how Latino college students engage in college and receive support from their families can give new insight into creating readiness and establishing a college culture. Familial support was essential, and exploring literature from undocumented Latino community college students helped identify factors that may influence Latino college students at four-year universities.

Undocumented Latino students also experienced conflict in school and at home. In one instrumental case study, Muñoz and Maldonado (2011) interviewed four undocumented Mexican-born female students at Mountain West University and addressed family culture, schooling, immigration, and college experiences. The study found that students stayed below the radar while in school and questioned gender roles at home. This study used two instruments that gave detailed experiences of undocumented students, while some researchers have used only one (Attinasi, 1989). Latinos who were the first in their family to pursue college tended to experience college adjustment challenges (Zell, 2009). The main difference in this study was that the participants were undocumented Mexican students (Muñoz & Maldonado, 2011). Although the participants are different, using Muñoz and Maldonado's study helped guide social experiences and familial support for Latino college students who transition from an urban charter high school to universities. Low-income and first-generation factors may have influenced Latino college students' social experiences and their familial support during their transition to college.

Experiences of Low-Income and First-Generation Students

Another important factor to consider are the experiences of low-income and first-generation Latino college students. In a mixed methods study with a small sample of low-socioeconomic Latino college freshmen, Torres Campos et al. (2009) found that students' psychosocial factors improved with the help and guidance of their mentor. Intervention programs were typically geared toward Latinos or people from low-income backgrounds. When collecting data, their demographic variables did not consider participants' socioeconomic background. Instead, the authors stated that the instrument used to assess university motivation was adapted for low-income students. Torres Campos et al. (2009) and Phinney, Dennis, Gutierrez (2005) did not explain how socioeconomic status was obtained for their study. Given these findings, the implications of this study can be seen when low-income Latino college freshman students need mentor support; however, we still need to know how being a first-generation, urban charter high school graduate impacts the transition to college. In addition to receiving extra support in college, coming from a low socioeconomic background also affected their emotional and social stability, and motivation.

Students' low-income status may influence their motivation in college. In a large quantitative study, Phinney, Dennis, and Gutierrez (2005) sought to understand the factors related to college adjustment in Latino college freshmen students who were likely not to finish college. There were three categories of students, which were established based on their cultural and motivational characteristics in relationship to academic and adjustment variables. The study found that the family group easily adjusted to college and showed connectedness between their families which inspired motivation for

attending college; the committed group showed positive attitudes and the desire to complete their degree, but had low motivation; the default group did not know their purpose for being in college. Interestingly, all groups had the same G.P.A. As in the study conducted by Torres Campos et al. (2009), this study did not describe how the students' income status was collected. Although this study found that Latino college freshmen with low socioeconomic status have different motivations and adjustment experiences, and the three groups did not differ in G.P.A. We still need to know how first-generation students prepared themselves socially for college.

Latino students who are from low socioeconomic households tend to experience distress while they are in college. In a quantitative study that sampled a large group of Chicana students, Castillo and Hill (2004) found that lower socioeconomic status (SES) led to greater distress, more financial support lowered distress, while gender role attitudes did not cause distress. The study limited its sample to Chicanas only; including first-generation Latino/a college students could have provided further insight into distress factors and how gender may play a role.

As low-income Latino college students begin to experience stress, there is a likelihood of psychological distress. In a quantitative multivariate study where a large sample of Chicano students was used, Saldaña (1994) found that Hispanic students who were from low-income backgrounds experienced higher stressors. When Hispanic students experienced increased ethnic identity, in terms of acculturation within their college, they reported minority stresses that often led to psychological distress. As was the case in a study done by Castillo and Hill (2004), gender did not play a role in creating stress. While Phinney, Dennis, Gutierrez (2005) and Torres Campos et al. (2009) did not

27

share how students' socioeconomic status was obtained, Saldaña (1994) identified how socioeconomic status was collected for her study. This study helped address potential stressors among low-income Latino students in college. A qualitative ethnographic case study could provide additional information about how familial support and social experiences create distress, if at all, among first-year, first-generation Latino college students. Educating Latino high school students about the potential stressors in college could help alleviate some of their concerns.

Gaps in the Empirical Literature

In this literature review, I have described how Latino college students benefit when parents are involved in the educational process during their transition from a charter high school to a college. Research suggested that analyzing Latino high school students' college preparedness prior to transferring to college could help with their adjustment (Attinasi, 1989). Studies also found that low-income students experienced distress when trying to adjust to college because of family responsibilities. Lastly, first-generation Latino college students experienced academic challenges, social adjustment, and family support and challenges that made adjusting to college difficult (Phinney, Dennis, & Gutierrez, 2005).

A college-going culture was formed by faculty, staff, and parents who prepared students for college, which also included enrolling and graduating students from college (Oakes, 2003; Holland & Farmer-Hinton, 2009). One of the gaps in the empirical literature was that social preparedness was a component largely omitted from the definition of a college-going culture. In fact, the literature suggested that many Latino students struggled to adjust to college life, particularly with the social component of the

transition (Hernandez, 2002; Zell, 2009). If there is a disconnect between the social transition from a high school to universities, then perhaps social preparedness has not been addressed properly prior to their transition to universities. In addition, the lack of social preparedness within a college-going culture in high school may provide clarity on how this influences Latino college students' transition to universities. In particularly, how social experiences influence first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students during their transition from high school to college.

As with social preparedness, another gap in the empirical literature relates to familial support. Indeed, what we saw from the current literature was largely related to parental support (Calaff, 2009). In this area, studies have found that parents lacked college information but provided motivation and support in order to encourage college aspiration (Carden, 2007; Calaff, 2009), while students relied on extended family for college guidance (Perez & Mcdonough, 2008). During Latino college students' stay in college they received encouragement from their parents, yet it was not demanded of them to attend college (Zalaquett, 2005; Hernandez, 2002). While we know about parental support, we still have not yet fully explored familial support for first-generation, low-income Latino college students during their transition from high school to college.

For these reasons, I addressed the experiences of Latino college students during their transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California. Specifically, in this study, I looked at Latino college students' social experiences and familial support during their transition from an urban charter high school to four-year universities. I examined how Latino college students prepared themselves socially in high school and how they adjusted socially during their transition

29

to college. In addition, determining the familial support they received prior to their arrival and during their time at their respective university.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that I used for this study was social capital theory. Lin, Cook, and Burt (2001) identified social capital as an "investment in social relations by individuals through which they gain access to embedded resources to enhance expected returns of instrumental or expressive actions" (p. 14). The importance of preserving social relationships would provide people with accessing social resources. This would allow for the social relationships to provide information to others, thus influencing those who are critical agents because they have ties to networks and resources. As a result, people would have a better chance in attaining power, wealth, reputation, physical health, mental health, and/or life satisfaction. This would depend on how people decided to preserve and nurture their social relationships in order to access information and attain their end goal.

Other authors like Julia Häuberer (2011) referred to Pierre Bourdieu's and James Coleman's social capital theory and how social capital influences individuals and groups. Bourdieu and Coleman (Häuberer, 2011) defined social capital theory as the act of establishing relationships with others, then providing information and resources to other people who are part of the established social network. Coleman emphasized that within social capital those involved in the network needed to reciprocate their resources and information. There were some components that had to be balanced in order to strengthen social capital, for example, trust, authority, information, and norms among people and/or

30

groups. However, Coleman believed that there were three factors that jeopardize the functionality of social capital: a closed relationship, instability, and extreme ideology.

There are various authors who describe Bourdieu's social capital theory. Bourdieu (1986) described social capital theory, in which access to resources was essential to building networks with groups of people. In building relationships, people had access to others' networks of people and resources, which would open up an array of opportunities. In this study, building networks would assist students in their preparation to regional urban public universities in Southern California. Research has stated that information networks are necessary when providing college-going information to students (Liou et al., 2009). There has been research that used social capital theory in order to analyze their findings, which can help provide how Latino college students have prepared themselves socially.

Social capital theory has addressed school engagement at the middle school level, which can be used as a guide to look at the social experiences of Latino college students during their transition. Garcia-Reid (2007) conducted a quantitative study, where she used a large sample of low-income, female Hispanic middle school students in order to identify risks and factors for school engagement. The study used the School Success Profile (SSP), which measured social support, neighborhood dangers, and school engagement. Garcia-Reid's (2007) study found that when female Hispanic students received support from teachers, parents, and peers they were more engaged in school. Also, results showed that coming from an at-risk neighborhood did not influence female Hispanic students' school engagement. According to Bourdieu (1986), social capital was established based on the network of people who provided information and knowledge to

the people part of their social network. In this study, it was evident that social networks were important in order to maintain school engagement within a middle school. Support from teachers, parents, and peers encouraged student engagement, which helped in retaining students in high school (Croninger & Lee, 2001). In my study, I hope to understand how social preparedness in high school encourages engagement and interactions in college, and understand how familial support helps Latino college students' transition to college.

A different study used social capital theory to examine high school students at risk of dropping out. In a longitudinal quantitative study, Croninger and Lee (2001) assessed a large sample of students to determine whether social capital from high school teachers reduced the amount of students dropping out. In particular, it looked at the benefits social capital had for students at-risk of educational failure. The National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) measured educational, vocational, personal development, familial, social, and institutional factors. The study found that when adolescents maintained a relationship with their teachers they were more likely to persist and graduate from high school. Socially at-risk high school students who had low educational expectations and had school-related problems benefited from both guidance and a strong relationship with their teacher. Research has shown that when students maintained a social relationship with their teachers, parents, and peers, they engaged more in school (Garcia-Reid, 2007). Social preparedness in high school can help students during their transition to college.

Another article described how building relationships encouraged familiarity with system structures. Stanton-Salazar (1997) stated that minority children and youth success

in school had nothing to do with learning and performing technical skills, rather becoming familiar with the power agents of a school or community, such as faculty and staff; this allowed students to learn how to "decode the system" (p. 13).

This ethnographic case study was different from other social capital theory studies because it emphasized how building relationships with powerful entities would help urban minority students become familiar with the social component during their transition to a university setting. Also, this study addressed how social components function at university settings and the relationship between familiarity with social components and navigating campus environments. This study emphasized that students need to learn how the educational systems work in order to succeed; however, providing detailed experiences of Latino college student experiences and the way they build their capital in a charter high school and at four-year universities would provide additional insight on how students navigate the educational system and build relationships during their transition. In this way, social capital theory would allow for social preparedness and growth. Through social capital theory I analyzed the data that I collected during my interviews and observations. I assessed the relationships established on-campus, such as with peers, faculty, staff, and organizations. Furthermore, I looked at the relationship between the Latino student and the family during the transition to college. I measured this through the trust, authority, information, and established norms among people and/or groups.

Summary

Social capital grasps how individuals and groups maintain relationships in order to gain access to information that can lead to certain end results. What the literature lacks

is information on how social preparedness and familial support allows Latino college students to transition from an urban high school to four-year universities. Addressing Latino students' college-going culture while they are in a charter high school offers a perspective on their views of college life, familial support, and college knowledge guidance, which may provide information about their preparedness during their transition to college. In addition, Latino college students' social experiences provide insight as to how students were socially prepared in high school and how they adjusted socially while in college. Another factor that may influence students' social adjustment is how familial support influences their social preparedness in high school and their social adjustment to college.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Purpose

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to explore Latino college students' social preparedness and familial support experiences during their transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California. This study used a naturalistic approach where "knowledge is obtained by direct experience through the physical senses" (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 5). Accordingly, the study focused on a "social phenomena" within "natural settings rather than controlled ones" (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 6). In the natural and realistic setting I created, Latino college students expressed their experiences during their transition to college.

As a high school counselor, I was interested in exploring what first-generation, low-income Latino college students think about their social preparedness and familial support experiences while they were in high school and during their transition to regional urban public universities in Southern California. The reason I explored these experiences was so that I can provide a well-rounded transition plan for the low-income, first-generation, college-bound Latino charter high school students who plan to attend four-year universities. By creating a transition plan, I would be able to help low-income and first-generation students remain at four-year universities, rather than having to drop out because they found it difficult to integrate socially and lack family support. Furthermore, I want to contribute to the existing literature regarding the social preparedness knowledge and support Latino high school students when getting ready to attend universities, so that

they are better able to navigate the social component of college life and achieve academic success.

Research Questions

The following research questions helped guide my study:

1. What are the social experiences of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California?

2. How do first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students experience familial support as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California?

Chapter Organization

This chapter established the reason an ethnographic case study was used for this study. The settings used for this study include Southern California Charter High School (SCCHS), the location where participants were be recruited for the study, and three regional urban public universities to which most students have applied. The study also described the low-income, first-generation, college-bound Latino charter high school students' demographics and data source. However, I interviewed and observed first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students. In addition, I interviewed Latino college students' parents. This study used various instruments and procedures in order to provide credibility and dependability. Then I provided a detailed description of how the data was collected and analyzed. Lastly, I explained what my role as the researcher entailed when planning and conducting the study.

Research Design and Tradition

In this study, I used an ethnographic case study design that draws on "the concept of culture … that describes the way things are" (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 93). The cultural group I studied was first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students during their transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California. The case study approach allowed for an "in-depth and detailed explorations of single examples (an event, process, organization, group, or individual)" and an "analysis of a bounded system" (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 103; Merriam, 2009, p. 40). Through the lens of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students during their transition from a charter high school to a regional urban public universities in Southern California, I hoped to understand the "human ideas, actions, and interactions" (Glesne, 2011) students go through when they transition to college. In this case study I provided a particularistic, thick, descriptive, and heuristic approach (Merriam, 2009).

This ethnographic case study required that, as the researcher, I submerge myself within the social and family lives of a cultural group in order to provide a descriptive, detailed, and hermeneutic study. An ethnographic study allowed for a thorough description and interpretation of a cultural group's "human behavior" (Schram, 2006, p. 68), where I interpreted "patterns and regularities" (Schram, 2006, p. 68) that Latino college students experienced during the transition from high school to college. Through the cultural experiences of the group, I was able to find patterns and determine similarities and distinctions.

Lastly, this ethnographic study used a hermeneutic circle in order to make sure that each "part depend[ed] on the interpretation of the whole and vice versa" (Schram, 2006, p. 69). A hermeneutic circle is defined by the "movement between parts and whole" in order to understand the interpretation of each part (Schram, 2006, p. 69). My study interpreted the results and created codes and themes under social and familial support experiences in order to answer the research questions and connect the entire study. As the ethnographer, I observed students' social interactions and recorded what students said during their interviews. Then I transcribed the interviews and conducted member checks in order to capture what students and parents meant.

Research Setting and Context

I recruited students from an urban charter high school and followed them to different regional urban public universities in Southern California. Southern California Charter High School (SCCHS) is a low performing high school that serves low-income students and a majority of Latino students. SCCHS was the site where I recruited participants for the study. I followed the participants to three different universities and observed and interviewed them at their respective universities and their respective family or home environments. The universities were located within 80 miles of their home environments and implemented comprehensive eligibility requirements (redacted 2, 2012; redacted 3, 2012; redacted 4, 2012). Some of the participants came from a single parent household and resided in a low-income community. I interviewed and observed participants during the summer, and fall semester at their respective universities. Additionally, I interviewed and observed participants two months after they began their

tenure at a university. Lastly, I interviewed Latino college students' family members in order to gather information on the type of support they provided students.

Southern California Charter High School

I used a criterion sampling to select my site, Southern California Charter High School (SCCHS), which fulfilled certain requirements for the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). In this study, I focused primarily on first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino students. SCCHS housed a large number of Latino students, a majority of whom qualified for free and reduced lunch and would be the first in their family to attend a four-year university. I assigned a pseudonym to each student in order to provide confidentiality.

In the past, SCCHS struggled to perform at a satisfactory level, and as a result, the former superintendent of Public California School District (PCSD) gave the school to two charter organizations in an effort to improve academic results (Dwyer, 2011). The charter organizations were brought in to provide a different solution to the struggling school by decreasing dropout rates and increasing state test scores. Since the campus was divided into two separate schools, a tense environment between former and new faculty and staff had emerged.

SCCHS was part of a charter school district in California and offered courses in English, history, mathematics, science, art, physical education, Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC), and English and mathematics support courses. The courses offered to students were designed to help them prepare for college and fulfill college admissions requirements. There were two security aides who supervised two buildings. In addition, there was a contracted security company that provided supervision by the

bungalow area, which was on the far side of campus. Due to the budget cuts in education, positions had been cut. The campus required maintenance, but SCCHS had provided the funds for only one Plant Manager and two clean up personnel for both campuses. Needless to say, SCCHS required some tender loving care.

In addition, the school was located next door to a housing project, where the majority of the students lived. Parent involvement was also extremely low at SCCHS, and even though the school held parent meetings every week, one in the morning and another in the evening, the maximum amount of parents who showed at any given meeting last year was fifteen. The concern remained as to the reasons parents were not involved in their children's education.

I worked at the school site as a school counselor and during my tenure I had helped students apply to four-year universities; various students have returned to visit and some of them have told me they dropped out of school. Some of the reasons they dropped out were financial difficulties, the inability to adjust to the academics, and the inability to adjust socially to college. This was important because students should have been prepared to handle these issues prior to transitioning to a four-year university. Fortunately, students knew who I was, which made observations interesting. In order to respect the students, faculty, staff, and administration's time and space, and to provide minimal impact on regular school activities, I coordinated the dates that I would conduct student recruitment.

University Settings

The Latino college students were attending regional urban public universities in Southern California. The university campuses were located in an urban city within an

80-mile radius of SCCHS. I used a chain or network sampling strategy to select the universities to use in my study. Chain or network sampling occurs when participants identify and refer others with similar characteristics (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). In this case, participants identified the university they chose to attend.

University 1 was considered a large university known for housing a large number of academic programs (CPUE 1, 2011). University 1 received over 30,000 applications and only admitted around 15,000 students (redacted 2, 2013). Of those students admitted, the average GPA was approximately 3.00, and only around 5,000 students ended up attending (redacted 2, 2013). In addition, around thirty percent of new freshman lived on campus (CPUE 1, 2011).

University 2 was a medium-sized campus with six nationally recognized programs. It received over 20,000 applications and only admitted 17,000 students (redacted 3, 2012). Students who were admitted had an average GPA of 3.00 (redacted 3, 2012). University 2 was known as a commuter campus and seventeen percent of new freshmen students lived on campus or around the community (CPUE 2, 2011).

University 3 was another large campus, with fifty academic departments and an array of majors. It received approximately 25,000 applications and only admitted 20,000 students (redacted 4, 2012). Only 3,000 students attended in the fall of 2012 and the average GPA of that group was 3.20 (redacted 4, 2012). University 3 was also considered a commuter school and only fifteen percent of students lived on campus or around the community (CPUE 3, 2011).

Family Home Environment

In addition, I recruited parents to participate in the study. I also used a chain or network sampling strategy in order to recruit family members. Many students and their families lived in a low-income housing project located next door to SCCHS. The Housing Authority (redacted, 2009) identified Hispanics as the largest population residing in the community, followed by blacks, and a small percentage of Asians and Caucasians. The community was known for the several housing projects that provided subsidized housing for low-income families. In fact, most families lived below the federal poverty level (redacted, 2009, p. 4). In addition, a majority of the families that resided in the housing project earned their income through employment wages, while others received government funding (redacted, 2009, p. 7). Parents who resided in the housing community had either less than a 12th grade education, some college experience, or were currently enrolled in school (redacted, 2009, p. 7). Finally, the community was known for its gangs and violent crimes (Anti, 2007). Because gangs and violence were prevalent within the community, students either joined a gang or feared what would happen out on the streets (redacted, 2009, p. 9).

<div align="center">

Data Sources and Research Sample

</div>

I interviewed five participants for the early transition interview at participants' preferred location and subsequently interviewed and observed four Latino college students at their respective universities in order to gather information about their social experiences and familial support during their transition. In addition, I interviewed three parents to gather the type of support they gave their children during their transition to a university.

Students

I used interviews and participant observations from first-year, first-generation,

low-income Latino college students, that were recruited from SCCHS. While recruiting

students from SCCHS, I identified college-bound Latino students from low-income and

first-generation backgrounds as the students needed to meet requirements to participate

(Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). SCCHS had over 400 students, where the majority of

students were Hispanic and African-American, and a small percentage of other ethnicities

(Pearson Education Incorporated, 2011). Many of the students in SCCHS came from

low-income, single-family homes (redacted, 2009, 2). The SCCHS students felt

challenged because the courses offered made them eligible for college, these changes

have made students adjustment difficult because of the new structure. SCCHS provided

breakfast and lunch to all of its students, 70% of whom qualified for free or reduced

breakfast and lunch (Pearson Education Incorporated, 2011). The majority of students

came from low-socioeconomic households, and a large number of the students were

Latinos. I used a criterion strategy, which required a particular criterion in order for

participants to be part of the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I used an informant, a

school counselor, in order to determine which Latino students were college-bound.

Parents

In addition to students, I invited parents to participate in the study. I used a chain

or network sampling strategy to select the parents. Chain or network sampling occurs

when participants identify and refer others with similar characteristics (Bloomberg &

Volpe, 2012). Through the students, I relied on obtaining parental participation consent.

Few of these parents graduated from high school, and some have attended college yet were unable to complete a degree (redacted, 2009, p. 7). The majority of the parents worked minimum wage jobs in order to make ends meet, and often times their jobs prevented them from participating in school functions. Therefore, they relied on SCCHS to obtain college information to help their child follow the college process.

Participant Selection and Recruitment

   Students. At the school site, permission from the principal was required in order to recruit students, so I met with the principal and asked permission to recruit students on the campus. I informed the principal that a letter would be required for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application. The principal gave me permission to speak with the school counselor, and the counselor sent my research flyer and invitation to all senior students via email.

   I asked the students who responded to the email, that had the research flyer attached, and met the requirements of the study to meet with me individually in order to provide them with their participant bill of rights and the participant informed consent form. An ethnographic case study, which "is a bounded integrated system with working parts" (Glesne, 2011, p. 22), allowed for a "descriptive and holistic" (Glesne, 2011, p. 22) approach. Upon submission of their informed consent forms, I interviewed five to four first-year, first-generation, Latino college students twice for approximately 60 minutes. I observed participants during the fall semester at their respective universities. Through these methods of data collection, I was able to gather Latino college students' social and familial support experiences during their transition from a public charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California.

Parents. The students whom I selected to participate in the study I notified that their parents would be invited to participate as well. I asked students for their parents' contact information in order to invite them to participate. I contacted three parents via phone and asked if they were interested in participating in the study. Then, I met with each parent at a location of their choosing where I gave them the consent forms, bill of rights, and answered any questions they had about the study. Lastly, I conducted parent interviews in order to collect data on how parents felt they supported their children during the transition process from high school to college. I sought a minimum of four parents.

Ethical Considerations

Both students and parents submitted an informed consent form in order to participate in the study. Participants were notified that their information would be shared with my Chair and committee members. A pseudonym was issued to each participant in order to maintain confidentiality. The participants submitted their informed consent forms and were placed in a locked file cabinet. Only me, the researcher, had access to this cabinet. During the research process, I kept personal interviews and observations in a computer file that required a password. Once I transcribed the interviews, the verbally recorded interviews were deleted. I kept the transcriptions in a secure, locked file cabinet, and a soft copy in a computer file that required a password. I kept all the information confidential and only shared with my committee members. Pseudonyms were given to institutions and other locations in order to maintain confidentiality.

I also provided participants with a copy of a signed informed consent and information on their right to terminate participation in the study at any time. Their identity and information was kept confidential. Prior to handing out the consent forms, I

tried to reassure the participants that the study was not related to the SCCHS, that this study would not disclose their personal information to teachers, staff, or administrators. As the student's high school counselor, students may have found it hard to disclose or elaborate on their answers. For this reason, I conducted interviews outside of my office, outside of a coffee shop and in a juice shop. Prior to beginning the interview, I reminded the participants that their information would not be disclosed to anyone and that they could terminate their participation at any time.

Documents. In addition to interviews and observations, I reviewed university support services' websites. I looked at the universities that the participants decided to attend. I reviewed university websites in order to determine how the universities recruited Latino college students as they transitioned into their institution. In addition, I looked at these particular websites because I wanted to determine how each respective university helped students to transition into the college environment. I took a screenshot of each university's admissions, orientation, and student support services, as well as any student organization websites.

Data Collection Instruments

Instruments

The ethnographic case study addressed the social preparedness and familial support of first-generation, low-income Latino college students during their transition from a public charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California. For my research study, I used four instruments to protect and collect research data in order to answer my research questions. The first instruments that were used included the recruitment flyer and research invitation, followed by the student participant

informed consent form, parent participant consent form, and bill of rights form.

Additionally, one personal parent interview protocol, two student interview protocols,

and student observation guide were used to collect data.

Description of Instruments

      Recruitment flyer and invitation letter. When I began to recruit participants for

the study, I provided them with a recruitment flyer and invitation letter. The recruitment

flyer provided information about the study and those who qualified to participate in the

study, and my contact information: email and phone number. The invitation letter

included information about myself, the purpose of the study, participants' time

commitment, how the study would be conducted, and information on confidentiality and

withdrawal from the study. I asked the SCCHS counselor to email the recruitment flyer

and invitation letter to all recent graduates from SCCHS. The recruitment flyer and

invitation letter provided general information and requirements for participants, and

promoted the study to others who may have been interested in participating. The

invitation letter can be found in Appendix I and Appendix J, which are available in both

English and Spanish.

      Consent forms. I used informed consent forms to apprise participants of physical

or emotional risks associated with the study (Glesne, 2011). I gave students interested in

participating in the study a student consent form. All student participants had to be

eighteen years or older to participate. The student consent form provided information on

the study, their rights as a participant, and how their information would be kept safe and

confidential. Also, the consent form informed participants of the potential for

uncomfortable questions and how the study would benefit society. Lastly, contact information was provided in case they had questions or concerns.

In addition, parents signed a parent participant consent form that provided information on the study, their rights as a participant, and how their information would be kept safe and confidential. In addition, information was provided about the possibility of discomfort when answering questions and how the study would benefit society. Lastly, contact information was provided if they had any questions or concerns.

The student and parent consent forms were given in order to provide detailed information about the study, confidentiality, storage and protection of data, discomfort and benefits, compensation, and voluntary participation. This allowed participants to know what they would be involved in and their rights in case they had any questions during the process. The student consent form can be found in Appendix A, while the parent consent forms can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C, which are available in English and Spanish.

Student interview protocols. The interview protocols helped create a "formal and orderly process" (p. 103) when trying to capture a cultural group's experiences (Glesne, 2011). The interview protocols were composed of a written list of semi-structured interview questions that would be asked in order (Bernard, 1994). The semi-structured interview approach allowed me to ask probing questions in order to gather clarifying information from the participant (Bernard, 1994).

The "Early Transition Student Interview Protocol" assisted in explaining Latino college students' social and familial support experiences during their transition to college. The "Early Transition Student Interview Protocol" provided an introduction to the

purpose of the study. It also provided information about the study being voluntary and confidential. The college student interview protocol asked questions about Latino college students' high school social preparedness and familial support experiences. In addition, I asked questions that addressed what Latino college students expect their social and familial support experiences would be while at regional urban public universities in Southern California. Lastly, I provided an opportunity for participants to ask questions. The interview protocols served as guides that helped gather social experiences and familial support data. The "Early Transition Student Interview Protocol" can be found in Appendix K.

The "First-Year College Student Interview Protocol" assisted in explaining Latino college students' social and familial support experiences during their transition to college. The "First-Year College Student Interview Protocol" provided an introduction to the purpose of the study. It provided information about the study being voluntary and confidential. The "First-Year College Student Interview Protocol" asked questions about Latino college students' high school social preparedness and familial support experiences. In addition, I asked questions that addressed social and familial support experiences while at regional urban public universities in Southern California. Lastly, I provided the opportunity for participants to ask questions. The interview protocols served as guides that helped gather social experiences and familial support data. The "First-Year College Student Interview Protocol" can be found in Appendix L.

The student interview protocols were comprised of questions that addressed their interaction and communication with peers, professors, programs, and organizations.

These questions enabled me to capture students' social capital interactions and how these interactions helped in their transition to their college.

Parent interview protocol. The parental interview protocol captured Latino college students familial support experiences. The interview protocol was composed of a written list of semi-structured interview questions that were asked in order (Bernard, 1994). The semi-structured interview approach allowed me to ask probing questions and also allowed me to ask clarifying questions (Bernard, 1994).

The interview protocol assisted in explaining Latino college students' familial support experiences during their transition from high school to college. The parental interview protocol provided an introduction about the purpose of the study. It also provided information about the study being voluntary and confidential. The parental interview protocol was comprised of questions about familial support during Latino college students' transition to regional urban public universities in Southern California. Lastly, I asked whether parents had any questions regarding the interview and study. The parental interview protocol may be found in Appendix M and Appendix N, which are available in English and Spanish.

The parental interview protocols also included questions that addressed their interaction and communication with their child after they graduated from high school and began at a university. These questions enabled me to capture students' social capital interactions and how their parents' support helped in their transition to their college.

Descriptive observation guide. An observation guide allows for the researcher to understand what they see (Glesne, 2011). An observation guide allowed me to view participants and others interactions on campus, the types of activities they were involved

in, and what they talked about and felt while at a four-year university. I used a descriptive question matrix that was composed of grand-tour and mini-tour questions (Spradley, 1980). The matrix had nine major dimensions—space , actor, activity, object, act, event, time, goal, and feeling—that were listed on the left side and top of the matrix (Spradley, 1980). The observation guide was composed of nine grand-tour questions that guided me to look for broad observations (Spradley, 1980). The mini-tour observation guide was composed of seventy-two questions that helped focus the observation (Spradley, 1980). During the observation, I asked participants informal interview questions in order to get clarity (Spradley, 1980). The observation guide assisted in gathering data when observing students and families in order to get an understanding of social preparedness and familial support. The observation guide can be found in Appendix O.

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to beginning my research study, I secured permission from the principal at the charter high school to recruit participants for the study. I relied on the school counselor to help identify college-bound Latino students. The counselor sent my research flyer and invitation to all senior students via email. Those who responded were contacted. Then I introduced myself to the students, and explained the purpose of my study.

Research Flyer, Research Invitation, and Consent Forms

After consulting with the counselor at the high school, she informed me which students were interested in being part of the study after she emailed all seniors the research flyer and invitation. There were six students who showed interest in

participating in the study. After contacting all six students via phone and email, only five

students elected to participate in the study. I met with each student individually.

Students were invited to a meeting, and research invitations were given to college-bound

Latino charter high school students who were going to attend regional urban public

universities in Southern California. In addition, students were given a consent form. I

asked students their age; only those who were 18 or older were given a student consent

form. The consent forms were submitted before any interviews began. Copies of the

research invitation can be found in Appendix I, and the student and parent consent forms

are located in Appendix section A, B, and C of this study.

Student Interviews

The "Early Transition Student Interview Protocol" questions were open-ended

and semi-structured, and required participants to provide answers about their social and

familial support experiences during their transition to college. I conducted the interviews

during the summer, when students were on vacation from their regional urban public

university in Southern California. I conducted five sixty-minute personal interviews with

each participant at an agreed-upon location. I contacted the participants via phone and

email in order to set up an appointment for the interview. I conducted "Early Transition

Student" interviews with Juan, Pancho, and Valerie at a local Starbucks; I met Samantha

at a local Jamba Juice; and I met Isabela at a local Chili's restaurant. I began the

interview by introducing myself, explaining what my study was about, and stating that

the study was voluntary and confidential. Then I began by asking introductory questions

about how the student was doing, how life was going, and how they anticipated college to

be. Next, I asked questions about how the student was adjusting after graduating from

high school and what they anticipated when building relationships with peers; interacting with campus organizations, faculty, and staff; and how their family had and potentially would support them during their transition from high school to college. Lastly, I concluded by asking questions about how they foresaw their social experience and family support while in college, if they wanted to add anything else, and if they had any questions about the interview questions or the study in general. To end the interview process, I thanked them for their participation in the interview, and asked them if I could reach out to them in case I needed any clarification and if I interpreted what they said correctly.

The "First-Year College Student Interview Protocol" questions were open-ended and semi-structured, and asked participants about their social and familial support experiences during their transition to college. I conducted interviews when students were at regional urban public universities in Southern California. I conducted 60-minute personal interviews with each participant at an agreed upon location. I contacted the participants via phone and email in order to set up an appointment for the interview. I conducted Pancho's "First-Year College Student Interview" at SCCHS; I interviewed Isabela at University 2 after class; I interviewed Juan at University 3 after his Introduction to University course; and I interviewed Samantha at a local Jamba Juice. I began the interview by introducing myself, explaining what the study was about, and stating that the study was voluntary and confidential. Then I asked a few introductory questions about how the student was doing, how college life was going, and how they felt they were adjusting to college. Next, I asked questions about how the student was adjusting socially to college in terms of building relationships with peers and interacting

with campus organizations, faculty, and staff, and how their family had supported them during their transition from high school to college. Lastly, I concluded by asking questions about how they foresaw their social experience and family support while in college, if they would like to add anything else, and if they had any questions about the interview questions or the study itself. To end the interview process, I thanked them for their participation, then, asked if I could reach out to them in case I needed any clarification and if I interpreted what they said correctly.

The "Early Transition Student Interview Protocol" was designed to ask questions that addressed relationships established with high school faculty, staff, and friends; as well as questions that pertained to the types of familial support they experienced. The "First-Year College Student Interview Protocol" included questions that addressed types of relationships with college peers, professors, staff, programs, and organizations. In addition, I also asked participants questions about their relationships with family members and the type of support they felt they received. The student interview protocols were influenced by social capital theory in order to determine how relationships influenced students' transition from a charter high school to a university. Because social capital theory emphasizes that people who build relationships are able to expand their networks by sharing and introducing relationships to their networks, the protocols yielded responses that described how those networks expanded and how people shared resources.

Parent Interviews

The "Parental Interview Protocol" questions were open-ended and semi-structured questions, where I asked parents about the type of familial support they provided their children, Latino college students, during their transition to college. I interviewed three

parents, where I asked personal questions. The personal interviews were conducted at locations where parents felt comfortable, such as their home or a coffee shop, for a 60-minute, personal one-on-one interview. I asked parents what time and day would be a convenient time to meet and conduct the interview. During the interview, I began by introducing myself, explaining what my study was about, and stating that the study was voluntary and confidential. Then I began by asking introductory questions about how the parent was doing, how they felt about their child attending college, and how they felt their child had prepared for college. Next, I asked parents questions about the type of support the family had provided their child during their transition to college. Lastly, I concluded by asking if they would like to add anything else and whether they had any questions about the interview or the study itself. To end the interview process, I thanked them for their participating in the interview and asked them if I could reach out to them in case I needed any clarification and if I interpreted what they said correctly.

Participant Observations

      Descriptive observations and ethnographic interviews. I observed participants on their respective campuses during the fall semester. I contacted participants for their "First-Year College Student" interviews via phone and electronic mail to set up an appointment to conduct observations in class or on campus. Pancho asked his speech professor about allowing me to observe him in class. I also emailed Pancho's speech professor to ask her for permission to observe Pancho in class. The speech professor stated via email that she would need to ask her department for permission, and the department allowed me to observe Pancho. When I arrived to observe Pancho in class, he introduced me to his new college friends and his speech professor. When I entered

Pancho's speech class, his professor asked that I introduce myself to the class. I observed Pancho's interaction with his peers and his professor, and the speech he conducted, for a total of 45 minutes. Pancho and I met the following day for an interview because Pancho had another class to attend after his speech class. During the interview, I asked clarifying questions that I had in regards to the observation. After the interview and observation, I thanked Pancho for his participation in the study and asked him if I could reach out to him in case I needed any clarification and if I interpreted what he said correctly.

Isabela was another student I observed during her fitness course. Isabela asked her fitness professor about allowing me to observe her in class and she consented. I also emailed Isabela's fitness professor to ask her for permission to observe Isabela in class, and provide addition information about my study. The fitness professor never replied to my email. When I arrived to observe Isabela in her fitness class, the professor arrived just in time to begin class. I observed Isabela's interaction with peers and with the professor for a total of 60 minutes. After class concluded, I approached Isabela's fitness professor and introduced myself, thanking the professor for allowing me to observe Isabela. After the class observation, I interviewed Isabela. During the interview, I asked clarifying questions that I had in regards to the observation. After the interview and observation, I thanked Isabela for her participation in the study, and asked her if I could reach out to her in case I needed any further clarification, and if I interpreted what she said correctly.

Lastly, I observed Juan at University 3 when he gave me a tour of the campus. Juan and I met at an outside seating area near a parking structure. Juan began the tour near the social science building. We followed the main walking path during the campus

tour Juan led. Throughout the observation, I was able to ask clarifying questions. After the campus tour, we ended up at the same seating area where we had begun, and I conducted the final interview. After the interview and observation, I thanked Juan for his participation in the study, and asked him if I could reach out to him in case I needed any clarification and if I interpreted what he said correctly.

When I observed the participants in class or during the campus tour, I sought the actors, spaces, activities, objects, acts, events, times, goals, and feelings in order to determine how students interacted socially with others and resources. I went through my descriptive questions matrix by answering the grand-tour and mini-tour questions in order to gather information about Latino college students' social experiences and familial support. I focused primarily on the grand-tour questions, but moved to the mini-tour questions when I needed in-depth detail. During the class observations, I was able to answer some grand-tour questions and looked to answer mini-tour questions. During the campus tour, I was able to focus on the grand-tour questions while also asking clarifying questions during the observation. Also, I conducted informal ethnographic interviews during the observations or final interviews so that I would get clarity and understanding about observation.

Focused and selective observations and ethnographic interviews. Observing first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students provided insight to the types of questions they had about college, what they knew about college, and their interactions or concerns with other students. Accordingly, I moved from my initial descriptive observations to focused observations, where I narrowed the focus of the field sessions primarily on social interactions with others on campus. I also observed the types

of social relationships and social interactions, and the way participants interacted with others.

In addition to descriptive questions, I used structural questions, the use of the semantic relationship of a domain, in order to focus my observation (Spradley, 1980). The semantic relationship connects the cover term with the included term in order to create a cultural domain (Spradley, 1980). The cover term is also known as the cultural domain (Spradley, 1980). The included terms are smaller categories that fall under the cover term (Spradley, 1980). Finally, I observed students in a classroom or on a campus tour in order to see, hear, and feel their interactions with others. During the class and campus tour observations, I was able to capture how participants interacted with college peers, and professors. However, in order to understand how participants felt, heard, and saw while interacting with others in their college, I wrote down clarifying questions so that I would be able to ask participants during the last interview.

Lastly, I conducted selective observations, where I created contrast questions pertaining to the kinds of social relationships and social interactions the participants had with others. The contrast questions helped determine some of the differences during the observation. Informal ethnographic interviews were conducted after the observations. I used formal ethnographic interviews to gain clarity about certain things I observed.

Document reviews. I reviewed university websites in order to determine how the universities recruit and help Latino college students' transition into their institution. I took a screenshot of admissions, orientation, student support services, and student organization websites from each university. I looked for repetitive key words or phrases that would welcome and introduce students to campus during their transition.

Data Analysis

As I collected data, I prepared the data in order to begin the analyzing process, which consisted of creating codes based on the empirical literature; I then created domains, taxonomy analysis, and cultural themes. As I collected data I used a fieldwork journal, which served as the basis of the early data analysis. Data was then transcribed and organized in order to begin the analysis. Finally, the data was interpreted by using the social capital conceptual framework.

Domain Analysis

After assessing the empirical literature, I created domains that helped to analyze observation and interview data. Domains have three components: a cover term, a semantic relationship, and included terms (Spradley, 1980). The cover terms describe the cultural domain and the included terms, smaller categories in a domain, while the semantic relationship bridges both categories (Spradley, 1980). Some of the domains I explored included Latino college students' interactions with professors, staff, peers, and organizations while at their university. I also explored Latino college students and parental domains about familial and parental support during the transition from high school to college. Once I finished observing Latino college students' social and familial support experiences I identified domains by becoming familiar with my observations notes. I created a domain analysis worksheet that identified included terms and used semantic relationship phrases in order to identify a cover term (Spradley, 1980). I continued the domain analysis process in order to gather a list of domains.

Taxonomic Analysis

Once I identified the cultural domains, I analyzed them individually in order to build a taxonomy, which is a set of categories from one single semantic relationship (Spradley, 1980). I selected a domain from a semantic relationship and identified similar included terms. Then, I narrowed down included terms and created subset terms, which resulted in a broad included term. Afterward, I created a broad cover term in order to create a large domain. Then I created a tentative taxonomy, but analyzed my focused observations in order to create a final taxonomy analysis. During the taxonomy analysis process, I used Atlas.ti in order to organize my data.

Thematic Data Analysis

After building a taxonomy, I began to seek cognitive principles—either tacit or explicit—that connected different subsystems in order to develop cultural themes (Spradley, 1980). By immersing myself in the data and assessing cultural domains and their similarities and differences, I identified cultural themes. Once I established cultural themes, I created a diagram that included domains and themes in order to provide a visual aid. Lastly, I created a cultural inventory to gather and organize my data. I gathered roadmaps, list of themes, and examples from the data. In Chapter 4, I have organized my data based on themes with examples so that the reader can understand the findings.

<div align="center">

Researcher Roles

</div>

As the researcher, I accessed the gatekeeper, which was the principal of the Southern California Charter High School, in order to gain access to the school. Once I was given access, I provided the principal, faculty, staff, students, and parents with information about the study that I was conducting. I discussed how, as the researcher, I may have influenced the study and participants because of my previous experience as a

low-income, first-generation, college-bound Latino high school and college student, and school counselor. In addition, I discussed how the study had created an effect on me, as the researcher, because I may have identified with certain experiences that students may have been going through during the process of transition.

Effects of the Researcher on the Case

      Researcher bias. When I was a senior in high school, my college counselor did not want to give me the University of California application. I relied on my academic advisor from the Educational Talent Search to help me apply. When I graduated college, I assumed everyone in high school wanted to attend college. One day, as an academic advisor for the Upward Bound program, which encourages students to prepare for college, I realized that not everyone wanted to pursue a post-secondary education. This was baffling to me. As a Latina who was the first in her family to attend college, came from a low-income household, repeated the third grade yet managed to skip from 7th to 9th grade, I was meant to drop out of high school and never attend college. The students who I interviewed and observed were Latina/o, the first in their family to go to college, and from low-income households, but in addition to that, they lived in a community where violence and gangs were prevalent. Although I experienced similar things, I did not become involved in the violence or gangs within my community because my parents made sure we were involved in after-school activities.

      I am a school counselor at Southern California Charter High School and I interact with students, parents, teachers, and staff members. I have built relationships with families, students, faculty, and staff. My role as a school counselor requires me to educate and advocate mainly for students, but at times I do the same for families, faculty,

and staff. Being a school counselor, I educate and advocate for students and ask many questions and sometimes lead questions.

As part of my reflexivity to understand how I could potentially influence my results, I assessed my subjectivity in order to control against any personal bias in my research (Glesne, 2011). As a counselor who grew up as a Latina in a low-income household and was the first to attend college and graduate, I wanted to remain neutral and not influence the results. During my pilot study I practiced by not asking questions, making only statements, and limiting my interaction with students. Once I transcribed and coded the student interviews I conducted member checks in order to make sure I understood what they said.

Participant reactivity. Although I have experienced similar situations, the Latino high school students who participated in this study viewed me as their counselor. The students did not view me as someone who had a similar upbringing and high school experiences. Therefore, students may not have understood why I was conducting this study. The students' experiences may have included challenges outside of school. The Latino high school students lived in a community affected by violence and gangs. Unfortunately, students at Southern California Charter High School have experienced many people walking in and out of their lives and therefore found it hard to trust people. Providing a letter stating the purpose of the study may have helped alleviate some concern. When collecting data, students may not have understood what the intent of the study was. Most important was making sure that the Latino high school students knew that their identities would remain confidential by assigning them pseudonyms.

Effects of the Case on the Researcher

It was important to make sure that there was a specific plan set in place when gaining access, and informing participants and parents about the study being conducted. The principal and I agreed that I could meet with the school counselor so that she could help with recruiting students for the study. Once the counselor sent out the recruitment flyers and invitation letter, I was able to meet with students, distribute consent forms, and provide participants with their bill of rights in the study. When collecting data in an interview, I related to some of the students' experiences. There were certain things about which I got emotional, but it was important to remain calm and ask for clarity. The population of students that I interviewed and observed were first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students, and their familial support experiences impacted me the most because of the value I placed on my family and my experiences while in high school and college. This experience was part of my reflexivity, where I sympathized because of similar experiences, but I developed audit trails such as notes in order to keep track of my ideas and my emotions (Carlson, 2010). During interviews and transcriptions, I took notes in order to jot down my ideas and my emotions (Glesne, 2011). Later, I looked at my notes in order to see what I was thinking at the time of the interview. During my observations, I used thick and descriptive details in order to provide a real-life experience (Carlson, 2010). Audit trails, thick and descriptive information, and member checking helped control my biases.

Summary

In this ethnographic case study, I recruited senior high school students by using both a criterion strategy and a chain or network sampling strategy. Those who were

interested in participating in the study were given an invitation letter, a consent form, and a bill of rights form. After the students were recruited, parents were asked to be part of the study where I used a chain or network sampling strategy. I gave parents who were interested in being part of the study a research flyer, an invitation letter, a consent form, and a bill of rights form. Students and parents were interviewed one-on-one. The interviews were approximately 60 minutes in length and were recorded. Students were observed while they were at their respective university, and each observation was 45 minutes in length.

Once I collected the data I transcribed the interviews and observations. During the transcribing process I changed student and parent names to pseudonyms in order to ensure confidentiality. I used Atlas.ti to code the data by themes. As a counselor, I kept work-related comments, suggestions, or ideas to myself in order to avoid influencing student and parent responses.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to explore factors that influenced Latino college students when they transitioned from a charter high school to a California university. To understand how social preparedness and familial support influenced Latino college students' transition from a charter high school to college, I explored the following questions: (1) What are the social experiences of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California? and (2) How do first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students experience familial support as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California? These questions helped me understand Latino college students' experiences during their transition. I collected data through interviews, participant observations, and document review.

I used flyers and invitation letters to recruit participants for the study. Six participants responded to the flyers and invitation letter, and I interviewed five participants for the first set of student interviews that took place in the summer of 2013. In the second set of student interviews and observations, which occurred during the Fall 2014 academic term, four students participated in the study. There were three parents of three different students who participated in the study. I used two student interview protocols, early high school transition protocol and first-year college transition protocol, one parental interview protocol, and one observation guide. The goal was to capture the social experiences and familial support during students' transition to a four-year

university, and the research questions guided me in exploring how families support students during their transition to college as well as providing insight into how students transition into regional urban public universities.

After I completed interviews, I submitted digital audio files to transcription services, Castingwords and GMR Transcriptions. Once Castingwords and GMR completed the transcriptions, I prepared the data to start data analysis. As I collected data, I used a fieldwork journal, whose contents served as the early data analysis, to capture classroom or campus observations. The analytical process consisted of the development of codes based on the empirical literature followed by the creation of cultural themes. I uploaded the transcriptions to ATLAS.ti, a software program that helps interpret data. Then, I created codes from interview transcriptions, observations, and campus websites, after which I created an Excel spreadsheet containing all the codes, and I merged some similar codes after reviewing quotes. The first theme to emerge related to communication, followed by themes related to relationships and family. After I identified the themes, I identified subthemes. As a result, I organized the themes in this chapter as they arose during the data analysis process.

In this chapter, I discuss how I entered and exited the field when interviewing and observing participants. I conducted a student interview in the summer of 2013 and a student interview and observation in October 2013; and I conducted parent interviews in October 2013. I have used pseudonyms for participants and institutions to maintain confidentiality. I introduced participants by describing their familial background, personal experiences, and school expectations. Then I discussed the results derived from the data collection by creating cultural themes. Lastly, I provided a chapter summary.

Field Entry

I initially approached the Southern California Charter High School's (SCCHS) school counselor. When I spoke to the school counselor, I asked her if she could email the invitation letter and flyer to all the SCCHS graduates. The school counselor emailed the information to nighty-eight SCCHS graduates. Six former students replied to the email with their name, contact phone number, and personal email address. I responded via email to each student who had replied and then sent a follow-up text message. Five students responded by email or text message. Students preferred to use text messaging as their primary form of communication. For the five students who participated in my first interview—the early high school transition interview included Valerie, Isabela, Samantha, Juan, and Pancho – pseudonyms were used.

I text-messaged each student to determine what day and time would work, and what their preferred meeting location would be. I picked up Valerie from her home and we drove to a local Starbucks to conduct the interview. Isabela met me at SCCHS, and then we drove to Chili's to conduct the interview. I picked up Pancho from his home and we drove to a local Starbucks to conduct the interview. Samantha met me at SCCHS, and then we drove to a local Jamba Juice to conduct the interview. Lastly, Juan and I met at a local Starbucks to conduct the interview.

In October 2013, I contacted the five students who had participated in the study over the previous summer. I contacted each student via email and then sent a follow-up text message. Only four students responded to my e-mail or text message. The four

students who participated in my first-year transition interview were Isabela, Samantha, Juan, and Pancho.

I text-messaged each student to determine what day and time would work, and what their preferred meeting location would be. I met Isabela at University 2, where I conducted a classroom observation, followed by an interview. I met Pancho at University 2, where I conducted a classroom observation, followed by an interview. I picked up Samantha from her home and drove to a local Jamba Juice to conduct the interview. Lastly, Juan and I met at University 3, where I conducted a campus tour observation, followed by an interview. After contacting Valerie via email, text message, and phone, she did not reply and assumed she did not want to continue participating.

Field Exit

As the interviews concluded, I reminded the participants that the study was voluntary and confidential and that they had the right to withdraw at any time. Once I completed the individual interviews with students, I reminded them that I would reach out to them in October to set up the last interview and observation. On the day of each interview, I drove Valerie, Pancho, and Isabela home. I dropped Samantha off at SCCHS, and Juan and I ended our interview at Starbucks.

Once I completed the second set of individual interviews with students, I reminded them that I would reach out to them throughout the year to verify information that had been collected. I drove Samantha home after the interview. I ended the interviews with Juan, Isabela, Pancho at their respective schools on the day that their interview and observation was conducted. After the final student interviews and

68

observation, I mailed out thank you letters to show my appreciation for their commitment and time.

Participant Profiles

Valerie

Valeria was 18 years old and had graduated from SCCHS. She was a first-year student at University 2. Valerie came from a two-parent home with an older brother and a younger brother. Valerie's parents both worked, her older brother attended a local community college, and her younger brother was in middle school. I had limited information on Valerie because she only participated in one interview.

I emailed Valerie and text-messaged her to determine a time and day to meet over the summer of 2013. I picked up Valerie from her home and went to a local Starbucks. We bought coffee, sat down, and began the early high school transition interview. I explained to Valerie the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Valerie. I told her that if I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. The interview was recorded and later transcribed by an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Valerie that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she could withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, I notified her that I would contact her again in October 2013 to conduct the second interview and an observation.

In October 2013, I contacted Valerie via email, text message, and phone to determine if she was still interested in participating in the study. I sent two emails, two text messages, and I left a voice message on her voicemail, but she neglected to respond.

After multiple attempts, I stopped all forms of communication. Valerie did not give me parent contact information because she stated that her parents were not interested in participating in the study. Therefore, her parents were not part of the study.

Isabela

Isabela was 18 years old and had graduated from SCCHS. She was a first-year student at University 2. She was an only child who had immigrated from El Salvador to the United States with her mother; her father had passed away when she was young. At the time of the study, Isabela lived with her mother and stepfather in a small two-bedroom apartment. Isabela was an AB 540 student, which allowed undocumented students in the state of California to receive in-state tuition and California grant funding if they fulfilled the requirements (MALDEF, 2008). AB 540 students must have attended a California high school for at least three years, graduate with their California high school diploma or General Education Diploma (GED), and submit an affidavit to a California college or university identifying themselves as an AB 540 student (MALDEF, 2008). Isabela had not received any information from the financial aid office about her grant, because the admissions office had not received Isabela's affidavit. Thus, she was not eligible for grant aid. At the time of the study, she was trying to fix the issue, otherwise she would be required to pay her tuition out of her own pocket. Isabela was enrolled in an English development course, a mathematics development course, and a physical fitness course. Unfortunately, in the second semester University 2 did not approve her AB 540 paperwork and was not able to continue at the university. As a result, Isabela enrolled at a local community college.

I emailed Isabela and text-messaged her to determine a time and day to meet over the summer of 2013. I picked up Isabela from her SCCHS and we went to a local Chili's restaurant. We sat down, ordered lunch, and began the early high school transition interview. I explained to Isabela the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Isabela. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. The interview was recorded and later transcribed by an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Isabela that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she could withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, I notified her that I would contact her again in October 2013 to conduct the second interview and an observation.

In October 2013, I contacted Isabela via text message to determine if she was still interested in participating in the study. Before we set up a time and place to meet, we decided that we should figure out what day and time would work for Isabela's physical fitness professor. Isabela contacted her professor via email and gave me permission to observe Isabela in the class. Isabela also gave me her professor's email address, and I followed up with her professor to notify her of my study and what my plan was during the observation. Isabela's professor never replied to my email. Isabela then set up a time and day to meet in her physical fitness course. Isabela and I met a few minutes before class began. The professor arrived just in time to begin class and I was unable to introduce myself before class began. I conducted the observation and after class I approached the professor. I gave her a thank you card to show my gratitude for allowing me to observe Isabela.

Following the observation, Isabela and I found a bench in a quiet area to conduct the first-year college transition interview. I explained to Isabela the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she has the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Isabela. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. In addition, I asked Isabela clarifying questions that had arisen during the observation. The interview was recorded and later transcribed by an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Isabela that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she could withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, I notified her that I would contact her mother to conduct the parent interview.

In the same month, I contacted Isabela's mother via phone to set up a time, day, and place for the parental interview. I drove to Isabela's home to conduct the parental interview. I conducted the parent interview in the living room of their apartment. I conducted the interview in Spanish because that was Isabela's mother's native language. I explained to Isabela's mother the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Isabela's mother. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. The interview was recorded and later transcribed in Spanish by an online transcription service. I translated the interview into English. After the interview, I reminded Isabela's mother that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she could withdraw from the study at any time. Isabela's mother stated that I could contact her if I had any other questions. After I conducted the

observation, student interviews, and parent interview, I mailed thank you cards to Isabela and her mother to show my appreciation of their time.

Pancho

Pancho was 18 years old and had graduated from SCCHS. He was a first-year student at University 2. He was an only child born in the United States. His mother had immigrated to the United States from Mexico, and his father resided in Mexico. Pancho lived with his mother in a small bedroom that they shared. They shared the home with two other families. During middle school, Pancho's mother had decided to send him to Mexico to lives with his grandparents. In Mexico Pancho attended middle school and three years of high school, and he returned to the United States at the beginning of his senior year of high school. During his senior year of high school, he made up several courses that he needed to graduate from high school and fulfill college entrance requirements.

He was admitted to University 3, but during the summer his admissions letter was rescinded because the university did not accept one year of the English courses he had taken in Mexico. Pancho appealed, but University 3 did not accept his appeal. Pancho had been admitted to University 2, but he had never submitted his intent to enroll. Following the results of the appeal at University 3, Pancho appealed to University 2 to allow him to enroll in courses. The day before school began at University 2, Pancho was admitted and was rushed to meet with an advisor to enroll in courses. Pancho was enrolled in an English development course, a mathematics development course, a speech course, and a Spanish course. He felt a lot of pressure when he began at University 2 because the entry process was rushed. He noticed that students who were in the

Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), which provided tutoring and advisors (redacted 6, 2014), received a lot of support compared to students who were not in the EOP. He felt that he would have benefited a lot from the EOP.

Over the summer of 2013, I emailed Pancho and text-messaged him to determine a time and day to meet. I picked up Pancho from his home and we went to a local Starbucks. We ordered coffee, sat down, and began the early high school transition interview. I explained to Pancho the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that he had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Pancho. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. The interview was recorded and later transcribed by an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Pancho that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that he could withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, I notified him that I would contact him again in October 2013 to conduct the second interview and an observation.

In October 2013, I contacted Pancho via text message to determine if he was still interested in participating in the study. Before we set up a time and place to meet, we decided that we should figure out what day and time would work for Pancho's speech professor. Pancho contacted his professor via email and gave me permission to observe him in the class. Pancho also provided me with his professor's email address, and I followed up with his professor to notify her of my study and what my plan was during the observation. Pancho's professor replied to my email and confirmed that I could observe Pancho. Pancho and I then set up a time and day to meet in his speech course. Pancho and I met a few minutes before class began, and he introduced me to his friends and his

professor. I gave the professor a thank you card to show my gratitude for allowing me to observe Pancho. I sat in the row closest to the exit so that I could walk out quietly from the class. Prior to entering the class, Pancho and I decided to meet the next day to conduct the second interview.

The following day, Pancho and I met at SCCHS to conduct the first-year college transition interview. I explained to Pancho the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that he had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Pancho. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. In addition, I also asked Pancho clarifying questions that had arisen during the observation. The interview was recorded and later transcribed by an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Pancho that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that he could withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, I notified him that I would contact his mother to conduct the parent interview.

In the same month, I contacted Pancho's mother via phone to set up a time, day, and place for the parental interview. I met Pancho's mother at SCCHS to conduct the parental interview. I conducted the parental interview in the counselor's office. I conducted the interview in Spanish because that was Pancho's mother's native language. I explained to Pancho's mother the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Pancho's mother. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. The interview was recorded and later transcribed in Spanish by an online transcription service. I translated the interview into

English. After the interview, I reminded Pancho's mother that the study was voluntary

and confidential, and that she could withdraw from the study at any time. Pancho's

mother stated that I could contact her if I had any other questions. After having

conducted the observation, student interviews, and parent interview, I mailed Pancho and

his mother thank you cards to show my appreciation of their time.

Samantha

Samantha was 18 years old and had graduated from SCCHS. Samantha was born

in the United States after her mother and father had immigrated from Mexico. Her father

left the family when Samantha was young, and he had passed away a year prior to the

study. She had fifteen siblings in total, but resides with her two younger siblings and her

mother in a government funded home. She was supposed to attend University 1, but was

attending a local community college at the time of the study. Over the summer of 2013,

Samantha found out that her first choice university had not received her "Intent to Enroll"

form, which stated that she had chosen that school to attend in the fall of 2013. Samantha

tried to appeal her admissions status, but the admissions office personnel did not want to

take her paperwork. After several attempts, Samantha was able to submit her appeals

paperwork and was granted admission. However, the semester had begun and professors

would not accept her into their courses. She was forced to enroll at a community college

and was in the process of taking professional development courses to continue with her

education.

Over the summer of 2013, I emailed Samantha and text-messaged her to

determine a time and day to meet. I picked up Samantha from SCCHS and went to a

local Jamba Juice. We ordered juice, sat down, and began the early high school transition

interview. I explained to Samantha the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Samantha. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. The interview was recorded and later transcribed by an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Samantha that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she could withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, I notified her that I would contact her again in October 2013 to conduct the second interview and an observation.

In October 2013, I contacted Samantha via text message to determine if she was still interested in participating in the study. Samantha and I set up a time, day, and place to meet. Since Samantha was not enrolled at University 1, I was only able to conduct the interview. I picked Samantha up from her home and went to a local Jamba Juice. We ordered juice, sat down outside, and conducted the first-year college transition interview. I explained to Samantha the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Samantha. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. The interview was recorded and later transcribed by an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Samantha that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that she could withdraw from the study at any time. After having conducted the student interviews, I mailed Samantha a thank you card to show my appreciation of her time.

Juan

Juan was 18 years old and had graduated from SCCHS. He was a first-year student at University 3. Juan was enrolled in an English development course, a mathematics development course, and a first-year experience course. Like Pancho, Juan had also noticed that students who were in the EOP received a lot of support compared to students who were not in the EOP. Since Juan was part of the First Year Experience (FYE) program, a program that guided freshmen into a smooth transition to University 3 (redacted 5, 2014), he felt he had received support because he had become familiar with the FYE program.

Over the summer of 2013, I emailed Juan and text-messaged him to determine a time and day to meet. I met Juan at a local Starbucks. We ordered coffee, sat down, and began the early high school transition interview. I explained to Juan the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that he had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Juan. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. I recorded the interview and later submitted the audio to an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Juan that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that he could withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, I notified him that I would contact him again in October 2013 to conduct the second interview and an observation.

In October 2013, I contacted Juan via text message to determine if he was still interested in participating in the study. Juan and I set up a day to meet and conduct a campus tour observation. Juan and I met at a plaza on campus to conduct the first-year college transition interview. I explained to Juan the purpose of my study, that the study

was voluntary and confidential, and that he had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Juan. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. In addition, I also asked Juan clarifying questions that had arisen during the campus tour observation. The interview was recorded and later transcribed by an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Juan that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that he could withdraw from the study at any time. Additionally, I notified him that I would contact his father to conduct the parent interview.

In November 2013, I contacted Juan's father via phone to set up a time, day, and place to meet for the parental interview. I met Juan's father at SCCHS to conduct the parent interview. I conducted the parent interview in the counselor's office. I explained to Juan's father the purpose of my study, that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that he had the right to withdraw at any time. During the interview, I presented my interview protocol and read the questions to Juan's father. If I needed clarification, I would ask clarifying questions. The interview was conducted in English, recorded, and later transcribed by an online transcription service. After the interview, I reminded Juan's father that the study was voluntary and confidential, and that he could withdraw from the study at any time. Juan's father stated that I could contact him if I had any other questions. After having conducted the observation, student interviews, and parent interview, I mailed Juan and his father thank you cards to show my appreciation of their time.

Cultural Themes

When answering the research questions related to this study that addressed Latino college students' social experience and familial support during their transition from a charter high school to a California university, three cultural themes emerged. The following themes emerged from the study: 1) the central role of communication during students' transition, 2) establishing and maintaining relationships to support transitions, and 3) the importance of a supportive family throughout the transition process.

The Central Role of Communication During Students' Transition

The first theme to emerge from the analysis related to communication. During the data analysis process, many of the codes that I had created involved participant communication with individuals and institutions in high schools and/or universities. Many of the participants discussed how their high school had prepared them for college and how the university had reached out to them. Participants identified that they had been prepared for college by having one-on-one and group meetings with counselors. Additionally, participants had received college knowledge through their homeroom and they had most often communicated directly with high school faculty and staff when they had college related questions or concerns. Once participants began college, they communicated with college peers and college professors when they needed to understand concepts from class or get support with course material. Another subtheme that emerged included course interaction at the university in regards to how students interacted with peers, professors, and course material, which helped participants receive support from peers and professors. Lastly, communication with programs, services, and organizations was the basis of how students familiarized themselves with their respective campuses.

Transmission of college-going capital through communication. Participants identified that, during meetings and in courses, they received valuable college preparation information. However, they would have also liked college information that would have helped them during their transition to college. Students sought information about services, programs, and how to adjust to their new environment. In general, students described how they were prepared for college. For example, Juan stated that he had participated in "one-on-one meetings" and "group meetings with students who were all trying to go to college." Isabela identified that she had also been pulled out for college support, "They were always like – the counselors pulled me out to ask – to tell me to apply for colleges or they would help me." Isabela stated that she had received help from her counselor, "A lot, because I didn't know about financial aid and all of that stuff. My counselor helped me out a lot with that." There was a relationship that entailed shared values in order to obtain information for their future educational goals.

Aside from receiving college related information from their counselors, participants had also received college-related information in their advisory course. Isabela reported that she had been supported "during advisory," which was equivalent to a homeroom class but focused on college and career lessons. In advisory, students received college information through technology-mediated presentations. On this point, one of the participants, Juan, mentioned: "Many [teachers] would use PowerPoint shows, that I was aware [of], the [that were given to teachers during their] professional development meetings they had on Wednesdays. PowerPoints were given to them by [the] principal or counselors or things like that, they presented them to us when they had time." Samantha mentioned that her advisory course had supported her in her college

effort, "Well, in advisory, when she [teacher] was available, she would be like, 'Oh, let's search up schools. Let's see how I can enroll you guys to community college, to any type of schools. I'll help you guys.' She also offered herself after school, lunch. She was open to help us in anything when it comes down to college."

Through their advisory, participants shared that they had been able to research college-related information. For example, Pancho stated that he had received college information and work on college related activities, "They would mostly give information about colleges and what type of courses you should take. Like in my advisory class, they were always making us do poster boards I guess about the colleges and the demographic of people, the type of majors they give you, and how much would the tuition cost in a college and that type of information they gave me." Juan added that they learned about "financial aid, different classes that we can take, different tests that we need to get into the school, as well as work habits. Always prioritizing and being on time to class, going to office hours, things like that." The advisory course, teachers, and counselors had all provided college preparation knowledge.

Some students felt that the college preparation courses had provided them with help. Samantha reported that, "it has helped me in the way where if a professor gives me whatever it is, I take game [will do what is asked of me]. I don't complain about it because in high school, I used to complain about essays but [that's] not allowed here, I think." Pancho also agreed that it had provided help, "Yes, it helped me. Let's say it just provided me a start to know what I should expect about college, like what would my future be if I go. That's what I think. It's a head start." This knowledge provided them

with a connection as to what to expect in college, which provided them with a head start when they began college.

However, some students felt that additional college information would have been beneficial. Valerie stated, "Probably give us – be straight like how the college sounds like they are. Actually, prepare us." Although participants found the college preparation information in advisory helpful, they conceded that they would have liked a more robust college transition preparation program. After Pancho began college he added that he had received college entrance requirements, but would have benefited from additional college knowledge,

> I think it's like, during my...when I was in high school, I don't know if it has changed, they gave me an advisory class where they would tell me about colleges. I would think they should give more information because I remember most of the information they gave us was like only the requirements. They didn't tell us about, let's say, about...I think they did, but they didn't go much into let's say like the benefits of a bachelor's degree or a master's degree. What does it provide? How can you transfer? Those sorts of things. I would suggest because I remember they only showed us like the demographics. I would think they'd go more into it so the students wouldn't get that much lost when they would go to college. I still feel comfortable with all they showed me I would. I think it's optional like to provide more information. Even prepare entrants there like freshman, I would believe.

Pancho mentioned that in addition to providing students with college entrance requirements, students should have received college transition information that would

have provide connectedness once they were in college. Similarly, Pancho and Valerie felt that they would have benefited from college transition information to better acclimate themselves to the college environment. Students stated that the one-on-one meetings and groups meetings from counselors, and advisory lessons from teachers helped them when preparing for college. However, some students felt that they should have received additional college information so that they could transition into college more smoothly.

     Student communication with high school staff and faculty. Another subtheme that emerged was the way that participants and high school staff and faculty networked with each other. Participants described how they had relied on obtaining knowledge and information from faculty and staff by communicating with them. With the exception of Valerie, most students stated that they had spoken to all their teachers. Samantha stated, "In high school I can actually say [that I talked] to all my teachers," Juan also reported, "[talked to] every single teacher at that school," and Pancho also added, "to every teacher. Every teacher, I was talking to them." Isabela also stated that she had communicated with, "all of my teachers," but Isabela identified a certain teacher with whom she had communicated with, "she was an English teacher," and added, "She will help you do things with college or any other class." Valerie stated that she had also relied on a particular teacher, "Probably my math teacher," because she asked for help, "She was always there. She always tried to explain it to me any other way." However, Pancho had also relied on his counselor, "Mostly my counselor because my teacher would usually tell me go ask your counselor."

     When students needed additional support they had relied on staff and faculty office hours to receive additional support. For instance, Juan would utilize a teacher's

office hours, "At the end of class, I would ask if I could attend office hours or if they could stay a little bit after class or after school to help me out." Isabela said, "I would stay after school or go during lunch." On the other hand, Samantha would not use office hours, "I would always stay after class." Pancho had used various times to approach a teacher for help, "I would come after school or probably during their office hours or when the class ends, and if they had time, I would ask them maybe during my advisory class. I would ask permission from my advisory teacher to let me go out of class and ask them." All the students identified a time when they would ask staff and faculty for help.

Students had found office hours very helpful. On this point, Isabela shared that she had found office hours useful: "Well, it was good. I mean, for example my math teacher, she would be like stay after school for hours to help me." Valerie added, "They're really helpful. They tried to explain to me any other way, a couple of ways, to bring me to understand." Samantha had valued the help, "It was like if they would go through the lesson again for me to understand it." Juan had found that, "I would say that it always made me understand the subjects more like the fact that they would go more in depth after class. It helped me feel comfortable for tests and things like that." Juan remembered an experience where a teacher had committed themselves to helping students,

> It was very, very good. They would take the time to stay after school as long they had time, you know. There occasions where teachers would stay to help us with our, oh what was it, what is it called, personal statement…I considered that homework for me because it was something I had to in order to kind of get admitted to schools or hope to get admitted. There was teacher who stayed until

6:30 that day and it was raining, pouring rain and she still stayed with us to help

so it was very good.

Here, Juan then explained how a particular teacher had stayed after school with students who needed help with their personal statements for college because of the shared values that had existed among them. Juan added that he could still connect with teachers for help, "I know that I can go back to my old high school teachers. They told me before graduation that I can go back and ask for help." Students stated that they had spoken to all of their teachers or had relied on a particular teacher for help. Students had found that office hours were an important communication tool.

Student communication with college peers. Prior to beginning college, participants anticipated networking with most of their friends in their college courses, where participants planned on establishing communication with them. Isabela stated, "Probably during classes," Samantha knew she would connect with peers, "in class," and Juan believed he would meet peers, "probably [in] classes." Juan added that he anticipated meeting college peers, "at the dormitories, the restaurants they have on campus, different places they sell food." Students anticipated meeting students in class or on campus. Students foresaw how they would approach college peers. For example, Juan stated that he would say, "Oh. Hi, my name is Juan," and he would ask, "Where are you from, where are you coming from?" Isabela said that she would begin her introduction by "tell[ing] them my name and where I came from." Samantha said that she, too, would introduce herself, "I think I would introduce myself. And then I would be like oh, my name is Samantha such and such," and that she would ask her college peers, "What are you doing here? What are you going to major in? I think that's how I'll start

out." Pancho stated, "Just by asking him something basic. Let's say like 'what course are you taking, or do you want to study with me? Or can I help you on something?' Something that has to do with school probably." Participants anticipated networking with college peers on campus, introducing themselves, and asking them questions.

Participants all agreed that they anticipated asking college peers for course help. For example, Valerie stated, "I would probably ask everyone around the class and then him [the professor]," and she would ask, "if they actually know what they're doing, if they could help me out a bit, help me understand." Isabela would ask her peers, "if they understand the problem or something." Juan would approach his college peers for help, "With the peers, I think it would just be like whenever I see them around, asking if they have notes or they can – if they understood a problem on the homework or in class." Participants anticipated making friends in college, introducing themselves, and relying on college peers for course help.

Once participants began college, they socialized with college peers on campus. On this point, Juan stated he had met some peers, "I would say probably ten at minimum." Isabela said she has made some friends as well, "I have four." While Pancho stated, "Yeah. I honestly talk to a few people. Let's say around five, four, but I know a few of their names. But it's just complicated to engage a friendship because of my schedule. I only see those people two times a week, but yeah. They're very nice, nice people." Samantha reported, "I have a few. Unfortunately, they're just girls. I wish I had guy friends, too, but it's just girls. Girls get along pretty easy." All the participants had met college peers.

Overall, participants stated that they met college peers in various places on campus. For example, Samantha met her peers in class, "In class. It's not outside, because I wouldn't be talking to nobody outside. I'm scared." Pancho also connected with peers in class and had socialized with them after class, "Well, I met them during my class, yeah. There are especially two guys I talk to. We have two classes together, and afterwards we would go get some food right there at the student union. Yeah, that's how we mostly started talking and engaging some sort of relation." Juan met peers in class and in a program, "Classes, the first-year experience orientation, this group discussions that we have that are mandatory for the first-year experience program and that's about it." Isabela reported, "I met her [new college peer] at orientation when I came and the ones in my classes." Participants networked with college peers in various locations on campus.

Participants mentioned that they had initiated conversations with their college peers. For example, Isabela met a friend because she had approached her, "The first day of college, we got out of the class and I chose to go up to her, to ask if she was going to buy the book. We had to buy a book. That's how we started talking." Samantha stated she had asked a few questions, "I started talking to them. I asked simple questions like, 'What is your career? What are you here for? What are you studying towards?' From there we were friends all ready." Isabela relied on her college peers, "All I do is go ask my friend because she knows everything," and Isabela also used technology to communicate with her college peer, "Well, I just text her and asked her if she understood. She said yes, and then we meet up the next day after classes and she just explained to me everything." During a participant observation with Pancho, he introduced me, the observer, to his three male college friends. He said he did not remember their names and

claimed they were new friends. Once class began, Pancho found a seat with his four

male friends and one female friend. Pancho stated that he approached his college peers

first,

> I would guess I did because I saw them walking together, and I asked them, 'Hey,
>
> we have the same class. I think it might be speech class.' And like, 'Oh, yeah.
>
> You're that dude that spoke about your accent.' 'Oh, yeah.' Then we engaged a
>
> conversation about it, about my past, and we would speak about it. That's how we
>
> met each other and just started talking.

Here, students had anticipated meeting college peers in courses, and many of the

participants had met their college peers in various on-campus locations.

Student communication with college professors. Participants initially

mentioned that they felt their shy personalities would interfere with asking professors for

help. Most participants admitted that they would feel uncomfortable approaching their

professors because they felt that their professors would think negatively of them. For

instance, Valerie stated, "My professors, I don't know how they feel. I feel nervous," and

she added, "I don't know, they kind of scare me. I don't see them the same thing as

teachers." Valerie attributed it to, "I guess because the movies. I watch too many

movies. And usually, the professors, they're really rude and mean." Isabela mentioned,

"Shy probably. I don't know," and reasoned with this idea, "Because in that first year, I

will be scared and shy. And the three next years, I'm going to be more confident."

Pancho stated:

> Maybe I wouldn't feel so confident because of the – I think it's a different level.
>
> And I might even think 'oh my God', I'm like – let's say I'm so dumb or

something because I'm asking for help on something easy. That's what I think I

will think of myself like not being very intellectual. But I should see the positive

side. It's for me and for my future, so I would probably feel better later.

Clearly, Pancho felt that asking a professor would have impacted their view of him in a

negative manner. Valerie and Isabela also felt that establishing communication with

college professors would make them feel uncomfortable.

Although participants may have been timid, they felt that they would need to ask

their college professor for help if they were going to succeed. Samantha stated, "And I

think I will ask the teachers because I think that I'll trust them that they won't give me a

wrong answer." Juan added, "For the professor, because they are the ones, giving the

course." Participants may have felt uncomfortable with asking the college professor for

help, but they still relied on their help. For example, Juan expected to attend his college

professor's office hours, Juan mentioned, "For the professor, it would be during the office

hours if not email and ask for another day that I can see them as probably as soon as

possible to get that out of the way. And with old teachers, probably go after school or

schedule meetings with them."

While participants felt that they would be shy asking professors for help, most

participants asked their professors for help in-person, during office hours, or via email.

Once Juan began his college courses he did ask his professors for help. Juan stated, "I

feel a bit shy sometimes. I feel since we are in college we are expected to know more

than when we were in high school, especially in the community in which we lived in. I

feel embarrassed in the sense that they don't know where we came from and what we

were taught before our school was transformed." When Juan attended college professors'

office hours, he observed how "usually they are always available during office hours except during midterms or finals but sometimes you have to schedule appointments." Samantha asked her college professors for help and it was not as bad as she thought it would be, "It was nothing, like asking the teacher and getting direct help from the teacher." Isabela reached out to her fitness professor to ask permission to be observed in class and mentioned that her professor was nice, sharing: "Yeah, she's sort of nice," but she had yet to go to office hours, "not yet," but she had used other means of communication, "just by email." Pancho realized that sometimes professors were not clear when teaching and that, at times, he had to go home and study to understand the course material. On this point, Pancho elaborated: "No, the instructors. Sometimes they're not clear enough. You would have to learn everything by yourself at your house mostly, like study and study until you get it by your own." Students anticipated asking their college professors for help, but expected it to be intimidating when approaching them. Once they began college, they attended college office hours or emailed their professors to ask for help. Students' initiative helped develop a social relationship as they established a network of professors to ask for help.

Class interaction. Class interaction varied by participant: one participant was very social while the other participant kept to herself. During class time, Isabela remained mostly quiet while Pancho was more outspoken. Isabela was waiting for class to begin, when her classmate arrived and asked her about sweatpants for the class. Once class began, the professor presented the differences in the food that people eat and most of the students laughed, including Isabela. The professor asked the class a question and Isabela did not answer nor raise her hand. When the professor asked another question

91

Isabela responded by answering, "Tobacco." During a short ethnographic interview after the observation, Isabela stated, "I'm like, scared to be wrong. Yeah," and added, "Like, they might laugh. I don't know." Isabela did show some interaction in class but also showed timidity. Isabela's limited social interaction relates to a similar study where Muñoz & Maldonado (2011) found that Latinas remain under the radar because of their upbringing. Isabela was one of the female participants that remained shy and timid during her transition to college. Since she was timid, she did not make as many friends as the male participants.

When I observed Pancho in his speech class, he took a seat next to a few college peers. When one male classmate asked Pancho a question, Pancho began to look through his belongings and then stopped. When class began, students were preparing to give their speeches; Pancho was one of those scheduled to give a speech that day. Pancho talked to another male classmate during the transition of speakers. Pancho laughed when the speaker addressed the reason why a girl may not date a person. When Pancho went up to speak, he did not read from the cue cards. Pancho talked about the art of folklore dancing and classmates laughed when he identified dancing as a seduction technique. Once the students finished presenting, the professor asked if they had any feedback. Pancho partially raised his hand as if he wanted to speak or ask a question. Later on, Pancho chimed in by saying "students show confidence." Pancho found a way to establish a social connection with the professor and peers in which they shared similar values. Isabela was shy interacting in class, but Pancho was very open to interacting in class.

College services, programs, and organizations. Participants identified college services, programs, and organizations with which they were familiar or had used during

their transition. Valerie stated, "While applying to University 2 and actually signing up for information sessions that they were giving. That really helped out." Further, she described how the university reached out to her, "University 2 has – they always send out fliers." Valerie found that the information sessions were helpful, "They kind of were, not really as in how in sessions, they told us that it won't be the same thing at all. I don't think they went into that briefly like how it was supposed to be." Lastly, Valerie stated that she would participate in a program during the summer, "For the Early Start, we actually have to participate in workshops." Pancho anticipated using a program, "I'm not sure. I think there's – I think career development," and would use it, "probably work study or something that gives me a job and like helps me study at the same time." Pancho stated that he had heard about the services around campus, "Well, it was mostly because I saw bulletin boards there in college. And some friends told me about them, some friends that are in college; some people I know that go to that college." Pancho noticed the university organization, services, and programs networked through bulletings in order to promote a sense of togetherness. Some students received advertisement at home or found it around campus.

Some participants researched their campus services, programs, or organizations on their college's website. Juan looked on "the school's website. It has a link to other clubs and social organizations. And it just lists about 400 of them." Juan also found some organizations online, "I know of their engineer club. There was another one. Their soccer club. It's not their soccer team, so you just like playing soccer, and you have mini tournaments at the school so you can get to know people." Although Juan had researched organizations, Juan reported, "I haven't given much thought to that. I've been focusing

on just making sure that I pass my classes before I do any extra activities." Juan was also part of an on-campus program, "My first year experience program made the first approach," where students were encouraged to participate in certain courses. He continued, "my Intro to University class actually brought them in to talk to us" and the class provided students with campus information and resources. During Juan's on-campus tour he identified certain information he learned from his course, "Academic advisement, portal support (IT), portal support (IT) helps with unlocking portal, email support, first year experience (FYE) program, FYE program helps students who need remedial support, and EOP program." Juan mentioned during the observation that he had become familiar with the campus because of his first-year program course, which promoted connectedness with the campus, sociability, and networking with peers and professors.

In addition to some participants having received mailings from the university or having researched campus information on their own time, participants heard from peers about various services on campus or saw the organizations and programs promoting on campus. For example, Pancho found that many programs, services, and organizations recruited students around campus, sharing:

Well, they're mostly posted outside. You can see a whole row of people trying to recruit others and trying to give you information about the organization, like what's their purpose? In that case I stopped by, and not because I don't want to. It's because of my schedule. I have all four classes follow, and I can't stop. By the time I get out, half of them already left.

Although Pancho was interested in learning more about programs, services, and organizations, his busy course schedule prevented him from networking with them.

Samantha had also participated in a similar course to Juan's, where they both became familiar with the college services, programs, and organizations on campus. Samantha described how she was enrolled in a college introduction course where grades were not assigned, "As of right now I don't have any grades because I'm just going to mini lessons where they just tell you how college is and how do you feel with this. A lot of things about school and they don't grade us on that. We just go Monday through Friday." The connection between students and campus programs help promote shared values.

Participants identified the ways their respective institutions promoted programs, services, and organizations on their college campus. Universities had information on their campus websites for students to research services, programs, and other ways to become acquainted with their campus. Beyond faculty and staff, when I turned to institutional documents, I found that University 1 had a first-time freshman check-off list online for students. The check-off list included steps that students needed to complete in order to register for classes. For example, students needed to attend a "mandatory advisement" to register for classes and they were instructed to "activate [their] campus User ID and initial password" to access the university's portal. Once they logged in, students needed to "confirm [their] intent to register no later than 11:59 p.m. on May 1st." The check-off list also reminded students that they needed to take their placement exams prior to a certain deadline. Most importantly, University 1 also reminded students of other important tasks they needed to complete, "Log in to your portal on a weekly

basis as email is the primary source of communication for the campus." University 1 was the only campus that provided students with an online check-off list for freshmen.

While one university provided a check-off list for freshmen, some institutions used their websites to introduce their campus to students. University 2's website was easy to navigate when trying to reach academic services. They provided a brief summary of how academic services provided support to students. In addition, University 2 provided links covering the types of programs and services students could use at the college. For example, they provided a link to "Admissions & Records, testing, registration, financial aid, academic advising, tutoring and homework assistance, the library, and more." University 1's accessibility to the academic support website for students was difficult to find yet provided thorough information. University 1's academic support website provided information about academic advising, their mission statement, and how the advisement center "provide[d] students with the opportunity to explore, discover, and decide during their stay at University 1.

In comparison, another university's website was not easy to navigate when trying to become familiar with the college campus. Navigating University 3's website in search of resources was difficult, but they did provide advisement support focusing on "general education, transfer credit, petitions, policies and procedures, and referrals to other University Student Support Services." Also, University 3 also provided support services information through their website. There were links that students could access online to get new or additional information, for example "computer training, computer labs, library workshops, career center, health center, university tutorial and writing center, students with disabilities, and transportation services." University 2 provided students with

student support services information through their website, which provided one-on-one tutoring, homework help, access to the Learning Center, and summer bridge. In addition, they provided various types of student services at the university, for example, "disabled student services, academic services, student rights and responsibilities, and campus services." Lastly, University 2 was the only school that provided information about campus life, as it let students know about "ways to get involved, make connections, explore your interest, develop your skills, and have a great time getting your education." The website provided links to "athletic teams, clubs and organizations, Greek community, and community service," for students to explore their options.

Although participants were aware of services, programs, and organizations on their respective campuses, most were not familiar with the majority of them. Prior to beginning college, students identified that they were aware of freshman orientation services, financial aid, and the summer bridge program. Only one participant relied on the university's website to research on-campus organizations. Once students were on campus, only one student became involved in the first-year program. The other participants were not involved in campus programs. Although some of the participants were familiar with services and programs, only one student used their university's website. This allowed the student to become familiar with programs and organizations. Although some university websites were challenging to navigate, some of the students found the websites useful. When students navigated websites, they would find information, such as a freshman check-off lists that would help them navigate the requirements during their first-year of college.

Establishing and Maintaining Relationships to Support Transitions

The second theme that emerged was relationships with key people in the transition process. Specifically, participants described how they relied on the relationships they maintained with high school staff and faculty to receive help with course material and obtain college-related help. In addition, participants felt that they had a close relationship with friends whom they had during high school because of the length of time that they had known them. However, establishing relationships with college peers was difficult because of the fears of being judged and the differences among college peers and the participants' personalities. Lastly, participants found that establishing a relationship with an online class instructor was difficult, but in the fall, participants felt comfortable establishing a relationship with their professors. Establishing communication with high school staff and faculty, close friends, new college peers, and professors led to establishing and maintaining a relationship with them. As a result, the subthemes that emerged included: (a) relationships with high school staff and faculty, (b) relationships with close friends during high school, (c) relationships with new college friends, and (d) relationships with college professors.

Relationships with high school staff and faculty. Students identified having a relationship with counselors. Juan stated, "The fact that the counselors were always very calm, very open to hear how you felt, and what things you were interested in and always helped you see things in that path." Pancho stated that he relied on a particular staff member for help and described an experience with his counselor: "It was mostly the time that I had an incident. Somebody made me cry and I came and the counselor made me

feel better that time." Pancho described the type of relationship he had with his

counselor,

> It was simple and basic. For the – I think my counselor liked to help me, and I
> always would like trusted her to look for help. I know it was something
> professional like something in school, but you can – I always felt I could rely on
> that person and ask her a question.

Similarly, Samantha mentioned that she planned on asking counselors for help, "I think

the counselors, if they are able to help me," and added, "I think I would ask the

counselors because the counselors know me already, so they know how to understand me

and approach me." Samantha went on to describe her relationship with her counselor, "It

was the best. It was really open. I could have searched for her anything. I think up till

this day I still have that communication with my counselor and I still trust her."

> Another student found support from his counselor after having graduated from

high school. Pancho felt that he could still rely on his counselor, "Very well. After I

graduated, I still know I can depend on her. She even helped me go to college even

though I had a door closed with another college." He added:

> I was going to go to University 3, but they, unfortunately, in the last minute, they
> declined my application. They didn't consider me competent enough in my
> English and Math. They just found it easy. They maybe have their requirements,
> but they cancelled it in the last minute. I still had a chance to go to University 2
> and I appealed in the last minute and that's where I am right now.

Since Pancho maintained a relationship with his high-school counselor, he received help

from his counselor when his first choice university rescinded his acceptance letter and he

had to request an appeal for his second choice. Juan, Pancho, and Samantha stated that they had positive relationships with their counselors. Students identified a strong sense of togetherness with their counselor.

In addition to high school counselors, students identified having an important relationship with high school teachers during their transition. Valerie stated how she developed a trusting relationship with her teacher, "I really opened up to the art teacher. Like, we had conversations. And I don't think she would actually have conversations with other students. So that's different." Participants also identified that building a trusting relationship with teachers influenced them in a positive way. For example, Juan described how he had a trusting relationship with his teachers and saw them as mentors and role models:

> It was my English teacher. It was more of like a mentor. He always guided me to do the right things, and he helped me out as much as he could with another teacher another English teacher. She was like a role model to me. I always looked up to her because she grew up in little communities like the one I grew up in. So that always pushed me to do more. So I think for most teachers, it was really good. They were more motivational.

Here, Juan relied on teachers because of the support they provided, "because of the relationships that we've had and the fact that I know that they understand my weaknesses and strengths or even alternate methods to solving things." Samantha stressed the importance of the relationships she had with her teachers because they provided a lot of support. Samantha stated, "I think it was one of the best relationships I had with adults, with teachers. They were really helpful. They would tell me that I was a really

successful student, and that would make me feel good. And that's how we open up a relationship." Students found that they connected with their teachers because they had similar educational and cultural values. Teachers encouraged students to do well academically in order to pursue a higher degree. Teachers provided support outside of the school day because the first-generation, low-income Latino students needed the additional support.

Participants found teachers' help useful in order to progress academically. Valerie also mentioned another teacher, "I always used to ask her [math teacher] for help. She was always there. She always tried to explain it to me any other way." Valerie continued, "They're [teachers] really helpful. They tried to explain to me any other way, a couple of ways, to bring me to understand." Isabela described how she had relied on her teacher for academic help and support from her math teacher, "Well, it was good. I mean, for example my math teacher she would be like stay after school for hours to help me," and she described why she relied on her teacher, "She [math teacher] was always happy. She wasn't mad all the time, or she would always tell us if you needed help, please come after school or something." Isabela found her help very useful, "It was good because I would be able to understand after they explained it to me." Isabela also found that her relationship with her math teacher was useful.

Like Valerie and Isabela, another student expressed how the connection between a teacher-to-student relationship was very helpful for her academic pursuit. Samantha stressed how her teachers encouraged, motivated, and supported her academically. She found the support from her teachers beneficial, "It was good because they would actually know, tell me detail by detail and, help me out with starting it off with them and then I

101

would end it after that." Samantha added, "I never had that problem. I think teachers were really supportive what they were doing. Everything they made it clear to me." Samantha stated she also valued her relationship with her teachers.

Aside from receiving help from teachers, Pancho felt that his relationships with teachers were important, that he enjoyed helping them when they needed the help. Pancho stated:

To be honest, my high school teachers were my best teachers of my senior year were the best teachers I ever had. They would always support me and any question I had, they would answer it. I was in very different schools. My relationship with them, I would usually stay after school. Sometimes, I asked them if they needed help and I would. Not for community service, just to help them.

Clearly, Pancho felt that his teachers' support was very clear and helped him when taking an exam. For instance, Pancho described how his teachers had provided him with instructional tools to help him learn, "They [teachers] would leave it very clear. They would give me...I forgot what they call it. It's like an outline of what should I do or what should be on my work. What's it called? But yeah." His teachers' support was important when taking an exam as well, "They were very clear and precise, and even though I had trouble they would explain it to me and try to answer if it was necessary until I got it clear and got an A on my test." Pancho also noted that his teachers were very important. All the participants noted that the connectedness with teachers and counselors were very important to them.

Relationships with close friends during high school. Many of the participants

noted that in high school they had close friends on whom they relied and with whom they

trusted with their personal matters. Samantha stated, "I have four [close friends]," and

added, "I met them in middle school." Valerie also stated that she had a small group of

close friends, "Probably like three," who she has known for a long time. She shared: "I

knew them since middle school, so we come a long way." Another student revealed that

having a small group of friends created a sense of closeness. On this note, Isabela stated

that she had, "I had 5 closest friends," whom she knew before high school, "Well, I know

them since middle school, so I guess more than four years knowing each other." Juan

stated that he had "probably three, four [close friends]" and would spend time together

outside of school, "we would hang out after school, go out to places." In similar fashion,

Juan had also known his close friends for a long time, explaining:

> Most of the ones that I had those close connections with, I had already known
>
> from the previous school, before the transformation. We had classes together and
>
> we kind of stuck together since day one at SCCHS which kind of just made it
>
> easier for us to connect.

Some participants grew close within their network of friends because they shared

similar personalities. Samantha described her relationship with friends, "Oh, it's really

fun. We tell each other how we feel, what we've been through," she stated why this was

the case, "Because every single one of us gives a chance to know each other. And we

were open to like all of us because a few of them are like me, the way I am, and I think

that's the way." She described her relationship with her friends as such, "They were

closed like me. But then when we got to meet each other, we were like oh, you're like

that, too. We can relate to each other. And I'm like oh yeah. And that's when we started opening up to each other, and that's what made us BFFs. We would tell each other everything."

Samantha identified herself in relation to her close friends. Juan also described the relationships he maintained with his close friends. He attributed his close friendships to "sharing the same interests because people think differently now. It's not the same thing as high school where everyone came from the same community. Everyone is coming from different places, different backgrounds."

In addition to identifying with peers because of shared personality characteristics, participants added that trust was an important component of their relationships with close friends. Isabela described the importance of her connectedness with her close friends, and although each relationship had its ups and downs, she was able to maintain a trusting, sister-like relationship with many of her friends. Isabela described her relationship with her close friends, "They trust me and I trust them too," Isabela added, "Good and bad because sometimes we do have arguments, but nothing big," and although they may have disagreements, she saw her friends as being "like my sisters because they're really close to me," and Isabela relied on her friends, "They always listening to me or giving me advice when I need them." Isabela described her friends as being like sisters because of the relationships they shared with each other. Valerie described her friends as, "always there when I need help or when I'm in need of something, someone to hear me out," and added, "they don't hide anything from me. I don't believe we keep secrets from each other. I guess that's a good friendship." Valerie described how important her close friendship relationships were to her.

While other participants had a small group of friends whom they had known for several years, Pancho stated that he only had one close friend that he had known for about a year. Pancho stated, "Yes. One, but she's not at school [high school]." Pancho stated that his relationship with his friend began because of their connection to their culture. Pancho described how they had met because of the similarities they shared:

> Well, I am sort of a happy person. And I'm proud of my heritage. And she is too, even though she was most all her life here. And I would describe her as supportive. She supports me. She even went to my graduation and to some dinners and things like that I invited her. She always like searches for time to be with me and her family, too. I go to her house and like even sleep over. Her family likes me a lot, too. And I see her mom as a second mom, too.

Here, Pancho explained that the relationship he had with his close friend was due to shared cultural similarities, the relationship he shared with his friend's family, and the motivational support he received from his friend. Pancho added that they shared other similarities, "It was just that we both liked to dance. And we both have fun with each other. We always talk about dancing, or we watch movies or things like that." Pancho also connected his friendship to the similarities they have with one another. All the participants stated that they had close relationships with friends because of the similarities they shared, and most had known their friends for several years.

Relationships with new college friends. Participants identified that there might be challenges when networking with friends in college due to shyness and feeling uncomfortable approaching others. Despite participants' fears, they foresaw establishing relationships with new college peers because they expected to have similar educational

goals. Once participants began college, they realized that college peers came from different communities and backgrounds, and had different personalities. For example, Juan stated that the "challenge is the fact that I'm always trying to be right probably, challenging people." Isabela mentioned that it may be challenging making new friends in college, "If you're really a shy person," or "not being confident about yourself," she also noted, "Being scared." Samantha mentioned that it would be challenging "meeting rude people." Valerie brought up the differences among others, "They might come in from somewhere else, somewhere different than what I'm usually used to."

Although students anticipated challenges, they did foresee meeting new college peers. Valerie stated, "I hope so. I'm planning to meet new people," and added, "Yeah. Because sometimes I guess I hear that we have projects with groups. I'll probably pair up or a group of people that you don't know at all. So I guess that should be good." Juan reported, "I think so," and Isabela stated, "Yeah." Samantha anticipated meeting new people on campus, "To be honest, I think so because there's – I think I'm going to meet new people that want to be the same as me – no, not the same. But we're going to be in the same circle where people are going to one to be someone in life." Pancho foresaw meeting college peers, "I think I will meet them when I'm already enrolled into normal classes in college. And maybe if we do like group work assigned by our instructor, and probably around the campus, nobody never knows nothing is bad." Although participants expected challenges to arise when they made friends, they did expect to make friends.

After Pancho had begun a summer bridge program during the summer at a university 3, he described how he had established a relationship with a college peer. Pancho stated, "So far, I only talked to one person there out of the two weeks I've been

going to those Early Start courses." Pancho established a relationship with new college peers who had similar goals, which included obtaining a job and attending similar college courses. During Pancho's summer bridge experience he noted some sociability challenges when making friends in college,

> Well, what I've seen so far is just that people – I don't know how to say the academic word, but they're like cocky. They think of – they see you – they don't see you as smart as them or something. Some people are just focused on what they're doing, and they're like – they're not really into looking for friends maybe because they already have some friends from high school. And the biggest challenge would be to actually try to know them because they might think you have bad intentions or something.

Here, Pancho felt that when establishing a connectedness with peers, difficulties would often arise because of peers' various personalities.

In addition to Pancho, Isabela mentioned that, "Everybody is different," and she, too, experienced some challenges when making friends, "there's other people that think they're better than someone else. That would be a problem because they don't really like to talk to new people and all that stuff." Pancho and Isabela experienced challenges, but those challenges did not prevent them from making friends.

Aside from Isabela and Pancho having difficulty when establishing relationships, Samantha also found that establishing relationships with college peers was challenging, "It's very hard, because you don't know if the person is going to ignore you. I always start as, 'Oh hi, my name is Samantha. What are you here for, or do you need help?' When I see a person having a hard time, I approach the person even because your know.

I used to be like that. That's the only hard challenge that I had." Juan felt that building

relationships with college peers involved "sharing the same interest because people think

differently now. It's not the same thing as high school where everyone came from the

same community. Everyone is coming from different places, different backgrounds."

Participants felt that they might encounter some negative experiences when approaching

new college peers, but they looked for shared similarities nevertheless.

During Isabela's observation, a college peer arrived to class and began talking to

Isabela about sweatpants for class. Isabela remained quiet until her college peer initiated

a second conversation about the class. The professor laid out exams based on last name,

and Isabela's college peer asked her what her last name was. They both laughed. Isabela

stated why she approached her new college peer, "Because when I came up to her, she

was really nice and she was like – all the girls that look at you all weird and stuff."

Pancho also met college peers, "Well, I met them during my class, yeah. There are

especially two guys I talk to. We have two classes together, and afterwards we would go

get some food right there at the student union. Yeah, that's how we mostly started talking

and engaging some sort of relation."

In contrast, when I observed Pancho in his speech course, he found a seat with his

four male friends and one female friend, his new network of college friends. When

Pancho began his speech, his friends were laughing because he was smiling and jumping

up and down. Pancho recalled the experience during our interview, "The person that was

in front of me was telling me, 'Calm down, man. Everything will be fine.' The other one

like, 'You'll do fine, man. The other time, you did good, too.' They were just telling me

to relax, and go to the flow. 'You already rehearsed, so why are you worrying?' They

told me to calm down." Pancho found that time had been a challenge when socializing with new college peers, "I would think it's a challenge because you see them very few times, and I think many of them are just focused on college like me. But I still stick to the social life. I try to talk, but many of them don't. They would just be quiet." Pancho also found that his new college peers were more like acquaintances, "I don't know if I would be able say friendship because friendship takes a while to structure. But I think they're good acquaintances right now." Participants anticipated that challenges would arise and some did arise, but participants did end up meeting and establishing a new network of college peers who identified with each other.

Relationships with college professors. The last subthemes, one participant stated that it was difficult to establish a relationship with professors who teach online courses. However, two participants found that once they began the fall semester at their university, they were able to establish a reliable relationship by asking questions and attending office hours. For instance, Pancho stated that when he met his college professor during the summer bridge program he found it difficult to interact, "Well, so far I have an English class through internet. I don't really like internet classes, but I think if I would have had a teacher that was personally there or an instructor, maybe it would have been better. But so far, I have a C." Pancho also noted that he would probably not rely on instructors, "I learned so far that there are tutors that can help you. But I guess you can't rely much on your instructor. Maybe if he has office hours, or she. But it would mainly depend on the instructor." Prior to beginning the fall semester, Pancho had a different experience with his college professors.

Once Pancho began the fall semester and enrolled in a speech class, he described his speech instructor as approachable, "She's [college professor] very nice. She's a very nice person. Every time I would ask her something about, let's say, speech... I know if I would want to be an actor, if I am a bad actor, I know I could ask her, and she would give me all the information, or send me with somebody that actually knows about it." Pancho added that his speech professor made a comment toward his group of friends, "Before class, she's [college professor] always asking questions. I'm always eating with other people, and she's like, 'Oh, the eaters,' or something. She's always talking to her students before her class." The professor and Pancho established a social relationship. During my observation of Pancho, his speech professor was very approachable. Other students approached her, and she replied, often engaging in long conversations. Pancho felt that his other professors were approachable, stating, "If I would ask a question during the class, they would answer it to me," and he provided an example, "Let's say, if I asked my Spanish History teacher, 'Who came to America?' they would actually take the time to answer to me. Those types of questions."

In addition, during Juan's observation he mentioned that his current professors held office hours in a particular building, and he mentioned that one of his professors liked to meet at a Starbucks on campus. Juan had met with his professor at Starbucks to talk about classes and assignments. Some of the participants identified how they had built relationships with their professors.

Importance of a Supportive Family throughout the Transition Process

The third major cultural theme of this study was the importance of a supportive family for Latino college students as they transition from a charter high school to regional

urban public universities in Southern California. Participants identified that their parents did not provide academic support, instead the participants relied on siblings and extended family members for academic support. Although parents did not provide academic support, they were able to provide a comfortable learning environment for their children to complete their schoolwork. Within the supportive family theme, three subthemes emerged: (a) family's sense of pride in student, (b) familial support for student academic success, and (c) familial financial support.

Family's sense of pride in student. Families expressed how proud they were that the participant would be attending a university. Some family members distinguished between a college and university. One of the subthemes that emerged was family's sense of pride in students. All of the participants stated that their families were very proud that they would be attending a university. Valerie stated, "My family is very proud of me. I mean, because I'm the first one to go off to university. Because I have other cousins. They all graduated from high school, but they just didn't continue on. My dad's pretty proud of me."

Furthermore, like Valerie's family, Isabel mentioned that her family demonstrated pride in her. Isabela stated that her family was "very excited…because I'm the first girl from the family to go to college," and that once she began college, the excitement continued. Isabela's family's sense of pride also included her stepfather and grandmother. Although Isabela's immediate family was happy, the excitement also traveled to El Salvador, "Well, my mom is happy. She's excited. My stepdad is, too…My grandma is in El Salvador. She is very happy and excited." Isabela's mother also described her excitement that Isabela was attending college, "I feel proud because

111

sometimes if a friend, sometimes my family who almost never asks about her, but my co-workers who know that I have her would tell me 'and your daughter?' I do not know, I feel proud to say 'she's in college'." Samantha stated that before she began college, "every single one of them is happy and supportive" and things had not changed after she began college, she said, "My family is really happy. Up to this day my family has been really supportive, happy and proud of me. They have not given me one reason to stop. They help me out in whatever they can and I know that I can make it." Most participants felt that their family created a sense of togetherness during their transition to college. Latina participants felt that their families expressed their sense of pride, even from family outside of the country.

In contrast, Juan initially did not know if his family was excited for his accomplishments, but after the transition to college he noticed his family's excitement. Prior to enrolling in college classes, Juan stated, "My dad is not very open with his emotions, so I think that he's happy as well. And I don't know. I'm guessing he's anticipating me to drop out because of how difficult it's been for other family members because of some of the things he says. But I would have hoped that he's happy as well." However, Juan received support from his mom prior to enrolling in college, "My mom is very happy. She keeps re-emphasizing that she wants me to stay in school and focus all my attention on school. But if she has to get a job, she will." Once Juan began attending college he noticed his entire family's sense of pride, "They'll show off about it to everyone so I guess they're pretty proud." Consequently, his family shows off when, "They can have a conversation with someone, for instance, my dad had a conversation with the insurance company and they said is your son in college and he said no he's in the

112

university." Juan's father showed his excitement when he stated, "Everybody and somebody say college, no, my son is going to the university." Juan's father reported that Juan's extended family members were also proud: "All of them congratulated him, he is the first in both side of the families to set foot on a university, as an officially enrolled and everybody is like they have showed him that they have high expectations of him and they are very proud of the way he is and what he has accomplished." Juan's family was very excited that he is enrolled in a university, demonstrating togetherness by expressing their pride in Juan.

Lastly, Pancho noted his family's sense of pride, but also a lack of understanding of the college experience. On this point, he shared:

They feel proud. But somewhat, they don't really know what's the experience.

So they see it as something normal and that should be done. But they don't really understand what I'm doing here. They think it's just like a high school, let's say.

Like something normal like it's just a school. They don't know the difference between high school or college and university.

Every student participant stated that their family was proud that they were attending a university. Some parents distinguished between the difference between college and university.

Familial support for students' academic success. A second subtheme that emerged was familial support for students' academic success, where participants identified how their family provided support. Parents were not able to provide much academic support and if they did, it was limited support. A lot of familial support came in the form of encouragement from parents. When Isabela was asked if her family helped

113

her with school work, she replied, "No." Similarly, Pancho stated, "Not really. My mom doesn't speak English. She did help me on like elementary school math classes. It was very different." Juan also stated, "No. They graduated a very long time ago, so they weren't up to date with math or English." Additionally, Juan reported:

> They couldn't. My mom was, she dropped out and went back and she was given her diploma but with very basic classes. Lower level math classes, lower level English classes. She would only help me sometime with word choice. She likes going through crossword puzzles and she looks up the words in the dictionary. My dad was more with percentages so when I had to do a math problem that involved percentages. He's really good at that. That's about it.

Juan mentioned that his family provided him academic support, although it was limited. Juan's father added how the family helped him, "He was writing essays. He has a tendency to come out and pass the TV, pass everything and ask us to listen to it. He would read it, and present it to us and ask us what we think. Also, when he answers, he would ask us what do we think about it, and we gave him our input." Families showed a sense of togetherness because they shared the same goals, academic success. Families understood that the success of their child required the entire family's commitment towards the students' education; especially since they were the first in their family to attend a university.

However, parents and family members reminded students how they could provide them with their support while they were in college. Samantha reported that "everyone told me if you need anything, we'll pick you up. If you change your mind in leaving school, our doors are open, and you can come back." In reference to support, Juan

mentioned that support "was there. I don't know. It wasn't shown as much as I wanted it to, but it was there in some shape or form." Once he began college Juan also reported,

> If I'm doing studying time or just homework in general and I ask everyone to please keep it down they'll do either one of two. Leave the house and leave me peace and quiet or they'll turn off the TVs and everyone will put on some earphones and connect to their phones to watch what they were watching on Netflix or something.

While in high school, Juan felt that academic support had not been shown as much, when he reached college his family demonstrated to Juan how they supported his academic success.

Another participant, Pancho, mentioned that his mom provided a different type of support for him. Pancho stated, "My mom supported me by telling me. Even though she didn't really know about the type of information. She even went to ask my counselor once." Pancho mentioned that his extended family in Mexico was supportive, "It's mostly basic. But they're always telling me to go to school, and they're helping me with clothes and things like that. And they were always giving me advice like don't drop out of school because you'll probably be like us working in the fields." Isabela reported that her family provided support, "My mom and my stepdad was lately asking me about my day, schooling, if I need something for my class or anything." Isabela's mother also added information about how she helped Isabela, "Yes, sometimes, or she tells me she has to do homework and I ask her what is it about. If she has questions she asks me and if I can, I help her in some way." Many family members exhibited shared goals for the success of the student through connectedness.

Participants identified siblings or extended family as those who provided them with academic support or guidance during their transition to college. Pancho stated that, "It was in Mexico. It wasn't here. But it was a cousin that was helping me make designs for my art class. And she helped me like in a way. She was providing me information of an experience work that she did when she was in high school." Isabela extended her network in order to receive academic support from her cousin, "When I was doing my senior portfolio, my cousin, she was helping me a lot with my essay and all that." Valerie relied on her brother for academic support, "He's actually really good at math." She described how he helped her:

> I was like how they hell did you learn this or how did you remember this? I could ask him – because you know how math there's many ways to actually solve the problem. And I remember I had asked him once with my math teacher's work. I think I was in 11th grade year in my Algebra class. I had asked him that I needed help. And he showed me some other way. I'm like no, it's wrong. He's like how are you going to tell me? I know this. And I had asked my math teacher, and she's like no, it's right. He probably did it some other way, but it's the right answer.

Samantha noted that her sister provided her with guidance, "One example was changing schools. My sister helped me out on that. She came and helped me out on changing and speaking up because I didn't know what to do or how to do it" because of the connectedness and togetherness she had with her family. Schneirder and Ward (2003) found that family support determined how Latino college students adjusted academically

and emotionally. In this case, Samantha received guidance from her sister because of the tight-knit relationship the family had.

During the participants' high school careers, parents had not been able to provide academic help; however, parents and family members did provide students the support to become successful in college. Students stated that they received academic support from siblings and extended family members.

Familial financial support. Another subtheme that emerged was familial financial support. All of the participants mentioned that their families had offered to provide financial support if needed. However, participants stated that their families would provide financial support by providing them with the necessities and some college related supplies. Valerie expressed that her family asked about her financial needs, "they say if anything, if I need money or whatever or if I need like expenses"; additionally, Valerie stated that her father, "always asks me like 'How are you going to do it? You have to pay for your classes. What do you need?' And I'm like I don't know."

Juan mentioned that while he was in high school, his family had provided financial support, "With their jobs supporting me financially, and health wise, always having food on the table, something healthy to eat." Juan also found that his family was able to support him financially once he began college, "by getting second jobs or even jobs for my mom who doesn't work. And letting me borrow the car to get to and from school. And always giving me food and having a roof over my head." When Juan arrived to college, the family made financial decisions,

> They provide transportation. We're planning on getting a new car that's more
>
> efficient to actually help reduce money that we spend on gas. My dad was

117

planning on buying me a new laptop that I needed or just laptop programs such as

Microsoft Office. He just renewed my anti-virus and he lets me stay at home still

without a job. Things like that.

Isabela also found financial support from her mother, "My mom says if I don't get

financial aid, she will try to pay it." While in college, Isabela relied on familial financial

support "for my school supplies, to go out, to the computer service, stuff like that."

Samantha also found that her family would provide her with financial support,

"Each one of them, every time when it comes down when we talk about University 1,

every single one of them always tells me financially, you know, we're all going to be

here for you. So that shouldn't be a problem for you not going to school." Once

Samantha began college she experienced the financial support from her family, "They

help me out as far as taking me and bringing me, and financially."

Like other participants, Pancho shared that his mom was only able to provide

limited financial support, "My mom, we have a normal relationship. But she's always in

work. And sometimes, she's tired, but she does help me out in economic ways."

Pancho's mother could only provide a minimal amount of support:

> Well, she said – she will support me, but she really can't pay much money. She
>
> said she can help me like with two or three books and maybe food. But she says I
>
> need to help her by applying for food stamps or something because she can't pay
>
> everything. Maybe she would charge me rent. She needs some help with food
>
> stamps.

Additionally, Pancho stated that his mother's financial support would only cover certain

things, "Well, they would mostly provide me like if the college doesn't cover let's say

transportation, maybe that, food, and where to live." However, Pancho's mother reported

that she could help him with financial support, "Financially if he needs anything I give it

to him or if he asks me to take him to school, sometimes he couldn't or whatever I take

him." Although Pancho's father lived in Mexico he provided him with financial support,

"Well, they can't really support me economically. But let's say my dad, a few days ago,

being from Mexico, he told an uncle of mine to send me money because my uncle works

on the border. And he sent me like $70.00 to pay my books – a book that I needed. And

another $70.00 to pay my upfront for my orientation class." Participants identified that

their families would provide some form of financial support while they were getting

ready to transition to college or once they arrived at college. When family's

socioeconomic status (SES) was lower, then it led to greater distress, more financial

support lowered distress (Castillo and Hill, 2004). Students experienced a strong

connection with their family. Although the financial support would be limited, their

support would be valuable in attainting their educational goals.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 4 described how participants found family to be an important component

during their transition to college. Three themes emerged from this study: 1) the central

role of communication during students' transitions, 2) establishing and maintaining

relationships to support transitions, and 3) the importance of a supportive family

throughout the transition process. The first theme that arose in this study was the role of

communication during students' transition. Participants relied on college preparation to

get to college, but lacked college transition knowledge. Throughout their transition,

participants relied on communication from high school staff and faculty. Once

participants enrolled in college, they relied on communication when meeting college peers in college. Some female participants did not meet as many peers as their male peers because of the their timid or shy personality instilled in them. Participants anticipated meeting college peers in class and initiating conversations, and all participants did end up establishing communication with college peers. Although participants found communicating with college professors as intimidating, most participants did establish communication with their college professors. Two participants showed class interaction when they were observed. Lastly, participants found bulletin boards or college websites useful in becoming familiar with college services, programs, and organizations. One university provided a check-off list for first-year freshman to use once they were ready to attend the university.

Another theme that arose among participants was establishing and maintaining relationships. Participants identified that they trusted counselors for socio-emotional support and college information, that they relied on teachers for academic support, and that they felt comfortable asking their teachers for help. Most participants identified that they had a stronger relationship with close friends whom they had met in middle school or through family members. In addition, participants had begun to build relationships with new college peers, and some had developed a professor-to-student relationship.

The last theme presented the importance of a supportive family throughout students' transition. The participants' families described how proud they were that their child would attend college. Although parents did not provide academic support, they did support their child's academic endeavors. When students needed academic support, some participants relied on siblings or extended family members. Participants also

experienced a strong connection with their family that supported participants educational goal and success.

In the next chapter, I discuss the findings of the study. Additionally, I provide recommendations based on the findings that I discuss. Through a discussion of the findings and recommendations, I hope to encourage changes to better serve first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students during their transition from a charter high school to college.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

First-year Latino college students who were low-income and the first in their

family to attend college often had familial responsibilities and found academic challenges

when enrolled in college (Fry, 2004; Brown et al., 2003). Prior to beginning their

freshman year of college, students have had previous experiences that have influenced

their transition to college (Attinasi, 1989). As a result of these findings, I explored the

social experiences and familial support of Latino college students as they transitioned

from a charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California.

This ethnographic case study explored two research questions that would help understand

students' social experiences and familial support during their transition: (1) What are the

social experiences of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students as

they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in

Southern California? and (2) How do first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino

college students experience familial support as they transition from an urban charter high

school to regional urban public universities in Southern California? These questions

helped in understanding Latino college students' experiences during their transition.

I collected data through interviews, participant observations, and document

review. The data collected was transcribed, segmented, coded, and clustered into

thematic results to understand participants' social experiences and familial support.

Three cultural themes emerged in this study: (1) the central role of communication during

students' transition, (2) establishing and maintaining relationships to support transitions,

and (3) the importance of a supportive family throughout the transition process. Lastly, I used social capital theory to interpret the results in this study.

Findings

Exploring the Social and Familial Experiences of Latino College Students

First-generation, low-income Latino students. The first research question that I sought to answer guided me through an exploration of students' social experiences during their transition to college in order to understand how these experiences could have influenced participants' transition. I discovered that the central role of communication during students' transition—including transmission of college-going capital through communication with high school staff and faculty—showed how communication was important for students' transition. In fact, counselors and teachers frequently transmitted college-going preparation information to students. Here, counselors and teachers articulated most of the college-going information through individual or group meetings from counselors, and during the participants' homeroom course.

Although students received and found college-going information useful, they would have liked information that would have helped them as they transitioned to college. Some topics that were mentioned included less access to college counselors, types of major fields of study, and programs while in college. Students also identified that communication with high school staff and faculty was essential to getting college related information and schoolwork help. Further, students stated that they would ask teachers for help with classwork and homework during office hours, and college's personal essay, to name a few.

Once students established communication, they developed and maintained essential relationships, including those with high school staff and faculty, and close friends during high school. Students described the importance of relationships with high school teachers and counselors, due to the fact that they were able to rely on them for college information and, even after graduation, rely on them for help because of the relationship they had established while in high school. In addition, students described how they had built trusting relationships and felt comfortable talking to staff and faculty about personal issues and school concerns, specifically viewing teachers as a valuable support system and role models. Students also noted that they had close friends while in high school, whom they had known since middle school. Thus, students relied on their friends when they had personal matters because they were able to relate closely. Their relationships helped establish honesty and reliability within their circle. First-generation, low-income Latino college students experienced familial support during their transition to college. The type of support students experienced included their family's sense of pride in them, familial support for students' academic success, and familial financial support during students' transition. Students and their parents were proud of them attending a university. For example, family members outside of the country were very proud, as were those living in the states. Parents distinguished between a college and university, where parents made corrections to those they spoke to. Finally, parents provided students with limited financial support, although it was limited support, which typically covered transportation, books, food, shelter, and minimal university fees.

First-year Latino college students. Aside from relying on high school faculty and staff for help, participants anticipated introducing themselves to new college peers

124

and asking them for help as well. When they arrived on their respective college campuses, they established communication with college peers. Most of the students met their peers in courses or through campus programs, such as orientation or the first-year experience program, and were usually the first ones to initiate a conversation. Although participants felt hesitation when talking with professors, they knew that they needed to establish a relationship to receive appropriate help. Once participants began their fall courses, asking professors for help was not as difficult as they had anticipated. However, getting clarity with course material was often a challenge, so students would often rely on their own study skills to better understand the course material. The ways in which participants communicated during classroom interaction varied.

In addition to communication with college peers and professors, some students identified programs, services, and organizations at their institution that they would attend or with which they would become involved. Orientation programs helped students' transition to college because they provided a realistic view of college. For example, one student found out through his freshman orientation that they would not have access to college counselors the way that they had in high school. In terms of programs on campus, one participant researched his university's website for services, programs, and organizations on his campus. Once on campus, participants found advertisements on bulletin boards, encountered recruiting events on-campus, or were part of the first-year experience program. This type of communication allowed students to become familiar with services and organizations on their campus. The first-year experience program helped one student get acquainted with his campus and provided thorough information about services, programs, and organizations. Ultimately, the college websites were not

user-friendly for first-year, first-generation, low-income students. Two universities'

homepages made it difficult to find information on services, programs, and organizations.

However, one university offered a checklist, which provided first-year freshmen

complete deadlines and requirements. However, the university websites were difficult to

navigate through.

During students' transition to college, participants established relationships with

new college friends and professors. Prior to beginning college, students anticipated

facing challenges when making friends, but they foresaw creating relationships with

college peers. Once students began college, they all felt that some college peers were

selective when making friends. Some of the students college peers were unapproachable

because they seemed cocky, thought highly of themselves, or would ignore them.

Therefore, students sought peers with whom they identified with when building

relationships. Students did make friends on campus and relied on them for help with

class work. Some of the students spent time outside of class talking about life

experiences, but even though students developed friendships, they only viewed their

peers as acquaintances. Lastly, students felt that they would not approach a professor

first when they needed help, but would feel comfortable asking their peers first. By the

time students began school, they felt comfortable asking professors for help or advice,

began a conversation before class, or met their professor at Starbucks for office hours.

The students' relationships were important in high school and during their transition into

college.

First-year, Latino college students experienced familial support, but also found

some challenges during their transition to college. Additionally, families provided

encouragement and accommodations to support students' academic success. Parental

support was provided in the form of encouragement, making their home environment

conducive to studying and learning for students. Students relied on siblings and extended

family members to provide them help with schoolwork, rather than their parents. One of

the challenges students experienced was that although they were in college and taking

fewer classes, parents did not understand how rigorous a university workload was

compared to a high-school workload. Some of the parents provided limited academic

support, but they all provided encouragement and motivated their child.

Understanding Social Experience and Familial Support among Latino College

Students through the Lens of Social Capital Theory

The findings in this study pointed to social capital as imperative to students'

transition from a charter high school to a university. Bourdieu and Coleman (Häuberer,

2011) defined social capital theory as the way people established social relationships,

where they shared information and resources within their social network. Thus, everyone

within the social group would benefit from the resources (Lin, Cook, and Burt, 2001).

For social capital to work, everyone must share resources and information among the

social network of people (Häuberer, 2011).

Communication was the first step in establishing social capital during students'

transition to college. In this study, the teachers and counselors were able to distribute

college-going information. However students would have liked for their counselors and

teachers to have shared information related to life and college experiences on campus.

For example, emphasizing that students would not have access to counselors as easily as

in high school, the resources available to students in college, and the various majors and

careers available. In addition, establishing communication with new college peers and professors was imperative when transitioning to college.

Communication also promoted what Bourdieu and Coleman (Häuberer, 2011) referred to as sharing information and resources among their new social network. Students foresaw communicating with peers, and when they began college they established communication with college peers with whom they shared similarities. Likewise, students foresaw having limited communication with college professors, but once they were on campus, students did establish communication with their college professors to gain clarity and understanding on coursework. Classroom interaction also helped establish communication with new college peers and professors. Lastly, college services, programs, and organizations communicated with students through mailings and recruitment events. University websites were difficult to navigate because they were not user-friendly to first-year, first-generation Latino college students. Communication was vital for students during their transition.

Relationships helped to establish strong social capital for students during their transition from a charter high school to their respective universities. Once students established communication with stakeholders, they were able to establish and maintain these relationships. Students explained that they trusted teachers and counselors with personal experiences and academic support. Even after students graduated high school, they expected to ask former high school counselors and teachers for help once they began college. The relationship between high school staff and faculty and students was important when sharing social information and support. Additionally, students maintained ties with their close friends throughout high school and college. However,

students considered new college peers as acquaintances because their relationships were fairly new. There was a limited amount of relationship building with professors because most students met with their professors for an hour or so for office hours or contacted them via email. The social capital that students had with teachers, counselors, close friends, and college peers was easy to develop, but social capital with their college professors was not as simple to develop.

Familial support was essential for students during their transition. Familial social capital helped provide encouragement from parents, siblings, and extended family members. Parents distinguished the difference between a college and a university when they spoke to others. Parents and extended family members expressed how proud they were that participants would be attending a university. Extended family members provided academic support, while parents provided encouragement and motivation. In addition, social capital led family members in another country to provide financial support if students needed financial help. While parents provided limited financial support for school necessities and transportation costs. Social capital within families provided a united front in an effort to help students succeed in college.

Recommendations

This study sought to understand first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students' social experiences and familial support during their transition from a charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California. After presenting and interpreting results, I provided recommendations for future practice. Many participants expressed that they benefited from college-going knowledge, however participants felt that they needed college transition information. College transition

information would consist of a realistic view of the college experience, which would include not having as much access to counselors, available college majors and careers, and programs on campus. The level of communication from teachers and counselors would not change; however, the type of information disseminated would provide the additional information.

In addition to college transition information, another recommendation would be to strengthen ties between the charter high schools and universities to help create a curriculum that would address the social challenges that students face. This curriculum would help continue positive communication between teachers, counselors, and students. The curriculum would include basic information about deadlines, definitions, requirements, majors and careers, resources, programs, and organizations at most colleges and universities. Although most students received basic information during orientation, at most universities they were not required to enroll in an introductory course about the university. The three universities that the students attended did not require them to enroll in a first-year program or an introduction course about the university. Some of the students indicated that they would have liked to be part of courses or programs that acquainted them to their campus because they would have been able to navigate their campus a little easier. In addition, the recommended curriculum would help build communication and relationships between high schools and universities, and students prior to beginning at their respective university.

In order to strengthen ties between high schools and universities, this should include a quarterly meeting that would help begin to develop a partnership and create a curriculum that would help educate students about their experiences while in college. It is

important to incorporate university speakers such as, the financial aid office, admissions office, support services, health center, student panel and other services that may be offered to students and what their expectations are of college students. The curriculum would assess students learning outcomes every semester in order to determine what students have learned or found challenging. This partnership would help all students who are enrolled in the high school, unlike federally funded programs only help a limited amount of students.

In addition, the curriculum would also include college information for students' families. Family members indicated that they were proud that their child would be attending a university, but students indicated that their family members had a misconception about the rigors of a college workload. Educating family members about the number of classes in college, the length of college courses, and course workload would facilitate students' transition to a university.

Some recommendations for first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students in order to have a smooth transition:

1. High schools should have a culminating course for students transitioning to four-year universities on what to expect at their campus.

2. Students should be required to attend orientation and meet with their advisors before enrolling in college courses.

3. Students should be required to attend summer bridge programs at their university.

4. Additionally, students should be required to enroll into a university introduction course during their first semester on campus.

5. Like one of the participants, students should be required to exchange phone numbers and emails in order to begin building communication and potential relationships with college peers during orientation.

For future studies, I recommend conducting a study about first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students' social experiences and familial support during their transition to college using cultural capital theory. Using cultural capital to interpret results would provide additional insight, through a cultural lens, into students' social experiences and familial support. For instance, looking at the way students' school and home culture influences their social experiences and familial support would be very beneficial.

Another recommendation for future studies would be to conduct a year-long study that would focus on first-year, first-generation, and low-income Latino college students' to explore students experiences throughout their entire freshman year. A year-long study would provide insight to students' entire freshman year, including social experiences and familial support during their transition. Analyzing students' second semesters or quarters would help further understand how they transition into college. A final recommendation would be to conduct a study at a comprehensive, non-charter high school, a public school that is overseen by a school district, and explore that group of students' experiences prior to enrolling and attending college and once they arrive to college.

In conclusion, this study showed how social experiences and familial support are imperative to a students' transition experience from a charter high school to urban regional public four-year universities. Students stated that establishing and maintaining communication and relationships helped when transitioning to college. Additionally,

familial support was found in the form of encouragement and minimal financial support, yet students noted that their family did not understand their new educational environment and its requirements.

References

Anti (2007, August 7). The neighborhood project: (redacted). Laist. Retrieved on
    September 29, 2012 from:
    http://laist.com/2007/08/07/the_neighborhood_project_watts.php

Attinasi, L. C. (1989). Getting in: Mexican Americans' perceptions of university
    attendance and the implications for freshman year persistence. *The Journal of
    Higher Education, 60*(3), pp. 247-277.

Bernard, H. R. (1994). *Research methodologies in anthropology: Qualitative and
    quantitative approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Bloomberg, L. D., & Volpe, M. (2012). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road
    map from beginning to end* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J.G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory
    and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-258). New York:
    Greenwood.

Bradley, C., & Renzulli, L. (2011). The complexity of non-completion: Being pushed or
    pulled to drop out of high school. *Social Forces, 90*(2), 521-545.

Brown, S., Santiago, D., & Lopez, E. (2003). Latinos in higher education: Today and
    tomorrow. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 35*(2), 40-46.

Burciaga, R., & Zarate, M. (2010). Latinos and college access: Trends and future
    directions of student leaving. *Journal of College Admissions, 209*, 24-9.

Calaff, K. P. (2009). Latino students' journeys toward college. *Bilingual Research
    Journal: The Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education, 31*(1-
    2), 201-255.

Carden, A. (2007). Mobilizing a region in crisis to build a college-going culture. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 27-33.

Carlson, J. A. (2010, September). Avoiding Traps in Member Checking. *The Qualitative Report, 15*(5), 1102-1113.

Castillo, L., & Hill, R. (2004). Predictors of distress in Chicana college students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, *32*(4), 234-248.

Ceja, M., Smith, W., Solorazno, D., & Yosso, T. (2009). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate for latina/o undergraduates. *Harvard Educational Review, 79*(4), 659-690.

Chudowsky, N., & Ginsburg, A. (2012). Who attends charter schools and how are those students doing? Exploratory analysis of NAEP data. *National Assessment Governing Board.*

Cohn, D., & Passel, J. (2008). *U.S. population projections: 2005-2050*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.

College Portrait of Undergraduate Education 1 (2011). Redacted college portrait Retreived on December 22, 2012, from http://www.collegeportraits.org/CA/CSUN

College Portrait of Undergraduate Education 2 (2011). Redacted college portrait Retreived on December 22, 2012, from http://www.collegeportraits.org/CA/CSUDH

College Portrait of Undergraduate Education 3 (2011). Redacted college portrait Retreived on December 22, 2012, from http://www.collegeportraits.org/CA/CSULA

Constantine, M., Kindaichi, M., & Miville, M. (2007). Factors influencing the

    educational and vocational transitions of black and Latino high school

    students. *Professional School Counseling*, *10*(3), 261-265.

Creswell, J. W. (1996). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five*

    traditions. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Croninger, R. G., & Lee, V. E. (2001). Social capital and dropping out of high school:

    Benefits to at-risk students of teachers' support and guidance. *Teachers College*

    Record, 103(4), 548-581.

Dwyer, L. (2011, January 13). (redacted). GOOD. Retrieved on September 29, 2012 from

    http://www.good.is/post/los-angeles-unified-turns-watts-high-school-over-to-

    charter-organizations/

Fry, R. (2004). *Latino youth finishing college: the role of selective pathways*.

    Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.

Fry, R., & Lopez, M. H. (2012). *Now largest minority group on four-year college*

    campuses: Hispanic student enrollments reach new highs in 2011. Washington,

    DC: Pew Hispanic Center.

Garcia-Reid, P. (2007). Examining social capital as a mechanism for improving school

    engagement among low-income Hispanic girls. *Youth and Society, 39*(2), 164-

    181.

Garrison, N. J., & Gardner, D. S. (2012). *Assets first generation college students bring to*

    the higher education setting. Unpublished paper presented at the Association for

    the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV.

Glesne, C. (2011). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Gonzalez, L. M., & Ting, S. R. (2008). Adjustment of undergraduate Latino students at a southeastern university: Cultural components of academic and social integration. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 7*(3), 199-211.

Häuberer, J. (2011). *Social capital theory: Towards a methodological foundation*. Germany: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschafte.

Hernandez, J. (2002). A qualitative exploration of the first-year experience of Latino college students. *NASPA Journal*, *40*(1), 69-84.

Holland, N. E., & Farmer-Hinton, R. L. (2009). Leave no schools behind: The importance of a college culture in urban public high schools. *The High School Journal, 92*(3), 22-43

Jarsky, K. M., McDonough, P. M., & Nuñez, A., M. (2009). Establishing a college culture in secondary schools through P-20 collaboration: A case study. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 8*(4) 357–373.

Keup, J. (2007). Great expectations and the ultimate reality check: Voices of students during the transition from high school to college. *Naspa Journal*, *44*(1), 3-31.

Kiyama, J. (2011). Family lessons and funds of knowledge: College-going paths in Mexican American families. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, *10*(1), 23-42.

Kolkhorst, B. B., Yazedjian, A., & Toews, M. (2010). Students' perceptions of parental support during the college years. *College Student Affairs Journal, 29*(1), 47-63.

Lin, N., Cook, K., & Burt, R. S. (Eds.) (2001). *Social capital: Theory and research* (4th ed.). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Liou, D., Antrop-Gonzalez, R., & Cooper, R. (2009). Unveiling the promise of
community cultural wealth to sustaining Latina/o students' college-going
information networks. *Educational Studies: Journal of the American Educational
Studies Association*, *45*(6), 534-555.

Llagas, C., & Snyder, T. (2003). *Status and trends in education of Hispanics (No. NCES
2003-008)*. Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics.

McCollough, C. (2011). Creating a college-going culture. *Science Teacher*, *78*(3), 51-55.

McDonough, P. (1995). *Choosing colleges: How social class and schools structure
opportunity*. New York, NY: State University of New York Press

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.* San
Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (2008, January 27). *AB 540
makes higher education more affordable for California's undocumented students.*
Retrieved on November 28, 2013 from
http://maldef.org/education/public_policy/6.2.4_AB540TuitionCostFactsheet.pdf

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded
sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Munoz, S., & Maldonado, M. (2011). Counterstories of college persistence by
undocumented Mexicana students: Navigating race, class, gender, and legal
status. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE), 25*(3),
293-315.

O'Meara, D. J. (2012). Mexican American first-generation/low-income students: A rural

    community college, TRIO student support services experience. (Unpublished

    doctoral dissertation). Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA.

Oakes, J. (2003). *Critical conditions for equity and diversity in college access: Informing*

    policy and monitoring results. Retrieved on September 30, 2012 from University

    of California, All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity website:

    http://ucaccord.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/pdf/criticalconditions.pdf

Pearson Education Incorporated (2011). PowerSchool [Student information system]. Los

    Angeles, CA: Green Dot Public Schools.

Perez, P., A., & McDonough, P., M. (2008). Understanding Latina and Latino college

    choice: A social capital and chain migration analysis. *Journal of Hispanic Higher*

    Education, 7(3), 249-265.

Phinney, J., Dennis, J., & Gutierrez, D. (2005). College orientation profiles of Latino

    students from low socioeconomic backgrounds: A cluster analytic

    approach. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *27*(4), 387-408.

Pomerantz, E. M., Moorman, E. A., & Litwack, S. D. (2007). The how, whom, and why

    of parents' involvement in children's academic lives: More is not always better.

    Review of Educational Research, 77(3), 373-410.

(redacted 2) (2013). (redacted) – High School & Community College [Powerpoint

    slides]. Retrieved on February 2, 2014 from

    http://www.calstate.edu/sas/counselors-conferences.shtml

(redacted 3) (2012). (redacted) – high school: 2012 High school admissions practices

       [Powerpoint slides]. Retrieved on November 30, 2012 from

       http://www.calstate.edu/sas/counselors-conferences.shtml

(redacted 4) (2012). (redacted) – high school: Fall 2013 first-time freshman admissions

       practices [Powerpoint slides]. Retrieved on November 30, 2012 from

       http://www.calstate.edu/sas/counselors-conferences.shtml

(redacted 5) (2014). *First year experience*. Retrieved on February 2, 2014 from

       http://web.(redacted).edu/programs/fye/

(redacted 6) (2014). *Programs and services.* Retrieved on February 2, 2014 from

       http://www4.csudh.edu/eop/programs-services/index

(redacted) (2009). Human capital plan: Existing conditions and summary of findings.

       Retrieved on September 29, 2012 from author website:

       http://www.hacla.org/attachments/files/479/HCPExistingConditionsReport.pdf

Rossman, G. B., & Rallis, S. F. (2012). *Learning in the field: An introduction to*

       qualitative research. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Saldaña, D. (1994). Acculturative stress: Minority status and distress. *Hispanic Journal*

       of Behavioral Sciences, *16*(2), 116-128.

Sanchez, B., Esparza, P., Colon, Y., & Davis, K. (2010). Tryin' to make it during the

       transition from high school: The role of family obligation attitudes and economic

       context for latino-emerging adults. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 25*(6), 858-

       884.

Schneider, M. E., & Ward, D. J. (2003). The role of ethnic identification and perceived
social support in Latinos' adjustment to college. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral
Science, 25*(4), 539-554.

Schram, T. H. (2006). *Conceptualizing qualitative inquiry: Mindwork for fieldwork in
education and the social sciences.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation.* New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and
Winston.

Stanton-Salazar, R. D. (1997). A social capital framework for understanding the
socialization of racial minority children and youths. *Harvard review, 67*(1), 1-40.

Torres Campos, C., Phinney, J., Perez-Brena, N., Kim, C., Ornelas, B., Nemanim, L., …
Ramirez, C. (2009). A mentor-based targeted intervention for high-risk latino
college freshmen: A pilot study. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, *8*(2),
158-178.

Torres, J. B., & Solberg, V. S. (2001). Role of self-efficacy, stress, social integration, and
family support in Latino college student persistence and health. *Journal of
Vocational Behavior, 59*, 53–63.

U.S. Census Bureau (2011, May). The hispanic population: 2010. Retrieved on October
14, 2012, from: http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-04.pdf

U.S. Census Bureau (2011, September). The black population: 2010. Retrieved on
October 14, 2012, from: http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-
06.pdf

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education (2013, March 21). *Federal TRIO programs current-year low-income levels.* Retrieved on April 13, 2013 from http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/incomelevels.html

Yosso, T., Smith, W., Ceja, M., & Solorazno, D. (2009). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate for latina/o undergraduates. *Harvard Educational Review, 79*(4), 659-690.

Zalaquett, C. P. (2005). Study of successful Latina/o students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 5*(1), 35-47.

Zell, M. (2009). Achieving a college education: The psychological experiences of Latina/o community college students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 9*(2), 167-186.

Appendix A
California State University, Northridge
STUDENT CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECT

Latino college students' transition experiences from a charter high school to college: An ethnography of social experiences and familial support

You are being asked to participate in a study conducted by Raquel Michel as part of the requirements for the Ed.D. degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that you do not understand before deciding if you want to participate. A researcher listed below will be available to answer your questions.

RESEARCH TEAM
Researcher:
Name: Raquel Michel
Department: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Phone: (323) 810-9901
Email: rmichel319@yahoo.com

Faculty Advisor:
Dr. Nathan Durdella,
Department: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
18111 Nordhoff St.
Northridge, CA 91330-8265
Phone: (818) 677-3316
Email: nathan.durdella@csun.edu

PURPOSE OF STUDY
The purpose of this study is to look at how Latino students prepare socially in high school and experience social situations at universities in Southern California. In addition, the study will look at the way family supports Latino students while they are in high school and when they are enrolled at a university.

SUBJECTS
Inclusion Requirements
You are eligible to participate in this study if you:
- Attend Southern California Charter High School (SCCHS)
- Are in your senior year of high school
- 18 years of age or older
- Fulfilled your A-G California State University (CSU) entrance requirements
- Will attend a CSU university
- The first in your family to attend a university.

Exclusion Requirements
You are not eligible to participate in this study if you:
- Attend a different high school other than SCCHS.
- Younger than 18 years of age.
- You are a freshman (9th grade), sophomore (10th grade), or junior (11th grade).

- Your parents attended a university.
- Did not fulfill A-G California State University entrance requirements.
- Will not attend a California State University.

Time Commitment
This study will require approximately three (3) hours of your time over the course of one year. This will include two (2) interviews and one (1) observation.

PROCEDURES
The following procedures will occur: Before you begin the study you will be provided with an adult consent form and Bill of Rights form. You will participate in two personal interviews that will be audio-recorded. In addition, the researcher will ask you to guide them on a campus tour, which will be used as an observation. Additionally, your parents will be invited to participate in the study. All interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
The possible risks and/or discomforts associated with the procedures described in this study include: embarrassment, and emotional distress. In order to help with emotional discomfort you have the right to take a break, discontinue with the study, and/or reschedule the interview and/or observation. At the end of the consent form, there is a list of counseling services and campus academic support at your own cost.

BENEFITS
Subject Benefits
You will not directly benefit from participation in this study

Benefits to Others or Society
The possible benefit to society is becoming familiar with how Latino high school students' prepare for their social college experience and how their families support them during their preparation to college. Also, the study will help understand how Latino college students at California State Universities (CSUs) interact with peers, professors, organizations, and campus programs. Lastly, understanding how families support Latino students while they are enrolled at a university and how that may help future Latino college-bound students.

ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATION
The only alternative to participation in this study is not to participate.

COMPENSATION, COSTS AND REIMBURSEMENT
Compensation for Participation
No compensation will be provided.

Costs
There is no cost to you for participation in this study.

Reimbursement
You will not be reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses, such as parking or transportation fees.

WITHDRAWAL OR TERMINATION FROM THE STUDY AND CONSEQUENCES
You are free to withdraw from this study at any time. **If you decide to withdraw from this study you should notify the research team immediately**. The research team may also end your participation in this study if you do not follow instructions, or miss scheduled visits.

CONFIDENTIALITY
Subject Identifiable Data
- After interview audio-recordings are transcribed, all identifiable information will be removed and given a pseudonym. A pseudonym is a different name or code. Then the audio-recordings will be destroyed.

Data Storage
- All research data will be stored electronically on a secure computer with password protection.
- Any data that is printed will be kept in a secured file cabinet that is locked under key.

Data Access
The researcher and faculty advisor named on the first page of this form will have access to your study records. Any information derived from this research project that personally identifies you will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without your separate consent, except as specifically required by law. Publications and/or presentations that result from this study will not include identifiable information about you.

Data Retention
- The researcher intends to keep the research data for approximately 5 years and then it will be destroyed.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS
If you have any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the conduct of this research please contact the research team listed on the first page of this form.

If you are unable to reach a member of the research team listed on the first page of the form and have general questions, or you have concerns or complaints about the research study, research team, or questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Research and Sponsored Projects, 18111 Nordhoff Street, California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA 91330-8232, or phone 818-677-2901.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION STATEMENT
You should not sign this form unless you have read it and been given a copy of it to keep. **Participation in this study is voluntary.** You may refuse to answer any question or discontinue your involvement at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with California State University, Northridge. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this consent form and have had a chance to ask any questions that you have about the study.

I agree to participate in the study.

_____   _____

Participant Signature   **Date**

_____

Printed Name of Participant

_____   _____

Researcher Signature   **Date**

_____

Printed Name of Researcher

Appendix B
California State University, Northridge
PARENT CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECT

Latino college students' transition experiences from a charter high school to college: An ethnography of social experiences and familial support

You are being asked to participate in a study conducted by Raquel Michel as part of the requirements for the Ed.D. degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that you do not understand before deciding if you want to participate. A researcher listed below will be available to answer your questions.

RESEARCH TEAM
Researcher:
Name: Raquel Michel
Department: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Phone: (323) 810-9901
Email: rmichel319@yahoo.com

Faculty Advisor:
Dr. Nathan Durdella,
Department: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
18111 Nordhoff St.
Northridge, CA 91330-8265
Phone: (818) 677-3316
Email: nathan.durdella@csun.edu

PURPOSE OF STUDY
The purpose of this study is to look at how Latino students prepare socially in high school and experience social situations at universities in Southern California. In addition, the study will look at the way family supports Latino students while they are in high school and when they are enrolled at a university.

SUBJECTS
Inclusion Requirements
You are eligible to participate in the study if your child meets the following requirements:
- Attends Southern California Charter High School (SCCHS)
- A senior in high school
- 18 years of age or older
- Fulfilled the A-G California State University (CSU) entrance requirements
- Will attend a CSU university
- The first in the family to attend a university.

Exclusion Requirements
You are not eligible to participate in this study if your child:
- Attends a different high school other than SCCHS.
- Younger than 18 years of age.
- A freshman (9th grade), sophomore (10th grade), or junior (11th grade).
- Did not fulfill A-G California State University entrance requirements.

- Will not attend a California State University.
- You or your spouse attended a university.

Time Commitment
Your participation will require about one (1) hour of your time, which includes one (1) interview.

PROCEDURES
You will be invited to be interviewed for approximately one (1) hour. All interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
The possible risks and/or discomforts associated with the procedures described in this study include: embarrassment, and emotional distress. In order to help with emotional discomfort you have the right to take a break, discontinue with the study, and/or reschedule the interview and/or observation. At the end of the consent form, there is a list of counseling services at participants' own cost.

BENEFITS
Subject Benefits
You will not directly benefit from participation in this study

Benefits to Others or Society
The possible benefit to society is becoming familiar with how Latino high school students' prepare for their social college experience and how their families support them during their preparation to college. Also, the study will help understand how Latino college students at California State Universities (CSUs) interact with peers, professors, organizations, and campus programs. Lastly, understanding how families support Latino students while they are enrolled at a university and how that may help future Latino college-bound students.

ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATION
The only alternative to participation in this study is not to participate.

COMPENSATION, COSTS AND REIMBURSEMENT
Compensation for Participation
No compensation will be provided.

Costs
There is no cost to you for participation in this study.

Reimbursement
You will not be reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses, such as parking or transportation fees.

WITHDRAWAL OR TERMINATION FROM THE STUDY AND CONSEQUENCES
You are free to withdraw from this study at any time. **If you decide to withdraw from this study you should notify the research team immediately**. The research team may also end your participation in this study if you do not follow instructions, or miss scheduled visits.

CONFIDENTIALITY
Subject Identifiable Data

- After interview audio-recordings are transcribed, all identifiable information will be removed and given a pseudonym. A pseudonym is a different name or code. Then the audio-recordings will be destroyed.

Data Storage
- All research data will be stored electronically on a secure computer with password protection.
- Any data that is printed will be kept in a secured file cabinet that is locked under key.

Data Access
The researcher and faculty advisor named on the first page of this form will have access to your study records. Any information derived from this research project that personally identifies you will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without your separate consent, except as specifically required by law. Publications and/or presentations that result from this study will not include identifiable information about you.

Data Retention
- The researcher intends to keep the research data for approximately 5 years and then it will be destroyed.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS
If you have any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the conduct of this research please contact the research team listed on the first page of this form.

If you are unable to reach a member of the research team listed on the first page of the form and have general questions, or you have concerns or complaints about the research study, research team, or questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Research and Sponsored Projects, 18111 Nordhoff Street, California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA 91330-8232, or phone 818-677-2901.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION STATEMENT
You should not sign this form unless you have read it and been given a copy of it to keep. **Participation in this study is voluntary.** You may refuse to answer any question or discontinue your involvement at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with California State University, Northridge. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this consent form and have had a chance to ask any questions that you have about the study.

I agree to participate in the study.

_____ _____
  Participant Signature   **Date**

_____
  Printed Name of Participant

_____ _____
  Researcher Signature   **Date**

_____
  Printed Name of Researcher

California State University, Northridge
CONSENTIMIENTO PARA ACTUAR COMO SUJETO HUMANO DE INVESTIGACIÓN PARA PADRES

Estudiantes universitarios latinos experiencias de transición de una escuela secundaria a colegios: Un examen de las experiencias sociales y apoyo familiar

Se le pide participar en un estudio realizado por Raquel Michel como parte de los requisitos para el titulo de Ed.D. en Liderazgo Educativo y Estudios Políticos. La participación en este estudio es completamente voluntaria. Por favor, lea la siguiente información y hacer preguntas sobre cualquier cosa que usted no entienda antes de decidir si desea participar. Un investigador se enumeran a continuación estarán disponibles para responder a sus preguntas.

EQUIPO DE INVESTIGACIÓN
Investigador:
Nombre: Raquel Michel
Departamento: Liderazgo Educativo y Estudios Políticos
Tel: (323) 810-9901
E-mail: rmichel319@yahoo.com

Facultad Asesor:
Dr. Nathan Durdella,
Departamento: Liderazgo Educativo y Estudios Políticos
18111 Nordhoff St.
Northridge, CA 91330-8265
Phone: (818) 677-3316
Email: nathan.durdella@csun.edu

OBJETIVO DEL ESTUDIO
El propósito de este estudio es analizar cómo los estudiantes Latinos se preparán socialmente en la escuela secundaria y como lirean con experiencias sociales en las universidades del Sur de California. Además, el estudio analizará la forma en que la familia apoya a los estudiantes Latinos mientras están en la escuela secundaria y cuando se esten matriculados en la universidad.

ASIGNATURAS
Requisitos de inclusión
Usted será invitado a participar en el estudio si su hijo cumple con los requisitos anteriores:
- Asiste a la escuela charter, Southern California Charter High School (SCCHS).
- Está en su último año de la escuela secundaria
- Tiene 18 años de edad o mayor.
- Ha cumplido sus requisitos del California State University (CSU) A-G
- Asistira una escuela CSU
- El primero en su familia en asistir a una universidad

Requisitos de exclusión
Usted no es elegible para participar en este estudio si su hijo:
- Asiste a una escuela distinta a la que no sea la escuela secundaria SCCHS
- Es un estudiante del 9 ° grado, 10 ° grado, o 11 ° grado

- No ha cumplido con los requisitos del California State University A-G.
- Usted o su esposo/a asistió a una universidad.

Compromiso de tiempo
Su participación requerirá aproximadamente una (1) hora de su tiempo que incluirá una (1) entrevista.

PROCEDIMIENTOS
Usted será invitado a ser entrevistado por aproximadamente una (1) hora. Todas las entrevistas serán grabadas en audio y transcritas por el investigador.

RIESGOS Y MOLESTIAS
Los posibles riesgos y/o molestias asociadas con los procedimientos descritos en este estudio incluyen: la vergüenza y angustia emocional. Con el fin de ayudar a los estudiantes y padres con malestar emocional, ellos tienen el derecho de tomar un descanso, dejar el estudio y / o reprogramar la entrevista y / o observaciones. En la ultima pagina se proebe una lista de servicios de consejeria por cuenta y costo de usted.

BENEFICIOS
Beneficios Sujeto
Usted no se beneficiará directamente de la participación en este estudio

Beneficios a otros o de la sociedad
El posible beneficio para la sociedad es entender como estudiantes Latinos de la secundaria se preparan para sus experiencias sociales de la universidad y cómo sus familias los apoyan durante su preparación para la universidad. Además, el estudio ayudará a comprender cómo los estudiantes universitarios Latinos en las universidades del Estado de California (CSU) interactuan con sus compañeros, profesores, organizaciones y programas de la universidad. Por último, tambien entender cómo las familias apoyan a los estudiantes Latinos mientras están matriculados en una universidad y entendiendo eso puede ayudar a los futuros estudiantes Latinos universitarios.

ALTERNATIVAS A LA PARTICIPACIÓN
La única alternativa a la participación en este estudio es no participar.

COMPENSACIÓN, COSTOS Y REEMBOLSO
Compensación para la Participación
No se concederá indemnización.

Costos
No hay ningún costo para usted por participar en este estudio.

Reembolso
Usted no recibirá un reembolso por cualquier gasto de bolsillo, como las tarifas de estacionamiento o transporte.

RETIRADA O TERMINACIÓN DEL ESTUDIO Y CONSECUENCIAS
Usted es libre de retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento. **Si usted decide retirarse de este estudio usted debe notificar inmediatamente al equipo de investigación.** El equipo de

investigación también puede terminar su participación en este estudio si no se siguen las instrucciones, o si falta a las citas programadas.

CONFIDENCIALIDAD
Titular de los datos identificables
- Después de las grabaciones de audio se transcriben, toda la información de identificación será retirado y se le dará un seudónimo. Un seudónimo es un nombre o un código diferente. A continuación, se destruirán las grabaciones de audio.

Almacenamiento de datos
- Todos los datos van a ser almacenados electrónicamente en una computadora segura con protección de contraseña.
- Los datos que se imprimen se guardarán en un archivador seguro que está bloqueado bajo llave.

Acceso a datos
El investigador y consejero de la facultad mencionada en la primera página de este formulario tendrá acceso a los registros de estudio. Toda la información derivada de este proyecto de investigación que identifique personalmente a usted no será liberado voluntariamente o divulgada sin su consentimiento por separado, salvo lo específicamente requerido por la ley. Publicaciones y/o presentaciones que se derivan de este estudio no incluirá información que le identifique.

Retención de Datos
- Los investigadores tienen la intención de mantener los datos de la investigación durante aproximadamente 5 años y luego será destruido.

SI TIENE PREGUNTAS
Si tiene algún comentario, duda o preguntas acerca de la conducta de esta investigación, por favor póngase en contacto con el equipo de investigación que aparece en la primera página de este formulario.

Si usted no puede comunicarse con un miembro del equipo de investigación que aparece en la primera página del formulario y tiene preguntas generales, o tiene alguna inquietud o queja sobre el estudio de investigación, el equipo de investigación, o si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como sujeto de investigación, por favor póngase en contacto con Proyectos de Investigación y patrocinado, 18111 Nordhoff Street, California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA 91330-8232, teléfono 818-677-2901.

DECLARACIÓN DE LA PARTICIPACIÓN VOLUNTARIA
Usted no debe firmar este formulario a menos que lo he leído y recibido una copia de la misma a conservar. **Participación en este estudio es voluntaria.** Usted puede negarse a contestar cualquier pregunta o descontinuar su participación en cualquier momento sin sanción o pérdida de beneficios a los que de lo contrario podría tener derecho. Su decisión no afectará su relación futura con la Universidad Estatal de California, Northridge. Su firma indica que ha leído la información de este formulario de consentimiento y he tenido la oportunidad de hacer cualquier pregunta que usted tenga sobre el estudio.

Estoy de acuerdo en participar en el estudio.

Firma del Participante   **Fecha**

Nombre del Participante   **Fecha**

Firma del Investigador   **Fecha**

Nombre del Investigador   **Fecha**

Appendix D
List of Counseling Referrals/Lista de Servicios de Consejeria

1. Children's Institute Inc.
10221 South Compton Ave., Suite 104&203
Los Angeles, CA 90002
Phone: (310) 783-4677

2. Shields for Families
2101 E. 101st Street
Los Angeles, CA 90002
Phone: (323) 249-7751

3. Kaiser Permanente Watts Counseling and Learning Center
1465 East 103rd Street
Los Angeles, CA 90002
Phone: (323) 564-7911

List of Academic Advising Centers/ Lista de Ayuda Academica

1.   CSU, Dominguez Hills
Psychological Services
Career Center, Welch Hall Room D-360
Phone: (310) 243-3625

University Advisement Center
Welch Hall A-220
Phone: (310) 243-3538

2.   CSU, Long Beach
Counseling and Psychological Services
Brotman Hall, Room 226
Phone: (562) 985-4001

University Center for Undergraduate Advising
Horn Center, Suite 103
Phone: (562) 985-4837

3.   CSU, Los Angeles
Counseling and Psychological Centers
Student Health Center, Station 4, 2nd Floor
Phone: (323) 343-3314

University Academic Advisement Center
Library South, Palmer Wing 1040A
Phone: (323) 343-3150

4.   CSU, Northridge
University Counseling Services
Bayramian Hall 520
Phone: (818) 677-2366

CSU, Northridge (continued)
Advising Resource Center/ EOP
Bayramian Hall 210
Phone: (818) 677-2108

5.   CSU, Fullerton
Student Health and Counseling Center
800 N. State College, Fullerton, CA 92831
Phone: (657) 278-3040

Academic Advisement Center
University Hall-123B
Phone: (657) 278-3606

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE
EXPERIMENTAL SUBJECTS
BILL OF RIGHTS

The rights below are the rights of every person who is asked to be in a research study. As an experimental subject I have the following rights:

1) To be told what the study is trying to find out,

2) To be told what will happen to me and whether any of the procedures, drugs, or devices is different from what would be used in standard practice,

3) To be told about the frequent and/or important risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that will happen to me for research purposes,

4) To be told if I can expect any benefit from participating, and, if so, what the benefit might be,

5) To be told the other choices I have and how they may be better or worse than being in the study,

6) To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study,

7) To be told what sort of medical treatment (if needed) is available if any complications arise,

8) To refuse to participate at all or to change my mind about participation after the study is started. This decision will not affect my right to receive the care I would receive if I were not in the study,

9) To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.

10) To be free of pressure when considering whether I wish to agree to be in the study.

If I have other questions I should ask the researcher or the research assistant, or contact Research and Sponsored Projects, California State University, Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330-8232, or phone (818) 677-2901.

_____

Signature of Participant   Date

Appendix G

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE
(Universidad Estatal de California, Northridge)

Sujetos Experimentales
Declaración de Derechos

Los derechos que a continuación se mencionan, son los derechos de cada persona que participa en esta investigación. Toda persona al participar en estos estudios, tiene derecho:

1. A saber que es lo que el estudio esta tratando de investigar,

2. A estar informado de lo que sucederá, los procedimientos, los medicamentos, y los dispositivos, sean ó no diferentes a los utilizados en un precedimiento normal,

3. A saber la frecuencia y/ó el grado de riesgo, efectos secundarios, ó incomodidades que sucederan en el transcurso de la investigación,

4. A saber si hay algún beneficio al participar en el estudio, y cual sería ese beneficio,

5. A saber si existen otras alternativas que puedan ser mejores ó peores que, participar en esta investigación,

6. A que se le permita hacer preguntas antes de participar en el estudio, al igual que en el transcurso del mismo,

7. A saber que tipo de tratamiento médico (si es necesario) está disponible en caso de que ocurran complicaciones,

8. A renunciar a la participación en el estudio, aún cuando ya haya comenzado. Cualquier cambio de decisión no afectará el derecho a recibir la atención que se provería al no ser parte de esta investigación,

9. A recibir una copia firmada y fechada de la hoja donde se autorizó la participación,

10. A estar libre de cualquier presión al decidir si quiere ó no participar en el estudio.

En caso de tener preguntas, puede comunicarse con el investigador, el asistente de investigación, ó a la oficina de Research & Sponsored Projects, California State University, Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330-8232 ó al teléfono (818) 677-2901

_____

Firma del participante   Fecha

Appendix H

Research Invitation

Dear Guardian(s)/Student(s),

I am writing to invite you to participate in a dissertation study that I am conducting as a doctoral candidate at California State University, Northridge. My study explores social and familial support experiences of first-year and first-generation Latino college students from low-income backgrounds during their transition from high school to California State Universities.

As part of the study, I will conduct two confidential, personal one-on-one interviews with students to obtain their experiences during their transition to a university, which should be sixty minutes in length each. In addition, student observations will be conducted while enrolled at the university, which should be forty-five minutes in length. Also, I will conduct confidential, personal one-on-one interviews with parents, which should be sixty minutes in length. Responses used in the dissertation will be confidential, and your name will not appear in the study.

If you would like to participate, please contact me at rmichel319@yahoo.com or (323) 810-9901. Participation in the study is voluntary, and the decision to participate or not participate will not affect your standing at charter high school.

Thank you,

Raquel Michel

Appendix I

Invitación para Participar en una Investigación

Querido Guardian (s) / estudiante (s),

Me dirijo a usted para invitarlo/a a participar en mi estudio de tesis doctoral que estoy realizando como candidato doctoral en California State University, Northridge. El propósito de esta investigación es examinar el primer año de estudiantes universitarios Latinos de primera generación y bajos ingresos sobre sus experencias sociales y el apoyo familiar durante su transición de una escuela secundaria charter a una universidad de cuatro años.

Como parte del estudio, dos entrevistas de estudiante se llevará acabo confidencialmente y de persona-a-persona durante su transición de la escuela secundaria a la Universidad que tomará aproximadamente sesenta minutos cada entrevista. Además, las observaciones de los estudiantes se llevará a cabo mientras están matriculados en la Universidad y durará aproximadamente cuarenta y cinco minutos. Incluso, la entrevista de padres se llevará acabo confidencialmente y de persona-a-persona que tomará aproximadamente sesenta minutos. Las respuestas se utilizarán en la tesis doctoral y se mantendran confidencialmente y su nombre no aparecerá en el estudio.

Si desea participar, por favor comuníquese conmigo al rmichel319@yahoo.com o (323) 810-9901. La participación en el estudio es voluntaria y la decisión de participar o no participar no afectará su situación en la escuela secundaria charter.

Muchas Gracias,

Raquel Michel

Appendix J

Early Transition Student Interview Protocol

Demographic Questions

Introduction: Good Morning/Afternoon, you will be participating in a study that will look at how Latino college students transition from a charter high school to universities. I will ask questions about experiences in high school, and what you expect to experience in college, and support you received in high school and anticipate to receive in college. Participation in the study is optional and you can withdraw from the study at any time.

1. What is your ethnicity?

2. What year are you in?

3. How old are you?

4. What is your gender?

5. Who do you live with?

6. Are you the first in your family to attend a four-year university?

7. Why did you decide to attend this university?

Research Question 1
What are the social experiences of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California?

   1) In high school, did you have friends?

        a. How many friends did you have?

        b. How did you meet your friends?

        c. How would you describe your friendships?

        d. What made your friendships that way?

   2) In college, do you think you will make friends?

        a. Where do you think you will meet your friends?

b. How would you approach new potential friends?

c. What do you think are some challenges when making friends in college?

d. What are some suggestions you can recommend to future freshmen when making friends in college?

3) In high school, how many teachers did you talk to?

a. How would you describe your student – teacher relationship?

4) Did you have a particular staff member (for example, teacher, counselor, principal) that you relied on for information?

a. What about that staff member made you rely on them?

b. How would you describe your communication with that staff member?

5) In high school, how would staff members pass on (instead of disseminate) college related information?

a. What type of college information did your teachers, counselors, and staff members talk to you about?

b. How has that information helped you in college?

6) In high school, when you had a question about an assignment(s), how would you approach your teacher for clarification or help?

a. How would you describe their help on assignments?

7) Did you feel that your teachers helped you with your assignments?

a. What do you feel your teacher(s) helped you with on your assignments?

b. What do you feel your teacher(s) did not help you with on your assignments?

8) When you need clarification or help with an assignment in college, who do you anticipate asking for help?

    a. How would you ask for help from that person?

    b. How do you think you will feel asking for help?

    c. Why would you ask that person?

9) Taking into consideration the grading scale (A, B, C, D, F), what grades do you think you will get in college?

    a. Why do you think you will get those (A, B, C, D, F) grade(s) in college?

    b. What do you think will help you earn a passing grade?

    c. What do you think may prevent you from earning a passing grade?

10) Are you familiar with support programs and social organizations on-campus?

    a. What support programs are you familiar with?

    b. What support programs do you expect to use?

    c. What social organizations are you familiar with?

    d. What social organizations do you expect to become involved with?

    e. How did you find out about these support programs and social organizations?

Research Question 2
How do first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students experience familial support as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California?

1) Where do you currently live?

    a. Who do you live with?

    b. How would you describe the relationship with those you live with?

2) When you were in high school, how many people did you live with?

   a. Who did you live with at home?

3) How many siblings do you have?

   a. How old are your siblings?

4) How does your family feel that you will be attending a university?

   a. How does your family say they will show their support while you attend
   college?

   b. Give an example of when your family supported you while in high school.

   c. Give an example of how your family will support you while in college.

5) While in high school, what types of family responsibilities did you have?

   a. Why did you have these responsibilities?

   b. Will you still have these family responsibilities while you are in college?

6) While in high school, did your family help you with school work?

   a. Who helped you with your school work?

   b. Give me an example of when a family member helped you with school
   work (e.g. homework, project, assignment, etc.)

7) Overall, how would you describe the support you receive from your family while
   in high school?

Appendix K

First-Year College Student Interview Protocol

Demographic Questions

Introduction: Good Morning/Afternoon, you will be participating in a study that will look at how Latino college students transition from a charter high school to universities. I will ask questions about experiences in high school, college, and support you received in high school and in college. Participation in the study is optional and you can withdraw from the study at any time.

1. What is your ethnicity?

2. What year are you in?

3. How old are you?

4. What is your gender?

5. Who do you live with?

6. Are you the first in your family to attend a four-year university?

7. Why did you decide to attend this university?

Research Question 1
What are the social experiences of first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California?

1) Looking back to high school, did you have friends?

    a. How many friends did you have?

    b. How did you meet your friends?

    c. How would you describe your friendships?

    d. What made your friendships that way?

2) Now that you are in college, have you made college friends?

    a. How did you meet your college friends?

b. Where did you meet?

c. Who made the first approach?

d. What do you think are some challenges when making friends in college?

e. What are some suggestions you can recommend to future freshmen when making friends in college?

3) In high school, how many teachers did you talk to?

a. How would you describe your student – teacher relationship?

4) Did you have a particular staff member (for example, teacher, counselor, principal) that you relied on for information?

a. What about that staff member made you rely on them?

b. How would you describe your communication with that staff member?

5) In high school, how would staff members pass on (instead of disseminate) college related information?

a. What type of college information did your teachers, counselors, and staff members talk to you about?

b. How has that information helped you in college?

6) In high school, when you had a question about an assignment(s), how would you approach your teacher for clarification or help?

a. How would you describe their help on assignments?

7) Did you feel that your teachers helped you with your assignments?

a. What do you feel your teacher(s) helped you with on your assignments?

b. What do you feel your teacher(s) did not help you with on your assignments?

8) In college, when you need clarification or help with an assignment, who do you ask for help?

    a. How do you ask for help from that person?

    b. How do you feel asking for help?

    c. Why do you ask that person or people?

9) Taking into consideration the grading scale (A, B, C, D, F), what grades are you getting in college?

    a. Why do you think you are getting those (A, B, C, D, F) grade(s) in college?

    b. What helps you keep a passing grade?

    c. What do you think may prevent you from earning a passing grade?

10) In college, are you familiar with support programs and social organizations on-campus?

    a. What support programs are you familiar with?

    b. What support programs have you used?

    c. What have you used these support programs for?

    d. What social organizations are you familiar with?

    e. What social organizations have you been involved with?

    f. How did you find out about these support programs and social organizations?

Research Question 2
How do first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students experience familial support as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California?

8) Where do you currently live?

    a. Who do you live with?

    b. How would you describe the relationship with those you live with?

9) When you were in high school, how many people did you live with?

    a. Who did you live with at home?

10) How many siblings do you have?

    a. How old are your siblings?

11) How does your family feel that you are attending a university?

    a. How does your family show their support while you attend a university?

    b. Give an example of when your family supported you while in high school.

    c. Give an example of when your family supported you while in college.

12) While in high school, what types of family responsibilities did you have?

    a. Why did you have these responsibilities?

    b. Will you still have these family responsibilities while you are in college?

13) While in high school, did your family help you with school work?

    a. Who helped you with your school work?

    b. Give me an example of when a family member helped you with school work (e.g. homework, project, assignment, etc.)

14) Overall, how would you describe the support you receive from your family now that you are in college?

Appendix L

Parental Interview Protocol

Demographic Questionnaire Questions

Introduction: Good Morning/Afternoon, you will be participating in a study that will look at how Latino college students transition from a charter high school to a university. I will ask questions about the type of familial support and experiences. Participation in the study is optional and you can withdraw from the study at any time.

1. How old are you?

2. What is your gender?

3. What is your ethnicity?

4. What is your relationship to the student?

5. What is the highest level of education you completed?

6. What is your yearly income?

Research Question 2

How do first-year, first-generation, low-income Latino college students experience familial support as they transition from an urban charter high school to regional urban public universities in Southern California?

1) Where do you live (e.g. home, apartment)?

   a. How many people live in your home?

   b. Do you share your home with other family members?

2) How many children do you have?

   a. How many children are attending college?

   b. How many children are attending high school?

   c. How many children are attending middle school?

   d. How many children are attending elementary?

3) How would you describe the living environment at your home?

    a. Where does your child/children study?

    b. How is a homework schedule set up?

4) While your son/daughter attended high school, what types of family responsibilities did they have?

    a. Why did they have these responsibilities?

    b. Do they still have these family responsibilities while they attend college? Why?

5) While in high school, did your family help you with school work?

    a. Who helped him/her with their school work?

    b. Give me an example of when a family member helped your child with school work (e.g. homework, project, assignment, etc.)

6) How would you feel if your son/daughter lived at home while they attend college?

7) How would you feel if your son/ daughter lived on-campus, dormitories while they attend college?

8) Where would you prefer your child lived at, while they attend college? Why?

9) How did you feel when your child was filling out college applications?

10) Did your son/daughter receive denial letters?

    a. How did you feel when your child received a denial letter?

    b. What about the denial letters made you feel that way?

11) How did you feel when your child received an acceptance letter?

    a. What about the acceptance letters made you feel that way?

12) How do you, the parent, feel now that your child is attending a university?

13) How do you as a parent and the rest of your family (immediate and extended) show their support while your son/daughter child attends a university?

   a. Give an example of when you, as the parent, and your immediate and extended family supported your child while in college.

   b. Describe the type of support you provided (e.g. academic, financially) your child.

14) When your son/daughter attended high school, what type of support did you and your family provide him/her?

   a. Give an example of when you and your family supported your child while in high school.

   b. Describe the type of support you provided (e.g. academic, financially)

15) How would you describe the community you live in?

16) How do you feel the community/environment has motivated your child to pursue a college education?

17) What are your expectations of your son/daughter while in college?

18) When your son/daughter graduates from college, what do you foresee in their future?

Protocolo de Entrevista con los Padres

Cuestionario de preguntas demográficas

Introducción: Buenos días / tardes, usted va a participar en un estudio en el que se verá experencias de estudiantes Latinos de transición de una escuela secundaria charter a una universidad. Voy a hacer preguntas sobre el tipo de apoyo familiar y experiencias. La participación en el estudio es opcional y puede retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento.

1. ¿Cuántos años tiene?

2. ¿Cuál es su género?

3. ¿Cuál es su origen étnico?

4. ¿Cuál es su relación con el estudiante?

5. ¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación completado?

6. ¿Cuál es su ingreso anual?

Pregunta de investigación 2

¿Cómo son las experiencías de apoyo familiar de estudiantes universitarios Latinos durante el primer año de la universidad, de primera generación y de bajos ingresos durante la transición de la escuela secundaria charter urbana a una universidad piblica urbana regional en el Sur de California?

1. ¿En dónde vive usted (por ejemplo, en una casa, apartamentos,)?

    a. ¿Cuántas personas viven en su hogar?

    b. ¿Comparte su hogar con otros miembros de su familia?

2. ¿Cuántos hijos tiene usted?

    a. ¿Cuántos niños están asistiendo la universidad?

    b. ¿Cuántos niños están asistiendo la escuela secundaria?

    c. ¿Cuántos niños van a la escuela "middle school"?

    d. ¿Cuántos niños asisten a primaria?

3. ¿Cómo describe el ambiente de su casa?

   a. ¿En qué parte de su casa estudian su hijo/a(s)?

   b. ¿Cuál es el horario establecido para hacer sus tareas?

4. Mientras que su hijo/hija asistía la escuela secundaria, ¿qué tipo de responsabilidades familiares tenían?

   a. ¿Por qué tenían esas responsabilidades?

   b. ¿Todavía tiene las siguientes responsabilidades familiares mientras asisten a la universidad? ¿Por qué?

5. Mientras asistía la escuela secundaria, ¿su familia le ayudaba a su hijo/a con las tareas escolares?

   a. ¿Quién le ayudaba a él/ella con sus tareas escolares?

   b. Deme un ejemplo de cuando un miembro de la familia ayudó a su hijo/a con las tareas escolares (por ejemplo, tareas, proyectos, etc)

6. ¿Cómo se sentiría si su hijo/a viviera en casa mientras asisten la universidad?

7. ¿Cómo se sentiría si su hijo/a viviera en los dormitorios mientras asisten la universidad?

8. ¿Dónde prefiere que su hijo/a viva mientras asisten la universidad? Y ¿Por qué?

9. ¿Cómo se sintió cuando su hijo/a estaba llenando aplicaciones para la universidad?

10. ¿Recibió cartas de rechazo su hijo/a?

    a. ¿Cómo se sintió cuando su hijo recibió una carta de rechazo?

    b. ¿Por qué lo/la hizo sentir de esa manera?

11. ¿Cómo se sintió cuando su hijo recibió una carta de aceptación?

    a. ¿Por qué lo/la hizo sentir de esa manera?

12. ¿Cómo se siente ahora que su hijo/a asiste una universidad?

13. ¿Cómo muestra usted como padre/madre y el resto de su familia su apoyo, mientras que su hijo/a asiste la una universidad?

   a. Dé un ejemplo de cuando usted como madre o padre y su familia (imediata y extensiva) apoyó a su hijo en la universidad.

   b. Describa el tipo de apoyo que le dan a su hijo/a (por ejemplo, académico, financiero).

14. Cuando su hijo/a estaba en la secundaria, ¿en qué forma apoyaba usted y su familia a su hijo/a?

   a. Dé un ejemplo de cuando usted y su familia apoyó su hijo mientras estaba en la secundaria.

   b. Describa el tipo de apoyo que le dan a su hijo/a (por ejemplo, académico, financiero).

15. ¿Cómo describe la comunidad en donde vive?

16. ¿Cómo siente que la comunidad/ambiente ha motivado a su hijo a seguir una educación universitaria?

17. ¿Cuáles son sus expectativas de su hijo/hija en la universidad?

18. Cuando su hijo/hija se gradué de la universidad, ¿qué espera ver en su futuro?

Appendix N

DESCRIPTIVE OBSERVATION QUESTION GUIDE
For student Participants

Space	Space	Object	Activity	Event	Time	Actor	Goal	Feeling
	Can you describe the places where students interact?	How do students use objects during social activities/events on-campus?	How do places/locations affect the way social activities occur?	How are activities laid out during social events?	How much time do students socially interact at a specific location?	What location(s) do students socially interact?	How does the location influence social goals?	What social event location(s) influence intense feelings?
Object	Where do students find the objects used in social settings?	Can you describe what students use to interact?	How are objects used in social events/activities?	How are objects used in social events?	How do students use objects over time?	What objects do students use to interact?	How are objects used to support social goals?	How do objects used in social events activate feelings?
Activity	Where do social interaction activities take place?	How do social activities/events incorporate objects?	Can you describe what students do?	What activities are used in social events?	How do social interactions vary by time of day and/or weeks?	What social activities do students participate in?	How do social activities help meet social goals?	How do social activities prompt student feelings?
Event	Where do social events take place?	How do social activities/events incorporate objects that students use to interact?	How are events influenced by social interactions?	Can you describe what social events students participate in?	How do social events occur over time? (by day, week)	How do students interact in social activities/events?	How do social events influence goals?	How do social events form student feelings?
Time	How does time affect where social events occur?	How does time of day, week, month, affect objects used?	When do most social interactions occur?	When do most social events occur?	Can you describe when social activities and events occur?	How do students act when they interact together?	How long does it take students to meet their social goals?	What is students' feelings over-time during a social event?
Actor	Where do students place themselves during social activities?	How do students use objects?	What do students do during social interactions?	How are students involved in social events?	How do students change over time?	Who participates in social activities and events?	How do students influenced by their social goals?	How do students feel at the end of a social event?
Goal	What are the goals for students at the social event?	How do objects used in social events support goals?	How do social interactions help student's complete goals?	How do social events help students in their goals?	How do social event goals change over time?	How do social goals influence student interactions?	Can you describe the goals of social activities and events?	How do goals impact student feelings?
Feeling	Where do students express their feelings the most during social activities?	How do students express their feelings when using objects?	How do students' feelings affect social interaction?	How do student feelings affect their involvement in social events?	How does time affect student feelings about social events?	How are student feelings influenced?	How do feelings influence social goals?	Can you describe how students feel during social interactions?