Portland State University

PDXScholar

Cultural Capital and Community Cultural Wealth: A Study of Latinx First Generation College Students

Affiong Eyo-Idahor
Portland State University

Recommended Citation

Cultural Capital and Community Cultural Wealth: A Study of Latinx First Generation

College Students

by

Affiong Eyo-Idahor

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Sociology

Dissertation Committee:
Alex Stepick, Chair
Dara Shifrer
Karen Haley
Michael J. Smith

Portland State University
2022

Abstract

When compared to Blacks, Asians, and Whites, Latinxs have lower rates of educational attainment at every level from secondary education to advanced postsecondary degrees (Ryan and Bauman 2016). This study focuses on Latinx first generation college students and uses Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) theory to illuminate the ways this population navigates college through employing the strengths from their home community. The Latinx population is the largest ethnic or racial minority group in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau 2017. By 2060, they are expected to account for nearly 29% of the US population (U.S. Census Bureau 2017). While the enrollment of Latinx students in institutions of higher education has experienced a significant increase (Salinas 2017), Latinx students continue to experience challenges obtaining four-year degrees. Additionally, majority of the literature on Latinx FGCS focuses on a deficit perspective, asserting that their lack of educational progress is due to their social and cultural capital. Yet, increasingly Latinx FGCS students are entering and successfully completing college. Little research addresses the factors that positively contribute to the success of these Latinx FGCS. Using a case study approach, interviews were conducted to examine the perspectives of 7 current students and 9 alumni from a mid-size public university in the Pacific Northwest. In addition, I interviewed 7 program administrators from three mid-size public universities in the Pacific Northwest. Findings revealed three main themes and motivated the creation of the *Power of Collective Community* model for supporting Latinx FGCS.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all the wonderful students who I have had the pleasure of working with over the years. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell you stories. Sigue Adelante!

Acknowledgments

First, I would love to acknowledge my Heavenly Father, God Almighty, who has filled my life with grace and love.

To my heartbeats, Efeosa and Imade you have watched me pursue this goal. I can only hope that I have encouraged you to stay determined and believe in the validity of your dreams. Always remember, "as far as your eyes can see". Love of my life and my husband, Tunde, none of this would have been possible without you. Thank you for your encouragement, sacrifices and for holding the family through these couple of years. I am forever grateful to you for your belief in my abilities.

My parents, retired Ambassador Bassey Eyo and Monica Bassey Eyo, I thank you for instilling in me a love for education, justice and always encouraging me to strive for excellence. My sister Dr. Ama Eyo, my journey in life especially through this process could not be written without you. Thank you for your consistent encouragement and for being a great role model. My brothers, Awa Eyo, Bassey Eyo and Dr. Ukpong Eyo, thank you for inspiring me and your unconditional support.

I would like to acknowledge my entire dissertation committee: Dr. Alex Stepick, Dr. Dara Shifrer, Dr. Karen Haley and Dr. Michael J. Smith for your knowledge, wealth of experience and expertise that guided me through this process. Thank you all for supporting and believing in my work. I would especially like to thank Dr. Alex Stepick for the direction and insight your provided to help me complete this dissertation. I consider myself truly blessed to have had you as my dissertation chair.

To my classmates Ned, Luis, Essie, Erika, colleagues who have gone before me Omar Melchor-Ayala, PhD; Sonja Taylor, PhD; Vivian Aseye Djokotoe, PhD; and the career analyst group in the department of Sociology, thank you for your advice and guidance. I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to the wonderful community of mentors I have had over the years: Dr. Ame Lambert, Dr. Bayo Oludaja, Jennifer Luna and Anna Hernandez-Hunter.

Amanda, Ebun, Deola, Bola, Uche, Elsie, Samone, Rachael, John and Barbara, I thank you all for the many years of friendships and for being great cheerleaders along this journey. Finally, thank you everyone, without your support I would not have been able to complete this dissertation or degree. I share this accomplishment with all of you.

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter One: Introduction

"Like all the other first gen peers of mine, all my other homies we couldn't have done it without each other and kudos to us. We have the TRIO program who helped us, but like you have your own individual experience and you're walking in your own shoes. And to have other folks next to you to do this, I'm just forever grateful for the people that I've had in my community.... but I just wonder like what if I didn't have those connections? If I didn't have those individuals alongside me who we navigated college together, I would have had a completely different experience and then who knows where I would have been right now, but the power of collective community, it's just, it's beyond"

(Luis, Valley University Alum)

This study examines whether Luis's observations of the importance of community and college programs designed for his community make the positive difference Luis is reflecting on. The dissertation focuses on Latinx first generation college students and aims to illuminate the ways the population navigates college successfully through the strengths from their home community.

There is little doubt that for most people a college education influences one's earnings capacity and quality of life. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences found that individuals with a bachelor's degree can expect to earn $1 million more than those with just a high school diploma over their careers (American Academy of Arts and Sciences 2017). Not surprisingly then, approximately 17 million students were expected to pursue a college education between Fall 2018 and Fall 2029 (Hussar, Zhang, Hein, Wang, Roberts, Cui, Smith, Bullock Mann, Barmer and Dilig 2020). However, one group of students that continues to experience challenges with regards to obtaining a college degree is Latinx first generation college students (FGCS).

First-generation college students (FGCS) are defined as those with parents who do not have a four-year degree (Chen and Carroll 2005; Choy; 2001; Davis 2010; Horn

and Nunez 2000; Ishitani 2006; Pascarella, Pierson, Wolnaik, and Terenzini, 2004). Most Latinx students who are in college are FGCS (Bui 2002; Cavazos; Fielding; Cavazos; Castro; and Vela 2010; Lohfink and Paulsen 2005) and as of the 2015-2016 academic year, they make up 25% of the FGCS population (RTI International 2019). In this study, I chose the term Latinx. Before continuing, it is important to provide more context as to this choice.

Historically, the term Hispanic was first used in the 1970s by the U.S. government to collect data on U.S. residents with origins from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Cuba, Central America, South America and others descended from Spanish speaking countries (Noe-Bustamante, Mora and Lopez 2020). It was fully adopted in the 1980 census. However, in the 1990s, there was some resistance to the term due to its association with Spanish countries (Noe-Bustamante, Mora and Lopez 2020), while others found it to have no personal significance (Santiago-Rivera, Arredondo and Gallardo-Cooper 2002). The Latina/o term emerged in the late 1990s and more accurately represents peoples from Latin America as it also considers their geographic location (Noe-Bustamante, Mora and Lopez 2020). In recent times, the term Latinx emerged as an alternative to both the Hispanic and Latina/o terms. According to Santos (2017:12), Latinx is defined as "a descriptor for individuals in the U.S. who have roots in Latin America which explicitly acknowledges diversity in forms of gender identity and expression via use of 'x' in lieu of the gendered articles 'a' or 'o". I chose this term to be inclusive of people from all genders. Furthermore, when I borrow data or information from another source, I defer to whatever label they use. As a result, the terms Latina/o, Hispanic and Latinx are all used in this study.

While the enrollment of Latinx students in institutions of higher education has experienced a significant increase, for example there was a 203% increase from 1993 to 2003, Latinx students continue to experience challenges obtaining four-year degrees (Fry 2002; Krogstad 2015; Salinas 2017). For educators, this situation is critical due to its immediate and long-term impact on a society. Consequently, it is imperative that institutions of higher education are prepared to respond to the unique needs of Latinx FGCS to continue to encourage the successful attainment of their post-secondary education goals. Additionally, the Latinx population is expected to account for a significant percentage of the US population by 2060, nearly 29% of the US population (U.S. Census Bureau 2017), the national impact of degree attainment of Latinx first generation college students on meeting future workforce demands, economic goals and global competitiveness needs to be considered.

Statement of the Problem

The profile of the college student today differs significantly from that of their peers three to four decades ago (Pike and Kuh 2005; Jehangir, Telles, and Deenanath 2020). Current changes to today's student profile include higher rates of enrollment and participation for members of historically underrepresented populations such as students of color, immigrants and students from low income backgrounds (Chen and Carroll 2005; Jehangir et al. 2020; Pike and Kuh 2005).

Many FGCS are less likely than those who have parents who attended college to graduate or complete a degree program (Jehangir et al. 2020; Loeb and Hurd 2019; Pike and Kuh 2005). Nationally, only approximately 50% of FGCS enrolled in institutions of

higher education had graduated within 6 years, compared to 64% of non-first-generation students who had done so in the same time frame (Franke, Hurtado, Pryor and Tran 2011, cited in Loeb and Hurd 2019). Additionally, having an FGCS status has been found to be the strongest predictor of students leaving college before their second year (Chen and Carroll 2005).

Furthermore, most FGCS who are ethnic minorities are Latinx. Latinx students though often classified as a single group with origins from approximately 22 countries are culturally connected with people from South, Central and North America (Salinas 2017). Additionally, they have diverse cultures, traditions and customs and often have the unique experience of traversing between two cultures (Salinas 2017). The Latinx population is also the largest ethnic or racial minority group in the United States, comprising 18% of the total U.S population (U.S. Census Bureau 2017). However, when compared to Blacks, Asians, and Whites, Latinxs have lower rates of educational attainment at every level from secondary education to advanced postsecondary degrees (Ryan and Bauman 2016). Bar graphs showing comparative educational achievement amongst the major ethnic racial groups at the high school level, college enrollment and college completion are presented below.

Figure 1.1

COMPARATIVE EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

High School Completion or Higher (25-29 year olds)

Hussar et al. 2020
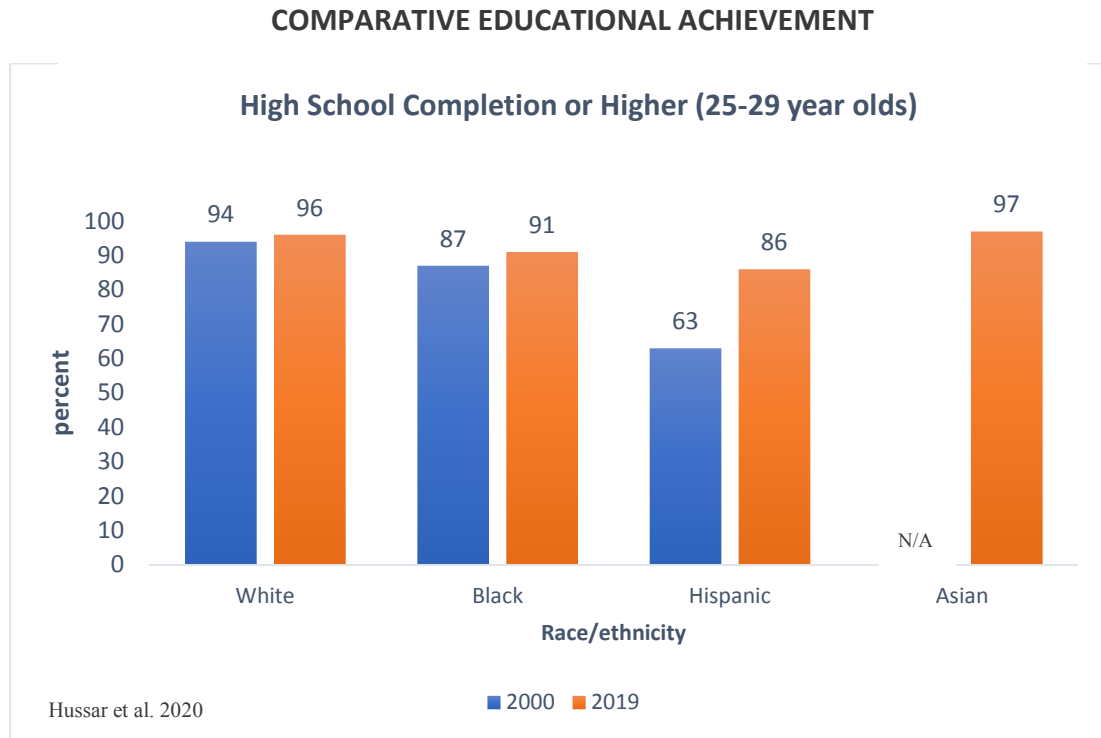
Figure 1.2

COMPARATIVE EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

College Enrollment (18-24 year olds)

Hussar et al. 2020

Figure 1.3

COMPARATIVE EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Bachelors Degree or Higher (25-29 year olds)

Hussar et al. 2020

■ 2000   ■ 2019
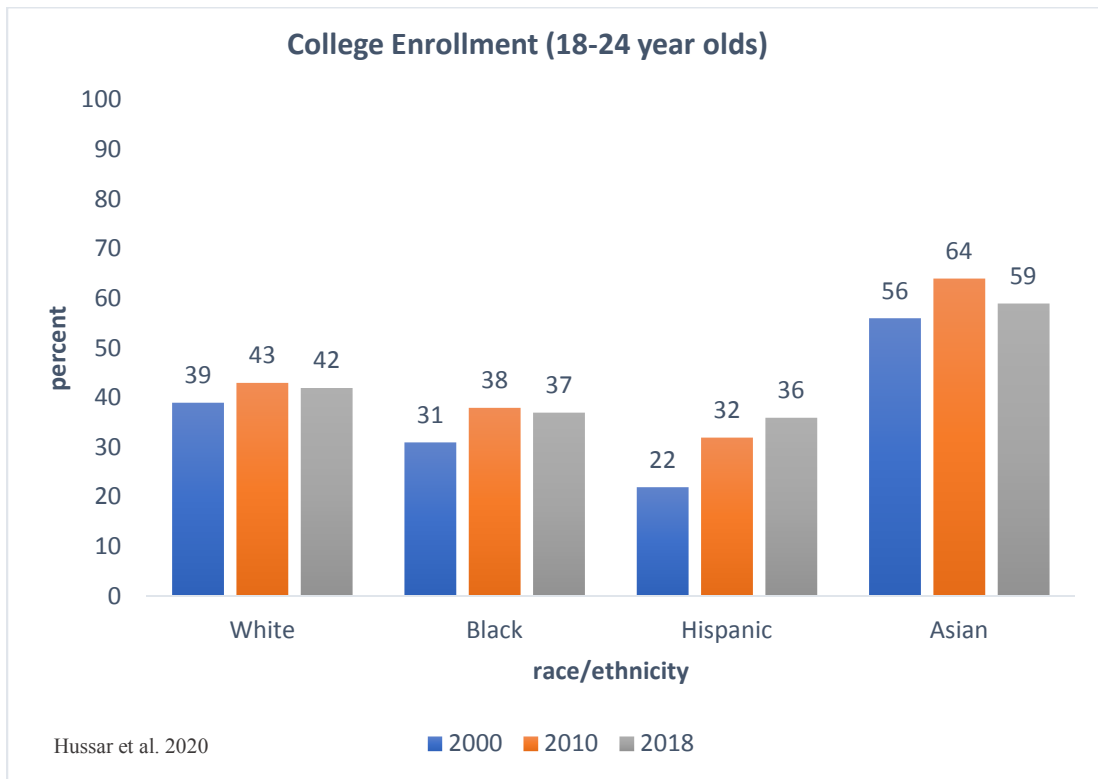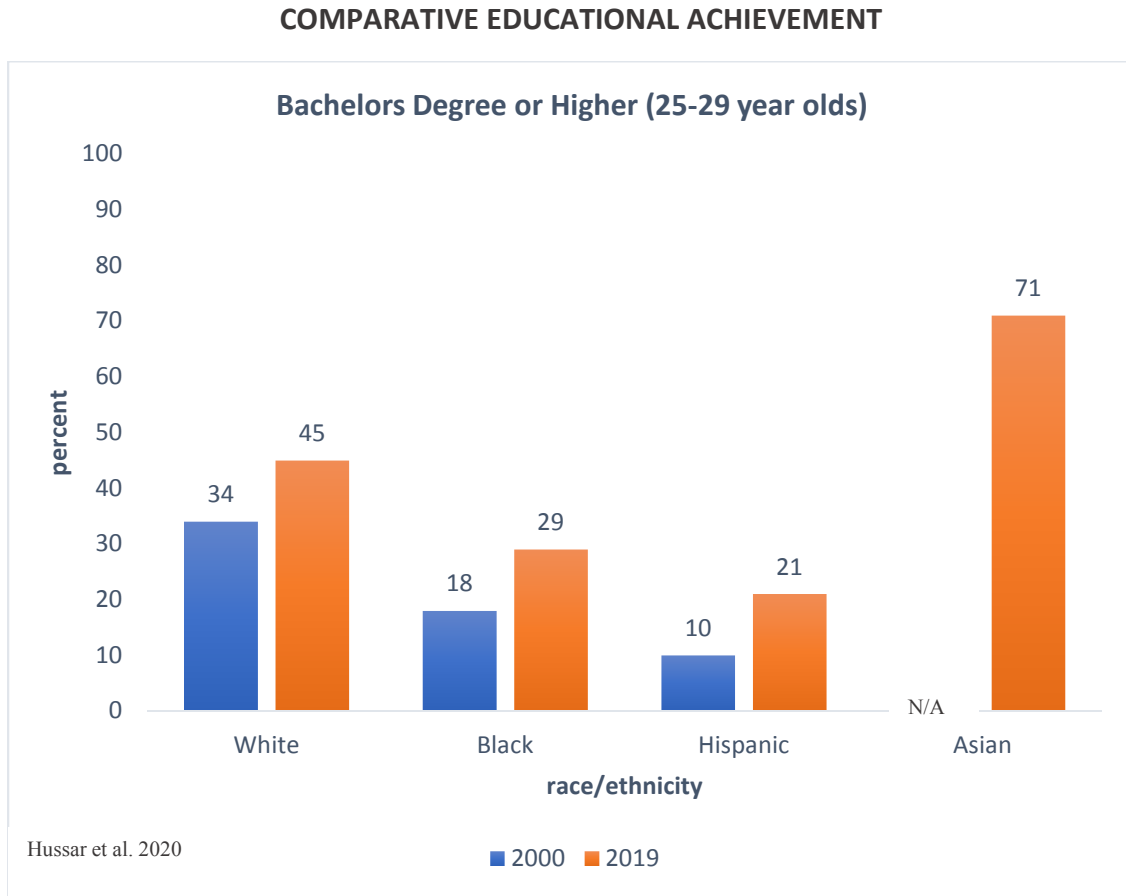
Amongst the major minoritized ethnic racial groups, Latinx students have the worst performing achievement. They have the lowest college enrollment and completion rates (Perna, 2000; Reyes and Nora 2012) and within FGCS, Latinx FGCS have the lowest rates of graduation (Kouyoumdjian, Guzman, Garcia, and Talavera-Bustillos 2017; Pew Research Center 2016). One reason that has been pointed to impacting the low Latinx college completion rate is their lack of dominant, middle class cultural capital in relation to their FGCS status (Lohfink and Paulsen 2005; Saenz, Hurtado, Barrera, Wolf, and Yeung 2007). However, this focus on what these students lack contributes to the deficit based narrative prevalent in the literature on the Latinx FGCS population (Mobley

and Brawner 2019; Yosso 2005). In contrast, Yosso (2005) has argued that a paradigm

shift is necessary, one that focuses on the strengths of communities of color. As such, the

Community Cultural Wealth framework was developed to better appreciate and recognize

the cultural and familial strengths inherent in communities of color that students from

these communities use to navigate their college journey (Yosso 2005). Unfortunately to

guide such a shift, there are few studies that have evaluated the experiences of successful

Latinx FGCS (Vega 2016).

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to contribute to the literature on the experiences of the Latinx

FGCS, their strengths, how they navigate college successfully, as well as effective

program interventions. It is guided by the following research questions:

RQ 1: What supports contribute to the acquisition of dominant,

middle class cultural and social capital for Latinx first generation

college students according to students and program administrators?

RQ 2: What Community Cultural Wealth do Latinx first generation

college students have that contribute to advancing their education?

Research Design

A qualitative case study methodology approach was utilized to explore the

acquisition of dominant, middle class cultural and social capital by Latinx FGCS.

Additionally, to counter the deficit-based narrative, this study uses a Community Cultural

Wealth (CCW) lens that incorporates an asset-based outlook in identifying factors that

contribute to the success of Latinx FGCS. A qualitative methodology was chosen as it

aims to answer "how" and "why" questions (Yin 2014). In this study, I sought to understand how Latinx FGCS successfully navigate college. Furthermore, a case study design is appropriate since the phenomenon under study- the experience of successful Latinx FGCS, occurred within a bounded context (Yin 2014). The bounded context is the research site which this study occurred at which is Valley University (VU), a pseudonym for a state supported public university located in the Pacific Northwest.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used in this study. The definitions are provided to facilitate understanding of how the terms were referenced in this research study, especially since several definitions of some of these terms exist.

- First-generation college student: those whose parents' highest level of education is a high school diploma but no college or university experience (Chen and Carroll 2005; Choy; 2001; Davis 2010; Horn and Nunez 2000; Ishitani 2006; Pascarella, Pierson, Wolnaik, and Terenzini, 2004).
- Community cultural wealth: based in critical race theory, CCW is a framework that acknowledges the skills, abilities and experiences people of color bring to their educational pursuits (Yosso 2005). The core of the CCW framework are the six forms of capital: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational and resistant capital, which provide an asset-based perspective on communities of color (Yosso 2005)
- Cultural capital: refers to the knowledge of the norms, practices and conventions that permeate specific social settings and allow individuals to navigate them in

ways that increase their advantages in a variety of social situations (Bourdieu

1977; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, Lareau 1987 and 2003). Cultural capital can

be used to ensure and maintain one's privilege.

- Latinx: Any person who was born in, raised in, or descended from a country of

  Latin America e.g., Mexico, El Salvador, Cuba, Puerto Rico (Cerda-Lizarraga

  2015). The term also refers to individuals categorized as Hispanic by the U.S.

  Census. The Latinx term is also used as a gender inclusive cultural identifier

  (Scharron del Rio and Aja 2020).

- Social capital: resources for people found in their network of relationships that

  enables them to achieve their interests and function effectively in society

  (Coleman 1988). For Yosso (2005), social capital is a part of CCW and it is

  defined as networks of people and community resources that provide instrumental

  and emotional support.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the literature by reframing the deficit perspective

regarding Latinx FGCS. It gives voice to the experiences of successful Latinx FGCS as it

considers the Community Cultural Wealth they utilized in navigating college.

Furthermore, this study will add to the research on program components that facilitate the

acquisition of cultural and social capital of Latinx FGCS. The data collected from this

study may help university administrators design programs and services that will support

Latinx FGCS' acquisition of cultural and social capital while acknowledging the

strengths in their lived experiences. Moreover, the data may be used to help

policymakers, and other educational professionals make informed decisions about best

practices that support initiatives related to overall success of the Latinx FGCS population. Finally, supporting Latinx FGCS is an important means to address U.S. racial disparities as such support would help them achieve financial stability and upward mobility (Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, and Leonard 2007).

Organization of the Study

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces Latinx FGCS and their current educational state, the purpose of the study inclusive of the research questions, research design, definition of key terms, and the significance of the study. Chapter 2 reviews the literature related to Latinx FGCS, introduces the guiding theoretical frameworks for the study and impactful programs and interventions. Chapter 3 presents the justification for and description of the methodological approach used in this study. Chapter 4 presents the findings and Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the study's findings, concluding with a discussion of the implications for practice, and recommendations.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

As established in the previous chapter, Latinx students have the lowest college enrollment and completion rates (Perna, 2000; Reyes and Nora 2012) and within FGCS, Latinx FGCS have the lowest rates of graduation (Kouyoumdjian, Guzman, Garcia, and Talavera-Bustillos 2017; Pew Research Center 2016). This chapter reviews literature related to Latinx FGCS with a focus on this population's characteristics, demographic factors that impact the lived experiences of Latinx FGCS and barriers to success. It also introduces the guiding theoretical frameworks; cultural capital, social capital and community cultural wealth (CCW) theories. Presented after the guiding theoretical frameworks is literature on institutional agents, impactful programs, and interventions that are targeted at the Latinx FGCS population. The literature review begins with historical information on the FGCS population to lay the foundation for understanding the layered context within which Latinx FGCS exist.

History of FGCS

During the late 1800s, a shift in the perception of the purpose of higher education occurred which resulted in higher education being seen as necessary for the development of the economy (Sorber 2018). Previously, college had been the domain of a small elite of the wealthy and the clergy. The Morrill Acts or Land Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890 sought to extend higher education for farmers, scientists and teachers. The first Land Grant Act of 1862 created agricultural colleges in the various states in the nation. The second Land Grant Act of 1890 designated a portion of federal funding to land-grant Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (Sorber 2018). These land-grant

HBCUs were frequently "the only providers of elementary, secondary and higher education in many southern locales and contributed to advancing African American literacy (Sorber 2018:8).

After World War II, catapulted by the GI Bill that provided subsidies for armed forces and veterans, colleges and universities experienced dramatic enrollment increases of FGCS and racial and ethnic minorities. With their presence came additional challenges in transition issues as these students had little college knowledge, a lack of a sense of belonging due to a history of marginalization, and educational institutions framed their cultural assets as being a deficit (Hallet, Kezar, Perez and Kitchen 2020). To address some of these issues, in 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Higher Education Act (HEA) into law. The HEA aimed to support student's post-secondary education goals by providing opportunities and better access to higher education. It also provided financial assistance such as grants and loans (National TRIO Clearinghouse 2003). In some ways the HEA addressed the obstacles created to FGCS, racial and ethnic minority college students. It not only contributed to increase the number of FGCS on college and university campuses (Bergerson 2009), but also the HEA act established the Title IV and TRIO programs that provide access to college to many students including FGCS who otherwise would not be able to attend post-secondary education.

According to Peabody (2013), Fuji Adachi was the first to coin the "first-generation college student" term in the 1970s, which referred to students with at least one parent who did not have a bachelor's degree (Nguyen and Nguyen 2018). Currently, and depending on an institution's classification system, the term can include students who have parents with some college education but no bachelor's degree (Nguyen and Nguyen

2018; Wildhagen 2015). Part of the underlying assumption of the FGCS term is that a parent's level of education influences the type of knowledge conveyed to their children. For example, based on their knowledge, parents can encourage their children to take the SAT or enroll in 2-or 4- year colleges (Toutkoushian, Stollberg and Slaton 2018). For the purpose of this study, FGCS are defined as those with parents who do not have a four-year degree (Davis 2010).

Latinx First Generation College Student Characteristics

Latinx FGCS are impacted by their dual context of having parents without a bachelor's degree as well as coming from a Latinx background. Statistics show that first-generation college students account for approximately 50% of the overall enrollment and 30% of entering first year students at public institutions of higher education (Cataldi, Bennet, and Chen 2018; Redford and Hoyer 2017), with a higher proportion of FGCS at two-year colleges (Tym, McMilliion, Barone and Webster 2004). Of these first-time freshmen, 27% identify as Latinx students.

Compared to the general student population, FGCS are more likely to be born outside of the US, be nonnative English speakers, and be single parents (Choy 2001; Engle and Tinto 2008). They are also more likely to be female, older in age, married and have a disability (Terenzini, Springer, Yaeger, Pascarella and Nora 1996; Tym et al. 2004; Engle 2007; Redford and Hoyer 2017; Whitley, Benson, and Wesaw 2018).

With regards to academics, FGCS tend to be less prepared academically because they attend low performing PreK-12 schools (Gibbons and Shoffner 2004; Warburton, Bugarin and Nuñez, 2001; Hudley, Moschetti, Gonzalez, Cho, Barry and Kelly 2009),

take more remedial courses, have lower SAT scores and are enrolled part time or in fewer credits (Thayer 2000; Chen and Carroll 2005; Engle et al. 2006). Research also shows that FGCS tend to graduate at lower rates in comparison to non-first-generation college students and are nearly twice as likely to drop out after the completion of their first year (Choy 2001; Engle and Tinto 2008).

FGCS also often come from low-income backgrounds (Chen and Carroll 2005; Engle; Bermeo, and O'Brien 2006) and lack access to financial information (Saenz, Hurtado, Barrera, Wolf and Yeung 2007). Being from a low socioeconomic background may place limitations on FGCS success and persistence in college (Engle 2006; Saenz, Hurtado, Barrera, Wolf, and Yeung 2007). Similarly, Latinx students are more likely to be troubled about financial issues while in college and enroll in school part time to receive more federal financial aid (Crisp Nora, and Taggart 2009).

Culturally, the Latinx culture is collectivistic. It identifies strongly with the concept of familismo, which focuses on close ties between kin and a prioritization of group needs over individual needs (Desmond and López Turley 2009; Gloria and Castellanos 2012). The maintaining of family and community connections provides strength needed to succeed through the educational process for Latinx FGCS (Gloria and Castellanos 2012). Though Latinx FGCS may experience some conflict balancing academic responsibilities with familial ones, they depend on their family for support and encouragement (Early 2010; Gloria and Castellanos 2012). In connection to this, Latinx students often enroll in programs or institutions of higher education that give them the opportunity to live from or be close to home (Desmond and López Turley 2009).

Additional background factors that impact the experience of Latinx FGCS are discussed in the next section.

Latinx FGCS Background Context

Latinx students though often classified as a single group actually have origins from approximately 22 countries in the continents of South, Central and North America (Salinas 2017). The Latinx population living in the United States are comprised of several major subgroups: Those of Mexican descent (referred to as Mexicans or Chicanos, the latter of which means born in the U.S. of Mexican descent) are the largest group (63.2%), followed by Puerto Ricans (9.5%), Cubans (3.9%), Salvadorans (3.8%), Dominicans (3.3%), Guatemalans (2.5%), and the remainder from other Central American or South American countries (U.S. Census Bureau 2017). Given that Latinx FGCS students come from diverse backgrounds, it is necessary to be mindful of demographic characteristics that shape their experiences. Some demographic characteristics that impact the lived experiences of Latinx FGCS such as family income level, social class, race, immigrant status and gender are discussed further.

Family Income and Social Class

While income is a numerical measure of financial worth, social class takes into consideration one's economic status, aspirations, values and beliefs which are shaped by one's family history (Jehangir 2010). Both concepts impact Latinx FGCS. Aud, Hussar, Johnson, Jena and Roth (2012), for example note that between 1990 and 2010, the immediate college enrollment of students from low- and middle-income families who

completed high school was 52% while those from high-income families was 72%, a 30 percentage points difference. Parental educational attainment also influenced the proportion of 12th graders who intended to attend college such that students with parents who had bachelor's degree were more likely to aspire to graduate from a four-year institution (Aud et. al 2012). Furthermore, the impact of social class can manifest itself psychosocially such that FGCS question their self-efficacy and capability to thrive in college (Jehangir 2010).

Race

While Whites comprise the single largest racial group both in the general population and in college, the Hispanic and Asian populations have experienced tremendous growth, primarily fueled by immigration (Jehangir 2010). This growth has impacted the education system such that projections from the NCES imply that between 2014 and 2025, post-secondary institutions will see the following increases in their students of color population: Black 22%, Hispanic 32%, Asian/Pacific Islander 16% and multiracial 37% (Hussar and Bailey 2017). As such, institutions of higher education need to be better prepared to serve students whose cultural, racial and social class identities may differ significantly from those who have traditionally attended college (Jehangir 2010).

Immigrant Status

An estimated 24% of all undergraduates are children of immigrants, which includes foreign born or second-generation Americans with at least one foreign-born parent (Arbeit, Staklis and Horn 2016). Newcomers from Latin America and Asia make up the majority of new immigrants and sometimes present a variety of concerns that may

include English language proficiency, transition challenges that impact psychological development such as navigating two cultures-their home culture and the American culture, concerns with immigration status, parental expectations and social identity development problems (Kim and Diaz 2013). Furthermore, the age at arrival impacts the educational trajectory of immigrants. While immigrants who arrived as children are more likely to matriculate through the education system, those who arrived as adolescents have a high school drop out rate greater than 70% (Sáenz, Ponjuan, Figueroa and Serrata 2016). Also, according to Arbeit, Staklis and Horn (2016), some children of immigrants who arrived early took college-level courses in high school at higher rates and developmental courses in college at lower rates in comparison to their peers who arrived as adolescents or adults.

Gender

Though the overall Latinx population in higher education is increasing, (22% to 39% from 2000-2016) there is a growing gap between female and male Latinx students in both college enrollment and graduation (Sáenz and Ponjuan 2009). For example, in 2000, the college enrollment rate for male Latinx students was 18% compared to 25% for female Latinx students. As of 2016, the college enrollment rate for male Latinx students was 35% compared to 44% female Latinx students, a 9-percentage points difference (NCES 2018). Equally concerning is that male Latinx students are graduating at disproportionate low rates alongside their female Latinx counterparts with a 50% to a 58% 6 year graduation rate (NCES 2018). Some reasons for the disparity suggested by Sáenz and Ponjuan (2009) include poor early childhood enrollment rates, overrepresentation of Latinx males in special education classes, high suspension rates,

attending underfunded and poverty-stricken schools, lack of access to Latinx males in the teaching workforce and cultural expectations to work to fulfill traditional gender roles.

Postsecondary educators when working with Latinx FGCS need to understand the context and possible interacting effects of this student population's background. This will enable them uncover issues that possibly impact retention and equip them with information to design programs and implement practices that better serve the Latinx FGCS population. Moreover, Lohfink and Paulsen (2005), assert that it is the intersection of various oppressed identities that account for some of the challenges these students experience. A discussion of these challenges ensues below.

Barriers to Success

FGCS experience unique challenges that impact their college experience that include less familial and social support (Collier and Morgan 2008) higher levels of stress (Mehta, Newbold and O'Rourke 2011), lower socioeconomic backgrounds, (Mehta et al., 2011; Soria and Stebleton 2012) and fewer supportive resources (Pascarella et. al 2004; Collier and Morgan, 2008; Padgett, Johnson and Pascarella 2012). Other challenges identified in the literature on FGCS are lower academic aspirations, poor academic preparation, and low levels of self-efficacy (Terenzini et. al 1996; Ramos-Sánchez and Nichols 2007).

Moreover, the cultural and social capital of FGCS is often pointed to as impacting their educational success. Dumais and Ward (2010) note that FGCS come from backgrounds lacking in institutionalized cultural capital (degrees and credentials) and do not have any direct experience with the college selection and application process. The

social capital of parents of FGCS also influences FGCS' decisions about which college to attend (Chen and Carroll 2005). The resultant effect of this dearth in dominant, middle class cultural and social capital is that many FGCS self-select out of pursuing a college education because of a lack of a sense of belonging (Dumais and Ward 2010). And even when they may possess cultural capital, a possibility exists that FGCS may not activate it in such a way that benefits them (Lareau 2003).

Language barriers have also been recognized as impacting the higher education experience of Latinx FGCS (Gist-Mackey, Wiley, and Erba 2018; Zalaquett and Lopez 2006). This is as a result of poor English language skills among some parents which poses a challenge for effective communication about a student's experience. Consequently, some Latinx FGCS experience the same poor English language skills which may affect their ability to be successful their first year of college (Gist-Mackey, Wiley, and Erba 2018).

An additional challenge to understanding and assisting this population is the prevalence of research in the area of FGCS not persisting and graduating, while there is little research about the experiences of successful FGCS (Demetriou, Meece, Eaker-Rich and Powell 2017). Valuing the experiences of FGCS who graduate from college improves our understanding of what works in supporting these students as well as the development of effective degree completion strategies. Related to this is the national impact of the degree attainment of FGCS on meeting future workforce demands, economic goals and global competitiveness (Lopez 2006; White House 2009).

The experience of marginalization is another challenge of the FGCS student label (Wildhagen 2015). Due to the plethora of research focused on how this population lacks

in comparison to their non-first-generation student counterpart, FGCS may feel isolated, underestimated and stigmatized (Wildhagen 2015). Related to this is a lack of a sense of belonging that FGCS often report feeling (Wildhagen 2015).

Another challenge is that the FGCS label tends to imply a homogenous experience for the recipients of the label. While the group overall may have similar experiences, a variety of other identities intersect with their first-generation status to provide the student with a unique experience (Wildhagen 2015). For example, Orbe (2004) notes that even though majority of first-generation college students enter college with disadvantaged backgrounds, some come from families with dominant cultural capital that acts as a buffer and source of support to the student's experience. Even though they are often lumped together due to their parent's educational backgrounds, FGCS face differing realities. These include their level of confidence and degree of comfort with college related information (Nguyen and Nguyen 2018). This lack of clarity in definition affects what kinds of policies and programs are enacted to serve this population as well as who truly qualifies to benefit from them (Nguyen and Nguyen 2018). The overall effect becomes a watered-down understanding of the actual inequality first generation college students experience (Nguyen and Nguyen 2018).

To further contribute to the literature on successful Latinx FGCS, illuminate the strengths inherent in Latinx communities, as well as effective program intervention components, this study utilized a qualitative approach to answer the questions of factors that influence successful college completion for Latinx FGCS. The study attempts to overcome the previous research deficit perspective (Mobley and Brawner 2019) by introducing the community cultural wealth framework. The next section discusses the

guiding theoretical frameworks for the study: cultural capital, social capital and the community cultural wealth (CCW) frameworks. All three are addressed below.

Theoretical Frameworks

Cultural Capital

The term cultural capital was developed in the late 1960s by Pierre Bourdieu a French sociologist in his analysis of inequality in the French educational system (Dumais 2015). In *Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction,* Bourdieu examined the way culture is reproduced across generations through the influence of major institutions, specifically the ways schools reproduce cultural ideas that support the position of the dominant group and ultimately reproduce the inequalities in society (Bourdieu 1977). Cultural capital in Bourdieu's formulation refers to the knowledge of the norms, practices and conventions that permeate specific social settings and allow individuals to navigate them in ways that increase their advantages in a variety of social situations (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, Lareau 1987 and 2003).

Bourdieu identified three forms of cultural capital which include*: embodied, objectified* and *institutionalized* cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986). In the embodied state, cultural capital refers to the knowledge, cultural attitudes and practices in an individual (Bourdieu 1986) for example playing the piano or navigating the school system (Conley 2013). Objectified cultural capital refers to the cultural goods or material objects such as books or computers that require embodied cultural capital in order to be valued, and institutionalized cultural capital refers to legitimated cultural capital which is often found in the form of educational qualifications (Bourdieu 1986).

The implications of cultural capital within an educational context can be understood through considering it in its embodied state. Cultural capital in an embodied state is acquired over time through a process of socialization to certain cultural norms, expectations and practices that influences an individual's way of thinking and acting. According to Swartz (1997:76), embodied cultural capital "requires 'pedagogical action': the investment of time by parents, other family members, or hired professionals to sensitize the child to cultural dispositions".

For college students, understanding of the student role exemplifies cultural capital. Students need an awareness of course expectations, along with how to interact with faculty and staff, utilize office hours and participate in campus activities (Engle 2007). For students whose parents attended college, this knowledge is passed on to them by their parents through their institutionalized cultural capital (Dumais 2015). As a result, students whose parents attend college begin their own college experience with a significant amount of cultural capital. However, for FGCS whose parents have no experience with college, they are at a disadvantage with a resultant effect being that parents are less supportive of their children attending college (Horn and Nunez 2000). Furthermore, scholars point to a cultural mismatch between many FGCS and the colleges they attend as a result of their working class background and "middle-class cultural capital—understanding the rules of the game [a lesson they would receive from their parents if the parents were college-educated]—that are often taken for granted as normative by many American universities" (Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, Johnson and Covarrubias 2012:1180). Consequently, this cultural mismatch impacts FGCS ability to

transition successfully to the college campus (Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, Johnson, and Covarrubias 2012).

Moreover, Collier and Morgan (2008) note that FGCS' lack of cultural capital and insider knowledge often affects their ability to be a successful college student, whereas the increased cultural capital of their non-FGCS peers equips them to respond appropriately to professor expectations, which contributes to the higher rates of degree completion and employment of non-FGCS students. The authors also assert that a lack of dominant, middle class cultural capital creates challenges for FGCS in demonstrating what they understand and know, which impacts their academic and social experiences (Collier and Morgan 2008).

Bourdieu also discusses the concept of *habitus* which refers to one's culturally shaped habits and dispositions (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Musoba and Baez 2009; Dumais 2015). These habits and dispositions are "derived from the predominantly unconscious internalization, particularly during early childhood, of objective chances that are common to members of a social class or status group" (Swartz 1997:104). Consequently, people's habitus makes them aware of their position and relation to the social world and as a result engenders or stifles their actions (Bourdieu and Wacuqant 1992; Lareau and Horvat 1999). Dumais (2015) claims that according to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, most FGCS will self-select out of seeking a college education as a result of a lack of a sense of belonging in the college environment. And even when they may possess cultural capital, a possibility exists that FGCS may not activate it in such a way that benefits them (Lareau 2003).

Overall, the possession of a significant amount of middle class, dominant cultural capital provides non-FGCS the opportunity to identify and respond properly to professor expectations, culminating in higher rates of degree completion and employment (Collier and Morgan 2008). The reverse is the case for FGCS.

Social Capital

While Bourdieu can be credited with introducing the term social capital to sociology, another theorist, James Coleman is credited with enabling the concept to gain widespread recognition, highlighting its importance as an individual notion, as his various works expound on the relationship between social capital and human development. According to Coleman, social capital is "the set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organization that are useful for the cognitive or social development of a child or young person" (Coleman 1990: 300). It is a resource for people found in their network of relationships that enables them to achieve their interests and function effectively in society (Coleman 1988). Coleman's interest in social capital developed in his attempt to understand and explain the relationship between social inequality and academic achievement in schools (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfield and York 1966).

Social capital works in two ways to benefit its possessor, first it connects individuals to a network of individuals and secondly, the information obtained from this network can be further converted to beneficial economic and institutional resources (Portes 1998). The accumulation of social capital commences at birth with membership in networks such as families, neighborhoods, occupational groups and schools (O'Keefe

and Djeukeng 2010). Membership in these networks allows access to the resources held by individuals in that network (Portes 1998). Students from college-educated backgrounds often receive valuable information regarding college from their established networks before the beginning of their higher education careers (Bell, Rowan-Kenyon, and Perna 2009). From their parents, non-FGCS students learn about college and parents can serve as a resource to students when challenges arise (Collier and Morgan 2008). The opposite is the case for FGCS as their parents may not be familiar enough with the system to help them navigate it or refer them to crucial resources (O'Keefe and Djeukeng 2010). Furthermore, as a result of their own lack of education, some FGCS parents are opposed to their children pursuing higher education as they don't necessarily see the value of a college education (Engle 2007).

All students who are successful in college likely benefited from the support of others to navigate challenges in college (Almeida, Byrne, Smith, Ruiz 2019). For FGCS who are less likely to have college educated individuals in their network, social capital from their college related relationships is essential to their success (Almeida, Byrne, Smith, Ruiz 2019). Students who do not have the social capital required to succeed in college can generate social capital through their connections with institutional agents (Stanton-Salazar 2011), which I return to below. Social capital can then be used to obtain a college education, secure a good job, earn a good salary and further utilized to expand social networks post-graduation (O'Keefe and Djeukeng 2010).

Community Cultural Wealth

As mentioned previously, the discourse on FGCS is often deficit based and frequently attributes the challenges FGCS face such as poor academic aspirations, weak social networks and low levels of self-efficacy to individual characteristics (Ramos-Sánchez and Nichols 2007; Terenzini et. al 1996). Consequently, the strengths and values inherent in FGCS and communities of color are often overlooked (Yosso 2005; Katrevich and Aruguete, 2017). Yosso (2005) challenged the traditional interpretation of cultural capital because of its standardization of white middle class norms and proposed community cultural wealth (CCW) as an alternative construct to highlight the cultural wealth people of color possess. Based in critical race theory, CCW is a framework that broadens Bourdieu's class-limited definition of cultural capital to include the skills, abilities and experiences people of color bring to their educational pursuits (Yosso 2005). The CCW model grew out of discussions in Yosso's research with Mexican American parents on the inequalities of the educational system (Yosso 2005, 2006).

According to Yosso (2005), the core of the CCW framework are the six forms of capital that provide an asset-based perspective on communities of color. They are used by communities of color to survive and resist oppression and discrimination (Yosso 2006). There is also a great degree of intersectionality (Yosso 2005, Carey 2016) among the forms of capital and "they mutually reinforce one another and at times, overlap in the meaning making processes for Black and Latina/o students" (Carey 2016:725). The six forms of capital are as follows:

- *Aspirational capital* refers to the capacity of individuals to maintain hopes and dreams in the face of adversity (Yosso 2005)

- *Linguistic capital* recognizes the intellectual and social skills gained as a result of communicating in more than one language (Yosso 2005)

- *Familial capital* refers to cultural knowledge and support nurtured by family that promote a sense of community history (Yosso 2005)

- *Social capital* includes a network of people that provide instrumental support (Yosso 2005)

- *Navigational capital* refers to the ability to maneuver through societal institutions that are often not considerate of the needs of communities of color (Yosso 2005) and

- *Resistant capital* refers to knowledge and skills developed through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality (Yosso 2005).

Yosso (2005:82) asserts that "the main goals of identifying and documenting cultural wealth are to transform education and empower people of color to utilize assets already abundant in their communities". This could inspire a sense of pride within students and as well as for their communities (Holland 2017). Furthermore, the CCW framework is beneficial as it requires an acknowledgement of the historical context of marginalized populations as well as the economic, social and political climate in which students of color receive their education (Yosso 2005). Moreover, CCW provides further clarity as to how students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds become familiar with college knowledge and their utilization of non-conventional skills and strategies to access educational resources in spite of the absence, or limited presence in their immediate

social networks (Holland 2017). CCW also provides educators and policymakers a deeper understanding as to how these students and their families can be institutionally supported (Holland 2017).

Using CCW as a conceptual framework, Kouyoumdjian, Guzman, Garcia, and Talavera-Bustillos (2017) studied the educational experiences of 114 Latinx students. Challenges and sources of support which were perceived as affecting the goal of completion for first and second-generation Latinx students at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) were examined. Results from the study indicate that majority of the student sample identified forms of CCW such as aspirational, familial, navigational and social capital as being instrumental to their success.

Denicolo, González, Morales, and Romani (2015) examined how bilingual 3rd grade students writing t*estimonios* or personal narratives reflect on their cultural and linguistic wealth developed in their homes and communities. Findings show that the knowledge acquired outside of the classroom can be used to help students identify their individual and collective CCW. Additionally, the authors recognize systems such as curricular decisions and school policies that denigrate these students' assets which they often draw on to navigate their classroom.

Studying the persistence of students of color in engineering, Samuelson and Litzler (2016) examined the different types of CCW Black and Latinx students relied on to complete an engineering program. Interviews with 31 engineering students from 11 universities revealed that while each type of CCW contributed to student's persistence, navigational and aspirational capital were referred to the most. Furthermore, Black male

and female students activated specific types of capital differently as well as females from different racial/ethnic backgrounds.

Rincon, Fernandez and Duenas (2020) also interviewed 16 first- and continuing-generation Latinx students pursuing STEM degrees to explore the forms of capital these students utilized to navigate postsecondary STEM pathways. Results reveal that first-and continuing generation students participated in activities that stimulated, cultivated and expanded their CCW. And even though both groups of students arrived at college with CCW, continuing-generation Latinx students arrived at college with dominant, middle class capital. This provided them the opportunity to activate either CCW or traditional forms of capital as they moved between or across both kinds of capital. Additionally, students who employed CCW were often faced with an incompatibility with their values and those espoused by the institutions. To remedy the situation, they engaged in acts of resistance such as disengaging from curricular and co-curricular activities that promoted incongruent values; or negotiating conflicts that arose when engaging in co-curricular activities.

Some other studies that employed CCW include Araujao (2012) who used CCW to study how a Latinx migrant farmworker student, used his CCW in his transition from high school to college to successfully navigate his first year; and Carey (2016) who examined how two 11th grade boys of color were supported by their families in the pursuit of their post-secondary education goals.

In short, Yosso's expansion of cultural capital to include CCW does not deny that middle class and above cultural capital is important in applying to, entering and succeeding in college. But, CCW does argue that racial and ethnic minorities who may

lack middle and above cultural capital resources can still succeed and are likely to do so by relying on their Community and Cultural Wealth. One part of this dissertation is to describe more precisely the important components of Community and Cultural Wealth.

To sum up, this section discussed Latinx FGCS characteristics, background factors such as family income and social class, race, immigrant status and gender that provide a context for Latinx FGCS experiences, barriers to success, institutional agents and their various roles, and the theoretical orientations that guided this study. These theories fit well with this project as social and cultural capital provide a framework for understanding the kinds of capital needed to navigate the higher education sphere. CCW on the other hand provides an expanded lens for Bourdieu's capital framework as it captures the different forms of capital developed and nurtured in communities of color that students of color draw on to be successful in college. Current intervention initiatives targeted at Latinx FGCS often include social and cultural capital, and to a much lesser extent CCW, with the aim being to develop in this population middle-class valued cultural capital.

This dissertation also argues that social and cultural capital, including CCW, are not just "natural," i.e. arising and developing *sui generis.* I argue that institutional agents, specifically educational and education-affiliated institutions, significantly advance social and cultural capital, and in some cases CCW. The next section examines the literature on the role of institutional agents in Latinx FGCS education trajectory.

Institutional Agents

      As previously mentioned, successful college students likely profited from the support they received while journeying through college (Almeida, Byrne, Smith, Ruiz 2019). For FGCS who are less likely to have college educated individuals in their network, social capital from their college related relationships is essential to their success (Almeida, Byrne, Smith, Ruiz 2019). One-way FGCS can take advantage of opportunities provided by higher education is through the support of institutional agents.

      Stanton-Salazar (1997:6) whose work provides the foundation for the literature on institutional agents, defined institutional agents "as those individuals who have the capacity and commitment to transmit directly, or negotiate the transmission of, institutional resources and opportunities". Expanding on this definition, Stanton-Salazar (2011:1075) added that an institutional agent is "an individual who occupies one or more hierarchical positions of relatively high-status, either within a society or in an institution (or an organization)". Similarly, Tovar (2015:51) defines institutional agents as individuals who, "transmit knowledge, serve as bridges or gatekeepers, advocate or intervene on students' behalf, serve as role models, provide emotional and moral support, and provide valuable feedback, advice and guidance to students".

      Institutional agents have a high degree of cultural and social capital and provide students with information to assist them in navigating the college system (Stanton-Salazar 2011). They include faculty members, deans and chairs, advisors, counselors, front-line staff such as financial aid specialists and program directors (Tovar 2015; Bensimon, Dowd, Stanton-Salazar and Davila 2019). Additionally, they use their "position, status, and authority to act on behalf of young people to advocate for

institutional support to be directed towards their education" (Bensimon et. al 2019: 1695).

Institutional support can come in a variety of forms which include highly valued

resources, opportunities, privileges and services (Bensimon et. al 2019). Furthermore,

institutional agents are aware of the ways institutional policies and practices hinder

students in the accomplishment of their goals. Thus, they utilize their knowledge of the

academic culture to help Latinx students be successful within existing systems, while

working to make these systems or structures more receptive to minoritized students

(Garcia and Ramirez 2018).

       Stanton-Salazar identified four categories of institutional agents which are: direct

support, integrative support, system developer and system linkage and networking

support.

1. Direct support: institutional agents here occupy a variety of roles that provide
   support directly to students (Bensimon et. al 2019). In these roles, institutional
   agents act in ways that are reflective of an academic advisor or mentor. Roles
   here include:

   - *Resource agents* who focus on providing personal and institutional resources
   - *Knowledge agent and advisor*, who focus on conveying knowledge and
     educating students on how to navigate the system
   - *Advocate* who promotes and protects students' needs and a
   - *Networking coach* who teaches students how to build their networking skills
     (Bensimon et. al 2019).

2. Integrative support: here the focus is on helping students integrate into the cultural
   world of the institution. Roles here include:

- *Integrative agent* who helps students integrate and participate in professional and institutional networks

- *Cultural guide* who guides and teaches students how to interact and navigate in particular cultural spheres

3. System developer: in this category, the institutional agent may not have direct contact with students, but they use their position to influence policies and programs in support of their students. Roles in this category include:

    - *Program Developer* focuses on program development that entrenches students in a system of resources and opportunities

    - *Political advocate* is part of a political action group that promotes policies that would benefit targeted student groups and the

    - Lobbyist who petitions for resources to be targeted towards recruiting and support

4. System linkage and networking support: this last category features roles in which the institutional agent interacts with both the student and individuals at the institution to assemble support and connect to resourceful people. These roles are:

    - *Recruiter* who engages in student recruitment for programs or departments

    - *Bridging* agent who has a strong social network and connects students to other institutional agents

    - *Institutional broker* who is knowledgeable about resources and negotiates amongst parties and the

    - *Coordinator* who assesses needs as well as identifies, provides and ensures resources are available for students.

It should be noted that the roles of institutional agents in these last three categories are enacted at the systems level as opposed to the first category which is focused on direct support to students (Bensimon et. al 2019).

There are a few studies focused on institutional agents and their actions in supporting Latinx students. For example, Bensimon et. al's (2019) study examined how four STEM Latinx faculty served as institutional agents and enacted various roles to promote Latinx students aspirations in the STEM field. Some of the faculty advocated for students at the campus level and provided more direct support, while others focused their effort at the system level.

In their dissertation, Santiago (2012) focused on the actions faculty serving as institutional agents took to support Latino students at a Hispanic Serving institution (HSI). Other studies have examined institutional agents within the community college setting, for example Javier's (2009) dissertation focused on math faculty serving as institutional agents and Dowd, Pak and Bensimon's (2013) study demonstrated the psychological support institutional agents provided students from non-dominant racial-ethnic and low socioeconomic groups.

Support Programs and Interventions

Support programs and interventions are the mechanism by which institutional agents convey social and cultural capital as well as reinforcing community cultural wealth. As the wealth of problems students experienced such as the high cost of college, poor college knowledge, navigating campus resources continued to increase, colleges and universities to provide students with support have implemented practices and designed

programs with a variety of components to meet the diverse needs of underserved students (Douglas and Attewell 2014; Hallet, Kezar, Perez and Kitchen 2020; Kezar 2000; Purdie and Rosser 2011). For FGCS, these programs provide social and academic support that increase persistence and retention (Murphy and Hicks 2006). Furthermore, The Institute for Higher Education Policy (2012) recommends that FGCS are provided with structured interventions, that comprise academic and social engagement. These programs can be especially important for FGCS students because they provide opportunities to grow their college-knowledge or cultural capital (Kezar 2000). Programs available to FGCS to support the attainment of a college education and successful life transition can be divided into pre-college, college and post-college programs. Only the precollege and college programs are relevant to this study.

Precollege Programs

Pre-college programs center on tackling probable challenges that FGCS may encounter prior to college. These programs can begin as early as elementary school and continue right before the first semester of college. Three common types of pre-collegiate academic development programming as identified by Tym, Barone and Webster (2004:15) are " *Informational Outreach* – primarily information dissemination and advising, with little or no academic intervention in the way of actual instruction; *Career-Based Outreach* – academic, motivational, and informational interventions designed around students' career aspirations and intended to link those aspirations with college majors; and, *Academic Support* – instructional services designed to increase student performance in college preparation classes or to improve students' opportunities to enroll in such classes".

Some notable programs in this category that were available to the students I studied include AVID, Upward Bound, and Bridge programs. A brief description of these programs follows in the subsequent section.

1. AVID, which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a college preparatory program that begins in elementary schools and continues through college. It was created for two reasons: (a). to "increase college participation among African American, Alaskan/Native American, Latino and low-income students who are most underrepresented in post-secondary education and (b). to restructure secondary school methodologies to allow college preparatory curricula to be accessible to all students (Swanson, Mehand and Hubbard 1993:3; Avid.org).

2. Upward Bound is one of eight programs that constitute the group of TRIO programs, created in 1965 by Congress. These programs are a series of federally funded programs designed to provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, low-income students, first generation college students and individuals with disabilities, to help them progress through the academic pipeline to college, graduate, and go on to contribute to American societal and economic life. While there are eight programs in all, three of them fall into the pre-college category and they include Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math-Science and Talent search (U.S Department of Education 2020).

3. Summer Bridge Programs- A final category of precollege intervention programs are summer bridge programs that occur in the summer between high school completion and the commencement of the first semester of college. These

programs are designed to provide students with skills that are needed to be successful in college before the start of the freshman year. Summer bridge programs typically last between 2 – 4 weeks, vary with regards to their content, and are organized by various institutions of higher education. Though summer bridge programs have also been generally used for all students, historically, they have targeted ethnic and racial minority, low-income and first-generation college students (Kezar 2000; Hallet et. al 2020).

For students from first generation college backgrounds, these programs aim to correct poor academic preparation, boost college knowledge, and equip students with the social capital needed to achieve college enrollment (Gullat and Jan 2003).

College Programs

These programs focus on providing college students with a range of support to ease their transition to college life as well as support their college experience. Programs may further target students based on their year in college. For example, there are programs that provide targeted support once first semester grades are posted and programs that follow students through the course of their undergraduate career (Hallet et. al 2020). There are also programs that target students as a result of their major, for example STEM support programs for underrepresented minorities (Ovink and Veazey 2011). An example of a notable program at this stage is the Federal TRIO Student Support Services program which provides support services to students from low-income backgrounds, first generation college students and individual with disabilities. Qualified students are connected with opportunities for academic development, receive assistance

with basic college requirements, and motivation towards the successful completion of their college education (U.S Department of Education 2020).

Impactful Programmatic Components

Programmatic research to support FGCS as they navigate postsecondary education systems often examine challenges this population face and propose recommendations accordingly (Tobolowsky, Cox and Chunoo 2020). Recommendations often vary by institutions with program components that include academic advising, tutoring support, increased financial aid and scholarship opportunities, writing center help, peer mentoring, enrichment activities, and support for the development of leadership skills by encouraging students to participate in student organizations (Choy 2001; Engle and Tinto 2008; Kezar and Holmcombe 2020; Kezar and Kitchen 2020).

Furthermore, High Impact Practices (HIPs), i.e. those that have positive effect on retention, have been identified as "institutionally structured experiences and activities that deepen learning, and increase student engagement" (Conefrey 2018:3). The founding Director of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) George Kuh advises that students participate in two HIPs during their college experience- one during the first year and the other near the completion of their baccalaureate (Finley and McNair 2013). Kuh in his 2008 book *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter''* was able to use NSSE data to demonstrate the noticeable impact HIPs had on underserved student (Finley and McNair 2013). For example, when they engaged in HIPs, students with lower ACT scores experienced an increase in their grade point averages in comparison to their peers with higher ACT scores. And in several

instances, the effects were more evident for students from groups historically underrepresented in higher education such as African American, Latino/a students and FGCS (Finley and McNair 2013). FGCS who partake in HIPs report higher gains in deep learning, general education, practical competence, and personal and social development (Finley and McNair, 2013).

The Association of American Colleges and Universities highly recommend these practices which include:

1. First-year seminars (FYS)

2. Common intellectual experiences

3. Learning communities (LC)

4. Writing-intensive courses

5. Collaborative assignments and projects

6. Undergraduate research

7. Diversity/global learning

8. ePortfolios

9. Service-learning, community-based learning

10. Internships

11. Capstone courses and projects (Conefrey 2018).

Research suggests that these practices, which have been especially advantageous for those who are most disadvantaged, help students compensate for their dearth in cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), assuage gaps in their academic preparedness, and improve their engagement and belongingness (Eynon and Gambino 2016; Kuh 2008). They also support the development of leadership skills (Kezar and Holmcombe 2020; Kezar and

Kitchen 2020). Two of the most commonly offered HIPs at institutions of higher education are First Year Seminars (FYS) and Learning Communities (LC) (Schmidt and Graziano 2016). A discussion of these two HIPs and studies that examine their impact follows below.

First-year seminar

According to Hunter and Linder (2005: 275 - 276) as cited in Schmidt and Garziano (2016), FYS is a course created to "assist students in their academic and social development and in their transition to college. In most cases, there is an emphasis on creating community in the classroom". FYS courses are designed to help students navigate the first year of college by teaching life skills and tactics to encourage student success. The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition which conducts a survey triennially reports in the 2012-2013 National Survey of First- Year Seminars, that 89.7% of institutions offered an FYS course (Young and Hopp 2014).

FYS courses differ in their content and can focus on a specific theme such as career exploration or a variety of themes. They also may be offered face-to-face, online or utilize a hybrid format (Schmidt and Graziano 2016). Six types of FYSs have been identified by The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition and they include:

1. *Extended orientation seminar:* focuses on introducing students to campus resources, academic and career planning, learning strategies;

2. *Academic seminar with uniform content across sections*: focuses on academic skills and components such as critical thinking and expository writing;

3. *Academic seminar with variable content across sections*: here topics vary from section to section;

4. *Preprofessional or discipline linked seminar*: focuses on connecting and preparing students in specific majors for their major and profession. This is commonly found in disciplines such as engineering, business, health sciences or education;

5. *Basic-study skills seminar*: which address concerns such as grammar of academically underprepared students and

6. *Hybrid seminar*: which comprises elements of different types of seminars (Schmidt and Graziano 2016).

Vaughan, Parra, and Lalonde (2014) investigated the effect of FGCS participating in a FYS on academic achievement and persistence to the second semester in comparison to nonparticipants. 266 first-generation students participated in the study and results indicated that FGCS who participated in FYS had higher GPAs (a difference of 0.71 points) and were more likely to persist (an overall 17% difference).

Learning Communities

Living learning communities are designed to bring together students by enrolling them intentionally in linked courses for the purpose of:

a. "fostering close connections between and among students, faculty and staff as active participants in the learning process and

b. providing students with and integrative learning experience" (pg xvi)

Students often live together and participate in educational and social programming (Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, and Leonard 2007). They often target a variety of students at various stages of their college careers such as ESL or honors students; in specific academic majors or career programs such as nursing. The specific structure varies by institution and may include a residential experience, peer mentoring, tutoring, discussion groups and a variety of other features" (pg xvi)

Inkelas et. al (2007) studied the impact of the living- learning programs in enabling first generation students' perceived academic and social transition to college. Data from their study came from 1,335 first-generation students from 33 postsecondary institutions who participated in the National Study of Living Learning Programs during Spring 2004. Constructs that were measured in the study include student background information, involvement in several types of college environments, and self-reported outcomes. Results from the study show that that first-generation students in living-learning programs were more likely to report a more positive academic and social transition to college than first-generation students who lived in a traditional residence hall setting (Inkelas et. al 2007). Furthermore, interactions with faculty members, the utilization of residence hall resources and an encouraging residence hall atmosphere enabled an easier academic transition for first generation students in living-learning programs (Inkelas et. al 2007).

Overall, these programs focus on academic and social engagement practices that support FGCS with the aim of bridging the gap in their cultural and social capital accumulation to help them be successful.

Limitations to Existing Literature and Relevance of Theoretical Frameworks

Existing literature on FGCS is broad and often falls into three categories: (i) an examination of FGCS demographic characteristics (Pascarella et. al 2004; Terenzini et. al 1996); (ii) persistence in college and degree attainment in comparison to non-FGCS (Lohfink and Paulsen 2005; Soria and Stebleton, 2012); (iii) and institution specific experiences of FGCS (Woosley and Shepler 2011).

However, Vega (2019:307) notes that existing research on FGCS "does not comprehensively attend to the unique experiences of Latino students". Additionally, most of the research on FGCS addresses quantitative measures, such as retention and graduation rates, high school and college GPA. By utilizing a qualitative approach, this study provides an opportunity to give voice to the lived experiences of Latinx FGCS focusing on factors current and former students view as important to their success in college.

Further, a number of supports/interventions as discussed above have been recommended to encourage an environment conducive to academic success for students in this group. The incorporation of social and cultural capital in the study shows how these support/intervention programs focus on the development of college focused knowledge to retain underrepresented populations. However, the literature indicates that FGCS are still leaving college at high rates (Tobolowsky, Cox, Chunoo 2020). One explanation could be that the approach of current supports/intervention are usually not cognizant of the student's cultural wealth and operate generally from the perspective that students need to assimilate to middle class values and cultural capital. The inclusion of the Community Cultural Wealth theoretical perspective in this study presents a

perspective that recognizes the kinds of capital needed to succeed while acknowledging and honoring the capital Latinx FGCS bring to navigate their postsecondary education journey. The chapter that follows discusses the research design, methodology and data analysis process.

Chapter Three: Methods

The literature review indicates that more information is needed about Latinx FGCS and the cultural and social capital, including community wealth, that affects their success in college. My research design addressed this gap by using the voices of students themselves to speak to the cultural and social capital that helped them be successful. Moreover, it illuminated the community cultural wealth Latinx FGCS bring to college.

A qualitative case study research design was utilized in this study. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015:23), "qualitative research is based on the belief that knowledge is constructed by people in an ongoing fashion as they engage in and make meaning of an activity, experience, or phenomenon". This qualitative study sought to allow for a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of Latinx FGCS, their strengths, how they navigate college successfully, as well as effective program interventions. It also explored the acquisition of dominant, middle class cultural and social capital by Latinx FGCS. A qualitative research design was selected for this study because this approach is best suited to describe participant's perspectives and experiences (Yin 2015). Qualitative research provides useful data and depth in the understanding of the human experience (Hays and Singh 2012).

Additionally, a case study design was selected. Creswell (2007: 73) notes that "case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a *case*) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information* (e.g., observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents) and reports a case *description* and case-based themes. A case study design is aimed at understanding phenomena associated

with a single individual or concentrations of individuals in a bounded system. In this study, the case which is also the bounded system is Valley University (VU), a pseudonym for a state supported public university. In case studies, multiple sources of data need to be gathered and analyzed. I conducted semi-structured interviews and will complement that with data from my personal observations from my time at Valley University working with the Latinx FGCS population. Additionally, data from the semi- structured interviews with students/alum will be triangulated against data with program administrators and my personal observations.

Research Location

This study was conducted at Valley University (VU), a pseudonym for a state supported public university located in the Pacific Northwest. It serves approximately 5000 students through its undergraduate and graduate programs with approximately 46% identifying as a first generation college student (Personal communication). It is also designated as an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) which is given when at least 25% of the student population identify as Hispanic. Currently, at Valley University, as an emerging HSI, 15% of the students identify as Hispanic and thus provides an appropriate participant pool, the very demographic, Latinx first generation college student, that is the focus of this study.

Population and Sampling

The criteria for participation were that participants had to be Latinx, a first-generation college student and a junior, senior or alum. I previously worked at VU's Multicultural Students Services (MSS) office and the Director expressed interest in this project. She assisted in connecting me with MSS juniors, seniors and graduates. A faculty

member in the department of Criminal Justice also assisted with student recruitment. I

also contacted Latinx focused clubs at VU, Latinx faculty, career services and recruited

from the TRIO program at VU. TRIO programs are federal programs designed to

increase access to higher education for economically disadvantaged students. Program

administrators of support programs for this population were the last group I interviewed,

and a convenience snowball sampling method was utilized.

Participants

       Twenty-three individuals participated in this study. Seven were current students

and nine were alumni from the same mid-size public university in the Pacific Northwest

of the United States. The remaining seven participants were program administrators from

three mid-size public universities in the Pacific Northwest. Pseudonyms for the college

and participants are utilized to protect participant's identities. No demographic

information was collected to further keep participants' identities private. The table below

provides a summary of the participants from the study.

Table 3.1: Pseudonyms, class standing and occupation of participants

Name	Current Student	Alumni and their Current Position	Program Administrator
Ariana		Academic Advisor	
Carlos		Doctoral Student	
Diana	Senior		
Gael	Senior		
Isabella			Director
Laura	Senior		
Professor Lucas			Faculty
Luis		Exec. Assistant to the Vice President	
Luisa			Director
Luna		Student Support Services	
Manuel		Support Student Services Supervisor	
Mateo			Interim Director
Olivia	Junior		
Pablo		Evaluation Specialist	
Paula	Junior		
Pedro		Program Coordinator	
Pilar		Counselor	
Salvador		Faculty	
Santiago			Director
Sarah			Director and Instructor
Sebastian			Coordinator
Rocio	Junior		
Victoria	Senior		

Data Collection

Data collection commenced after Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data to explore students' and program administrators' perspectives. These kinds of interviews follow a predesigned interview script that might include probes for follow up questions that arise from participant answers (Berg 2009). Semi-structured interviews were suitable for this study because it gives voice to the lived experiences of participants and helped them share their expertise that should inform work with the Latinx FGCS population. The semi-structed interviews were conducted over zoom and were recorded. Participants were informed that interviews will be recorded over zoom prior to interviews being scheduled. At the start of interviews, I read an interview script (see Appendix A) to remind participants of the study aims. Participants were also asked to provide verbal consent prior to the commencement of the recording.

Interviews ranged from 30 minutes to an hour with questions focused on understanding participant's aspirations, support systems and overall experience navigating college as a Latinx first generation college student. Some questions from Gonzalez's (2019) dissertation were used in this study. Interviews were conducted between January 2021 – April 2021. During the interviews, I took notes about my thoughts and observations and wrote memos after the interviews. A pilot study was conducted with one student participant and one program administrator to test the interview guide. All participants were given a $20 gift card as compensation for their time. After each interview, I kept notes of important observations for reflecting on through the coding process.

Data Analysis

For qualitative research, data analysis focuses on preparing, organizing, and reducing the data into themes (Creswell 2007). It begins with data management which consists of organizing data into files, folders and appropriate text units such as a word, sentence or an entire story. Next, the data analysis requires that researchers get a sense of what is available in the whole database which necessitates that for example transcripts are read several times. While engaging in this process, the qualitative researcher describes, classifies and interprets the data for the purpose of developing meaningful codes. A code is a "word of short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldaña, 2016:4). The codes are eventually narrowed down into five or six themes (Creswell 2007).

In this study, analysis of qualitative data was guided by using the literature review on cultural capital, social capital, and community cultural wealth theories. Recorded responses were transcribed using zoom and transcriptions were checked for accuracy. The transcribed interviews were exported to Dedoose and an abductive approach was used to guide the identification of themes and codes. The abductive approach entails that the researcher commences the coding and analysis process using trends in the literature such as college knowledge, connection to others, family support, to discern themes, but allow for emergent themes that may not have been previously described in the literature (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). While engaging in the data analysis process, I carefully read each transcript multiple times, reviewed transcripts line by line and noted things I considered significant (Saldaña, 2016). Codes (see Appendix D) were created and

regrouped as needed, leading eventually to the creation of categories based on their similarities. They were further narrowed down to give room for the emergence of dominant themes.

Researcher Positionality

Researchers serve as the primary data collection and analysis instrument in qualitative studies (Creswell 2008, Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Thus, it is important to acknowledge the impossibility of separating one's experiences and backgrounds from their roles as researchers (Creswell 2008). My interest in studying Latinx first generation college students (FGCS) derives from my time working in Multicultural Student Services (MSS) at Valley University as well as my previous background experiences.

Growing up, I traveled the world as a child of a diplomat and my most memorable experience was my time in Cuba. I became drawn to and interested in the Latinx culture because of similar values to my Nigerian culture of family and community. While in college, I attended a predominantly White institution and experienced challenges that racial and ethnic minority students often encounter in such settings- underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minority students, lack of support, lack of faculty from a similar background, feelings of isolation and a generally unwelcoming campus environment. Fortunately for me, I was able to get connected to the International Office. I also received personal and consistent support from the Director at the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Through this connection, I met other racial and ethnic minority students who provided the much needed community I longed for. These supports were instrumental in helping me navigate college and ensuring my success.

Years later after I began working in Student Affairs with Latinx FGCS at Valley University and I quickly discovered that they expressed similar concerns as I had when I started college. Additionally, they often confronted other challenges, including poor academic preparation, being pioneers, food insecurity, balancing home and school responsibilities, needing to work, and funding their education. To mitigate some of these concerns, MSS, the office where I worked, provided scholarships, academic success classes, mentoring, individual advising, engagement with student clubs and a variety of Latinx cultural events. But coming from a different country, I recognized I needed to become more familiar with some of the systemic issues impacting my students. To this end, I pursued doctoral studies and my desire to learn more about strategies to best support Latinx first generation college students led me to this dissertation topic.

I have been removed from this experience for over four years now and the Director of MSS who also expressed interest in this project helped with connecting me to study participants. The similarity of some of my undergraduate experiences as well as my time at Valley University helped with building trust with student participants. However, as a doctoral student, I recognize that I occupy a higher position of power than the participants within this study. To address this power differential, I engaged in reflexivity throughout the conduct of this study. Reflexivity is "the process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome" (Berger 2015:220). This was mainly through reflecting on my role as a researcher as well as conversations with one committee member. I also provided

participants with completed transcripts to ensure that they were being represented authentically. This further validated the study's trustworthiness.

This chapter described the methodology that was employed in the conduct of this study. The researcher aimed to give voice to the experiences of the Latinx FGCS in this study while preserving their anonymity. The next chapter explores the findings of the study

Chapter Four: Results

This qualitative case study examines the experiences of Latinx FGCS, their strengths, how they navigated college successfully, as well as effective program interventions. The first three chapters of this dissertation offer an introduction to the problem of low college completion for Latinx FGCS, a review of the literature surrounding Latinx FGCS, the theoretical frameworks guiding this study and the methodological design that was utilized for this study. This chapter presents findings that seeks to understand the following research questions:

RQ 1: What supports contribute to the acquisition of dominant, middle class cultural and social capital for Latinx FGCS students according to students and program administrators?

RQ 2: What Community Cultural Wealth do Latinx FGCS have that contribute to advancing their education?

Three main themes emerged to describe students and program administrators experience with regards to helping Latinx FGCS be successful. They include: 1. Community; 2. Dominant Social and Cultural Capital Building supports and 3. Community Cultural Wealth. The findings from this study are presented with direct quotes from the research participants.

Community

Bourdieu's theories of social and cultural capitals have had an enormous impact on educational research as it has been used to examine educational inequality. However,

it centers forms of capital representative of White, middle-class norms. Yosso's

Community cultural wealth (CCW) theory recognizes and values the assets in

communities of color that foster educational achievement. Though not part of the six

forms of CCW, one of the assets Latinx FGCS possess that was identified in this study is

community. In the Latinx culture, in addition to the core value of family or familismo the

importance of relational connections otherwise known as community is considered to be

a core value (Gloria and Castellanos 2009).

Study participants affirmed the value of community and its impact on the

educational success of Latinx FGCS throughout different parts of the interview. For

Olivia a junior, community comprises, "mostly people that are around you and that

support you...that encourage you to pursue what you want to do." Similarly for Gael a

senior, community is "just people around you, your friends, faculty, advisors, people in

the community, people you engage [with] on a day-to-day basis." He notes further the

importance of community "building a good community is definitely important.... I had

really good mentors that will definitely be my community, people around you, people

who support you." These responses reiterate that community in the Latinx culture extends

beyond the nuclear family and embraces a much wider network of individuals. It also

speaks to the idea of community representing a sense of support for the Latinx FGCS

population. Commenting on this, Luis an alum describes how his understanding of

community evolved and how it includes supportive individuals. For him community,

> is anyone who supports you in all aspects of your life. When I was younger, I
> thought that community meant family and it does, but I quickly realized coming
> to college that it can be folks who aren't like you, but they support
> you....Community doesn't have to be your family, it can really be someone down
> the road, but they see you, they support you.

Luis' interpretation of community acknowledges like the previous respondents that community extends beyond the immediate family and it also includes feeling supported.

Like Luis, Mateo a program administrator who also identifies as being first generation Latinx discusses the reason why this population needs to be supported. In doing so, he also describes the experience of being first generation Latinx. He explained:

> A lot of times students sometimes don't feel that they have that connection with the university as a whole, even though Valley University is a small university. Sometimes it can feel like it's overwhelming. So we try to set up a kind of... like a family, extended family touch, that connection there [at the university], so someone's always looking out for them, so they can go to talk about, whether it's academics, personal, anything, there's someone that they can go to talk about issues. Again, being first generation Latinx, it's likely parents have zero, little of any kind of college or post secondary [knowledge], so someone they can go talk to about how things are. Some things they can bounce ideas off us to talk with their parents, you know so depending on the students' comfortability and that they you know gave us authorization to talk with their parents. So, it's just really important that they see someone that they feel connected to, like themselves, maybe went through the same experience, just so they know they have that person or support person, whether they call the administrator or a mentor, friend, you know extended family, I think that's really important.

Mateo's comments recognizes that Latinx FGCS in addition to being pioneers in their higher education journey come from backgrounds with parents lacking in institutionalized cultural capital. As such navigating college level processes and expectations can often prove challenging for this population. In addition to the support, they receive from their family, Latinx FGCS need community support from the university to be successful in the pursuit of their goals.

Furthermore, a benefit of Latinx FGCS being in community is that it keeps them connected and accountable. Speaking on this, Santiago a program administrator who also identifies as first generation stated that:

I believe in community; I believe that as a first generation Latinx student whether they're going to.... a community college, a public university or even a private school, I believe for that Latinx first year student to find a community, it could be a resource Center it could be a... program it could be a club, find a community, because if they find a community, they are accountable now to each other [and] they're looking out for each other

Echoing the previous responses, Santiago also speaks to the interconnectedness in the Latinx culture where individuals see their success as not only representative of themselves, but their families and their communities. There is a shared common interest in the pursuit of their educational goals because of the benefit it brings. Additionally, they can be responsible to each other because of their backgrounds and the understanding of the work that is needed to be put forth to attain their educational goals. Paula shared,

You just see I have a friend and she's also a first gen student. And I think for her it's just the support and the understanding that we have for one another. And just you know she understands how you know we [Latinx FGCS] have to work hard, like extra hard for you know, to get there.

Paula's response speaks to the support she feels from her friend who is also a Latinx FGCS due to their similar backgrounds and experiences.

Perhaps another way to understand the importance of being in community for Latinx FGCS success is examining what a lack of community looks like. Carlos contrasts his undergraduate experience where he experienced community to his graduate experience in Kentucky where he is pursuing a doctorate in Sociology where this was lacking. He shared,

When I went to Valley University for instance, I noticed that a lot of my success came from being able to be in community with my friends. Because a lot of us were in the same conditions, a lot of us were first generation. And so, it's like we benefited from having people a year or so older than us, who we could count on, who would give us advice on study habits, or what to do and where to go for help, joining clubs and things like that. ..... and so, I feel like having community, really

58

helped those of us that stayed in college, kind of like stick together. I feel like it really helped us, navigate college together. And I think outside of my friends, I think just feeling like I had a supportive community, of mentors and adults in my life, that were positive influences, that wanted us to go to school.....And then going to graduate school, that's when I realized how important having that community is. And it's very easy to feel isolated, when you're not around friends and family. And it's easy to feel initially like you can do it, it's not a big deal. But then, you know in the long run, it kind of starts wearing on you. And you start realizing how important, your community is

Speaking further on his lack of community while pursuing graduate studies, Carlos stated:

Going to graduate school, I only realized then like the lack of community, and the lack of like support. Like I noticed that a major difference between, you know as an undergrad being at Valley University, was the peer support, and the community, and the different offices and services. Whereas in [graduate school] it's more so like I'm just by myself. And I go to school, and I do my work, and I teach. And then I go home. And then I repeat every day. So, I think another big challenge, would be that lack of community. I think that community piece is really, really important.

For Carlos like many Latinx FGCS, having a community strengthened him by providing a network which he could depend on for guidance as he discussed how he benefitted from the advice provided by older students on study habits, where to seek help or engaging with student clubs. Having a community also encouraged him to persist through his college experience. He most especially recognizes the benefit of community to his success when he acknowledges the isolation he feels while pursuing graduate studies due to him lacking community.

Victoria a junior, transferred to the university right before and during the COVID-19 pandemic and had struggles finding community. She described receiving support from a financial aid counselor at Valley University who provided her with information on various campus resources such as the Advising office. But because she was not able to be

on campus due to COVID, she tried to attend some campus clubs online. She describes her experience with one of the clubs,

> I went to one meeting for like the LGBT community, but I don't think.. I was just like iffy about it. I didn't know if I wanted to continue going and stuff because I want to be a part of like I want to be involved in that kind of stuff, but I think it was just too overwhelming for me

In spite of this though, she would have liked to have received more support from multicultural programs and similar initiatives, "I would want to be more involved in like the multicultural programs and stuff like that, and just more support from that, I guess." For Latinx FGCS, community provides them with a sense of support and connects them with a network of individuals with shared aspects of their identity who they can relate to and who help them feel understood. The section that follows discusses the various ways in which the Latinx FGCS in this study built community.

Building Community

As mentioned above, community for Latinx FGCS contributes to this population feeling supported. This is because they are surrounded by other students with similar backgrounds and experiences. It is therefore pertinent to understand how Latinx FGCS build community.

Participants described building their community in a variety of ways; through friendships and mentoring relationships that existed in high school, elder siblings, with classmates in particular classes in college, engagement with student support programs and involvement with campus clubs. For Gael, who participated in the Upward Bound program in high school, the friendships he built through this program continued when he

went to college. He also joined a multicultural fraternity founded by Latinos on campus and built a community of friends and mentors. Comparably, Luna had a high school friend who is not Latinx going to the same college with whom she continued her friendship:

> So, I had a friend who was also going to Valley University with me so. I would follow her lead if there was something that she got that also applied to me, then I would talk with her about how we can figure out the situation you know we talked about like applying for housing, starting new student week, and then also questions about like who I'm supposed to talk to about financial aid questions, and so my friend, was one of the support systems.

Pablo also had high school friendships all with Latinx students that continued into college and expressed appreciation for having a strong friendship base prior to college,

> I definitely...had a support group going into Valley University because I had friends that we had just graduated high school with. So that was nice having that solid group of friends who were already there.

Another group of students built their community through the support of siblings who had gone ahead of them. Gael was a high school student when his sister was in college. He notes that:

> My sister Erica, she already had the connections here at Valley University. She wanted me to come to Valley University it was close by you know, my parents were like, "Oh it's 15 minutes away, perfect". I came here, and once I came here; I didn't know anyone. But everyone knew who I was because I was Erica's little brother.

Luis also had a sister who was already in college and expresses a similar sentiment:

> My sister who was in college, I think they were a good mentor and role model for me that I was able to look for guidance from and because she was already in college three years ahead of me. And I was introduced to her peers. I had a good group of folks there my first year at Valley University [that] I was you know walking alongside with, knowing who and why and how you do things and what are the ins and outs etc

61

Paula also credits her sister for helping her build community acknowledging that "if I would have never asked for help, or never had my sister show me around or told me like well look, this is Luisa or this is Erica, I think I would have never created that support system. I think I would have never like I said, I would have never asked for help, I would have never known about how great the Multicultural Student Services is."

Other ways student reported building their community include through their classes.

Diana explained:

> Most of my connections, I made through my favorite classes, because I would just be a little bit more, you know excited about the topic and stuff like that... but through classes definitely I feel like because, like I mentioned, I didn't really participate in events, those social events in school so the way I would make connections, is through classes.

Likewise, Luna reported building community through her classes:

> yeah so I had my friends within the classes and connecting with the advisors as well. I think those were and then I mean I would meet with the Faculty like during office hours, if I have questions or you know get feedback on assignments I think, mostly when I was taking math classes, I would check in with them to get clarification on how to solve the problems so yeah I think those were some of the ways that I tried to connect with the professors.

Classes provide these students the opportunity to build connections not only with other students, but with advisors and faculty who could help support them on their college journey. Other students credit their engagement with student support programs for helping them build community. Luis describes his experience:

> I had a group of support systems that I was able to connect with once I found out who they were, so that included again TRIO, participating in the Summer Bridge program, specifically that was critical for me when I think back because it really allowed for me to foster and build a community with other peers, who were just like me, and we all were able to learn the different functions and the resources that we had on campus.

Similarly, Laura relayed that:

> I made friends like within the MSS program so I met a lot of people there and then also in the TRIO Program. Before I started my freshman year, I remember, we were able to stay, TRIO had a Program. I don't remember what it was called. So, I was able to stay at Valley University for like a week before everyone came to school. I met like a lot of people. Some of the mentors became my friends and the advisors, you know, so we got pretty close and then yeah I would say through TRIO and MSS.......in the Summer Bridge I had mentors there and they were college students as well, they were like a year or two or three years older than me. They were really kind and always offered you know their support. So, I would like ask questions about school and they were able to tell me as well, like what teachers what professors, you know I should take or what classes I needed or what class I can substitute or double dip or whatever the case may be.

For Pedro,

> I got to be in TRIO and the Summer Bridge program. I think, actually, let me take a step back right there, I think, [that] was what solidified everything for me because like going to college, I was nervous. I wasn't sure what to expect, I wasn't sure if I'd be able to make friends and like I don't know, I was afraid. But going into Summer Bridge, it was a boost of confidence because right there, I made a lot of friends already, and they were a lot of friends who are going through similar experiences as myself with similar backgrounds. So, I think, I don't think anyone was intentionally trying to support me, but I think just by being my friend and going through the same experiences with me, you know along my side was supportive in itself, because I knew I wasn't alone. So that program you know built community, for me, and then I had all those connections of people to socialize with but also to lean on and work with if I needed it.

Carlos also credits his involvement with two support programs in helping him build community:

> I would say ... those things really helped me find like-minded students that were in the same position, that were also like first generation, came from similar backgrounds, that I feel like I could relate to, and build community with.

Interestingly Manuel acknowledged getting connected to a support program through his on campus job:

> Through my student employment at the university center I was able to meet people who ran some of those programs [support programs] and they were able to again point me in the right direction.

A final way students reported building their community was through their involvement in campus clubs. Pedro discusses how he got involved with a student club:

> Early on, I was able to get connected with like the Multicultural Student Union (MSU) and MECHA. I did MECHA only one year, but that helped me build a lot of connections with other Latino students that were at the College.

Comparably, Luis got involved with a club prior to commencing college "right away, I got involved with like MSU. I wasn't even a student yet, but I was already involved in the exec board and already planning events for new students, I didn't even know what that looked like you know." While these clubs have varied missions, nearly all study participants acknowledged being part of or indicated interest in clubs with a multicultural or Latinx focus. Luna describes her interest:

> Like I consider myself an introverted person, and so I was very much more like wanting to you know take my classes and, you know, do my homework and hang out in my room. But with my friends like they're trying to push me like okay like let's join these clubs like let's, you know, do different activities that the school has to offer so You know I attended like the Multicultural Student Union clubs and so from there, I also had other students that identified as Latinas that I can connect with

This speaks to the need that several students and institutional agents identified which is the creation of a dedicated space that honors, appreciates and celebrates Latinx culture, thus further encouraging a sense of belonging for the Latinx FGCS population. This concept of a dedicated space is further explored in the section below.

Dedicated Space

Students, alumni, and program administrators discussed the concept of space in a variety of ways. Mateo, a program administrator, interpreted the concept of space as a physical building and describes this space as a:

64

a center where you know they [Latinx FGCS] can see cultural representation of their background, whether it's language, whether it's art..... Some place they feel comfortable they can go and just hang out and make those connections. I mean we don't really have that for them [Latinx FGCS], you know we don't really have a specific space, I mean there's places in the multicultural center, but I think especially making this some kind of space where we're studying, just talking, whatever it may be, you know I see visions like you know, a food area .... a kitchen, that little place where I can go and kind of get my home away from home where it's open to everyone, but again specific and maybe designed for Latinx first generation students.

Mateo's description speaks to the need to have spaces that meet a variety of needs for the Latinx FGCS community. One of those needs is a place where the Latinx FGCS population feels represented thus encouraging a sense of belonging. This is especially important since Latinx FGCS as a result of their Latinx identity are often described in the literature in deficit terms with more of a focus on their struggles and less on their strengths. Having a space that encourages cultural representation will help Latinx FGCS feel welcome on the campus.

Like Mateo, Santiago, also a program administrator, discusses the need for a similar space:

it was a process to be able to advocate for a good CAMP resource Center space that we can insulate with computers, that we can insulate with offices, study spaces, places for students to lounge and hang out, to talk and study....so am really proud of that service. Because it makes a difference, that students can come into a space and see their friends, hang out, and they can come walk into my office if they have any questions, they can come in between classes and rest, they can grab a snack.

Both Mateo and Santiago recognize the need for a space where Latinx FGCS can go to feel a sense of belonging as well as relax with friends in between classes. Carlos recognized this need as he explained:

I think a lot of first-generation students, just need to like catch a breath. You know like they just need to like relax. And being able to provide spaces, where students can just be themselves, and not worry about the way they are speaking, and how they're going to come off, if they say something

Space for Carlos provides a place to not only relax but also be authentic. Additionally, from Mateo and Santiago's excerpts, having a space for Latinx FGCS also provides them a place to study. Students can take advantage of such a space to get homework completed prior to going home where there are often competing home demands. Likewise, by providing a space where Latinx FGCS can get a snack recognizes that some students are food insecure and such snacks help provide a mini meal to students struggling to afford food. In my experience with Multicultural Student Services (MSS), we sometimes provided fruits, snacks, and culturally familiar meals for students most especially during the final exam period when students were often low on their housing meal plan balance, or generally stretched thin with personal finances.

For Ariana, engaging with MSS provided her with the opportunity to learn from other Latinx FGCS as well as receive support from staff at MSS. She discusses her experience of utilizing the space provided by MSS:

A lot of my learning came from just hanging out with the students that hung out there [MSS]...So implicitly the office is there to support, but a lot of support just comes from them existing, not even intentional, a lot of it is just like built into the way the office operates

When I probed further about this concept of space she shared:

I think space is important, like let's say it was just your office and Luisa's office [Director's office] right, I don't think that would have been as effective, I think it would have been good for students to feel connected, but as soon as they were done meeting with you, they would probably leave right. But the way that the office, the space is, I think that's what makes it what it is. Honestly, the fact that students can kind of hang out in the lobby, the fact that you all employ student employees, that there's a student group that's advised under the office, I think that

66

brings in a lot of students and almost becomes this like lively space where people are getting support but they're also doing things that benefit them as a college student...I think the way MSS is structured, I think it's really effective and I don't even think that was the intent I think it's just like hey I think we need space, but I think if it was just like an office...I don't think it would be as effective.

Ariana describes how MSS was able to create a space for Latinx FGCS by hiring student workers, providing a place to hang out, as well as advising a student club. In doing so, MSS was able to create a space for Latinx FGCS to feel connected ultimately helping them build community.

A final benefit hinted at for having a dedicated space for Latinx FGCS is the opportunity to reconnect with their roots. Most Latinx FGCS pass through the K-12 system where majority of the education focuses on assimilation principles and less on embracing their cultural heritage. Fraga and Segura (2006) note that "the origin of the public school system in the U.S. was related to a conscious attempt at 'Americanizing' immigrant children" (p.284). As such, the beliefs and values passed on to students in the American education system tend to reflect that of the dominant class. Despite this, Latinx FGCS when they arrive at college according to Luisa are put on a platform where they are expected to speak knowledgeably about their cultural heritage. She stated:

> Latino students come into Valley University you know, obviously we select them for something like the diversity commitment scholarship and there's this assumption that they already have this awareness and this knowledge of their own culture and who they are, where they came from and they just went K-12 through a system that's very built to be like we're all the same........and so they've been through you know 12 years of school of trying to assimilate for lack of a better word. And then they get to college, and they're put on this stage to represent their culture and represent who they are, and sometimes they haven't quite figured that out yet.

Sebastian another program administrator expressed a similar sentiment when he shared:

You know a lot of students will end up reconnecting strongly with their community and with their roots. You know you have some students that grew up in predominantly White communities and you know, never had the time, the opportunity to celebrate the community [Latinx community] and so when they come to be part of our cohort, they get to reconnect with that or get to even learn about it for the first time. You know, we have some students that grew up heavily around their community [Latinx community] and so it's just familiar and it's nice and some who were completely denied that opportunity, you know, whether it be you know growing up half or something you know biracial background or something and perhaps living with a parent that you know doesn't share the same racial backgrounds as them

These responses provide insight into how having such a dedicated space provides Latinx FGCS the opportunity to reflect on their heritage while developing their identity. Luisa shared further

And so, another piece that I feel like we're able to help support is their development and their own self-identity and their awareness of their future and their history. And whether that be through sometimes class, but not always, sometimes interaction with other students, sometimes in the programming through some learning. Sometimes it's conferences or events that that we attend, not only put on but all that piece of self-discovery is the other piece that I think is the growth, I see for students over that four years.

Echoing a similar support, Sebastian shared that "I'm not here to judge you on how authentic of a Latin mix you are, but really just to give you the space to be you and not let anybody necessary to find that for you."

Finding a dedicated space met a variety of needs for the participants in this study which include: feeling represented, encouraging a sense of belonging, providing a study space, a place to relax and be their authentic self, in addition to getting their nutritional needs met. It is interesting to note that while administrators specifically discussed a dedicated space for Latinx students, a significant number of study participants discussed being around students with "similar backgrounds". Overall, students appreciated taking

advantage of a space where there are other Latinx and first-generation college students.

Moreover, such a space provides an opportunity to develop their identity as they reflect

on their Latinx cultural heritage. In developing their identity, Latinx FGCS are

encouraged to feel like they matter and become invested in moving their community

forward. The following section discusses this further.

Give back to the Community

The desire to give back to their community was a common thread amongst

participants in this study. Recognizing the sacrifices made by their parents and

community, Latinx FGCS were committed to not only succeeding individually, but also

helping others. Sarah a program administrator commented,

> Their parents, a lot of their parents came here from other countries, and they [the students] are cognizant of the sacrifices and the difficulties, and they often say you know, my parents did this and I really want to achieve XYZ, not only for myself, but to be able to give back to my parents and to my community.

Mateo, also a program administrator, describes the collectivist attitude Latinx FGCS have

that encourages them to look out not only for their immediate family, but also for their

classmates. He stated:

> Their sincere motivation is to make their family happy, to make their family proud, to bring up the whole family, again the whole entire family, the extended family can make a change. They have that you know, my parents worked hard to get me here, maybe they're sacrificing, a sibling sacrificing. So that collectivist attitude we're all in this together, my parents sent me to get it [college degree], but I'm going to give back. I'm going to do well in college because I want to be able to give back, whether it's to buy them a house or just have them see me walking across stage...So no matter what they do, they're willing to help their fellow students, just as they would, a family member as a student, you know if it's a sibling or aunt or an uncle, they're real collectivist, yes, I want to be on Honor Roll, I want to get scholarships, but I want to make sure my fellow classmate they are doing well as well.

Both Sarah and Mateo's responses reiterate a pattern discussed earlier about the interconnectedness inherent in Latinx communities which motivates Latinx FGCS to give back to their community. The concern is not just for their well-being, but for that of their family and overall community. Study participants identified two main ways in which they gave back: 1. by sustaining the educational pipeline in their families and community, and by 2. program administrators being a support system for Latinx FGCS goals.

Sustaining the Educational Pipeline

Some participants spoke about giving back by sustaining the educational pipeline in their families and community. Santiago, a program administrator, explained:

> When a student goes through our program and they succeed in their first year, move on to graduate, a huge outcome is their family is changing. Their family is getting an education, it's going to open up more doors, a great career and perhaps what was once a low-income family, has a chance for that family to gradually increase its own resources, as far as you know, income and lifestyle and you know the type of life that they live through education. So, it's really neat to see even parents, and their confidence grow, by seeing you know their own sons and daughters go to college. What's even cooler is when we see a whole family come through school. We have students, we have families who have had three siblings right, the sister went, the brother and a sister went, so the whole family is now coming to college which is kind of cool.

Santiago is explaining the impact of education for Latinx FGCS and their families. The pursuit of a college degree not only benefits the Latinx FGCS but their families as well, as it increases their opportunity to realize goals that ultimately improve their social standing. Pablo had older siblings who didn't go to college, so it was important to his parents that he set an example for his younger sister. He shared:

> She (mom) was pretty adamant about me going to school because she didn't want me to   not go to school. My two older siblings haven't gone so she wanted me to set the example for my younger sister. You know that we can do it, and for my

other siblings that we can do it. I think my dad had always told me when I was growing up, because I used to work in the fields and stuff in the Summer and he always told me, hey if you don't want to be out here, you have to go to school, and you have to you know get an education. Otherwise, you're going to be out here with me, working in the summer in the heat, in the rain and the seasons and stuff. So that was really motivating for me, because I know how hard it was to work those jobs and how hard it was to earn $1 without an education and stuff like that, so I think my parents did a really good job of showing me, you know not getting an education, how limited, you are with options

Pablo shared further that he was happy to be able to help his younger sister on her

journey to attaining a college degree,

Because I know going through firsthand, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do and I'm okay with that, because now, I can help my sister who's younger, kind of guide her and tell her, motivate her that you know it's okay, that you have resources and that's okay with me and that I went through the process first and was kind of lost for a second but it's okay, because it makes me feel better that I can help her in her process so.

Similarly, Pilar described how her parents used their experience to motivate her and her

siblings to pursue higher education diligently:

My dad, he really wanted us to......he always talked about like the importance of education, they did a lot of farm work during ...when we were little and so what I remember you know seeing is, my dad always coming home really tired or my mom   coming home really tired from being at a nursery all day because of the plants, and you know how hot it was. And so my dad would always tell us like you know, we came here for you all, and so we want you to have a better life and a better future and we don't want you to have this type of work so really my parents sort of shaped you know, like the value of education and the value of school.

Due to this, Pilar became invested in giving back to other students. She commented:

My dreams were to make a difference specifically wanted to make a difference in students' lives. I've always been very interested in helping people but, as I was figuring out what I wanted to do. It always was around like working with students, so I wanted to make a difference You know in students' lives. I wanted to be a successful professional...... also give back to the community, so that that was what I envisioned.... so I continue to participate and be engaged in the conversation in terms of like student success and making things better.

Program Administrators as a Support System

Another way of giving back identified was program administrators being a support system for Latinx FGCS so they could attain their higher education goals. Six out of the seven program administrators interviewed in this study identified as being Latinx and first generation. The last administrator was first generation but not Latinx. Participants considered the assistance they received from program administrators. Pilar an alum discusses her experience,

> I remember like not knowing a lot about FAFSA, my parents didn't know about FAFSA and we don't really speak English with my parents and so that's another layer, the language, and so I remember like feeling really overwhelmed with the FAFSA. And so I remember my cousin like well, I know you can talk to Luisa, back then Luisa's position was a little bit different and she drove all the way to [my] high school to help me fill out the FAFSA.

Pilar describes Luisa going out of her way to ensure that she was supported in the college application process especially since she understood the barriers associated with being a Latinx FGCS being a first-generation Latina herself. Another alum Salvador who was also assisted by Luisa describes a similar support he received from her,

> From the very beginning, Luisa, I mean, she essentially held my hand, I think that she understood people like myself and again, you know bridging that gap she helped me to look for an apartment. You know even simple little things like that will discourage someone because it's completely unknown to you. She helped me to navigate you know my first few months at Valley University....And, of course, you know throughout the rest of my time there as I needed her.

Luisa, like other program administrators who identified as Latinx and first generation, not only took extra steps to assist Latinx FGCS, but in so doing inspired them to understand that they were not alone in the process. This was important because they indicated that though their parents were generally supportive of their educational aspirations, they were

not able to provide specific support with regards to the college process. Salvador continued,

> You know traditional students typically you see their parents, they get into college right, transition them, you know you're going to need a microwave, you're going to need this and that, and you know here comes the family van or SUV, to take the student, to move them into the dorms or whatever. That's not an experience I had. I had to figure it out, on my own, you know from the beginning. I got a small studio. So, you know I feel like sometimes again those things that are lacking, something has to fill that space. You know, so people like Luisa for instance, from the very beginning, helping me to find an apartment I mean she was taking the place of my parents, during that time and checking on me to see how things were going. Again, things that traditional parents will do, or a family or that kind of support system, I didn't have that, so Luisa was that support system.

Salvador recognizes the importance of program administrators like Luisa filling the gap and helping facilitate success for Latinx FGCS. Laura also shared a comparable appreciation for the Latinx and first-generation program administrator who supported her. She stated:

> I would say Arturo, he helped me, he was my advisor for the first three years, so I would always go to him for questions and ask him about classes. Not just about classes, but also about life. Because I would always go to him, he would always give me advice and whatever I needed, he was always there for me and responded to my questions because he also went to college and everything, he knows what it's like you know, being a student because he, I think he had recently gotten his masters and also started at Valley University that same year, that I started. He started as an advisor and I started as a student, so I think we just connected that way.... he just always knew how to answer my questions or just give me advice with anything. He is also first gen so that's another reason that we connected, because you know, we had a lot in common.

Laura was able to connect with her Advisor due to him being a first-generation college student and I suspect because he was also Latinx. She also built a relationship with him beyond academics as she was able to seek guidance from him about other life concerns. Rocio another student participant discusses the support she received from her advisors,

So, I'm in a few programs [support programs] here... [and] under those two programs, we get assigned an advisor and they are, both my advisors are first generation, also Latinas. I was able to connect with them in that sense and they've also been able to tell me the pros and the cons of like starting classes and what to do in college what not to do in college, so they definitely provided like a good framework for me to follow.

Some program administrators from the study also described their experience being first generation college students and their motivation for supporting the Latinx FGCS population. Santiago stated,

I enjoy being able to, as I mentioned before, not just play a role, but also be a go-to for that person. It's hard, I've experienced it, ... when you go to college, you have so much. your clouded right, you don't know where to start, you don't know who to go to, there's a lot of anxiety, especially if you are a trailblazer in your family like I was,..... if you are truly leaving your family to another place, it can be even more of a responsibility to get the right support, so I appreciate having an opportunity to support students, because I have been there before.

For Santiago supporting Latinx FGCS is important to him because he understands the anxiety that comes with being a trailblazer as a result of being the first in the family to go to college. Mateo was interested in being a role model and normalizing the challenges students experienced, thereby encouraging them,

We're fortunate over half our staff are bilingual. Most of us are first generation, vast majority, so being able to share, we share a lot of our experiences and our struggles and successes in college with them so they see that they're not alone. So, kind of giving them that role model example that hey it wasn't easy for anyone so you're not alone, so we do quite a bit of that.

The support provided by program administrators helped to validate and encourage Latinx FGCS especially since several of the program administrators had similar experiences due to being a first-generation college student themselves.

In summary, community provided participants in this study with the opportunity to pursue their educational aspirations. Study participants responses was replete with the

reoccurring theme of community providing them encouragement, and a support system to lean on as they journeyed through college. Their responses also support the idea of having a community of co-ethnics who they can be authentic with and who truly understand their experiences- this includes Latinx FGCS and administrators with Latinx backgrounds. They also appreciated having a dedicated space to celebrate and honor their Latinx roots. The theoretical framework of Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) helps highlight how community is important better than the more individualistic notion of cultural and social capital. CCW, considers the Latinx FGCS population's strengths, celebrates, and honors it. CCW also recognizes the interconnectedness in the Latinx culture which helped study participants stay connected and in alignment with their cultural values. Participants also identified specific dominant cultural and social capital building supports that helped them succeed as they persisted to graduation. These will be discussed in the next section.

Dominant Cultural and Social Capital Building Supports

> Those 50 students would automatically be enrolled in our program where they get
> a designated advisor and are also required to take a class for their first year if they
> were incoming freshmen. That class was designed to be a student success class, a
> support class, with a goal to really be able to see the students at least once a week,
> check in with them, have some conversations about what it meant to be a diverse
> student on campus. And also have an opportunity to connect with them about the
> college process, you know dropping dates, any information about what was going
> to happen when they needed to register, you know. They should have, or do you
> see their financial aid, all those things that they don't know to expect
>
> (Luisa, program administrator)

The above excerpt by Luisa a program administrator, describes some components

of a support program for FGCS at Valley University. During my time as an Advisor with

Multicultural Student Services (MSS) at Valley University, I worked with students in a

variety of ways to socialize them to college level expectations. In essence, I provided

them with dominant cultural capital or knowledge and skills that would be highly

valuable throughout their college experience. The first weeks of the Fall term were

dedicated to attending new student orientation week events. The specific purpose being to

connect with MSS students who were awarded scholarships, in addition to promoting

MSS's services to first year students, particularly those who identified as a first-

generation college student (FGCS) and an ethnic/racial minority. In one specific situation

a Latino FGCS who had been at one of our recruitment sessions stopped by my office as

he wanted to ensure he was taking the right classes. After helping him with his schedule,

I was also able to inform him about MSS's resources to ease his transition from high

school into college, for example MSS's peer mentoring program. These and similar

76

actions illustrate the ways study participants were provided with cultural and social capital to help them transition into college life and give them an opportunity to succeed.

This section will discuss programs and programmatic components that study participants identified that aided their success as they journeyed through college. For some students, these supports/programs commenced prior to college and often inspired the pursuit of their higher education goals. For others, they became acquainted with these supports/programs after they were admitted to college. The table below identifies the different programs during high school and in college, study participants identified that provided them with knowledge to succeed in college.

Table 4.1: Support Programs

Program Name	High School	College	Benefits	Program Participants
Adelante Chicas	X		Campus tours, college knowledge, Advisor support, peer support	Olivia
ASPIRE	X		Mentoring, college knowledge	Diana
AVID	X		Campus tours, college knowledge	Rocio
Bilingual Teacher Scholars (BTS)		X	Advising, mentoring, peer support, scholarship	Olivia
CAMP		X	Advising, college knowledge, tutoring, college success classes, Family focused events, scholarships	None of my sample used this program but an Administrator discussed it
College Possible	X		College knowledge, advising, coaching, ACT/SAT prep support	Rocio
Generation College	X		College knowledge, care packages while in college	Luis
Greater Than	X		Campus tours, college knowledge, college representatives	Rocio
International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program	X	X	College credit, rigorous classes, workshops on applying for college	Olivia, Paula
Multicultural Student Services (MSS)		X	Scholarships, college knowledge, advising, mentoring, peer support, identity development, student success class, family focused events	Paula, Carlos, Pedro, Salvador, Luis, Gael, Pilar, Rocio, Olivia
Summer Bridge		X	College knowledge, mentoring, one week campus stay	Gael, Laura, Pedro, Luis, Luna
TRIO		X	College knowledge, student success classes, scholarships, advising, book rental	Gael, Pedro, Luis, Luna, Laura, Pablo, Pilar, Carlos, Rocio, Salvador, Olivia
Upward Bound (UB) Program	X		Academic preparation, college knowledge, peer support, campus tours,	Carlos, Gael

While several of these programs overlapped because they had the main focus of providing students with college knowledge or cultural capital, and social capital, they complemented themselves. For example, both TRIO and MSS provided program participants with individual advising and student success classes. However, TRIO provided additional supports such as textbook and equipment rentals. MSS on the other hand provided the MS peer mentoring program and access to the MSU student club. Besides, during my time at Valley University, students also appreciated their involvement in both programs and often remarked that it was beneficial to them to receive the same information from both programs as this convinced them of its value. The next sections discuss these supports more indepthly.

Supports prior to College

One of the first supports two participants- Paula and Olivia, identified as helping them prepare for the transition to college was their enrollment in the International Baccalaureate or IB diploma program, an internationally recognized program in secondary schools that prepares students for postsecondary education (Hill 2012). The 2-year program commences in the 11th grade and engages students in rigorous academic enrichment experiences, and they can also earn college credit. Olivia discussed her high school experience and the IB program:

> I did like a lot of IB classes during the end of my junior, senior year when we can do that. So it was definitely like hard I feel, because it was like rigorous classes, I had to do, and like also take exams and everything. But, at the beginning of high school like I did struggle, a bit just because everything was so new and it was kind of like middle school is more like am preparing you, and then high school I suppose that kind of hits you a little bit I think, and so I had a hard time. I think, freshman year I was more involved in like sports, clubs and I was hanging out

with my friends.... and then as high school went on I focused more on like school and took a lot of IB classes.

She shared further:

I took IB classes and those classes kind of, I think did prepare me a lot for college. Just because those classes gave me a good amount of work [like] the college classes would give me, and in a way, college is kind of more easier than those classes, not that easy, but like a bit maybe because I was taking 8 classes a day, during that time. In college I am taking four or five [classes] every semester. But they taught me a lot about college, how to write adequate essays and also I took a lot of exams, IB exams and I passed, like most, I think all of them, and they gave me college credit. So, I got a lot of like college credit from those exams, and it helped me with college, so I don't have to take some classes here [at the university].

It is interesting to note Olivia's evolution as she discussed her struggles during the beginning of high school to a more focused interest in the IB program. She also conveys her appreciation for how the IB diploma program prepared her to succeed in college. This was by challenging her with a good amount of workload such that in comparing her college classes to the classes in the IB diploma program, she acknowledges that college is a bit easier.

For Paula, she recognizes that her IB experience provided workshops to help her with applying for college. She stated "I was able to test for IB where even though like in some of the classes, I didn't do good, as in the test, but the classes, I did good. And then they did have workshops for seniors so they could be helped with applying for college and all that, I think it did help a lot". These students lauded the IB program as it influenced their post-secondary education goals and aided their preparation to succeed in college.

Students also identified national academic programs that contributed to their preparation for transition and success on their higher education journeys. One of such programs is the Upward Bound (UB). The UB program, is a federally funded program designed to provide intensive academic instruction to high school students from underserved backgrounds (Gandara and Contreras 2009). Pedro an alum describes his high school experience:

> I was you know I said this before I was following all the steps, I was being told to do. Getting like good grades, and all that kind of stuff but all the actual processes that get you into college I didn't know any of that and my high school was doing an awful job with that. I remember my senior year so many of us who didn't have parents who like could guide us through it [college application process] , were just like asking each other, like trying to teach each other what we knew, about you know, like oh this thing is due next Friday like make sure you apply for that one, do this by then, you have to get a recommendation for this, you know we were teaching each other, It didn't seem like the school was really guiding us on that.

Even though Pedro describes himself as a good student, he admits that he didn't know what he needed to do to apply for college. His high school also didn't provide him with this information. He shares further how his involvement with the UB program changed this:

> I knew very little about scholarships, I knew very little about timelines for admissions, and FAFSA, and SATs and all that kind of stuff. It's like minimal like I would have missed all of that, if it hadn't been for Upward Bound, so I got lucky. But it wasn't because of my high school, it was because of the Upward Bound program that was in my community that happened to be serving my high school and I learned about it through a friend who was in the program and she was the one who was like "Oh, you need to you know, apply for this program and get into it, because they help you so much", and it was actually because of them that I think I made it, you know I made it through.

Pedro learned about the UB program through his friend and credits the UB program at his high school for providing him with the needed information to apply to college. Like

Pedro, Gael also credits the UB program for his ability to apply and enroll in college. He

stated:

> In high school, it was because of the upward bound program that really pushed me to go to college. In the upward bound program, we did tours, we went to different colleges...we did different workshops on scholarships, on FAFSA and everything. And it just really got the ball rolling and me to be able to apply to colleges, like I was just applying to colleges, not even knowing if I was going to get accepted or not. And I got accepted to quite a few colleges and that was just pretty eye opening to me, you know, I was like dang like I'm qualified and I'm able to take these avenues, and these paths.

Gael identifies various components of the UB program which helped him set things in

motion to apply to college. His eventual acceptance to various colleges made him feel

capable of pursuing a college education.

Pablo unlike Pedro and Gael was not part of the UB program or any other

specially designed academic enrichment programs during high school. He commented on

his high school experience,

> I think I wasn't really prepared. I think my high school kind of didn't do a very good job of preparing us for you know post high school opportunities. I know that there was a program in school that was Upward Bound and that I know all my friends were a part of, and I regret not being in that program because I know that they had a better understanding of what they were going into [college]. I chose to work in the Summer and do all that stuff to get money to be able to buy myself school supplies and clothes for school and stuff, but I definitely think that I would have benefited from going to Upward Bound, instead of being able to buy those things, because I definitely struggled first year and even second year going into it [college] because I wasn't sure what resources we had available and scholarships and all that stuff, financial aid. So, I definitely would have been better off just going to Upward Bound and not working in the summer.

Pablo due to having friends in the UB program and recognizing its benefits wished he

had elected to be a part of it instead of working over the summer. He identifies a benefit

of the UB Program as his friends being more aware of what they were getting into when

going to college. Basically, he identifies the cultural capital his friends received from

their engagement with the UB program Pablo also noted that participation in the UB

program may have enabled him avoid some of the struggles he experienced in the first

two years of college.

Rocio a Senior participated in AVID which stands for Advancement Via

Individual Determination and is a non-profit organization that aims to improve college

access for traditionally underrepresented students (AVID 2021); College Possible which

is a nonprofit college access and success program that targets low-income and high

school students (College Possible 2021); and Greater Than another local nonprofit

organization that "empowers students from poverty impacted communities to thrive in

school, college and career" (Greater Than 2021). In discussing her high school

experience and involvement with AVID and College Possible, Rocio stated:

> My high school experience was cool... I was in this program called AVID. I don't
> know if you're familiar with it, since like seventh grade or sixth Grade one of
> those years. And they always supported the idea of going to college and applying
> for scholarships, going to visit colleges to gain the sense of what college life is
> like. And I was in a program called College Possible so just adding more to the
> idea of college is possible and anyone is able to attain a higher education. So, my
> experience with high school was great because I felt like, although I didn't feel too
> prepared to go into college or university, I feel like I had the foundation of what
> college was going to be like and I felt like I was just a little bit more prepared than
> other students who weren't taking, for example AVID or College possible as I was

Rocio's involvement with AVID and College Possible served as a catalyst for preparing

her to be successful in college. She also shared about her experience with the Greater

Than program:

> I believe also my third grade elementary got adopted by a program called I Have a
> Dream which this program then later became Greater Than...and what this
> program does is it provides a vision to students as early as elementary school to
> pursue higher education to show them that it is possible, that anyone can go into
> higher education and go to college. So the way that they like provided for me was
> that we visited colleges, like, for example, we went to Linfield and we stayed the

night there and we got to experience what a college class was like and the college environment so that was very fulfilling because, as a young, you know as a young kid you're like wow like I see myself in this position, I see myself going to college and it was just very fulfilling to do that. And we also had, like many of the College reps come to our school and give presentations. So that was very, very nice and like from that all the families and the teachers, the administrators were very supportive of all the students and just making it very clear that everyone has the opportunity to attend higher education.

Rocio's response illustrates the specific way the Greater Than program catered to her pursuit of her higher education goals. This was by helping with college visits and connecting her with a variety of college representatives ultimately helping her feel supported and seeing college as a possibility. The Greater Than program also helped to increase Rocio's social capital as it connected her with her mentor who was a Valley University alum. She explained about the impact of this relationship:

It has really been very nice to be part of that community [Greater Than] and, like their support has been very appreciated. And so, one of my mentors actually from Greater Than was an alum from Valley University and because they attended Valley University they knew like basically how to work the system here. So, they were able to tell me hey do this and that yeah so it was mainly my mentor, who was the one that was able to tell me what to do.

Similarly, Diana was involved with the ASPIRE program which is a mentoring program, and it aims to "help students access education and training beyond high school". The program matches trained and supportive adult volunteer mentors with middle and high school students to develop a plan to help them meet their future career and education goal". (OSAC 2021). Diana benefitted from this program because her ASPIRE mentor referred her to the DREAM US scholarship- a full ride scholarship program for DACA identified students, which provided her the opportunity to attend college. Furthermore,

her mentor provided her with cultural capital and thus helped her build college

knowledge. She offered,

> You know I'm a first-Generation Student, so my mom was basically clueless on the education system, let alone like college. So she does not know anything, like zero about enrollment, about what a bachelor's degree means what an associate's means, she only know like the doctors, like you know you're a doctor or your job title, but they don't know what everything else means...... so having that mentor helped me get enrolled into college and she even explained to me what a bachelor's is, what a master's is and I'm like oh like you know I just thought you went to college and you got the title of a doctor, you got the title of you know, a police officer that's it (chuckles) so that's kind of what I got from it [the ASPIRE program], that was her focus.

For Olivia, Adelante Chicas provided a similar support. Adelante Chicas is a youth

program that partners with local public schools to empower Latina girls in the

development of their leadership potential. Adelante Chicas also encourages the pursuit of

academic excellence paving the way for high school graduation and eventual college

enrollment (Adelante Mujeres 2021). Olivia stated:

> I think what really helped was like I was in a club that was called, Adelante
Chicas
> and so that was in my school, like a lot of my friends also went to that club, and so we will always go to the college campuses like tours and we will talk about like the FAFSA or ORSA or like maybe scholarships and I was really close with also the Advisors for that club, so like I would talk to them like about my worries, or like what kind of scholarships are there for me. So like.....I will go to the club and they will help me with those type of things. And also with my friends like we will like fill out applications together or scholarships together that we both qualify for and maybe we can get in and so those type of events helped me go to college

> The Adelante Chicas program like some of the already mentioned programs

provided Olivia with college knowledge. Additionally, she found support from advisors

and peers in the program who helped put her on the path to college.

> Finally, Luis discusses the support he received from Generation College, a club at

his high school that provides historically underrepresented individuals information on

post-secondary education opportunities. This club was important to Luis due to him being

a first generation college student. He shared,

> Well my mom and my dad were very supportive, they just didn't know what to do.
> Like I think that's very common they want you to go, but they didn't know the
> language, this is also in 2009, so they weren't familiar with the process, they didn't
> understand the whole FAFSA, how do you apply who do you talk to, etc, but what
> I did have, though was a college access program essentially it's called First
> Generation College or Generation College. Generation College ....helped me
> with preparing everything for making college a reality.

Like most first generation college students, Luis' parents weren't familiar with the

college terrain. Being a part of the Generation College program provided Luis much

needed support to make his college aspirations a reality. Luis shared further that the

support from the Generation College program continued even after he was enrolled in

college:

> Every term or semester, depending on how they [Generation College] were
> looking at it, [there was] constant communication on how things are going, do
> you have the support that you need in college, if not, do you know who you can
> call to maybe get support. We always also got care packages and they were great
> because it helped, at least for me being five hours away from home, I felt
> homesick often my first couple of years, and so that was a great way for me to
> feel connected, but also like they [Generation College] got my back even though
> they're a long way away, yeah that's the only one that comes to mind. So, before I
> got to Valley University, I would say Generation college helped prep me, by
> giving me an overview of what an institutional structure looks like or usually,
> there are these types of services and resources in academic and student affairs that
> you can reach out to, so they kind of helped me with that overview.

In addition, some study participants also identified institutional agents while they

were in high school who provided them instrumental support in the actualization of their

college aspirations. The next section expands on this.

Institutional Agents in High School

Manuel, Laura, and Pablo identified institutional agents in high school who helped support them in making their college goals a reality. They shared the following:

> I mean, I will say that the biggest support that I received was from my wrestling coach's wife. She did a great job always reminding students that were on the team like hey you're getting close to graduating, have you thought about what you're going to do next? What you want to do? They [wrestling coach and his wife] were actually the ones that explained to me when I received my FAFSA letter like what everything meant. I had no idea what unsubsidized versus subsidize meant ...they were able to break it down for me
>
> (Manuel)

> She's an assistant principal now, but she was my fourth grade teacher. She's always encouraged me to go to college, you know, become a bilingual teacher.....and then her sister as well, she helped me a lot through high school... When I was applying to scholarships, she would revise my scholarships and then you know just support me....I feel like they were a big piece on my journey to becoming a teacher
>
> (Laura)

> My soccer coach in high school would also talk about college and just talk about you know soccer programs, and what I thought about going to school. And he wanted me....to figure out if I wanted to continue to go to school and with the kind of like excuse of playing soccer, like hey if you want to keep playing soccer you have to want to go to school. And so, I feel like that also helped me kind of drive myself to want to go to school, because I still also wanted to continue to play soccer
>
> (Pablo)

These institutional agents provided these study participants support by checking in on them, reviewing their scholarship applications, offering words of encouragement, helping explain their financial aid package and being a welcoming presence overall. In summary, participants engaged with a variety of school and community organizations as well as institutional agents hat provided them with cultural capital and social capital that helped to expand their networks ultimately providing information to help prepare them for their college journeys. The next section discusses college level supports that program

administrators (institutional agents at the college level), Latinx FGCS and alums identified as being instrumental to their success.

Supports During College

Several programmatic components were identified by program administrators and Latinx FGCS students in this study that aided their transition and success. They include advising, scholarships, mentoring (peers and faculty), academic support classes, summer bridge, cohort style arrangements, writing center support and student club involvement. Each of these programmatic components overlapped throughout the discussion and are presented through individual program administrators' responses and student stories.

Program Administrator responses

When I asked program administrators to give examples of supports they provided, they spoke on the benefit of scholarships, advising, mentoring, and cohort group arrangements. Luisa directs a program for FGCS which also has a high proportion of Latinx students. She discusses how her program worked towards filling the gap with regards to students' college knowledge to help them be successful. One way this is done is through advising. She commented,

> You know it started by supporting just the scholarship program, and then we saw that they [Latinx FGCS] needed help you know with advising. Back when I first started at Valley University, we didn't have mandatory advising, and so we had students sort of guiding themselves on what they should take, and when they should take it and reading the catalog and following that. So it is a little bit confusing for our first generation students. Sometimes they took classes, they didn't need or wasted time and money they didn't have and so that's where we started getting into the advising piece and supporting students that way.

Luisa recognized the importance of advising as it helped to ensure students were enrolled for classes, they needed to avoid wasting resources on non-essential classes. She shared further on the benefits of advising,

> You know students are required to see their academic advisor. That didn't exist when we started, but it does now and some people might say, well then, what you're doing is redundant, but it's not for so many reasons. We have some students who you know don't understand what their academic Professor said, but they don't feel comfortable in saying they don't understand, they don't ask the questions that they need to ask. And they'll just nod their head and say okay, and then they leave and then they come meet with us and say okay, this is what they said and I didn't understand, can you break it down for me? Because we've had time to sort of build a relationship, you know we've met them, since they came in [arrived at college], we've done class, we've done programs. And so I think there's a comfort level there that by the time they have that with their academic advisor it may be too late or they were taking things [classes] they don't need.....And some people come after just to clarify what their conversation with their academic advisor was, so that piece, I feel like it is always going to be a strong piece.

An additional component of the program Luisa oversees is mentoring. She notes that the mentoring piece grew out of an increasing need to serve students which her program didn't have the capacity to manage:

> And we can only you know manage so many, and so we created what's called the Multicultural Student (MS) mentor program, and that's a peer mentor program, and we have upperclassmen usually around 30 upperclassmen students who volunteer their time, they apply to be mentors and are selected, but they volunteer their time to be mentors to all the new incoming freshmen and transfers......and part of the idea is to connect them with somebody who's been through the first year process already, who maybe has some tips and tricks on how to be successful, maybe someone to connect with if they haven't already made connections with their class or someone on campus

Sebastian a Program Advisor for a similar program that caters to Latinx FGCS describes his program and its components as follows:

> we offer a first-year retention program, so it's a cohort model. They come in, there's, about 40,45 students that come in each year, and [they] get to meet with me on a regular basis. They get a remission- $3000 for the year, they get a mentor, we do activities with them, we do workshops with them, and so the idea

is to really support this student holistically.......and you know things like that to kind of inspire them and show them like there's more than just your classes, you know what I mean, there's more than just that. We have a Call It Success class and it's taught through a Latinx lens. You know everything that we talk about is kind of in terms of the [Latinx] Community and how their culture kind of reflects those things.

He describes some of the topics covered in the success class using a Latinx Lens:

And so, we talk about time management, for example, and we might talk about how that is in your household, is time management, even a thing. Is it this POC [people of color] time? We will talk about how that affects your lens in terms of how you look at time management. We talk about budgeting, what does that look like if you're coming from a low-income community. How does that manifest?......We talk about identity, we talk about what it means to be to Latinx, what does that mean? What does it mean to be female or male like in the context of your culture? And so those are all things that I think affirm students, but also supports them throughout the year as well.

Sebastian's program like Luisa's includes a scholarship component, Advising, mentoring and a student success class. In addition to this, Sebastian's program offers a cohort model which he describes as being an important component of the program along with mentoring. He noted,

I feel like the mentoring and the cohort model itself are two really strong components. Those are kind of the core of what the program was when it first started. We've added those other components like events and workshops and those type of things, but like really at the core of it was you know, remission to support them financially; a cohort model so they can have a support network of one another to feel like they're not alone on campus and mentors to guide them and help them out, to kind of be a support for them.

Sebastian's response stresses the need to help students stay connected and supported. Further emphasizing this, Isabella another program administrator and a colleague of Sebastian added,

we intentionally make the cohort so some of them are returning students and some of them are new students, so that they can have that communal experience, not just one on one, but as a group, so when they're having conversations, things may come up that they didn't even realize

The need to also help students stay connected was important when they went remote as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Isabella stated,

> When we went remote, what we did was we put our students in cohorts. The cohorts, well it used to be that students worked at the front desk or they would work in a particular Center helping a program or interact with the students that were in that Center. Now since our centers are closed, we have virtual hours, but you know those are only a few hours a week. We put all the students in cohorts....and we have about 15 for each program coordinator, so each program coordinator, then, is responsible for that cohort.

Understanding the need to keep students supported especially with the reduced hours and closures resulted in Isabella's team modifying their operations to keep students and staff connected through the pandemic.

Mateo a program administrator serves as an Assistant Director to a TRIO program and recounted how the program supports students:

> Each student gets a one-on-one advisor that meets with them at least twice per term, six times per year......we provide two FYS [first year seminar] classes for free that are required to graduate, we provide that tuition free and provide all the textbooks for the class .... we have classes like Student Success so they can also earn additional elective credits, we also do things like check out calculators, computers, textbooks, those type of things. [We] have a computer lab in our office to help you know help find scholarships. So while we give a $500 scholarship in the form of a grant aid, we help them find other scholarships, to look outside the box with that. Also, opportunities to be mentored as student workers, we hire several student workers, most of them are TRIO students.

Mateo's program not only provides students with a personal advisor but connects them to other resources such as FYS classes, educational devices such as computers and calculators, textbooks, scholarships and the opportunity to be mentored. And like Luisa, Mateo affirms the importance of Advising,

> you have an advisor for as long as you're at Valley University, as you know, most of us know, most people will change your major multiple times throughout the current college. So a person starts with me during summer bridge, two weeks

before school starts I have that student assigned to me. I work with that student, all the way through till they finish, they get the degree. It could be, you know, two years if they are a transfer student, it can be four or five years. So, having that personal connection and we get to know them, grow with them, I think, is huge, someone they can count on for the entire time they're there.

Professor Lucas' program aims to encourage the research interests of diverse students in biomedical sciences. He explained that to support students in the program, they are provided with scholarships which pay 60% of their tuition; a monthly stipend; embedded in a cohort, mentored and provided with a dedicated advisor. This advisor is also bilingual and often wears several hats as they work to meet students' varying needs. He elaborated,

> He is bilingual, but the nice part with him is, academic advisors are not just academic advisors, this is part of it, but in the Latinx community we call it familismo which is once I'm familiar with you, I lost housing, boom, my mom died ,boom, I need help with this class, and then you become a traffic controller. But they trust you, you know, they come to you because you would say you know, there is a Latina financial aid advisor who could help you with that [the challenging situation], their name is Maria Gonzales and then you go from [the Advisor] to Maria Gonzales........but if you're a student and you have to go to someplace else, anything that happens between you getting there, you will take the opportunity not to go. But if you're going to meet Maria Gonzales, you're like okay yea, this should work out.

Professor Lucas talks about the concept of familismo in the Latinx culture. And though it refers to a Latino value system that emphasizes strong loyalty to the family (Gloria and Castellanos 2009), in this context professor Lucas highlights its extension to institutional staff who Latinx students come to see as trustworthy. Once built, Latinx students often return to this individual for assistance with other concerns as they arise. They trust them to refer them if needed to others who can help them as opposed to them possibly seeking out this information on their own. For Latinx FGCS, having to navigate the college system in this way can often be confusing and could leave them discouraged.

92

Additionally, these kinds of relationships served as social capital students could take advantage of when in unclear situations.

With regards to mentoring, Professor Lucas identifies three types of mentors the program uses to support students, "we match them with a faculty mentor, with a peer mentor and a research mentor". He added,

> I have mentors, multiple mentors because not one mentor is going to do it. That's where peer mentors [help]... we have faculty who are not researchers, I mean there are a lot of faculty who don't have a research agenda, but they went to graduate school, I mean they know a lot. So, we try and we recruit faculty who are mentors to help the students, and faculty who can also tell them how to navigate that research learning community where they go with the research mentor, how to navigate that space. Again, these kids are gonna join a team where there might be 5, 8, 10 other researchers that have seen a lot, and you have a Post Doc, you have graduate students and they might be the only Latino student there, they might be the only minority student.

Professor Lucas in understanding the rigors and demands of the sciences, especially for a Latinx FGCS who is often the only Latino or BIPOC student in a group of researchers provides a 3 person mentoring team. This is to facilitate the integration of BIPOC students into the biomedical sciences. The support provided by each mentor also contributes to Professor Lucas' interest in helping his Latinx students build self-confidence, a science identity and challenge feelings of imposter syndrome. He stated,

> it's part of developing that science identity and we go through a little exercise, where we try to explain to them that they all have different identities that have been built by different things and we talk about ......you are Latino and that probably informs a lot of decisions you have made. You were probably, born someplace else and you come with this. Maybe you're not sure if you have a gender identity that is binary, and then we explain what it is. Then they realize that yeah, I am who I am because of all the stuff that happened to me. Where I've lived, where I come from, the church I go to etc., And now, you're telling me I'm going to be a scientist, I never thought of me, as being a scientist, but here we go and now I've switched from being a student. And you're calling me a scholar and being a scholar it's different and has some expectations and there's some things that we expect from you and we will treat you as a scholar, and you need to

behave from now on as a scholar, and it's the imposter syndrome. And we'll start from the beginning, addressing that that imposter syndrome.

When asked which components of the program are especially helpful to the students, he responded,

> So out of all these things, what I've heard from the students is that they appreciate the money, and they appreciate the mentoring......that being able to talk to somebody, it could be their research mentor, career mentor, has been extremely helpful and I mean that's a big part, especially for your first generation [college student] needs.

Like Luisa, Santiago is a program administrator with the CAMP program which is geared towards increasing retention and promoting academic success. CAMP which stands for College Assistance Migrant Program is a federally funded program dedicated to supporting students from migrant and seasonal farm worker backgrounds (Araujo 2011). In this role, Santiago focuses on student access, retention, and completion. He describes how he achieves this:

> The CAMP program is all about access, what can we do to bridge an access for that student, and not just for that student but it's also about their family because it's also a transition for the parents. And when we introduce the college to the students, we are also introducing it to their parents because they've never been there before, and how cool is it to have parents who know about the quarter system, Fall, Spring, winter, how to register and just have more of an active role in their lives. So access, getting students access....that was part one. Part two, is that retention and completion so that's why we inserted the mentors, we inserted the tutors, advising, workshops, conferences, we insert college success classes, volunteering, scholarships, books and events, family, community. We now have a CAMP Center, so we insert all the services to ensure that students have the tools that they are going to need to use to heighten their chance of graduation and go even further, not to stop with that growth, but to encourage them that there's more learning, that they can go to the university, graduate school, they can get into an honors Program.

Santiago while working to support students by providing retention focused services-tutoring, advising, mentoring etc., also highlights the need to engage the family in the

development of their college knowledge. This is to enable the family assume a more involved role with their students. To encourage this, the CAMP program also hosts family events,

> We do a lot of family events. So we'll try to get at least one quarterly family event that's a social event, where families can come, we'll provide dinner. We'll provide a speaker, campus tour, workshops. Again, we want to make sure that students and parents feel empowered, that they know about college and know the language of college, and all of the questions to ask, and have a greater awareness of how to accomplish a college degree

Providing such opportunities to families and students is a way to empower them as Santiago states and also develop an understanding of the college system. Students and alums also shared about programs and supports they found beneficial. The next section discusses this further.

Student and Alum Responses

Several supports were identified that helped current students and alum succeed. They include programs that provided advising, peer mentoring, Summer Bridge, scholarships, academic support services, writing support and students club involvement. The three main programs identified in this study that provided a combination of services to support students include the TRIO, the MSS program and the Bilingual Teacher Scholar or BTS program. In my time working at Valley University, I estimate that a high percentage of Latinx students participated in one or more of these programs. Some participants were engaged with only one program, while others were engaged with two or more programs. They provided a description of their experience and the supports that impacted them most.

One support which the students discussed was the Summer Bridge program. As a result

of their acceptance to the TRIO program, some students were allowed to be on campus a

week prior to new student week. Gael explained,

> So I did the summer bridge program with TRIO. So I was on campus a week
> before new student week and I have to say TRIO was that first support system
> like before college started and then as soon as I started college [it] was definitely
> TRIO

Similarly, Laura shared:

> so I was able to stay at Valley University for like a week before everyone came to
> school, I met like a lot of people, some of the mentors became my friends and the
> advisors, you know, so we got pretty close.... .In Summer Bridge I had mentors
> there and they were college students as well, they were like a year or two or three
> years older than me. They were really kind and always offered you know their
> support.

The Summer Bridge program gave Gael an early start to college life and Laura the

opportunity to build connections while receiving support as she transitioned to the college

campus. Pedro and Luis describe their time in the Summer Bridge program as

instrumental to helping them build connections. Pedro said,

> I got to be in TRIO and the Summer Bridge program, I think, actually, let me take
> a step back right there, I think, that was what solidified everything for me because
> like going to college, I was nervous. I wasn't sure what to expect, I wasn't sure if
> I'd be able to make friends and like I don't know, I was afraid. But going into
> Summer Bridge, it was a boost of confidence because right there, I made a lot of
> friends already, and they were a lot of friends who are going through similar
> experiences as myself with similar backgrounds [First generation and Latinx].

Luis maintained that,

> I had a group of support systems that I was able to connect with once I found out
> who they were. So that included again the TRIO Program, participating in the
> Summer Bridge program, specifically that was critical for me when I think back
> because, it really allowed fme to foster and build a community with other peers,
> who were just like me, and we all were able to learn the different functions and
> the resources that we had on campus.

Participating in the Summer Bridge program provided these students access to mentors

and peers from similar back grounds. Luis who was part of the TRIO program speaks on

his experience, as well as other supports that impacted him positively,

> The most support would be my TRIO advisors, I had two TRIO advisors, they had
> to switch me ..... but both TRIO advisors were my rock.....my first year I received
> several different scholarships....I remember my first year that was super
> tremendous because I didn't have to take out a big loan....[the] Writing Center, I
> utilized that a lot obviously my dilemma earlier with the old critical thinking I
> went to them quite a bit [and] MEChA [which] was a group that was my circle,
> my community....

MEChA stands for Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanx de Aztlán and is a student

organization "that promotes higher education, community engagement, political

participation, culture, and history" (Mecha Nationals 2021). Luna was also part of the

TRIO program and described her TRIO advisor as being "supportive in answering my

questions".

Like Luna, Pablo was also part of TRIO. He described his TRIO Advisor as helpful

because:

> I was really unaware of what I wanted to do so, he kind of gave me options. I
> think that whole TRIO Program was really helpful, especially as a first generation
> [college student], I was like I don't know what I'm doing and then having them
> there and being able to just go to TRIO and hang out and do some homework
> there if I need to and you know, use the computers and things like that was really
> helpful.

Pablo benefited from the support he received from his TRIO advisor because being a

FGCS, he was unaware of his career path. His relationship with his TRIO advisor

provided him with much needed guidance to navigate college. He also described how his

academic advisor supported him, as well as other supports he benefited from,

My academic advisor, he was a good person. He wasn't scared of calling people out, so I think that was a good match, for me, because sometimes I needed that. ..... The Writing Center was also a really good resource, because I feel like that's where I lacked the most is my writing And so it was nice to be able to have someone overlook my homework and give me feedback... And then the library as well, because sometimes being home after school, it's like you know I have like my parents and my siblings and stuff and sometimes I wasn't able to study or get work done without being interrupted so it was nice to be to have the library and those closed rooms.

Furthermore, Pablo's comments describe the support he received from the Writing Center. Like most Latinx FGCS who live at home, he also reflects on the need to find a space where he could work free from interruptions. Pedro and Paula also found the Writing Center's services helpful and visited quite frequently. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Paula could no longer utilize the Writing Center's services in person which she preferred. She also benefitted from the MS peer mentoring program, which was managed by the MSS office, as well as being a part of MEChA. She stated,

Our freshman year we, did have to go to the MS meeting. Even if it was required, I think it did help a lot, because if it wasn't required, I would have never been able to receive the help because I also did receive a mentor and that also helped a lot. I had a good mentor that I knew since high school. She was my sister's friend, so when my sister couldn't [help], she was the one that would help me. So, I think that helped a lot and even after they [the MS meetings] weren't required, I did attend.... And then I went to some MEChA meetings as well, but I do plan on being more involved a little bit more once everything goes back a little bit to normal.

Like TRIO, the MSS program also provided bridging and wrap around services.

Elaborating on his experience with both programs, Carlos noted,

MSS was the first group, that really helped me get engaged on campus. So, it helped me understand how-to put-on events, and things like that. But also, I think, just how to talk to people. And like kind of, get out more. And not just be in my shell. I think people consider me a pretty quiet person. So you know, MSS was helpful, in getting me like out of my bubble. But also providing me like the funding, that I was able to get the Diversity Scholarship was huge. And yeah, I think that was like the foundation, of how to be successful in college. And TRIO I

would say, the academic advising was one of the biggest things. Being able to go to TRIO, every semester, or every term and just strategizing things like my classes. I think like having the foundation through MSS of how to be successful in college. And get out, and join clubs. Paired with like the classroom aspect, of like what classes to take. I think those two really helped.

For Carlos, being involved with the MSS helped him get engaged on campus and also provided him with financial support. The TRIO program assisted Carlos with advising and prepared him to engage in his academic planning. Like Carlos, Gael remarked about both programs,

They definitely provided me with a lot of like educational advising, what classes to take, when to take them. They got me in connection with other students that were in the same major that I could talk to them and know how the classes are before even you know, I take the classes. Definitely, a lot of educational support helping with my classes, helping me with finding other scholarships, I can apply for.

Gael received educational support, connections to other students and help applying for scholarships. Pilar an alum was also part of both the MSS and TRIO programs. On her experience, Pilar shared,

Because I was a scholar.... I had the benefit of accessing resources and getting that support, that mentorship, that class [the Diversity Scholars class] that I was required to take my freshman year.... Multicultural Students Services were supportive in terms of you know how to be successful as a college student. They gave me a lot of tools, but also, they gave room for growth in terms of like why am I even here, you know, do I belong here? They sort of assured me that I was important, that I did matter, and I did belong. And I think for a lot of first generation [college] students always have that. You know, that thing behind you, you know you think about really like oh my gosh like somebody's going to figure out that I don't belong. And so I think that they provided the type of support that was going to [help me] meet my educational goals. So I would say, you know the MSS, but also my time in the MSU [Multicultural; Student Union] club, I think that helped me a lot to sort of think of you know long term and learning to be a part of that, you get to like expand and network and see what's out there. So I think that really helped me too in terms of like building my resume and experiences, In terms of like working with students because that's what I wanted to do. So yeah MSU, MSS and also the TRIO program they had a lot of workshops and support and resources, as well.

Pilar received scholarship support as well as academic and personal support through the Diversity Scholars class. The Diversity Scholars class focused on needs, concerns and expectations for new students in their transition to college. Furthermore, students are equipped with information on resources to help them navigate college. Pilar also discussed the benefits of her involvement with MSU, a student club run out of the MSS office that promotes diversity and cultural awareness on the Valley University campus. In addition to these supports, Pilar described having to push herself to go to Valley University's Writing Center because she "wasn't a good writer" and identifies the Writing Center as one of "the resources that helped me succeed".

Similar to Carlos, Gael and Pilar, Rocio was also involved with TRIO and MSS programs. She stated,

> I'm part of MSS and so we get assigned an advisor from that and then I'm also part of TRIO. So under those two programs, we get assigned an advisor and they are...both my advisors are first generation, also Latinas. So, I was able to connect with them in that sense and they've also been able to tell me the pros and the cons of like starting classes and what to do in college what not to do in college, so they definitely provided like a good framework for me to follow

Having advisors that were first generation and Latina, provided Rocio access to individuals she could connect with who understood her background and experiences. She also discussed other supports she utilized,

> The Writing Center is such a great resource like whenever I talk to my mentees, I'm like go to the Writing Center, go get help like they're there for a reason, to help you. But they've been such a great resource for me because I've improved my writing skills and I've been able to do all my assignment because of them. It has been such a great support for me. My advisors as well, have helped me along the way to know what classes to take, know where I want to go after my undergrad......I had a mentor and they were kind of like that first person, the first bridge to the MSS office for me that got me more involved within the university and I was able to ask them questions that I wouldn't typically ask like Luisa for

example, it was very nice to have a mentor to chat about what college life is like....I did take a class with TRIO, it's the first year seminar that I was required to take for them. And I learned a lot, not just with college, but just outside of college too, like it taught us a lot of things like how to budget, things that I was not great at, and that I'm still working on, but simple life skills that were very beneficial.

These supports provided Rocio with information that enabled her to thrive not only on campus but also in her personal life as she notes that she was taught "simple life skills that were very beneficial". Furthermore, on the most beneficial supports, she identifies her relationship with her Advisor Luisa as the most impactful.

It's gonna have to be Luisa. Luisa is such a great resource, like when you think about Luisa, it is like who is she not connected with, she has so many great connections. And if she doesn't have an answer to something she finds that answer for you. So with her being able to create like a four year plan for me, kind of visualizing what my time in college is going to be like has been very helpful and then me going through like mental crises of me wanting to drop out again and [Luisa] just being like hey no you're not, like look how far you're going, look at where you are right now. So, Luisa has been one of the greatest impacts here for me.

Rocio's response emphasizes the need for personnel working with the Latinx FGCS population to be knowledgeable about campus and community resources to which they can direct students. This is especially beneficial to the Latinx FGCS population who often have a variety of needs and are appreciative of the opportunity to be guided by trusted individuals like Luisa on how to get those needs met. Moreover, the exchange of information and the relationship with trusted individuals helps provide students with important skills and knowledge, expands their social networks and thus enhances their social capital. Like Rocio, Salvador, a Valley University alum, describes being impacted positively by his relationship with Luisa,

From the very beginning, I mean, she essentially held my hand. I think that she understood people like myself and again, you know bridging that gap, she helped me to look for an apartment, you know even simple little things like that will

discourage someone right because it's completely unknown to you. She helped me to navigate my first few months at Valley University and so I will say she was definitely the biggest, the biggest support at the beginning. And, of course, you know throughout the rest of my time there as I needed her.

Salvador commenting on Luisa's understanding of people like him underscores how even the simplest and seemingly well-known process e.g searching for an apartment, can be foreign to FGCS. But Luisa understood this and was able to help him navigate the first couple of months. Salvador also benefited from being part of the TRIO program and utilized the Writing Center as well,

> the TRIO program was huge. Taking classes, like Becoming a master student, what to do in a class, how to write, how to structure a paper, I mean how to study, I mean things like that that may be common sense to somebody else but just completely unknown, to students like myself..... the Writing Center was another huge one....to kind of make up for my lack of writing skills..

Olivia was a part of the MSS, BTS and TRIO programs. BTS stands for Bilingual Teacher Scholars and it's a program geared towards increasing the number of bilingual teachers in the state. She recounted her experience,

> So, through my scholarship [with the MSS office], I think I had to be part of a mentor program, so I had to have a mentor. And it was like a college mentor like somebody who is like a Junior or Senior like more older than me..... and they helped me a lot. I think I asked a lot of questions of them and am also like currently an MS mentor so it's kind of like giving back a little bit. I am also part of the bilingual teacher scholars program. Those people, those staff members [BTS people] also helped me out a lot because within that program there's a lot of people, I think I also have to take classes from them, so certain classes and we all kind of are Bilingual teacher scholars in that class. The staff members they always I remember, they always helped me out.

Olivia also benefited from the BTS program as it provided her with summer employment as a teaching assistant and job shadow opportunities. She also got involved with MEChA and was part of a Latinx focused sorority on campus. And by being part of the TRIO

program, she was able to borrow textbooks, and calculators. When I asked her what

supports she found to be most beneficial, she shared,

> I had to take the class [Diversity Scholars class], and I think that's where I got
> most of the support. Because....I had to attend the class every single week you
> know, so I will always see like my advisor and like they also kind of like helped
> me because they did, I think they did, how to budget, and classes like that, resume
> building classes as well, and those type of topics that kind of helped me out a lot.
> We went too every single week, so I think that's where like, that provided most of
> the support. Also, like I mentioned before, my MS mentor like I will talk to her a
> lot and meet with her a lot and yeah I think those are the main two.

Olivia benefited from the Diversity scholars class which covered a variety of topics to

guide students while in college. She also benefitted from seeing her Advisor weekly and

the mentoring support she received.

Interestingly, only Pilar, Paula, Rocio and Gael discussed visiting the career

center and this was because it was a requirement for a class. On his interaction with the

career center, Gael said

> I went there a couple times for resume help or career help because at first for my
> first two years of undergrad I was exploratory, and I didn't really know. And I
> went there and we just had a conversation, and she just gave me like a list of
> majors I could like potentially go into, but I feel like I didn't get enough, I feel
> like I could have got a little bit more help or sense of direction.

Gael further disclosed that we would have appreciated more information on

understanding how a chosen major connects with the future. For Salvador the career

center was more for regular students with a traditional background. He explained,

> You know other services like you know career development and things like that
> again to me that those it felt like that wasn't my world, that was intended for
> students that are just traditional college students.......the focus for me at least was
> making it through the classes right. But I felt like a big part of it was personal
> support. Motivation, I think, is one of the biggest things another biggest thing that
> will help you push through college. And talking to mentors one on one, people
> that that you feel understand you is really what you need more than anything else,
> more than thinking about a career, you know and stuff like that, and how to
> interview or whatever.

He continued,

You're going through something very personal and you kind of have to dig you know very deep to make it through oftentimes. And I think that talking to people that at least to an extent that understand that experience or try to understand that experience and give you advice, makes a big difference. So in my case, I felt like what I really benefited from and what I needed was to continue to have that motivation in talking to people like you know mentors and stuff like that. That kind of gave me that fuel, you know, to keep going.....and I guess I wasn't thinking about the next step, I wasn't thinking about a career, I wasn't thinking about where I was going to work, I was thinking about surviving the experience.

Salvador's response acknowledges the reality of his background as a Latinx FGCS and how this influenced his daily focus which became more about "surviving the experience" of college and less about long term career plans.

Faculty were also identified as providing meaningful support to some study participants and the next section explores this finding further.

Faculty Support

Luna, Pilar, Luis, Pablo, Paula, Salvador and Diana also reported receiving support from faculty at Valley University. For Luna and Pilar who were both Psychology majors, the support they received, provided them with further clarity as they navigated their majors. For Luna this included class recommendations to help improve her skills with working with people. Pilar also received similar guidance with her classes and a recommendation letter for graduate school, She shared,

...I really loved my faculty advisor and she was very involved in terms of like what I wanted to do with my Psychology degree and she gave me a letter of recommendation when I applied for graduate school. So, I had that relationship with her and I would say, like that supported my success

Luis describes his faculty advisor as the faculty member "who had the most impact on my tenure". He stated,

they were so supportive of me and challenged me to think outside the box, and to also put myself outside the box. One of those experiences was to travel and study abroad or do an international internship which is what I did, in Argentina so I studied in Rosario, Argentina for four months.

For Pablo, he appreciated his faculty advisor for his directness. He commented,

..he was he was a good person. He wasn't scared of calling people out, so I think that was a good match, for me, because sometimes I needed that in school. So, he just kind of called it how it was and just told me like listen if you don't get you know your crap together, you're not going to graduate on time and so that's what I needed sometimes myself, because I didn't have direction on where I wanted to go.

Paula and Diana both identify similar experiences with faculty who were able to connect them with experiences directly related to their majors as they worked on community projects these faculty members supervised. Diana presented the following account of her experience,

...I became part of that project as two things: as a health care worker and a contact tracer. That definitely helped me not only get experience in the path I'm also going down, which is community health, but I'm also getting real job experience.... being able to work on this project during the pandemic and help with the pandemic.... that's another support system that I didn't know, I was ever going to have and then she turned into my advisor

And finally, Salvador spoke highly of two faculty members. Of one of them he said,

He tried to work with me and to understand me and stuff like that...so I would say, that kind of one on one mentorship I think makes a huge difference for students, like myself.

While these study participants reported receiving support from some faculty, other study participants did not report having similar experiences. Regarding this, Laura commented that she had one professor whom she would have liked to reach out to her especially when she wasn't doing well in their class, and Carlos offered that he would have liked to have better connections with his professors.

Overall, study participants identified support programs at the local and national level that impacted Latinx FGCS' ability to persist. The pre-college supports participants discussed provided them with the confidence to not only excel but take on challenging workloads once at college. In college, programmatic components such as scholarships, advising, mentoring, academic support classes, enrichment workshops, cohort style arrangements, student clubs and writing center services provided participants with college knowledge or cultural capital that aided in participant's retention and success. For example, several study participants discussed going on college tours, taking academic success or enrichment classes, learning how to speak to professors, how to read their educational plan, all things that that helped them gain valuable knowledge of academic life. Participants also discussed being impacted by their relationship with different institutional agents which included program administrators and some faculty members at the campus. Their expanded social network provided them the opportunity to enhance their social capital, thus providing connections to meaningful opportunities as in the case of Diana who was introduced to the DREAM US scholarship by her mentor. An additional benefit of these relationships is that it helped the Latinx FGCS in this study receive academic and emotional support while in college. Being FGCS, even in circumstances where parents were supportive, they couldn't fully understand their child's higher education experience due to them not having attended college, The social capital developed from their relationships with program administrators or faculty provided Latinx FGCS with support that helped them stay motivated to complete the college journey. Interestingly, one program administrator discussed teaching a success class from a Latinx lens. This perspective draws attention to the assets present within the Latinx

community that contributed to participant's success. The next section discusses these

assets, or the community cultural wealth (CCW) observed in this study.

Community Cultural Wealth

Some factors described as supporting success reflected community cultural wealth rather than dominant cultural and social capital. Community cultural wealth (CCW) based in critical race theory is an antideficit and asset-based framework for illuminating the capital that exists in marginalized communities. According to Yosso (2005) who formulated the concept, it consists of six forms of capital: aspirational, familial, social, navigational, resistant, and linguistic capital. Although the findings are presented according to the forms of capital identified in this study, it should be noted that there is a vast degree of intersectionality among the different forms. The most salient forms of CCW study participants identified as sources of support during their college journey were familial, aspirational and social capital.

Familial Capital

Familial capital denotes the "cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition" cultivated among kinship networks (Yosso, 2005:79). Familial capital centers on the support families provide students in their academic pursuits. This also extends to support provided by extended family members and community members. Participants in this study identified four ways they received familial capital from their families. They include: emotional support, *dichos* or cultural sayings, encouragement through sharing the family's history and the meeting of basic needs.

Emotional Support

Emotional support was prominent in participants' responses as the most frequently reported form of familial capital. The emotional support participants received inspired them to continue their academic pursuits. Participants voiced some of the following statements that highlight examples of the emotional support they received from their family:

> You know my family wasn't able to provide like financial support, or anything like that. It was kind of the reverse. You know like my dad had lost his housing. You know my sisters, were kind of all over. And so, it's more so like me and my sisters had to help each other financially. So that wasn't really there, that financial aspect. There was like not really knowledge about school either, so that wasn't there either. But it was more so, it's almost like they kind of had my back, from a distance. You know like, "Hey, we don't really know what you're doing, but we trust that you're moving in the right direction. And we're supporting you emotionally, and we're here for you." Which I think in itself, was helpful enough. Of course, I never really expected them to help me, in any other way. Having them in my corner, I think was really helpful for me   (Carlos)

> My mom and my dad were very supportive, they just didn't know what to do. Like I think that's very common. They want you to go, but they didn't know the language, this is also in 2009 time, so they weren't familiar with the process, they didn't understand the whole FAFSA, how do you apply, who do you talk to, etc, ...My sister was another family member that was also involved with me, ...,because she was already in school, she helped me out with learning different things, ...But, in general, my mom and my dad went along with me every step of the way, even though they didn't really understand what was happening, they knew that at least I was connecting with folks who could help me   (Luis)

> I think it was more symbolic than anything else, they couldn't help economically. They also couldn't help in terms of you know strategies or real world advice about how to make it through college because again it's a world that is unknown to them, so in terms of family support, it was just knowing that I had their support and that unconditional love
>
> (Salvador)

Both of my parents they didn't go to college, they didn't graduate high school either so they didn't really know a lot about college, but they always encouraged me with my education...... they don't provide a lot of economic help you know because I do have scholarships and I do work myself, but also like I didn't really want to put.. not that I want to say burden, but I really wanted to do it by myself....they don't provide a lot of economic help, but they do provide a lot of mental health [support]. They kind of like encouraged me whenever I had like distress or was having a hard week or anything, they provided support with that. Or sometimes they came to my college, and they took me home if I need to like take a break or anything like that... little things like that, like really do help me in college and they make you feel like, maybe you're not going through this alone, kind of you know you have your family and your friends   (Olivia)

Well, first and foremost I think they were supportive of me being there. I think that says a lot, I know that there are students whose parents, sometimes don't want them in college. They want them at home as much as possible, which my parents did a little bit of, but they worked with me on living away from home, even if it was only 30 minutes away...... they were supportive of me living away from home and dedicating myself to my education ....they were there for me, for whatever I needed they were there. I think that was really good because it didn't make me feel like I was abandoning my family

(Pedro)

These participants indicated that their parents were often clueless and lacked knowledge about navigating the college world. Inspite of this, they provided emotional support through words of encouragement, unconditional love, by trusting that participants knew what they were doing as they pursued their college education, by being understanding with regards to helping their student find a balance between school and family life like in Pedro's case or helping take them out of a temporary stressful environment as Olivia shared.

Support through Dichos

In addition to supporting study participants emotionally, families also used dichos or cultural sayings to build resiliency in students. Espinoza-Herold (2007) argued that

dichos "serve as a reservoir of culturally based resilience strategies that family members use to resist marginalization and to support each other in approaching issues and tasks in their everyday lives." (Espinoza-Herold 2007: 262). The dichos identified in this study were *échale ganas, no te rajes and no te dejes* which all point to the idea of pushing through challenging situations. Olivia, Rocio, Diana, Luis and Carlos describe the dichos they heard growing up. Olivia stated,

> A big kind of value which I guess my family gave me a lot is to kind of not be ashamed or I guess to keep going. Like in Spanish, they have like a saying like 'échale ganas', like just keep going. And so I guess that's like a value that I have really integrated in my mind. No matter what, to keep going and to just try my best, and to not be afraid or ashamed to ask questions or anything like that. .... I just had to keep going basically, just keep going forward

For Diana, she translates échale ganas to mean,

> ....put your best work out there, échale ganas in your education, because that's, the only way you'll succeed. That's one of the ways, you can succeed in life and do better. My mom always used the example, I want you to get further in life so you're not working the jobs, I work. You're not flipping burgers, you're not cleaning bathrooms, you're not stuck doing this living off paycheck to paycheck.

Rocio also heard the échale ganas dicho growing up and it inspired her to add to a positive image of Latinas. When asked what it means to her, she shared,

> It means keep going. It means that if you are faced with an obstacle, you get right back up and you keep going, and if you're faced with another obstacle, you do it all over again. You just learn from your mistakes and you don't let anything bring you down because society says a dimension of individuals like myself, we're not going to continue with education, after we face one obstacle, oh they're going to drop out. And that's something that.....I will not be an addition to that image, like I'm going to break the odds, and I'm going to just continue and I'm going to show them that, yes, Latinas, first generation Latinas are able to pursue their degree and their goals.

While Luis heard échale ganas *growing up*, he also discussed hearing *no te dejes* which his parents used to encourage him when sharing about stories of racism and hate they had

experienced. They advised him to do what is right for him despite contradictions and not to worry about what others think. Carlos heard the dicho *no te rajes* growing up. He describes the time when he was introduced to the dicho,

> I remember my dad, when we were little, and we would like eat sometimes, like we would be eating and we didn't want to eat, because I didn't like onions. He would tell me, "no te rajes. don't back down, show that onion who's boss", kind of thing. And so, I feel like I kind of internalized that in general, like with my life. Because I feel like sometimes life is like those onions man, you can make it. Show them who's the boss. (Carlos)

All four participants used the dichos to stay persistent in the course of actualizing their higher education goals.

Encouragement Through the Sharing of the Family's History

Several study participants also spoke about their family's history as a motivational platform in their pursuit of higher education. Gael, Pilar, Salvador, Luna, Laura and Paula all came from immigrant families. In general, they shared that their parents left their home countries in search of better opportunities for their families:

> My parents, they came illegally to United States. They are now citizens and residents here and they always told us since I was a little kid, they came over here to give us, me and my siblings a better life. And they wanted us to be able to choose our career goals and they wanted us to go to college, because once you're in college you basically get to choose what you want to do for the rest of your life, rather than getting stuck behind like a nine to five job that you don't really like
> (Gael)

> We would be considered an immigrant family. Both my mom and dad, they were born in Mexico....my dad he always talked about like the importance of education, they did a lot of farm work...when we were little and so what I remember you know seeing is, my dad always coming home really tired or my mom coming home really tired from being at a nursery all day because of the plants, and you know how hot it was. And so my dad would always tell us like you know we came here you know, for you all, and so we want you to have a better life and a better future, and we don't want you to have this type of work. So really my

parents sort of shaped you know, like the value of education and the value of school   (Pilar)

...you would hear things like going to college is important, and do better for yourself and stuff like that........you should go to college, because it will help you and you'll make more money and stuff like that, but it was very, very, very minimum, and I think that a big part of the reason for that is that again, this is a world that my family didn't understand. There wasn't much that they could tell me, other than you know it's a good thing, it will make it easier, so that you don't have to you know go and work in the fields like you know all of us, so you're not having to suffer like you know, like all of us did   (Salvador)

My mom was also a very big advocate for college and education. She didn't have the opportunity to finish high school........ she grew up in Mexico and so their school was really expensive over there...... but she definitely wanted us to continue and wanted us to do well in school. She was very supportive and was always willing to help out with whatever. Even though she didn't understand a lot of the process, she still wanted me to continue and did whatever she could to help support me being able to go to school. Same thing with my dad, he also didn't go to school. He finished like third grade and he definitely wanted us to have a better future and better jobs than they did when they were growing up   (Luna)

My parents have always encouraged me to attend college, because they know that going to college would open more possibilities for me to attain a good job in the future. My parents work in the fields they don't make as much money, you know as someone who would have a college degree.... they always encouraged me to look for scholarships to apply. They believe that education is really important, especially because they come from Mexico and they know that you know this country is a country of many possibilities   (Laura)

We came to the US for a better life and they [parents],...... gave up everything for me to come to school. And even though sometimes they didn't show it, in other ways they demonstrated that they wanted the best for me. .... The sacrifices that my parents have done for us, being lucky enough to be sitting indoors and for them to be working out in the fields, that's obviously, something that's very close to my heart, knowing that they have done whatever they can for us to be here.
                                                                                                       (Paula)

Sharing further on how her parents demonstrated that they wanted the best for her, Paula stated,

 My parents have always been involved with school; they always went to meetings. When it came to high school, they started attending you know classes for them to help me attend college and for them being aware more about you know what is college, what is a resume........and I think they attended those

because, like I said I did become close to those counselors [high school counselors] and those counselors you know they were able to you know being bilingual, be more able to connect with my parents. So, I think that helped a lot. And when applying to college, they were just there for me and even though you know they're not perfect in English, they sometimes told me to tell them what I was writing for my essays.

Participants were motivated to pursue a college education because they wanted to affirm and honor their parents sacrifices of coming to a new nation. Participants' parents often mentioned relocating due to the desire to provide their children with better opportunities. For this reason, parents emphasized education and saw obtaining a college degree as a means to securing a better future. Sharing their family's triumphs and struggles such as challenges parents experienced working in the fields, or in their countries of origin was used to motivate their children to aspire to a career path different from that of their parents.

Meeting Basic Needs

The final way participants described receiving familial capital from their family was the meeting of basic needs. One way families engaged in this was through the provision of financial support. While difficult, several participants were truly appreciative of the financial support they received from their family as they used the funds to balance out unmet financial needs. As a result of the financial support, some participants noted they were better able to focus on their academics. Participants also discussed living at home and parents meeting their basic needs. They commented as follows:

> ..I didn't have a ton of scholarships or anything like that, I was really fortunate that my parents were able to help me pay for school. And that helped me out a lot, because I was already struggling academically and I wasn't sure what direction, I was going, so I never really had to work or get like a full time job. I know a lot of college students work, a lot of hours, and they have to manage their time

114

appropriately. So, I think my parents' financial help and not having to pay for rent or anything like that, because I was still living at home being so close to school that I was fortunate enough to not have to work so much. And I could focus on just going to school, so that was a big help because I know a lot of my friends that weren't from around the area that had to pay rent and they had to work. So that was the biggest help I think in my success and in college was having my parents have my back financially and being able to be home and have their support there

(Pablo)

....monetarily, my family provided funds for me to be able to focus on my school. I did work, but they also like helped balance that [work and school balance] because they wanted to ensure that I was excelling in my classes, so monetarily I guess that could be another way [they provide support]   (Luis)

Well, my parents have helped me a lot. Thankfully, I still live with my parents, so they you know, tell me to go to school, you know don't worry about bills and stuff like that so they've supported me having me there, thankfully, at their house.....My family has always supported me especially because I'm the first. I'm a first generation Latina and I am going to be the first one in my family to graduate from a University   (Laura)

.... my dad he's been really helping me pay for my classes and stuff like that, and I feel like without him I wouldn't be able to continue my education, because college is so expensive, and I am already working two jobs. And even with that, like it's hard to pay for college, so I feel like he's been a big help with that

(Victoria)

My family I think in general their advice and then mainly the financial support that they have given me because they don't have to worry about the rest [college processes], because they know I have other advisors, because they will help me and lead me to the other things that I might need help with. But my parents have definitely helped me financially   (Paula)

And finally for Gael, his mom supported him by providing food and emotional support. He shared,

Even though I lived really close to Valley University, I still lived on campus my first year. My mom would always be calling me, making sure that I was okay. She would call to make sure I had food. She told me, I can come home and pick up food, rice beans or something that that I can have for the rest of the week... I would talk to them how I'm like, sometimes I'd be stressed, about like all these papers and exams and studying I have to do, and my mom always just tries to calm me down, telling me everything's okay, and that you know you're doing this, for your future and this is going to be something that's going to help you   (Gael)

Though he wasn't far from home, Gael's mom encouraged him to come home to pick up some food. She also cheered him on and was reassuring when he discussed his school related stress. Furthermore, she was committed to seeing him succeed as she reminded him to focus on the bigger picture of his future.

For most study participants, familial capital provided foundational support that encouraged the attainment of academic goals. Participants also described how their families provided them with emotional support. Furthermore, the sharing of family histories inspired alternative career paths, positioning study participants for the brighter future their parents often left their home countries for. Families also provided familial capital through dichos or cultural sayings, financial support and met basic needs such as providing shelter and meals.

Aspirational Capital

Aspirational capital refers to "the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real or perceived barriers" (Yosso 2005:77). It encourages a hope in the future, in possibilities, despite one's circumstances (Yosso 2006). In this study, participants nurtured high aspirations as they recognized the value of a college education to improve their lives, their family and their community.

Participants who Nurtured High Aspirations

Pedro, Luna, Laura, Olivia and Diana discussed having aspirations for college or a brighter future as early as elementary. Pedro shared how he desired to pursue a college education as a young kid,

> I always aspired to go to college and so, since I was a young kid... my mom, especially and my family always encouraged me to continue my education. And she always presented education as like the key to my future to like fulfilling all my dreams, basically, is it's kind of like how it seemed to me, so that was always a goal. But I always knew as a young child that finances were going to be a struggle. I knew that my family, you know was here as an immigrant family and that they were you know working jobs that didn't pay very much and we struggled to make ends meet when I was young. So for me, that was something I worked hard for. You know my mom was always telling me you have to get good grades, you want to get those scholarships. And so, I just saw it as a path to a better future

He was influenced by his family's situation to work hard towards the attainment of a better future. Like Pedro, Luna's family also experienced struggles and this motivated her to want to do more with her life. She commented that prior to starting college, she was driven by the desire for a better future and wanted to have "better opportunities and more growth for myself. I always enjoyed learning so that was something that I was really motivated to pursue after high school".

Laura, Olivia and Diana knew in elementary, middle school and high school respectively that they were interested in going to college. Laura described being taught by bilingual teachers in elementary school and how this weighed heavily on her future desire to become a bilingual teacher,

> ... since I was younger, I remember being in elementary school and I remember always saying that I wanted to become a teacher.....I had great bilingual teachers. I was placed in a district where they had a bilingual dual immersion program. I remember my teachers were bilingual and I remember, I was like in kindergarten when I started learning English.....I come from a Hispanic family, so my family is Mexican and my parents only spoke Spanish to us. I remember when I started kindergarten, first and second grade, that's when I realized I wanted to be like my teachers, I wanted to be a bilingual teacher.

Olivia shared,

> So at first I knew I always wanted to just go to college. When I was in middle school I didn't really like know what college was, and if I could go to college. I

was in a lot of like clubs and organizations that really like encouraged me to go to college and to know how to, so that's why I knew like this is something that I really want to do, and I want to like help my parents out...But I did not know like what major I wanted yet, I just knew that I really just wanted to go and like further my education so that was my goal

Even though she wasn't certain with regards to a specific major to pursue, she was determined to accomplish her goal of pursuing a college education to help her parents out. In Diana's case, she was unsure if she could attend a community college, let alone a university, so her biggest hope in high school was to get into either.

These students had future visons of themselves pursuing a college education and some like Laura knew specifically what they wanted to study, thus better strengthening their aspirations.

Aspirational Capital Inspired by Family

Aspirational capital was also reinforced through participants' families who held high aspirations for their education. According to Luis, college was always in the picture for him. He was the youngest out of four siblings and only he and his sister were able to attend college. Of his family's influence, he reflected,

> The goal was always to get to college. My parents were very typical to other first gen folks. They immigrated from Mexico....but from early on, from middle school and high school, it was get your grades up, do some sort of extracurricular activities obviously work hard and then let's get you some financial aid and scholarships, so that we can make the reality of you going to higher ed possible. So, it wasn't necessarily like when is it going to happen, it just was like where is it going to happen?

Even though Luis's parent lacked in understanding of the college terrain, they understood the value of hard work and supported his college aspirations. This in turn inspired him to become a role model for his nieces and nephews. He commented,

118

I have nieces and nephews who are my age or older than me, and it was a case where I was the one that was going to start a trend, essentially my sister and I. So, my older sisters, my little nieces, and nephews I think that they wanted me to do this. And for me, it was like I need to do this, so that I can set an example for them, that they can also do this, that the sacrifices that our parents made aren't going to waste and that we're not necessarily perpetuating this stereotype of Latinos and Latinx folks in eastern Oregon, which is that they drop out, which is that they get pregnant, that they are only farmworkers, like all this stereotypical ideologies.

Salvador being the first in his family to attend college also wanted to make his family proud and be a role model,

One of the biggest things on my mind was I guess somehow making my family proud. I have younger siblings, so maybe somehow showing them that it could be done, because. again, there wasn't anybody in my family, you know at the time that was college educated. So, I would say my family was definitely on my mind

Pilar's family had expectations of her to pursue a college education. Her ultimate goal was to make her family proud, support them and to make a difference in students' lives,

My hopes and dreams were to make my family proud, so that I can help and support my family. My dreams were to make a difference, specifically wanted to make a difference in students' lives. I've always been very interested in helping people but, as I was figuring out what I wanted to do, it always was around working with students.

Rocio envisioned a future where she will pursue a Masters and doctorate in addition to her bachelors. This was possible through her parents sacrifices and constant encouragement,

I'm a first generation student and both my parents did not have the opportunity to pursue higher education. They both had to stop their education at a very young age because, they were expected to help out at home or to go work. So, their experiences reminded me of the possibilities that I am able to achieve... and the constant reminder of telling me like (mimicking voice) "hey, you have the opportunity to do so, go get what you want, go achieve your goals", is what has always pushed me to continue my education. I realized that they not only feel proud, but they feel like they have accomplished something by giving my sisters and myself an opportunity to pursue higher education. So my dream has always been to complete my education, one undergraduate, and then pursue a master's degree...I have [also] envisioned myself with a doctorate

Victoria also wanted to make her parents proud. They couldn't finish school because they had children and she wanted them to know that inspite of their struggles, it was possible

to keep moving forwards. Additionally, she was influenced by her brother's life trajectory,

> Since my oldest brother, has always been in and out of prison, always choosing the wrong path, I knew that I didn't want to end up like him...Like there's nothing wrong with not going to school or anything like that, but I just knew that I wanted to be better for myself and give myself the future that I've always wanted and that my brother never was able to or my parents weren't able to achieve...I know I just had to keep going.

Some program administrators also commented on Latinx FGCS aspiring to make their family proud and the sacrifices they engaged in to make their college dreams a reality. Speaking on Latinx FGCS' motivation, Luisa said,

> there's just such a motivation of wanting better, wanting more that drives them that i've not always seen in other students when I compare, if I had to compare different backgrounds.

Speaking further, she shares an example of a highly motivated student,

> I had a student who would wake up at five in the morning to get ready, the family had moved to Canby, she had to live at home for financial reasons. I think their car broke down or maybe one of the parents wasn't working, so she had to get up at five in the morning, drive her siblings to school, which was farther away, then drive all the way to campus to do her classes, then drive all the way back because they had one car between the whole family. She had to fix her schedule to pick up mom and dad, so it wasn't even her managing just her schedule, she had to manage her parents' schedules, her siblings schedules, get herself to school, make sure parents got to work ...... that's the kind of drive that can only come from that first generation perspective, that idea that we could do more if we could only make it to this next level of having a degree, having a better life

This example illustrates the drive many Latinx FGCS have to succeed, which was evidenced throughout this study. Being inspired by their social context, they sacrifice in a variety of ways and make use of the opportunities they are afforded. Mateo a program administrator's comments echo a similar drive in the students he worked with,

> ....it's really exciting to see them succeed in school, and get to their goals. I've had students that were in middle school that are now working on their MA and PhD programs. So that's kind of exciting to see that process and it's been exciting to

see where they transition from I'm not sure if I'm going to get through K-12, where now I'm a confident graduate student, you know undergraduate student and how that impacts their families, how they change a bit of their families or their siblings, some of this is mom and dad deciding to go back and get their high school diploma, cousins, just that whole network....

Finally, Santiago complements the conversation on Latinx FGCS' aspirational capital noting how motivated they are to see their family succeed,

.... they've seen their parents struggle financially, that's motivating for that student, that they want to change that in their family. Maybe they've seen their families struggle when it comes to getting a home or going from apartment to apartment or from camp to camp, you know and the student, they have the desire to do differently...when a first year student goes to college, what I have noticed is that a lot of them are driven. They want to lead their families, they want to be the one to graduate high school, they want to be the first to get their Associates, to get a university degree, their Bachelors or Masters .... they are determined because of their first generation status...and it [first generation status] ends up helping them through college.

Interestingly, unlike the other responses, one alum Carlos, expressed not having educational aspirations early in life,

...growing up, I didn't think of school, I never really liked school as a kid. So I never saw myself going to college. I never saw myself graduating high school, I wasn't really thinking about that. But then, once I got to like high school, I started thinking about that a little more. Yeah, I don't know. Like I made a pretty big life transition, I think in my life. And I tried to do as well as I could in school. .... Like I wasn't really thinking about college, but around my sophomore/junior year [in high school], it started becoming more of a possibility. And I don't know, I started really getting into sciences, physics, astronomy, things like that...I kind of started imagining, what if I could be in these big universities, doing like this good work with physics and things like that?

Inspite of him seemingly not having educational aspirations early on, Carlos was able to become more focused and nurtured his aspirations to the point that he is currently finishing up a doctoral program.

The aspirational capital displayed by the participants in this study reflect a determined group of students who took initiative to achieve their goals. They were

inspired by hopes and dreams for a brighter future. Their families also believed in them and thus held them to high educational standards.

Social Capital

Yosso defines social capital as "networks of people and community resources". It encompasses the idea of "lifting as we climb" which involves an exchange of instrumental resources and emotional support shared within their networks to help with navigating through society's institutions (Yosso 2005:79). Yosso's definition differs from Coleman and Bourdieu's in that it emphasizes the social capital found in communities of color, that is support provided by co-ethnics. The theme of social capital centered on the peer support study participants received that provided them with necessary information to persist to graduation, as well as support from extended family members and their siblings.

Study participants discussed relying heavily on their peers to traverse the higher education terrain. For some study participants seeing their friends leave for college motivated them to attend college. Pablo stated,

> ...Seeing my closer friends .... going to college, it definitely also motivated me because I didn't want to be the one that didn't go to college either. And so, seeing them go to go to school, made me also want to go to school because kind of a little bit of peer pressure, like in a positive way, because they were all super excited about going to school and I wasn't really sure what I wanted to do until with my parents' push and then kind of going [to college], I felt comfortable kind of just putting myself out there and trying to get my degree

Luna also shared,

> ....with my friends like they definitely wanted to pursue an education or wanted to continue on to college. And so, seeing what they were doing and what colleges they were interested in, also got me involved with doing that. I mean again I'm like really close to my family, like being Hispanic like I think it was hard for me

to push and pull away from that. So, having my friends like oh here's this option, it got me to explore other colleges like outside of [my home community] so that I can you know grow and be more independent and pull away from the family.....

Similarly, Olivia commented,

So my close family it's just me, my brother, my mother, and my father. I also have like a lot of my uncles and my aunts that like we live close by. They always told me that I will go to college and everything. Also, people I'm surrounded with, like my friends and my acquaintances a lot of them go to college ...[so] you're kind of encouraged more. So... with all my friends, they were also going to college, so I was like I should probably also go, you know so that's how they kind of influenced me in a way

Olivia considered the support she received from friends as well as aunts and uncles who always encouraged her in the pursuit of a college degree. Pablo, and Luna acknowledge being inspired by their peers to pursue a college education. Pablo describes this influence as a positive kind of peer pressure. For Olivia, she was surrounded with friends who also went off to college. Her family and relatives often told her that she was going to go to college. This support encouraged and inspired her college dreams. Luna also had friends who were interested in going to college and this gave her the opportunity to develop more independence, gradually pull away from her family and connect with other Latinas. She shared further,

I had a friend who was also going to Valley University with me, so I would follow her lead if there was something that she got that also applied to me. Then I would talk with her about how we can figure out the situation. We talked about like housing.... also questions about like who I'm supposed to talk to about financial aid, and so my friend, was one of the support systems, ...that I would connect with to be able to get help with any questions that I had and navigate my way through the school.

Luna's response describes how she relied on her friend to navigate college as the two discussed questions about housing, financial aid and other matters. Laura also confirmed

relying on her peers while in the Bilingual Teachers Scholars program, a program geared

towards increasing the number of Latinx teachers in the state. She offered,

> I have some friends that were also in the Bilingual Teachers Scholars program.
> They started a year before I did, so I was able to ask them questions and they were
> able to tell me, for example, classes or professors I should take at VU or ...what I
> should do, or not, or what classes, what books I need, what books I don't need and
> stuff like that.

Luara's peers guided her with classes and professors to select at VU. Similar to Laura,

Carlos' friend Gabriel also provided him support. Carlos describes joining the Upward

Bound Program because of the information Gabriel shared. He stated,

> Fortunately, I got into an Upward Bound program. My friend Gabriel, he told me,
> "Hey, they pay you $10 a week, and they give you food. It sounds like we should
> do it". So, we decided to join it, and it was through the Upward Bound program,
> that I got into school. They said, just to be safe, they told us to apply to two
> different types of schools. Like a safe school, a school that's kind of like within
> reach and then like our dream school. And I ended up only applying to Valley
> University.

The information shared by Carlos' friend contributed to Carlos being able to get

connected with a support program that helped him realize his college goals. He shared

further how this support from friends helped him expand his engagement and leadership

within the community.

> ...my resources have been through school, the school clubs and ... support from
> my friends. They've kind of helped me feel like I could expand into the
> community and get involved with community stuff. And so, I did several
> community things, service work, but then also like projects and I started
> participating in initiatives with the school [Valley University], like action
> committees and like working with the city.

Furthermore, Carlos joined a Latino fraternity who connected him to resources not only

at VU, but to other connections at institutions in the area

Joining the fraternity.....that really helped me out. Because I was able to get help, not only in terms of like VU specifically, but more like college in general. And I was able to get my connections, to the people at [other institutions in the area].

On the additional benefits of the fraternity, he commented

It had like the friendship aspect, because a lot of us were friends before school, we were really close. And I feel like that provided support, in terms of when we do volunteer service. When we do like study hours, when we just hang out with each other...So having that fraternity was like, it was really big for me in college, in terms of like keeping us together. And feeling like I was navigating college, with a group of people as a community, as opposed to just by myself.

Paula, Rocio and Luis each described receiving support and guidance from their siblings who were already at college, and often acted as role models for them.

In the beginning, I really didn't think of you know attending college.... I'm actually a DACA recipient so that made it a little bit hard to think of.... Thankfully, I received the help and .... I wasn't sure what to do, so I just you know followed my older sister... and I'm thankful to have that. If not, I would have not known anything, not even how to register for classes, what building I was supposed to go to, where the bathrooms are even or even how to check my grades... she helped me a lot, I know I have other friends that navigated by themselves, and It was hard, but I was glad that I had my sister   (Paula)

I have an older sister; we are 11 months apart.... she finished her Associate's degree and she will be graduating in Spring of this year....she has definitely been a great role model for myself and she has always pushed me.........and just having her as someone that I can always talk to about school or like even times, when I'm like I want to drop out, she's like "No you're not going to drop out.' So her support has been someone that has always like helped me along the way.. to understand what it is to go through like undergrad as a first gen and as a Latina too   (Rocio)

My sister was the one who really was able to pinpoint and actually direct me to exact departments or names here at Valley University that I was able to access and I eventually did   (Luis)

Having parents with no college education was challenging enough for these students, but they drew support from siblings who had gone before them to college, paving the way for these respondents to achieve their college education goals.

Summary on Community Cultural Wealth

The reports offered by study participants draw attention to how these Latinx FGCS activated their community cultural wealth to persevere while pursuing their college degree in spite of severe challenges. The forms of community cultural wealth that were most visible in this study were familial, aspirational and social capital. Familial capital provided participants emotional support, encouragement through sharing the family's history, dichos or cultural sayings, and the meeting of basic needs. Participants also discussed their aspirational capital which they nurtured through their high aspirations, and which were also inspired by family. Lastly, social capital was demonstrated through peer support. The enacting of these forms of CCW supported participants 'ability to persist to graduation. The next chapter analyzes these findings further in relation to the grounding theoretical framework, existing literature and presents recommendations for policy, practice, and future research.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to contribute to the literature on the experiences of the Latinx FGCS, their strengths, how they navigate college successfully, as well as effective program interventions. The research addressed: 1. the supports that contribute to the acquisition of dominant, middle class cultural and social capital for Latinx first generation college students according to students and program administrators (Research Question 1); and 2. The constituent components of Latinx first generation college students' Community Cultural Wealth that contribute to advancing their education (Research Question 2).

This chapter discusses the main findings of this study in relation to cultural and social capital theories, and the community cultural wealth framework. It offers a model for supporting Latinx FGCS and concludes with recommendations for policy, practice, and future research.

Institutional Agents: Cultural Capital, Social Capital for Latinx FGCS

This research found that institutional agents played a critical role at Valley university in supporting, creating and linking Latinx FGCS to cultural and social capital. While the enrollment of Latinx students in institutions of higher education has experienced a significant increase, Latinx students continue to experience challenges obtaining four-year degrees (Fry 2002; Krogstad 2015; Salinas 2017. And within FGCS, those with parents who do not have a four-year degree (Davis 2010), Latinx FGCS have the lowest rates of graduation (Kouyoumdjian, Guzman, Garcia, and Talavera-Bustillos 2017; Krogstad 2015). Because Latinx FGCS parents generally have no college

experience, like other FGCS students they lack insider knowledge or dominant cultural capital on how to be a successful college student (Collier and Morgan 2008). Social capital on the other hand focuses on the relationships that provides access to this insider knowledge and behaviors that can be used to promote educational success. One-way institutions of higher education have helped support the acquisition of dominant, middle class cultural capital and social capital is through the work of institutional agents.

This research confirms that successful college students likely profited from the support they received while journeying through college (Almeida, Byrne, Smith, Ruiz 2019). The Latinx FGCS participants spoke highly of the support they received from institutional agents. Institutional agents in this study included program administrators and faculty members. They acted in various ways "to transmit directly, or negotiate the transmission of, institutional resources and opportunities" (Stanton-Salazar 1997:6). The literature identifies four categories of institutional agents which are: direct support, integrative support, system developer and system linkage and networking support. These four categories also include various action areas: Direct support comprises five: resource agent, knowledge agent, advisor, advocate and networking coach. Integrative support comprises two: integrative agent and cultural guide. System developer comprises three: program developer, lobbyist and political advocate; and system linkage and networking support includes four: recruiter, bridging agent, institutional broker and coordinator.

The institutional agents in this study enacted roles across the four categories, to provide study participants with valuable knowledge of academic life and also provided a source of dominant capital accumulation. For example, at the high school level, Luna shared how her 4th grade teacher who is currently an Assistant Principal encouraged and

128

supported her dreams of becoming a bilingual teacher. Pilar and Salvador described how Luisa a program administrator supported them in their transition to college with Luisa guiding Pilar with her college application and filling a parental gap for Salvador as she helped him locate an apartment. Similarly, Rocio expressed appreciation for support from a faculty advisor who invested in providing her with critical information as she explored pursuing a career path in Psychology. Relationships with these institutional agents provided study participants with dominant cultural capital to navigate the campus terrain. It also helped them build and expand their social networks. Paula and Diana's experience with a faculty who connected them with an opportunity to work on community projects exemplifies this. This finding on the support provided by program administrators and faculty was consistent with the literature on institutional agents and how they utilize their knowledge of the academic culture to help Latinx students be successful within existing systems (Garcia and Ramirez 2018).

While study participants expressed great appreciation for actions of institutional agents that directly supported them, they didn't seem to care about the different categories of institutional agent roles. What mattered most to them was the trust and relationship they were able to build with these institutional agents which the literature shows can help promote success for this population (Bensimon et. al 2019; Garcia and Ramirez 2018).

Furthermore, this study found that institutional agents conveyed social and cultural capital through the support programs that engaged Latinx FGCS. Support programs prior to college focused on providing participants with sufficient cultural and social capital to access college. This was through providing college knowledge, campus

tours, advisor and mentoring support, ACT/SAT prep, meeting with college

representatives. These programs encouraged the possibility of college as a reality for

these Latinx FGCS students. In college, the mechanisms institutional agents utilized to

convey social and cultural capital featured a variety of programmatic components

embedded in the structure of the support programs. They include scholarships, advising,

mentoring, academic support classes, enrichment workshops, cohort style arrangements,

student clubs and writing center help and enrichment activities. Study participants in their

responses confirmed the benefits conferred by these components in helping them remain

successful. Furthermore, majority of these programmatic components were available to

the study participants throughout their time at VU reflecting consistency with the

literature on support programs (Hallet et. al 2020).

The literature also highlights High Impact Practices (HIPs) defined as

institutionally structured experiences and activities that deepen learning and increase

student engagement" (Conefrey 2018:3), and their role in supporting FGCS (Finley and

McNair, 2013). Valley University offered 7 out of the 11 identified HIPs which included

First year seminars (FYS), learning communities, writing intensive courses,

undergraduate research opportunities, internships, service learning and capstone courses

and projects. Participants such as Carlos, Pilar, Olivia who spoke about HIPs reflected on

the benefit of the FYS classes facilitated by MSS and TRIO which provided them with

information on how to be successful in college. When I worked at VU, I taught the FYS

class for MSS students. The curriculum focused on college knowledge related to

academic success such as time management skills, study habits, understanding degree

expectations, utilizing a variety of campus resources, both academic and social, creating

an educational plan and similar measures to support Latinx FGCS success. All these were

geared towards contributing to their cultural and social capital. Moreover, I observed

students participating in capstone courses and service-learning opportunities with some

Latinx FGCS eventually leading some of these service learning trips. My evaluation of

the service learning is that at least for some students; the service learning was important

as it fed into their interests in giving back to the community. Overall, aside from the FYS

classes, participants did not mention the impact of HIPs on helping them remain

successful. Not mentioning them could be just because I didn't explore them directly.

Alternatively, maybe they didn't appreciate them at that time. Due to this, we don't really

know how important the HIPs are. This would be an area for further research.

To sum up, institutional agents acted as a bridge in connecting Latinx FGCS to

college knowledge or cultural capital, and social networks that increased their social

capital which contributed to helping them remain successful. A variety of programmatic

components identified previously were the mechanisms through which institutional

agents conveyed cultural and social capital to the Latinx FGCS in this study. As study

participants accumulated additional social and cultural capital, they were not only

interested in securing opportunities for themselves. Rather, they were invested in giving

back to other Latinx FGCS. This is reflective of the collectivistic nature of the Latinx

community which the community cultural wealth framework highlights. This will be

dissected further in the next section.

Community Cultural Wealth and Latinx FGCS

Culturally, the Latinx culture is collectivistic. The maintaining of community connections provides strength needed to succeed through the educational process for Latinx FGCS (Gloria and Castellanos 2012). The results of this study reiterates the importance of community for the Latinx FGCS population. Study participants defined community quite simply as people around them who provided them with support. This description was inclusive of individuals beyond their immediate family. Community also connected the Latinx FGCS in this study to a community of co-ethnics who they can be authentic with and who truly understand their experiences- this includes Latinx FGCS and administrators with Latinx backgrounds. Luna and Rocio's experiences provide noteworthy examples.

Integrated in the discussion of the importance of community is the need for a dedicated space. Such a space provided the Latinx FGCS in this study a safe and supportive environment where they could feel validated, a place to study in between classes or prior to going home, a place to grab a quick snack, and a place where their culture could be celebrated and honored. Mateo, a program administrator described this dedicated space as "a center where you know they [Latinx FGCS] can see cultural representation of their background, whether it's language, whether it's art..... Some place they feel comfortable they can go and just hang out and make those connections". The additional benefit of having a dedicated space benefit is the creation of a sense of belonging which the literature has shown impacts retention (Strayhorn 2017) especially for Latinx students who often perceive the campus environment as unwelcoming (Castellanos and Jones 2003).

Ultimately, in recognition of their commitment to their community, study participants in were not satisfied with simply improving their lives. They found ways to consistently give back by creating a pipeline for younger siblings or cousins, as well as by programs administrators with Latinx backgrounds who provided guidance to pave the way for other Latinx FGCS.

The Latinx FGCS in this study also employed their community cultural wealth (CCW) in navigating college. CCW based in critical race theory is an antideficit and asset-based framework for illuminating the capital that exists in marginalized communities (Yosso 2005). CCW centers the capital found in communities of color. CCW comprises six forms of cultural wealth which include: aspirational, familial social, navigational, linguistic, and resistant capital. These forms of capital are interconnected and often overlap. In this study, participants were able to employ familial, aspirational, and social capital as they journeyed through college.

Familial Capital

Familial capital according to Yosso (2005) describes the support provided by immediate and extended family members. It was utilized by all study participants who described the support they received from their families in four main ways which include: emotional support, dichos or cultural sayings, encouragement through sharing the family's history and the meeting of basic needs. The literature notes the importance of familismo among Latinx, i.e. the close ties between kin and a prioritization of group needs over individual needs (Desmond and López Turley 2009; Gloria and Castellanos 2012). In this study as in the literature, family members influenced, motivated and

133

provided strength needed to succeed through the educational process for Latinx FGCS (Gloria and Castellanos 2012). Study participants also relied on their family as a source of hope that provided the students with aspirational capital, which is discussed in the next section.

Several of the participants indicated how valuable the support from their families was to them especially since they could not support them financially. Additionally, family support was also appreciated by participants as it served as a source of encouragement during difficult times, helping them stay the course towards graduation. This confirmed findings from previous work in which Latino/a students described their family as critical in supporting their ability to graduate from a four-year university (Kouyoumdjian et al. 2017).

One common assumption in the literature is that FGCS parents are opposed to their children pursuing higher education as they don't necessarily see the value of a college education (Engle 2007). This deficit assumption also applies to Latinx students who are said to come from families that do not place a high value of education (Delgado-Gaitan 2004; Quiocho and Daoud 2006). The results of this study are contrary to this literature as study participants described how their parents emphasized the value and benefit of education in helping them lead more fulfilling lives. The Latinx FGCS parents in this study were supportive of their children's educational goals. The deficit was not a value on education, but that parents did not specifically know how to help them with their college related concerns due to them not having previous higher education experience. Inspite of this, they provided much needed encouragement and emotional support.

Aspirational Capital

Aspirational capital refers to the hopes and dreams for the future in the face of adversity (Yosso 2005). In this study, five participants (Pedro, Luna, Laura, Olivia and Diana) demonstrated nurturing aspirational capital early on in life. For some, this emerged from early exposure to financial challenges with families being in jobs that didn't pay well. This contributed to their understanding of the need for a college education to improve their lives and the lives of their families. Others had visions of themselves in specific careers such as Laura who aspired to become a bilingual teacher and pursued this course diligently. These five participants were driven by the desire for a better future.

Furthermore, aspirational capital was nurtured by participants' families who had high hopes for their children's education. Parents instilled college going expectations and emphasized the importance of education as they perceived it to be an avenue through which their children could finally attain the life they hoped for. Study participants were also driven to make their parents proud as they understood and were deeply appreciative of the sacrifices their parents made to provide them with a better life. This inspired them to remain committed to their educational goals, for example Rocio has a dream to "complete my education, one undergraduate, and then pursue a master's degree", she also envisions herself with a doctorate. This finding echoes findings from other studies (Espino 2016; Matos 2015) which highlighted how Latinx parents encouraged their children in the pursuit of their higher education goals as an avenue to better opportunities.

Social Capital

Social capital defined as "networks of people and community resources" (Yosso 2005:79). It also includes extended family that provide instrumental and emotional support. Social capital was demonstrated in this study through the support of peers and relatives. Study participants described being inspired and motivated to pursue their college education by peers who left to college. This was congruent with Olivia and Pablo's experiences.

Social capital also encompasses the idea of "lifting as we climb" Yosso (2005). Peers connected study participants to meaningful resources such as study groups, information on classes, professors, support programs as well as vital information that helped the Latinx FGCS on their higher education journey. Luna commented on how she depended on her friend who shared information on housing and financial aid. Laura also discussed the support and insider information she received as to her classes and professors in the Bilingual Teachers Scholar program. These students' actions show that they are not just pursuing their higher education goals for themselves, rather they position themselves in these places to also help those coming after them.

Peers as co-ethnics, provided study participants companionship and a sense of comfort in understanding their dual background experiences as Latinx and as first-generation college students. Luis in recognizing the critical nature of this kind of support notes that "the power of collective community, it's just, it's beyond". Likewise, Carlos reflected on the support he received from the Latino fraternity that provided friendship and a community with individuals of a similar background journeying through college together.

And finally, study participants aunts and uncles provided emotional support reminding them constantly that they were capable and smart enough. Siblings who had gone before them acted as role models, provided guidance, and reinforced the idea that college was possible. This finding aligns with previous literature that proposes that family members with previous college experience serve as role models (Gonzalez, Stoner and Jovel 2003; Sanchez, Reyes and Singh 2006).

Latinx FGCS drew on three main forms of capital, viz., familial, aspirational, and social capital described by Yosso (2005). It should be noted that even though these forms of capital were discussed separately, in reality there is an interconnectedness amongst the forms of capital. Latinx FGCS familial capital, based in their family's histories, and often retold with dichos or cultural sayings provides support and encouragement for the aspirational capital which students use to access college. In college, Latinx FGCS utilized the social capital from siblings and peers specifically co-ethnics who have gone before them to situate themselves in being successful in college. And finally due to their collectivistic nature, they give back to their community through mentoring, role modeling and in other ways that helps to move the Latinx community forward.

Critiquing Cultural Capital, Social Capital and CCW

The enrollment of Latinx students in institutions of higher education has experienced a significant increase, however, Latinx students continue to experience challenges obtaining four-year degrees (Fry 2002; Krogstad 2015; Salinas 2017). Cultural and social capital theories have often been used to explain this difference in achievement (Lohfink and Paulsen 2005; Saenz, Hurtado, Barrera, Wolf, and Yeung 2007). However,

137

these theories are insufficient in that they assume that some forms of capital are "better," and more productive than others, as they have traditionally valued white middle class norms as capital (Mobley and Brawner 2019; Yosso 2005). By implication, the capital of minorities, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and first-generation students are considered deficient. Additionally, both social and cultural capital blames the victim rather than recognizing assets that can be "productive," and that students utilize in advancing their college goals. Moreover, these theories focus on how to advance individual needs which is contrary to the Latinx culture.

Yosso's CCW seems to offer a better explanation of what works in supporting Latinx FGCS in the attainment of their higher education. CCW acknowledges the natural way the Latinx community operates as it focuses on values of familsmo, communidad and the interconnectedness of the Latinx community. It offers a communal way of understanding how Latinx FGCS aspire and achieve success while holding the door open for others coming behind them, reflecting how they lift others up as they climb (Yosso 2005). CCW also recognizes the capital Latinx FGCS bring from their home communities, and how this capital has sustained them in navigating a system founded on white, middle-class values.

One area of critique for Yosso is her formulation of the concept of social capital which is slightly vague seeing as she defines it as "networks of people and community resources" or "peers and social contacts", (Yosso 2005:79). However, considering that CCW centers the experiences of communities of color and how they navigate oppressive system, it is safe to assume that the emotional and instrumental support Yosso refers to is derived specifically from students' co-ethnic communities of color.

Contributions to the Field

      This qualitative case study shared responses from Latinx FGCS, both current students and alumni, sharing their lived experiences as to the ways they successfully navigated college. This included support from their family, relatives, and community of co-ethnics. In addition, this study shared details of how Latinx FGCS build community**;** through friendships and mentoring relationships that existed in high school, elder siblings, with classmates in particular classes in college, engagement with student support programs and involvement with campus clubs. This is one way the current literature was extended.

      In addition, below, I offer the *Power of Collective Community* [1] model as a method for how Latinx FGCS can be supported as they progress through higher education. Latinx FGCS community is comprised of their immediate family and their social network which is made up of family, peers who are co-ethnics, and institutional agents. Their family provided them the drive to aspire to college. In addition, relatives and peers provided them with emotional and instrumental support. However navigating college proved challenging at times due to them being pioneers, the first in their family to attend college. Family, relatives, and peers empowered them with CCW which provided them with support and encouragement, while institutional agents provided cultural and social capital to help mitigate some of these challenges on their higher education journey. As Latinx FGCS gained opportunities, they reinforced their CCW and sought to expand and create space for other Latinx FGCS. It is important to note though that not every Latinx FGCS does it like this and not every Latinx FGCS lived experience fits into this
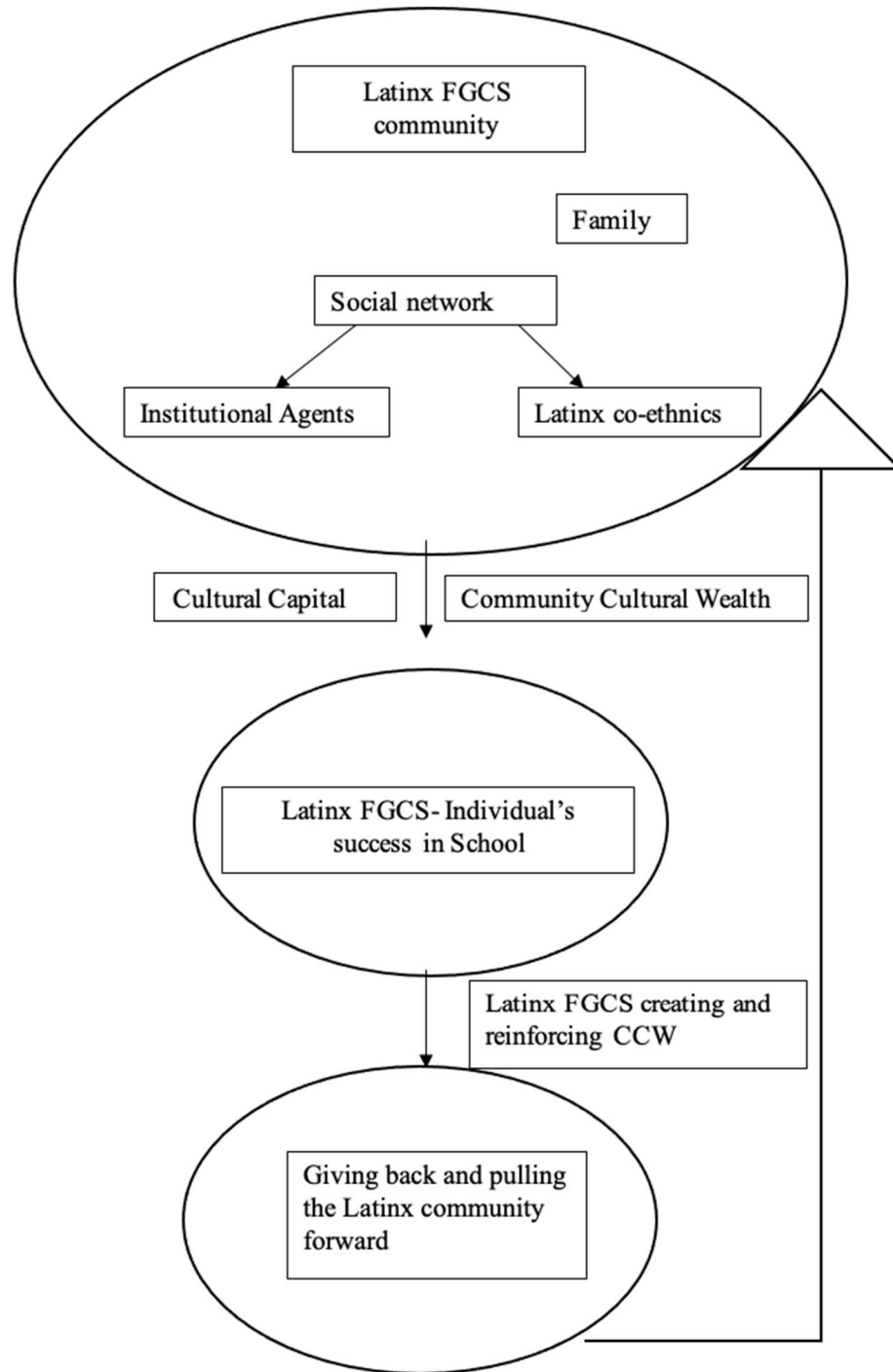
---

[1] Power of Collective Community was a quote used by Luis

model as there are other elements and processes that exist. But this is a critical process that can help facilitate Latinx FGCS success at the college level.

Figure 5.1

Power of Collective Community
A model for Latinx FGCS Success

Recommendations for Practice

Considering the data which projects that the Latinx population is expected to account for a significant percentage of the US population by 2060, (U.S. Census Bureau 2017), it is critical to understand what works in supporting Latinx FGCS in persisting to graduation. Latinx FGCS live and seek to advance their education within a system that is oppressive, and that was created to benefit the majority (McLaren 2015). As such, a lot of current institutional policies do not serve the goals of this population. One of such policies I encountered in my experience is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Enacted in 1974, FERPA assigns privacy rights to the student (Ramirez 2009). That is students at institutions of higher education have sole access to their educational records. Parents are only allowed to have access to their student's information unless their student has given prior consent (Ramirez 2009). As seen throughout this study, as well as through existing literature, Latinx families are supportive and have high expectations for their children's success (Delgado-Gaitan 2004; Quiocho and Daoud 2006). This Act and similar policies do not take into consideration the Latinx culture that drives parental involvement. Moreover, Latinx's collectivistic nature, as well as values such as familismo encourages parental concerns for the educational success of their children. As such institutions should evaluate the impact of such policies possibly acting as a barrier to Latinx FGCS success.

Relatedly, initiatives that seek to increase Latinx family engagement should be encouraged. This could be by having annual bilingual events with a family focus,

bilingual newsletters informing parents of campus resources aimed at supporting their students, providing workshops to parents to help their understanding of the college application process, as well as what life as a college student entails and how to help their children be successful. Institutions could also consider having some of these programs in communities where Latinx FGCS reside to address possible transportation concerns or time constraints concerns. The purpose of all this being to engage and support Latinx parents as they themselves work to support their children.

For Latinx FGCS, institutions should continue to provide critical programmatic components such as advising, mentoring, academic support classes with a Latinx focus and other similar beneficial supports previously highlighted. One campus resource Latinx FGCS in this study indicated they would have appreciated more support from was career services. Four students Pilar, Paula, Rocio and Gael indicated utilizing their services only because it was a requirement for class. Beyond this, they barely interacted with this service. For Salvador career services "was more for regular students with a traditional background". He explained further, "I wasn't thinking about a career, I wasn't thinking about where I was going to work, I was thinking about surviving the experience". Perhaps this provides some insight into why other Latinx FGCS in this study may not have utilized this service. Moreover, students often need help connecting the dots with regards to how a college major translates to possible career options. Given that the purpose of career services is to address this gap and engage students in their career development, institutions should seek ways to bring this service to Latinx FGCS and not always expect them to visit on their own. This should also occur at every stage of Latinx FGCS college experience.

The concept of dedicated space for Latinx student should be emphasized. Being around other Latinx FGCS provided comfort in that there were others who they could be authentic with and who understood their background and lived experiences. Such a space could also be used to further support the identity development of Latinx students. Luisa a program administrator was apt in pointing out this need as she commented that Latinx students were expected to represent their culture even though they just went through an education system that doesn't teach or encourage the embracing of their culture. Having a dedicated space not only meets the above needs, it also lets Latinx students know that they are seen, and their presence is valued by the university. Moreover, the enhancement of Latinx FGCS leadership skills can also be encouraged in this dedicated space and consequently prepare them to be competitive in the job market.

Support of faculty is also crucial for ensuring the continued success of this population. While some students indicated receiving support from faculty, some would have appreciated more support. In my experience at VU, this was a consistent challenge as some faculty were not sensitive to the background experiences of Latinx FGC. Continuous education around this is needed. Class curriculum should also be expanded to give room for Latinx students to share their experiences. Sarah a program administrator offers an example with assignments that allows students to write and read a poem in Spanish, and then translate it to English for other members of the class. Sarah also teaches a Families and Society class and helps Latinx students connect to the class material by providing opportunities for them to share relevant stories about their family. Related to this is constantly finding ways to increase the number of Latinx staff at

institutions to continue to provide support in the form of being role models, as well as continuing the tradition of "lifting as we climb" (Yosso 2005).

Furthermore, this study found that institutional agents played a crucial role in supporting Latinx FGCS, most especially institutional agents of color. These agents had a dual function in that they provided Latinx FGCS with cultural and social capital, but as members of a co-ethnic community they provided and helped to reinforce Latinx FGCS' CCW. Given this important role, institutions should continue to seek ways to augment institutional agents of color support to Latinx FGCS.

Overall, an attitude shift on the part of institutions of higher education that recognizes the experiences of Latinx FGCS, that acknowledges their CCW and that seeks to develop programs and initiatives that centers Latinx FGCS should contribute to the realization of this population's educational goals.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This qualitative case study has several limitations and offers opportunities for future research. For example, the sample size and non- probability method of sample selections will impact the generalizability of findings as the stories of those interviewed cannot be representative of the experience of the Latinx FGCS population. Future research could benefit from a larger study to more fully examine the various forms of community cultural wealth. In addition, such a study can be conducted with other communities of color for example with first generation college students who identify as African American or Pacific Islander.

Furthermore, qualitative research is subjective and could be influenced by researcher bias especially since the researcher worked at this setting in the past. Moreover, the study's population consisted majorly of students who attended VU, with only one other student attending a different university. We thus will not know if what emerges as significant would be because of VU or the students who attended VU. Future studies could replicate this study at other institutions.

Moreover, this research is subject to a positive bias of selecting on the dependent variable. In other words, I selected and interviewed students who were successful, at least at gaining entrance to the VU and in the case of alums having graduated from VU. I did not have the opportunity to interview students who may have wanted to attend college or began college and then dropped out. I cannot make a comparison between those who are or were successful and those who were not. Without further research, we cannot know if the same or similar results would obtain if we had the resources to sample the entire student population at universities in the Pacific Northwest, let alone those Latinx who have not attended college. This presents an additional opportunity for future investigations.

Since the study was mainly at one university, Valley University, we may argue that the results may transfer to similar populations at other universities, but we cannot know until further research is conducted. And finally, more research on how institutions of higher education can center the experiences of Latinx FGCS, as well as meaningful ways to engage their families would be beneficial to study.

Delimitations

The focus of this research involves first-generation Latinx students in one mid-size public university in the Pacific Northwest. The researcher focused on the experiences of first- generation Latinx students in higher education and observed the factors that positively contributed to the success of these Latinx FGCS. I chose to select Latinx FGCS who were juniors, seniors or alumni who having experienced college for at least two years could better speak to factors that contributed to their success. Program administrators of support programs for Latinx FGCS were also interviewed to understand how they supported the Latinx FGCS in this study. The university in this study was chosen given that it is designated as an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with 15% of the students identifying as Hispanic.

Conclusion

This research study sought to give voice to the experiences of successful Latinx FGCS and also challenge the existing deficit perspective surrounding this population. Findings reinforce Yosso's notion that Latinx FGC can be successful with capital from their home community. In sharing their stories, study participants revealed major sources of support which included family, extended family members, a community of co-ethnics and institutional agents. Additionally, as they progressed, they created opportunities and space for other Latinx FGCS. This process is illustrated in my theoretical contribution, *the Power of Collective Community* model. As the Latinx population is expected to account for a significant percentage of the US population by 2060 (U.S. Census Bureau 2017), it is crucial that institutions of higher education acknowledge Latinx cultural

values, strengths, and assets to support Latinx FGCS as they advance their higher

education goals.

References

Adelante Mujeres. 2021. "About Us". Retrieved December 7, 2021
        (https://www.adelantemujeres.org/about-us)

Advancement Via Individual Determination. 2021. "What is AVID?". Retrieved
        December 7, 2021 (https://www.avid.org/what-avid-is).

Almeida, Daniel J., Andrew M. Byrne, Rachel M. Smith, and Saul Ruiz. 2019. "How
        Relevant Is Grit? The Importance of Social Capital in First-Generation College
        Students' Academic Success." *Journal of College Student Retention: Research,
        Theory & Practice* 1521025119854688. doi: 10.1177/1521025119854688.

American Academy of Arts and Sciences . (2017). The future of undergraduate
        education: The future of America. Cambridge, MA: American Academy of Arts
        and Sciences.

Araujo, Blanca E. 2012. "Knowledge From the Fields: A Migrant Farmworker Student's
        Community Cultural Wealth." *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*
        6(2):85–98. doi: 10.1080/15595692.2012.662549.

Arbeit Caren A., Sandra Staklis and Laura Horn (2016). New American Undergraduates:
        Enrollment Trends and Age at Arrival of Immigrant and Second-Generation
        Students (NCES 2017-414). U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC:
        National Center for   Education Statistics. Retrieved from
        https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED570890.pdf.

Aud, Susan, William Hussar, Frank Johnson, Grace Kena, Erin Roth, Eileen Manning,
        Xiaolei Wang and Jijun Zhang. (2012). The Condition of Education 2012 (NCES
        2012-045). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education
        Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch.

Bell, Angela D., Heather T. Rowan-Kenyon, and Laura W. Perna. 2009. "College
        Knowledge of 9th and 11th Grade Students: Variation by School and State
        Context." *The Journal of Higher Education* 80(6):663–85.

Bensimon, Estela Mara, Alicia C. Dowd, Ricardo Stanton-Salazar, and Brianne A.
        Dávila. 2019. "The Role of Institutional Agents in Providing Institutional Support
        to Latinx Students in STEM." *The Review of Higher Education* 42(4):1689–1721.
        doi: 10.1353/rhe.2019.0080

Berg, Bruce L. 2009. Qualitative Research Methods. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Bergerson, Amy.A. 2009. "College choice as a comprehensive process". *ASHE Higher
        Education Report* 35(4): 21-46.

Berger, Roni. 2015. "Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research". *Qualitative Research 15*(2): 219-234.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction." In *Power and Ideology in Education* (pp. 487-511)*,* edited by Karabel and Halsey. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.) Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education. New York, Greenwood, 241-258.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Passeron, Jean-Claude. 1977. *Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture.* London: Sage.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Wacquant, Loïc J. D. (1992). *An invitation to Reflexive Sociology.* University of Chicago Press

Bui, Khanh Van T. 2002. "First-generation college students at a four-year university: background characteristics, reasons for pursuing higher education, and first-year experiences." *College Student Journal* 36 (1):3-11

Castellanos, Jeanett, and Lee Jones, 2003. *The Majority in the Minority: Expanding the Representation of Latina/o Faculty, Administrators, and Students in Higher Education* (1st ed.). Sterling, VA: Stylus Pub.

Cataldi, Emily. F., Bennett, Christopher. T., and Chen, Xianglei. 2018. "First-generation students: College access, persistence, and postbachelor's outcomes". Stats in Brief. NCES   2018-421. National Center for Education Statistics.

Cavazos, Javier, Michael B. Johnson, Cheryl Fielding, Alyssa G. Cavazos, Veronica Castro, and Luti Vela. 2010. "A Qualitative Study of Resilient Latina/o College Students." *Journal of Latinos and Education* 9(3):172–88. doi: 10.1080/15348431003761166.

Carey, Roderick L. 2016. "'Keep That in Mind…You're Gonna Go to College': Family Influence on the College Going Processes of Black and Latino High School Boys." *The Urban Review* 48(5):718–42. doi: 10.1007/s11256-016-0375-8.

Cerda-Lizarraga, Patricia R. 2015. "Latina/o First Generation College Students and College Adjustment: An Examination of Family Support Processes" (Doctoral dissertation). The University of Nebraska- Lincoln.

Chen, Xianglei., and Carroll, C. D. 2005. First-Generation Students in Postsecondary Education: A Look at Their College Transcripts. Postsecondary Education Descriptive Analysis Report. NCES 2005-171. National Center for Education Statistics.

Choy, Susan. 2001. Students whose parents did not go to college: Postsecondary access, persistence and attainment. *Findings from the Condition of Education*. Educational Resources Information Center, & MPR Associates, Berkeley, CA. Distributed by ERIC Clearinghouse.

Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94: S95-S120.

Coleman, James S. 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Coleman, James. S., Campbell, Ernest. Q., Hobson, Carol. J., McPartland, James., Mood, Alexander. M., Weinfeld, Frederic. D., and York, Robert. L. 1966. Equality of educational opportunity. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

College Possible. 2021. "Our Story". Retrieved December 7, 2021 (https://collegepossible.org/our-story/).

Collier, Peter J., and David L. Morgan. 2008. "'Is That Paper Really Due Today?': Differences in First-Generation and Traditional College Students' Understandings of Faculty Expectations." *Higher Education* 55(4):425–46.

Conefrey, Theresa. 2018. "Supporting First-Generation Students' Adjustment to College With High-Impact Practices." *Journal of College Student Retention : Research, Theory & Practice* 152102511880740-. doi: 10.1177/1521025118807402.

Conley, D. 2013. *You may ask yourself : An introduction to thinking like a sociologist* (3rd ed.). New York: W.W. Norton &.

Creswell, John. W. 2007. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (2nd ed.)*. California, USA: Sage Publications.

Creswell, John. W. 2008. *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (3rd ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Crisp, Gloria, Amaury Nora, and Amanda Taggart. 2009. "Student Characteristics, Pre-College, College, and Environmental Factors as Predictors of Majoring in and Earning a STEM Degree: An Analysis of Students Attending a Hispanic Serving Institution." *American Educational Research Journal* 46(4):924–42.

Davis, Jeff. 2010. The First-Generation Student Experience Implications for Campus Practice, and Strategies for Improving Persistence and Success (An ACPA Publication). Sterling: Stylus Publishing.

Delgado-Gaitan, Concha. 2004. *Involving Latino Parents in Schools: Raising Student Achievement through Home-school Partnerships*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Demetriou, Cynthia, Judith Meece, Deborah Eaker-Rich, and Candice Powell. 2017. "The Activities, Roles, and Relationships of Successful First-Generation College Students." *Journal of College Student Development* 58(1):19–36. doi: 10.1353/csd.2017.0001.

DeNicolo, Christina Passos, Mónica González, Socorro Morales, and Laura Romaní. 2015. "Teaching Through *Testimonio:* Accessing Community Cultural Wealth in School." *Journal of Latinos and Education* 14(4):228–43. doi: 10.1080/15348431.2014.1000541.

Denzin, Norman K., and Lincoln, Yvonna. S. 2005. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd.

Desmond, Matthew, and Ruth N. López Turley. 2009. "The Role of Familism in Explaining the Hispanic-White College Application Gap." *Social Problems* 56(2):311–34. doi: 10.1525/sp.2009.56.2.311.

Douglas, Daniel, and Paul Attewell. 2014. "The Bridge and the Troll Underneath: Summer Bridge Programs and Degree Completion." *American Journal of Education* 121(1):87– 109. doi: 10.1086/677959.

Dumais, Susan A. 2015. "Cultural Capital and Education." Pp. 375–81 in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences (Second Edition)*, edited by J. D. Wright. Oxford: Elsevier.

Dumais, Susan A., and Aaryn Ward. 2010. "Cultural Capital and First-Generation College Success." *Poetics (Amsterdam)* 38(3):245–265. doi: 10.1016/j.poetic.2009.11.011.

Early, Jessica Singer. 2010. "'Mi'ja, You Should Be a Writer': Latino Parental Support of Their First-Generation Children." *Bilingual Research Journal* 33(3):277–91. doi: 0.1080/15235882.2010.529348.

Engle, Jennifer. 2007. "Postsecondary Access and Success for First-Generation College Students. *American Academic* 3, 25-48.

Engle, J., Bermeo, Adolfo, O'Brien, Colleen, & Educational Resources Information Center. 2006. *Straight from the Source What Works for First-Generation College Students*. Distributed by ERIC Clearinghouse.

Engle, Jennifer and Vincent Tinto. 2008. *Moving Beyond Access: College Success for Low-Income, First-Generation Students*. Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, 2008-11.

Espino, Michelle M. 2016. "The Value of Education and *Educación* : Nurturing Mexican American Children's Educational Aspirations to the Doctorate." *Journal of Latinos and Education* 15(2):73–90. doi: 10.1080/15348431.2015.1066250.

Espinoza-Herold, Mariella. 2007. "Stepping beyond *Si Se Puede: Dichos* as a Cultural Resource in Mother?Daughter Interaction in a Latino Family." *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 38(3):260–77. doi: 10.1525/aeq.2007.38.3.260.

Eynon, Bret and Laura M. Gambino. 2016. *High Impact EPortfolio Practice: A Catalyst for Student, Faculty, and Institutional Learning* (1st ed.). Herndon, VA: Stylus Publishing

Finley, Ashley, and Tia McNair. 2013. "Assessing Underserved Students' Engagement in High-Impact Practices.". Retrieved June 13, 2021 (https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/bitstream/handle/10919/87004/AssessingUnderservingStudents.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

Franke, Ray., Hurtado, Sylvia., Pryor, John. H., and Tran, Serge. 2011. "Completing College: Assessing Graduation Rates at Four-year Institutions. Los Angeles, CA: Higher Education Research Institute, Graduation School of Education & Information Studies, University of California.

Fry, Richard. 2002. *Latinos in Higher Education: Many Enroll, Too Few Graduate*. Pew Hispanic Center, 1919 M Street, NW, Suite 460, Washington, DC 20036.

Gandara, Patricia., and Contreras, Frances. 2009. *The Latino Education Crisis: The Consequences of Failed Social Policies*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Garcia, Gina A., and Jenesis J. Ramirez. 2018. "Institutional Agents at a Hispanic Serving Institution: Using Social Capital to Empower Students." *Urban Education* 53(3):355–81. doi: 10.1177/0042085915623341.

Gibbons, Melinda. M. and Shoffner, Marie. F. 2004. "Prospective First-Generation College Students: Meeting their Needs Through Social Cognitive Career Theory". *Professional   School Counseling*, 8: 91-97.

Gist-Mackey, Angela N., Marissa L. Wiley, and Joseph Erba. 2018. "'You're Doing Great. Keep Doing What You're Doing': Socially Supportive Communication during First-Generation College Students' Socialization." *Communication Education* 67(1):52–72. doi: 10.1080/03634523.2017.1390590.

Gloria, Alberta M., and Jeanett Castellanos. 2009. "Latinas/os and Their Communities" in *Psychology education and training from culture-specific and multiracial perspectives: Critical issues and recommendations*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Retrieved Jan 10, 2021 (http://www.apa.org/pi/oema)

Gloria, Alberta M., and Jeanett Castellanos. 2012. "Desafíos y Bendiciones: A Multiperspective Examination of the Educational Experiences and Coping Responses of First-Generation College Latina Students." *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 11(1):82–99. doi: 10.1177/1538192711430382.

González, Kenneth P., Carla Stoner, and Jennifer E. Jovel. 2003. "Examining the Role of Social Capital in Access to College for Latinas: Toward a College Opportunity Framework." *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 2(2):146–70. doi: 10.1177/1538192702250620.

Gonzalez, Salome. B. 2019. "Exploring the Role of Community Cultural Wealth in How Minority" First-Generation College Students Persevere in Graduate School (Doctoral dissertation). Grand Canyon University.

Greater Than. 2021. "Our Model". Retrieved December 7, 2021 (https://www.greater-than.org/our-model).

Gullatt, Yvette and Wendy Jan. 2003. *How Do Pre-Collegiate Academic Outreach Programs Impact College-Going among Underrepresented Students*. Retrieved from http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.483.7094&rep=rep1&type=pdf

Hallett, Ronald E., Adrianna Kezar, Rosemary J. Perez, and Joseph A. Kitchen. 2020. "A Typology of College Transition and Support Programs: Situating a 2-Year Comprehensive College Transition Program Within College Access." *The American Behavioral Scientist (Beverly Hills)* 64(3):230–252. doi: 10.1177/0002764219869410.

Hays, Danica and Singh, Anneliese A. 2012. *Qualitative inquiry in clinical and educational settings*. New York, NY: The Guildford Press

Hill, Ian. 2012. "An international model of world-class education: The international baccalaureate". *Prospects* 42(3):341-359. doi.org/10.1007/s11125-012-9243- 9

Holcombe, Elizabeth, and Adrianna Kezar. 2020. "Ensuring Success Among First-Generation, Low-Income, and Underserved Minority Students: Developing a Unified Community of Support." *The American Behavioral Scientist (Beverly Hills)* 64(3):349–369. doi: 10.1177/0002764219869413.

Holland, Nicole E. 2017. "Beyond Conventional Wisdom: Community Cultural Wealth and the College Knowledge of African American Youth in the United States." *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 20(6):796–810. doi: 10.1080/13613324.2016.1150823.

Horn, Laura., and Anne-Marie Nunez. 2000. "Mapping the Road to College: First-Generation Students' Math Track, Planning Strategies, and context of support". Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Hudley, Cynthia, Roxanne Moschetti, Amber Gonzalez, Su-Je Cho, Leasha Barry, and Melissa Kelly. 2009. "College Freshmen's Perceptions of Their High School Experiences." *Journal of Advanced Academics* 20(3):438–71. doi: 10.1177/1932202X0902000304.

Hunter, Mary Stuart and Carrie W. Linder. 2005. First-year seminars" In M. L. Upcraft, J. N. Gardner, B. O. Barefoot, and Associates, "Challenging and supporting the first-year student: A handbook for improving the first year of college" (pp. 275-291). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hussar, William J. and Tabitha Bailey .2017. *Projections of Education Statistics to 2025* (NCES 2017-019). U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Hussar, Bill, Jijun Zhang, Sarah Hein, Ke Wang, Ashley Roberts, Jiashan Cui, Mary Smith, Farrah Bullock Mann, Amy Barmer and Rita Dilig, 2020. "The Condition of Education 2020." (NCES 2020-144). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo. asp?pubid=2020144.

Inkelas, Karen Kurotsuchi, Zaneeta E. Daver, Kristen E. Vogt, and Jeannie Brown Leonard. 2007. Living–Learning Programs and First-Generation College Students' Academic and Social Transition to College. *Research in Higher Education* 48(4):403–34.

Institute for Higher Education Policy. 2012. Supporting first-generation college students through classroom-based practices. Retrieved from https://www.ihep.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/uploads_docs_pubs_issue_brief_walmart_msi_supporting_fgs_september_2012.pdf

Ishitani, Terry T. 2006. "Studying Attrition and Degree Completion Behavior Among First-Generation College Students in the United States. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 77(5), 861-885.

Javier, Mary Grace. 2009. "Math faculty as institutional agents": Role reflection through inquiry-based activities (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Southern California

Jehangir, Rashné. 2010. "Stories as Knowledge: Bringing the Lived Experience of First-Generation College Students Into the Academy." *Urban Education* 45(4):533–53. doi: 10.1177/0042085910372352.

Jehangir, Rashné R., Arien B. Telles, and Veronica Deenanath. 2020. "Using Photovoice to Bring Career into a New Focus for First-Generation College Students." *Journal of Career Development* 47(1):59–79. doi: 10.1177/0894845318824746.

Katrevich Alina V., and Mara S Aruguete. 2017. "Recognizing Challenges and Predicting Success in First-Generation University Students." *Journal of STEM Education* 18(2):40.

Kezar, Adrianna. 2000. *Summer Bridge Programs: Supporting All Students. ERIC Digest*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, One Dupont Circle, N.

Kezar, Adrianna, and Elizabeth Holcombe. 2018. "Integrated and Comprehensive Student Support Programs Aimed at Historically Underserved Students: Creating a Unified Community of Support." *International Journal of Chinese Education* 7(1):65–84. doi: 10.1163/22125868-12340090.

Kezar, Adrianna, and Joseph A. Kitchen. 2020. "Supporting First-Generation, Low-Income, and Underrepresented Students' Transitions to College Through Comprehensive and Integrated Programs." *The American Behavioral Scientist (Beverly Hills)* 64(3):223–229. doi: 10.1177/0002764219869397.

Kim, Eunyoung, and Jeannette Diaz. 2013. *Immigrant Students and Higher Education: ASHE Higher Education Report 38:6*. Vol. 38. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, Jossey-Bass.

Kouyoumdjian, Claudia, Bianca L. Guzmán, Nichole M. Garcia, and Valerie Talavera-Bustillos. 2017. "A Community Cultural Wealth Examination of Sources of Support and Challenges Among Latino First- and Second-Generation College Students at a Hispanic Serving Institution." *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 16(1):61–76. doi: 10.1177/1538192715619995.

Krogstad, Jens M. 2015. "5 facts about Latinos and education. Pew Research Center. Retrieved January 10, 2021 (https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/05/26/5-facts-about-latinos-and-education/)

Kuh, George D. 2008. *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Lareau, Annette. 1987. Social Class Differences in Family-School Relationships: The Importance of Cultural Capital. *Sociology of Education, 60*(2), 73-85.

Lareau, Annette. 2003. *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lareau, Annette and Erin McNamara Horvat. 1999. "Moments of Social Inclusion and Exclusion: Race, Class, and Cultural Capital in Family-School Relationships." *Sociology of Education* 72(1): 37-53.

Loeb, Emily, and Noelle M. Hurd. 2019. "Subjective Social Status, Perceived Academic Competence, and Academic Achievement Among Underrepresented Students." *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice* 21(2):150–65. doi: 10.1177/1521025117696821.

Lopez, Janet K. 2006. *The impact of demographic changes on United States higher education.* Chapel Hill, NC: State Higher Education Executive Offices.

Lohfink, Martin M., and Michael B. Paulsen. 2005. "Comparing the Determinants of Persistence for First-Generation and Continuing-Generation Students." *Journal of College Student Development* 46(4):409–428. doi: 10.1353/csd.2005.0040.

Matos, Jennifer M. D. 2015. "*La Familia* : The Important Ingredient for Latina/o College Student Engagement and Persistence." *Equity & Excellence in Education* 48(3):436–53. doi: 10.1080/10665684.2015.1056761.

McLaren, Peter. 2015. *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education (6th ed.)*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Mecha Nationals. 2021. "About Us". Retrieved December 7, 2021 (http://www.mechanationals.org)

Mehta, Sanjay S. John J. Newbold, and Matthew A. O'Rourke. 2011. "Why Do First-Generation Students Fail?" *College Student Journal*, *45*(1): 20-35.

Merriam, Sharan B., and Elizabeth J. Tisdell. 2015. *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation, 4th Edition*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mobley, Catherine, and Catherine E. Brawner. 2019. "'Life Prepared Me Well for Succeeding': The Enactment of Community Cultural Wealth, Experiential Capital, and Transfer Student Capital by First-Generation Engineering Transfer Students." *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* 43(5):353–69. doi: 10.1080/10668926.2018.1484823.

Musoba Glenda and Baez Benjamin. 2009.The Cultural Capital of Cultural and Social Capital: An Economy of Translations. In: Smart J.C. (eds) *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research;* New York: Agathon Press, 24:151-182

National TRIO Clearinghouse. 2003. The early history of the Higher Education Act of 1965. *Council of Opportunity in Education.* Retrieved March 6, 2020 (http://www.pellinstitute.org/downloads/trio_clearinghouse-The_Early_History_of_the_HEA_of_1965.pdf)

Noe-Bustamante, Luis; Lauren Mora and Mark Hugo Lopez. 2020. *About One-in-Four U.S. Hispanics Have Heard of Latinx, but Just 3% Use It*. Pew Research Center. Retrieved December 12, 2021 (https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2020/08/11/about-one-in-   four-u-s-hispanics-have-heard-of-latinx-but-just-3-use-it/).

Nguyen, Thai-Huy, and Bach Mai Dolly Nguyen. 2018. "Is the First-Generation Student Term Useful for Understanding Inequality? The Role of Intersectionality in Illuminating the Implications of an Accepted—Yet Unchallenged— Term". *Review of Research in Education,* 42(1), 146-176.

Office of Student Access and Completion. 2021. "Encouraging Higher Education for Everyone". Retrieved December 7, 2021 (https://oregonstudentaid.gov/aspire.aspx).

O'Keefe, Molly and Benji Djeukeng. 2010. "Social Capital and First-Generation Students: A Sociological Perspective". *Journal of Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives in Education.* 3(1): 1-8.

Orbe, Mark. 2004. "Negotiating multiple identities within multiple frames: An analysis of first-generation college students". *Communication Education, 53*(2): 131-149.

Ovink, Sarah., and Veazey, Brian. 2011. "More Than Getting Us Through: A Case Study in Cultural Capital Enrichment of Underrepresented Minority Undergraduates". *Research in Higher Education, 52*(4): 370-394.

Padgett, Ryan D., Megan P. Johnson, and Ernest T. Pascarella. 2012. "First-Generation Undergraduate Students and the Impacts of the First Year of College: Additional Evidence." *Journal of College Student Development* 53(2):243–266. doi: 10.1353/csd.2012.0032.

Pascarella, Ernest T., Christopher T. Pierson, Gregory C. Wolniak, and Patrick T. Terenzini. 2004. "First-Generation College Students: Additional Evidence on College Experiences   and Outcomes." *The Journal of Higher Education* 75(3):249–84. doi: 10.1353/jhe.2004.0016.

Peabody, Michael. 2013. "A critical analysis of the identification and treatment of first generation college students: a social capital approach". *Kentucky Journal of Higher Education Policy and Practice*: 2(1) 4.

Perna, Laura W. 2000. "Racial and Ethnic Group Differences in College Enrollment Decisions." *New Directions for Institutional Research* 2000(107):65–83. doi: 10.1002/ir.10705.

Pike, Gary. R., and Kuh, George. D. 2005. "First- and Second-Generation College Students: A Comparison of Their Engagement and Intellectual Development". *Journal of Higher Education:* 76(3), 276-300.

Portes, Alejandro. 1998. "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology." Annual Review of Sociology. 24:1-24.

Purdie II, John R., and Vicki J. Rosser. 2011. "Examining the Academic Performance and Retention of First-Year Students in Living-Learning Communities and First-Year Experience Courses." *College Student Affairs Journal* 29(2):95–112.

Quiocho, Alice M. L., and Annette M. Daoud. 2006. "Dispelling Myths about Latino Parent Participation in Schools." *The Educational Forum* 70(3):255–67. doi: 10.1080/00131720608984901

Ramirez, Clifford A. 2009. *FERPA Clear and Simple: The College Professional's Guide to Compliance*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated. Retrieved April 15, 2022 (http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/psu/detail.action?docID=456228).

Ramos-Sánchez, Lucila, and Laura Nichols. 2007. "Self-Efficacy of First-Generation and Non-First-Generation College Students: The Relationship With Academic Performance and College Adjustment." *Journal of College Counseling* 10(1):6–18. doi: 10.1002/j.2161-1882.2007.tb00002.x

Redford, Jeremy and Kathleen Mulvaney Hoyer. 2017. "First-Generation and Continuing-Generation College Students: A Comparison of High School and Postsecondary Experiences". Stats in Brief. NCES 2018-009. National Center for Education Statistics.

Reyes, Nicole. A. S., and Nora, Amaury. 2012. Lost among the data: A review of Latino first-generation college students. *White paper prepared for the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Conference*, Washington, D.C.

Rincón, Blanca E., Érica Fernández, and Mary C. Dueñas. 2020. "Anchoring Comunidad: How First- and Continuing-Generation Latinx Students in STEM Engage Community Cultural Wealth." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 33(8):840–54. doi: 10.1080/09518398.2020.1735567.

RTI International. 2019. *First generation college students: Demographic Characteristics and Postsecondary Enrollment.* Washington, DC: NASPA. Retrieved Jan 6, 2022 (https://firstgen.naspa.org/files/dmfile/FactSheet-01.pdf)

Ryan, Camille L., and Kurt Bauman. 2016. "Educational Attainment in the United States: 2015". *Current Population Reports*. United States Census Bureau. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/p20-578.pdf

Saenz, Ponjuan, L.uis J. L Figueroa and William Serrata. 2016. *Ensuring the Success of Latino Males in Higher Education: A New National Imperative*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Saenz, Victor. B., Hurtado, Sylvia., Barrera, Doug., Wolf, De'Sha., and Yeung, Fanny. 2007. First in my family: A profile of first-generation college students at four-year institutions since 1971. Los Angeles, CA: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.

Saldaña, Johnny. 2016. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers (3E. ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.

Salinas, Cristobal. 2017. "Transforming Academia and Theorizing Spaces for Latinx in Higher Education: *Voces Perdidas* and *Voces de Poder*." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 30(8):746–58. doi: 10.1080/09518398.2017.1350295.

Samuelson, Cate C., and Elizabeth Litzler. 2016. "Community Cultural Wealth: An Assets-Based Approach to Persistence of Engineering Students of Color." *Journal of Engineering Education* 105(1):93–117. doi: 10.1002/jee.20110.

Sánchez, Bernadette, Olga Reyes, and Joshua Singh. 2006. "Makin' It in College: The Value of Significant Individuals in the Lives of Mexican American Adolescents." *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 5(1):48–67. doi: 10.1177/1538192705282570.

Santos, Carlos E. 2017. The history, struggles, and potential of the term Latinx. *Latina/o Psychology Today* 4(2):7-13

Santiago, Cecilia. 2012. "Faculty as institutional agents for low-income Latino students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields at a Hispanic-serving institution" (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Southern California

Santiago-Rivera, Azara. L., Patricia Arredondo and Maritza Gallardo-Cooper. 2002. *Counseling Latinos and la familia: A practical guide.* Sage Publications, Inc.

Scharrón-del Río, María R., this link will open in a new window Link to external site, and Alan A. Aja. 2020. "Latinx: Inclusive Language as Liberation Praxis." *Journal of Latinx Psychology* 8(1):7–20. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/lat0000140.

Schmidt, Lauren Chism, and Janine Graziano. 2016. *Building Synergy for High-Impact Educational Initiatives: First-Year Seminars and Learning Communities.* Bloomfield: National Resource Center for The First Year Experience & Students in Transition.

Sorber, Nathan M. 2018. *Land-Grant Colleges and Popular Revolt: The Origins of the Morrill Act and the Reform of Higher Education.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Soria, KM and MJ Stableton. 2012. First-generation students' academic engagement and retention. *Teaching in Higher Education 17:*673–685.

Stanton-Salazar, Ricardo. D. 1997. A Social Capital Framework for Understanding the Socialization of Racial Minority Children and Youth. *Harvard Educational Review* 67(1), 1-40

Stanton-Salazar, Ricardo D. 2011. "A Social Capital Framework for the Study of Institutional Agents and Their Role in the Empowerment of Low-Status Students and Youth." *Youth & Society* 43(3):1066–1109. doi: 10.1177/0044118X10382877.

Stephens, Nicole M., Stephanie A. Fryberg, Hazel Rose Markus, Camille S. Johnson, and Rebecca Covarrubias. 2012. "Unseen Disadvantage: How American Universities' Focus on Independence Undermines the Academic Performance of First-Generation College Students." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 102(6):1178–1197. doi: 10.1037/a0027143.

Strayhorn, Terrell L. 2017. *College Students' Sense of Belonging: A Key to Educational Success for all Students (Second ed.).* London: Routledge, a Taylor & Francis Group.

Swanson, Mary Catherine, Hugh Mehan and Lea Hubbard. 1993. *The AVID Classroom: A System of Academic and Social Supports for Low-Achieving Students*

Swartz, D. 1997. Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Terenzini, Patrick., Leonard Springer, Patricia Yaeger., Ernest Pascarella, and Amaury Nora. 1996. "First-generation college students: Characteristics, experiences, and cognitive development". *Research in Higher Education,* 37(1):1-22.

Timmermans, Stefan, and Iddo Tavory. 2012. "Theory Construction in Qualitative Research: From Grounded Theory to Abductive Analysis." *Sociological Theory* 30(3):167–186

Tovar, Esau. 2015. "The Role of Faculty, Counselors, and Support Programs on Latino/a Community College Students' Success and Intent to Persist." *Community College Review; Raleigh* 43(1):46–71.

Thayer, P. 2000. *Retention of students from first generation and low income backgrounds*. Washington, D.C.: National TRIO Clearinghouse : U.S. Dept. of Education : Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Educational Resources Information Center.

Tobolowsky, Barbara F., Bradley E. Cox, and Vivechkanand S. Chunoo. 2020. "Bridging the Cultural Gap: Relationships Between Programmatic Offerings and First-Generation   Student Benchmarks." *Journal of College Student Retention : Research, Theory &   Practice* 22(2):273–297. doi: 10.1177/1521025117742377.

Toutkoushian, Robert, Robert Stollberg and Kelly Slaton. 2018. "Talking 'Bout My Generation: Defining First-Generation College Students" in Higher Education Research". *Teachers College Record,* 120(4), Teachers College Record, 2018, Vol.120(4).

Tym, C., McMillion, R., Barone, S. and Webster, J. (2004). *First-Generation College Students: A Literature Review*. (Research and Analytic Services). Texas Round Rock, TX: Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation.

U.S. Census Bureau. 2017. *Facts for Features: Hispanic Heritage Month 2017*. Retrieved May 10, 2021 (https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2017/hispanic-heritage.html)

U.S Department of Education. 2020. "Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP)." Retrieved November 7, 2020 (https://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.htm).

Vaughan, Angela, Janessa Parra, and Trent Lalonde. 2014. "First-Generation College Student Achievement and the First-Year Seminar: A Quasi-Experimental Design." *Journal of The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition* 26(2):51–67.

Vega, Desiree. 2019. "'Why Not Me?' College Enrollment and Persistence of High-Achieving First-Generation Latino College Students." *School Psychology Forum, research in Practice, 10(3): 307*

Warburton, Edward. C., Rosio Bugarin, and Anne-Marie Nuñez, A. 2001. "Bridging the Gap: Academic Preparation and Postsecondary Success of First-Generation Students". Washington, DC: US Dept of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Education Statistics.

White House. 2009. *Excerpts of the president's remarks in Warren, Michigan today and a fact sheet on the American Graduation Initiative* [Press release]. Retrieved from https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/excerpts-presidents-remarks-warren-michigan-and-fact-sheet-american-graduation-init.

Whitley, Sarah.E., Grace Benson, and Alexi Wesaw. 2018. "First-generation Student Success: A Landscape Analysis of Programs and Services at Four-year Institutions". : Center for First-generation Student Success, NASPA–Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, and Entangled Solutions. Retrieved May 12, 2021 (https://firstgen.naspa.org/files/dmfile/NASPA-First-generation-Student-Success-FULL-REPORT.pdf)

Wildhagen, Tina. 2015. "Not Your Typical Student': The Social Construction of the 'First-Generation' College Student". *Qualitative Sociology*, 38(3), 285–303.

Woosley, Sherry A., and Dustin K. Shepler. 2011. "Understanding the Early Integration Experiences of First-Generation College Students." *College Student Journal* 45(4):700–714.

Yin, Robert. K. 2014. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (5th edition.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Yin, Robert. K. 2015. *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish*. (2nd ed). New York, NY: The Guildford Press

Yosso, Tara J. 2005. "Whose Culture Has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8(1):69–91. doi: 10.1080/1361332052000341006.

Yosso, Tara J. Tara Joy. 2006. *Critical Race Counterstories along the Chicana/Chicano Educational Pipeline*. New York: Routledge.

Zalaquett, Carlos P., and Alana D. Lopez. 2006. "Learning from the Stories of Successful
    Undergraduate Latina/Latino Students: The Importance of Mentoring." *Mentoring
    & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 14(3):337–53. doi:
    10.1080/13611260600635563.

LATINX FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

Participate in a study to share your experience of how you are succeeding in college.

Study Eligibility:

- A First generation Latinx College Student

- In junior or senior standing academically

Study Commitment:

Participate in a phone or zoom interview that would last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour

Study Compensation:

$20 Amazon gift card

Questions? Contact Affie Eyo-Idahor at aeyo@pdx.edu

APPENDIX B - Program Administrator Interview Protocol

Interview intro

Thank you once again for the opportunity to interview you for this study. Once again, my name is Affie Eyo and I am a doctoral student at Portland State University. I am conducting interviews with students/alum who identify as Latinx first generation college students to further understand how they successfully navigate the college journey. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour and you will receive a $20 Amazon gift card for your time

Please note that your participation is voluntary, you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to answer, and you can stop at any time. Your name and responses will be kept anonymous. Only the researchers conducting the project will have access to your answers. By continuing with the interview, you give your consent to participate in the study.

Benefits of the study include contributing to research that will expand our understanding of what works in supporting first generation Latinx college students. Risks to participating in the study are minimal, for example, thinking about negative past experiences.

If you have concerns or problems about your participation in this study or your rights as a research subject, I can provide you with phone numbers to call [if requested: Portland State Office of Research Integrity: 503-725-2227).

Do you have any questions for me?

1. So tell me, how did you get started working with Latinx FGCS student? And how

    long have you been working with Latinx FGCS?

2. What do you enjoy most with regards to working with Latinx FGCS? (Ask to

    elaborate as needed on the information they provide).

3. What do you focus on achieving with Latinx FGCS in your day-to-day work with

    this population? (Ask to elaborate as needed on the information they provide)

4. What do you feel is the ultimate goal of your program? How do you achieve this goal?

5. Can you give me some examples of supports you provide to Latinx FGCS? Which of these supports, do you feel, are especially helpful to Latinx FGCS?

6. Can you tell me about social events if any your program provides its students? (Follow up question: from your perspective, how do these events support Latinx FGCS?)

7. Similarly, can you tell me about the cultural events if any your program provides its students? (Follow up question: And again, from your perspective, how do these events support Latinx FGCS?)

8. What would you say are the biggest changes you observe in students who go through your program? Would you be able to give me a specific example?

9. Based on your experience, what would you say are some of the strengths the Latinx FGCS population brings to campus?

10. How, in your opinion, do these strengths help Latinx FGCS navigate campus? Would you be willing to share an example?

11. Are you aware of literature on Latinx FGCS and the deficit perspective? What is your response to it?

12. How do you feel the college experience could be improved for Latinx FGCS?

13. What advice do you have for others interested in working with Latinx FGCS?

APPENDIX C - Interview Protocol for Students

Interview intro

Thank you once again for the opportunity to interview you for this study. Once again, my name is Affie Eyo and I am a doctoral student at Portland State University. I am conducting interviews with students/alum who identify as Latinx first generation college students to further understand how they successfully navigate the college journey. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour and you will receive a $20 Amazon gift card for your time

Please note that your participation is voluntary, you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to answer, and you can stop at any time. Your name and responses will be kept anonymous. Only the researchers conducting the project will have access to your answers. By continuing with the interview, you give your consent to participate in the study.

Benefits of the study include contributing to research that will expand our understanding of what works in supporting first generation Latinx college students. Risks to participating in the study are minimal, for example, thinking about negative past experiences.

If you have concerns or problems about your participation in this study or your rights as a research subject, I can provide you with phone numbers to call [if requested: Portland State Office of Research Integrity: 503-725-2227).

Do you have any questions for me?

Introduction Questions

Pre college

1. Reflecting back on your experiences, what were your hopes and dreams for your education? (Gonzalez 2019)
2. What message did your family and community send you about college?
    a. Can you tell me how family members were involved in your decision to pursue a college education? (Gonzalez 2019)
    b. Did other people in your family or close social circle have hopes and dreams for your education? (Gonzalez 2019)

      c. Can you tell me how members of your community were supportive in your decision to pursue a college education?
3. Was there someone or something that was particularly influential in your decision to go to college? (Gonzalez 2019)
4. How would you describe your high school experience? How did it prepare you or not prepare you for college?

College

5. Let's talk about those supports that you feel have been (were) especially helpful to you in getting through college.
      a. Starting with your family, what types of family support did you receive that contributed to your perseverance in college? (Gonzalez 2019)
      b. What about your home community? What types of support did you receive from them that contributed to your perseverance in college?
      c. Were there any community resources that directly supported you through college (community organizations, church groups, etc.) (Gonzalez 2019)
6. Thinking back at your time at Valley University [if former], I would like to know about the support system you had at VU. Let's start with before you arrived at VU, who or what helped you figure out what you should and should not do?
7. I would like to know about your support system at VU. Let's start with before you arrived at VU, who or what helped you figure out what you should and should not do?
      a. Once you arrived, who helped you out?
      b. Who provided you with the most support? Some examples of supports include the following:
            i. Scholarships
           ii. Advisor/advisors
         iii. Any specific class/any specific support programs
         iv. Math center
          v. Writing center
         vi. Career services
       vii. Residential life
      viii. Faculty/staff
         ix. Peers
          x. Campus events i.e cultural events
(As a follow up to any supports identified, ask for types of information said support provided and also effect of this information with a possible example).

      c. Who do you wish could have provided more help?
      d. How did you build your support network at VU? (follow up questions to ask here depending on their response includes "tell me how you met that friend?)

8. What are some challenges you've experienced with regards to the college process? This can be academic, social, financial etc. (time management, grades, speaking to campus staff/faculty, family demands, books).
    a. What are some strategies you learned from your family and community that helped you navigate these challenges?
    b. What resources did you utilize in navigating these challenges? How did that/those resource(s) help you in overcoming this challenge?
    c. Were there certain people, organizations, or groups that you felt you had to struggle against to succeed in college? If so, how did you persevere through that? (Gonzalez 2019)
    d. Was there a unique event or personal experience that helped you persevere during difficult times? (Gonzalez 2019)

9. Do you think there are any advantages to speaking Spanish or any other language besides English?
10. What would you say are some of the strengths the Latinx FGCS population brings to campus?
11. How, in your opinion, how do these strengths help the Latinx FGCS population navigate campus? Would you be willing to share an example?

12. Tell me how you think your experiences as a first-generation Latinx college student compares to a non-first generation Latinx college student?

13. Is there anything I missed that you feel is important regarding your experience of getting through college that you'll like to share?

14. Do you have any questions for me?

15. Is it okay I follow up with you if I have further clarifying questions?

    Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX D - CODES AND RELATED THEMES

Sample Codes
- Break the cycle
- Family, relatives,
- Encourage community
- What community means
- Feeling of belonging
- Students need community
- Putting students in cohorts
- Creation of a safe space
- Celebration of their culture
- Importance of community
- Foundation for the Latinx community
- Sense of community
- Creation of Support
- High school counselors
- Scholarships
- Student support programs
- Pulling people forward
- Family as source of motivation
- Community through classes
- Being able to be in community with friends
- Lack of community
- Pull up community
- Community is about support
- Encouragement from the community
- Home community provided learning opportunity
- First gen peers of mine
- Writing Center
- Clubs and organizations
- Navigate college together
- Give back to the community
- How going to college impacts my community
- Social events provide opportunity to build community
- Celebration of Latinx culture
- Be unapologetically themselves
- Meet students in similar situations
- Connections with Latinx peers
- Having other folks to walk with you

Final Code List

Community
- What community means
- Feeling of belonging
- Creation of a safe space
- Importance of community
- Foundation for the Latinx community
- Community is about support
- Support from program administrators

Dominant Cultural and Social Capital Building Supports
- Student support program- before college
- Student support program- during college
- Cohort
- Mentoring
- Advising
- Program administrators
- Faculty
- Writing center

Community Cultural Wealth

Aspirational Capital
- Motivation within the community
- Future dreams and goals
- Make parents proud
- Break the cycle and encourage others forward
- Be a role model

Social Capital
- Peer connections
- Latinx focused clubs
- Celebration of Latinx culture
- College oriented friends
- Latinx program administrators

Familial capital
- Parental and sibling support
- Source of motivation
- Providing basic needs
- Encouragement
- Emotional support
- Family history
- Dichos