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Transfer Conocimientos: Understanding the Pre-Transfer Experiences of Latina/o/x Community College Students Through a Family-Centered Approach

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

by

Ivan Valdovinos

Committee in Charge:

Professor Amanda Datnow, Chair
Professor James Antony
Professor Frances Contreras
Professor Alan Daly
Professor Samuel Museus

2025

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The Dissertation of Ivan Valdovinos is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically.

University of California San Diego

2025

DEDICATION

A mis padres, que cruzaron fronteras con el corazón lleno de esperanza, para que yo pudiera seguir mis sueños. Honrar sus sacrificios con cada logro, cada intento, y cada paso que doy hacia un futuro que también es suyo.

To my parents, who crossed borders with hearts full of hope so that I could pursue my dreams. I honor their sacrifices with every achievement, every effort, and every step I take toward a future that is theirs as well.

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Thank you to the students and families that participated in my study. I appreciate your willingness to share your lived experiences with me. Your vulnerability, honesty, and voice are needed in the academy and I look forward to all the things you will achieve. You are brilliant!

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for supporting me and cheering me on. Thank you to my father, Mardonio Valdovinos, for always encouraging me to pursue my goals and dreams. Thank you to my dog, Koda, for being my source of comfort everyday when I came home from a long day of work. Thank you to my nieces and nephews. I hope I inspire you to pursue your own goals and dreams despite how outrageous they might be. Without the support of mi familia, I would not be where I am today! My accomplishments are yours as well.

Chapter 1 and 2, in part, has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Latinos and Education. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

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Ko-Wong, L. & Valdovinos Gutierrez, I. (In Press). Countering Deficits: Understanding the Racialized Experiences of First Year Graduate Students of Color During the Pandemic. *About Campus*.

FIELD OF STUDY

Major Field: Education
Professor Amanda Datnow, PhD

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Transfer Conocimientos: Understanding the Pre-Transfer Experiences of Latina/o/x Community College Students Through a Family-Centered Approach

by

Ivan Valdovinos

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California San Diego, 2025

Professor Amanda Datnow, Chair

The California Community College system enrolls over one million Latina/o/x students annually, yet only 2% transfer within two years. Although there are many reasons why Latina/o/x community college students struggle to successfully complete the transfer process, one of the relationships that is often overlooked by researchers is the unique role that families play in the transfer success of their transfer-going student. Utilizing platica methodology and familial testimonios, I explored the transfer decision-making processes of Latina/o/x community college

students through a family-centered approach. A total of forty-eight platicas were conducted with sixteen Latina/o/x students and thirteen testimonios with their family members. I used College-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017), Apoyo Sacrificial (Cuevas, 2021), and Transfer Receptive Culture (Herrera et al., 2020) frameworks to conceptualize the complex and nuanced transfer decision-making processes that Latina/o/x students and their families experience to achieve transfer success.

Findings suggest that Latina/o/x community college transfer students faced complex transfer decisions shaped by cultural identity, family obligations, systemic barriers, and practical constraints like finances, housing, and transportation. Many were driven by a desire to uplift their communities and pursue educational equity, often prioritizing proximity to home due to caregiving roles, emotional support, and immigration-related concerns. Furthermore, families played a vital role in supporting Latina/o/x pre-transfer students by offering emotional, practical, and knowledge-based assistance rooted in love and resilience. Despite limited formal knowledge of the transfer process, they acted as advocates and resourceful guides, helping students manage both academic and personal challenges. While Latina/o/x community college students drew on a wide range of formal programs and informal networks to support their transfer journeys, many still faced transitional barriers upon entering four-year universities, particularly due to unclear communication and limited access to services. Although institutional support existed through programs like EOPS, Puente, and Transfer Centers, gaps in structured transition efforts left some students feeling isolated and unsupported. This research challenges deficit depictions of families of color by showcasing the non-traditional forms of apoyo and supportive behaviors families employ to support their student's transfer aspirations and success. Moreover, this research

provides a foundation for studying Latina/o/x transfer success through a critical, equity-minded, and family-centered approach.

Keywords: Latina/o/x transfer student, family engagement, community college, transfer decision-making process

Prologue

A Note About My Positionality

This dissertation is about the transfer choice experiences of Latina/o/x community college students and the impact that their families have on their transfer decisions. To understand how I came to this topic and my personal commitment to this population, I return to my upbringing. I grew up in a seasonal migrant, farmworker family. My father, the breadwinner of our family, worked long strenuous hours in arduous weather, harvesting fruits and vegetables in California's central valley and later in the orchards of Washington State. My mother, on the other hand, was our primary caretaker. She did not work for the majority of my childhood, which allowed her to spend most of her time in schools fighting to make sure that my two sisters and I had access to the best educational resources in our farmworker community.

Throughout my K-12 education, I attended public schools in rural, working class towns in California and Washington State, where access to higher education was limited. My teachers, counselors, and school administrators were more interested in preventing teen pregnancy and substance abuse than creating a "college-going" culture. My mother was very much aware of these circumstances and, thus, made sure that she attended every parent/teacher conference, PTA meeting, and other school-time functions to ensure that I was enrolled in the best classes with the best teachers, and, ultimately, had the best education possible. After school, she always had a homemade meal prepared for me and used our dinner time to ask about my school day and to remind me to complete my homework before I could hang out with my friends. Migrating with my father to the United States from Mexico, she had no formal education in the American sense, though she highly valued education and always made it clear we were going to go to college.

My father, on the other hand, was hardly physically present in schools. As a seasonal migrant farmworker, he spent most of his time in the orchards harvesting crops. He was dedicated to his work and providing for our family that I did not expect to see him at any of my school-time functions. Although not physically present in schools, he still cared about my education and used nontraditional ways of being involved. In middle school, at the age of thirteen, he took me to work with him in the orchards for the first time and used the experience to give me consejos about the value of education and attending college. He reminded me that working as a farmworker was hard work and that he emigrated to this country as a sacrificio to provide me with better opportunities than he had. He expected that I take advantage of all educational opportunities possible to get me to college.

Both of my parents, in their own ways, were dedicated to ensuring that we attended college. They knew it was important for our futures. As a young child and, later, an adolescent, I never questioned this: College was always the next logical step after high school. Therefore, my parents made sure I participated in college preparatory programs such as GEAR Up and TRIO and made sure that I spoke with my teachers and school counselors about higher education options. Even though I had access to these programs, they were not designed to support students like me. And although my parents ingrained in me the idea of going to college, they had no understanding of the American higher education system, so it made it difficult for them to support me with the college planning process.

While they learned about the process through me, as I was experiencing it and was translating it to them in ways they could understand, they gained a clearer understanding of the college planning and matriculation process through my participation in La Bienvenida at Washington State University (WSU)—a program entirely in Spanish that helps Latino families

achieve their college dream. Through this program, Spanish-speaking staff traveled three and a half hours to my home in Soap Lake, Washington to inform my parents about the college admissions process and about Washington State University, where I decided to matriculate for my undergraduate studies. Prior to moving to WSU, my parents traveled to WSU to attend La Bienvenida orientation program. There, they connected with other Latino families, spoke to Spanish-speaking staff and faculty, learned about financing a college education, and experienced college life by staying in the dormitories. La Bienvenida was empowering and transformative. My parents finally felt like schools were finally listening to them and their needs. They felt like they could partner with American higher education systems despite the language barriers, their cultural differences, and their immigration status. It took a culturally-responsive college access program to finally allow my parents to feel valued by school officials in order to work towards one common goal: Fulfilling their dreams and aspirations of getting their children to college.

When I worked in college access programming as the Director of TRIO Student Support Services at Padrinos Community College (pseudonym), I was intentional with including a family component. This was a result of my experiences with my family. When designing Noche De Familia and other components of my program, I wondered what my parents would benefit from and used that as my lens for creating these opportunities. Because I worked with primarily Latina/o/x students, I made sure programming was culturally responsive and that the material was both in Spanish and English. The more I worked with Latina/o/x families and their transfer bound children, the more I realized the importance of family engagement in higher education spaces. It was apparent that family engagement was necessary for the successful graduation and transfer outcomes for Latina/o/x community college students. It is because of my parents'

experiences navigating my education and my experiences working with Latina/o/x students and their families that motivate this dissertation study.

I do not claim to be objective in my research. I am personally embedded in this study's subject matter; I come with my own assumptions, biases, values, and subjectivities based on my own experiences and epistemology. I am the son of Mexican immigrants, the first in my family to be born in the United States, and the first in my family to attend college. As such, my identity and life experiences afforded me the role of "insider" in this study. I also acknowledge that my privileges make me an "outsider" in this work. I am highly educated, having both a Bachelor's and Master's degree, and at the time of conducting this work, I am completing a doctorate at the University of California San Diego. Additionally, my higher educational experience did not involve a transitional component; I matriculated to university from high school. In my research process, I bring my personal and professional experiences, existing literature, and the analytical process itself. My "insider" perspective allows me to be familiar, critical, and nuanced with the data, which makes my research stronger.

Chapter 1

Understanding the Pre-Transfer Pathways of Latina/o/x Community College Students Through a Family-Centered Approach

Latina/o/x students interested in earning a bachelor's degree in the United States increasingly begin their postsecondary education at community colleges (Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Ma & Baum, 2016). Affordable prices, proximity to home, and open access policies are amongst the reasons why Latina/o/x students are attracted to the community college system. In 2022, nearly 4.5 million students enrolled in a community college and of those students, twenty-five percent identified as Latina/o/x (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2023).

Many of these Latina/o/x students enter community college with the goal of transferring to four-year institutions. In 2022, 17.9% of Latina/o/x students transferred to a four-year university within six years (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2023) and in California, where this study is situated, only 2% transferred within two years (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2021). Latina/o/x community college students often face an educational paradox: while their parents hold high educational aspirations and provide crucial support by shaping their postsecondary goals and aspirations (Jabbar et. al., 2019; Wang, et.al., 2022), their transfer and bachelor degree attainment rates remain alarmingly low (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2021). In California, for instance, only 14% of Latina/o/x adults have a bachelor's degree, reflecting the lowest rates of degree attainment of any racial/ethnic subgroup in the state (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2021).

Given the low transfer rates and the crucial decision-making process Latina/o/x students have to make, it is critical that researchers closely examine the transfer pathway for Latina/o/x community college students, as the policies and practices that emerge from the lack of understanding of their decision-making can have lasting implications for their transfer success.

This decision carries very important consequences given research showing that college quality affects the likelihood of completing a four-year degree (Melguizo, 2008) and eventually labor market opportunities and earnings (Thomas, 2003).

It is well documented that many Latina/o/x students make life decisions through a collectivist, familismo lens (Azpeitia et.al., 2022; Villanueva, 2020; Witkowsky et.al., 2020). The concept of familismo unites Latina/o/x families because of their common understanding and commitment to providing for, being loyal to, and wanting the best for their families (Villanueva, 2020). Thus, scholars have proclaimed that Latina/o/x family engagement is critical for the transfer success of Latina/o/x community college students (Jabbar et al., 2019; Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Vega, 2018; Wang et al., 2022). For instance, Latina/o/x students often gain transfer information and support from immediate and extended family networks such as parents, partners, siblings, aunts and uncles as well as friends (Saenz et al., 2017). These individuals serve as pseudo-counselors and trusted transfer agents that assist with course planning, transfer applications, scholarships, financial aid applications, and more (Harris, 2017; Jabbar et al., 2019; Vasquez et al., 2022).

Despite the substantial evidence that Latina/o/x community college students rely on their familial networks to navigate through the transfer process (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Castro & Cortez, 2017; Cortez & Castro, 2017), Latina/o/x familial voices and experiences are often left out of the literature, minimizing their roles in the transfer-choice process. Utilizing platica methodology (Fierro & Bernal, 2016) and familial testimonios (Huber, 2019), this dissertation study examined the transfer decision-making processes of Latina/o/x community college students over time and through a family-centered approach to highlight the voices and experiences of these students and their families. Platica methodology (Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016) and

familial testimonios (Huber, 2009) are methodological tools used to position Latina/o/x students and their families as co-creators and theorizers of their lived experiences.

Latinx Family Engagement in the Transfer Choice Process

Although there are many reasons why Latina/o/x community college students struggle to successfully complete the transfer process (Acevedo et al., 2021; Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Rodriguez et al., 2021; Sanchez & Morgan, 2022), one of the relationships that is often overlooked by researchers is the unique role that Latina/o/x families play in the transfer success of Latina/o/x community college students.

Research on Latina/o/x families often depict them as barriers to college access (Pollack, 2013); this is due to the familial, cultural, and financial expectation they place on their children. For instance, one of the barriers for attending college for Latina/o/x students is family responsibilities. Manzano-Sanchez et al. (2019) found that Latina/o/x college students have to contribute to regular and unexpected expenses. Older siblings, in particular, have more responsibilities than their younger counterparts and familial responsibilities are determined by gender (Manzano-Sanchez et al., 2019). These gender assigned roles lead to inequitable access to college for Latinas because they are expected to stay home to help support their families (Manzano-Sanchez e .al., 2019). Moreover, Acevedo-Gil (2019) found that familial financial obstacles serve as a barrier for Latina/o/x students because they have to help support their families despite their aspirations to remain in college. Some Latina/o/x students, who are already enrolled at four-year institutions, reverse transfer to community colleges in order to fulfill their familial financial responsibilities (Acevedo-Gil, 2019).

However, the literature on Latina/o/x transfer choice has shown that families are involved in their own ways (Doran & Hengesteg, 2020; Gard et al., 2012). The transfer choice process for

Latina/o/x students begins by establishing a commitment to transfer to a four-year institution with the goal of earning a bachelor's degree. Latina/o/x students pursue college degrees to honor and respect their parents' sacrificios (Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Vega, 2018). Sacrificios describe the ways in which parents intentionally give up things (e.g. health and wellness, time, money) for the sake of their children's education and future (Cuevas, 2021). Thus, the transfer process for Latina/o/x students begins with their families in mind suggesting that familial support and validation is necessary throughout this process.

Once Latina/o/x community college students establish the motivation to pursue a transfer pathway, they begin to search for and receive transfer information. Immediate and extended family networks are often consulted because they are trusting, caring, and have the ability to provide accurate information and advice (Harris, 2017; Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Saenz et. al., 2017; Suarez, 2003; Vasquez et. al., 2022). These trusted transfer agents also assist with the planning and applying stage of the transfer process (Cortez & Castro, 2017; Dowd et al., 2013; Hagedorn & Cepeda, 2004; Harris, 2017).

When Latina/o/x students begin to gain admissions to four-year institutions, they must decide where they want to matriculate. Transfer choices are often bounded by geographic location, which are largely influenced by familial and cultural expectations, such as prioritizing their families' needs before theirs (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Vasquez et al., 2020). As a result, Latina/o/x students often decide to transfer to institutions that are close to their families.

In sum, Latina/o/x family engagement is an integral part of the transfer success of Latina/o/x community college students. However, the extant literature on Latina/o/x family engagement in the transfer choice process has several significant limitations. First, much of this research is largely and entirely retrospective and does not fully capture *how* Latina/o/x

community college students and their families collectively navigate the transfer process and *how* they work together to co-construct transfer decisions in real time. These primarily retrospective research designs do not allow for a complete understanding of how transfer decision-making unfolds in practice. Second, previous research has underscored the importance of geography on the transfer decision-making process of Latinx students and the impact that familial and cultural factors play in this decision (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Jabbar et al., 2019; Suarez, 2003). Therefore, future research needs to investigate how Latina/o/x students and their families co-construct transfer choice sets and how those choice sets are bounded by racial, geographic, and sociopolitical factors. Third, previous research is largely focused on the lived experiences of students and has not included the voices of their families. Scholars have underscored the urgency to include Latina/o/x families in the college matriculation process (Cuevas, 2021). Thus, more research is needed that centers families' voices and experiences in the transfer choice process through their lens. Lastly, there is a stark lack of methodological diversity in this line of research. Most studies primarily draw on interviews to understand transfer choices and experiences;. Additionally, few studies have engaged in a critical approach to studying Latina/o/x transfer choice, such as one study that utilizes critical race theory and a transfer receptive culture (Jain et al., 2020) and another that uses mixed-methods to analyze geographical constraints of the transfer decision-making (Jabbar et al., 2017). To address these gaps in the literature, this dissertation focuses on how Latina/o/x community college students and their families co-construct transfer decisions given their racial, geographical, and sociopolitical contexts, using critical methodologies such as platicas and testimonios.

Towards A Transfer-Conocimiento Framework: Centering Latina/o/x Families in the Transfer Choice Process

As the extant literature suggests, the transfer choice process for Latina/o/x community college students is family-centered. This necessitates a transfer-conocimiento theoretical framework that centers the voices and experiences of Latina/o/x students and their families to fully capture how they work together to co-construct transfer decisions in real time given their beliefs, values, and experiences. I draw on the college-conocimiento framework (Acevedo-Gil, 2017), the concept of apoyo sacrificial (Cuevas, 2021), and transfer receptive culture (Jain et al., 2020) to construct a family-centered transfer-conocimiento theoretical framework.

College-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017) is a framework used to center the lived experiences of Latina/o/x college students by acknowledging that their college choice decisions and experiences are nonlinear and are shaped by individual's intersectional identities within the inequitable distribution of institutional resources in the American K-12 educational system (Acevedo-Gil, 2017). College-conocimiento draws from Anzaldúa's (2002) theory of conocimiento – a theory of identity and knowledge development – with Perna's (2006) multi-layered college choice model to create a conceptual framework that advances earlier college choice models (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987; Perna, 2006) to provide a nonlinear, intersectional approach to accurately representing the college choice experiences of Latina/o/x students. College-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017) consists of seven stages: El Arrebato: aspirations to earn a Bachelor's degree, Nepantla: Searching for college information, Coatlicue: Anticipating college obstacles, El Compromiso: Planning and applying to college, Coyolxauhqui: Choosing a college, A Clash of Realities: Entering and conflicting with college, and Spiritual Activism: Self-advocacy and peer support. In this study, I use college-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017) to describe and understand the complexities and nuances of the transfer decision-making process of Latina/o/x community college students in real time.

To center the voices and experiences of Latina/o/x families as they support and navigate the transfer process with their children, I draw on Cuevas' (2021) Apoyo Sacrificial conceptual framework to describe how Latina/o/x families employ new parental and engagement practices given their socio-political positions. Apoyo Sacrificial describes the intentional parenting practices of Latina/o/x undocumented parents marked by the limitations of their sociopolitical environments (Cuevas, 2021). California is home to over 5 million Latina/o/x people who were born outside of the United States (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2021). In recent years, the political landscape, especially during the Trump Administration, has pushed undocumented immigrants to the margins by implementing policies and mandates that shaped the everyday lives of Latina/o/x undocumented immigrants. These policies have affected the ways in which undocumented immigrants navigate the college application and planning process (Cuevas, 2021).

Successful Latina/o/x transfer requires an institutional commitment from both the sending and receiving institution to provide the support needed to streamline the transfer process (Jain et al., 2020). Thus, I use Transfer Receptive Culture (TRC) (Jain et al., 2020) to analyze how institutional factors influence the transfer decision-making process for Latina/o/x students. TRC is grounded in Critical Race Theory (CRT) and centers race and racism in the transfer process (Jain et al., 2020). It acknowledges the marginalization of students of color in higher education, specifically their high enrollment in community colleges, which serves as an imperative to streamline the transfer function for marginalized and underrepresented students. Jain etal. (2020) argue that CRT is an important aspect of TRC because it not only centers race and racism, but it also addresses the intersectional identities of transfer students. TRC is guided by two pretransfer and three posttransfer elements. These elements are as follows:

> 1) establish the transfer of students, especially nontraditional, first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students, as a high institutional priority that ensures

> stable accessibility, retention, and graduation, 2) provide outreach and resources that focus on the specific needs of transfer students while complementing the community college mission of transfer, 3) offer financial and academic support through distinct opportunities for nontraditional/reentry transfer students where they are stimulated to achieve at high academic levels, 4) acknowledge the lived experiences that students bring and the intersectionality between community and family, and 5) create an appropriate and organic framework from which to assess, evaluate, and enhance transfer receptive programs and initiatives that can lead to further scholarship on transfer students (Jain et al., 2020, p.15).

Because this study focuses on the pretransfer process, I will address elements one and two in my data collection and analysis.

College-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017) allows us to visualize the multidimensional and non-linear transfer choice journeys of Latina/o/x students and a transfer receptive culture (Jain et al., 2020) provides an institutional lens to analyze these experiences, while apoyo sacrificial (Cuevas, 2021) provides a family engagement element that the other frameworks do not emphasize. Collectively, these frameworks will provide analytical concepts to examine the transfer decision-making processes of Latina/o/x community college students through a family-centered approach.

Moreover, in this study, I use the term “family engagement” versus “parental involvement” to acknowledge that a student's familial networks can consist of not only immediate family members, but also grandparents, Tias, Tios, cousins, friends, peers, mentors, partners, non-biological parents, etc – anyone that the student considers to be family. It is important to broaden the definition of “family” to be inclusive and inviting. The analysis of these findings in this way reflects the realities of the transfer choice processes of Latina/o/x community college students and allows us to move towards developing equitable transfer policies and practices suited for Latina/o/x transfer student success that center their familias.

The following overarching research question and sub-questions guide this study:

How do Latina/o/x community college students and their families experience the pre-transfer process?

a) How are transfer choice sets created and what role do racial, geographic, cultural, sociopolitical, and familial contexts play?
b) How do Latina/o/x families' conceptions of their role, responsibilities, and capacities in the transfer process shape the ways in which they support their children's transfer aspirations?
c) How do Latina/o/x students and their families engage with the sending and receiving institution to promote transfer success given the tenets of Transfer Receptive Culture and the process of College-Conocimiento?

Utilizing platica methodology and familial testimonios, I followed Latina/o/x community college students through their pre-transfer journey by interviewing students three times and their family members once. This research extends our empirical understanding of the transfer choice processes of Latina/o/x community college students. Theoretically, this research challenges deficit depictions of families of color by showcasing counternarratives of how Latina/o/x families support their children's transfer aspirations. Moreover, this research provides a foundation for studying Latina/o/x transfer success through a critical and culturally-responsive approach. Finally, this research has the potential to inform higher education practitioners, policymakers, and researchers about the potentials and caveats of utilizing a family-centered approach to designing policies, practices, and research studies to advance the transfer success of Latina/o/x students.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into seven chapters. Chapter One outlined an introduction to the research study, including research questions, conceptual framework, and significance of the study. Chapter Two presents relevant literature and theory that synthesizes the experiences and transfer decision-making processes of Latina/o/x transfer students and their families through a transfer conocimiento lens (Acevedo-Gil, 2017). Chapter Three outlines the methodological approach including, the rationale for a narrative research design, participant selection, forms of data collection, and the analytical approach. Chapters Four, Five, and Six presents the major findings. Chapter Four addresses how Latina/o/x students design transfer choice sets given their racial, geographic, cultural, sociopolitical, and familial factors, while Chapter Five highlights the voices and experiences of their family members in the transfer decision making process. Chapter Six showcases how community colleges are developing transfer receptive cultures (Jain et al., 2020) to support the pre-transfer experiences of Latina/o/x students. Finally, Chapter Seven theorizes a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC) and provides implications for research, policy, and practices to strengthen the Latina/o/x transfer pipeline.

Chapter 1, in part, has been published in the Journal of Latinos and Education. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

Chapter 2

A Synthesis of Latinx Family Engagement in the Transfer Choice Process

This dissertation explores how Latina/o/x community college students and their families co-construct transfer decisions. To provide a foundation for this study, this chapter synthesizes the literature on Latina/o/x family engagement and the transfer choice process from 2000-2022. For this review, I identified 32 articles that were 1) focused on a U.S. community college context, 2) focused on vertical or upward transfer, and 3) focused on the transfer choice processes of Latina/o/x community college students.

The findings of this literature review are organized around the seven stages of college-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017). Within each stage, I provide evidence of how Latina/o/x community college students and their families navigate the transfer process, negotiate options, make transfer decisions, and successfully complete the transfer process.

Aspirations, Resistance, and Sacrificios: Making the Commitment to Transfer

Latina/o/x community college students begin their transfer choice journeys by establishing a commitment to transfer to four-year institutions with the goal of earning a bachelor's degree. As I will explain, during this stage of the transfer choice process, Latina/o/x students are inspired to pursue a transfer pathway due to their familias' sacrificios as well as encouragement from other trusted transfer agents at the sending institution. Moreover, some Latina/o/x community college students are inspired to pursue a transfer pathway as a result of their negative experiences with the U.S educational system. This helps facilitate student's dreams and aspirations to transfer and commit to the transfer process.

Familial Inspiration. Families, specifically parents' served as the most common form of inspiration and motivation for Latina/o/x community college students to pursue a transfer

pathway to attain a four-year degree (Jabbar et al., 2019; Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Vega, 2018; Wang et al., 2022). These students were inspired by their parent's stories of hardship and adversity that motivated them to begin the transfer pathway and earn a Bachelor's degree to honor and respect the sacrificios their parents made (Jabbar et al., 2019). Jabbar et al. (2019) found that Latina/o/x community college students were inspired by their family's work ethic and felt like the best way to honor their sacrifices was through completion of a college degree.

While Latina/o/x community college students were inspired by their parents' sacrificios, they also benefited from their parent's high educational expectations. Wang et al. (2022) examined the life experiences of five non-traditional Latina community college students to better understand how their experiences shaped their decisions to transfer and found that high familial educational expectations were a form of validation for them to begin their transfer journeys and further their education beyond community college. The Latinas in this study needed validation from their families in the form of educational expectations in order for them to feel confident in their decisions to pursue a transfer pathway.

Similarly, Latino males were also inspired to pursue a transfer pathway by their families sacrificios. However, mujeres or women were important sources of motivation and inspiration to facilitate the transfer process (Saenz et al., 2018; Saenz et al., 2017; Vasquez et al., 2020; Vasquez et al., 2022). Saenz et al. (2018) in their article, "Mujeres Supporting: How Female Family Members Influence the Educational Success of Latino Males in Postsecondary Education," found that Latino males identified their mothers as their biggest forms of inspiration and ignited their dedication and persistence of their goals and dreams. Their mothers served as sources of inspiration, support, and validation throughout their son's educational pathway, including during the transfer choice process (Saenz et al., 2018). Moreover, Vasquez et al. (2020)

also found that Latino men were dedicated to financially supporting their mothers, so they provided unselfish reasons for pursuing high paying careers, which facilitated their pursuit of the transfer pathway. To initiate the transfer function for Latina/o/x community college students, they need to have space to reflect on their motivation for pursuing transfer.

Academic Programs. In addition to familial inspiration, Latina/o/x community college students were also motivated to pursue transfer pathways by trusted and familial-like transfer agents from academic programs (Andrade, 2019; Dowd et al., 2013; Harris, 2017; Nicholas et al., 2021, Tekla et al., 2021). Andrade (2019) in his longitudinal study examining the experiences of four cohorts of students in the Adelante transfer program found that counselors and staff were important for encouraging Latina/o/x students to pursue degrees beyond community college. These institutional transfer agents provided a sense of hope, trust, and optimism, which further motivated Latina/o/x students to pursue their transfer and career goals (Andrade, 2019).

Honors programs also initiated the transfer process for Latina/o/x community college students. Harris (2017) found that honors programs at the community college level also served as spaces where Latina/o/x students were encouraged and motivated to transfer to prestigious universities. Similar to the Adelante program, students in the honors program attributed their motivation to pursue the transfer pathway to supportive and caring faculty and staff. Both Harris (2017) and Andrade (2019) underscored the importance of building strong transfer cultures to empower Latinx community college students to begin and persist through the transfer choice process.

Resistant Response as Motivation. Some Latina/o/x community college students were inspired to pursue a transfer pathway by a resistant response to their educational schooling experiences in the U.S. educational system (Cortez & Castro, 2017; Malagon & Alvarez, 2010;

Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Saenz et al., 2017). Malagon and Alvarez (2010) found that Chicana women acquired a critically conscious of their oppressive educational experiences while at the community college, which motivated them to begin the transfer process with the goal of attaining the knowledge and skills a Bachelor's degree provides to transform educational spaces for future students and to have the tools to combat systems of oppression in education.

Similarly, Cortez and Castro (2017) found that faculty can also initiate a racialized political consciousness in Latina/o/x community college students. This leads Latina/o/x students to reflect on, question, and critically think about the ways in which institutional inequities and oppressive systems serve to perpetuate how they experience and advance in the U.S. educational system. This awakening that students expressed led to their desire and motivation to pursue a transfer degree and dedicate their careers to combating these oppressive systems and structures. Latino fathers also facilitated a resistant response to combating systems of oppression by exchanging resistant capital with their sons by sharing their life experiences and consejos (Saenz et al., 2017). Specifically, the fathers encouraged their sons to "do better than them" and to resist being forced into lower wage jobs; Pursuing and attaining a college education was seen as a form of resistance (Saenz et al., 2017).

Searching for Transfer Information en Confianza

Once Latina/o/x community college students establish the motivation to pursue a transfer pathway, they are excited to search for and receive transfer information (Acevedo-Gil, 2017). In this stage of the transfer choice process, Latina/o/x students seek transfer information from transfer agents who are trusting, caring, and who could provide accurate transfer information and advice (Cortes & Castro, 2017). These transfer agents are primarily siblings, immediate and extended family, spouses, peers, faculty, staff, counselors, and academic program staff

(Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Saenz et al., 2017; Vega, 2018; Vasquez et al., 2022). Latina/o/x students primarily seek transfer information and advice from their immediate and extended family members because they have had direct experience and success with the transfer process (Harris, 2017; Jabbar et al., 2019; Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Suarez, 2003). To this end, they serve as mentors and guides for Latinx community college students.

Academic Programs. Latina/o/x community college students relied heavily on academic program staff from Puente, Ascenders, CAMP, and the Honors College to gain transfer information (Andrade, 2019; Cortes & Castro, 2017; Doran & Hengesteg, 2020; Dowd et al., 2013; Hagedorn & Cepeda, 2004; Harris, 2017; Nicholas et al., 2021; Sanchez & Morgan, 2022; Wang et al., 2022). Hagedorn and Cepeda (2004) in their article, "Serving Los Angeles: Urban Community Colleges and Educational Success Among Latino Students," found that the Puente program not only supported community college student's aspirations to continue with the transfer process, but the program staff also provided valuable information for the the academic course planning necessary to meet transfer guidelines and goals. Moreover, the Extended Opportunities Program and Services (EOPS) provided basic academic skills training to prepare Latina/o/x community college students for transfer-related courses (Dowd et al., 2013).

In addition to course planning information, academic programs also provide emotional support, care and a sense of familia, which undoubtedly assisted Latina/o/x community college students with gaining the transfer information needed to achieve their goal of transferring to four-year institutions (Andrade, 2019; Dowd et al., 2013). Establishing safe, informative transfer information access spaces went beyond the student. Doran and Hengesteg (2020) found that academic programs also served as spaces where Latina/o/x families were able to gain information about the community college system and the transfer process.

Doran and Hengesteg (2020) found that the Ascender program provided opportunities for familias to connect with faculty and staff of the institutions their transfer students were attending. Events such as Noche de Familia empowered parents and extended family members to better support their transfer student's pursuit of a higher education degree and their transfer goals (Doran & Hengesteg, 2020). It is evident that academic programs and their staff are critical transmitters of transfer information for Latina/o/x community college students due to easy access to knowledgeable administrators who can support students with accurate transfer information to successfully navigate the transfer process (Dowd et al., 2013).

Student Organizations. Another source of transfer information for Latinx community college came from student organizations that matched their gender and cultural identities (Acevedo et al., 2021; Malagon & Alvarez, 2010; Rodriguez et al., 2021). For instance, in the article "Latino Men and Masculinities: A Multi-Institution Study of Community College Transfer Experiences," Rodriguez et al. (2021) found that Latino men benefited from participating in on-campus men's groups because they were able to negotiate their intersectional identities and conceptualize their definitions of masculinity, which in turn helped them persist through community college, gain transfer information, and continue with the transfer process.

Latina women, on the other hand, utilized their navigational capital to seek out groups of supportive, empowering women with like-minded, social justice-oriented goals, who could serve as transfer information agents and support (Malagon & Alvarez, 2010). Like-minded, empowering support groups are also crucial for the transfer success of Latina/o community college students in STEM. Acevedo-Gil et al. (2021) found that Latina STEM community college students benefited from having access to supportive peer groups because they could gain

academic and social validation due to the fact that they could help each other out when facing challenges.

Familial and Peer Networks. Latina/o/x community college students gained transfer information from immediate and extended family networks such as parents, partners, siblings, aunts and uncles as well as friends (Saenz et al., 2017). Latino males in Vasquez et al.'s (2022) study often viewed their girlfriends as experts with the transfer process and navigating institutional spaces because of how advanced they were in their educational careers. Latino males sought out information from them regarding coursework, admissions applications, and the overall transfer process (Vasquez et al., 2022). Similarly, Jabbar et al. (2019) found that Latino families supported their transfer-going students with direct advice and support with the transfer process and career choices and even attended college tours with them to assist with asking the right questions (Harris, 2017; Jabbar et al., 2019).

Castro and Cortez (2017) point to a different type of familial transfer support that assists with successful transfer. Students in this study relied on their families for the emotional support and encouragement needed to continue on with gaining the transfer information necessary for successful transfer (Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Suarez, 2003). Jabbar et al. (2019) also found that Latino families supported their transfer-going children in non-traditional ways. Some of these methods involved implicit support such as not getting in the way of their children's education or disrupting their abilities to progress in college, as well as in-kind support such as free babysitting and transportation (Jabbar et al., 2019; Vasquez et al., 2022). Although Latino families did not always have the transfer expertise to assist with providing transfer information, they provided life advice and served as life coaches to their children (Saenz et al., 2018).

Latina/o/x community college students also sought transfer information, mentorship, and expertise from their siblings and friends who had successfully completed transfer requirements and transferred to four-year institutions (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Vega, 2018). Acevedo et al. (2021) and Rodriguez et al. (2019) underscored the importance of peer groups to the successful transfer of Latina/o/x community college students. Peer groups provided Latina/o/x students with like minded individuals who share a common goal of transferring to a four-year institution. Through these groups, students support and encourage each other through the transfer process and, most importantly, work with each other to gain accurate transfer information.

Community College Faculty and Staff. Latina/o/x community college students strategically negotiated who they considered as part of their transfer support system (Alcantar & Hernandez, 2020; Bensimon & Dowd, 2009). Students selected institutional support such as faculty and counselors based on many factors, but primarily institutional transfer agents who are caring and who are invested in their goals and dreams (Rodriguez et al., 2019). Arteaga (2015) in her study titled "Applying Cultura in the Community College Counseling Practice," found that Latina/o/x community college students sought institutional stakeholders who are buena gente (nice), enjoy small talk (personable small talk), demonstrate carino (endearment), and who are disposed to developing confianza (trust in one another). Latina/o/x community college students also sought support and information from Latino faculty mentors who helped foster a sense of confidence in the students abilities to transfer (Hagedorn et al., 2007). Additionally, Alcantar and Hernandez (2020) found that Latina/o/x community college students sought faculty mentors who provided validating messages that encouraged them to succeed in transfer coursework and the transfer process. These stakeholders often came from academic programs such as TRIO, CAMP,

Puente, and EOPS–college access programs specifically designed for historically underrepresented and marginalized students (Cortez & Castro, 2017; Sanchez & Morgan, 2022).

Vasquez et al. (2022) found that Latina/o/x community college students appreciated how faculty and staff held them accountable for completing their community college transfer coursework and continuing on with the transfer process. Faculty members accomplished this by consistently asking students for updates on their transfer process and by evoking high expectations of students (Dowd e. al., 2013). Lastly, Latina/o/x community college students mentioned that counselors, particularly those from academic programs embodied a parental role that assisted them with gaining transfer information (Vasquez et al., 2022).

Desafíos y Barreras: Anticipating Transfer Obstacles

As Latina/o/x students begin to engage with the transfer process, they also begin to experience and anticipate transfer obstacles (Sanchez & Morgan, 2022; Wang et al., 2022). Latina/o/x community college students at this stage assess the transfer information they received to determine whether they will be accepted into a transfer institution, will belong at that transfer institution, and will succeed as a transfer student (Arteaga, 2015). During this stage, Latina/o/x community college students create self-doubt in their academic abilities and question if a transfer pathway is the correct path for them (Pena & Rhoads, 2019; Wenjie et al., 2022). They encounter social, cultural, financial, structural, and systemic barriers that serve to perpetuate the transfer equity gaps for this population of students (Gard et al., 2012; Rodriguez et al., 2021; Vasquez et al., 2020).

Financial Barriers. One of the biggest barriers to transfer for Latina/o/x community college students is affordability. Students at this stage of the transfer choice process contemplate if a bachelor's degree is worth the financial investment. Rodriguez et al. (2021) and Pena and

Rhoads (2019) found that Latina/o/x community college students worried about student debt due to transfer, which increased their fear of financial strain. They worried about high costs to transfer and feared that the financial strain would not allow them to continue to support their families financially (Sanchez & Morgan, 2022). Furthermore, Wang et al. (2022) and Gard et al. (2012) found that being ill-informed about the transfer and financial aid timelines led to limited access to financial aid when transferring from one institution to another. For immigrant and undocumented Latina/o/x students, financial strain was further exacerbated because they often had to work full-time and attend college part-time to help support their families.

Lack of Qualified Transfer Agents. The absence of transfer agents such as counselors and instructors led to increased difficulties with the transfer process for Latina/o/x community college students. Students who were ill-equipped to navigate the transfer process, specifically course selection, tend to take longer to complete transfer degrees and become less motivated to do so (Jabbar et al., 2019). Lack of transfer agents, specifically academic counselors, led to incongruences with course selection that eventually led to not meeting transfer guidelines and not completing the transfer process (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009).

Without qualified transfer agents, Latina/o/x students are ill-equipped to select transfer-related courses and become frustrated when course selection for their majors is small (Wang et al., 2022). This makes them question if completing the transfer pathway is an achievable goal. Moreover, in her study, "Applying Cultura in the Community College Counseling Practice," Arteaga (2015) found that Latina/o/x community college students had negative experiences with academic counselors. This included lack of availability, counselors lacking care, not providing options and instead throwing them into courses, giving them conflicting transfer information, and discouraging them from pursuing their goals (Arteaga,

2015). Ultimately, Latina/o/x students were ill-equipped to pursue a transfer pathway and the lack of qualified transfer agents further contributed to their decisions to question if transferring was a viable option (Gard et al., 2012; Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004).

The lack of qualified transfer agents also led to misinformation and lack of opportunities to move forward with the transfer process (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009). Gard et al. (2012) found that students were disappointed with the transfer counseling they received at their community colleges due to incompetencies with the transfer process from counselors. Acevedo et al. (2021) also found that faculty transfer agents invalidated STEM students' interests in STEM majors and careers. Therefore, Latina/o/x STEM students questioned their abilities to pursue STEM degrees which led them to reconsider their academic options beyond the community college system.

Remedial Coursework. Students who began their community college careers in remedial classes were less motivated to transfer due to the time to degree (Pena & Rhoads, 2019; Wenjie et al., 2022). Pena and Rhoads (2019) found that students thought the transfer process was lengthy due to the many transfer requirements needed after completing remedial coursework. This further discouraged and frustrated Latina/o/x students to pursue the transfer process. Additionally, Wang et al. (2022) found that enrolling in remedial courses led to students exceeding their credit limit for financial aid which led to discrepancies with transfer. Since remedial courses do not count as transfer degree requirements, Latina/o/x students struggled to attain transfer degrees in shorter time frames which affects their financial aid.

Malagon and Alvarez (2010) also reported that remedial classes reinforced a deficit mindset of low achievement, which often made Latina students question their abilities to succeed and pursue the transfer track. Hagedorn and Lester (2006) also found that non-traditional students thirty years and older were often placed in remedial mathematics courses which put

them at higher risk for not completing the courses and advancing with the transfer process. Similarly, English as a Second Language (ESL) community college students often begin community college in ESL courses which extend their time to degree (Alexander et al., 2007). One student in Gard et al.'s (2012) study mentioned he thought that community colleges used remedial courses as a mechanism to exploit low-income and minority students for financial gain. The result of beginning a community college career in remedial courses is detrimental to the transfer success of Latina/o community college students (Alexander et al., 2007).

Sociocultural Obstacles. Latina/o/x community college students constantly negotiated their sociocultural identities throughout the transfer choice process (Vasquez et al., 2020). For Latina women, pursuing a transfer pathway is difficult because their parents believe that higher education institutions teach ideas that steer away from the traditional Latina/o cultural customs of emphasizing work, marriage and family (Alexander et al., 2007). These cultural expectations make it difficult for Latina community college students to consider a transfer pathway.

Latino men also experienced challenges with adhering to gender roles and their masculinity (Rodriguez et al., 2021). Saenz et. al. (2017) found that Latino fathers relied on and emphasized financial contribution from their sons. Many of the Latino male students in the study felt ashamed for pursuing full-time academic work versus having a full-time job, which in return contributed to a cultural clash between pursuing the transfer track or fulfilling cultural expectations of being a provider and contributor to the family (Saenz et al., 2017; Rodriguez et al., 2021). Latino fathers also viewed college as unnecessary because their sons were not making money and contributing to the family (Gard et al., 2012). These cultural expectations had negative effects on Latino males' help-seeking behaviors.

When Latino men struggled academically, they were hesitant to seek help due to fear of not being perceived as masculine (Pena & Rhoads, 2019). These feelings come from cultural expectations that Latino males are supposed to be able to succeed on their own without the help of others. Rodriguez et al. (2021) also found that prior conceptions of masculinity that Latino men brought with them into higher education spaces led to academic challenges with completing transfer requirements. As a result, Latino male students were hesitant to access and utilize campus resources because help-seeking behaviors were seen as a feminine attribute and their pride prevented them from seeking transfer support (Rodriguez et al., 2019).

Apoyo with the Planning and Applying to Transfer Process

The next stage of the transfer choice process involves planning and applying to transfer institutions. During this stage, Latina/o/x community college students gather the transfer information they received and sift through it to determine if they are ready to apply. They are in constant negotiations with their intersectional identities and they continue to question if they are going to gain successful admission to their transfer institutions. These tensions lead Latina/o/x community college students to continue to search for more transfer information and leverage their network of transfer agents to assist them with the transfer planning and applying process.

Familial Assistance. Twenty-one articles that were reviewed showed evidence that Latina/o/x community college students relied on a community of transfer agents for the support they needed to apply to and gain successful transfer admission to four-year institutions (e.g., Andrade, 2019; Hagedorn & Cepeda, 2004; Nicholas etal., 2021). The primary source of support came from immediate and extended family members (Jabbar et al., 2019; Harris, 2017; Suarez, 2003; Wang et al., 2022). Jabbar et al. (2019) found that Latina/o/x students trusted the information that their families possessed as opposed to the prospect of receiving conflicting

transfer information from institutional transfer agents such as counselors, staff, and faculty. For example, Latina/o/x students sought out application support from family members who had already gone through the process of transferring. They also sought out advice and support from cousins who were already professionals (i.e., doctors) to help with transfer and career advice (Jabbar et al., 2019).

In some cases, family members sought support from colleagues, neighbors, and friends and relayed that information to their transfer-going student (Jabbar et al., 2019; Harris, 2017). Nicholas, Musoba, and Khurana (2021) also found that Latino males received support from the women in their lives. These women (i.e. mothers, aunts, mentors, sisters, girlfriends) assisted them with critical academic pseudo-counseling services that helped them transfer. For example, mothers and tias served as continued motivators and inspiration, while girlfriends assisted with navigating the transfer process (Nicholas et al., 2021).

Academic Support Programs. Faculty and staff members, mostly from academic programs such as CAMP, TRIO, MESA, Adelante, and Puente helped bolster Latina/o/x community college student's confidence and success with the transfer application process (Dowd et al., 2013, Harris, 2017; Hagedorn & Cepeda, 2004). Andrade (2019) found that academic program counselors provided helpful transfer and financial aid information as well as helped students navigate the bureaucratic transfer process. Moreover, summer programs are important and critical resources of support for prospective Latina/o/x transfer students because it exposes them to transfer institutions, where they get to learn about the expectations of four-year institutions (Andrade, 2019). Cortez and Castro (2017) found that CAMP staff assisted students in applying to transfer and complete transfer course requirements as well as connecting them with other support programs like Puente and CAMP at the receiving institution. In sum,

academic programs not only provide Latina/o/x transfer students with academic advice and support, but they also serve as safe spaces where students can feel like they belong and are recognized for some of their salient identities, which supports their successful navigation of the transfer choice process (Sanchez & Morgan, 2022).

Role Models. Role models also emerged as an important transfer agent in assisting with the planning and applying to transfer institutions for Latina/o/x community college students. Bensimon and Dowd (2009) found that siblings served as successful transfer role models because they had "laid out the process" for them, which resulted in increased confidence of gaining admission due to witnessing success with the transfer process (p. 642). Former classmates also served as role models because they had direct experience with the transfer process that could be shared with prospective students (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Jabbar et al., 2019; Vega, 2018).

Finally, Saenz et al. (2018) found that Latina/o/x community college students gained navigational capital from their older sisters, who established precedence in their families. These older sisters had already attended college and were instrumental in the transfer success of their siblings (Saenz et al., 2018). Overall, role models are critical for the transfer success of Latinx community college students.

Co-creators of Transfer Choice: Centering Their Familial and Cultural Raizes (Roots)

During this stage of the transfer choice process, Latina/o/x community college students develop a transfer student identity due to their acceptance to four-year institutions. They begin to see themselves as university students rather than community college students, which boosts their confidence in successful completion of the transfer choice process (Vega, 2018). Latina/o/x community college students sift through the transfer information they gathered in previous stages

of the transfer choice process to help them choose a transfer institution (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Jabbar et al., 2019). They also review admissions and financial aid offers and negotiate each institution's offerings to determine the best fit for their needs (Viramontes, 2021). Through the sharing of consejos, stories, and experiences, Latina/o/x students and their families co-create transfer decisions ensuring that they stay connected to their familial and cultural roots (Jabbar et. al., 2019; Suarez, 2003).

Geographic Proximity to Family. The primary reason why Latina/o/x community college students decide to transfer to institutions close to home is because they often tend to prioritize their families' needs over their own (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Vasquez et al., 2020). Jabbar et al. (2019) found that family matters and commitments such as serving as caretakers and providers influence transfer choice decisions. Moreover, Latina/o/x community college students choose transfer institutions close to home because they want to maintain close ties to their families and they value the constant support they receive (Jabbar et al., 2019; Suarez, 2003).

Siblings and Friends As Pseudo-Counselors. Siblings who have already successfully completed the transfer choice process were also influential in the transfer decisions of Latina/o/x community college students. Oftentimes, these siblings were the only people in their families to have direct experience with transfer institutions, thus leading to being influential players in the transfer decision-making process for Latina/o/x community college students (Jabbar et al., 2019).

Cultural Values and Beliefs. Furthermore, families influenced the transfer choice decisions of Latina/o/x community college students by imposing their cultural values and beliefs onto them. Suarez (2003) found that traditional family members do not support their transfer-going students from moving far away from home. Although both male and female students are influenced by their cultural values and beliefs, Latina women were more influenced

by these ideologies than men (Jabbar et al., 2019). This is due to the cultural expectations that women should be at home caring for the family and thinking about marriage.

Financial Factors. Finally, another significant factor in the transfer choice process was financial considerations. Dowd et al. (2013) found that Latina/o/x community college students decided where they were going to transfer based on where they will incur the least debt. They often received information on how to access financial aid and how much loans to borrow from siblings who had already navigated these financial challenges (Jabbar et al., 2019).

Entering y Chocando (Clashing) with Transfer Institutions

After Latina/o/x community college students gain admissions to transfer institutions, they encounter various conflicts with the receiving institution and its stakeholders. These conflicts include academic, financial, cultural, and familial challenges as they try to complete the transfer choice process. This stage of the transfer choice process can be entered at various times in their transfer choice journey, such as when the student commits to the transfer process, begins to search for transfer information, starts planning and applying to transfer institutions, gains admissions to transfer universities, begins to select their transfer institution, and upon matriculating into the receiving institution.

Familial and Cultural Conflicts. As mentioned in previous sections of the transfer choice process, Latina/o/x families play a critical role in the transfer choice process and oftentimes familial ties and cultural expectations weigh heavily on transfer decisions. Scholars have noted that familial responsibilities are a major factor that leads Latina/o/x transfer students to select transfer institutions that are close to home (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004). However, both the student and the family benefit from these transfer decisions. Latina/o/x community college students serve as caretakers for their families, while the families

provide in-kind services such as babysitting for the student (Jabbar et al., 2019; Suarez, 2003). Latina/o/x community college students grapple with the thought of leaving their support systems if they decide to move away from their home (Vasquez e. al., 2020).

Systems Level Conflicts. As Latina/o/x transfer students begin to review and negotiate their transfer admissions offers, they also reflect on their experiences with the transfer support they received at the sending institution. Arteaga (2015) found that transfer students' negative counseling experiences with transfer agents at the receiving institution led to distrust in higher education counseling services. As a result, transfer students were hesitant to seek support from the receiving institution due to their negative experiences at the sending institution. Moreover, Latina/o/x transfer students reported receiving misinformation about the transfer process which built further distrust with systems of higher education (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009). Ornelas and Solorzano (2004) also point to negative and inadequate K-12 public education schooling for the mistrust that Latina/o/x community college students carry through the transfer choice process.

Financial Conflicts. It is no secret that Latina/o/x community college students rely heavily on substantial financial aid packages to fund their studies (Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004). However, applying for and attaining financial aid is not a streamlined process, especially as students proceed with the transfer process. Gard et al. (2012) and Ornelas and Solorzano (2004) found that students thought the four-year institution cost was insurmountable in comparison with community college costs, which led to them questioning their decisions to matriculate. Moreover, some students were concerned about not being able to access adequate financial aid packages to fund their transfer institution and they were concerned about not being able to access financial aid personnel at the four-year institutions which further placed them in conflict with the receiving institution (Gard et al., 2012; Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004).

Familias Poderosas: Dual-Capacity Building & Mentoring As Counterstories

In the seventh stage of the transfer choice process, Latina/o/x community college students engage in an internal transformation of self after successfully completing the transfer process (Malagon & Alvarez, 2010). They realize the reality that they will continue to encounter challenges at the receiving institution, but that self-advocacy in the form of seeking support and resources will assist them in overcoming those obstacles (Sanchez & Morgan, 2022; Vega, 2018). Latina/o/x community college students also pay it forward by serving as role models and mentors to prospective transfer students (Sanchez & Morgan, 2022). Their mentoring involves sharing transfer information and advice to enhance the success of other community college transfer students (Saenz et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2022).

Familial Motivation. For Latina/o/x community college students, education is not an individualized experience, but rather a collectivistic endeavor that is meant to improve their families and communities lives (Vasquez et al., 2022; Vega, 2018). These students pursue higher education in order to attain degrees for social and familial mobility, thus investing their time and efforts mentoring future college students in their communities and families. Malagon and Alvarez (2010) found that students started a transfer club at their community colleges in order to support prospective students with their transfer choice process.

Role Modeling and Mentoring. Additionally, students sought opportunities to serve as transfer agents, especially with students who share similar backgrounds and experiences as they did (Sanchez & Morgan, 2022). Latina/o/x community college students felt the desire to serve as role models to their younger siblings to ensure that they followed a higher educational trajectory (Doran & Hengesteg, 2020; Saenz et al., 2018; Vasquez et al., 2022). These successful transfer students shared information about academic support programs with their siblings to ensure that

they also received adequate transfer support when they entered higher education spaces (Doran & Hengesteg, 2020). Moreover, student-parents were motivated to complete the transfer process in order to serve as role models, mentors, and advocates for their children and to show their children that they too can accomplish their educational goals (Malagon & Alvarez, 2010; Vega, 2018; Wang et al., 2022).

Discussion and Future Research

The evidence is clear that Latina/o/x family engagement is an integral part of the transfer success of Latina/o/x community college students at all stages of the transfer process. Given the collectivistic nature of Latina/o/x culture and the evidence showcased in this literature review, Latina/o/x family engagement should be at the forefront of the transfer choice process. Thus, college choice frameworks, practices, and policies should center familismo and familial capital in order to disrupt transfer equity gaps for Latina/o/x students. The concept of familismo unites Latina/o/x families because of their common understanding and commitment to providing for, being loyal to, and wanting the best for their families (Villanueva, 2020). Familial capital, on the other hand, is described as "cultural knowledge nurtured amongst the family that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition" (Yosso, 2005, p. 79). When combined, these concepts allow Latina/o/x community college students and their families to successfully navigate the complex and inequitable transfer process.

While this review of research highlighted how Latina/o/x families indirectly influenced the transfer decision making process of Latina/o/x community college students, more research is needed to better understand how Latina/o/x parents understand the transfer process, specifically, how it is that these parents develop their understanding and perceptions of the transfer process, and resources, tools, knowledge, and power structures that help them develop these notions and

what are the limits and barriers they face. The extent to which Latina/o/x community college students take into consideration their families' opinions of the transfer process, the reasoning behind it, and the result of these decisions are all important notions that need further investigation.

Moreover, researchers need to further examine the role that sociocultural factors play in the transfer decisions of Latina/o/x students and to better understand how Latina/o/x families view the implications of cultural expectations on transfer processes. To unearth some of these answers, researchers need to utilize methodological tools that are best suited for working with Latina/o/x students and their families. One such approach can be by using platicas as the main form of data collection and analysis. Platicas methodology can serve as a powerful tool to learn more about the thoughts and ideas of Latina/o/x families because platicas emphasize sharing ideas, experiences, stories, and relationship building (Fierros & Bernal, 2016). These are aspects that are missing in the community college context when building relationships between institutions and Latina/o/x families. As such, this dissertation seeks to contribute to the Latina/o/x transfer literature by including the voices and experiences of Latina/o/x families and exploring the sociocultural and sociopolitical factors that shape transfer decisions for Latina/o/x community college students.

Chapter 2, in part, has been published in the Journal of Latinos and Education. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This dissertation investigates the transfer decision-making processes of Latina/o/x community college students through a family-centered approach. To recap, the research questions are as follows: (1) How are transfer choice sets created and what role do racial, geographic, cultural, sociopolitical, and familial contexts play?, (2) How do Latina/o/x families' conceptions of their role, responsibilities, and capacities in the transfer process shape the ways in which they support their children's transfer aspirations?, and (3) How do Latina/o/x students and their families engage with the sending and receiving institution to promote transfer success given the tenets of Transfer Receptive Culture and the process of College-Conocimiento? To explore this topic, I employed a narrative research study design that utilizes platica methodology (Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016) and familial testimonios (Huber, 2009). Creswell and Poth (2018) argue that a narrative research approach is integral for the exploration of the social, cultural, familial, linguistic, and institutional narratives of individuals. Narrative inquiry requires the collection of stories to illuminate the lived experiences of individuals, such as the exploration of the non-linear and complex transfer decision-making processes of Latina/o/x community college students. Drawing on the stories of individuals and working alongside them to co-construct meaning allows researchers to tell a complete story of their lived experiences by corroborating results and involving participants in the data collection and analysis procedures (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Thus, narrative methodology is appropriate for studying Latina/o/x transfer decision-making because it allows for a deeper understanding of the intricacies, nuances, and complexities of the transfer decision-making process. In this chapter, I describe my participant

selection criteria, participant recruitment strategies, the diverse forms of data collection methods, and the analytical approach that helped guide data analysis and interpretation.

Participant Selection

The state of California is home to over fifteen million (39%) of the Latina/o/x population in the United States (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2021). Of that population, 1.12 million (7%) Latina/o/x people reside in San Diego County (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2021). San Diego County is serviced by five community college districts, which comprise a total of eight community colleges (Contreras et al., 2018). Collectively, these institutions enroll a critical mass of Latina/o/x students (Contreras et al., 2018). Moreover, all eight of these community colleges are Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) meaning that they enroll at least 25% full-time enrolled Latina/o/x students (The Campaign for College Opportunity, 2021). Therefore, I intentionally selected San Diego County as the site for this study because a significant number of students enrolled in community colleges are Latina/o/x students.

The students participating in this study self-identified as Latina/o/x, were enrolled in a San Diego County community college during the 2023/2024 academic year, were transfer ready and pursued a vertical transfer pathway. Transfer ready participants are students who are already "predisposed" to make a choice—those who intend to transfer to a 4-year institution within the next 12 months. To gain access to eligible participants for this study, I utilized social media, specifically Instagram to recruit my participants. In 2020, prior to starting my PhD program, I began documenting my PhD experiences as a first-generation, low-income Latino student. Through curated informational digital campaigns, where I demystify graduate school by sharing resources, advice, and vlogs (virtual blogs), I began to grow my following to over thirty thousand

followers. In my content, I am intentional; I use bilingual (English/Spanish) messaging, Latin music, and transparency. For instance, I share how much money I make as a teacher assistant as well as tips for applying to PhD programs, while overlaying the video with cumbias and ranchero music. These tactics have afforded me the honor of building a virtual counterspace (Gomez & Cabrera, 2023) for primarily Latina/o/x prospective and current graduate students, including current transfer students from San Diego County. Gomez and Cabrera (2023) argue that "virtual counterspaces function as powerful sites of cultural affirmation, community building, empowerment, knowledge sharing, and resistance" (p.14).

Upon receiving IRB approval, I posted a recruitment flier to Instagram prompting qualified participants to scan a QR code to complete an initial Qualtrics survey. This survey asked students to create transfer choice sets by ranking universities they were considering, in addition to further questions to determine participant eligibility. Recruitment for this study lasted from June 2024 to August 2024. After reviewing and screening initial surveys to determine eligibility and participant commitment to the study, I selected sixteen Latina/o/x community college students to participate. Participants were immediately emailed to schedule their first Zoom interview and were provided with an electronic IRB-approved exempt form for their review.

Sixteen Latina/o/x students participated in this study. Thirteen participants were U.S. citizens or permanent residents, while three participants were undocumented. Two students identified as Central American and Mexican, while the other fourteen participants identified as Mexican/Chicanx/Chicana/Chicano. Twelve of the participants were female, three were male, and one was non-binary. All but one participant is first-generation and ten participants received federal Pell grants signifying lower economic status. Ten participants reported working either

part-time or full-time, and six participants did not work. Nine participants are majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM), and twelve participants were members of a college access program (i.e. Promise program, Puente, HSI, EOPS, TRIO, MESA, CalWorks).

To recruit families, I asked student participants to share study information with their families alongside a bilingual (English/Spanish) recruitment flier. Once families expressed interest in participating in the study, I contacted them to schedule a Zoom meeting and provided them with a bilingual (English/Spanish) IRB-approved exempt document explaining the study. To challenge the harmful federal definitions of families and to be more inclusive and inviting, I use the term "family" versus "parental" to acknowledge that a student's familial networks can consist of not only immediate and extended family members, but also grandparents, aunts, uncles, non-biological parents, friends, partners, etc. This study consisted of five mothers, one father, three sisters, two friends, and two spouses.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, I secured approval by the UC San Diego Institutional Review Boards (IRB) before proceeding with recruitment and data collection. Due to IRB exempt status, participants received a digital exempt document explaining the study, in which, I also reviewed prior to the first interview. Appendices D include the exempt form for both the student and their family members. Recruitment fliers, platica and testimonio protocols, and exempt forms were translated from English to Spanish to accommodate the language needs of families. With the financial support of the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students (NISTS) Research Grant, I provided student participants with a $100 dollar gift card upon completion of three platicas, and their families received a $50 dollar gift card for their participation in one

testimonio. I am committed to providing participants with a monetary incentive for their energy, time, and story (Abrego, 2022). Once data was collected, interview transcripts were placed in a password-protected server and participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms they selected. At times, institution names are anonymized in order to protect the institutions and the students within them. During the entirety of this dissertation, I maintained a strong commitment to ethical research.

My responsibilities as a researcher move beyond collecting data for personal gain. I am deeply committed to advancing the success of Latina/o/x community college students and, therefore, I aim to be in accompaniment with my participants (Abrego, 2022). Abrego (2022) describes accompaniment as prioritizing the needs of the oppressed or marginalized by "making connections with others, identifying with them, and helping them" (p. 3). Essentially, the goal is to make my participants my first priority, which results in dedicating time to answer transfer-related questions, directing them to resources, and connecting them to transfer agents at the sending and receiving institutions. For example, I provided one of my participants with a list of Latina/o/x resources at her transfer destination since she expressed interests in remaining connected with her cultural background.

While these practices shaped the outcomes of my study, I am committed to prioritizing the needs of my participants. Thus, I used my role as the Director of a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) STEM grant at one of the community colleges that some of the students involved in this study attended to continue to serve as a resource and mentor to my participants throughout their transfer process. These are a few ways I tried to give back to my participants (Abrego, 2022). Moreover, I centered the well-being of my participants by including them in every aspect of the research process to empower them to become co-creators of their realities

(Abrego, 2022). I accomplished this by including member-checking during the research process and allowing my participants to shape their narratives through follow-up questions.

Data Collection

For this study, I collected data by using three data collection tools: qualtrics survey, platicas, and testimonios. The first phase of data collection involved creating transfer "choice sets." Students constructed "choice sets" to help them with the selection of higher education institutions during the college choice process (Bell, 2009). Latina/o/x students constructed transfer "choice sets" by completing a short Qualtrics survey that allowed them to rank four-year institutions from most to least likely to apply to and matriculate. Appendix E includes a copy of the Qualtrics survey. This information was used to collect demographic information as well as information regarding their decisions to apply or not apply to certain transfer institutions. During the platicas phase of this study, the data collected from the transfer "choice sets" was used to probe further questions regarding transfer decision-making and the demographic information was used to analyze transfer choice patterns as they pertain to certain groups of participants (i.e., first-generation, low-income, etc.).

Understanding the lived experience of Latina/o/x transfer students through shared memories, experiences, and stories requires a methodological approach that positions study participants as co-creators of knowledge and theorizers of their own lived experiences (Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016). Therefore, the second phase of data collection used platica methodology to center the transfer choice processes of Latina/o/x students by acknowledging that they shape the research process and are not just informants, but creators of knowledge (Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016). Platica methodology differs from the traditional, Eurocentric ways of interviewing participants because they are a more appropriate method to communicating with Latina/o/x

people due to the cultural formalities of the interview process and it acknowledges the participants role as contributors to the sense-making and theorizing of their own lived experiences (Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016).

In educational research, platicas have been used as a methodological tool to share one's life experiences through chismes, dichos, cuentos, consejos, and other forms of oral storytelling (Flores & Morales, 2021). Pláticas, which are an expressive cultural form "shaped by listening, inquiry, storytelling, and story making," are often learned from parents through everyday interactions and, thus, serve as a powerful tool for relational inquiry with the Latinx community (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013, p.160). Scholars have used platicas to honor community members' stories and to challenge the Eurocentric ways of interviewing Latina/o/x students. For instance, Garcia and Mireles-Rios (2019) engaged in pláticas with their fathers to analyze their own college-choice processes and to highlight the important role fathers play in college decision making for Chicanas. Puente and Velez (2023) theorized the methodology, platicando y mapeando, to interrogate the intersections of race, gender, space, and educational (in)opportunity by platicando with Latina/o/x rural youth from California's San Joaquin Valley.

In this study, each student engaged in three platicas starting in June and concluding in August, 2024. These platicas were conducted using the Zoom platform. Platica methodology relies on relations of reciprocity, vulnerability, and researcher reflexivity (Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016). Thus, the first platica was used to establish trust between the student and researcher. I asked participants about their life histories, student histories, and their motivations for engaging with the transfer pathway. Appendix B includes a copy of the platica protocol. Throughout the conversation, I also shared my personal experiences navigating higher education as a Latino student to connect with the participant and to establish an environment where the

participant and researcher converse in a "back and forth set-up" (Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016, p.114). Due to the aforementioned recruitment method of utilizing my virtual counterspace (Gomez & Cabrera, 2023) to connect with participants, it was easier to establish rapport and trust with participants because we had already built a connection online. Subsequent platicas explored how Latina/o/x students search for transfer information, plan and apply to transfer institutions, choose transfer institutions, interact with the receiving institution, and mitigate transfer challenges. A copy of platicas two and three are also included in appendix B. Collectively, these platicas served to yield action by developing new knowledge of the transfer decision-making process of Latina/o/x students and their families and informing transfer policy and practice.

The third and final phase of data collection focused on the lived experiences of families in the transfer decision making process. I conducted twelve familial testimonios, in English or Spanish, with each participant's families to learn about the families' parenting practices, their general experiences with their children's community college experiences, and their role in their children's planning, applying, and selection of a transfer institution. All testimonios were conducted on Zoom with a mix of English, Spanish, and Spanglish. Almost all familial testimonios were conducted with the student participant present. Moreover, I explored the sociopolitical implications of parenting styles and engagement and the new forms of apoyo that derive from their socio-political positions (Cuevas, 2021). A copy of the testimonio protocol can be viewed in appendix C. Testimonios are "guided by the will of the narrator to tell events as [they] see significant, and is often an expression of a collective experience, motivated by the social and/or political urgency to voice injustice and raise awareness of oppression" (Huber, 2009, p. 644).

Testimonio attempts to empower participants to act and seek justice through storytelling (Rodriguez-Campo, 2021). For instance, Jaime-Diaz and Ramos (2023) used testimonios to better understand the schooling experiences that led Mexican-American students to pursue community colleges and the role of familial culture in making that decision. Moreover, Conchas et al. (2019) employed testimonios to explore how Chicana/o/x first-generation college students different forms of marginalization shape their self and community empowerment.

By engaging in a process of knowledge production that incorporates participants in the analytic process, I was able to create new knowledge about experiences that are often untold such as the co-construction of transfer choice decisions between Latina/o/x families and their transfer-going student. In this process, I operated as a testimonialista, where the researcher engages in testimonio within or from a historically marginalized community (Rodriguez-Campo, 2021). This allowed me to blur the lines between researcher and participant in order to bring my own stories of resistance and marginalization into the conversation (Rodriguez-Campo, 2021).

Data Analysis

The information from the Qualtrics survey was used to refine interview protocols and help develop probe interview questions. All platicas and testimonios were audio-recorded through Zoom. They typically lasted between thirty minutes to an hour. Upon completion of each interview, I used Zoom to transcribe the audio files. All interview transcripts that were in English were downloaded and transcribed verbatim. I transcribed the interviews that were conducted in Spanish as I am fluent in the language. I reviewed all of the transcripts for accuracy and formatting. Transcripts were then uploaded into the qualitative analysis software program, MAXQDA in order to begin initial coding of the data.

I developed a coding scheme utilizing deductive and inductive approaches to analyze the large qualitative data set (Creswell & Poth, 2018). First, I adapted key elements of college-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017), apoyo sacrificial (Cuevas, 2021), and transfer receptive culture (Jain et al., 2020) as initial deductive codes to develop a codebook. These codes were as follows: aspirations to transfer to earn a Bachelor's degree; searching for transfer information; anticipating transfer obstacles; planning and applying to transfer; choosing a transfer institution; entering and conflicting with the transfer institution; and self-advocacy and peer support, sacrificios, apoyo and supportive behavior, apoyo sacrificial, transfer support and resource, and institutional commitment.

After identifying the pieces of data that embodied college-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017), apoyo sacrificial (Cuevas, 2021), and transfer receptive culture (Jain et al., 2020), I grouped them into separate files and conducted a second round of inductive coding to identify emergent themes that exemplified an accurate representation of the transfer choice processes and experiences. Examples of these codes were as follows: cultural and racial identity, geographic proximity, familial expectation, immigration policy, familial networks, knowledge brokers, in-kind support, consejos, Hispanic serving, Hispanic enrolling, and liminal transfer stage.

This study followed Creswell and Poth's (2018) guide for narrative data analysis, which posits that narrative study data need to be analyzed for the "story they have to tell, a chronology of unfolding events, and turning points or epiphanies" (p. 198). To do this, after each platica and testimonio, I explored the data by reading through the transcripts and noting initial thoughts about the data in the form of memos. Memos are important because they help form broader categories of information that can be used as codes, themes or to tell a story (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

In phase two of the data analysis process, I moved from coded data to writing up the findings by providing a discussion of the major themes that emerged from the interviews. Subcategories were discussed within each major theme and I included participant quotes in order to accurately depict the transfer choice processes and experiences of Latina/o/x students and their families. To preserve participants' voices, when families used Spanish in their interviews, I used their home language in sharing their quotes and I also provided an English translation. I organized the findings into three chapters. Chapter Four explored the transfer decision making processes of Latina/o/x students and the role their racial, cultural, sociopolitical, geographic, and familial factors played in those decisions. Chapter Five highlights the voices and experiences of families in the transfer journey and showcases the forms of apoyo and supportive behavior they employ to assist their transfer-going student. Chapter Six explores how higher education institutions are (or are not) developing a transfer receptive culture (Jain et al., 2020) at their institutions that supports Latina/o/x transfer outcomes and success.

I used the college-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017) framework and the concept of Apoyo Sacrificial (Cuevas, 2021) to describe how racial, geographical, and sociopolitical factors influence the decision-making process and the ways in which Latina/o/x families support their children's transfer aspirations. Cuevas (2021) asserts that an undocumented immigration status geographically limits students' higher education aspirations as well as the advice they receive from their parents when making transfer decisions. Through these platicas and tesimonios, I created counternarratives to describe new forms of apoyo that were shaped by racial, geographical, and sociopolitical factors. I used college-conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017) and transfer receptive culture (Jain et.al., 2020) to analyze and accurately depict the transfer realities

of Latina/o/x students and their families and the institutional commitments towards advancing the transfer success of Latina/o/x students.

Validity and Reliability

To establish validity and reliability of this study, member checking was employed to ensure that participants' lived experiences are accurately represented in the interpretation of the data. This involved sharing summaries of the preliminary findings and biographies with participants and working with them to present the data in a way that matches their actual transfer experiences. I reviewed findings with each participant after each platica. Moreover, I strategically collected multiple forms of data (i.e. platicas, testimonios, survey) to triangulate Latina/o/x transfer decision-making with the pretransfer experiences of participants. To further establish validity, my dissertation committee, who are experts in qualitative methodology and community college transfer, were also consulted to provide a different perspective to my data analysis in order to overcome biases that may arise.

Chapter 4 – Findings

Creating Transfer Choice Sets: Understanding How Latina/o/x Students Decide Where They Want To Transfer

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the pre-transfer experiences of Latina/o/x community college students. In this chapter, I aim to uncover how Latina/o/x students create transfer choice sets to determine where they plan to transfer. Through forty-eight platicas with sixteen Latina/o/x community college transfer students from San Diego County, I explored how these students decided where to submit transfer applications given their racial, cultural, sociopolitical, geographic, and familial positions. In this chapter, I address the first research question: *How are transfer choice sets created and what role do racial, geographic, cultural, sociopolitical, and familial contexts play?* The chapter is organized into four parts that help contextualize the nuances of the transfer decision-making process for Latina/o/x students. The first subsection explores the cultural and racial implications of transfer decisions, while the second subsection investigates how place and geographic proximity shape transfer pathways. The third subsection examines how immigration policy and sociopolitical context shape transfer decisions and the fourth subsection showcases cultural values and familial expectations in shaping transfer choices for Latina/o/x students.

Cultural and Racial Identity and Its Influence on Transfer Decisions

An analysis of the data reveals that Latina/o/x community college students create transfer choice sets based on racial and cultural factors. Their race and culture influences the transfer institutions they decided to apply to and ultimately the institution they decided to attend. Latina/o/x community college students made transfer choice decisions based on their critical consciousness and motivation to combat systemic inequalities, specifically racism and discrimination. Pillen et al. (2020) describe critical consciousness as "intentional cultivation of

self-awareness in context that attends to the dynamics of power in relationships and the structural environment invoking action toward social justice" (p. 1520). Moreover, due to the low transfer rates of Latina/o/x students, participants were motivated to pursue a transfer pathway to attain a Bachelor's degree to help raise these statistics. Furthermore, Latina/o/x students identified the lack of representation in majors in STEM, for example, and, therefore were also motivated to pursue transfer. Additionally, Latina/o/x students sought institutions where they felt like their culture was welcomed and valued. Specifically, they applied to institutions that were Hispanic serving and enrolling because this signified that there would be resources for Latina/o/x students. Institutions with HSI-designations were sought after by Latina/o/x students because the designation made them feel safe and welcomed.

Critical Consciousness

Through the development of critical consciousness, Latina/o/x students were able to recognize the systemic inequalities in their lived experiences that led them to create their transfer choice sets. More specifically, they wanted to prove others wrong by debunking stereotypes associated with Latina/o/x community college students. Emiliano, for example, chose to only apply to elite institutions in the University of California (UC) system in order to show other low-income, Hispanic/Latino students in his community that they can also access higher education institutions in the UC system. Similarly, Sofia's experience with racism and discrimination due to her Latina heritage and undocumented immigration status motivated her to apply to elite institutions like her local state university. She wanted to prove to her former white bosses, who treated her and her family unfairly, that undocumented people can also pursue higher education and achieve success. As undocumented people, their job sites were filled with

“discrimination, racism, and unfairness,” so Sofia wanted to attain a higher education to better support undocumented students and their families.

Furthermore, Alejandra selected to apply to out-of-state institutions because she wanted to show that Latina/o/x students are capable of transferring away from home to pursue a transfer pathway. Alejandra faced “a lot of trauma in school and feeling like [she] wasn't able to accomplish the same things [her] other peers were able to,” thus, she was further motivated to pursue transfer institutions out-of-state. She also recognized that many Latina/o/x students in her community choose in-state transfer institutions, specifically in the San Diego region. Being aware of the educational inequalities she witnessed led her to pursue a transfer pathway out-of-state. She explained, “I think because I'm Mexican. I just feel the need to apply to schools where a lot of people say it's so hard to get into. I always feel the need to prove people wrong in anything.” Although she was accepted to prestigious in-state institutions such as UC Davis and UC Berkeley, Alejandra chose an out-of-state transfer destination because it has one of the nation’s best veterinary schools. Alejandra’s critical consciousness was also awakened when she had a negative experience in the workforce. She stated:

> When I was first starting out in my veterinary career, I applied to my first job where the doctor was a little mean to me, saying that maybe this wasn't the right job for me. Maybe I should just stop trying [and to] move to a different career. Because I wanted to prove them wrong, I stopped working there, and I moved to another place where I got promoted two times and one as shift lead in the veterinary field, and I don't know. I just felt the need to one up him and prove him wrong.

Numerous students including Bernie, Deborah, Isabella, and Julia were aware of the low transfer and graduation rates for Latina/o/x students, which motivated them to pursue a transfer pathway. Deborah recognized that “there's not a lot of Hispanic, or people that look like me in universities,” which motivated her to “be in that percent that probably raises it or is involved [in] that category.” Similarly, Isabella knew “that a lot of people who go to community college, they

don't end up transferring," so she was motivated to "make the percentage go up higher." Furthermore, Julia chose to transfer "because of [her] parents; they didn't get the opportunity." She wanted to show them that their sacrifices were worthwhile, and she wanted to pay them back for their sacrifices of migrating to the U.S. from Mexico and enduring the challenges that immigrant families experience. She understands "that they wanted us to have better opportunities, better education to live a better life," and that is always "in the back of [her] head, where [she] wants to do it for them."

Bernie, on the other hand, wanted to take action to combat systemic educational inequities that contribute to low transfer and graduation rates by sharing her successful transfer experience. Her experience working in the restaurant industry exposed her to the inequities that Latina/o/x people face and how those inequalities contribute to lack of access to higher education. Therefore, she wanted to be the representation her community needs to pursue higher education, specifically a transfer pathway. Bernie states:

> I wanted to kind of like break the barriers for those after me, and like to show people like me in high school like it is possible you can do it, and it's not a matter of how long it takes you just get it done. I grew up in a restaurant setting right, and I grew up seeing Latino workers…I just want to break those barriers so that those after me can also see someone that looks like [them] do it then it motivates you to also want to do it.

Finally, critical consciousness about race and culture also influenced students' transfer choices, as some students sought to respond to the lack of Latina/o/x representation in their fields of study. Valeria chose to apply to the UC system because she wanted to help diversify STEM majors at this institution. Her understanding of the lack of Latinas in STEM majors at the UC led her to apply to this institution and "since [she's] a woman in STEM, [she] thinks it's so important to us as a Latinas to graduate to get our bachelor's degree to get our PhD." Furthermore, Valeria was proud to be born in Mexico and she wanted to make sure that future

Latina engineers are able to access UC institutions and their resources such as research. She understood that the UC system has opportunities that not all other transfer destinations do.

Leonardo also recognizes that the film industry needs more Mexican directors and, thus, he is pursuing a film degree at a local elite institution with a prominent film major to pursue a career as a filmmaker and producer to diversify the field. Similarly, Emiliano's low-income background and living in a predominantly Latino community led him to witness the day-to-day struggles of his community members. Many of his community members did not consider higher education as an option after high school. He explained, "Oh, we try out community college for a little bit. But half of the people that I know who went to community college dropped out. It's just not it." Therefore, he is pursuing an engineering degree at the UC to motivate members of his community to pursue majors in STEM to diversify the field. He wants to help future engineers or future scientists achieve majors and careers in STEM. He stated, " I want to make the people around me see like, "you can do it too, like, trust me, you can do it too. I'll help you get to it." Receiving acceptance to UC institutions provided the "oomph" he needed to "give advice to people [in his community]" and to address stereotypes of "just another Hispanic kid who tried community college and like who, just, you know, did whatever." Emilano's cultural background as Hispanic/Latino "made [him] a lot more stubborn to actually get an education for [his] people."

Latina/o/x community college students developed their transfer choices based on race, culture, and a strong sense of critical consciousness. Their awareness of systemic inequalities, racism, and underrepresentation in higher education motivated them to pursue transfer as a way to challenge stereotypes and elevate their communities. Many students applied to Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) to feel culturally affirmed and supported, seeking

environments that reflected and respected their identities. Personal experiences with discrimination, limited representation in fields like STEM and film, and seeing others in their communities struggle inspired students to aim for elite institutions and underrepresented majors. Students like Emiliano, Alejandra, Sofia, and Valeria were driven by a desire to prove doubters wrong and serve as role models for others in their communities. Ultimately, their transfer decisions were not just academic but deeply rooted in social justice, representation, and a desire to uplift Latina/o/x voices in higher education and beyond.

Environments Where They Feel Valued and Welcomed

Latina/o/x transfer students also chose transfer institutions where they felt like their race and culture were valued and welcomed. Essentially, they were seeking transfer institutions that were Hispanic-enrolling. Alicia contemplated applying to a small private university because she was unsure if there would be other Latina/o/x students enrolled. She had heard that this university "was a little different" because it was a private institution in an affluent part of San Diego and that there weren't many Latinos enrolled at the institution. She was afraid that she would not be able to connect with others from similar backgrounds. Therefore, she decided to apply to another local university where she "knew [they] had a high Hispanic population" and where she would "feel comfortable and had good programs for Hispanics." She also recognized the local university's Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation and equated the designation with a sense of belonging and she "felt that [she] would be okay going there." Similarly, Leonardo decided to apply to his local university because many of his transborder friends were currently attending this institution. Since "most of the [transborder] people that [he] knew are choosing and and going there," this local university must be a "safe option" due to the high number of Latina/o/x students that attend who cross the border daily. He felt that his local

university was welcoming to Latina/o/x transborder students because many of his friends and peers were accepted and attended.

Sofia conducted extensive research on prospective transfer institutions to design her transfer choice sets. She was specifically searching for Hispanic-enrolling institutions and placed emphasis on the locations and communities that surrounded the institutions. She knew that transfer institutions such as CSU San Marcos, CSU Long Beach, CSU Los Angeles, and San Diego State University had "a vast population of Latinx students in LA, and so that also swayed [her] into considering going there, because [she] knew that there'd be more students like [her] up there than there is here." The large populations of Hispanic students at those institutions mirrored the communities where they were situated. Thus, Sofia wanted an institution that felt like home and was inclusive and supportive of undocumented students like herself.

The UC system is the most prestigious higher education system in the state of California and arguably the nation. It is highly competitive and, as a result, relatively few Latina/o/x students are accepted and enrolled (UCnet, 2024). A recent report found that 23.3.% of UC students are Latina/o/x (UCnet, 2024). Students like Bernie, Claudia, Diana, Ximena and Leonardo recognized the lack of Latina/o/x students enrolled at the UCs, which prevented them from applying to UC institutions to transfer. Ximena chose to apply to Cal State San Marcos because she knew it was Hispanic-enrolling and she equated that with the institution having resources for Latina/o/x students. Bernie applied to the CSU system as well because she knew that many Latina/o/x students attended CSUs. If she would have applied to and attended a UC school, she was scared to be the only Mexican in her classes and she feared not belonging. Bernie states:

> And honestly, I was really afraid of going to a school and being the only brown girl like that was my fear. I was raised in a border town, and because I'm too brown to be white,

> but I'm too white to be brown. It was kind of like, oh my God, I'm gonna have to assimilate to like being a white girl and I'm brown brown, like, you know, like there's no whiteness here, but it like it made me afraid of like dang like I'm gonna lose who I am kind of like. I was afraid of that.

Claudia's experience attending a predominantly white community college led her to decide to apply to transfer institutions that were Hispanic-enrolling because she wanted to feel "welcomed and comfortable" versus feelings of "sometimes not fitting in or not being able to relate to [her] peers."

Latina/o/x students chose to also apply to transfer institutions that were Hispanic-serving and sought evidence of support for Latina/o/x students. When Alicia visited SDSU, she noticed the Latinx Resource Center, Chicanx/Latinx books at the library, and Latinx artwork across campus. This made her feel comfortable and welcomed. Similarly, Isabella recognized CSU San Marco's Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation, which played a big factor in her selecting this institution to transfer. When she visited, she also noticed the Latinx Center and saw fliers for Latinx clubs and workshops designated to Latina/o/x students. Isabella explained that seeing these things confirmed her decision to apply to CSU San Marcos because "they take a lot of effort to make [Latina/o/x] students feel comfortable," and, thus, why she chose to apply and eventually attend. Due to Sofia's involvement with a Chicano/Latino teacher preparation program that was a partnership with her community college and SDSU allowed her to have connections to other Latina/o/x students in the same program but at the receiving institution. This transfer pathway program allowed her to connect with other undocumented Latina/o/x students and learn how they navigated their experiences at SDSU. This validated her decision to add SDSU as a transfer destination to her transfer choice sets. Similarly, Leonardo's cousin, who attends SDSU, shared with him some of the ways SDSU serves its Latina/o/x student population. She told Leonardo about MECHA and other Latina/o/x clubs and organizations. His cousin also

mentioned the HSI designation, and the large number of Latina/o/x enrolled students. Furthermore, Rafael was seeking a transfer institution where he felt like his culture was embraced and represented. He says:

> They've hosted … an Oaxacan event. And I know that, like other universities have also done events like that, or they bring traditional, like indigenous, dances like from Mexico. …I want to be somewhere where they embrace my culture, and I feel represented.

While most participants were seeking Hispanic-Serving Institutions, pre-transfer Latina/o/x students and their families experienced tensions with HSI-servingness. For instance, Sofia was not sure if SDSU showcased performative acts of servingness or not. She mentioned that SDSU did not have a Latinx graduation, or at least she could not find evidence of it online, which made her question SDSU's true intentions towards HSI-servingness. Hugo was also vigilant in examining how transfer institutions such as SDSU and UC San Diego valued Latina/o/x students' cultures. He mentioned that he chose his local UC because of its openness to student advocacy and "just the history that it has with Hispanics and minorities," although there have been recent events where students were prevented from advocating on campus. He mentioned that the local state university recently fired a Native American instructor because of his beliefs. He was also shocked to learn that students at the local state university harassed hot dog vendors in the area. These acts prevented Hugo from applying to this local state university. Moreover, Hugo's wife spoke about her husband's dual identity of being Mexican-American and how language played a role in feeling welcomed at Latina/o/x centers and events. Specifically, she mentioned that many Mexican American students are considered "no sabo" kids, which essentially translates to not knowing how to properly communicate in Spanish. Hugo's wife, Ana, believed that her husband "feels disconnected" from his culture and that "holds him back from reaching out to these centers because he doesn't feel like one of them." Being a "no sabo"

has a negative connotation and oftentimes people are shunned and looked down upon for not being able to carry their cultural backgrounds, specifically the language. Due to the embarrassment of losing one's culture and language, some "no sabo" students fear entering spaces that are meant for Latina/o/x students.

Some Latina/o/x students explored the surrounding community to help them determine which transfer institutions made it on their transfer choice sets. For example, Bernie chose to apply to a local state university because it was the closest institution to the border and she knew that more transnational students would attend. Moreover, the community around the local state institution is more diverse than other transfer destinations in the greater San Diego area. Bernie says that, while there are "White kids from North County, there are also black and brown kids from South San Diego." Similarly, institutions in North County had a similar student enrollment composition to the local state university, which further attracted Bernie to consider it and apply. On the other hand, institutions such as UC Merced and UC Davis did not make it on her list because she perceived there were very few Mexicans in those communities. Her friend who attends UC Davis advised her not to go there because "there's no Mexicans [here]; it's all White people and when you go out into the college town or surrounding towns, you're the outlier like you're not going to find anywhere to eat." Sofia applied to CSU Los Angeles and CSU San Marcos because they had large populations of Latina/o/x people in the surrounding community and she knew that there would be community resources for her. Rafael also considered the surrounding communities to help him design his transfer choice sets. He said: "I guess, like I knew that [the] LA Area, and like the San Diego area, like they're very real rich in … my culture, Mexican culture and…my race."

Latina/o/x students also sought transfer destinations that honored their intersectional identities. Rafael, an undocumented student, mentioned that he selected to apply to the local state universities because they welcomed his undocumented community by providing resources. On the other hand, he mentioned that he did not apply to Chico State because he perceived "they would probably have less resources for my community and they're more conservative and. I wanted to make sure that as an undocumented student, I would be in a safe space, and that there'd be plenty of resources." Similarly, Sofia applied to CSU Los Angeles, CSU San Marcos, and San Diego State University due to her perception of their support of undocumented students like herself. These institutions had undocumented student centers and that showed Sofia that she would have the resources that she needed to succeed as an undocumented Latina. Rosa, Ximena's Mother, was concerned that her undocumented children would not have access to financial resources nor support programs at their transfer institutions, so she advised them to seek transfer institutions that supported their undocumented, Latina/o/x identities. Rosa stated:

> La verdad. Sí, tenía muchas dudas pues mis hijos son inmigrantes, ¿verdad? Y yo digo, ¡ay, ¿qué tal si no existe una beca o un programa que ellos puedan asistir ahí o que no califiquen para eso. Sí, eso sí me preocupaba y que se quedaran a la mitad de su carrera de su profesión. Eso sí, sí, me ponía preocupada la verdad.
>
> "The truth is, yes, I had a lot of doubts because my children are immigrants, right? And I would say, 'Oh, what if there isn't a scholarship or program they can access, or what if they don't qualify for it?' Yes, that really worried me — that they might end up stuck halfway through their studies or their career. That, yes, that honestly made me really worried."

Latina/o/x community college students prioritized cultural belonging and representation when selecting transfer institutions, often choosing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) or Hispanic-enrolling schools where they felt their race and culture were welcomed. Many students, like Alicia and Leonardo, were drawn to universities with strong Latina/o/x student populations and visible cultural support, such as Latinx centers, clubs, and community events. Students like

Sofia and Rafael also considered the surrounding community demographics and cultural vibrancy when determining where they would feel most supported and at home. Concerns about being the "only brown student" or not fitting in culturally, especially at predominantly white institutions like some UCs, led many to prefer CSUs or local universities with strong Latina/o/x presence. Intersectional identities, especially undocumented status, also heavily influenced students' decisions, as they sought institutions offering resources and safe environments for undocumented students. Families played a key role too, as parents expressed concerns about financial support and institutional inclusivity, further reinforcing students' desire to attend culturally affirming and supportive campuses.

The Impact of Place and Geographic Proximity on Latina/o/x Transfer Decisions

Non-traditional students such as Diana and Hugo had no choice but to apply to local transfer institutions due to factors such as shared custody and established careers for their spouse. Oftentimes, the extant literature on Latina/o/x transfer neglects the experiences and needs of non-traditional students (Brozina et al., 2024). Non-traditional students experience a unique set of challenges that need to be underscored when thinking about supporting their transfer journeys. For example, Diana had limited transfer options due to custody requirements. Due to shared custody of her son, she was not able to leave San Diego County to pursue a transfer institution. Diana explained: "The area of the school affected my decision because I have shared custody in it was gonna be like a really hard process for me. And also I don't think it was the best decision for my son. So I decided to stay in the area instead of moving elsewhere." Furthermore, non-traditional students like Hugo need to think about the effects of moving away from San Diego County and how it would impact his wife's career trajectory. Hugo's wife graduated with her Masters in Library Sciences and recently started a new job, so his transfer

decisions are based on stability. He doesn't “wanna move up there [to LA] alone or move her from her job” where it would be disruptive to their lifestyle, specifically his wife’s career.

Latina/o/x students also choose to apply to transfer institutions that are close to home because of the key roles they played in their family units. Luz, for example, planned to stay close to home because she wanted comfort and “familiarity” if she is struggling academically or emotionally. She mentioned that staying close to home would allow her access to “tacos,” which she equates to comfort and familiarity, which is important to her. Hugo also chose to apply to transfer institutions that were close to home because of “the convenience of being around my wife, around my family” in case he felt “homesick.”

Sofia, on the other hand, was expected to stay close to home due to familial expectations from being from “a very Mexican family.” Her parents are more traditional, thus, expected her to not leave San Diego County. Her parents “never wanted [her] to leave, and at first they were very straight up about it.” After realizing how difficult it was to attain acceptance to a local transfer institution, however, her parents were more open to her decision to apply to transfer institutions in Los Angeles and further away from home. Bernie also wanted to have accessibility to go home, and therefore she decided to apply to transfer institutions in San Diego County. Bernie helps manage her grandparents’ restaurant and she felt if she moved she would be doing a disservice to them by not helping them run their business. Since Bernie has been an integral component of the team, her departure to a transfer institution outside of the county would create challenges for her family.

Isabella and Deborah both decided to apply to institutions close to home because they wanted to help support their family members by helping take care of younger siblings. Isabella, for example, wanted to serve as a role model for her younger sibling, and she thought being close

to home would allow her to do this. She says: “I have a younger brother who’s currently in his adolescence, and I just felt like it's important to have a role model at home like I wanted to be there for him, ‘cause I know this is a tough part in development.” Deborah chose the local state university because she wanted to continue to be able to help her parents by picking up and dropping off her younger sibling at elementary school and his afterschool program. Deborah explained, “in case my dad isn't able to pick him up, I'll be able to pick him up, because usually we don't want to bother other people as well, since it's our responsibility.”

Students also associated moving away from home with high costs of living. Therefore, they decided to apply to transfer institutions that were close to home. As first-generation college students, they did not feel it made sense for them to move away from home to acquire debt for a higher education. Claudia expressed that if she were to transfer outside of San Diego County, she would have had to find new roommates or pay a higher price of rent to live on her own. She explains: “Right now, the apartment that I have with the roommates is a really good deal, and it would have just been a lot more financial strain to leave San Diego right now.” The financial strain of moving away from home prevented Claudia from considering transfer institutions outside of San Diego County. Julia considered CSU Fullerton and UC Santa Cruz as potential transfer institutions, however, after exploring housing options, she found that “housing [was] crazy, and the cost just goes up. So [she] wanted to stay local” so she would not have had to acquire debt to transfer to these universities. This motivated her to stay local and live at home. Leonardo compared transfer institutions in San Diego and Los Angeles to determine which schools would be a better fit for his family. Leonardo comes from a single-parent immigrant household, and, at the time of the study, his family did not have a car. Therefore, Leonardo and his mother decided that moving away from San Diego would not be an option. He also expressed

concerns regarding housing prices in Los Angeles and did not want to be in debt to pursue a higher education outside of San Diego. Alicia consulted with her mother to help her determine which institutions to apply to. She was conflicted because institutions in Los Angeles had the major she was searching for, however, the cost of living would be greater than to live at home. Her mother expressed her concerns about the high cost of living in Los Angeles and explained that it would be much cheaper to live at home while getting a quality education close to home. Alicia said her mom explained: "You're gonna be living in LA, it's gonna be different, you know, like you don't…Basically you don't need to go far. You have it here."

Latina/o/x students were also concerned about the commute, which influenced their transfer choice sets. Ximena, for example, did not have a car, so she was concerned about not being able to get to campus if she were to move away from home. She relied on "carpooling or taking the train" with friends or having her family members drive her to school and back. By not having reliable transportation, Ximena felt like she would have not succeeded at a transfer institution away from home. Sofia considered applying to an institution in Los Angeles, but instead of living there, she was considering commuting everyday from San Diego. She replayed the scenario of waking up at 4:00am and being on the road at 5:00am to get to Los Angeles at 7:00am. Although she was "trying to make it work in her head," she knew it was unrealistic and could disrupt her academic trajectory. This motivated her to apply to transfer institutions close to home. Similarly, Valeria, who lives in the border town of San Ysidro, strategically selected to apply to transfer institutions close to home to avoid long commutes. When she was considering CSU San Marcos, "she was planning to live with her aunt [in San Marcos] until she [finished] her undergraduate studies" in order to avoid long commutes.

In sum, many non-traditional Latina/o/x students were limited to applying to local transfer institutions due to factors like shared custody of children or their spouse's career commitments. Their experiences are often overlooked in transfer literature, even though they face unique challenges that significantly shape their educational decisions. For many Latina/o/x transfer students, staying close to home offers emotional support, cultural comfort, and the ability to continue fulfilling important family roles like helping raise siblings or supporting a family business. Financial concerns, especially high housing costs and avoiding debt, also play a key role in keeping students local. Reliable transportation and commute times further limit students' options, especially for those without cars or consistent access to transit. Despite these barriers, students remain deeply committed to their education and find creative ways to balance school, family, and financial responsibilities.

The Impact of Sociopolitical Contexts and Immigration Status on the Transfer Pathways of Latina/o/x Students

Given the current political climate, the role of immigration policy significantly shaped Latina/o/x students' transfer decision-making. Latina/o/x students considered their parents immigration status when determining transfer institutions, while other students sought out transfer institutions that provided immigration support for mixed-status families. They also sought institutions that they perceived to be immigrant friendly. Students like Alejandra had difficult conversations with their immigrant parents regarding transferring out-of-state. Alejandra chose to attend an out-of-state transfer institution, which houses one of the top universities for veterinary studies. Leaving San Diego County was difficult for Alejandra's family, specifically her father who is undocumented. Her father "can't fly so he'd have to drive to go visit [her]," and her father had a "fear of not being able to reach [her if she would have had] an emergency or

something." Despite these fears, her father "felt more comfortable, knowing that I was going to be with another friend I've grown up with here in [San Diego], California." Her parents had a strong relationship with her friend's family, and, therefore, it made it more comfortable for Alejandra to transfer out-of-state. Additionally, Alejandra has family that live in the state she would transfer to, so she explained that she'd "have people check up on [her] if needed on an emergency basis." So, her father's immigration status played "a role on them, being fearful of [her] going to [university out-of-state]."

Other students like Alicia chose transfer institutions where they could continue receiving resources and support for mixed-status families like hers. Alicia was specifically looking for access to free immigration lawyers to help her family with their immigration processes. Alicia mentioned that "While [she] was at [community college she] was getting services from the dreamers [center]" so she wanted to continue to receive similar services at her transfer institution. Similarly, Sofia intentionally applied to a local state university because of the services provided by their robust undocumented resource center. As an undocumented student, Sofia was "swayed into going to [the local state university] because [she] knew they had a very inclusive and supportive undocumented student center and a good established program for students like me."

Students like Claudia selected to apply to institutions that were welcoming to immigrant students and children of immigrants. She also selected to apply to institutions in California because she was aware that California had strong immigration policies that could protect undocumented and mixed-status families. She explained:

> It doesn't directly impact me because I am a US citizen, but I feel like I've always seen on the news that [the local state university] is pretty open about minorities, and they seem really helpful. Honestly, I think even recently, like with the election, I think [the university] stated that they would not help like any border patrol or ICE officers like

> escort students from campus, which I think that it just feels like welcoming, I guess, and like safe.

Like Claudia, Leonardo decided to apply to transfer institutions where he saw many of his immigrant friends and colleagues attend, signifying that the institution valued immigrant students and their families because of the high enrollment of transborder students and other immigrant students. While Claudia saw her local state university as having strengths in these areas, the lack of undocumented and immigrant students at UCs prevented Leonardo from applying to these institutions. Rafael had preconceived notions that UC San Diego, San Diego State University, and UCLA were welcoming and receptive of undocumented students because they are more "liberal" and "open" institutions. On the other hand, he did not apply to Chico State because he said he would not feel safe in a "conservative community." Although Rafael strategically selected transfer institutions that were more "liberal," he did acknowledge that some of these institutions silenced their students when their engagement was civic activism. He mentioned the encampments at one university and the Gaza protests and how institutions silence and prevent students from engaging in protests. This was concerning for Rafael because of his undocumented status; he did not want to be associated with an institution that did not value freedom of speech and where he could not express his feelings and concerns as an undocumented student.

Transfer students like Deborah and Leonardo chose to stay close to home due to fears of deportation. Although she is a U.S. citizen, Deborah was concerned that members of her mixed-status family might be misinformed about immigration policies, therefore, she chose to transfer close to home to be able to utilize the knowledge she gained at the university level to bring back to her home. She says "I want to get a higher education and be more educated and tell them what's happening around the world, because sometimes they get overwhelmed with

politics." Her goal was to share accurate immigration-related information to ease her family's fears of deportation. Sofia and Leonardo decided to apply to transfer institutions in San Diego County because they were afraid of "crossing checkpoints everyday" if they were to pursue transfer institutions up North. Sofia, an undocumented Latina, did not want to take the risk of attending schools in the Los Angeles area even though they had more resources for undocumented Latina/o/x students. Enrolling in institutions away from home "would increase the chances of [her] encountering immigration officers that could potentially deport [her]. There's a lot of anxiety that comes with traveling while being undocumented." Attending an institution in Los Angeles would increase her chances of being detained by ICE and she describes this potential commute as a "very anxiety filled scary commute." She feared that she would not be able to visit her family in San Diego due to these concerns.

Leonardo was also concerned about the prospect of attending university in the Los Angeles area. Although he is a U.S. Citizen, his widowed, undocumented mother would have had to move with him. This led him to fear deportation of his mother due to her immigration status. His mother has heard stories of checkpoints and deportations and "sin papeles" his fears increased. Therefore, Leonardo and his mother collective decided that applying to transfer institutions in San Diego County was the best decision. Leonardo says:

> That has obviously influenced a ton of the decisions I've ever made, especially with the transfer stuff and [which] area to [consider]. Sometimes it can be scary like if it's like up in LA. When she hears stories like that there's like a little checkup like going up there and stuff. So it's like, oh, like she kind of just wants everything down here in San Diego.

Latina/o/x students like Leonardo, Rafael, and Sofia chose to apply to certain transfer institutions due to the unsafe application process for undocumented students and families. For instance, the UC system's common application was not friendly for immigrant students and families and, thus, transfer students like Leonardo chose not to apply to any UC institutions.

After reviewing the UC application and noticing the personal questions that were asked of applicant's families, Leonardo knew that he was not going to apply because his "mom's probably going to think they're trying to find something out." Since Leonardo worked at the admission office at his community college, he was familiar with the questions that were being asked of him, but did not apply to UCs because he did not want to make his mother, who was undocumented, feel uncomfortable and fearful. Leonardo and his mother felt it was safer to apply only to CSU transfer institutions since those applications did not request much information from families.

Rafael faced difficulties completing transfer applications because of his immigration status. He is not a permanent resident, DACA recipient, or an international student. Thus, Rafael did not know how to fill out certain aspects of his application. He compared his experience with the community college application and mentions that the community college application was easy to fill out due to AB 540, which made it "easy" to fill out and the institution does not "make it a big deal." At the UC and CSU systems, he had to complete the AB 540 forms plus provide supporting documentation, which made it a "rigorous" process for Rafael.

Similarly, Sofia also had difficulties completing her transfer applications as an undocumented student. Her biggest challenge was bypassing the social security question. She was unaware of how to "find a loophole to not put a social security number," so that she could continue with her application. Sofia states:

> From day one [immigration status] played an important role in my transfer decision process, just because from the start my transfer application was difficult. So, when I talk to the [Dreamers Resource Center (DRC)], they're like, "well, we're not really sure we're assuming we can, because we've had other students transfer. But go talk to a counselor." So the counselor did explain. There is … a way to just leave it blank.

Immigration status and related concerns played a critical role in the transfer decisions of Latina/o/x students. Many students had to navigate the emotional and logistical challenges tied to

having undocumented family members, often limiting their transfer options to local institutions. Others sought out colleges with robust support systems for undocumented or mixed-status families, including legal resources and inclusive campus services. Safety and fear of deportation also shaped choices, with Latina/o/x students avoiding schools in areas with immigration checkpoints or unfamiliar environments. Additionally, perceptions of institutions' political climates, such as whether they were immigrant-friendly or liberal, influenced where students felt comfortable applying. Lastly, many undocumented students struggled with completing transfer applications due to confusing or invasive questions about immigration status, making the application process itself a barrier to accessing higher education.

The Role of Cultural Values and Familial Expectations in Shaping Latina/o/x Transfer Aspirations

Many Latina/o/x students designed transfer choice sets based on their cultural values and familial expectations. Specifically, their cultural values, familial expectations, and familial ties shaped where they decided to transfer. Latinas in this study faced gendered cultural norms when considering transfer institutions. Prior research shows that Latinas negotiate gendered cultural tightropes (Cabrera et al., 2024) to maintain closeness to family and to navigate familismo when pursuing a higher education. For example, Sofia's family did not want her to move away from home because of her background of growing up in a "very Mexican family." The cultural traditions and values that Sofia's family instilled in her played a significant role in her transfer decisions. Her parents made it known that she should only consider transfer institutions in San Diego. When she revealed that she was considering applying to CSU Long Beach and CSU Los Angeles, her parents were "a little bit surprised" at her decision. After several conversations, her family "understood the application process, about acceptance rates about, you know [her] grades,

considering [she] told them [she'd] failed a couple of classes and [she] had changed [her] mind several times." Therefore, she needed to consider all options. Sofia said that "it took them a while to get them there," but that they finally understood the situation. By engaging in constant communication with her family, Sofia was able to teach them about the complexities of transferring.

Alejandra also had conversations with her family about the possibility of transferring out-of-state. Due to her parents "having a huge influence on [her life]," she "sometimes feels like that overshadows who [she is] as a person, as an individual." Thus, she "thought that maybe moving away will give [her] that ability to figure out who [she is and to figure out what [she is] meant to do in this world, and ultimately learn how to be independent." She sought therapy to cope with the idea of transferring out-of-state and not disappointing her family members. Engaging in deep conversations about familial cultural shifts and her own transfer journey helped Alejandra and her family agree that transferring out-of-state was a viable decision given their strong cultural and familial ties.

Similarly, Bernie mentioned that she grew up in a Catholic household that valued the notion of not leaving home until after she's married. Growing up, her family instilled fear in her as a result of leaving home to attend school. Her family was worried about the bad things that could happen to her due to her being a Latina. Bernie said:

> And then, my gender had to do [a lot] with the things that can happen to you. The fear that was instilled [in me], and like this is going to happen to you if you leave. So it was kind of like you can't leave home. And then, like, I guess, feeling that stereotype of like you can't leave until you're married, because I'm really Catholic, right.

Beyond expectations that related to gender, other Latina/o/x community college students developed transfer choice sets based on their strong cultural and familial ties. For example, Alicia's grandparents are getting older, so she wanted to be at close proximity to them in case

something happened. She wants to continue to play a role in helping her grandparents, and if she were to leave the greater San Diego area, she would not have those opportunities. Similarly, Bernie described her familial role as the "financial provider" and "backbone" of her single parent family household. When her parents divorced, she felt like she had to step-up and help raise her younger siblings, while her mother worked. After the divorce, Bernie helped her mother emotionally. If she would transfer away from San Diego, she would have felt like she abandoned her mother like her father did a few years earlier. To protect her mother's well being, Bernie decided to apply to institutions close to home.

Since Leonardo's mother became a widow, he has also had to step-up and provide financially for his single-parent household, and this contributed to his choice of transfer to institutions close to home. Luz also felt a sense of responsibility to help support the family given that she is the eldest daughter. While she wanted to stay close to home because she gained support from her family, she also carried the burden of having to pay rent or buy groceries when her family was in need. Due to her close familial values, Luz shared understanding of "this is just what you do" signals further explains the complexities of staying committed to collectivist cultural values, while engaging in individualistic educational demands of academia. Luz explained:

> I do play a [huge role in my family], whenever things falter, I have to pick up the slack. I used to really blame it on being the oldest you know although sometimes it sucks to …have to pitch in for rent, and, … be depended on and have to pause my savings for certain moments. I think it's just your family sacrifices so much. It's just what you do you know? A lot of people don't understand it, but it's just what you do, and I mean they do. They do so much as well.

Latina/o/x students often based their transfer decisions on cultural values, familial expectations, and responsibilities within their households. Latinas in particular faced gendered cultural norms that limited their choices, such as expectations to remain close to home until

marriage or fears about their safety as women living alone. Students had to engage in ongoing conversations with their families to help them understand the complexities of transferring and the importance of independence and self-discovery. Others chose to stay close to home to continue supporting aging grandparents or single-parent households, highlighting their deep familial ties. Latina/o/x students also felt obligated to provide financially for their families, reinforcing a sense of collectivist duty over individual academic ambition. These cultural and familial dynamics significantly shaped how Latina/o/x students navigated and defined their transfer pathways.

Conclusion

Latina/o/x community college transfer students were deeply influenced by cultural identity, familial obligations, and systemic barriers in shaping their transfer decisions. Many were motivated by a desire to address underrepresentation of their communities at elite institutions and specific fields of study, viewing their transfer as a way to uplift others and contribute to broader educational equity. The designation of Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) was especially meaningful, signaling resources, inclusivity, and institutional commitment to Latina/o/x students. For non-traditional students, factors like shared custody, spouse's careers, and financial limitations restricted them to local transfer institutions. Cultural expectations, particularly for Latinas, further complicated decision-making, as gender norms discouraged moving away from home.

Immigration-related concerns—including undocumented family members, fear of deportation, and barriers in the application process—also heavily influenced students' transfer pathways. Safety, access to legal resources, and supportive institutional climates were essential for undocumented and mixed-status families. Many Latina/o/x students prioritized staying close to home for emotional support, financial sustainability, and to fulfill caregiving roles, including

supporting siblings or family businesses. Reliable transportation and housing affordability were additional practical constraints. Despite these challenges, Latina/o/x students demonstrated resilience, critical consciousness, and a strong sense of purpose in navigating higher education.

Chapter 5 – Findings

Apoyo, Animo, y Consejos: Understanding How Family Members Support The Transfer Aspirations of Latina/o/x Students

In this chapter, I highlight the voices and experiences of families in the transfer decision-making processes of Latina/o/x students. I intentionally use the term "family engagement" versus "parental involvement" because I acknowledge that not all parents are supportive of the educational pursuits of Latina/o/x students. Moreover, some Latina/o/x students have established strong familial ties with other people outside of their nuclear parents. Moreover, many community college students are nontraditional students and do not rely on their parents to gain the support they need in their transfer journeys. Thus, operationalizing family engagement is more inclusive and representative of the experiences of Latina/o/x community college students.

This chapter answers the research question: How do Latina/o/x families' conceptions of their roles, responsibilities, and capacities in the transfer process shape the ways in which they support Latina/o/x students' transfer aspirations? I begin the chapter by examining families' perceptions of their roles, responsibilities, and capacities in the transfer process followed by exploring the barriers they experience in supporting their child's transfer success. I conclude by presenting an assets-based approach to the diverse methods of *apoyo* that families employ to support their child's transfer aspirations. Furthermore, I aim to discover the role of families in the transfer process and the ways in which they support Latina/o/x transfer choices.

Apoyo and Supportive Behavior

Family members of Latina/o/x community college students provided various types of apoyo (support), including in-kind, financial, and academic support to help their transfer-going student with their transfer process. Moreover, these family members served as knowledge

brokers, gathering transfer information for their transfer-going students as well as utilizing their networks to help their transfer-going students successfully complete their transfer process. Some family members translated information to support their transfer-going student.

In-Kind Support

During the transfer process, family members provided in-kind support to help reduce anxieties and stress that surround the transfer process. I refer to in-kind support as non-monetary assistance that allows individuals to meet the needs of their transfer-going student. For example, Hugo's wife "takes on more of the household responsibilities because [she] knows that school is hard." Due to her firsthand experiences completing a Bachelor's and Master's degrees, she "understands the rigors and the amount of work" that is required to get a higher education and, thus, she provides in-kind support in the form of completing household chores to allow Hugo to focus on successfully transferring. Similarly, Isabella's mother supported her daughter by making her "atun (tuna)" and "pastas," so that she could focus on her transfer aspirations. Isabella's mother intentionally asks her daughter every week what types of in-kind support she needs for the week so that her mother and father can coordinate to support her. She says: "Su papá la apoya porque la lleva. Él la lleva a la escuela, a la universidad y la lleva y la recoge. [Yo] organizo un día antes todo lo que Isabella necesita como comida. Her dad supports her because he takes her. He takes her to school, to the university, and he takes her and picks her up. [I] organize everything Isabella needs, like food, a day in advance." Isabella 's father supports her with transportation. He drives her to and from her community college and is willing to do the same if she transfers to the local northern university. Julia's sister, similarly, supported her transfer aspirations by helping her with commuting to her transfer destination. Although her parents and sister helped drive her to her community college, Julia's sister knew that when she transferred to

the local state university, she was going to have to rely on the trolley to get to campus. Since Julia “doesn’t have experience with [the trolley],” her sister took her on a “test run” in order to teach Julia how to use the trolley system to help her get to her transfer destination.

Luz’s mother and father also supported her transfer aspirations by driving her to school and eventually by buying her a car to make it easier and less stressful for her to pursue her transfer aspirations. Luz's mother says: “si salía muy tarde del colegio, [la apoyamos] para ir por ella cuando no tenía carro. If she got out of school very late, [we supported her] by going to pick her up when she didn’t have a car.” Deborah’s mother made her daughter breakfast every morning and used that time to talk to her about her transfer aspirations and to strategically determine how she can support her. For instance, Deborah’s mother asked her about her educational plans for the day and if she needs to support her by explaining to her father that she will be out of the house to focus on her studies. Deborah’s mother mentioned that her traditional Latino household expected her daughter to be home at a certain time, however, she acknowledged that her household can be a distraction for her daughter and therefore she advocated for her so that she can go to a cafe to focus on her educational aspirations. She says:

> Se va a cafés o se va a estudiar, o eso porque aquí en la casa, pues no la dejamos concentrar y entonces ya cuando me dice que está estudiando yo nomás le digo que me diga cómo a qué horas va a venir para no estár presionando. Mi esposo me pregunta dónde está, porque somos Latinos y no [queremos que] ande por ahí en la calle. Entonces yo le digo a mi esposa, es que está estudiando ahorita, pues está ahí con sus amigas o cosas así, y ha estado mal pendiente cuando ella llega o eso.
>
> She goes to cafés or she goes to study, or that, because here at home, we don't let her concentrate, and then when she tells me she's studying, I just ask her to tell me what time she'll be back so I'm not pressuring her. My husband asks me where she is because we're Latinos, and we don't [want her] out there on the street. So I tell my husband, “She's studying right now, she's there with her friends or things like that,” and I've been keeping an eye on when she comes back….

In sum, during the transfer process, Latina/o/x students received critical in-kind support—non-monetary assistance—from family members to reduce stress and help them focus on their academic goals. As noted above, Hugo's wife took on household responsibilities so he could concentrate on school, drawing from her own experiences in higher education. Parents like Isabella's and Luz's offered practical help, such as preparing meals, providing transportation, or even buying a car to ease commuting burdens. Julia's sister supported her by teaching her how to navigate the public trolley system before she began commuting to her transfer institution. In more traditional households, like Deborah's, mothers actively advocated for their daughters' academic needs by mediating family expectations and creating space for focused study time outside the home.

Academic Support

The families of Latina/o/x transfer students also provided academic support to their transfer-going students. Academic support came in the form of supporting with transfer applications, listening to the student explain academic concepts, and even staying up late to study with them. As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, family members could consist of siblings, partners, and friends; all of which are incorporated in this chapter. One of those types of support is direct help with the transfer process. Bernie's sister, a current transfer student at the local state university, "would help her [sister when] she had any questions" such as financial aid application assistance. Since Bernie's sister had "more experience with that, [she] was able to help her out with the [FAFSA]." She leveraged her own experiences to help her navigate the FAFSA application process. Her sister also sent Bernie reminders of important deadlines to help her successfully transfer. Bernie's sister applied a hands-off support approach because she knew how Bernie liked to receive support; this helped with knowing when to intervene with

application support. Julia's older sister, similarly, assumed the role of mentor to support Julia throughout her educational journey, including transfer. Growing up, Julia's sister made sure she completed her homework on time and she helped translate from Spanish to English so that their parents knew what was happening through her education. During the transfer process, Julia's sister helped her explore courses from her transfer institution catalog to create an education plan and to select the professors that matched her learning style and schedule. She helped Julia research which professors to take. She says:

> I feel like I've taken on this role of a mentor. I am the older sister, which I also take on that role. But I feel like I've been able to guide her in a lot of school-related things. So I've been able to check on the *rate my professor*, and like to check the ratings and kind of guide her [and] come up with a game plan.

Emiliano's friend also supported him with his transfer application. She "read over" his personal insight questions for his University of California application. Emiliano's friend was a student at a local university, so she was exposed to various opportunities that she shared with Emiliano so that he could strengthen his application. She leveraged her knowledge of resources at her institution to support her friend with gaining admission as a transfer student. She shared summer research opportunities with Emiliano. She says: "So I was like, okay, like, here's all the websites, you know. There you go find whatever you're interested in…."

Hugo's wife supported him by going to the accepted students orientation to serve as an advocate. As a librarian, Hugo's wife is used to supporting first-generation college students, so she used these skills to support Hugo during his pre-transfer journey. During the orientation, she was the "one asking and talking to everybody like questions about the clubs," organizations for engineers, internships, and research opportunities because she did not want Hugo to miss out. She had "a lot of concerns like I just wanna make sure he knows all the resources, especially at a really, really big university." She worried that as a first-generation transfer student, he would

miss out on opportunities because he would not know how to navigate the system. Her experiences as a librarian and working with first-generation transfer students allowed her to know how to support her husband so that he does not make similar mistakes as the transfer students she worked with everyday.

The other types of academic support that families provided was through studying with their transfer-going student. Since Hugo's wife was completing a Master's degree at the same time that Hugo was completing his community college degree, Hugo's wife supported him by going to cafes with him. She said: "We study together a lot. So we love going to cafes together and setting a timer and just being next to each other, both working at the same time, has been really helpful." During these sessions, Hugo's wife made sure she provided words of affirmation to him. Moreover, Hugo's wife also listened to Hugo while he practiced concepts from his homework. Although Hugo's wife did not understand most of the STEM concepts he was learning, she supported him by listening and probing questions to help Hugo retain information. She showed her support by "sharing the same enthusiasm and love for education" as Hugo. She understood the rigor and the amount of work that it takes to achieve a Bachelor's degree and, thus she used this form of support with her husband.

Furthermore, Ximena and Rafael's mother regularly checked-in with them about their academic progress even though shelived in Tijuana, Mexico. With Ximena, their mother asked about her poems and writing, while with Rafael she spoke about scientific concepts since he is a STEM Major. Even though their mother was deported and could not physically support their transfer aspirations, their mother found other ways to support them. She says:

> Entonces siempre estamos en contacto. Siempre estamos hablando. Siempre me dice, mamá, mira y se esto de ingeniería. Mira qué bonito se ve. O hizo esto de matemáticas, y siempre nos manda fotos. Y también la Ximena siempre me dice: yo hice esto del libro. Hice este poema y siempre lo mismo. ¡ay, ¡Qué bonito! Y me gusta mucho.

> So we are always in contact. We're always talking. She always says, "Mom, look, I made this in engineering. Look how nice it looks." Or, "I did this in math," and she always sends us pictures. And Ximena also always tells me, "I did this from the book. I made this poem," and it's always the same. "Oh, how beautiful!" And I really like it a lot.

Similarly, Luz's mother also supported her daughter by listening to her explain scientific concepts although she is not fluent in English nor understands "todos los sentidos de todas las partes del organismo. All the senses from all parts of the body." Moreover, Luz's mother stayed up with her to support her while she studied, stating that she stays up with Luz sometimes until 3:30am. She says:

> Pues yo la he apoyado como trayéndole libros, escuchando escuchando lo que ella estudiaba apoyándole en todos los sentidos de todas las partes del organismo, o sea, de todo. Sus sueños, apoyándola en todo, en todos los sentidos. Hasta me he desvelado con ella cuando tiene tarea porque a veces se dormía 3 y media. Es un gran apoyo a ella, motivarla hasta la comida o que no haga nada de cosas aquí para que ella se realice lo que ella quiere.
>
> Well, I've supported her by bringing her books, listening to what she was studying, supporting her in every way, in every part of her being. I mean, in everything. Her dreams, supporting her in everything, in every sense. I've even stayed up with her when she has homework because sometimes she would stay up until 3:30 AM. I'm a great support to her, motivating her, even when it comes to food or making sure she doesn't have to do anything here so she can focus on what she wants to accomplish.

Some families developed goals together to help their transfer-going students achieve their transfer aspirations. For example, Valeria's father reminded her to set smaller goals in order to accomplish her larger goals like transferring. He reminded her that he sets three to five goals every year and throughout the year he works on achieving them. He noted "if you do not have goals, how can you become better?" Moreover, Leonardo's mother also believed in goal setting. She says that she and Leonardo have "un libro de sueños (dream book)," where they had written Leonardo's goal of getting accepted into the local state university. They also strongly believed in prayer, and they both prayed that Leonardo would be accepted into his transfer aspiration. Leonardo's mother says:

> Sí, por ejemplo, en la situación, pues yo creo, soy una persona creyente y también él. Nos pusimos a orar. Nosotros hacemos un libro de sueños que es como en Word. Ahí está ese sueño en el mío, en el de Leonardo, de que él iba a entrar a la universidad. Si iba a agradar al colegio. Él iba a entrar a la universidad y se iba a graduar de la universidad también con el favor de Dios. No ha sido casualidad lo que está pasando y se oró. Por eso, antes como cristianos que somos, entonces las porras y todo, pero también la oración.
>
> Yes, for example, in this situation, I'm a believer, and he is too. We started to pray. We made a dream book in a Word document. In mine, and in Leonardo's, there's the dream that he was going to enter college. He was going to like the school. He was going to enter the university and graduate from it as well, with God's favor. What's happening hasn't been a coincidence; we prayed for it. That's why, as Christians, we have the support and everything, but also the prayer.

In summary, Latina/o/x transfer students received vital academic support from family members, which included help with transfer applications, sharing study strategies, and emotional encouragement. Siblings l played mentoring roles by guiding them through FAFSA, choosing professors, and developing education plans. Partners and friends also contributed—attending orientations, studying alongside students, reviewing applications, and shared research opportunities. Even from a distance, deported or working parents like Rafael and Ximena's mother provided motivation by staying in close contact and celebrating academic achievements. Families also practiced collaborative goal-setting, such as creating "dream books" and engaging in prayer, reinforcing a shared commitment to transfer success and emphasizing the spiritual and emotional dimensions of support.

Knowledge Broker

Family units served as knowledge brokers to support their transfer-going students with the transfer process. In this study, I define knowledge brokers as individuals who facilitate the exchange of information, expertise, and ideas about the transfer process (Delgado, 2023). These individuals help connect people who have transfer knowledge with those who need it, ensuring that valuable transfer information is accessible, understood, and applied effectively. Families in

this study served as knowledge brokers because of their own lack of knowledge and information about the transfer process. Family members served as knowledge brokers in four different ways; they identify and gather knowledge, distribute knowledge, facilitate collaboration, and translate knowledge.

Many family members supported their transfer-going students by identifying and gathering transfer knowledge. Specifically, they found and collected relevant transfer information or expertise from various sources. Leonardo 's mother, for example, “estaba en el club de AVID y eso me ayudó a soportar a Leonardo.” She used her experiences in the AVID club to share with her son about the value of education and that there were college preparation programs to help him achieve his transfer goal. With AVID, she was able to visit college campuses, which further helped her help her son select transfer institutions. Luz’s mother enrolled in a college preparation program to help her learn how to better support her transfer-going daughter. Specifically, she was interested in learning how her daughter could apply for scholarships since she had heard that transferring was expensive and served as a barrier to low-income families like her. Since her daughter was interested in STEM, her mother also rented science books from the library and brought them home so that her daughter could explore her career aspirations. When she saw that her daughter was committed towards becoming a doctor, she further supported her. Luz’s mother stated:

> Pues sí iba a posar a todo lo que era referente. Y también tomé una clase para cómo agarraron mejores becas o ayuda para ir a la universidad. Fui 2 años o 3 años durante el verano. Bueno, se ayudó, pero yo había investigado y como yo miré a mi hija tan segura lo que ella quería. Ella quería ser doctora. Entonces, para las ayudas y todo eso. Yo dije, pues mi hija está bien segura lo que ella quería hacer entonces. Esa clase, pues ayudó y no ayudó para ella porque era para ayudarle yo a ella, sí ellos mismos.
>
> Well, yes, I was going to focus on everything that was related to it. I also took a class on how to get better scholarships or help to go to university. I went for 2 or 3 years during the summer. Well, it helped, but I had done some research, and since I saw my daughter

> so sure about what she wanted, she wanted to be a doctor. So, for the help and all that, I thought, well, my daughter is really sure about what she wants to do. So, that class, well, it helped and didn't help her because it was meant to help me help her, not them helping themselves.

Other family members distributed transfer knowledge to support their student's transfer aspirations. Specifically they shared this knowledge with people or organizations that would benefit from it, ensuring it is presented in a useful and understandable way. Leonardo's mother, for example, utilized her experience taking English classes at Palomar College as a way to learn about the U.S. education system. In Mexico, she had attended one semester at the university level, however, when she immigrated to the United States, she did not know how the higher education system operated. As an English language learner, she met with a college counselor, who was supposed to help her prepare an educational plan to help her complete her English language courses and eventually enroll in college-level classes. However, su " experiencia de ir con una consejera no [le] ayudó." In other words, she had negative experiences with her college counselors. Despite this negative experience, she realized that community colleges had dedicated staff members to support students achieve their goals. She encouraged her son to find a counselor or other staff member that would help him achieve his goals of transferring. Leonardo's mother acknowledged that the key to transfer success for Latina/o/x students is getting connected with faculty, staff, and administrators who understand the process. She said:

> Yo siempre quise ser la universidad y me metí a la universidad en México. No duré ni un semestre. Entonces me es como mi sueño frustrado que yo no hice en la universidad pero siempre me gustó mucho la escuela y acá en Estados Unidos he aprovechado la la escuela que dan para adultos al máximo. Entonces eso tiene mucho que ver con lo que yo le he transmitido a Leonardo.
>
> I always wanted to attend university, and I enrolled in university in Mexico. I didn't last even one semester. So, it's like my unfulfilled dream that I didn't complete at university, but I've always liked school a lot, and here in the United States, I've taken full advantage of the education offered for adults. So, that has a lot to do with what I've passed on to Leonardo.

Some families facilitated collaborations to bring together experts, stakeholders, or communities to share insights and work together on solving problems such as the transfer process. For example, Ximena's mother platicaba (chatted) with her friends who have children at universities in order to learn more about the transfer process. Specifically, Ximena's mother was seeking information regarding transfer choices. When she spoke to her friend, she learned that renting a dormitory was expensive. Her friend had shared that her daughter, who was attending university in New York, paid a lot of money to live in the dormitories. Given this information, Ximena's mother advised her to pursue a transfer institution close to home in order to be able to live at home and essentially save money. Ximena's mother said:

> Fíjate que nunca lo tomamos en cuenta porque siempre decíamos, ¡ay, es que un dormitorio en la universidad debe ser muy caro. Entonces yo platicaba con una una amiga que su hija se fue para Nueva York a la escuela y decía, es que No, no consigo pagar su renta aquí mi renta allá y. Muy complicado. Y yo le dije a mis hijos, pues procuren agarrar lo más cerca que puedan de casa para no tener tanto tanto viaje el día que no se puedan pagar el cuarto ahí, pues tienen su casa aquí, cerca.
>
> You know, we never took it into account because we always said, "Oh, a dormitory at university must be very expensive." So, I was talking to a friend whose daughter went to school in New York, and she said, "No, I can't manage to pay her rent here and my rent there, it's very complicated."And I told my kids, "Well, try to find something as close to home as possible so you don't have to travel so much. If you can't afford the room there, you'll have your home here, close by."

Isabella's mother, a farmworker, consulted with her mayordomo (boss), who was a college graduate, to gain information about transfer. She asked him about his experience in college and how she could support her daughter with her transfer aspirations. Specifically, she wanted to gain information about financing a college education at the university level. When she realized that university was more expensive than community college, she strategized. Leveraging her knowledge that her boss was a college graduate and understood the financial burden an

university degree can have on farmworker families, she asked him if he would allow her to sell aguas, sodas, and papitas to support her daughter's transfer aspirations. She explained:

> Cuando estaba el mayordomo le dije mi hija va al colegio, se va a transferir, este puedo vender para apoyarla. Le digo, yo quiero vender aguas, quiero vender sodas, quiero vender papitas para apoyarla con lo poquito que yo agarre. Ya se fue [el mayordomo] para San Luis Obispo; fue a terminar también su carrera. Él estudió sobre las plantas; Agricultura. El estudio de pero nomás hizo sus 4 años y ahorita, tiene dos años que se movió para allá para hacer su maestría en San Luis Obispo y eso me ayudó porque le preguntaba sobre su experiencia y la información se lo transmitía a Isabella.
>
> When the boss was here, I told him, 'My daughter is going to college, she's going to transfer, can I sell things to support her?' I said, 'I want to sell water, I want to sell sodas, I want to sell chips to help her with whatever little I can make.' The boss went to San Luis Obispo to finish his degree. He studied plants, agriculture. He only did his 4 years, and now, two years ago, he moved there to do his master's in San Luis Obispo, and that helped me because I would ask him about his experience, and I would pass the information onto Isabella.

Valeria's father spoke to one of his friends who shared that his daughter went to the local state university straight out of high school and that it was challenging for her. He said: "So, he told me [my daughter] went straight from high school to San Diego State [and] had a lot of difficulties." Valeria's father used this information to tell his daughter that she should start at the community college and then transfer. He felt this would help her explore career paths and different majors at a lower cost. Given that Valeria had recently moved from Tijuana, Mexico to San Diego, her English language skills needed development, therefore, her father was more adamant that she start at the community college. When it was time for her to transfer, Valeria's father consulted with his friend again to learn more about the university system.

Family members, who were either transfer students themselves or Bachelor's degree holders, translated transfer knowledge. Specifically they helped adapt and simplify complex information to make it more accessible. For example, Julia's sister is a higher education practitioner and a former transfer student. She utilizes her personal experience and knowledge

with the transfer process to help her sister navigate and succeed as a transfer student. She shared: "I feel like I was able to introduce a lot of the higher education lingo very early on which is not to compare to my experience, but like I did not have that. And I again, I took on that kind of big sister role, and like mentioning things like FAFSA, and, like, you know, application deadlines." Her experience with academic advising at the university level has helped her support her sister with preparing an educational plan. Julia's sister went to UC Santa Barbara after graduating high school, but she was frequently homesick so she returned home to attend the local community college. Her experience reverse transferring to community college from a four-year institution fueled her desire to help other first-generation students navigate higher education. Julia's sister also connected her to reliable counselors, took her on transfer college visits, showed her where the financial aid offices were located, and introduced her to psychology professors who were in Julia's major. She said:

> She's smart, and she is very determined, and takes initiative. But she'll turn to me for reassurance. And she was like, I need to reach out to a Professor, and I don't know how to write an email. And I'm like, here, I'll help you draft it out. So it's kind of helping her navigate through any little hurdles or challenges. Anything, you know. New information dealing with FAFSA, which has been an issue this year with, like the recent changes, you know, and I work in higher education, so I've been able to fill her in. And I'm like, Oh, like this is happening across the board. Don't panic like everyone's on hold. So I guess yeah, just helping her based on my [personal] and [professional] experience.

As noted above, Hugo's wife works as a librarian at a four-year institution. She also has a Bachelor's and Master's degrees, which she has leveraged to support Hugo's transfer aspirations. At her job, she works with transfer students helping them find library resources. Additionally, her personal experiences navigating higher education helped her answer Hugo's questions regarding financial aid, education planning, selecting courses, and navigating the transfer process. She stated:

> I think that he was able to ask me a lot of questions, and I was able to answer because I had gone through school. And we actually, we were in school together at the same time, when I was doing my master's, and he was in college. So things like, how do you apply for financial aid and how do you know which classes [to apply to]. I was able to give him answers because I had gone through school and like what to expect, and it's like, "oh, if I add this class and like I'm waitlisted like, what does that mean?" And I'm like, "you're fine. You'll get in. Don't worry about it."

Diana's friend also works in higher education in the community college sector. Her nine years of experience helped her learn a lot about the transfer process and the resources that are available to transfer students, which she transmits the information to her students, including her friend Diana. She specifically helped Diana with submitting important documents to private institutions she was applying to such as the University of San Diego. Due to Diana's friend's experience with helping other students who wanted to transfer to private institutions, she was able to use this knowledge to support her friend. She helped explain information about the documents and why they were needed to transfer to certain institutions. She also informed Diana about transfer scholarships and basic needs programs that she could access at these private universities.

Similarly, Bernie's sister was able to help her with applying to San Diego State University since she had done so two years ago. When she did not have the answers, she recommended a particular community college counselor that she utilized to help her get into SDSU. She helped answer questions and if they did not know the answer they would Google it together. She recalled that when Bernie's sister was transferring, Bernie was by her side so she wanted to do the same for Bernie. Throughout the process, she also helped validate her doubts. She also took her to visit SDSU and utilized the trolley to help her learn how to get to and from college. Emiliano's friend supported his transfer aspirations by sharing research opportunities and any other university resources she knew about since she was already at a four-year

institution. She strategically did this to help Emiliano prepare a strong transfer application because his goal was to get into a UC. She shared websites with a list of clubs he could join as well as the research program she completed.

In this study, families acted as knowledge brokers by bridging critical information gaps in the college transfer process for Latina/o/x students. Despite often lacking formal knowledge themselves, they identified, acquired, and shared relevant information to help students succeed. Some, like Luz's and Leonardo's mothers, sought out college prep programs, attended workshops, or engaged with school systems to better understand transfer pathways, demonstrating the role of identifiers and gatherers of knowledge. Others distributed transfer knowledge by encouraging connections with campus resources like counselors or sharing advice from their own educational experiences, even when limited. Many families facilitated collaboration by leveraging social networks—such as friends, coworkers, or community members—to learn about costs, housing, or financial strategies, which they used to shape practical decisions, like choosing nearby institutions.

Critically, some family members also acted as translators of institutional knowledge, particularly those with insider experience in higher education or who had gone through transfer themselves. These individuals helped simplify FAFSA, course planning, and scholarship processes, often tailoring the information to match the student's learning style and needs. For example, Julia's sister and Hugo's wife drew on their professional and academic backgrounds to mentor their loved ones and guide them through complex tasks like drafting emails or understanding financial aid delays. Overall, families played a central role in democratizing access to transfer knowledge, compensating for institutional shortcomings by creating personalized, culturally rooted support systems that were both emotional and informational.

Consejos

Family members also utilized consejos as a way to support the transfer aspirations of their transfer-going students. Consejos refer to advice, guidance or suggestions given to transfer-going students. This can include general advice about the transfer process or advice related to navigating the process. In this study, consejos derived from personal experiences navigating higher education and enduring the challenges of pursuing higher education. For instance, Valeria's father advised her daughter to be proactive when searching for transfer information. Valeria's negative experiences with her community college counselors led her father to suggest that she conduct research online to determine which transfer institutions she wanted to apply to. Since Valeria's father also began his higher education career in the community college system, he advised her to reflect on her goals and aspirations to determine if transfer was a good next step for her. He shared his experiences of changing majors multiple times, and he did not want her to make the same mistakes in her journey. He did not want her to waste her time if she was not invested in higher education. He says: "[At ITT Tech], I changed my mind [on my major many times] because I wanted to major in electronics. Then I decided to major in architecture and engineering and that's one of the reasons I told her, you know, if you go to community college, you can explore careers." Due to the uncertainty of the transfer admissions process, Valeria's father reminded her that she was not alone in this process. He used positive affirmations such as reminding her that as a bilingual individual she had many opportunities beyond successful transfer admissions. Due to his experiences, he also encouraged his daughter to exhaust her local resources first before considering transferring out-of-state. He reminded his daughter that the San Diego region contains various universities that are full of resources and

that she should take advantage of them. This was his way of supporting Valeria in her transfer journey. He says:

> Then she wanted to go out of state. I'm like, no, first you[utilize] all the sources that you got locally. Then you [can] think about going out of state. You're gonna [get] more credits. [It's going to] be easier for you to transfer then, and going to start university it'd be less stressful for you. At least, that's my point of view.

Similarly, Leonardo's mother advised her son to speak to counselors to help him with the transfer process. Her limited knowledge that there are counselors at the community college motivated her to pass on this knowledge to her son to support him. Although Leonardo's mother was there to motivate him, she also taught him that he needs to take initiative to seek information and not to rely on himself or her. Moreover, Leonardo's mother provided him with advice on which institution to consider. She knew that the local state university was a great institution, and, due to their mixed-status family, although they considered institutions in Los Angeles, Leonardo's mother advised him to apply to universities in San Diego. They engaged in deep discussions regarding transfer institution selection. She stated:

> Pues apoyándolo de que yo pienso que es una buena universidad y decirle: tienes que continuar tus estudios para que hagas una carrera universitaria y yo siempre he oído buenos comentarios de esa universidad y sobre todo porque está aquí en San Diego. Yo, como mamá Latina, no quiero que se vaya a otro lado porque es como desunirnos hasta el momento que él pensó la opción de irse a Los Ángeles. Dije, pues nos vamos. Entonces dije mejor aquí. Si se puede aquí, es una buena universidad hijo.
>
> Well, supporting him by saying that I think it's a good university and telling him, 'You have to continue your studies so you can get a university degree.' I've always heard good things about that university, especially because it's here in San Diego. As a Latina mom, I don't want him to go somewhere else because it feels like it would separate us. When he thought about the option of going to Los Angeles, I said, "Well, we'll go." Then I said, "Better here. If it's possible here, it's a good university, son."

One of the reasons why Bernie's sister wanted her to continue her education beyond an associate degree was because she wanted her "go out and do something [with her life]" instead of continuing to work at their family's restaurant "like a lot of family members." She wanted Bernie

to pursue her interests and goals. Therefore, Bernie's sister provided advice and encouragement for Bernie to pursue a transfer pathway. Similar to Bernie's sister, Deborah's mother provided consejos to motivate her daughter to pursue a transfer pathway and a professional career. She doesn't want her daughter to "kill herself (matandose)" working at a restaurant. Part of the consejos about hard labor for Deborah's mother involved taking her to her physically laborious job to show Deborah how hard it can be if she did not pursue a Bachelor's degree and professional career. Deborah's mother told her daughter that these types of jobs do not allow you to take time off and go on vacation and be with family. She told her that pursuing a higher education will provide them with the time to share with their children and their children as well. She said:

> Como le dije, de un principio, pues yo siempre le doy estos consejos a mi hija, porque le digo que yo no quiero que ella esté matándose en un restaurante. De hecho, fue su primer trabajo en donde yo trabajaba, y ella miró, ella miró cómo se trabaja ahí, lo duro que es y lo poco que pagan. Entonces le digo a mi hija, yo no, yo no quiero esa vida para ti, No quiero eso. Si yo estoy viviendo eso ya me tocó vivir eso para sacarlos adelante. Lo voy a hacer, le digo, pero yo no quiero que ustedes hagan esto. Yo quiero que ustedes estén mejor.
>
> As I told her from the beginning, I always give this advice to my daughter because I tell her I don't want her working herself to the bone in a restaurant. In fact, it was her first job where I worked, and she saw how hard it is to work there, how tough it is, and how little they pay. So I tell my daughter, 'I don't want that life for you, I don't want that. If I'm living that, it's because I had to go through it to get you ahead. I'll do it, but I don't want you to do this. I want you to have a better life.'

Deborah's mother witnessed her not get accepted into her dream transfer institution the year prior, so sher made sure she provided consejos and validation to help Deborah with her transfer journey this time around. She provided consejos to relieve her stress of potentially not being accepted into a transfer institution again. She reminded her to "encharle ganas" (to give it your all) and to not worry that she would gain acceptance. Her mother encouraged her to continue to try and not to give up. The first time Deborah applied to transfer, she only applied to

one institution. When she notified her mother that this time around she was applying to two institutions, her mother validated her decision. She even offered to support her by paying for rent if she would gain admission away from home. Deborah's mother reminded her that she was here to "apoyarla" (support) and she could "contar con ella" (to count on her). These are examples of how Deborah's mother provided consejos to her daughter. Similarly, Isabella's mother helped her when she was struggling to gain admissions by providing consejos. Isabella was conditionally accepted to CSU San Marcos and needed to pass a summer course before her enrollment. Her mother witnessed her stress about completing the class. Her professor constantly told her that she was not capable of passing and transferring. When Isabella told her mother, her mother encouraged her to keep going and reminded her that she was capable. Isabella's mother said:

> Pues lo que entiende es que es algo estresante que si ese estrés y ese estrés, porque Isabella en el verano tuvo una clase y la maestra como dos o tres veces, le decía que le faltaban a ella que a lo mejor no. No iba a ser posible. Irse allí a la universidad y dice: me está diciendo eso la maestra, y le digo, sabes una cosa, tú debes de seguir, le digo, debes de seguir. Si ella te comento, ese comentario sigue yendo a la escuela porque primeramente, Dios, tú tienes que vas vas a te tienes que transferir porque te tienes que transferir.
>
> Well, what she understands is that the transfer process is stressful because Isabella had a class in the summer, and the teacher, like two or three times, told her that she was missing something, that maybe it wasn't going to be possible for her to go to that university. She says, "The teacher is telling me that," and I told her, "You know what? You should keep going, I tell you, you must keep going. If she made that comment, keep going to school because, first of all, God willing, you have to transfer, because you have to transfer."

Overall, family members played a critical role in supporting the transfer aspirations of students by offering consejos—advice drawn from personal experiences and cultural values. These consejos included practical guidance on navigating the transfer process, emotional support, and encouragement to stay local for familial unity and resource access. Many parents and siblings used their own challenges in education or labor-intensive jobs to motivate students to pursue a better future through higher education. Emotional reassurance and validation were

also common, especially when students faced discouragement or setbacks. Family members emphasized perseverance, initiative, and long-term vision, encouraging students to explore careers, apply widely, and believe in their capabilities. Ultimately, consejos functioned as culturally rooted tools of support that combined love, wisdom, and strategy to help students succeed.

Ánimo

Family members also provided animo to encourage and motivate their transfer-going student to persist through the transfer process. In this study, animo refers to encouragement or mood/spirit that's often used to boost someone's spirits or give them motivation, especially when they are feeling down or discouraged. The transfer process for Latina/o/x community college students presented many challenges. To support students during their transfer process, family members provided various methods of emotional support.

For example, when Bernie and her sister would work on transfer and financial aid applications together, Bernie's sister recognized that she would get overwhelmed. Bernie's sister intentionally scheduled "Girl's Nights" as a form of self-care to help Bernie with the rigors of the transfer process. Claudia's fiance, similarly, provided emotional support to help Claudia when she had "bad days" or "long days" as a STEM student pursuing the transfer pathway. His form of emotional support was listening to her express her feelings about the transfer process while maintaining a rigorous course load as a STEM student. Diana's friend created a safe and supportive space for her to share her feelings about the transfer process. Whenever Diana needed to decompress, Diana's friend listened to her challenges. She went out to eat with Diana to speak about transferring and provided gift cards to help Diana take self-care days. As I alluded to above, in this study, I argue that friends can be considered family members as some students do

not have support from what we consider traditional family members. In this case, Diana is a nontraditional, divorced immigrant student whose mother passed away. Therefore, her friends are her close family.

Emiliano's friend supported him by listening to him speak about his transfer process. Emiliano's friend used these talks to provide validation in his decision making process. Specifically, they made a pros and cons list together to talk through transfer decisions. She also made sure that Emiliano selected a transfer institution where he would feel happy. Because Emiliano's friend served as an emotional supporter, she wanted to make sure he also felt happy where he would transfer to, so she made sure she asked him those types of questions when he was deciding where to attend. Emiliano's friend grounded him and reminded him to take breaks from his academic rigorous schedule. She mentioned that Emiliano was taking eighteen credits during the summer before he transferred and she reminded him that the summer term was a time to "chill" and to take a break. Again, Emiliano considers friends as family due to the lack of relationship he has with his biological parents and siblings.

Ximena and her brother Rafael were both going through the transfer process at the same time, so she made sure that they kept in constant communication about their thoughts and feelings about the process. They checked in with each other to see where they were at with the transfer process and made sure to intervene when necessary. She said:

> Yeah, it made me feel more comfortable…more like I didn't really have to worry because my brother was also going through it…I didn't see him stressed out. I'm like, why am I gonna be stressed out over something? I think just always talking to each other really helped us. Just talking to see where we're at…in the process system. But I think just talking really helped us…keep going.

When Latina/o/x students shared their concerns about the transfer process with their families, family members also shared concerns. For instance, Isabella's mother supported her

daughter by listening to her express her feelings about the uncertainty of the transfer process. Secretly, Isabella's mother shared the same concerns. She mentioned that she was also concerned, but did not share that with her daughter. Isabella's mother provided validation by expressing to her daughter that she would get accepted. Isabella's mother also used the proverb "echale ganas" to emotionally support her daughter's transfer aspirations and reminded her that she did not have the opportunity to get an education. She shared:

> Pues yo me preocupaba, pero no le decía a ella. Me decía aye ama, si no me aceptan ¿Qué voy a hacer? Si no me aceptan, pues ya me buscaré un trabajo, me decía. Yo le decía te van a aceptar primeramente. Ellos te van a aceptar. Vas a ver. Pero sí me preocupaba también. Yo la apoyo más emocional. Yo le digo que le que le ponga muchas ganas y que ella tiene que lograr sus metas y echarle ganas, pues.
>
> Well, I was worried, but I didn't tell her. She would say, "Oh mom, if they don't accept me, what am I going to do? If they don't accept me, then I'll just look for a job," she would say. I told her, "They're going to accept you, God willing. They're going to accept you, you'll see."But yes, I was worried too. I support her more emotionally. I tell her to give it her all and that she has to achieve her goals and keep pushing forward.

Due to the lack of information about the transfer process that Leonardo's mother had, she turned to emotional support as her way of contributing to her son's transfer journey. She expressed that she motivated him to continue on with his studies and to look into local state universities, since that was the only local university she heard about. She even took him to go visit the institution. Although she did not have access to transfer information, she felt content with the emotional support she provided to Leonardo. She reminded Leonardo that he is talented, loves school, and that he could achieve his transfer aspirations. She states:

> Pues ha sido un reto estar ayudarle porque, como yo lo desconozco a veces, yo no sé cómo ayudarlo. Entonces lo único que hago es motivándolo de que se tiene que poder e investiga cómo, o sea, no es como nada más dale ánimos. Le decía yo sé que tú tienes talento, te gusta estudiar, tienes que o sea, vas a poder si el que quiere, puede, o sea, siempre era de que, o sea, se te tiene que notar. Y a lo mejor no va a ser fácil. Pero si de verdad tienes ganas, lo vas a lograr.

> Well, it's been a challenge to help him because, since I don't know much about it [transferring], sometimes I don't know how to help him. So the only thing I do is motivate him, telling him that he has to be able to do it and to research how—like, it's not just about cheering him on. I would tell him, "I know you have talent, you like to study, you have to—you're going to be able to do it. If you really want it, you can do it." I always told him, "It has to show. And maybe it won't be easy, but if you really want it, you're going to achieve it."

The uncertainty of the transfer admissions process led Ximena and Rafael's mother to utilize emotional support to combat the stresses that her transfer-going children possessed. She used prayer, similar to other mothers, to help relieve stress from her children who had not received any transfer admissions. For Ximena and Rafael's mother, transfer support was even more difficult because she lives in Mexico due to deportation. Much of her support was conducted through phone. Due to their distance, Ximena and Rafael's mother made sure to be in constant communication because she believes that communication and "apoyo" are the keys to achieving goals. She also reminded her children that although they cannot be together, that they are not alone; she reminded them to lean on their stepfather, the community, and institutional leaders who had helped them achieve their transfer aspirations. Ximena and Rafael's mother also used validation to help them through their transfer journey. She said:

> Yo no los podría ayudar de esa manera, pero sé que personas que ya lo hicieron van a poder lograrlo. Sobre todo, yo le le digo a Ximena: no te rindas. Si no puedes hacerlo, ahorita, no te rindas. Intenta hazlo mejor. Y pues si no se puede, pues vuélvelo a intentar. No, Las cosas no salen bien a la primera, entonces a la segunda, a la tercera, no te rindas y es la manera que yo siempre les he tratado de ayudar a mis hijos en ese aspecto. Y siempre les he dicho que que se esmeren más que den la milla extra que que nunca se limiten y que lo que no pueden hacer por ellos mismos, pues siempre hay una comunidad que los puede apoyar.
>
> I couldn't help them in that way, but I know that people who have already done it will be able to achieve it. Above all, I tell Ximena: "don't give up. If you can't do it right now, don't give up. Try, do better. And if it doesn't work, then try again. Things don't always work out the first time, so on the second or third try, don't give up." That's the way I've always tried to help my children in that regard. And I've always told them to strive harder, to go the extra mile, to never limit themselves, and that what they can't do on their own, there is always a community that can support them.

Deborah's mother's lack of knowledge on how to navigate the transfer process resulted in her only option for support was to provide animo to her daughter. She continuously asked her daughter for forgiveness because she did not know how to support her transfer aspirations. Instead, Deborah's mother cheered her on and provided words of affirmation to help her succeed with the transfer process. As a former elementary school teacher in Mexico, Deborah's mother understands the rigor of higher education. Thus, she knows how important emotional support can have on students pursuing higher education. She consistently communicated with her daughter to make sure she received the adequate emotional support she needed as a transfer student. She encouraged her to seek support and to never give up. Deborah's mother also witnessed her get rejected from transfer institutions the previous year, so this prompted her to provide additional animo to her daughter this second time around. She used words like "echale ganas" and faith-based animo to support her daughter. She was always cheering her on saying words like "sigale, puedes lograrlo, adelanted" and "en lo que podamos ayudarle pues los ayudamos" (We help them with whatever we can). She reassured her daughter that her and her father would support her in any way possible. Deborah's mother also recalls attending a class for parents when Deborah was in secondary school where the instructor said that Latino families were people that always said "no" to higher education or that it is not possible. He painted Latino families in an assets-based perspective. Due to this, Deborah's mother decided that she was going to change the narrative and would do anything in her power to support her daughter's transfer aspirations. She said:

> Entonces, yo recuerdo mucho, una clase que fui a cuando estaba ella en la secundaria me involucraba como en las juntas más de de ellos. Y recuerdo mucho al director. Nunca se me va a olvidar que dice que nosotros, los Latinos, no somos unas personas que siempre decimos, no se puede, no vas a poder, no no hay dinero. Entonces yo siempre le inculqué a mi hija ya cuando vaya a la universidad. No lo vas a decir, no tengo dinero. Y pues,

> para mí es un orgullo, porque pues yo nunca le dije eso de no vas a poder. Tú lo vas a hacer. Tú puedes. Tú échale ganas busca los medios.
>
> I remember very clearly a class I attended when she was in middle school—I used to get involved in their meetings more. And I remember the principal very well. I'll never forget that he said that we Latinos are the kinds of people who always say, "no you can't do it," or "there's no money." So I always instilled in my daughter that when she goes to college, she's not going to say, "I don't have money."'And for me, it's a source of pride because I never told her, "You can't." I told her, "You're going to do it. You can do it. Give it your all and find a way."

When Bernie had doubts in her abilities to transfer, her sister provided animo to encourage her that she was worthy and capable of transferring. She used her own transfer experience to motivate Bernie that anything can happen as long as she tried. She also encouraged her by sending her memes and Gifs to make the transfer process fun and enjoyable. She intentionally did this because she knew how difficult the transfer process can be and how mental health in this process was important. She said:

> Obviously it was more hands on, and I was there to answer questions, but it did start hands off, because I know how she is, and I don't want to overwhelm her with everything, and or pressure her into doing anything. You know. Yeah, it was between yeah, both of us, mostly her like, "Hey, you have any questions? I can help Google. But you know, if I don't know the answer, then I can't really help you out." But it was… a collaboration effort. Yeah [I] sent her memes [and] gifs. I would also text her [to] check in because I know mental health is very important, especially when you're going through this, you know, transferring can be difficult at times.

Leonardo's mother knew that a higher education was the greatest inheritance that she could provide to her children and therefore she was invested in supporting Leonardo through his transfer journey in the form of providing animo so that he could realize his goals and dreams. Despite her inability to understand the transfer process, she defined her role as a mother as a supporter. She made sure Leonardo knew that he could succeed and that he was intelligent enough to achieve his transfer goals. She said:

> A motivarlos, a que logren sus sueños, a que sepan que la educación es la mejor herencia que les podemos dejar a los hijos que ellos pueden hacer lo que ellos han soñado,

> estudiando. O sea, lo pueden lograr estudiando aunque los papás desconocemos el sistema nuestro papel es como papá, es muy importante, o sea, apoyarlos y motivarlos. ¿Puedes hijo. Eres bien inteligente, hazlo. ¿Tú lo puedes lograr? Investiga, ve pregunta, ¿No te quedes con la duda con eso? Yo creo que ya lo motivamos para poder dar lo demás.
>
> To motivate them, to help them achieve their dreams, to make them understand that education is the best inheritance we can leave our children—that they can accomplish what they've dreamed of through studying. In other words, they can achieve it by studying, even if we as parents don't fully understand the system. Our role as parents is very important—supporting and motivating them. "You can do it, son. You're very smart, go for it. You can achieve it. Research, go ask questions, don't be left with doubts." I believe that by doing that, we're already giving them the motivation they need to go further.

In sum, family members played a crucial role in providing *animo*—emotional support and encouragement—to help students persist through the challenges of the transfer process. This support ranged from motivational words to creating spaces for relaxation and self-care. Other family members provided reassurance by checking in and offering mutual support throughout the transfer process. In some cases, emotional support also involved validating the students' decisions, reminding them to persist despite setbacks, and offering faith-based encouragement. Even when family members lacked detailed knowledge about the transfer process, they focused on boosting their children's spirits and reinforcing their belief in their ability to succeed.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Latina/o/x family members provided essential, multifaceted support that shaped the transfer journeys of community college students. Through in-kind contributions, emotional encouragement, and knowledge-sharing, families filled critical gaps left by institutional systems, helping students manage academic demands and life stressors. Whether through cooking meals, teaching transportation routes, mentoring application strategies, or offering daily affirmations of belief and hope, their efforts were deeply rooted in love, resilience, and a collective investment in educational success. Despite often having limited formal

knowledge of the transfer process, families became resourceful knowledge brokers, translators, and advocates, ensuring that students were not navigating the journey alone. Their culturally grounded support systems served not only to guide but to empower students, reinforcing the powerful role of family in expanding educational opportunity and promoting transfer equity.

Chapter 6 – Findings

A Transfer Receptive Culture Analysis of the Pre-Transfer Experiences of Latina/o/x Community College Students

In this chapter, I explore how community colleges are developing a transfer receptive culture to support the transfer success of Latina/o/x students. This chapter answers the research question: How do Latina/o/x students engage with the sending and receiving institution to promote transfer success given the tenets of Transfer Receptive Culture (TRC) and the process of College-Conocimiento? Because this study explored the pre-transfer experiences of Latina/o/x community college students, I focused on examining how community colleges operationalized the first two tenets of Transfer Receptive Culture (Jain et al., 2020) which include making Latina/o/x transfer a priority and providing resources and support for successful transfer. Participants in this study acknowledge that their community colleges provided ample transfer outreach and resources to support their transfer aspirations. These included support programs, transfer centers, leadership positions and work-study, peer and faculty support. The findings reported in this chapter are from the perspective of Latina/o/x students, which is important because they interact with the sending and receiving institutions during this process as opposed to their family members who support them from afar.

The Search and Applying to Transfer Process

During the searching for transfer information phase, Latina/o community college students utilized various resources to learn about the transfer process and how to apply. These included support programs, transfer centers, leadership positions and work-study, peer and faculty support. Each of these resources is explained in more detail below.

Support Programs

Many of the participants in this study relied on the academic familias that they formed through their participation in support programs such as Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) and Developing Bilingual Educators with Resources (DEBER) to gain transfer information. Students such as Alejandra signed up for EOPS to gain access to transfer information because she "didn't know where to start," and the process was "very overwhelming." Through EOPS, she had access to dedicated academic counselors and a support network of staff, faculty and students to help her access transfer information. Her counselors directed her to resources like Assist.org and the San Diego State University website, where she learned about transfer agreements and transfer requirements for the CSU system. These academic mentors taught her how to read her transcripts to identify transferable credits. She engaged in "a lot of back-and-forth communication with [her] counselor [and that's how she] figured out how to do things." Alejandra's EOPS program required her to meet with her counselor at least three times per term, where she gained financial support, academic guidance, personal support, and transfer assistance. The program was influential in her transfer success that she "think[s] everyone should be in EOPS." Despite the immense support she received from EOPS, she noted "misinformation" and "frustration" with the process, specifically course equivalencies and transferable credits at each institution she was applying to.

Isabella also attributed her transfer success to her EOPS counselors mentioning that she "would go to a different [counselor] each time, but every single time they were always helpful." If she had a question, she would make an appointment with an EOPS counselor, where she would receive the transfer support she needed. EOPS also provided transfer workshops that Isabella attended as well as guidance with creating an educational plan to support her transfer aspirations. More specifically, when Isabella was conditionally admitted to CSU San Marcos, she

relied on her EOPS counselors for moral support, in addition to help with writing an appeal letter. Through EOPS counselor guidance, she was able to learn about the appeal process, which empowered Isabella. For Leonardo, EOPS was able to "sit [him] down and start the application process with [him]. If it was not for them guiding [him] through the steps, [he] does not know if [he] would have started [the transfer process]." Although Leonardo was not able to attend transfer workshops that EOPS provided due to work and school demands, he appreciated the resources being available to him. Rafael attended transfer workshops hosted by EOPS and met with counselors to "review his transfer application" and learned how the transfer process worked. Ximena also used EOPS services because they were "really big on transfer, so [she] always used EOPS to get all of [her transfer] resources." EOPS also informed Ximena about policies that support undocumented students to work on campus and she was grateful for EOPS informing her and helping her apply to this program.

Similarly, Alicia was a participant in the Developing Bilingual Educators with Resources (DEBER) program at her community college. DEBER scholars are self-identified Latinx/Chicanx/Hispanic students who have a desire to teach, inspire, and change future students' lives by working with professors and counselors on their career paths towards becoming bilingual (Spanish/English) educators (San Diego Mesa College, n.d). As a participant in DEBER, Alicia had access to a dedicated academic counselor that provided "[transfer] presentations and step-by-step [guidance] basically for everything [she] had to know." The cohort model allowed Alicia to gain support from other peers pursuing a transfer pathway by exchanging transfer information and resources. Moreover, the mandatory meetings throughout the year and the partnership with a local university were valuable for Alicia's transfer success. DEBER's coordinator invited academic advisors from the university to inform DEBER scholars

of the resources and support services available at the university specifically for transfer students. Alicia met with the advisor to discuss her transfer pathway to the university, which helped Alicia a lot with her transfer journey. Sofia, also a member of DEBER, "went to the [counselors] for any questions that [she] had and [she] felt [her] biggest strategy was seeking their help for any question that came up or anything related to the school that she wasn't sure of." According to Sofia, DEBER "pushed transferring very early on," however, she did not take advantage of the transfer resources early on. DEBER's emphasis on the transfer process encouraged students to consider it as an option. They provided biweekly workshops, walk-ins, and labs "that you can just walk into and ask questions." Sofia also appreciated the "night appointments they had like [at] 7pm or 8pm." When deadlines were approaching, her DEBER counselors provided transfer application workshops in the evenings. More importantly, DEBER provided Sofia with a cohort of peers that shared similar backgrounds as her that allowed her to build a network of transfer support.

Deborah's involvement in the Puente program at her community college allowed her to gain support with her search and applying to the transfer process. The PUENTE Community College Program offers academic support, guidance, and mentorship to help students develop the skills needed to achieve their educational and career objectives during their time in community college (The Puente Project, n.d.). Specifically, Deborah attributed her to transfer success to her Puente counselor. Her Puente counselor was a local university alumnus, which helped Deborah gain accurate transfer information and support. Her counselor "really pushed [her] to transfer and motivated [her] to transfer under two years." Deborah's counselor understood the importance of transferring within two years and the ramifications of extending their time at the community college level (i.e. financial aid). Therefore, Deborah's Puente counselor "always made time for

[her and] she gave her the classes she needed [to transfer].” Moreover, Deborah appreciated her counselor’s support with the transfer process because “she did really support [her] because [she’s] first-generation and [she] had no idea where to start.” Similarly, for Ximena, Puente was the “number one help at [her] community college.” Puente paid for her transfer application costs as well as reviewed her application before submission. Through Puente, she connected with “great professors” and was able to network with other institutional stakeholders. Ximena said: “If I wasn’t in Puente, I don’t know where I would be right now like Puente helped me a lot.”

Diana participated in various STEM programs that provided her mentorship, research opportunities, and transfer assistance to support her transfer aspirations. Specifically, she spoke about her experiences with the Mathematics, Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) program. The MESA program aims to provide every student in California with access to mentorship, hands-on experiences, professional networks, and other essential resources to help them complete degrees in calculus-based STEM disciplines and enter STEM careers (Carter et al., n.d). She says “I would also reach out to the Director of MESA. He was always a good resource. If we had any questions he would help us with providing information [as well as information on] how to start the [transfer] process.” Through MESA, Diana was able to learn about other support programs that support transition to four-year institutions for first-generation, underrepresented students like herself. She participated in STEM Pathways –a supportive mentoring program committed to helping STEM students navigate how to transition from community college to a 4-year university, explore STEM careers, and pursue a career that best fits their interests. Through this program, Diana was “assigned a [STEM] professor who’s going to be your director contact if you have any questions or concerns or anything. [They also] write you letters of recommendation.” These programs helped her attain research experiences and paid

for her to share her research at conferences. Diana's participation in STEM programs allowed her to not only gain transfer information and application support, but she was also able to connect with transfer institutions she was considering attending.

Julia relied on the Promise Program to gain support with her transfer journey. The San Diego Promise program is a two-year completion initiative designed to eliminate financial barriers and provide comprehensive support to eligible students. It offers up to two years of free tuition, health fees, and additional resources to help students achieve their educational goals. One of her Promise counselors "encouraged [her to apply to] SDSU, told [her] about her experience, and how she was also a transfer and how she really loved it." This validated Julia's choice to apply to and pursue transfer at the local state university. Moreover, Julia appreciated the constant email announcements she received from Promise about resources and transfer information. Even after Julia completed her community college degree, the Promise Program supported her by continuing to allow her to access the Canvas portal where they provided information about resources. Julia spoke highly of her Promise Program counselor who she saw every semester. She says: "I had a counselor that I [saw] every semester and she helped me stay on top of it. She had connections to SDSU, so she knew their process very well." For Luz, the Promise Program "really led [her] to get there. [She was like] now I have a goal and I have something aiding the goal." Similar to other students that accessed student success programs, Luz had a counselor that helped her create an educational plan to transfer. They provided free tuition and fees and "paid for everything." She liked the requirement of meeting with her counselor at least once per semester, which helped her stay accountable towards achieving her goals. Moreover, Luz was assigned a peer mentor to help her achieve her educational goals, including transfer.

Other instrumental support programs that Latina/o/x community college students utilized to achieve their transfer goals were honors programs and the Dreamer's Center. Leonardo was a member of the honors college and honor society at his community college which helped him connect with four-year institutions. He says: "I was in the Honors College and they have a lot of connections to universities and they promoted those a lot." Furthermore, Sofia used the Dreamer's Center, specifically the counselor because "he knew about the undocumented student struggle, which is why [she] went to him because he had students that had transferred with undocumented status." He helped her financially plan for transfer as an undocumented student. She had been going to the same counselor for over two years and "he kind of became [her] go to for everything. He really emphasized the fact that he wasn't just an academic counselor." She felt a stronger connection with her Dreamers Center counselor than with general counseling. She describes her general counseling support as follows: "And so with other counselors, you're with them for an hour and then you're in and out. Here are your classes, here is your plan, and you're out." With her Dreamer's counselor, he "took the time to get to know his student and emphasized the fact that he was there for personal help as well." This personal connection allowed Sofia to feel comfortable sharing her challenges and needs as an undocumented transfer student.

Transfer Centers

Latina/o/x community college transfer students utilized the Transfer Centers at their community college to gain transfer information and support with their transfer applications. Bernie used the Transfer Center for more technical assistance such as completing the application itself, submitting transcripts, financial aid application, and receiving general review of her application. She recalls that the first time she entered the Transfer Center it was "very welcoming" and it was "very like we can help you with whatever you need." She remembers the

Transfer Center being empty and "there were at least five people working, so all of them wanted to help [her] at once because they were excited that at least one student had shown up." Bernie's first impression of the Transfer Center allowed her to feel confident enough to go more than once to receive transfer support. Similarly, Emiliano used his institution's Transfer Center for technical assistance with course offerings and transferable course cross-reference. Through the Transfer Center, he learned about the California's Counselors website, which was a "great resource to cross-reference course offerings and cross enrollment." Emiliano learned about Assist.Org and accessed webinars to gain information about the transfer process, in addition to meeting with Transfer Center counselors for application support (i.e. personal insight questions review). ASSIST.org is the official online resource for students planning to transfer from a California Community College (CCC) to a California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) campus.

Hugo also used the Transfer Center for help with his personal insight questions and learned about Assist.org, which he utilized throughout his transfer application process. Hugo mentioned that his community college transfer center website provided clearer information about transfer than the four-year institutions transfer webpages, thus, he relied on it to garner transfer information. For Luz, the Transfer Center helped her connect with admission representatives for the universities she was considering transferring to. Specifically, the Transfer Center brought admissions representatives where she was able to ask questions that "left her at peace." The accessibility to transfer admissions representatives was helpful to Luz "because they were already there and she was able to ask them whatever questions she needed answered."

Leadership Positions/ Work-Study

Latina/o/x community college students leveraged their leadership and work-study positions to gain transfer information and transfer application support. For instance, Alicia had close proximity to the Dean through her work-study position in the Student Affairs office, which helped her learn more about the transfer process and gain application assistance. Alicia says: "I turned to the Dean I was working with at the time for transfer support. I was doing some projects for her, so it was easy to go to her, she was always encouraging me, and providing advice about transferring." Working in the Student Affairs department, Alicia had connections to many staff and administrators that helped her with her transfer process. These community college professionals helped her gain information about certain institutions she was interested in such as Point Loma and UCLA. They specifically provided information about programs at these institutions.

Leonardo's work-study position with the Admissions Office at his community college helped him gain information about the transfer process and how higher education systems operate. Due to his mother's immigration status, she was not comfortable giving him certain information that he needed to apply to University of California institutions. Thus, Leonardo's transfer options were limited. At his admission job, Leonardo worked with immigrant families and explained higher education concepts that were foreign to them. He shares that when immigrant families had questions, he would "sit down and talk to them to answer their questions" and he applied these same skills with his mother. When he did not know the answer to questions, he consulted with other staff members to find answers that he could relay to his mother.

Emiliano's position at the Transfer Center allowed him to gain mentorship from the Director of the center, which helped him with his transfer process. Emiliano received support

with his financial aid packages. For instance, his boss provided advice on comparing financial aid packages. They taught him "how to read the financial packages because [he] was looking at them and was so confused the entire time." Moreover, Emiliano's boss connected him with people they knew at the transfer destination. This provided Emiliano with an initial connection to his transfer institution.

Mentorship/ Peer Support

Latina/o/x community college students relied on their peers for support with their transfer process. Alejandra's transfer goals were to attend an out-of-state institution, however, she faced cultural challenges that made it more difficult for her to commit to transferring out-of-state. She relied on her childhood friend, who had transferred to the same institution a year before, for help with her transfer journey. Alejandra's friend "passed down the knowledge" and served as her pseudo counselor. She was "on top of it with [Alejandra]; she would ask [her] if she had done this or done that." Alejandra described her transfer journey to an out-of-state institution as "a lot of self-advocating" and "looking out there and seeing if you can get some help from the other side." Other students referred to receiving institutions as "the other side" making it seem like receiving institutions are difficult to access.

Deborah turned to her friends who were attending the local state university for information about "how their [transfer] process was like" to support her with her transfer journey. She asked a "bunch of questions and they were always there for [her]." These peer relationships helped Deborah realize her goal of transferring to SDSU. Diana, on the other hand, was more strategic with her peer support group. Her peer group "organized different meetings throughout the semester, where [they] would discuss how [their] applications were going and if [they] had any questions." They utilized these weekly meetings to "double check" with each

other and “touch base with each other.” They also provided feedback to each other and invited professors to help field questions. In addition to her weekly peer group, she had friends “who had already transferred and [she] would also reach out to them [for support].”

Similar to Diana, Leonardo utilized a group of peers to achieve transfer success. His role within the Admissions Office at his community college allowed him to connect with other transfer aspiring students. These coworker peers decided to help each other out during their transfer journeys. Leonard says: “We would help each other out and ask each other ‘did you do this form or this other form?’ If it wasn’t for helping each other, I don’t think we would have been able to transfer to be honest.” Leonardo emphasized that the various deadlines and forms to complete were difficult to track and his peer support groups allowed him to complete every process necessary for the institutions he applied to. Leonardo would also rely on testimonios from friends to make decisions regarding his transfer choices. For instance, Leonardo “wasn’t really able to go to many campus tours of the schools he applied to,” so he would ask his friends who were able to go on these tours for information to determine if those institutions were good choices for him.

For Luz, the “community she found and the friends she made” were instrumental to her transfer success. As a STEM student, she took very similar courses with her peers who were engaging with a “similar transfer process.” Therefore, these peers decided to help each other out with homework, course selection, transfer applications, and more. Luz’ friend group had “really similar goals,” which helped with her transfer journey. They “found ways to work together, study together, and take advantage of resources together.” Rafael “created a very big environment and network of people” to help him with his transfer journey. This made “applying a whole lot easier” for him. His peer support network constantly reminded him of deadlines, which made the

transferring process “a little smoother.” Whenever he had doubts about the process, he turned to his friend group for support.

Faculty Support

Participants also relied on faculty to support their transfer aspirations. Alicia appreciated the “professors being there for [you] outside of the classroom and being there to support [you].” Her professors shared resources in their classrooms such as transfer fairs, career fairs, and other campus events. This helped her learn about the available transfer resources on campus. Diana had an influential professor who she saw as a “big brother” who would listen to her vent about the rigors of STEM courses and reassured her that she was capable of completing the STEM pathway and transferring. Furthermore, another professor she had was “in charge of a [STEM] program and he felt like a dad; I had an academic family that has your back and you’re not alone and they can [help] fix the problems with you.” She specifically mentioned that her academic family was “there to go alongside you” in the academic and transfer journey.

Rafael intentionally created a “very big environment and network of people that [he] met along his community college career, [including] professors” which made his transfer application process easier. Although he acknowledged that he did not take advantage of all of the transfer resources available, he felt “like just having people and knowing that there were people willing to help” made the transfer process smoother for him. Moreover, the constant reminders from professors about deadlines and campus resources was helpful. Bernie also had professors who supported her academic trajectory, including her transfer aspirations. Whenever she needed a question answered, she reached out to her professors to gain information. She specifically was interested in learning about transfer credits in her field as well as field specific career and transfer information.

In sum, Latina/o/x community college students utilized a wide range of resources during their search for transfer information, relying heavily on support programs such as EOPS, DEBER, Puente, and Promise to gain academic guidance, emotional support, and assistance with transfer applications. These programs offered structured counseling, workshops, peer support, and access to institutional networks that helped demystify the transfer process and empower students to persist. Transfer Centers were another vital resource, providing technical assistance with applications, transcript submission, and direct access to university representatives. Students also leveraged leadership roles and work-study positions, which connected them to administrators, peers, and faculty who could offer insights and mentorship related to the transfer process. Peer support played a critical role, as students often formed informal networks to share deadlines, give feedback, and provide emotional motivation. Lastly, faculty members contributed meaningfully by serving as mentors, offering encouragement, and connecting students to academic and transfer-related opportunities.

Building the Transfer Bridge

Once Latina/o students gained admissions to and accepted their transfer admissions offers, they attempted to connect with their transfer institutions. While initial support was granted, they faced challenges with fully receiving support in their transition. This study underscores the importance of better connecting Latina/o students to their transfer institutions. Participants in this study struggled to gain support during the transitional periods that is after they completed their community college pathways to enrolling at their four-year institutions. The summer between this transition served to become a barrier to these students. In this section, I address the following question: How do students interact with the receiving institution to bridge

the transfer process? I discuss the role of admissions staff, academic advisors, digital communication, and summer transition programs.

Admission Staff and Academic Advisors

One of the primary ways that Latina/o transfer students interacted with their transfer destination was by connecting with admissions representatives and academic advisors. For example, when Alejandra applied to an out-of-state institution, she was immediately assigned an academic advisor to help smoothly transition to out-of-state institutions. She says:

> I'm talking to a counselor now. So he's also been super helpful in trying to reassure me that everything will be okay going up there, because, you know, coming in as my first time moving out, my first time being in a 4 year institution, my first time being out of state like that was really scary for me. So knowing I have support like that back up there is really reassuring.

Alejandra also received support with finding and securing housing. As an out-of-state transfer student, Alejandra "was very scared of who she was going to room with." Thankfully, her advisor provided her with resources to help her find a roommate. When Alejandra was accepted, she received a bilingual (Spanish/English) acceptance letter which was helpful because she "could share with her parents and they were able to understand it."

During her transfer process, Valeria connected with an academic advisor at the transfer destination. She specifically asked about course scheduling and completing an educational plan. By communicating with her academic advisor, she was able to receive "recommended classes to choose from," and she also received advice on which STEM courses to enroll in. In addition to course selection and educational planning, Valeria received information from her advisor regarding all of her admissions questions. Ximena went to her transfer institution's administration offices to receive support with her financial aid. As an undocumented student, she was concerned that she was going to be charged international or out-of-state fees, so she felt like

going directly to the offices would be the safest option. Her visit allowed her to "learn a lot about the financial support that they give to their students." That said, she described it as "not the best" because she could only access meal vouchers five times per term as opposed to many more times at her community college.

Diana strategically selected a local private university to complete a summer research program in preparation to transfer there. She "already knew that [she] wanted to go there to make connections and to be ready." When she participated in the summer research internship, she met with the Dean of the STEM department to ask "what she needed to do" to get into this institution as a transfer student. Specifically, she showed the Dean her transcripts to determine which courses would be transferable. She built a network of people at the receiving institution who helped her gain transfer information and she had a point of contact who would help her with her transfer journey. Whenever she had a question, she "had the information of people [she] needed" to help her solve her questions. The close proximity to university personnel helped her achieve her transfer aspiration because she was "bugging everyone in the admissions and transfer departments and the Dean."

Digital Communication

The primary method of communication students used with the transfer institution was through email and phone calls. Alicia emailed her transfer destination whenever she had questions. Her experience was mostly positive, describing it as "responsive" and "willing to solve any issues." However, Alicia wanted more curated email information for transfer students than just receiving general institutional information. Due to the various summer orientation programs that she received information about, she was confused which one she needed to attend for transfer students. Bernie was shocked when she realized she had easy access to financial aid

offices, admissions offices, and counselors. She said: “I have only positive things to say because it was so easy to get in contact with the financial aid office, admissions office, and the counselors. It was so easy to get a hold of them, and I was shocked. Because, you know, like you're at a campus university level like, there’s thousands of students. They’re not going to answer the phone for you.” After receiving this support from her transfer institution, Bernie felt valued and felt like they cared about her, her feedback, and opinion. Bernie appreciated receiving reminder emails regarding important information deadlines via text messaging. Specifically, she appreciated receiving information about the transfer orientation.

Luz also appreciated the various resources she received via email such as programs and research opportunities. However, she described the communication as “really overwhelming because after you get in, you have to go and you have to go through the checklist and you have to send them transcripts and then you have to send them vaccination history.” Again, transfer destinations provided a lot of information, yet it was overwhelming and not curated for transfer students. Emiliano has had a positive experience communicating with his transfer destination. His transfer destination has “responded pretty quickly” and any questions he had have been “resolved pretty easily.” Emiliano described the staff as “really supportive for his entire [transfer] journey.” They provided him with summer opportunities and other information for incoming students such as how to to sign-up for the Chicano orientation.

Transition Programs (i.e., Admitted Student Day, Orientation)

Latina/o community college transfer students attended transition programs after they accepted their offers of transfer admissions. For many students, this was the best method to communicate with and interact with the receiving institution. When Alicia attended Admitted Students Day at her transfer institution, she was able to get a better sense of the impact of the

institution at its HSI-servingness–something she was seeking. Specifically, she was able to "look around and they had the Latinx Resource Center" and a "library of Chicano books." She was also able to see "Latino artwork on the wall," which made her feel comfortable and "at home." For Bernie, the transfer orientation that she attended allowed her to not feel "overwhelmed to just be thrown into a university" because they "held [her] hand and made sure that [she] knew where [she] was and everything." Here, Bernie describes the commitment that her university has for transfer students like herself. At the orientation, she learned about processes, departments, and resources for transfer students, which made the receiving institution feel "welcoming" for her. Bernie knew that the university provided a transfer receptive culture because she met a lot of professors who were either transfer students themselves or alumni of the institution. These professors shared their educational and transfer stories, which helped Bernie in her transition from community college to university. Bernie says: "they had different individuals, including professors, come from different resource centers, and they would state their backgrounds and a lot of them were transfer students and alumni of [the university]." This allowed Bernie to feel like the transfer university up north welcomed transfer students and cared about them. During the Transfer Bridge Program via EOPS, Deborah was able to connect with a counselor to help her create an educational plan. The 4-day bridge program allowed her to "connect with people" who would become her academic family and she was able to "ask them a bunch of questions." The EOPS staff made her feel confident for her first year as a transfer student.

When Hugo attended his transfer universities open houses, he learned about all of the resources for Latino military veterans. Hugo says: " When I went to the campus for their open house, that's when I learned that there is actual support for the communities that I'm a part of." As a veteran, Hugo began accessing military services after he committed to attending the local

UC institution. The veteran's office was welcoming and people were friendly. He received the adequate support he needed at that time. However, Hugo does remember trying to utilize military resources "a couple of weeks ago" and he "kind of [felt] like [he] did not belong" because he was unable to access resources due to his student status; he was not yet enrolled.

Isabella reported she had a "pretty good experience" at the Transfer Orientation she attended during the summer. She was able to gain advice on "what classes to take based on [her] major." She was able to explore the campus via a campus tour. This experience made her feel welcomed and warm. Julia attended an admitted student's experience at the local state university, where she attended an array of panels for different majors and clubs as well as a specific session for transfer students. In addition to a campus tour, Julia participated in booths to learn about resources and her psychology major. She specifically enjoyed the transfer student panel because "she got to hear from actual Latino transfer students and what their experiences were; and [she was] able to ask them questions and advice, specifically about their academics and social lives."

Rafael participated in two summer transition programs: Summer Bridge Program with TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) and Transfer Prep Summer Program with his engineering program. With TRIO SSS, he engaged in a week-long residential program, where "he had an opportunity to be in a cohort, stay on campus a whole entire week, and learn about all the services." The purpose of the program was to help students build community by participating in group activities, events, and resources. He got to connect with his peer mentor as well. The Transfer Prep program allowed Rafael to get more specialized support for his engineering major. This three-day program informed him about the engineering resources available to him as well as engineering information and support. Rafael says: "If it wasn't for those two programs, I would

have been so lost as a transfer student." Rafael's words showcase the importance of summer transitional programs for Latina/o students.

When Sofia attended her university's new student orientation, she was shocked at the fact that she had to pay a large amount of money to attend. Despite the large price tag, she described the orientation as "the vibes were good, like everything. It was really fun, very organized." During this experience, she met with an advisor to help her register for her classes. Due to her education major being one of the smallest departments on campus, Sofia received specialized support from the advisor. In addition to the new student orientation, Sofia connected with the DEBER program at her transfer institution. This Chicana/o program allowed her to "connect with undocumented Chicanos/as in education majors." This helped Sofia feel connected with her transfer institution. Sofia says "and so I think programs that specifically help minorities play a pivotal role in whether or not we transfer."

After being admitted and accepting offers to four-year institutions, Latina/o community college transfer students sought to connect with their new campuses but often faced challenges during the transition, especially over the summer. While some students found early support from admissions staff and academic advisors—such as guidance on class registration, financial aid, and housing—others struggled with unclear communication and insufficient transfer-specific resources. Digital communication via email and phone was generally accessible, though students noted that much of the information provided was overwhelming or not tailored to transfer students' needs.

Overall, transition programs like orientation days, admitted student events, and summer bridge programs were particularly helpful in fostering a sense of belonging and offering targeted guidance and community building. These programs connected students to peers, faculty, and

mentors, and highlighted resources like cultural centers and academic support services. However, some students still felt gaps in support if they weren't yet enrolled or if program costs created barriers, emphasizing the need for more inclusive and structured transitional support.

Transition In Limbo

In spite of the support described above, Latina/o community college students faced challenges during the summer before they transferred. For instance, Alicia was trying to create a Handshake account in order to secure a campus job. However, the day after creating her account, she was asked to delete the account "because [she] was not a student [yet] until Fall semester." So, they deleted her account and also told her that she could not go to the Health Center until she was enrolled in classes. Alicia describes this transitional period as a "weird stage" because she cannot go back to her community college since she's not enrolled there either. Diana, on the other hand, felt "disconnected" from her transfer institution although she had already met with an academic advisor to review classes and prepare an education plan. Due to the limited support she received from her transfer institution and lack of access to resources, she felt "rushed" and "stressed" and behind because "in [her] head it's already too late" to be doing things last minute. Diana also felt "disconnected" to her transfer institution because she felt "like they treat you like a number."

When she went to talk about the transition process in-person, "no one was available at the moment" and they offered to send her an email instead. However, she "works better in-person because [she] could ask follow-up questions" and "they can share things they wouldn't do through email." When she finally was able to meet with an advisor, the advisor was "worried about time," which resulted in Diana not receiving the support she was seeking. Diana said: "So she just came in [and said] you just go to the website and scroll." Diana was thinking in her head

"yeah, I need more than that, but we will see. I'll figure it out." Her entire experience was "cold" and "distant." Hugo, a military veteran, had difficulties accessing his university's veterans office because he did not have a student ID or his university email setup. So, he "kinda had to wait to get [his] questions answered." He also turned to his college within the university to try to gain information about his military status and he was "turned down completely" and was told that they "were not talking to transfers right now until September." These experiences led Hugo to not feel welcomed as a transfer student. Rafael, an undocumented transfer student, needed help completing financial aid documents, specifically AB 540 forms. As a transfer student, he was unable to set-up an in-person or phone appointment because he was "still a prospective student." This made it "really hard because everything was by email." This made Rafael question if the university was right for him.

Despite initial support, many Latina/o community college students experienced challenges during the summer before officially transferring to their four-year institutions. Students like Alicia were caught in a limbo stage—unable to access resources like job platforms or health services because they were not yet considered enrolled. Others, like Diana, felt disconnected and rushed, receiving limited, impersonal advising that left them feeling unsupported. Hugo and Rafael faced barriers due to their military and undocumented statuses, respectively, as they were denied access to key services because they weren't yet fully recognized as students. These transitional gaps left many students feeling unwelcome, uncertain, and stressed about their upcoming transfer.

Conclusion

Latina/o/x community college students utilized a broad array of resources to navigate the transfer process, including support programs like EOPS, DEBER, Puente, and Promise, which

offered academic guidance, emotional support, and application assistance. Transfer Centers and leadership roles also provided critical help through direct connections with university representatives, faculty, and peers. Informal peer networks and faculty mentorship further supported students by sharing information and encouragement. After being admitted to four-year universities, students tried to connect with their new institutions but often faced transitional barriers during the summer, especially due to lack of enrollment status. While some received early advising and help with housing and financial aid, others dealt with unclear communication, impersonal interactions, or limited access to necessary services. Orientation events and bridge programs were among the most helpful tools, fostering a sense of belonging and connecting students to academic and cultural support. However, several students still encountered significant challenges that left them feeling isolated or unwelcome, highlighting a need for more inclusive and structured transition support. While the findings reported here suggest there is evidence of an institutional commitment for the transfer success of Latina/o/x students, there needs to be more studies that involve interviews with institutional transfer agents to better understand this institutional commitment.

Chapter 7

Conclusion and Implications

This study expands our understanding of the pre-transfer experiences of Latina/o/x community college students through a family-centered approach. Specifically, it addresses three important gaps in the Latina/o/x transfer literature. First, it provides a real time, nuanced, and nonlinear account of how Latina/o/x community college students and their families design transfer choice sets given their racial, geographic, and sociopolitical positions. Second, it centers the voices and experiences of families in the transfer decision-making process. Third, it utilizes critical theories (i.e., Transfer Receptive Culture, College-Conocimiento, and Apoyo Sacrificial) and methodological approaches (i.e. platicas and testimonios) to explore Latina/o/x transfer experiences.

Through an analysis of forty-eight platicas with sixteen Latina/o/x community college transfer students and twelve testimonios with their family members, I found that the pre-transfer experiences of Latina/o/x community college students requires intentional, curated, and culturally-responsive support services and opportunities that are inclusive of their families to strengthen the pre-transfer process. Research subquestion one asked "How are transfer choice sets created and what role do racial, geographic, cultural, sociopolitical, and familial contexts play?" Findings showed that Latina/o/x community college transfer students' decisions were strongly shaped by their cultural identity, family responsibilities, and structural challenges. For non-traditional students, circumstances such as shared parenting arrangements, spouses' employment, and financial constraints often limited their options to nearby transfer institutions. Cultural norms—especially those impacting Latinas—added complexity, as traditional gender roles often discouraged young women from leaving home. As a result, many Latina/o/x students

chose to stay close to home to maintain emotional support systems, manage financial pressures, and fulfill caregiving duties, such as helping to raise siblings or contributing to family-run businesses.

Subquestion two explored the following: “How do Latina/o/x families’ conceptions of their roles, responsibilities, and capacities in the transfer process shape the ways in which they support Latina/o/x students' transfer aspirations?” Findings revealed that Latina/o/x family members played a vital and multifaceted role in supporting community college students throughout their transfer journeys. Through practical help, emotional support, and the sharing of lived knowledge, families bridged critical gaps left by institutional systems, helping students navigate both academic pressures and everyday challenges. Whether by preparing meals, explaining transportation routes, assisting with applications, or offering words of encouragement, their support was driven by love, resilience, and a shared commitment to educational achievement. Even without formal expertise in the transfer process, families acted as resourceful guides, translators, and advocates, ensuring students were not alone in their journey. Their culturally rooted support networks not only provided direction but also empowered students, underscoring the crucial role of family in advancing educational access and transfer equity.

Finally, addressing research subquestion three provided insight into how Latina/o/x students engage with the sending and receiving institution to promote transfer success given the tenets of Transfer Receptive Culture (TRC) (Jain et al., 2011) and the process of College-Conocimiento (Acevedo-Gil, 2017). Findings indicated that although institutions show some commitment to supporting Latina/o/x transfer students, more is needed to fully support students. Latina/o/x community college students relied on a range of resources such as EOPS, Puente, Promise, and Transfer Centers for academic and emotional support throughout the

transfer process. Peer networks, leadership roles, and faculty mentorship also played a key role in providing guidance and encouragement. After admission, many students faced transitional hurdles due to unclear communication or lack of access to services before enrollment. While orientation and bridge programs were helpful, students still experienced exclusion and disconnection, emphasizing the need for more consistent and inclusive transfer support.

In this chapter, I will discuss the study's findings in more depth in relation to Transfer Receptive Culture (Jain et al., 2011). I will then discuss other connections to prior research, implications for future research, and implications for policy and practice.

Theorizing A Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture to Strengthen the Latina/o/x Transfer Pipeline

The findings from this study necessitate a transfer framework that centers the voices and experiences of Latina/o/x students and their families. While the Transfer Receptive Culture (Jain et al., 2011) framework provided a useful analytical lens to explore the transfer decision making processes and experiences of Latina/o/x community college students, there is a need to extend this framework to focus on better serving Latina/o/x students to improve transfer outcomes. Many participants in this study described "servingness" as an important factor in their pre-transfer success. The term "servingness" was coined by Garcia et al. (2019) as a call of action to Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) to develop an infrastructure of serving its Latina/o/x student populations rather than just focusing on enrolling Hispanic/Latino students. Therefore, the Multidimensional Conceptual Framework of Servingness (Garcia et al., 2019) was established to guide HSIs and other minority serving institutions (MSIs) to develop infrastructures of servingness to support the success of Latina/o/x students. The Multidimensional Conceptual Framework of Servingness (Garcia et al., 2019) consists of

indicators of serving, structures of serving, and external influences on serving. Indicators of servingness typically include outcomes and experiences of individuals, such as students and staff, as the main subjects of analysis. Some of the most common academic outcomes include grade point average, course completion rates, six year graduation rates, transfer rates, STEM degree complete rates, post-baccalaureate enrollment, and labor market outcomes. Additionally, the framework identifies nonacademic outcomes as part of developing a servingness culture. These include academic self-efficacy, social agency, racial identity, leadership identity, critical consciousness, social justice orientation, civic engagement, and graduate school aspirations are also important outcomes to consider for Latina/o/x students.

In contrast, structures of servingness are important to consider as they serve to change the organizational structure of institutions in order to better serve Latina/o/x students. These include developing mission and values for serving; implementing strategic and diversity plans for serving; changing hiring practices in order to increase the compositional diversity of faculty, staff, and students; engaging with the surrounding Latinx community, investing in institutional advancement activities, and applying for and implementing HSI grants shows a commitment to serving Latinx students (Garcia et al., 2019, p. 772). In the classroom, structures of servingness involve developing and implementing curricula, pedagogy, and support programs that are culturally-relevant, sustaining, and grounded in Latino epistemology.

Finally, the framework points to external factors that affect how Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) operate are more distant, influencing the ability of these institutions to create systems that support Latina/o/x students (Garcia et al., 2019). Therefore, when examining the structures and external influences on service, the analysis is more likely to center on organizations rather than individuals. These external factors consist of federal, state, and local

legislation, institutional governing boards, state governing boards, advocacy groups, community leaders, and alumni. Collectively, these forces are necessary to create cultures of servingness at higher education institutions.

If we want to improve transfer outcomes for Latina/o/x students, there is a need for a framework that can help guide the sending (community college) and receiving (four-year university) institutions to better understand the conditions, experiences, and needs of Latina/o/x students in order to develop a streamlined transfer infrastructure that strengthens the Latina/o/x transfer pipeline. In this chapter, I extend Jain et al.'s (2011) Transfer Receptive Culture Framework by integrating Garcia et al.'s (2019) concept of "servingness" to propose a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC). I define a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC) as an institutional commitment by both the sending and receiving institutions to provide the intentional, culturally-responsive support and inclusive environments necessary for Latina/o/x students to successfully transfer and earn baccalaureate degrees by centering their lived experiences, intersectional identities, and Latinidad, while honoring their familial capital in all aspects of their nonlinear and dynamic transfer journeys. In the following sections, I outline three elements that are needed to develop a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture at the pre-transfer level. Specific strategies that researchers, practitioners, and policymakers can employ will be discussed to ensure that Latina/o/x students receive the adequate pre-transfer support necessary to succeed as transfer students.

Element One: Develop A Deep Understanding of Latino Transfer Epistemology.

In a Transfer Receptive Culture (Jain et al., 2011), element one posits that colleges and universities should "establish the transfer of students, especially nontraditional, first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students, as a high institutional priority that ensure stable

accessibility, retention, and graduation" (p. 51). To establish Latina/o/x transfer as a high institutional priority, higher education institutions need to develop a deep understanding of Latino transfer epistemology. Such understanding will serve as the foundation for operationalizing "servingness" into the systems and structures of higher education institutions. The findings of this study call for a better understanding and integration of Latino transfer epistemology when developing a transfer receptive servingness culture.

A Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC) involves centering Latino ways of knowing, learning, and transferring knowledge—especially in the context of education, identity, and community college to university pathways. This type of epistemology must challenge dominant Eurocentric paradigms and instead draw on culturally relevant and community-based knowledge systems. Moreover, it acknowledges the role of transfer in the Latina/o/x student experience. It recognizes that many Latina/o/x students begin their higher education journeys in community colleges. A Latino transfer epistemology must validate the community college experience, explore how knowledge is navigated, negotiated, and transferred between institutions, and emphasize resilience, familial support, bilingualism, and bicultural navigation. Furthermore, developing a deep understanding of Latino transfer epistemology is grounded in Latino epistemologies from scholars that center lived experiences, cultural practices, language, and resistance as valid forms of knowledge (Anzaldua, 2002; Delgado Bernal, 2002; Yosso, 2005). In this same vein, a Latino transfer epistemology integrates Critical Race Theory (CRT), LatCrit, and decolonial thought to critique structures of power and highlight how knowledge systems and structures are racialized and colonized. These frameworks help reposition Latino students not as deficient, but as knowledge producers.

Understanding Latina/o/x lived experiences and intersectional identities can lead to better support during the transfer choice phase of the pre-transfer process. During the transfer choice phase, Latina/o/x students created transfer choice sets based on their cultural and racial identity, geographical factors, sociopolitical context and immigration status, and cultural values and familial expectations. Many Latina/o/x students in this study decided where they want to transfer based on their race and culture. Specifically, they wanted to pursue a transfer pathway to show other Latina/o/x students in their community that they too could also pursue a Bachelor degree. Furthermore, the discriminatory experiences that Latina/o/x students experienced in educational and work settings contributed to their transfer decision-making processes. They wanted to prove to naysayers that they were capable of transferring to elite institutions and programs. Moreover, Latina/o/x students pursued transfer pathways because they wanted to address systemic inequalities by helping increase the transfer and graduation rates for Latina/o/x students. They also wanted to be the representation that was lacking in their fields of study. Due to their racialized experiences, Latina/o/x students were motivated to pursue transfer at elite institutions.

Latina/o/x transfer students also created transfer choice sets based on the transfer destination's racial and ethnic make-up and their institutional commitment to serving Latina/o/x transfer students. Latina/o/x transfer students decided to apply to institutions that had a high enrollment of Latina/o/x students, which signaled to them that they valued Latina/o/x students. Beyond enrollment, Latina/o/x transfer students sought evidence of servingness. In this study, Latina/o/x transfer students attributed servingness with a sense of belonging; meaning that transfer destinations have institutional spaces for Latina/o/x students and an institutional environment that honors the lived experience of Latina/o/x transfer students. Latina/o/x transfer students gravitated towards institutions with a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation

because that showed them their commitment to serving Latina/o/x students. The HSI designation allowed Latina/o/x students to determine that these institutions had resources for them, thus why HSI designations are important for Latina/o/x transfer enrollment.

Findings from this study also underscored the importance of place and geographic proximity on the transfer decisions of Latina/o/x students. Non-traditional transfer students face constraints when creating their transfer choice sets because of situations such as shared custody and familial priorities. There is a need to better support non-traditional students on their quest to successfully transfer. Furthermore, Latina/o/x transfer students selected to transfer to institutions close to home because they play pivotal roles in their families. These roles consist of childcare, driving siblings to school, and supporting their families; small businesses. These students also wanted access to their families in case they get homesick or are struggling mentally and academically. Being close to home provided comfort and familiarity, which Latina/o/x students need when facing educational challenges. Latina/o/x students also did not want to transfer away from home due to the high cost of living. After researching the cost of attendance of institutions they were considering, they determined that moving away from home would require them to find an apartment versus living at home. Moving away would increase the probability of them borrowing loans to fund their transfer education. Moreover, Latina/o/x transfer students considered their potential commute to determine their creation of their transfer choice sets. They wanted their commutes to be short in order to not disrupt potential class and study time.

The sociopolitical climate and immigration policy also shaped Latina/o/x transfer choice sets. Many Latina/o/x transfer students, whose families are mixed-status, faced difficulties with moving away from home because their families could not visit them due to their immigration status. The fear of deportation prevented some Latina/o/x students in this study from considering

transfer away from San Diego County. Some students selected to apply to certain transfer institutions due to the resources they had for mixed-status families and undocumented students. Moreover, the state of California was a popular state to consider for transfer due to the state's position on supporting undocumented people. The safety that comes with being in a state that supports people with different immigration statuses was attractive to Latina/o/x transfer students. Latina/o/x transfer students sought transfer institutions that were liberal and accepting of undocumented students. Finally, some transfer applications felt unsafe to Latina/o/x students, so they either had difficulties completing the application or they did not complete them at all due to fears of deportation and utilization of their information.

Familial expectations and cultural values also shaped Latina/o/x transfer choice sets. For Latinas, gendered cultural norms prevented them from applying to and attending transfer institutions outside of San Diego County. Specifically, living in a Catholic and traditional household shaped the ways in which they strategized their transfer choices. Due to constant communication with their families about the complexities of transferring, they eventually showed their families that applying to transfer institutions outside of their area was required. The strong familial ties Latina/o/x transfer had shaped the institutions they considered applying to. These students wanted to be close to home and in close proximity to their grandparents. Moreover, Latina/o/x students wanted to be close to their single parents in order to be able to help when needed.

Element Two: Unapologetically Serve Latina/o/x Transfer Students

In a Transfer Receptive Culture (Jain et al., 2011), element two establishes that colleges and universities "provide outreach and resources that focus on the specific needs of transfer students while complementing the community college mission of transfer" (Jain et al., 2020, p.

57). These include summer bridge programs, peer mentoring, transfer visits to universities, and four-year institutions recruitment events at community colleges.

In a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC), transfer outreach and resources need to be intentional and culturally-responsive. Moreover, it is important to create ecosystems of transfer support to assist Latina/o/x students with their transfer aspirations. During the search and applying phase of the pre-transfer process, Latina/o/x students relied on support programs such as the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), Developing Bilingual Educators with Resources (DEBER), Puente, Mathematics, Engineering Science Achievement (MESA), Promise Program, Honors Programs, and the Dreamer's Center to gain transfer information and application assistance. These programs connected Latina/o/x students to institutional transfer champions such as counselors to support their transfer journeys. These counselors were more than academic counselors, they got to know their students on a personal level and provide holistic support. Latina/o/x students also gained transfer information and support from transfer centers, peers and faculty. Furthermore, Latina/o/x students strategically assumed leadership roles and work-study opportunities in order to gain access to transfer-agents who could help them gain transfer information and application help.

Despite the transfer outreach and resources that are available to Latina/o/x students at their community colleges, they faced significant challenges during the summer transition period. Latina/o/x students were in a limbo stage where they could not receive support from either the sending or receiving institution. Therefore, a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC) posits that community colleges and universities work together to better serve Latina/o/x students during this limbo stage. After Latina/o/x students commit to attending a transfer institution, they begin to interact with the receiving institution. During this time, these students primarily gain

support from admissions staff and academic advisors and gain transfer information through digital communication. The most important form of communication Latina/o/x students received was through summer transitional programs. These programs began to allow Latina/o/x transfer students to feel a sense of belonging and to determine if their chosen transfer destination prioritized Latina/o/x transfer students. At these different summer transitional programs, students were able to connect with advisors, faculty, staff, and other Latina/o/x students, where they gained the support needed to make a smooth transition. The most successful summer programs are those that are intentional, culturally-responsive, and that prioritize transfer students. However, during this transitional period, Latina/o/x transfer students were in limbo. Because they have graduated from community college and not yet fully enrolled at their transfer university, they do not receive the adequate support and resources they need to transfer. Due to this liminal access to resources at both the sending and receiving institutions served as a barrier for Latina/o/x students.

Element Three: Institutionalize Family Engagement Policies and Practices

In a Transfer Receptive Culture (Jain et al., 2011), element four in the post-transfer process underscores identity, community, and family as priorities. The findings of this study underscore that identity, community, and family are important components at the pre-transfer phase as well. Therefore, institutionalization of family engagement practices to honor their familial capital is critical for Latina/o/x transfer success. During the pre-transfer process for Latina/o/x students, their families were highly involved through apoyo, consejos, and animo. The apoyo and supportive behaviors that their families provided consisted of in-kind, financial, and academic support, in addition to serving as knowledge brokers. In-kind transfer support came in the form of transportation, meals, and completing household chores to support their

transfer-going student's transfer aspirations. Some families supported their students financially to lessen the burdens of pursuing a transfer pathway. Families also read transfer applications, supported with completing financial aid applications, and served as educational advocates to support their students. Many of these family members had prior success with their own educational journeys, so they leveraged that knowledge to support their transfer-going students. Some family members studied with their transfer-going student, while other family members assisted with goal setting to support their transfer-going student's educational aspirations.

Families also served as knowledge brokers to support their transfer-going students. To gain transfer information, families enrolled in college preparation courses to learn about the U.S. education system and other families utilized prior experience in programs such as AVID to gather transfer information. Some families distributed transfer information by taking classes at local community colleges and learning about the resources that are available to students. Through these experiences, families were able to transfer knowledge such as learning about counselors and support programs that can help prospective transfer students. Furthermore, families facilitated collaborations with stakeholders that already had experience with the transfer process. These stakeholders were friends, Tias, Tios, coworkers, and bosses who were familiar with the transfer process. Moreover, family members who they themselves transferred, translated transfer information. These family members served as pseudo counselors and helped prepare educational plans and connected their transfer-going students to resources that they previously used.

Furthermore, family members provided consejos to assist with their transfer-going student's transfer aspirations. Some family members utilized their past experiences with higher education to provide sound advice on the transfer process. For instance, family members

reminded their transfer-going students to be proactive when searching for transfer information and to be persistent when seeking support at their community college. Other family members provided insight on which transfer institutions they thought were a good fit for their family. These pieces of advice were largely shaped by socio political positions. Many family members advised their students to pursue a transfer pathway to assume a professional job that did not require hard labor and low wages. Family members, mostly mothers, validated their children's transfer decisions and were there to provide advice when they were struggling with the transfer process.

Finally, families utilized animo or emotional support to further support their transfer-going student's transfer aspirations. Family members incorporated self-care days and reminders to balance the rigors of the transfer application process with mental health. Many family members created safe spaces to allow their transfer-going students to express their feelings, challenges, and frustrations with the transfer process. They listened intently and provided words of validation. Family members constantly checked-in with their transfer-going student to make sure they had the necessary emotional support they needed. Many Latina mothers in this study shared concerns with their child as part of their way of supporting them emotionally. Words of affirmation were expressed such as "echale ganas" and "tu puedes," as well as "sigale, puedes lograrlo, adelanted." Family members constantly reminded their transfer-going students that they were not alone in this process despite the limited knowledge and information the family had about the transfer process. Below, I discuss implications for research, policy, and practice of a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture framework.

Connections to Prior Research

This study sought to explore how Latina/o/x community college students and their families experience the pre-transfer decision-making process. In Chapter Four, I explored how Latina/o/x students created transfer choice sets to determine where they wanted to transfer. Findings suggested that Latina/o/x community college students shaped their transfer decisions through the lens of race, culture, and critical consciousness. Motivated by personal experiences with discrimination and a desire to challenge underrepresentation, they often pursued transfer as an act of resistance and community uplift. Previous research confirms these findings (Cortez & Castro, 2017; Malagon & Alvarez, 2010; Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Saenz et. al., 2017). For example, Malagon and Alvarez (2010) showed how oppressive educational experiences led Chicanas to pursue a transfer pathway to combat systems of oppression to support other Latina/o/x students. Many Latina/o/x students intentionally applied to Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) or elite universities to find culturally supportive environments and to prove that success was possible for students like them. Their choices reflected a commitment not only to academic achievement but also to social justice, representation, and serving as role models for future generations. While previous transfer choice literature shows that Latina/o/x students pursue transfer to serve as role models (Doran & Hengesteg, 2020; Saenz et al., 2018; Vasquez et al., 2022) for family and community members, the current literature on transfer decisionmaking does not highlight HSI designation as being an important factor for transfer decisions.

Another contributing transfer choice factor for Latina/o/x students was place and geographic proximity. Many non-traditional Latina/o/x students are often limited to local transfer institutions due to family responsibilities (Jabbar et al., 2019; Suarez, 2003), financial constraints (Dowd et al., 2013; Jabbar et al., 2019; Sanchez & Morgan, 2022), and transportation challenges. These students remain deeply committed to their education, finding creative ways to balance

academic goals with caregiving and economic obligations. Staying close to home provides emotional and cultural support while allowing them to continue fulfilling vital family roles. The extant literature underscores familial responsibilities as an important factor for transferring close to home, however, those studies do not specifically address the unique transfer choice challenges and needs of nontraditional students as this study did.

This study also revealed that sociopolitical contexts were an important factor for the transfer decision of Latina/o/x students. Immigration status significantly influenced the transfer choices of Latina/o/x students, with many opting for local institutions to remain close to undocumented family members and avoid immigration-related risks. Students prioritized colleges with strong support for undocumented or mixed-status families and avoided schools in areas perceived as politically hostile or unsafe. The application process itself also posed barriers, as confusing or invasive questions about immigration status created additional stress and uncertainty. The research on Latina/o/x transfer choice does not specifically focus on undocumented students and how immigration policy and sociopolitical positions shape their transfer choices. Furthermore, Latina/o/x students' transfer choices were deeply influenced by cultural values, family expectations, and household responsibilities. Many, especially Latinas, faced gendered norms that encouraged staying close to home (Alexander et al., 2007), while others chose to remain nearby to support aging relatives or financially assist their families. These strong familial ties and collectivist values often shaped how students defined and pursued their transfer journeys. Interestingly, many studies focus on Latino men's (Gard et al., 2012; Rodriguez et al., 2021; Saenz et al., 2017) transfer choices versus Latinas although this study showcased that Latinas base transfer decisions on familial expectations.

Chapter Five investigated how families were involved in the transfer decision making processes of their transfer-going students. The extant literature shows how families are a focal point of the transfer decision-making process, for instance, the literature states that families serve as inspiration for engaging with the transfer process (Jabbar et. al., 2019;; Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Vega, 2018; Wang et al., 2022). As in this study, mothers are the most involved (Saenz et al., 2017; Saenz et. al., 2018; Vasquez et. al., 2020; Vasquez et. al., 2022), specifically with the transfer success of their sons. They also support their transfer-going students by gathering transfer information (Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Suarez, 2003) and applying to transfer institutions (Harris, 2017; Jabbar et al., 2019). Prior studies have documented that families also provide in-kind support (Jabbar et al., 2019; Vasquez et al., 2022), similar to findings of this study. However, family members' voices and experiences are left out. Almost all prior research is from the student perspective, therefore, findings from this study add to the larger conversation regarding Latina/o/x transfer decision-making.

Chapter Six examined how community colleges build transfer receptive cultures to support Latina/o/x student's transfer outcomes. Prior research shows that academic programs (Andrade, 2019; Cortes & Castro, 2017; Doran & Hengesteg, 2020; Dowd et. al., 2013; Hagedorn & Cepeda, 2004; Harris, 2017; Nicholas et. al., 2021; Sanchez & Morgan, 2022; Wang et. al., 2022), student organizations (Acevedo et. al., 2021; Malagon & Alvarez, 2010; Rodriguez et. al., 2021), familial (Harris, 2017; Jabbar et. al., 2019) and peers (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Vega, 2018) networks and community college faculty and staff (Alcantar & Hernandez, 2020; Bensimon & Dowd, 2009) helped Latina/o/x students search for and apply to transfer. Despite the fact that previous research confirms this study's findings, new insights emerged. For instance, participants in this study utilized the transfer center to gather information and application

assistance. Furthermore, assuming leadership roles on campus and work-study opportunities allowed them to establish connections with senior level staff members who supported their transfer aspirations by providing transfer information. Moreover, while previous literature supports the negative counseling experiences (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Ornelas and Solorzano, 2004) that Latina/o/x students experience, it does not showcase the limbo stages of transfer, particularly in the summer, that present challenges to transfer students.

Implications for Further Research

As the California Higher Education system (Community College, California State University, and University of California) continues to become a Hispanic-Serving system (Contreras & Contreras, 2015), there is a need for critical analysis of its systems, structures, and leadership capacity to address Latina/o/x transfer equity institutionally. Chapter Six of this dissertation examined how community colleges developed or failed to develop a transfer receptive culture at their institutions. Although there was evidence of successful implementation of the pre-transfer TRC elements, future research needs to include senior level administrators both from the sending and receiving institutions as they are the actors that operationalize institutionalization of efforts such as HSI servingness and Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC). Moreover, an examination of how senior leadership takes part in development of TRSC is necessary to create transformative change across the California Higher Education transfer system. I define senior leadership as Directors, Dean's, Vice Presidents, and College Presidents at the community college level and Chancellor's, Executive Vice Chancellors, Associate Chancellors, and University Presidents at the university level.

To continue to develop a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC) framework, there is a need to develop longitudinal studies that explore Latina/o/x transfer students'

experiences at the pre- and post transfer levels. This would require researchers to follow their participants starting at the pre-transfer (community college) and post-transfer (university) and through graduation to fully capture their transfer experiences. Developing longitudinal studies to explore Latina/o/x transfer students' experiences from pre- to post-transfer and through graduation is valuable because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and successes students face throughout their entire academic journey. By tracking students across different stages, researchers can identify key support needs, institutional barriers, and gaps in resources that may impact transfer success. These insights allow for the creation of more effective, tailored support systems, ensuring that both community colleges and universities are better equipped to support Latina/o/x students. Additionally, it helps institutions refine their Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC) framework to create a more inclusive and responsive environment that enhances Latina/o/x student outcomes.

Furthermore, at the institution level, further exploration is needed to examine differences in the pre- and post transfer experiences of Latina/o/x students given institutional type (i.e. Hispanic Serving Institutions, Minority Serving Institutions, Predominantly White Institutions, Private, Public, R1 universities, etc.). This is important to research because Latina/o/x transfer student's needs, challenges, and access to resources can vary significantly across institutional contexts. Understanding these differences helps identify which environments effectively support Latina/o/x transfer student success and which may perpetuate inequities. Such research can uncover how institutional culture, policies, funding structures, and student services either foster or hinder a sense of belonging, academic achievement, and degree completion. Additionally, it allows for more targeted and culturally responsive practices that recognize the diversity within the Latina/o/x community. Ultimately, this knowledge is critical for informing policy and

practice aimed at closing transfer equity gaps and promoting meaningful inclusion across higher education.

Chapter Four of this study explored how Latina/o/x students designed transfer choice sets given their racial, cultural, sociopolitical, geographic, and familial positions. Although this study provided significant insight into how Latina/o/x students decide where they wanted to transfer, more research is needed that further dissects how intersectional identities, specifically being first-generation and undocumented, determine transfer decisions. Moreover, the intersection between immigration policy, sociopolitical contexts, and transfer decisionmaking warrants further investigation. Furthermore, the majority of my participants identified as Mexican, therefore, exploring the transfer experiences of Central and South American transfer students is needed. A critical analysis of transfer experiences of diverse Latina/o/x transfer students can reveal the unique needs and challenges that emerge from different cultural and racial backgrounds.

Chapter Five investigated how families supported their transfer-going Latina/o/x students during the pre-transfer process. While this study provided insightful examples of how families supported their transfer-going student with apoyo, animo, and consejos, future research needs to explore the nuances of these types of supportive behaviors. Moreover, this study used the term "family engagement" versus "parental involvement" in order to be inclusive of all family types. Thus, future research should focus on Latino immigrant parents as well as nontraditional family units. Furthermore, this study had more female-identifying participants, and, therefore, an examination of how male-identifying family members support transfer success can help expand our thinking of how to create a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture.

Finally, this study utilized platicas and testimonios as methodologies to collect data. Although utilization of these critical methods expanded the ways researchers study Latina/o/x transfer experiences, more studies need to utilize quantitative and/or mixed methods research designs to explore Latina/o/x transfer decision-making. These diverse research methods could help shed light on larger scale needs and challenges of Latina/o/x transfer students.

Implications for Policy and Practice

In 2023-2024, there were 615 institutions that met the federal guidelines for Hispanic-Serving Institution designation–a 2.5% growth from the previous year (HACU, 2024). This highlights the continued growth in Hispanic/Latino student enrollment across colleges and universities in the United States (HACU, 2024). Despite this growth in Hispanic/Latino enrollment, HSIs continue to struggle with centering "servingness" (Contreras et al, 2008; Garcia, 2018; Vega et al., 2022). Therefore, a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture framework helps guide higher education institutions to develop a fabric of servingness across their institutions to improve the systems and structures that perpetuate Latina/o/x transfer inequity. Furthermore, TRSC provides higher education practitioners and policymakers with a guide for designing and implementing intentional and culturally responsive policies and practices that are grounded in critical frameworks for educational equity and social justice of Latina/o/x students.

Element one of a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture posits that higher education institutions, practitioners, and policymakers develop a deeper understanding of Latino transfer epistemology to improve, design, and implement resources and support services to better serve Latina/o/x transfer students. Moreover, Garcia et al.'s (2019) servingness framework calls practitioners to review and revise their mission and equity plans. To improve servingness culture within these plans, practitioners should integrate Latino transfer epistemology and

conocimientos. Coined by Chicana scholar, Gloria Anzaldua (2002), and Brazilian educator and philosopher, Paulo Freire (2020), conocimientos asks students to act on the knowledge gained about themselves and others and find common ground upon which to build a sense of community. Conocimientos, meaning "getting to know" or "understanding" in Spanish, is a concept that uncovers a deeper understanding among students or participants through their exchange of stories that reveal personal experiences, values, and aspects of their identity. Conocimientos help students and faculty foster a sense of belonging through a dialogue that encourages participants to embrace what they don't know about others and bring what they do know about themselves. Using conocimientos encourages self-reflection and inclusive attitudes. Essentially, higher education practitioners not only need to understand Latino transfer epistemology, but they also need to collaborate with Latina/o/x students to design and implement mission statements and equity plans. Finally, to deepen an understanding of Latino transfer epistemology, practitioners and policymakers need to engage in professional development opportunities that foster a deeper understanding of Latino transfer epistemology. Attending conferences such as Alliance for Hispanic Serving Institutions Educators (AHSIE) Best Practices Conference, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Annual Conference, and American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE) Conference can help practitioners and policymakers with better understanding how to serve Latina/o/x transfer students. Moreover, enrolling in ESCALA's professional development courses can serve to improve practitioners' knowledge of Latino transfer epistemology.

Element two of a Transfer Receptive Servingness Culture (TRSC) suggests that practitioners unapologetically serve Latina/o/x transfer students. Findings from this study underscore the importance of developing a pipeline to connect and enroll Latina/o/x students into

support programs. These programs provide Latina/o/x students with staff, faculty, and counselors who assist them with their transfer process. The reason why these programs work is because they are intentional and consist of practitioners who care about their students and will go above and beyond to serve them. However, it is important to note that the onus to develop a transfer receptive servingness culture should not depend on these programs. Oftentimes, these programs are underfunded and understaffed. Therefore, policymakers should provide institutions with more funding to institutionalize these programs. Moreover, many community colleges have a general counseling office whose goal is to counsel all students with educational and transfer plans. Thus, these counselors need professional development opportunities to improve counseling practices that are centered on servingness. Furthermore, Latina/o/x transfer students need work-study opportunities as well as ways to assume leadership roles on campus. These opportunities allow them to expand their networks in order to access transfer information and support. Lastly, findings showed that Latina/o/x students struggled with accessing support during the limbo stage of transferring to their four-year institutions. Therefore, practitioners need to design summer transition programs and work alongside community colleges to enroll Latina/o/x transfer students into these programs.

Element three of TRSC proposes the need to institutionalize a family engagement culture to improve Latina/o/x transfer outcomes. To accomplish this, Mapp and Bergman (2019) provide the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships to help higher education institutions design partnership initiatives that build capacity between schools and families and ultimately support the academic success of their students. In this framework, the authors point to process and organizational conditions that need to be addressed to improve family-school partnerships. The process conditions are as follows: relational and build on mutual trust, linked

to learning and development, asset-based, culturally responsive and respectful, collaborative, and interactive (Mapp & Bergman, 2019). The organizational conditions for building strong school-family partnerships are systemic and embraced by leadership across the institution, integrated and embedded in all strategies, and sustained with resources and infrastructure (Mapp & Bergman, 2019). Incorporating these conditions can help higher education institutions build stronger partnerships between families and their colleges and universities.

As the findings of this study suggest, there is a need to inform families about the transfer processes and their roles with supporting their transfer-going students. A Dual Capacity-Building Framework suggests that higher education institutions link their initiatives to learning outcomes. In this case, the outcome is transfer knowledge. Therefore, higher education institutions could offer a Transfer Bridge program to prepare families to support their students as they prepare to transition to university. The program should provide essential resources to understand the emotional, social, and academic aspects of community college to university transitions and offers guidance on navigating financial aid and campus resources. This program can help families connect with other families to build their capacities as knowledge brokers. To build trusting relationships with families, higher education institutions can implement culturally responsive and community-centered practices that honor family as a core source of support in transfer students' educational journeys. This can include providing bilingual (English/Spanish) outreach, hosting family-centered events, engaging families early in the transfer process, and hiring culturally competent staff. Higher education institutions can further strengthen school-family partnerships by recognizing families as key partners in the transfer success of Latina/o/x students by creating intentional, culturally affirming opportunities for engagement. Efforts can include family transfer workshops, parent and family advisory councils, family orientation programs, community-based

outreach, storytelling and recognition events, and ongoing bilingual communication. These are some examples of ways institutions can engage families in the transfer process given the challenges that families expressed in this study. Higher education institutions should institutionalize family engagement in strategic planning and allocate sustainable funding and resources to support these goals.

Conclusion

Improving transfer outcomes for Latina/o/x students is not just an educational imperative—it is a moral and societal one. Strengthening partnerships between community colleges and four-year institutions represents more than administrative coordination; it is a commitment to equity, opportunity, and justice. When we work together to streamline the transfer process, we honor the resilience, aspirations, and cultural capital that Latina/o/x transfer students bring into our educational spaces. These students carry with them stories of perseverance, deep familial ties, and a vision for a better future—not only for themselves, but for their communities. Investing in their success means investing in a more inclusive and prosperous society, one that recognizes that the brilliance and potential of Latina/o/x transfer students are essential to the future of higher education and the vitality of our nation.

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Appendix A

Recruitment Email

Subject Line: ATTENTION Latina/o/x Community College Students! Research Participants Needed!

Hello!
My name is Ivan Valdovinos and I am a fourth year doctoral student at the University of California San Diego and the Director of the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) STEM Exito project at San Diego Miramar College. I am writing to invite you to participate in my dissertation research study that focuses on exploring the transfer decision-making processes of Latina/o/x community college students through a family-centered approach. This means that I am also seeking to interview you and a member or members of your family to learn more about their role in your transfer decision-making process. My goal with this research is to amplify the voices and experiences of our comunidad to inform transfer policies and practices to improve transfer outcomes for Latina/o/x students.

To qualify for participation you must:

- Identify as Latina/o/x/e
- Enrolled in one of the San Diego County Community Colleges during the 2023/2024 academic year
- Transfer ready meaning that you plan to transfer to a four-year institution the following academic year
- Be able to commit to being interviewed 3 times starting in March and ending in June
- Be 18 years or older

If you would like to participate or if you have any questions, please reply to this email, email ivaldovi@ucsd.edu or call (509) 390-1240, and I will provide more information. A compensation of $100 gift card will be awarded to you for completing 3 interviews with me lasting between 30 minutes to an hour, and your family will also be compensated $50 for a one to two hour interview with me. If you do not qualify, please support this study by sharing this email with your respective communities.

Thank you!

Apéndice A

Correo Electrónico de Contratación

Línea de Asunto: ¡ATENCIÓN Estudiantes latinos/a/x de Colegios Comunitarios! ¡Se necesitan participantes en la investigación!

¡Hola!
Mi nombre es Ivan Valdovinos y soy estudiante de doctorado de cuarto año en la Universidad de California en San Diego y director del proyecto STEM Éxito de la Institución de Servicio Hispano (HSI) en San Diego Miramar College. Le escribo para invitarlo a participar en mi estudio de investigación de tesis que se enfoca en explorar los procesos de toma de decisiones de transferencia de estudiantes latinas de colegios comunitarios a través de un enfoque centrado en la familia. Esto significa que también buscó entrevistarte a ti y a tu familia para aprender más sobre su papel en su proceso de toma de decisiones de transferencia. Mi objetivo con esta investigación es amplificar las voces y experiencias de nuestra comunidad para informar las políticas y prácticas de transferencia para mejorar los resultados de la transferencia para los estudiantes latinos.

Para calificar para participar debe:

- Identificarse como Latina/o
- Inscrito en una de las universidades del Distrito de Colegios Comunitarios del Condado de San Diego durante el año académico 2023/2024
- Transferencia lista, lo que significa que planea transferirse a una institución de cuatro años el siguiente año académico
- Poder comprometerse a ser entrevistado 3 veces a partir de marzo y terminando en junio.
- Tener 18 años o más

Si desea participar o si tiene alguna pregunta, responda a este correo electrónico, envíe un correo electrónico a ivaldovi@ucsd.edu o llame al (509) 390-1240 y proporcionare más información. Se le otorgará una compensación de $100 en una tarjeta de regalo por completar 3 entrevistas conmigo que durarán entre treinta minutos a una hora y su familia también recibirá una compensación de $50 por una entrevista de una a dos horas conmigo. Si no califica, apoye este estudio compartiendo este correo electrónico con sus respectivas comunidades.

¡Gracias!

Appendix B

Student Interview Protocol

[Platica #1]

Introduction:
Hi [Participant Name]! Thank you so much for taking the time to engage in a platica with me today. My name is Ivan Valdovinos and I am a fourth year PhD student at the University of California San Diego. I am working on this project under the mentorship of Dr. Amanda Datnow from the Education Studies Department at UC San Diego. I intentionally selected to use platicas versus traditional interviews because I want us to engage in a back and forth conversation about your transfer choice experiences. Platicas are an expressive cultural form used to share one's life experiences through chismes, dichos, cuentos, consejos, and other forms of oral storytelling (Flores & Morales, 2021). For our meeting today, I have prepared a list of questions that will allow us to learn more about each other, your life history, student history, and your motivations for engaging with the transfer process.

First, I wanted to ask if you would be willing to let me record this conversation and take some notes while we talk to each other? [If yes - start recording now]

This interview will last approximately 60 minutes with 60 minutes being the maximum time. Once we complete the interview, we will schedule the next platica. Thank you again for taking the time to speak with me today. And please let me know if you have any questions or concerns throughout the platica.

Interview Purpose:
I have asked to speak with you today because you are currently engaging with the transfer decision-making process. I am interested in learning more about what that process looks like for you and how your family has been involved in this process. My goal is to present the findings of this study to administrators at SDCCD, at research conferences, and eventually publish articles about this work. A larger goal is to turn this research into a book that will inform and guide higher education practitioners to design and implement transfer policies and practices to better support Latinx students. Throughout the duration of this study, your identity will remain confidential.

Before we begin, I would like to ensure your consent - do you mind giving me a verbal confirmation that you are okay with continuing with this interview process? [If yes - say thank you] I also sent you the consent form - do you have any questions or would you like me to elaborate on the consent form before we get started?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Questions:

Life History/Experiences

1. Tell me a little about yourself - your name, your major, what community college you attend, where you are from, and what are your goals and dreams.
2. Families can be defined in many ways. For instance, people have biological parents, adoptive parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, etc. Who do you consider your close family?
3. Share with me a little bit about your upbringing. How was your family life? Did/do you have family traditions? Who lived in your home growing up? Did/do you have siblings who attended college? Did your parents attend college?
4. Share with me one of your most cherished family memories.

Student History

5. Talk to me about your educational journey starting from high school. How was your high school experience as it relates to your preparation for college?
6. What are your goals and dreams? Probe: Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?
7. Why did you decide to attend a community college? Probe: What were your options after graduating high school?
8. Describe what attracted you to this community college? Probe: Why are these factors so attractive? What makes them so important to your success as a student?
9. What role does your family play in your major life decisions such as attending college?
10. What role does your family play pursuing your goals and dreams? Probe: What does your family think about your goals and aspirations?
11. What role has your family played in your transfer process?

Engagement with the Transfer Process

12. What experiences motivated or inspired you to pursue a transfer pathway?
13. What are your goals and dreams? And how has a community college degree prepared you or not prepared you to accomplish these goals and dreams?
14. What challenges have you experienced that have prevented you from pursuing the transfer process?

Challenges with Considering Engaging with the Transfer Process

15. Did you ever feel like transfer was not the right decision for you? If so, why?
16. Did your parents influence your decision to engage with the transfer process? If so, how?
17. Did your culture play a role in your decision to engage with the transfer process?
18. Is there anything else you would like to share about your life history, student history, engagement with the transfer process, and/or challenges with engaging with the transfer process?

Closing

Thank you so much for taking the time out in your schedule to speak with me today. I really appreciate the information you shared and our conversation. If you have any questions or would like to add anything additional to our conversation - please feel free to reach out to me.

But other than that - this platica is complete. Let's schedule our next platica, which will focus on your search, planning and applying to transfer process.

Thank you so much again!

[Platica #2]

Introduction:
Hi [Participant Name]! Thank you for taking the time to engage in our second platica. As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to engage in a back and forth conversation about your transfer choice experiences. For our meeting today, I have prepared a list of questions that will allow me to learn more about your transfer information search experience as well as your experience with the planning and applying phase of transfer. This platica will last approximately 30 to 60 minutes with 60 minutes being the maximum time. Once we complete the interview, we will schedule our third platica. Thank you again for taking the time to speak with me today. And please let me know if you have any questions or concerns throughout the platica.

Before we begin, I wanted to ask if you would be willing to let me record this conversation and take some notes while we talk to each other? [If yes - start recording now]

Interview Questions:

Searching for Transfer Information

1. What resources did you use when searching for transfer information?
2. When searching for transfer information, what challenges did you face?
3. Who, if anyone, did you turn to when you were struggling to find transfer information?
4. What role did your family play when searching for transfer information?
5. What role did your family play in the higher education pursuits of your siblings? How were they the same or different from your experience?
6. What types of conversations did you have with your family regarding transferring?
7. How did your family get involved in your transfer search and planning process?
8. How important was it for your family to be involved in your transfer process?
9. What types of advice/consejos were you seeking from your family regarding transferring?
10. What have been some challenges with involving your family in the transfer process?
11. How do you navigate challenging transfer conversations with your family?

Planning and Applying to Transfer Institutions

12. What resources did you use when planning and applying to transfer institutions?
13. Could you share with me any strategies that you used that helped you successfully plan and apply to transfer institutions?
14. As a student with intentions to transfer, how much support did you receive from your community college? Please describe several ways this community college could have helped you along the transfer planning and applying process.

15. What role did your family play when you were planning and applying to transfer?
16. Was your family a barrier to your transfer process? If so, how?

Challenges When Planning and Applying to Transfer

17. What challenges have you faced while planning to transfer?
18. What challenges have you experienced when you were applying to transfer institutions?
19. As you were going through the transfer admission process, what challenges did you face? Probe: How did you address these challenges?
20. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with the search, planning, and/or applying process?

Closing

Thank you so much for taking the time out in your schedule to speak with me today. I really appreciate the information you shared and our conversation. If you have any questions or would like to add anything additional to our conversation - please feel free to reach out to me.

But other than that - this platica is complete. Let's schedule our next platica.

Thank you so much again!

Insider Transfer Knowledge from Family

[Platica #3]

Introduction:

Hi [Participant Name]! Thank you for taking the time to engage in our third platica. As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to engage in a back and forth conversation about your transfer choice experiences. For our meeting today, I have prepared a list of questions that will allow me to learn more about how you chose transfer institutions to apply to and transfer to. I am also interested in learning more about your interactions with the receiving institution. This platica will last approximately 30 to 60 minutes with 60 minutes being the maximum time. Once we complete the interview that will complete your participation in this study. Thank you again for taking the time to speak with me today. And please let me know if you have any questions or concerns throughout the platica.

Before we begin, I wanted to ask if you would be willing to let me record this conversation and take some notes while we talk to each other? [If yes - start recording now]

Interview Questions:

Choosing A Transfer Institution

1. Where are you going to be transferring to next year? Please explain why.
2. What role did your race and culture play in your transfer decisions?
3. What role did geography play in your transfer decisions?
4. What role did your sociopolitical (poverty, inequality, political conflicts) context play in your transfer decision-making?
5. How have your identities (race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, ability, etc.) impacted your transfer choice decisions, if any?

6. How, if at all, did your family influence your transfer decision?
7. What role did your family play in the decision making process of your siblings' higher education pursuits?
8. What types of conversations about transferring did you have with your family?
9. How does your family feel about your decision to transfer?
10. What are your family's concerns about transfering, if any?
11. How have you included your family in your transfer decision-making journey?
12. Consider the colleges you applied to transfer to. Why were you interested in these colleges? Probe: How do you eliminate colleges from your list?
13. What additional support did you use to help you decide where to transfer to?

Interacting with the Receiving Institution

14. What has been your experience with interacting with the receiving institution?
15. Who have you interacted with that has influenced your decision to transfer to the receiving institution?
16. What challenges have you encountered when interacting with the receiving institution?
17. What do you think receiving institutions can do to ensure a smooth transition for Latina/o transfer students?

Challenges During the Transfer Choice Process

18. What challenges have you faced when deciding which transfer institution to apply to?
19. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience choosing a transfer institution and your interactions with the receiving institution?

Closing

Thank you so much for taking the time out in your schedule to speak with me today. I really appreciate the information you shared and our conversation. If you have any questions or would like to add anything additional to our conversation - please feel free to reach out to me. As you know, this is our last platica for this study and this completes your commitments to this research project. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at ivaldovi@ucsd.edu.
Thank you so much again!

Appendix C

Familial Testimonio Protocol

Introduction:
Hi [Participant Name]! Thank you so much for taking the time to engage in a familial testimonio with me today. My name is Ivan Valdovinos and I am a fourth year PhD student at the University of California San Diego. I am working on this project under the mentorship of Dr. Amanda Datnow from the Education Studies Department at UC San Diego. You were selected to participate in a familial testimonio because your child is a participant in my study and they referred me to you. For our meeting today, I have prepared a list of questions that will allow us to learn more about each other, your life history, parenting styles, and the ways in which you are involved in your child's education, particularly their transfer process.

First, I wanted to ask if you would be willing to let me record this conversation and take some notes while we talk to each other? [If yes - start recording now]

This interview will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes with 90 minutes being the maximum time. Once we complete the interview, your participation in this study will be complete. Thank you again for taking the time to speak with me today. And please let me know if you have any questions or concerns throughout the platica.

Interview Purpose:
I have asked to speak with you today because your child is a community college student in the San Diego Community College District and they are currently engaging with the transfer decision-making process. I am interested in learning more about your role in helping your child achieve their educational goals and their transfer success. My goal is to present the findings of this study to administrators at SDCCD, at research conferences, and eventually publish articles about this work. A larger goal is to turn this research into a book that will document the lived experiences of Latina/o/x students and their families in order to inform and guide higher education practitioners to design and implement transfer policies and practices to better support Latina/o/x students and families.

Before we begin, I would like to ensure your consent - do you mind giving me a verbal confirmation that you are okay with continuing with this interview process? [If yes - say thank you] I also sent you the consent form - do you have any questions or would you like me to elaborate on the consent form before we get started?

Interview Questions:

Life History/Experiences

1. Tell me a little about yourself - your name, where are you from (San Diego and country/background), your relationship to student, and what led you and your family to live in San Diego?
2. What were your educational goals and dreams?

3. What is your relationship with college? Did you attend college? Why or why not?
4. Share with me a little bit about your upbringing. How was your family life? Did/do you have family traditions?
5. Who is part of your family? Who lives in your household? How many children do you have?
6. Share with me one of your most cherished family memories.
7. Speak to me about your relationship with your child. What are your goals and dreams for them and how have you supported them towards achieving those goals and dreams?
8. How would you describe your other children's educational journey?

Family Engagement in Schools

9. Talk to me about your involvement and engagement in your child's education starting from high school. How did you help them graduate from high school? How did you support their decision to attend college?
10. What about your other children? What was your involvement in their educational journeys?
11. What advice, if any, did you give to your child about pursuing a college education?
12. What role, if any, did you have in your student attending community college?
13. What is your relationship with community college?
14. What do you know about the community college system?
15. How are you currently or have you supported your child's success in community college?

Parenting Practices and Engagement with the Transfer Process

16. What do you know about the transfer process?
17. What are your concerns with your child transferring?
18. How do you feel about your child moving away from home?
19. Do you have any concerns about your child attending a four-year university?
20. What are your goals for your child?
21. What have you done as a parent to help your child reach their goal of transferring?
22. How do you feel about your child transferring to (insert institution)?
23. What challenges have you experienced with helping your child achieve their transfer goal?
24. What ways have you supported your child's transition to (insert institution)?
25. Is there anything else you would like to share about how you support your child's transfer goals?

Closing

Thank you so much for taking the time out in your schedule to speak with me today. I really appreciate the information you shared and our conversation. If you have any questions or would like to add anything additional to our conversation - please feel free to reach out to me.

This completes your commitments to this research project. If you have any questions after you leave, please feel free to contact me at ivaldovi@ucsd.edu. Thank you again for your participation in this study!

Apéndice C

Protocolo de Testimonio Familiar

Introducción:

Hola [Nombre del participante]! Muchas gracias por tomarse el tiempo de participar conmigo en un testimonio familiar hoy. Mi nombre es Ivan Valdovinos y soy estudiante de doctorado de cuarto año en la Universidad de California en San Diego. Estoy trabajando en este proyecto bajo la tutoría de la Dra. Amanda Datnow del Departamento de Estudios de Educación de UC San Diego. Usted fue seleccionado para participar en un testimonio familiar porque su hijo participa en mi estudio y me remitieron a usted. Para nuestra reunión de hoy, he preparado una lista de preguntas que nos permitirán aprender más unos de otros, su historia de vida, sus estilos de crianza y las formas en que participan en la educación de sus hijos, particularmente en su proceso de transferencia.

Primero, quería preguntarle si estaría dispuesto a dejarme grabar esta conversación y tomar algunas notas mientras hablamos. [En caso afirmativo, comience a grabar ahora]

Esta entrevista tendrá una duración aproximada de 60 a 90 minutos siendo 90 minutos el tiempo máximo. Una vez que completamos la entrevista, su participación en este estudio estará completa. Gracias nuevamente por tomarse el tiempo de hablar conmigo hoy. Y avíseme si tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud a lo largo de la plática.

Propósito de la Entrevista:

He pedido hablar con usted hoy porque su hijo/a es un estudiante de un colegio comunitario en el Distrito de Colegios Comunitarios de San Diego y actualmente está participando en el proceso de toma de decisiones de transferencia. Estoy interesado en aprender más sobre su papel para ayudar a su hijo/a a alcanzar sus objetivos educativos y el éxito de su transferencia. Mi objetivo es presentar los resultados de este estudio a los administradores de SDCCD, en conferencias de investigación y, eventualmente, publicar artículos sobre este trabajo. Un objetivo más amplio es convertir esta investigación en un libro que documente las experiencias vividas por los estudiantes latinos/o/x y sus familias con el fin de informar y guiar a los profesionales de la educación superior para diseñar e implementar políticas y prácticas de transferencia para apoyar mejor a los latinos/o. /x estudiantes y familias.

Antes de comenzar, me gustaría asegurar su consentimiento. ¿Le importaría darme una confirmación verbal de que está de acuerdo con continuar con este proceso de entrevista? [En caso afirmativo, diga gracias] También le envié el formulario de consentimiento. ¿Tiene alguna pregunta o le gustaría que le dé más detalles sobre el formulario de consentimiento antes de comenzar?

Historia de Vida/Experiencias

1. Cuéntame un poco sobre ti: tu nombre, de dónde eres (San Diego y país/antecedentes), ¿qué lo/a llevó a usted y a su familia a vivir en San Diego?
2. ¿Cuáles fueron tus metas y sueños educativos?
3. ¿Cuál es tu relación con la universidad? Asististe a la universidad? Por que o por que no?
4. Comparte conmigo un poco sobre tu crianza. ¿Cómo fue tu vida familiar? ¿Tenían o tienen tradiciones familiares?
5. Comparte conmigo uno de tus recuerdos familiares más preciados.
6. ¿Quién es parte de tu familia? ¿Quién vive en tu hogar? ¿Cuántos hijos tiene?
7. Háblame de tu relación con tu hijo/a. ¿Cuáles son sus metas y sueños para ellos y cómo los ha apoyado para lograr esas metas y sueños?
8. ¿Cómo describirías la educación de tus otros hijos?

Participación familiar en las escuelas

9. Háblame sobre su participación y compromiso en la educación de su hijo desde la escuela secundaria. ¿Cómo les ayudaste a graduarse de la escuela secundaria? ¿Cómo apoyó su decisión de asistir a la universidad?
10. ¿Qué consejo, si alguno, le dio a su hijo acerca de seguir una educación universitaria?
11. ¿Qué papel, si alguno, tuvo usted en la asistencia de su estudiante al colegio comunitario?
12. ¿Cuál es su relación con el colegio comunitario?
13. ¿Qué sabes sobre el sistema de colegios comunitarios?
14. ¿Cómo apoya actualmente o ha apoyado el éxito de su hijo en el colegio comunitario?

Prácticas de crianza y participación en el proceso de transferencia

15. ¿Qué sabes sobre el proceso de transferencia?
16. Cuales son sus preocupaciones con respecto a la transferencia de su hijo?
17. ¿Cómo se siente acerca de que su hija/o se mude fuera de casa?
18. ¿Tiene alguna inquietud acerca de que su hija/o asista a la universidad?
19. ¿Cuáles son sus objetivos para su hija/o?
20. ¿Qué ha hecho como padre para ayudar a su hijo/a a alcanzar su objetivo de transferirse?
21. ¿Cómo se siente acerca de la transferencia de su hijo/a a (insertar institución)?
22. ¿Qué desafíos ha experimentado al ayudar a su hijo/a a lograr su transferencia? ¿meta?
23. ¿De qué manera ha apoyado la transición de su hijo/a a (insertar institución)?
24. ¿Hay algo más que le gustaría compartir sobre cómo apoya la transferencia de su hijo/a? ¿objetivos?

Clausura

Muchas gracias por tomarse el tiempo de su agenda para hablar conmigo hoy. Realmente aprecio la información que compartió y nuestra conversación. Si tiene alguna pregunta o desea agregar algo adicional a nuestra conversación, no dude en comunicarse conmigo.

Esto completa sus compromisos con este proyecto de investigación. Si tiene alguna pregunta después de irse, no dude en comunicarse conmigo en ivaldovi@ucsd.edu.

¡Gracias nuevamente por su participación en este estudio!

Appendix D

Exempt Information Sheet (student)

You are being invited to participate in a research study titled "Examining the Transfer Decision-Making Processes of Latinx Student Through a Family-Centered Approach." This study is being done by Ivan Valdovinos from UC San Diego under the mentorship of Dr. Amanda Datnow from the Education Studies Department at UC San Diego. You were selected to participate in this study because you self-identify as Latina/o/x, you were enrolled in the San Diego Community College District for the 2023/2024 academic year, and you are engaging with or have recently engaged with the transfer process.

The purpose of this research study is to better understand the transfer experiences and decision-making processes of Latina/o/x students and the role their families play in their transfer success. Your participation in this research should last approximately from June 2024 to August 2024. If you agree to take part in this study, you will be interviewed three times between June and August. These interviews will be conducted in a one-on-one setting and will last between 60 to 90 minutes with 90 minutes being the maximum time. Ivan will collect audio recordings of all interviews via the Zoom platform or audio recorder if the interview is in-person. You do have the option to opt out of audio recording by communicating this with Ivan prior to starting the interview. You will be asked to recount your transfer experiences as a Latinx student as well as the role your family had in this process. Sample interview questions include: Share with me a little bit about your upbringing. How was your family life? Did/do you have family traditions? Why did you decide to attend a community college? What were your options after graduating high school? What experiences motivated or inspired you to pursue a transfer pathway? Did you ever feel like transfer was not the right decision for you? If so, why? Topics will include the following: life history/experiences, student history, engagement with the transfer process, and challenges with the transfer process. Upon completion of the third interview, your participation in this study will conclude and you will receive your $100 gift card.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time. Choosing not to participate or withdrawing will result in no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. You are free to skip any question that you choose.

If you have questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the researcher(s), Ivan Valdovinos at 509-390-1240. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the UC San Diego Office of IRB Administration at irb@ucsd.edu or 858-246-4777.

By participating in this research you are indicating that you are at least 18 years old, have read this consent form, and agree to participate in this research study. Please keep this consent form for your records.

Exempt Information Sheet (family)

You are being invited to participate in a research study titled "Examining the Transfer Decision-Making Processes of Latinx Student Through a Family-Centered Approach." This study is being done by Ivan Valdovinos from UC San Diego under the mentorship of Dr. Amanda Datnow from the Education Studies Department at UC San Diego. You were selected to participate in this study because you have a child who self-identifies as Latina/o/x, was enrolled in the San Diego Community College District for the 2023/2024 academic year, and has been engaging with the transfer process. Moreover, your child has identified you as someone who was influential in their transfer success.

The purpose of this research study is to better understand the transfer experiences and decision-making processes of Latina/o/x students and the role their families play in their transfer success. Your participation in this research should last approximately from June 2024 to August 2024. If you agree to take part in this study, you will be interviewed one time between June and August. This interview will be conducted in a one-on-one or in group setting if more than one family member wants to participate and will last between 60 to 120 minutes with 120 minutes being the maximum time. Ivan will collect audio recordings of the interview via the Zoom platform or audio recorder if the interview is in-person. You may opt out of audio recording by communicating with Ivan at the start of the interview. You will be asked to recount your parenting practices and involvement in your children's education, specifically as they relate to the transfer process. Sample interview questions include: Speak to me about your relationship with your child. What are your goals and dreams for them and how have you supported them towards achieving those goals and dreams? Talk to me about your involvement and engagement in your child's education starting from high school. How did you help them graduate from high school? How did you support their decision to attend college? What advice, if any, did you give to your child about pursuing a college education? What role, if any, did you have in your student attending community college? What is your relationship with community college? Topics will include the following: life history/experiences, family engagement in schools, Parenting Practices and Engagement with the Transfer Process. Upon completion of the interview, your participation in this study will conclude and you will receive your $50 gift card.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time. Choosing not to participate or withdrawing will result in no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. You are free to skip any question that you choose.

If you have questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the researcher(s), Ivan Valdovinos at 509-390-1240. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the UC San Diego Office of IRB Administration at irb@ucsd.edu or 858-246-4777.

By participating in this research you are indicating that you are at least 18 years old, have read this consent form, and agree to participate in this research study. Please keep this consent form for your records.

Apéndice D

Hoja de Información para Personas Exentas (familia)

Se le está invitando a participar en un estudio de investigación titulado **"Examinando los Procesos de Toma de Decisiones sobre la Transferencia de Estudiantes Latinx a través de un Enfoque Centrado en la Familia."** Este estudio está siendo realizado por Ivan Valdovinos de UC San Diego bajo la mentoría de la Dra. Amanda Datnow del Departamento de Estudios de la Educación en UC San Diego. Usted fue seleccionado/a para participar en este estudio porque tiene un/a hijo/a que se identifica como Latina/o/x, estuvo inscrito/a en el Distrito de Colegios Comunitarios de San Diego durante el año académico 2023/2024, y ha estado participando en el proceso de transferencia. Además, su hijo/a lo/la identificó como una persona influyente en su éxito con la transferencia.

El propósito de este estudio de investigación es comprender mejor las experiencias de transferencia y los procesos de toma de decisiones de estudiantes Latina/o/x, así como el papel que desempeñan sus familias en su éxito con la transferencia. Su participación en esta investigación durará aproximadamente de junio de 2024 a agosto de 2024. Si usted acepta participar en este estudio, se le realizará una entrevista una sola vez entre los meses de junio y agosto. Esta entrevista se llevará a cabo de forma individual o en grupo si más de un miembro de la familia desea participar, y durará entre 60 y 120 minutos, siendo 120 minutos el tiempo máximo. Ivan recopilará grabaciones de audio de la entrevista a través de la plataforma Zoom o con una grabadora de audio si la entrevista es en persona. Usted puede optar por no ser grabado/a en audio comunicándoselo a Ivan al inicio de la entrevista. Se le pedirá que comparta sus prácticas de crianza y participación en la educación de su hijo/a, específicamente en lo que respecta al proceso de transferencia.

Algunas preguntas de ejemplo de la entrevista incluyen: Háblame sobre su relación con su hijo/a. ¿Cuáles son sus metas y sueños para él/ella y cómo lo/la ha apoyado para alcanzarlos? Háblame sobre su participación y compromiso con la educación de su hijo/a desde la preparatoria. ¿Cómo lo/la ayudó a graduarse de la preparatoria? ¿Cómo apoyó su decisión de asistir a la universidad? ¿Qué consejos, si dio alguno, le ofreció a su hijo/a sobre seguir una educación universitaria? ¿Qué papel, si alguno, tuvo usted en que su hijo/a asistiera a un colegio comunitario? ¿Cuál es su relación con los colegios comunitarios?

Los temas incluirán lo siguiente: historia/experiencias de vida, participación familiar en las escuelas, prácticas de crianza y compromiso con el proceso de transferencia. Al finalizar la entrevista, su participación en el estudio concluirá y recibirá una tarjeta de regalo de $50.

Su participación en este estudio es completamente voluntaria y puede retirarse en cualquier momento. Elegir no participar o retirarse no tendrá ninguna penalización ni pérdida de beneficios

a los que tenga derecho. Usted tiene la libertad de omitir cualquier pregunta que no desee responder.

Si tiene preguntas sobre este proyecto o si tiene algún problema relacionado con la investigación, puede comunicarse con el/los investigador(es), Ivan Valdovinos al 509-390-1240. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en una investigación, puede comunicarse con la Oficina de Administración del IRB de UC San Diego en **irb@ucsd.edu** o al 858-246-4777.

Al participar en esta investigación, usted indica que tiene al menos 18 años de edad, ha leído este formulario de consentimiento y está de acuerdo en participar en este estudio de investigación. Por favor, conserve este formulario de consentimiento para sus archivos.

Appendix E

Transfer Choice Survey

A. Which schools were you considering applying to? Please rank the schools that you were considering applying to based on how much you wanted to attend that school. (1 = my top choice)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.

B. Which schools did submit applications to? Please rank the schools that you applied to based on how much you wanted to attend that school. (1 = my top choice)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.

C. Please rank the schools that you were accepted to based on how much you want to attend that school. (1 = my top choice)

1.
2.
3.

4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.

D. Did you apply for a Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) agreement? Which UC were you trying to transfer to?

E. Are you currently pursuing an Associate's Degree of Transfer (ADT)? Which CSU were you trying to transfer to?

F. Were there any schools that you were interested in and did not apply to? Which ones?

Student Demographics

G. Full Name
H. Email (will be used to schedule your first platica and further communication as it relates to the study)
I. Preferred Pseudonym (for confidentiality purposes, I will not be using your government name and instead will be using your alias)
J. Home Address (this information will be used to describe your geographic location and its influence on your transfer decisions)
K. Are you a U.S. Citizen?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Prefer not to answer
L. Please select one.
    a. U.S. born
    b. Immigrant
M. Please describe your ethnicity. (Select all that apply)
    a. Brazilian
    b. Central American
    c. Cuban
    d. Dominican
    e. Mexican/Chicanx/Chicana/Chicano

    f. Puerto Rican
    g. South American
    h. Other (African-American/Black, Asian, Native American, White, etc.)

N. What is your gender identity?
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Transgender
    d. Non-binary
    e. Other
    f. Prefer not to answer

O. Are you a first-generation college student? (Parents/Guardians do not have a Bachelor's degree)
    a. Yes
    b. No

P. What is your age?
    a. 18-24
    b. 25-34
    c. 35-44
    d. 45+

Q. What is your major?

R. Is your major in the Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) field?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know

S. Have you ever participated in any of these programs? (make all that apply)
    a. Puente
    b. Promise
    c. TRIO
    d. HSI
    e. MESA
    f. CalWorks
    g. EOPS
    h. Other

T. Have you ever received a Pell Grant?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know

U. Do you currently have a job? (if you have multiple jobs, add the total to determine the following)
    a. Yes, part-time (20 per week or less)
    b. Yes, full-time (40 per week or more)
    c. No